



CAMBRIDGE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

(Official Minutes)

Regular Meeting

June 17, 2025

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: Member Harding, Member Hudson (REMOTE & IN PERSON), Vice Chair Hunter (REMOTE), Member Rojas, Member Weinstein, Mayor Simmons

Others Present: Jennifer Amigone, Director of Data, Assessment & Accountability; Emily Bryan, Director of PreK-12 ELA/Literacy; Dr. Heather Francis, Executive Director of Academics; Siobhan Mulligan, Director of Mathematics; David Murphy, Interim Superintendent of Schools; Ashley Pierre, Executive Director of CPSD Human Resources; Dr. Carolyn Turk, Director of Educational Policy, Mayor's Office

Member Rojas in the Chair.

A quorum of the School Committee being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. and read the call of the meeting.

The meeting proceeded to the first order of business with a roll call of members present: Member Weinstein, PRESENT; Vice Chair Hunter, PRESENT; Member Harding, PRESENT; Member Hudson, PRESENT; Member Rachel, ABSENT; Member Rojas, PRESENT; Mayor Simmons, ~~ABSENT~~

Member Hudson transitioned from remote to in-person at 6:20 p.m.

Mayor Simmons arrived at 7:20 p.m. and assumed the role of Chair.

1. Public Comment

The following individuals were heard:

- Dan Monahan, Lexington Ave, Superintendent's Update, Climate Survey
- Jess Goetz, Pemberton Street, Superintendent's Update, Climate Survey
- Anna Shin, Sidney Street, **#25-183** School Councils Ad Hoc Subcommittee Report
- Vonel Lamour, Walden Square Non-Agenda Item and was directed to speak with an administrator

Public Comment was kept open for several minutes to ensure that a virtual registrant was able to participate. On a motion by Member Weinstein, seconded by Member Hudson, public comment was closed on following roll call vote: Member Weinstein, YEA; Vice Chair Hunter, YEA; Member Harding, YEA; Member Hudson, YEA; Member Rachel, ABSENT; Member Rojas, YEA; Mayor Simmons, ABSENT

2. Student School Committee Report: None

3. Presentation of the Records for Approval:

- May 20, 2025, Regular Meeting
- May 21, 2025, Special Meeting

On a motion by Member Harding, seconded by Member Weinstein, the records were approved on the following roll call vote: Member Weinstein, YEA; Vice Chair Hunter, YEA; Member Harding, YEA; Member Hudson, YEA; Member Rachel, ABSENT; Member Rojas, YEA; Mayor Simmons, ABSENT

4. Reconsiderations: None

5. Unfinished Business/Calendar:

#25-161 Preservation and Digitization of School Records – Mayor Simmons

WHEREAS: The preservation of the Cambridge Public Schools' historical and administrative records is vital to maintaining institutional memory, transparency, and accessibility for current and future generations; and

WHEREAS: Past practices of document disposal have resulted in the loss of valuable historical materials and records that are important to the school community and its legacy; and

WHEREAS: Digitization of records, including but not limited to yearbooks, student newspapers, and all other historical files, will ensure their preservation, improve accessibility, and safeguard against loss or damage; now therefore be it:

RESOLVED:

- That the Cambridge School Committee formally adopts a policy that every pertinent document generated or received by the School Department must be preserved in accordance with applicable laws and best practices.
- That the School Committee directs the School Department to undertake an immediate and comprehensive inventory of all such historical records, including yearbooks, all copies of the Register Forum student newspaper, and any other existing archival materials.
- That the Superintendent, his/her designees, and the Executive Secretary of the School Committee shall determine and designate a secure, centralized location—physical or digital—where all school records; and
- That the Superintendent will identify and appoint appropriate personnel or a dedicated team responsible for the management, digitization, maintenance, and preservation of all school records. This designee(s) will also oversee the development of ongoing record-keeping protocols to ensure consistent preservation going forward.
- That the Executive Secretary of the School Committee or her/his designee work with the City Clerk on the preservation and digitization of School Committee records, photos, and etc.
- That the School Committee requests a report outlining the proposed digitization plan, resource requirements, timelines, and staffing recommendations be submitted for review and approval within 90 days.

As **Mayor Simmons** had not yet arrived to the meeting, **#25-261**, Unfinished Business/Calendar, was passed over. Upon joining the meeting, **Mayor Simmons** discussed her proposed amendments to the group. **Member Hudson** and the Interim Superintendent shared their feedback and suggested additional amendments.

On a motion by Member Weinstein, seconded by Member Harding, amendments to **#25-161** were adopted on the following roll call vote: Member Weinstein, YEA; Vice Chair Hunter, YEA; Member Harding, YEA; Member Hudson, YEA; Member Rachel, ABSENT; Member Rojas, YEA; Mayor Simmons, YEA

On a motion by Member Harding, seconded by Member Weinstein, **#25-161** was adopted as amended on the following roll call vote: Member Weinstein, YEA; Vice Chair Hunter, YEA; Member Harding, YEA; Member Hudson, YEA; Member Rachel, ABSENT; Member Rojas, YEA; Mayor Simmons, YEA

6. Awaiting Reports: None

7a. Superintendent's Update:

An update on pending matters and highlight various initiatives taking place across CPS school communities. The update will include a briefing by the Director of Data, Assessment & Accountability on the recently completed district-side school culture survey that was administered throughout the month of May.

Interim Superintendent and Ms. Amigone gave the following presentation which can be found on this [website](#).

The Panorama survey centered on school climate and belonging, with additional domains specific to each group. This is the second consecutive year of data, allowing for year-over-year comparisons. The following are highlights of the presentation and discussion:

Survey Administration and Participation

- Family and staff surveys were fully anonymous; student surveys were linked via Aspen to allow for disaggregation.
- Response rates were: 39% for families (down from 68% last year), 51% for students (grades 3–12), and 63% for school-based staff.
- The City's Community Engagement Team helped administer surveys via phone to non-English-speaking families.

Family Survey Results

- Favorability improved across all categories.
- Notable improvements in perceptions of school climate and student belonging.
- Childcare and communication barriers decreased; the primary ongoing barrier was family schedule constraints.
- Strongest favorable response: feeling safe getting to school.
- Main area for growth: alignment of school activities with student interests.

Staff Survey Results

- Improvements across all domains: school climate, feedback and coaching, well-being, and belonging.
- Staff reported high value in their work (98%) but also high levels of exhaustion.
- Paraprofessionals and new educators had more favorable responses, while clerks, substitutes, and those who preferred not to disclose identity had less favorable views.

Student Survey Results

- Mixed results, with some improvements in older students' sense of belonging.
- Declines noted in student engagement, particularly in perceptions of instructional relevance and classroom energy.
- Younger students reported decreased interest in coursework.
- Engagement was stronger among students participating in out-of-school time programs.
- Data from CRLS was limited, prompting discussion on the need for improved response strategies or alternative methods of data collection.

Equity and Disaggregated Data

- Positive responses were more common among English Learners and lower-income families.
- Students with IEPs, those who are chronically absent, and those not meeting academic benchmarks reported less favorable experiences.

Next Steps and Reflections

- The Superintendent emphasized the importance of interpreting the data cautiously and in context. He noted his reservations in how the Panorama survey operates.
- This data will help inform the development of School Improvement Plans, with specific attention to school culture goals.
- The Superintendent committed to sharing a written report summarizing initial takeaways.
- Committee members expressed a desire for clearer accountability, better outreach at the high school level, and timely follow-up on previously stated goals (e.g., disaggregated IEP data).

Committee Discussion Highlights

- Recommendations included possibly resurveying high school students in the fall and leveraging Falcon Block more effectively.
- Members underscored the need for action steps with concrete timelines and transparency in communicating outcomes to the public.
- The Superintendent acknowledged these concerns and emphasized the ongoing commitment to improvement, particularly in the areas of student engagement, family partnership, and staff support.

7b. Presentation

The Interim Superintendent along with the Executive Director of Academics and the Directors of English Language Arts and Mathematics for the Cambridge Public Schools will present to the school committee on the ongoing work of implementing aligned curriculum programming in core content areas across the school district.

Interim Superintendent, Ms. Bryan, Dr. Francis and Ms. Mulligan gave the following presentation which can be found on this [website](#).

Highlights of the presentation and discussion include:

Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA) Curriculum Update

- Focus on aligning instructional materials with the science of reading.
- First year of district-wide implementation of CKLA in elementary grades.
- Implementation of Fishtank curriculum in upper schools and common assessments at CRLS.
- Emphasis on supporting educators through professional development and other resources.
- A comprehensive bias review was conducted on over 700 lessons.
- Student Feedback:
 - 96% reported high levels of learning.
 - 93% found the work appropriately challenging.
 - 96% reported high levels of enjoyment with instructional content.
- Academic Outcomes:
 - Grade 1: 26% increase in students on/above grade level.
 - Grade 2: 10% increase, with 80% now meeting benchmarks.
 - Grades 3–5: 70–82% of students on/above grade level.
 - Highest growth among English learners, Black/African American, and multiracial students.
 - Students averaged 175% progress toward typical growth expectations.

Mathematics Curriculum Update

- Ongoing rollout of Illustrative Mathematics curriculum, with differentiated progress across grades.
- Supports implemented:
 - Accelerated 6th/7th grade curriculum.
 - Afterschool and vacation programs.
 - Bridge to Algebra program.
 - Algebra 1 lessons introduced in Grade 8.
- Outcomes:
 - Grades 3–5 showed strong growth on spring screener data.
 - Grades 6–8 showed high growth in Grade 8, but disparities persist in high-needs subgroups.
 - Math mindset surveys showed improved belonging and engagement, especially in elementary grades.
- Plans include:
 - Strengthening upper school implementation.
 - Enhancing inclusive practices and targeted intervention strategies.
 - Increasing co-teaching with special educators and interventionists.

Family & Community Engagement:

- Caregiver-focused materials include unit preview letters, QR-coded websites, and at-home learning tools.
- Multiple events held: school presentations, webinars, and a successful Flagway Tournament (CPS schools took 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place nationally).
- Increased cross-department collaboration, including with Special Education and Multilingual Learners offices.

Next Steps for 2025-2026

1. Strengthen curriculum implementation through deeper professional development and minimal curricular changes.
2. Expand collaborative practices using data-driven instruction across departments.
3. Enhance shared knowledge among all instructional staff, including SPED and ELL providers.

School Committee Discussion:

- **Member Hudson** raised concerns about the long-term stagnation of MCAS scores and the disconnect between different assessments (i-Ready, mCLASS, MCAS).
 - Emphasized the need to present multiple data sources with context.
 - Expressed skepticism due to similar promises made over past decades.
- **Vice Chair Hunter** commended the academic team and acknowledged historical challenges around equity and access to rigorous instruction.

- **Member Rojas** praised the progress and asked for clarity on support for Hispanic students and how remaining students below grade level would be supported. Ms. Bryan noted that the platform does not currently track Hispanic students which she intends to rectify.

7c. CPS District Plan: None

7d. Consent Agenda:

On a motion by Member Harding seconded by Member Weinstein, the items **#25-165, #25-166, #25-167, #25-168, #25-169, #25-170, #25-171, #25-172, #25-173, #25-174, #25-175, #25-176, #25-177, #25-178, #25-179, #25-180, and #25-181** were adopted on the following roll call vote: Member Weinstein, YEA; Vice Chair Hunter, YEA; Member Harding, YEA; Member Hudson, YEA; Member Rachel, ABSENT; Member Rojas, YEA; Mayor Simmons, YEA

#25-165 Recommendation: Contract Award: Gerry's Music Shop: Musical Instrument Repairs (FY26 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.

Gerry's Music Shop, 80 Lamb Street South Hadley, MA for the period of July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026 in the amount of \$28,500.00.

#25-166 Recommendation: Contract Award: Leonard's Music, LLC: Musical Instrument Repairs (FY26 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.

Leonard's Music LLC, 128 Great Rd, Bedford, MA for the period of July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026 in the amount of \$75,000.00.

#25-167 Recommendation: Contract Award: Imagine Learning: Instructional Materials-Amendment 1 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.

Imagine Learning, 8860 E. Chaparral Road, Scottsdale, AZ for the period of July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026 in the amended amount of \$200,000.00.

#25-168 Recommendation: Contract Award: Amplify: Instructional Materials (FY26 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.

Amplify, 55 Washington St, Suite 500, Brooklyn, NY for the period of July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026 in the amount of \$208,000.00.

#25-169 Recommendation: Contract Award: City Sprouts: Educational Services (FY26 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.

City Sprouts, 678 Massachusetts Ave, Cambridge, MA for the period of July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026 in the amount of \$145,000.00.

#25-170 Recommendation: Contract Award: GoGuardian: Testing Materials (FY26 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.

GoGuardian, 2030 E. Maple Ave, Suite 100, El Segundo, CA for the period of July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026 in the amount of \$42,025.00.

#25-171 Recommendation: Contract Award: New England Medical Billing: Medicaid Reimbursement Claiming Service (FY26 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.

New England Medical Billing, 19 Norfolk Ave, South Easton, MA for the period of July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026 in the amount of \$100,000.00.

#25-172 Recommendation: Contract Award: Panorama Education: Professional Services (FY26 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.

Panorama Education, 24 School Street, 4th Floor Boston, MA for the period of July 1, 2025 to July 2, 2026 in the amount of \$25,555.00.

#25-173 Recommendation: Contract Award: Next Gen Supply Group: Food Service Paper Products 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.

Next Gen Supply Group dba HT Berry, dba Brady Plus, 11 Norfolk Street, Mansfield, MA for the period of July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026 in the amount of \$200,000.00.

#25-174 Recommendation: Contract Award: Thurston Foods, Inc.: Groceries (FY26 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.

Thurston Foods, Inc., 30 Thurston Drive, Wallingford, CT for the period of July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026 in the amount of \$1,000,000.00.

#25-175 Recommendation: Contract Award: Fantini Baking Company: Bread Products (FY26 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.

Fantini Baking Company, 375 Washington Street, Haverhill, MA for the period of July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026 in the amount of \$100,000.00.

#25-176 Recommendation: Contract Award: Greenwood Industries: Roof Repairs (FY 26 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.

Greenwood Industries, 640 Lincoln Street, Worcester, MA for the period

of July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026 in the amount of \$1,057,000.00.

#25-177 Recommendation: Contract Award: Capital Carpet & Flooring: Flooring Services (FY26 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.

Capital Carpet & Flooring Specialist, 64 Industrial Way, Wilmington, MA
for the period of July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026 in the amount of
\$98,489.00.

#25-178 Recommendation: Contract Award: New England School Services: Doors & Supplies (FY26 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.

New England School Services, 98 Hicks Avenue, Medford, MA for the
period of July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026 in the amount of \$64,000.00.

#25-179 Recommendation: Gifts/Miscellaneous Receipts be adopted as follows: that the School Committee accept and approve the following donations as described:

DONATION - CPS received multiple in-kind donations to Visual and Performing Arts (VPA). Two community members donated lights, backdrop equipment, and printing supplies for photography, and another community member donated a flute for the music program.

#25-180 Recommendation: Grant Award: FY25 Expanded Homeless Shelter Funding (SC25218) be adopted as follows: that the School Committee accept and approve the grant award below in the amount and for the period indicated:

FY25 Expanded Homeless Shelter Funding (SC25218) - INCREASE
through State - Targeted in the amount of \$194,570.95 for the period of
February 1, 2025 to June 30, 2025.

#25-181 Recommendation: Contract Award: North Lawrence Contracting LLC: Flooring & Supplies (FY26 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.

North Lawrence Contracting LLC, 599 Canal Street, Suite 6, Lawrence
MA for the period of July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026 in the amount of
\$149,900.00.

8. Non-Consent Agenda:

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

- #25-182** Special Education & Student Support Subcommittee Report – April 10, 2025
- #25-183** School Councils Ad Hoc Subcommittee Report –May 12, 2025
- #25-184** Communications & Community Relations Subcommittee Report – March 27, 2025

On a motion by Member Weinstein, seconded by Vice Chair Hunter **#25-182**, **#25-183** and **#25-184** were adopted on the following roll call vote: Member Weinstein, YEA; Vice Chair Hunter, YEA; Member Harding, YEA; Member Hudson, YEA; Member Rachel, ABSENT; Member Rojas, YEA; Mayor Simmons, YEA

10. Resolutions (letters of congratulations, letters of condolences): None

11. Announcements:

Member Weinstein:

- Expressed appreciation for:
 - Principal Gehant, Assistant Principal Milner and Ryan Souliotis for meaningful graduation ceremonies.
 - All involved in organizing the upper school commencements.
- Acknowledged Dan Monahan, outgoing CEA President, for his years of dedicated service through multiple superintendents, committees, contracts, and the pandemic.

Member Harding:

- Promoted the upcoming Hoops and Health event

Member Rojas:

- Echoed thanks to Mr. Monahan.
- Reminded the community about the Spring Street Building meeting and the recent Buildings & Grounds Subcommittee meeting, which addressed infrastructure and a City Council parking request.

Mayor Simmons

- Thanked Mr. Monahan for his service
- Additional announcements:
 - River Festival: Saturday, June 21.
 - Juneteenth Celebration: Thursday parade starting around 9:30 AM from City Hall to Riverside Press Park, with food, activities, and discussions.

12. Late Orders: None

13. Communications from City Officers:

Superintendent Search Update from Mayor Simmons and Vice Chair Hunter

Community Engagement and Process to Date:

- **Vice Chair Hunter** provided an overview of the Superintendent Search process, including:
 - Numerous community forums held (public, hybrid, staff, student-focused).
 - An external consultant was hired to compile and analyze feedback.
 - Surveys were distributed via ParentSquare and liaisons.
 - Community members had opportunities to submit anonymous written feedback.

Search Firm and Screening:

- The district retained The Equity Process to manage the Superintendent Search.
- Anti-bias training was conducted for three School Committee members who are involved in candidate screening.
- The applicant pool has been narrowed down to semifinalists.
- A third-party service, the Donovan Group, facilitated the community survey and will present results.

Next Steps:

- Remaining School Committee members must complete anti-bias training before participating in semifinalist interviews.
- A decision is pending on the number and composition of community stakeholders who will join the semifinalist interview process.
- A community interest form is being translated and prepared to invite participation.

The time of the meeting coming to 10:00 p.m. the meeting was extended on a motion by Member Weinstein, seconded by Vice Chair Hunter on the following roll call vote: Member Weinstein, YEA; Vice Chair Hunter, YEA; Member Harding, YEA; Member Hudson, YEA; Member Rachel, ABSENT; Member Rojas, NAY; Mayor Simmons, YEA (6-1-1)

Regular Meeting

Concerns and Clarifications:

- Several committee members raised concerns about:
 - Transparency in the composition and authority of the semifinalist interview committee.
 - Whether non-elected stakeholders on the interview committee will have voting power or serve in an advisory capacity.
 - Ensuring any finalists forwarded to the full School Committee are viable and vetted thoroughly.
 - The ability of the School Committee to add semifinalists to the finalist pool if needed.
- Dr. Turk and Ms. Pierre clarified:
 - The community/stakeholder interview committee is advisory and will operate by consensus.
 - The final vote on the superintendent will be by the full School Committee only.
 - The School Committee retains the option to advance additional semifinalists to finalist status by vote.
 - All finalists will undergo background checks before public announcement.

Follow-Up and Scheduling:

- A subcommittee meeting (Community Engagement Working Group) will be scheduled to finalize the stakeholder composition.
- A public roundtable is scheduled for Friday at 12:30 p.m. to review results from the community forums and survey, presented by the Donovan Group and Dr. Tamarin.

Email communications:

- ✓ Dan Monahan

On a motion by Member Rojas, seconded by Member Weinstein, the meeting was adjourned on the following roll call vote: Member Hudson, YEA; Member Rachel, YEA; Member Rojas, YEA; Member Weinstein, YEA; Member Vice Chair Hunter, YEA; Member Harding, YEA; Mayor Simmons, YEA (10:10 p.m.)

Attest:



Katherine Christo

Executive Secretary to the School Committee