

Maria L. Baldwin School Council

85 Oxford Street, Cambridge, MA 02138

January 15, 2026

Baldwin School Council Minutes January 2026

7:30 - 8:45 a.m.

In-Person Meeting, Baldwin School Library

School Council Members in Attendance

Parent Members: Jackie Hayes, Matt Meyersohn, Jen Nigro, Eugenia Schraa Huh, Chunying Yue

School Staff Members: Heidi Cook, Ben Geiger, Elena Haro, Karin Kugel, Sara Oliveira, Susan Tiersch

Absent: Andrew Verardo, Corianne LaBounty

Also in attendance: Margot Iverson, Anna Shin

Agenda

- Information About the Budget Process
- Happenings in our school building next school year

There is an upcoming Community Budget Meeting in the district.

Meeting date: January 21

6:00 p.m. at the Cambridge Street Upper School

Transportation, childcare and dinner provided.

We started the meeting watching a segment of a video of the Cambridge Chief Financial Officer, Ivy Washington talking about the big picture of the budget. Start at the 31:50 minute mark of [the video](#).

Summary of what is in the CPS Budget

84% is our most important resource - staff salaries and benefits

5% - transportation

3% - facilities and energy

3% - out of district tuition

2% - instructional supplies

1% - technology

The school staffing structure is determined by three variables: base-level, enrollment, and student need

Base-level funding is the same for all schools

Enrollment funding is based on the number of students

Student Need funding is staffing based on student need

The SIP (School Improvement Funding) is the part of the budget that is determined by the principal to achieve the school's improvement goals. This is a very small

piece of the budget.

Baldwin 2026-2027 School Year

We currently have three sections of K - 4 and two sections of grade 5. There will be a third fifth grade classroom next year. We will have a new teacher in our building next year. Our Faculty Advisory Council (FAC) met earlier this month and asked about the space for this new classroom. Space is an issue. Space is dependent on whether Special Start is moved to an early childhood center. If Special Start does not have another home, we will have a space creativity issue. One of the spaces that potentially be impacted is the art room. We will never have art on a cart. We will need to do some creative thinking about how we will use the space in the building.

Prior to this school year, our classes have been 'capped' so as to make sure we have the correct number of students to fit into two 4th grade classrooms. We would have three third grade classrooms with about 17 students and then they would move into two fourth grade classrooms with 25 students. For this school year, we had too many rising 4th graders and had to open a third 4th grade class (the teacher contract states the maximum number of students in a classroom grades 1 - 8 is 25). The plan of the Superintendent is to have schools with three sections of each grade. By removing the cap we added more students to our school. The number of students added to our building will trigger us to look at our specialist allocation.

During the FAC meeting, our teachers were asking about the new section of fifth grade to proactively plan. Last year's addition of the third fourth grade class was done after the budget was passed and anything that needed to be done to accommodate that was taken out of the district contingency budget (building out a classroom, ordering new classroom furniture and materials, hiring a new teacher). Teachers hoped to make this year's additional classroom a more seamless transition. That will be the case this budgeting session. The new classroom is budgeted along with all that goes with that addition.

The district vision of an early childhood center was talked about last year.

School-based Budget

We are spending more on consumables, physical workbooks, \$20 - 25 K on curriculum materials and supplemental materials (students like workbooks)

EJ (Mr. Beucler) has a budget for technology, Ms. Kugel (librarian) has a budget, and Lilli (art) has a budget. Teachers get an allocation and have control of \$250. Kindergarten also has some funding for center materials.

Feedback on the music teacher in residence has been great. This was suggested at a Friends of Baldwin meeting to help with Ms. Liz's absence. Friends Kerry O'Connor did the legwork finding the teacher (Ms. Moreno). Friends paid for this music teacher for 5 days, and then added 5 additional days since they heard such good things. Ms. Moreno is now approved by the district human resources department and is now included in the substitute teacher pool. This is a great example of an idea being put into motion with wonderful collaboration and support. Thank you Friends of Baldwin!

[District Budget Projections & Development Presentation](#)

Next Meeting

Thursday, February 26

7:30 a.m.

Baldwin School Library

School council meetings follow Open Meeting Law. Meetings are open to all.

For morning meetings, students are always welcome to come to the library and may go to the cafeteria for breakfast at 8:00 or they may stay in the library until the bell rings at 8:30. Parents are welcome to come when they can, leave when they wish.

School Council Meeting Schedule 2025-2026

March 19 - evening virtual meeting

April 16 - 7:30 a.m.

May 14 - 7:30 a.m.

Documents:

Baldwin SIP Overview SY2025-2027 <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1YiL0uPQm2bsHpuUgNRYKsLoOvimMXq2S/view?usp=sharing>