



CAMBRIDGE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

(Official Minutes)

Regular Meeting

October 21, 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), Vice Chair Hunter, Member Rachel, Member Rojas, Member Weinstein, Mayor Simmons

Others Present: Ms. Jennifer Amigone, Director of Data, Assessment & Accountability; Dr. Heather Francis, Executive Director of Academics; Dr. Chad Leith, Chief Accountability Officer; David Murphy, Superintendent of Schools; Mr. Damon Smith, Interim Chief Operation Officer

Mayor Simmons in the Chair.

A quorum of the School Committee being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 6:03 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 Rachel, PRESENT; Member Rojas, PRESENT; Member Weinstein, PRESENT; Vice Chair Hunter, PRESENT; Member Harding, ABSENT; Member Hudson, PRESENT; Mayor Simmons, PRESENT

Member Harding arrived at 6:05 p.m.

1. Public Comment

The following individual was heard:

- Alex Bowers, Pemberton Street, shared her support of **#25-270** and asked that the Middle School Pathway Program be introduced at the middle school level.

On a motion by Member Rojas, seconded by Vice Chair Hunter, public comment was closed on the following roll call vote: Member Rachel, YEA; Member Rojas, YEA; Member Weinstein, YEA; Vice Chair Hunter, YEA; Member Harding, YEA; Member Hudson, YEA; Mayor Simmons, YEA

2. Student School Committee Report:

No was no Student School Committee Report as Student Members Asraf and Jama were absent.

3. Presentation of the Records for Approval:

- September 29, 2025, Roundtable
- September 30, 2025, Special Meeting
- October 6, 2025, Special Meeting
- October 7, 2025, Regular Meeting

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

4. Reconsiderations: None

5. Unfinished Business/Calendar: None

6. Awaiting Reports: None

7a. Superintendent's Update:

An update on pending matters and highlight various initiatives that have occurred or been planned since the last meeting of the committee.

Superintendent Murphy shared the following update:

- Tobin-Montessori & Darby Vassall Community Celebration
 - Expressed appreciation to School Committee members and community attendees who participated in the grand opening event.
- Upcoming Community Events This Weekend
 - "Rhythms of Community: Dance, Drum & Togetherness" at Morse School
 - Peabody Playground Dedication
- ParentSquare and Technology Outage
 - A brief national tech outage affected ParentSquare and CPS Connect
- Federal Funding Update
 - Recent media focus on possible shifts due to national policy changes and potential government shutdown.
- Future MCAS Data Presentations
 - Next Meeting: Focus on CRLS achievement data.
 - Later Presentation: Civics and Science data (noting civics as a newer assessment area).
- 9th Grade Tech Exploratory Participation Increase
 - Currently, 46% of 9th graders at CRLS take the Tech Exploratory (RISTA) course.
 - Superintendent emphasized value of the course in exposing students to diverse pathways.
 - Goal should move toward 100% participation.

Following Superintendent Murphy's remarks, Committee members expressed their support of students taking advantage of RSTA's programs and expanding overall career exploration for students, as well as the importance of the district strengthening its partnerships with the business and labor communities.

7b. Presentation

The Superintendent and members of the central administration will continue the presentation on the recently released student achievement, growth and accountability data, including areas of needed improvement and strategies being employed to advance district goals.

Superintendent Murphy, Ms. Amigone and Dr. Francis presented the second in a series of presentations focused on the MCAS results released by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). The presentation can be found on this [website](#).

Highlights of the presentation and discussion include:

School Highlights

- Positive trends in Math achievement:
 - Tobin Montessori and Morse schools showed steady progress toward (and beyond) pre-COVID levels.
- High student growth indicators:
 - Hagerty and Amigos displayed high growth among multiple student groups.

- ELA performance improvements:
 - Cambridgeport and MLK schools exceeded state target expectations for multiple student groups.
- Other strong indicators:
 - Peabody had significant improvement in Grade 5 Science results.
 - King Open exceeded targets for English Language Learner proficiency rates.

Key Concerns & Academic Gaps

- Despite progress, significant and persistent achievement gaps remain, particularly among:
 - Black/Brown students
 - High-need students
 - Students with disabilities
- Certain schools identified for targeted focus and interventions.
 - Fletcher Maynard Academy
 - King Open
 - Cambridge Street Upper School (CSUS)

Strategies & Interventions Described

- District-wide adoption of aligned, high-quality curriculum (Math & ELA).
- Increased time on learning via expanded school day and structured intervention/WIN blocks
- Key interventions highlighted:
 - Excel Tutoring Program (grades 3–8)
 - Bridge to Algebra (supplemental algebra readiness support)
 - Math Recovery and supplemental targeted small-group supports.
- Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) being strengthened with:
 - Universal screenings
 - Centralized tracking of student intervention data
 - Increased coordination among interventionists, ESL teachers, and special educators.

School Committee Questions & Discussion Points

- Importance of understanding root causes behind variance in school performance.
- Need to ensure interventions (i.e., Bridge to Algebra, Excel Tutoring) are effective and positive experiences for educators, students and caregivers.
- Committee members emphasized:
 - Prioritizing responsiveness to Black student outcomes.
 - Ensuring staffing and resources align equitably with student need.
 - Presenting clearer historical trends when sharing school-level data.

Superintendent Murphy's closing points included:

- District is experiencing real progress, especially in growth measures.
- However, full success is defined by outcomes for historically underserved students.
- Leadership committed to:
 - Sustaining curriculum & instructional alignment
 - Strengthening educator effectiveness
 - Improving partnerships with families
 - Remaining transparent and accountable for progress.

7c. CPS District Plan: None

7d. Consent Agenda:

On a motion by Member Rachel, seconded by Member Weinstein, **#25-270, #25-271, #25-272, #25-273, #25-274, , and #25-276** were adopted on the following roll call vote: Member Rachel, YEA; Member Rojas, YEA; Member Weinstein, YEA; Vice Chair Hunter, YEA; Member Harding, YEA; Member Hudson, ABSENT; Mayor Simmons, YEA

#25-270 Recommendation: Approval of Cambridge Public Schools Middle School Pathway Exploration Policy (Second Reading) be adopted as follows: That the School Committee approve the Cambridge Public Schools Middle School Pathway Exploration Policy as detailed in the [attached document](#).

#25-271 Recommendation: Approval of Revisions to Rindge School of Technical Arts Program Recruitment, Admissions & Retention Policy Formerly Known as Rindge School of Technical Arts Program Admissions Policy (Second Reading) be adopted as follows: That the School Committee approve the Cambridge Public Schools Middle School Pathway Exploration Policy as detailed in the [attached document](#).

#25-272 Recommendation: Day & Residential Program Services not Available from the Cambridge School Department be adopted as follows: That the School Committee award contracts to the institutions on attached list in amounts not to exceed the shown rates, having been approved by the Operational Services Division of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, funds to be provided from the general fund and/or grant fund budget.

	#	Amount
Day Program Tuition Contracts:	1	\$88,360.83
Residential Program Tuition Contracts		
45 Day Program Contracts:		
Total		\$88,360.83

#25-273 Recommendation: Contract Award: BMP Transportation Inc (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.

BMP Transportation Inc, 37 School Street, Milford, MA for the period of July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026 in the amount of \$100,000.00.

#25-274 Recommendation: Contract Award: Malden Trans Inc. (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.

Malden Trans Inc, Box 516, Malden, MA for the period of July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026 in the amount of \$50,000.00.

#25-276 Recommendation: Contract Award: Shore Educational Collaborative (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.

Shore Educational Collaborative, 11 Revere Beach Parkway, Chelsea, MA for the period of July 1, 2025 to August 31, 2026 in the amount of \$35,000.00.

8. Non-Consent Agenda:

#25-275 Recommendation: Contract Award: Epoch Healthcare LLC (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.

Epoch Healthcare LLC, 1 Central Street, Suite #113, Norwood, MA for the period of July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026 in the amount of \$210,600.00.

A brief discussion followed **#25-275**.

Member Harding asked for additional details regarding the contract due to its high cost to the district. COO Smith and Superintendent Murphy shared details.

On a motion by Member Rachel, seconded by Member Harding, **#25-275 was** adopted on the following roll call vote: Member Rachel, YEA; Member Rojas, YEA; Member Weinstein, YEA; Vice Chair Hunter, YEA; Member Harding, PRESENT; Member Hudson, ABSENT; Mayor Simmons, YEA

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

#25-277 Policy Protecting Gender Nonconforming and Transgender Staff at CPS (Second Reading) – Member Rachel and Member Weinstein

Purpose

This policy should be interpreted consistently with the goals of becoming an antiracist and equitable district, and in accordance with the School Committee's Non-Discrimination on the Basis of Gender Identity Policy, as well as the City of Cambridge's Sanctuary City Resolution to "take active steps to ensure that transgender and gender diverse individuals have access to healthcare, housing, education, and employment without fear of discrimination."

Definitions

These definitions are provided not for the purpose of labeling employees, but rather to assist in understanding this policy.

Information: Data accumulated in the normal course of business for the purpose of administering an individual's employment with the district and consistent with normal business practices of employee record keeping as contemplated by the G.L. c. 149 §52C.

Gender Identity: A person's particular gender or non-gender, which may or may not correspond with the sex assigned at birth. A person's innate, deeply felt sense of being male, female, both, or neither. A person's gender identity may or may not match the sex they were assigned at birth.

Gender Expression: The way in which a person expresses gender through clothing, appearance, interests, and more.

Transgender: An umbrella term for a person whose gender identity is different than what they were assigned at birth.

Gender Nonconforming: An umbrella term for those who expand ideas of gender expression or gender identity.

Nonbinary: People who do not subscribe to the gender binary. They might exist between or beyond the man-woman binary. Some use the term exclusively, while others may use it as an umbrella term for identities like genderqueer, genderfluid, gender non-conforming, gender diverse, or gender expansive.

Scope

This policy pertains to the school district at large, both in the schools and also inclusive of the usage of electronic technology and electronic communication that occurs in the school as well as to the entire school system, including educators, school and district staff, students, caregivers, partner organizations and volunteers.

General Policy Statement

It is our policy to protect all employees from discrimination, including on the basis of gender identity and expression. In accordance with the School Committee's Non-Discrimination on the Basis of Gender Identity Policy, information about an employee's transgender status, assigned birth name and sex, name change for gender identity purposes, gender transition, medical information related to gender identity or other information of a similar nature, if such information exists, shall be maintained in a separate, confidential file and shall be kept confidential in accordance with applicable federal, state and local privacy laws and regulations. The fact that a staff member chooses to disclose their transgender status to staff or students does not authorize school staff to disclose this information, or other information as detailed above, including without limitation, medical information, about the staff member to others. Information that may reveal a staff member's transgender status to others will not be disclosed to others unless the school is legally required to do so, or unless the disclosure has been authorized in writing by the staff member.

In accordance with the School Committee's Non-Discrimination on the Basis of Gender Identity Policy, staff may access restrooms that correspond to the staff member's gender identity. All staff shall have access to all-gender/gender neutral, physically accessible restrooms at all times.

In accordance with the School Committee's Non-Discrimination on the Basis of Gender Identity Policy, every staff member has the right to be addressed by a name and pronouns that correspond to the staff member's gender identity. Regardless of whether a transgender or gender nonconforming staff member has legally changed their name or gender, the school system will allow such staff members to use a chosen name and gender pronouns that reflect their identity. The district will create and disseminate a protocol for name and gender changes, to be enacted within 10 business days of initiation by the staff member. It is expected that staff members will make reasonable efforts to consistently use colleagues' chosen names and pronouns. The employee's preferred name shall appear on all unofficial records (e.g. staff ID, classroom rosters, telephone directory, Student Information Systems, email and other electronic accounts and District-related applications). Official records, such as payroll and benefits, may require documentation demonstrating a legal name and gender change.

On a motion by Member Rachel, seconded by Member Weinstein, **#25-277** (Second Reading) was adopted on a on the following roll call vote: Member Rachel, YEA; Member Rojas, YEA; Member Weinstein, YEA; Vice Chair Hunter, YEA; Member Harding, YEA; Member Hudson, ABSENT; Mayor Simmons, YEA

11. Announcements:

- Members shared their positive reactions and appreciation for the recent for the Tobin Montessori and Darby Vassall opening celebration noting the importance of honoring Dr. Carolyn Turk with the naming in the schools' auditorium.
- **Member Rojas** highlighted VPA events for November/December and the near completion of the CRLS fall athletics.
- **Mayor Simmons** shared that Italian Heritage Month observance scheduled at City Hall the following day during lunchtime
- **Member Weinstein** highlighted upcoming school events.

12. Late Orders: None

13. Communications and Reports from City Officers: None

On a motion by Vice Chair Hunter, seconded by Member Rojas the meeting was adjourned on the following roll call vote: Member Rachel, YEA; Member Rojas, YEA; Member Weinstein, YEA; Vice Chair Hunter, YEA; Member Harding, YEA; Member Hudson, ABSENT; Mayor Simmons, YEA (8:35 p.m.)

Attest:



Katherine Christo
Executive Secretary to the School Committee