

School Committee - Regular Meeting

November 21, 2023, 6:00 p.m.

Held in and broadcast from the Dr. Henrietta S. Attles Meeting Room, Cambridge Rindge, and Latin School, 459 Broadway, Cambridge. To sign up to call in using the ZOOM app on your computer or mobile device: visit www.cpsd.us/school_committee/virtual

Regular Meetings will be live-streamed at www.cpsd.us and broadcast on Cambridge Educational Access TV (CEATV) Channel 26, as usual.

A G E N D A

1. **Public Comment (3 minutes):**
2. **Student School Committee Report:**
3. **Presentation of Records for Approval:**
 - October 17, 2023, Regular Meeting
 - October 17, 2023, Special Meeting
4. **Reconsiderations:** None
5. **Unfinished Business/Calendar:**
 - #23-259 Report of the Special Education and Student Supports Subcommittee**
6. **Awaiting Reports:** None
7. **7a. Superintendent's Update:** CPS Partnership Assessment

7b. Presentations:

Superintendent Evaluation Process/Draft Goals & Focused Indicators.....Victoria L. Greer, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Schools

7c. CPS District Plan: None

7d. Consent Agenda:

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| #23-263 | Recommendation: Approval of the Appointment of the Assistant Superintendent of Student Services |
| #23-264 | Recommendation: Approval of Cambridge Public Schools Youth Mental Health First Aid Plan |
| #23-265 | Recommendation: Day and Residential Program Services Not Available from the Cambridge Public Schools |
| #23-266 | Recommendation: Contract Award: IHealth Labs, Inc.: COVID Self-Test Kits |

- #23-267 Recommendation: Contract Award: MAG Retail Holding dba McGovern Commercial HQ: Ford All-Electric Vehicle
- #23-268 Recommendation: Contract Award: Savvas Learning Company: Instructional Materials
- #23-269 Recommendation: Star Dance School, LLC: Dance Program
- #23-270 Contract Award: TeachTown: Subscription & Peripherals
- #23-271 Recommendation: Contract Award: CCS Presentation: Interactive Display Hardware
- #23-272 Recommendation: PJ Systems DBA Hi-Q: Computer Hardware
- #23-273 Recommendation: Grant Award: FY24 Circuit Breaker Allocation (SC24776)
- #23-274 Recommendation: Grant Award: FY24 Broad Institute Coding Clubs (SC24153)

8. Non-Consent Agenda:

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

#23-275 Report of the Curriculum and Achievement Subcommittee on October 11, 2023

#23-276 Report of the School Climate Subcommittee on October 12, 2023

#23-277 Report of the Buildings and Grounds Subcommittee on October 24, 2023

#23-278 Joint Motion by Member Fantini, Vice Chair Rachel, and Member Rojas

WHEREAS: The American Montessori Association Accreditation team recently recommended that we explore the possibility of a more traditional three-year Upper Elementary program. Currently, the Tobin School has been granted a variance for the non-traditional grouping of the Upper Elementary Program; and

WHEREAS: Our current model consists of a Children's House and Lower Elementary program where children spend three years in each program while in our Upper Elementary Program children only spend two years; and

WHEREAS: The Tobin Montessori School has a solid track record of preparing Cambridge Public School students academically and socially, thanks to strong leadership and committed staff; and

WHEREAS: Allowing students to remain in Upper Elementary for three years, as opposed to two, allows children to develop their leadership skills further, build deeper academic skills using the Montessori materials, and take on larger, long-term projects that would help them develop stronger executive functioning and long-term planning skills; and be it

RESOLVED: That the School Committee go on record to explore the recommendation of the accreditation team to extend the Upper Elementary Program to three years; and now therefore be it

RESOLVED: That the School Committee refer the matter to the Superintendent for further review of the recommendations from the Accreditation team to explore implications of such a change including but not limited to the budget impact, upper school enrollment, and feeder patterns; and be it further

RESOLVED: The Superintendent will provide a report and recommendation to the committee a plan of action for the possible next steps.

#23-279 Joint Motion by Vice Chair Rachel, Member Wilson, and Member Fantini

WHEREAS: Last year the [School Committee decided to rename](#) the Vassal Lane Upper School to honor Black Cantabridgian(s) rather than someone who enslaved others; and

WHEREAS: The Superintendent and Principal engaged the staff, students, and families at VLUS in a process to suggest potential names; and

WHEREAS: [Students shared their thoughts](#) about the qualities they wanted in an honoree, including someone who was a local leader, made a positive change, is a person of color, is inclusive, and humble; and

WHEREAS: Students presented numerous possibilities for school names without a specific recommendation; and

WHEREAS: Community members, particularly representatives from the Slave Legacy History Coalition and Cambridge Black History Project, reached out to the School Committee to suggest renaming the school after Darby Vassall; and

WHEREAS: After securing his liberty from enslavement with the Vassall family, Darby Vassall went on to be a civil rights and educational justice leader, petitioning the state legislature for funding to educate Black children; and

WHEREAS: Darby Vassall was outspoken about human rights his entire life, including as a six-year-old declining unpaid work for General George Washington and through his work founding the African Society and with the New England Anti-Slavery Society; and

WHEREAS: Students and staff at VLUS have been offended by attending and working in a school with the enslaver's name (Vassall); and

WHEREAS: Roughly a century after Darby Vassall's death, Carolyn L. Turk grew up close to Vassal Lane in Cambridge, in a predominantly Black neighborhood; and

WHEREAS: Carolyn L. Turk was in the first cohort of Cambridge Public School students to be educated in the building that became the Tobin Montessori/Vassal Lane Upper School; and

WHEREAS: Dr. Carolyn L. Turk went on to [dedicate her career](#) to students in Cambridge Public Schools, including as a teacher and Vice Principal at the Tobin School, and ultimately Deputy Superintendent of the district; and

WHEREAS: Cambridge has previously named schools after two civil rights leaders, namely Sandra Graham and Rosa Parks; now therefore be it

RESOLVED: That the Vassal Lane Upper School be renamed the Darby Turk Upper School; and be it further

RESOLVED: That students at the school will learn about the history behind their school's name; and be it further

RESOLVED: That formal copies of this resolution be prepared by the Executive Secretary to the School Committee to be presented to the Slave Legacy History Coalition and Dr. Carolyn L. Turk.

10. Resolutions (letters of congratulations, letters of condolences):

#23-280 Joint Motion by Member Weinstein and Member Fantini

WHEREAS: The entire Cambridge Public Schools family was deeply saddened to learn of the death of Michael R. Brennan on November 7, 2023; and

WHEREAS: Michael Brennan was a long-time West Cambridge Little Baseball League parent and coach, who loved the game of baseball and getting involved to help players become the best they can be; and

WHEREAS: Michael Brennan was deeply committed to many things in life, but his family and friends were his highest priority, particularly his wife Elizabeth and his son Patrick, a Cambridge Public Schools student; and

WHEREAS: Michael Brennan while traveled extensively and had made Cambridge his new home, he stayed closely connected to his Philadelphia area roots and the people there who shaped him. Intensely loyal, Mike managed to maintain his relationships across the miles because he always made time to go home to be with his friends and family; and

WHEREAS: Michael R. Brennan was born in 1967 in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania to the late Robert F. Brennan and Elizabeth M. (Balkonis), and was the beloved husband of Elizabeth R. Brennan (Maloney) of Cambridge, the loving and proud father of Patrick M. Brennan of Cambridge, the dear brother of Elizabeth Mills and her husband Richard of FL, Nancy DiMeo and her husband Ralph of NJ, and the late Robert M. Brennan, and the loving brother in law of Linda Brennan, and is also survived by many loving nieces, nephews, relatives and dear friends; and

WHEREAS: A proud season ticket holder, Michael Brennan spent many of his fall weekends in Philly, cheering on his beloved Eagles after tailgating with his friends; and

WHEREAS: Michael Brennan's Cambridge roots were set down in Paddy's, where he became affectionately known as "Philly Mike." There, he found true friendship, and it was also there that he met his loving wife of 20 years; and

WHEREAS: Michael Brennan's ultimate joy in life was his son Patrick. They shared a love of sports which led to their participation in the West Cambridge Little Baseball League, Michael Brennan enjoyed coaching the kids in Cambridge for many years and he held the other coaches in the highest esteem and was so proud to be a member of their community; and

WHEREAS: The Michael Brennan Scholarship Fund has been established to assist West Cambridge Little Baseball League players in need to ensure that baseball remains an option for them to enjoy; and

WHEREAS: Michael Brennan will be missed by his peers and colleagues at Bright Horizons Family Solutions where he worked for 20 years. He was dedicated to his profession and truly loved going to work every day. His work ethic was admirable, and he was committed to the growth of Bright Horizons; and

WHEREAS: Michael Brennan will sorely be missed by all whose lives he touched; now therefore be it

RESOLVED: That the Cambridge School Committee go on record extending its deepest sympathy to the family of Michael Brennan at this time of such personal loss; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the Executive Secretary be and hereby is requested to forward a suitably engrossed copy of this resolution to the Brennan family on behalf of the entire School Committee.

#23-281 Joint Motion by Mayor Siddiqui, Member Fantini, and Member Hunter

WHEREAS: It is with a heavy heart that we extend our condolences to Linda A. Emde's family; and

WHEREAS: Her love for learning led her to pursue a degree in education at Framingham State College; and

WHEREAS: After graduating, Linda became a full-time teacher in the Cambridge Public Schools, where she found joy in educating middle school students; and

WHEREAS: Linda was known as a dedicated educator, always striving to inspire her students to reach their full potential; and

WHEREAS: Linda's laughter will echo in the hearts of her family, her generosity knew no bounds, and her love was unconditional; now therefore be it

RESOLVED: That the School Committee formally go on record in expressing its deepest condolences to Linda Emde's family; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the Executive Secretary be and hereby is requested to forward a suitably engrossed copy of this resolution to Linda Emde's family on behalf of the entire School Committee, Superintendent, and Cambridge Public Schools.

11. Announcements:

12. Late Orders: None

13. Communications and Reports from City Officers: None