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C21-077

--In School Committee--
03/02/2021

Ordered:

Whereas: Effective communication with families and scholars is a priority of the Cambridge Public Schools and the School Committee, especially in the constantly evolving context of the COVID-19 pandemic; and

Whereas: While students receive many CPS communications via email, there is currently no framework for CPS to use text messaging as a way to regularly contact and update its student body; and

Whereas: Many scholars in 2021 are most efficiently reached and notified by text message, much more so than via email; and

Whereas: The Remind app is a simple and effective tool already being used by some CPS educators to send out text message updates and reminders to scholars; and

Whereas: In the absence of a centralized communication system that reaches the majority of the CPS student body, many scholars report that they receive conflicting information by word-of-mouth, and are not sure what information is accurate (such as changes to schedules and information about the expansion of in-person learning); and

Whereas: Not all caregivers are able to consistently communicate updates from CPS in a timely manner to their children, especially if they work long hours, are rarely at home, or cannot regularly check their emails, and some caregivers rely on their children for school-related information; and

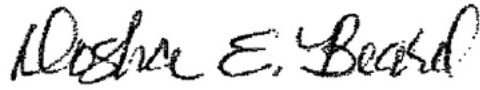
Whereas: The enhanced use of a district-wide student text messaging system, such as the Remind app, would align with and support the Superintendent's goal to elevate student voices, through "quarterly feedback opportunities, strengthened roles in decision-making, and asking how they want to be communicated with;" now therefore be it

Resolved: That the CRLS administration leverage student communication tools by providing scholars with the option to receive relevant school and district-wide updates through enhanced CPS use of a text messaging tool such as the Remind app; and be it further

Resolved: That the Superintendent work with upper school principals to explore the feasibility of implementing a similar system for upper school students; and be it further

Resolved: That the Superintendent and his cabinet explore the use of text messaging as an important way to collect further student data and receive student feedback.

A true copy:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Doshia E. Beard". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'D'.

Doshia E. Beard
Executive Secretary to the School Committee

C:
Member Weinstein
Mayor Siddiqui, Member Rachel, In Collaboration with Student Member Killian and Student Member Vera-DeGraff

Motion # 21-66