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MEMBERS
ALFRED B. FANTINI
CAROLINE HUNTER
JOSÉ LUIS ROJAS
DAVID J. WEINSTEIN
AYESHA M. WILSON

-IN SCHOOL COMMITTEE-

December 19, 2023

WHEREAS: Alfred “Fred” B. Fantini is a lifelong resident of Cambridge, born at Otis General Hospital and the proud son of George and Mary “Marie” Fantini and the loving sibling of George, Irene, Donald, and twin brother, Allen. A member of St. Hedwig Parish, which served a largely Polish community, he was supported by a large extended family in Cambridge including his maternal grandparents, aunts, and uncles; and

WHEREAS: Fred Fantini is enormously proud of his early roots in East Cambridge, where he enjoyed living in several homes throughout the city on Otis Street, Leonard Ave, Porter Road, Lakeview Ave, Plymouth Street, and Canal Park; and

WHEREAS: Fred Fantini is a proud graduate of the Cambridge schools including Saint Hedwig, the Longfellow School, and Cambridge High and Latin High School. He received his undergraduate degree in Finance and Accounting from Bentley College and a Master’s degree in Management from Cambridge College earning a specialized graduate certificate in diversity; and

WHEREAS: Fred Fantini embraced a wide array of activities and experiences that Cambridge neighborhoods had to offer. In his youth, he could be found at Cambridge Common ice skating in the winter and playing stickball in the warmer months; jumping from his second-floor porch into massive snow banks with his twin brother, Allen; playing touch football in parking lots, bowling at Bowl Haven, enjoying a movie at Inman Square Theater, or biking to Friendly’s at Fresh Pond to enjoy an “Alful Alful”; and

WHEREAS: Fred Fantini has been diligent and industrious since his early childhood undertaking jobs such as helping at his father’s shop J&F Motors, snow shoveling neighborhood sidewalks, managing carriages at Lechmere Sales, as a laborer and proud “Bull Gang” member at the Boston Garden, and working political campaigns for family and friends; and

WHEREAS: He had a distinguished 35-year career for the Town of Arlington where he served as Deputy Treasurer, as well as President and Treasurer for SEIU Local 888. The skills that he honed in these roles served him well as a Cambridge School Committee Member who took the lead at the collective bargaining table from the management side; and

WHEREAS: Fred Fantini is the longest-tenured elected School Committee member in Cambridge history. First elected in 1981, Fred Fantini served in several roles over the years, including as the Committee’s Vice Chair from 2012 to 2017 and as Budget Subcommittee Co-Chair, and partnered with fifteen Mayors and seven Superintendents. Since 2012, Member Fantini has created and passed 377 School Committee Orders. Given his 40 years on the Committee, he has been instrumental in leading efforts in passing likely over one thousand Orders; and

WHEREAS: Fred Fantini has been resolute in his commitment that CPSD teachers and staff are paid well and have some of the best benefits of Massachusetts school systems. He was instrumental in helping to create unions for family liaisons, substitute teachers, and security personnel; and

WHEREAS: Member Fantini has been a steadfast advocate for high-quality career technical education, working with our Rindge School of Technical Arts as well as community partners to ensure students have access to both apprentice experiences and career opportunities upon graduation from high school; and

WHEREAS: Member Fantini was a founder of the Media Arts Studio which allows students to create media and utilize new technologies. Thanks to Member Fantini's innovative spirit, CPSD students have access to courses such as Digital film, Music and Sound Design, Media Journalism; and

WHEREAS: Fred Fantini is one of the founders of the City of Cambridge scholarship program. Established in 1993, the program provides financial assistance to high school seniors and residents who wish to pursue post-secondary education. Since its inception, over \$3.2 million in scholarships have been awarded; and

WHEREAS: Fred Fantini has been an unwavering proponent of CPSD's visual performing arts program ensuring that the department is well-funded and adequately staffed. From its early beginnings of providing free musical instruments to CPSD students to CRLS' award-winning musical productions, Fred Fantini can often be found among the enthusiastic audience members enjoying these performances; and

WHEREAS: Since his early tenure on the Committee, Fred Fantini has committed to creating a long-range plan for the CPSD sports program. His determination to provide Cambridge students with top-tier athletic opportunities resulted in its current CRLS offerings of 38 competitive athletic teams or club sports activities with no fees to participate. His commitment to Cambridge sports continues as a sponsor for the city's girls' softball teams, its Little League and Major League baseball teams; and

WHEREAS: Embracing that one of Cambridge's strengths is the diversity of its community, Fred Fantini was committed to the district's Spanish, Chinese, and Portuguese immersion programs and implementing the dual-language immersion model at the Amigos School; and

WHEREAS: Fred Fantini was instrumental in creating the Cambridge Public Schools Pathways for Paraprofessionals program, which was launched in the Fall of 2020. In partnership with Lesley University, the program serves as a critical pipeline for paraprofessionals to attend college programs which are often otherwise out of reach due to costs and time, and to diversify the district's teacher workforce with professionals already rooted in our community; and

WHEREAS: Member Fantini worked with Lesley University to establish an Early College program that allows Cambridge Rindge and Latin students the opportunity to fulfill certain high school credits at Lesley University and earn college credits; and

WHEREAS: In 2012, Fred Fantini was recognized with the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) after being nominated by fellow committee members for "advocacy and courage during times of great change" over what were then 30 years of public service. In 2023, he was recognized again by the MASC and was the recipient of the Distinguished Public Service Award; and

WHEREAS: Member Fantini has supported the budgeting of district funds for international travel for CRLS students, and has also personally provided his own funds to support the international travel for many students; and

WHEREAS: Member Fantini has supported the consistent budgeting of positions for certified teacher school librarians such that CPSD is one of the few districts that have certified teacher school librarians in every CPSD school; and

WHEREAS: Member Fantini's most notable impact can be attributed to his unwavering commitment and natural inclination to build partnerships and personal relationships with colleagues, teachers, principals, and staff. Fred can be seen visiting schools across the district daily and attending countless events to lend his support and

mentorship to principals and staff and more importantly, listening to their feedback on the critical issues facing Cambridge's school children; and

WHEREAS: Over the course of dozens of campaigns, Fred Fantini relished in knocking on the door of virtually every home in Cambridge, building connections with residents as well as developing a deep understanding about the richness of our community; now therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That the School Committee go on record thanking Fred Fantini for his forty years of service to the Cambridge Public Schools and lifelong dedication to the City of Cambridge, and be it further

RESOLVED: That the School Committee thank Fred Fantini for his immeasurable contributions within the School Committee's conference room and the ones far beyond its walls; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the School Committee will sorely miss his good humor, level-headed sensibility, strategic thinking, and the countless positive relationships he forged during his service to Cambridge Public Schools; and be it further

RESOLVED: That Fred Fantini receive the title of *Emeritus School Committee Member*, granting him lifetime admission to all CPSD athletic and arts events, and that the appropriate identification be created for this titled position; and be it further

RESOLVED: That a formal copy of this Resolution be prepared by the Executive Secretary to the School Committee be presented to Fred Fantini.

A true copy:



Attest:

Ariel B. Kennebrew

Executive Secretary to the Cambridge School Committee

Motion #23-297

cc:

Vice-Chair Rachel
Mayor Siddiqui
Member Hunter
Member Fantini
Member Rojas
Member Weinstein
Member Wilson
Superintendent