

March 10, 2025

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS SUBCOMMITTEE

**Virtual Buildings and Grounds Subcommittee Report
Monday, March 10, 2025 at 5:00 p.m.
Broadcast from the Media Studio
454 Broadway, Cambridge, MA**

Called for the purpose of discussing bus schedules for the next fiscal year, giving an update on the planned work for the Spring Street building in relation to the Long-Range Facilities Condition Assessment and having initial discussions on policy revisions on pre-school and kindergarten assignments.

Subcommittee Members Present: Member Rojas, (Chair), Member Hudson, Member Rachel

Other Members Present: Vice Chair Hunter

Others Present: David Murphy, Interim Superintendent of Schools; Damon Smith, Interim Chief Operating Officer; Vedad Konjic, Director of Facilities; Kathy Sampson, Assistant Registrar, Student Registration Center

Chair Rojas started the meeting at 5 p.m. and read the call of the meeting.

Chair Rojas highlighted the agreements of the meeting (below):

- Speak and listen from the heart (respect)
- Step up/step back (watch air time)
- Expect and accept non-closure (work in progress)
- Bike rack (list of things that are important but should be addressed another time)
- Public comment would be limited to 3 minutes to allow for a broader discussion.

Chair Rojas opened the meeting by asking attendees to share how they were spending their extra hours of daylight.

Chair Rojas opened the floor for public comment. Given the time constraints, each speaker was allotted three minutes. The following caregivers and community members, Anne Coburn, Arjun Jakemar, Amber Fisher, Jill Linnell, shared the following sentiments:

- Urged CPS to address overcrowding at Kennedy-Longfellow and share clearer updates.
- Highlighted equity concerns about how resources and space are distributed across schools.
- Asked for more transparency and family engagement in planning processes.
- Raised issues around unreliable bus schedules, lack of tracker data, and communication gaps with families.
- Requested the district recommit to past promises around functional tracking and consistent communication.
- Advocated for better support and clearer timelines for potential changes in school start times. Short-term ideas like bringing in modular classrooms or using space differently while working on long-term plans that are still in progress.

Chair Rojas turned the meeting over to Superintendent David Murphy, who presented slides on Buildings and Grounds Subcommittee updates. The presentation can be found on this [website](#).

March 10, 2025

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS SUBCOMMITTEE

During the presentation, Superintendent Murphy and Damon Smith shared the following highlights:

- CPS is facing ongoing issues with bus delays and inconsistent arrival times.
- There are 12 major factors affecting bus performance, including limited buses, citywide school assignments, traffic, and too many stops.
- A recent survey sent to families in middle-tier schools showed a preference for later start times, though no final decision has been made.
- The goal is to improve service without shifting burden to families as conversations and data review are ongoing.
- Two guiding questions were introduced: How do we best deliver early childhood programs? And how does preschool placement impact kindergarten assignment?

The administration gave updates on Kennedy Longfellow (KLo) Building and possible renovations:

- Proposed improvements include instructional upgrades such as gym, tech, auditorium, changes to cafeteria and restrooms, and safety updates—HVAC and asbestos removal.
- These upgrades are still tentative and depend on capital project funding.

Member Hudson and Member Rachel emphasized the need for clearer communication with families and stronger transparency around upcoming changes. **Member Hudson** suggested that the district share a public update on the future of DHSP programming during renovations at Spring Street and proposed creative ways to better inform families about school options such as videos or Zoom sessions with school leaders. Both members pushed for a formal review and modernization of the Controlled Choice policy, noting that school assignment impacts equity and trust. **Member Rachel** added that safe, well-maintained school buildings directly impact student learning and supported keeping these topics front and center in future planning.

Chair Rojas closed the meeting at 6:30 p.m. by thanking participants and noting the need for continued community input, transparency, and urgency in addressing transportation and space issues.