



CAMBRIDGE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

(Official Minutes)

Regular Meeting

January 16, 2024

Called for 6:00 p.m. in the Dr. Henrietta S. Attles Meeting Room, Cambridge Rindge and Latin School, 459 Broadway, Cambridge, for the purpose of discussing any and all business that may properly come before the Committee.

Members Present: Vice Chair Hunter, Member Harding, Member Hudson, Member Rachel, Member Rojas, Member Weinstein, Mayor Simmons

Also Present: Corey Dotson, Chief Talent Officer; Dr. Greer, Superintendent of Schools; Dr. Edwards, Chief of Academics and Schools; Dr. Gittens, Assistant Superintendent of Secondary Schools; Dr. Grace, Interim Superintendent of Student Services; Attorney Maureen MacFarlane, General Counsel; David Murphy, Chief Operations Officer; Skylar Nash, Chief Strategy Officer; Raymond Porch, Director of Family and Community Engagement; Ivy Washington; Interim Chief Financial Officer

Mayor Simmons in the Chair.

A quorum of the School Committee being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. and read the call of the meeting

The meeting proceeded to the first order of business with a roll call vote for the purpose of a soundcheck: Vice Chair Hunter PRESENT; Member Harding PRESENT; Member Hudson PRESENT; Member Rachel PRESENT; Member Rojas PRESENT; Member Weinstein PRESENT; Mayor Simmons PRESENT.

1. Public Comment:

The following individuals were heard:

- Dan Monahan, Lexington Ave, spoke regarding **#24-012**.
- Anna Shin, Sidney Street, spoke regarding **#24-009**. Mayor Simmons asked that Ms. Shin direct her comments specifically to **#24-009** and not CPSPD's hiring practices more generally. Ms. Shin agreed that her statement did not relate specifically to **#24-009** and she stepped away from the podium.

On a motion by Member Weinstein, seconded by Member Rojas, on a voice vote, public comment was closed.

2. Student School Committee Report:

Student Member Alailima and **Student Member Anjaria** gave a student update on happenings at CRLS including their commitment to advocating for free AP tests for all students. They noted their work with promoting solar panels at CRLS, involving students in the budget process, and highlighted Dr. Greer's listening session.

3. Presentation of the Records for Approval:

- January 1, 2024 Special Meeting
- January 2, 2024 Regular Meeting
- January 9, 2024 Special Meeting

Mayor Simmons shared her edits to the meeting minutes with the Confidential Secretary. On a motion by Vice Chair Hunter, seconded by Member Harding, on a voice vote, the records were approved as amended.

4. Reconsiderations: None

5. Unfinished Business/Calendar: None

6. Awaiting Reports: None

7. Superintendent's Agenda

7a. Superintendent's Update

Mayor Simmons passed the floor to Dr. Greer who framed the *District Plan & Initiatives Fall Progress Update* and shared the presentation which can be found on this [website](#). Dr. Edwards, Mr. Nash, and Mr. Porch gave a detailed overview of the slides. After the presentation, a robust conversation followed highlighting the following topics:

- Involvement of School Councils
- MTSS tool and iReady data as they relate to identifying the needs of advanced learners
- Staffing and the organizational chart of the Early Childhood Department
- Instructional Frameworks
- Professional development and its availability to staff at all levels and tailoring opportunities as they relate to the needs of individual schools
- Student performance targets as they relate to DESE and target setting by the School Committee
- Supports and professional development opportunities for language teachers
- CPSD partnership with the Cambridge Learning Center
- Career Connections staffing structure as it relates to RSTA
- Importance of expanding internships and externships available to CRLS
- CPSD communications to caregivers and the possibility of including this topic as a strategic initiative
- Outline of individual school budgets as they relate to their student populations

- Updated 2022-2025 District Outcomes dashboard
- Individual Student Success Planning and Navigators initiative
- Status of Universal Preschool applications
- Dual language opportunities for caregivers
- Availability of Excel Tutoring across the district
- Encouragement of members to participate in Learning Walks

Following the discussion, **Mayor Simmons** gave the floor to Dr. Greer who introduced Ms. Washington. She gave the *FY25 Budget Process and Overview* presentation which can be found on this [website](#). After the presentation, a robust discussion included the following topics:

- Schedule of budget discussions and the importance of outreach to families and tapping into the interfaith community as an information resource
- School Improvement Plans (SIPs)
 - Their important role in facilitating caregivers' impact
 - The School Committee's role in reviewing SIPs
 - SIP allocations based on enrollment data with a wide range of funding from 55K up to 440K for CRLS
- The city's role in the budget process and the impact of a decrease in commercial tax revenue
- ESSER funding as it relates to specific budget items
- Prioritizing CPSD building maintenance
- Budgetary impact from the new CEA contract and potential for additional impact with the forthcoming bargaining units
- Responses of Climate Survey to help inform budget priorities
- Equity as a driver in the budget process
- Public bidding process for contracts underscoring the district's earlier commitment to moving to electric school buses

7c. **CPS District Plan:** None

7d. **Consent Agenda:**

Member Harding pulled #24-009. **Member Rojas** pulled #24-011, #24-013 and #24-016. **Mayor Simmons** pulled #24-018. On the following roll call vote, items #24-010, #24-012, #24-014, #24-015, and #24-017 were adopted: Vice Chair Hunter YEA; Member Harding YEA; Member Hudson YEA; Member Rachel YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Member Weinstein YEA; Mayor Simmons YEA.

#24-010 Approval of Revisions to the Controlled Choice Policy Regarding the Cambridge Preschool Program Admission & Matriculation (Second Reading): That the School Committee approve revisions to the Controlled Choice Policy with respect to Cambridge Preschool Program admissions and matriculation. (Second Reading)

Description:

Students turning three years old and four years old before September 1st will be eligible to register for enrollment into a preschool program at a CPS school through the Office of Early Childhood registration

process. Students turning five years old before September 1st who are not enrolled in a CPS preschool program will have the opportunity to participate in the Kindergarten lottery program consistent with current practice whereby their lottery eligibility occurs the January preceding their Kindergarten year.

Students enrolled pursuant to this provision in a CPS preschool at age four or Kindergarten at age five will matriculate into subsequent grade levels at their assigned elementary school. Students enrolled in a CPS preschool program at age three will be eligible to participate in the Office of Early Childhood registration process the following year as well for purposes of enrollment in preschool for the child's age four year, except for current CPS matriculating programs that commence in the child's age three year, i.e. Scholar College at the Fletcher Maynard Academy and the Children's House program within the Tobin Montessori.

In the absence of a genuine hardship, students will not be allowed to transfer from one CPS elementary school to another, except as provided herein.

Subsequent to assignment to a CPS elementary school via the OEC preschool matching system (for four-year olds), parents or caretakers of students may request a transfer to a different, single CPS school subject to seat availability from the point of assignment until October 15th of the student's Kindergarten year for students who begin their CPS career in preschool.

Subsequent to assignment to a CPS elementary school via the CPS Kindergarten lottery (for five-year olds), or an assignment to Kindergarten after the Kindergarten Lottery, parents or caretakers of students may request a transfer to a different, single CPS school subject to seat availability from the point of assignment until October 15th of the student's first grade year for students who begin their CPS career in Kindergarten. Consistent with the current practice, students assigned to an elementary school via the CPS Kindergarten lottery in January of 2024 for the 2024 - 2025 school year other than first of the three schools to which they expressed a preference for enrollment will be placed on the waitlists for the remaining schools to which they indicated a preference for enrollment on the Kindergarten lottery registration form. No student will remain on waitlists for more than three schools, and the two-year window to remain on the waitlist(s) contemplated by this provision will be in effect for these waitlist placements.

Families wishing to remain on a waitlist for another elementary school into the second school year of the two-year window contemplated by this provision must affirm that desire to remain on the waitlist by November 15th preceding that second year. Transfers from a waitlist for students availing themselves of this provision will occur prior to October 15th of the year in which the transfer occurs. No student will be permitted to transfer pursuant to this provision more than once.

The transfer and waitlist policy herein will take effect upon the assignment of students to preschool and Kindergarten for the 2024-2025 school year. Students currently on previously established waitlists from earlier iterations of this policy will remain unaffected through their elementary school careers.

Students with older siblings enrolled in the Chinese Immersion program at the Martin Luther King Elementary School or the Portuguese Immersion program at the King Open School who are denied entry via the Office of Early Childhood Preschool Registration process and/or the Cambridge Public Schools Kindergarten Lottery Program due to seat capacity attributable to the total number of siblings enrolling and receiving sibling preference will be prioritized with respect to enrollment in the non-

immersion classrooms in the school in which the older sibling is enrolled and will have the opportunity to enroll in the immersion program should a seat become available during the two-year transfer window.

Upon adoption, the Superintendent will direct the Chief Operating Officer to ensure additional communication to families is disseminated to ensure maximum awareness of the associated deadlines and timelines consistent with this policy.

#24-012 Day and Residential Program Services not Available from the Cambridge Public Schools be adopted as follows: that the School Committee award contracts to the institutions as detailed in the list in amounts not to exceed the shown rates, having been approved by the Operational Services Division of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts funds to be provided from the General Fund and/or Grant Fund Budget.

Description: SY23-24 Placement of students in private schools for implementation of educational plans in accordance with Chapter 766.

Program	#	Amount
Day Program Tuition Contracts	1	\$30,763.19
Residential Program Tuition Contracts 45-Day Program		
	Total	<u>1</u> \$30,763.19

#24-014 Contract Award: Ascentis Corporation: Time & Attendance System be adopted as follows: that the School Committee approve a contract with the following vendor, funds to be provided in accordance with the budget reference listed below. Procurement procedures for this purchase have complied with Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Ascentis Corporation, 9680 Haven Avenue, #200, Rancho Cucamonga, CA for the period of January 25, 2024 to January 24, 2025, in the amount of \$57,191.20.

#24-015 Contract Award: Maxim Healthcare Services: Special Education Temporary Staffing Services (FY24 Contract) be adopted as follows: that the School Committee approve a contract with the following vendor, funds to be provided in accordance with the budget reference listed below. Procurement procedures for this purchase have complied with Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Maxim Healthcare Services, 110 2nd Ave, Needham, MA for the period of January 1, 2024 to June 30, 2024 in the amount of \$60,000.00.

#24-017 Miscellaneous Gifts/Receipts be adopted as follows: that the School Committee accept and approve the following donations as described:

1. \$412.00 to the Morse School made from Geskus Studios & Yearbook Publishing as commission for student portraits. Funds will be used for the general support of the school.

2. \$500.00 from A Plus Insurance Agency to the Morse School for an awards dinner for students.

8. Non-Consent Agenda:

#24-009 Approval of the Appointment of the Assistant Superintendent of Student Services be adopted as follows: that the School Committee approve the appointment of Dr. Karyn Grace as the Assistant Superintendent of Student Services.

Member Harding asked Dr. Grace to share her sentiments regarding her aspirations for the department. Dr. Grace highlighted her priorities, early successes since serving as Interim Assistant Superintendent, management style, and organizational structure of OSS. School Committee members thanked her and gave congratulatory remarks.

On a motion by Member Harding, seconded by Vice Chair Hunter, on the following roll call vote **#24-009** was adopted: Vice Chair Hunter YEA; Member Harding YEA; Member Hudson YEA; Member Rachel YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Member Weinstein YEA; Mayor Simmons YEA.

#24-011 Approval of the Criminal Offender Record Information & Sexual Offender Registry Information Policy (First Reading) be adopted as follows: that the School Committee approve the revisions to the Criminal Record Information and Sexual Offender Registry Information Policy as detailed in the attached document (First Reading).

Description: This is the first reading of revisions to the Criminal Offender Record Information and Sexual Offender Registry Information [Policy](#).

Member Rojas asked for a brief summary of why the changes were necessary. Dr. Greer asked Attorney MacFarlane and Mr. Dotson and share their insights. Attorney MacFarlane shared that the updates would clarify the hiring process and that both the CORI and SORI checks would be necessary.

On a motion by Member Harding, seconded by Vice Chair Hunter, on the following roll call vote **#24-011** was adopted: Vice Chair Hunter YEA; Member Harding YEA; Member Hudson YEA; Member Rachel YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Member Weinstein YEA; Mayor Simmons YEA.

#24-013 Contract Award: Concentric Math: Professional Development be adopted as follows: that the School Committee approve a contract with the following vendor, funds to be provided in accordance with the budget reference listed below. Procurement procedures for this purchase have complied with Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Concentric Math, 624 N Silverado Drive, Lafayette, CA for the period of July 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024, in the amount of \$198,000.00.

Member Rojas asked for more clarity regarding the contract and how it relates to the Illustrative Math curriculum. Dr. Greer, Dr. Edwards, and Dr. Gittens each provided background on the contract and its focus on pedagogy and teachers' professional development.

On a motion by Member Rojas, seconded by Member Weinstein, on the following roll call vote **#24-013** was adopted: Vice Chair Hunter YEA; Member Harding YEA; Member Hudson YEA; Member Rachel YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Member Weinstein YEA; Mayor Simmons YEA.

#24-016 Contract Award: NCS Pearson, Inc. Assessment Materials & Software be adopted as follows: that the School Committee approve a contract with the following vendor, funds to be provided in accordance with the budget reference listed below. Procurement procedures for this purchase have complied with Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

NCS Pearson, Inc. PO Box 599700, San Antonio, TX for the period of January 1, 2024, to September 30, 2024, in the amount of \$28,987.00.

Member Rojas asked for additional background regarding the nature of the testing and its uses. Dr. Greer provided background information including the testing's role in IEP evaluations.

On a motion by Vice Chair Hunter, seconded by Member Harding, on the following roll call vote **#24-016** was adopted: Vice Chair Hunter YEA; Member Harding YEA; Member Hudson YEA; Member Rachel YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Member Weinstein YEA; Mayor Simmons YEA.

#24-018 Grant Award: FY24 Broad Institute Coding Clubs (SC24-153) Increase be adopted as follows: that the School Committee accept and approve the increased grant award below in the amount and for the period indicated:

Broad Institute Coding Clubs (SC24153) from Private, Allocation in the amount of \$3,000.00 for the period of September 1, 2023, to June 30, 2024.

Description: The purpose of this grant is to provide resources to host after-school coding clubs at schools.

The Broad Institute provides all of the materials and staff to implement the program. This grant has been increased from \$2,250 to \$3,000 to add an after-school coding club at Vassal Lane Upper School in the spring of 2024. FY24 grant funds will support:

- After-school coding clubs at Amigos School, Cambridge Street Upper School, and Putnam Avenue Upper School, and Vassal Lane Upper School:
- Stipends for a teacher at each school to serve as club advisor (\$750 per teacher, per semester-long club).

Mayor Simmons asked for additional background regarding the availability of coding clubs across the district's upper schools. Dr. Greer shared that all four upper schools had access to coding clubs.

On a motion by Member Weinstein, seconded by Member Rojas on the following roll call vote **#24-018** was adopted: Vice Chair Hunter YEA; Member Harding YEA; Member Hudson YEA; Member Rachel YEA; Member Rojas YEA; Member Weinstein YEA; Mayor Simmons YEA.

9. School Committee Agenda (Policy Matters/Notifications/Requests for Information):

None

10. Resolutions (letters of congratulations, letters of condolences):

On behalf of the School Committee, **Member Harding** asked that condolence notes be sent to the families of Bethune Kelly and E. Doreen Hawkins.

On a motion by Member Harding, seconded by Member Rachel, on a voice vote, the resolution was adopted.

11. Announcements:

Member Weinstein congratulated the recent success of the CRLS Winter DANCE/works production and encouraged members to attend the upcoming Jazz Night on January 25.

Member Rojas shared good luck sentiments to CRLS students on upcoming final exams.

Vice Chair Hunter shared her experiences joining Math Circles Family Engagement Day at FMA and the Martin Luther King, Jr. celebration at St. Peter's Church with Mayor Simmons as keynote speaker. She highlighted that January 7 was 8th Grade Night at RSTA, as well as CRLS Parent Night and a virtual dinner.

Mayor Simmons acknowledged Mr. Fernandez's role as a guest speaker at an MLK Celebration. She shared details about the MLK Celebration hosted by the Cambridge Black Pastors Alliance on January 21. She is hoping to arrange a meeting with members of the City Council and School Committee for an overview of parliamentary procedures. She is also hoping to schedule a meet & greet with both groups.

Email communications: None

On a motion by Member Rachel, seconded by Member Rojas, on a voice vote, the meeting was adjourned. (8:55 pm)

Attest,



Katherine Christo
Confidential Secretary to the School Committee