



CAMBRIDGE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

(Official Minutes)

Roundtable Meeting

September 8, 2020

Called for 6:00 p.m., held in and broadcast from the Dr. Henrietta S. Attles Meeting Room, Cambridge Rindge and Latin School, 459 Broadway, Cambridge, for the purpose of discussing the work of the Educator Collaboratives and the tools developed for educators for the launch of the 2020-21 school year. It is anticipated this meeting will end no later than 8:00 p.m.

The School Committee will also entertain a Motion to convene in Executive Session immediately following the Roundtable Meeting for the purpose of discussing strategy for collective bargaining (CEA Units A & B, CEA Unit C, CEA Unit D and CEA Unit E) as an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on bargaining strategy of the School Committee.

Members Present: Member Fantini, Member Rachel, Member Rojas, Member Weinstein, Member Wilson, Vice Chair Bowman, Mayor Siddiqui

Also Present: Dr. Salim, Superintendent of Schools
Dr. Turk, Deputy Superintendent of Schools

Mayor Siddiqui in the Chair

A quorum of the School Committee being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

The Chair read the call of the meeting and explained that this meeting is being televised, no votes will be taken and there will be no public comment.

The meeting proceeded to the first order of business with the following roll call for the purpose of a sound check: Member Fantini PRESENT; Member Rojas ABSENT; Member Rachel PRESENT; Member Weinstein PRESENT; Member Wilson PRESENT; Vice Chair Bowman PRESENT; Mayor Siddiqui PRESENT.

Mayor Siddiqui turned the floor over to Dr. Salim, who gave opening statements and then turned the meeting over to Dr. Turk. Dr. Turk expanded on the different opportunities that the educators have been able to explore and how belief, trust, support and collaboration all come together. It can be challenging at times and is always rewarding. Dr. Turk introduced the presenters that will be representing their teams.

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Dr. Turk summed up the first section of the presentation, explaining that the upcoming work currently in progress from the upper schools will be a different structure. The main difference is that the Department will be the collaborative rather than the Educators being the collaborators. There was a sneak peak of a few slides of what will be coming from the upper schools at a future presentation. Dr. Turk then turned the meeting over to the Chair and the floor was opened for questions.

Member Rachel asked about expanding collaboratives for Pre School, Dual Language and for OSS. Is there an OSS Educator Collaborative included in this presentation or is it separate? Since this

presentation is at the equality stage and not the equity stage; regarding math in the upper grades, should we be using interventionists to make sure all students are getting what they need?

- Ms. Gosselin answered that the SES program is separate. The Pre School/Special Start has already started and they are actively working toward solutions. The dual Language programs have recently started and they are in the process of figuring out the next steps.
- Ms. Zeigler spoke on the middle grades and math explaining what they are starting with.
- Ms. Ward spoke on the Young People's Project (YPP) they do have plans to continue the work began by Mr. Bob Moses which is continuing with his daughter.
- Ms. O'Donnell responded to interventionists as a first grade teacher, stating they have lesson plans and instructional materials for both remote and in person learning. They haven't built a cloning machine yet for interventionists and paraprofessionals.

Member Fantini stated that the articles about crisis management he has been reading is right in line with what he saw in the presentation tonight. How does this fit into the District Improvement Plan?

Member Weinstein asked how is the connecting happening between grades, and on the upper school levels between departments and where are students learning on Wednesdays?

- Ms. Herron-Smith responded that they made sure there was a connection, mainly using the Wednesdays to think about anti-racist and equity work. Students in all grades need to know what is going on in grades other than their own.
- Ms. Levine stated that students of color are tired of hearing the same redundant language over and over and the only way to eliminate that is to actually include the students in this work.
- Ms. Tingle added that at least the materials are no longer redundant, they are more complimentary than they used to be.
- Ms. Chung agreed with Ms. Tingle. Colleagues are communicating with each other much more.
- Mr. Batt stated that they have more cohesion now. They will be meeting weekly going forward.

Vice Chair Bowman asked to hear more about how the Collaborative tools can help parents, students and educators since some scholars will be learning remote and some will be learning in person.

- Ms. Engels responded that it depends on the documents being created for families. They are taking advantage of translations wholesale and having a consistent approach between schools will show a higher level of remote learning. Knowing that remote school will not look like in person school and figuring out how to use the differences is important.
- Ms. O'Donnell stated that getting rid of segregation issues is a beginning. We need to be more conscious of controlled choice schools and the effect it has as highly preferred and less preferred, causing negative issues that need to be addressed. There will be a family facing website with opportunities for families and students to connect with each other. Remote learning and equitable learning needs to be very similar to what the students in person are receiving.

Student Member Killian asked how students will be supported in the curriculum, how will students input be incorporated into what worked and what did not work in order to create better curriculum for all.

- Ms. Maws answered that they are not trying to fix anything and go back to normal, they are trying to create new ways for students to show that they are learning.
- Ms. Sailant stated that standard classes were not working for some students before Covid-19 so she will not pretend that things should go back to normal. She does feel comfortable collaborating with all educators, she's excited with this model because it works differently.

Member Wilson would like to know more about art and music, what are some of the focuses, considerations, and advice for these classes that have fallen to the back burner.

- Ms. Sailant answered on the advisory question stating that she wants to have a shared place that can be used by all educators across the district.
- Ms. Levine spoke on art and music and would love to collaborate with those specialist teachers, they have plenty of ideas for incorporating, but they have not received any clarity on how that can happen. The specialists want to have their own collaborations. She would love to do these collaborations on asynchronous Wednesdays.

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Dr. Turk stated that the VPA Department has asked to be part of the collaborations as well. Mayor Siddiqui stated that she will email her questions to Dr. Salim.

On the following roll call vote, the School Committee entertained a motion to convene in Executive Session for the purpose of discussing strategy for collective bargaining (CEA Units A&B, CEA Unit C, CEA Unit D and CEA Unit E) as an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on bargaining strategy of the School Committee: Member Fantini YEA; Member Rojas ABSENT; Member Rachel YEA; Member Weinstein YEA; Member Wilson YEA; Vice Chair Bowman YEA; Mayor Siddiqui YEA.

The open session was adjourned at 8:00 p.m. on the following roll call vote: Member Fantini YEA; Member Rojas ABSENT; Member Rachel YEA; Member Weinstein YEA; Member Wilson YEA; Vice Chair Bowman YEA; Mayor Siddiqui YEA.

Attest:



Doshia E. Beard
Executive Secretary to the
School Committee