

School Committee - Regular Meeting

April 4, 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 98/99, as usual.

A G E N D A

1. Public Comment (3 minutes)

2. Student School Committee Report:

3. Presentation of Records for Approval:

- March 14, 2023 Special Meeting (FY24 Budget Presentation)
- March 14, 2023 Special Meeting (Charter Review)
- March 21, 2023 Regular Meeting
- March 21 2023 Special Meeting
- March 23, 2023 Budget Workshop
- March 24, 2023 Special Meeting
- March 28, 2023 Budget Workshop

4. Reconsiderations: None

5. Unfinished Business/Calendar: None

6. Awaiting Reports:

C22-311 Joint Motion by Member Weinstein and Mayor Siddiqui

WHEREAS: The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) is reviewing and revising bus service schedules; and

WHEREAS: Cambridge Public School District (CPSD) students and their families rely on public bus service to attend school and to participate in out-of-school time opportunities including extracurricular activities, sports, jobs, and internships; and

WHEREAS: CPSD does not provide school bus transportation to students in grades 9 to 12; and

WHEREAS: Proposed changes to MBTA bus routes serving the City of Cambridge include reductions and changes in routes and/or schedules that would greatly impact the ability of CPSD students to access school and other activities; and

WHEREAS: Many issues with the proposed route modifications and recommendations have been brought forward by the community, including:

- **Route 68** Harvard - Kendall / MIT (travels down Broadway between Kendall Sq. and Harvard Sq.). MBTA proposes reducing service to weekdays only 6:00 am- 9:00 am and 4:00 pm-7:00 pm every 30 minutes. Afterschool activities and sports need evening rush hour frequency service extended to 3:00 pm-8:00 pm;
- **Route 69** Harvard - Lechmere (travels down Cambridge St. between Lechmere and Harvard). MBTA proposes a reduction from every 15 mins to every 30 mins;

- **Route 83** (Rindge Ave to Central Sq. via Porter Sq.). MBTA proposes a reduction to every 30 minutes from the current 20 minutes. Current frequency should be maintained, or increased to every 15 minutes to make the bus usable between 3:00 pm and 8:00 pm;
- **Routes 69 and Route 83** are being cut drastically; the frequencies of both routes should be increased to account for the needs of students;
- **Route 78** (78 Arlmont Village - Harvard via Garden St., Concord Ave to Cambridge Highlands). MBTA proposes a reduction from every 25 minutes to every 60-90 minutes (6:00 am-1:00 am). Students on this line need more frequent service to access school and afterschool activities and sports need evening rush hour frequency service extended to 3:00 pm-8:00 pm. Cuts to Route 78 also reduce access to Neighborhood Nine, Cambridge Highlands, Concord Ave between Huron and Blanchard Rd, including assisted care and medical facilities; it is also the only connector between West Cambridge and Arlington;
- **Route 75** (The dedicated CRLS route on school mornings) provides essential transportation services for high school students to get to school on time and should be reinstated and additional dedicated CRLS routes considered for other areas of the City;
- **Routes throughout the City** need to be assessed in light of new and planned housing units including affordable housing and the potential future needs of students living in that housing; therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That the Superintendent and Mayor Siddiqui [send a letter](#) and forward this policy order along with emails from the community to representatives at the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) and the Cambridge state delegation on behalf of the entire School Committee, and be it further

RESOLVED: That this letter will detail the MBTA bus routes and schedules that are critical for the needs of CPSD students, with particular attention to those students and families who rely the most on MBTA busses; and be it further

RESOLVED: That CPSD will review student needs and the most recent MBTA proposals before submitting the letter and will add to or modify the list noted above if needed, and be it further

RESOLVED: The Cambridge School Committee goes on record in support of changes that improve access and in support of further changes to address the concerns of residents as summarized above, and be it further

RESOLVED: [That this letter](#) will be delivered to the MBTA, the state delegation, and the Governor-Elect Maura Healy as soon as possible with a request for a response

7. 7a. Superintendent’s Update: FY24 Budget Updates

7b. Presentations:

Office of Student Services: SEL & MTSSDr. Karen Grace
 Interim Assistant Superintendent of Student Services
 Kimberly Huffer
 Director of Social-Emotional Learning

Superintendent’s Formative Evaluation.....Victoria L. Greer, PhD
 Superintendent of Schools

7c. CPS District Plan: None

7d. Consent Agenda:

- #23-065** Recommendation: Contract Award: IDSC Holdings, LLC: Calibration Machine
- #23-066** Recommendation: Contract Award: Systematic Special Education Support LLC: Consulting Services
- #23-067** Recommendation: Contract Award: Imagine Learning: Instructional Materials & Professional Development
- #23-068** Recommendation: Contract Award: Cambridge College: Professional Development
- #23-069** Recommendation: Gifts/Miscellaneous Receipts

8. Non-Consent Agenda:

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

#23-070 Joint Motion by Member Fantini and Vice-Chair Rachel

WHEREAS: Travel opportunities and field trips provide significant learning opportunities for Cambridge Public School District (CPSD) students; and

WHEREAS: These exceptional learning opportunities should be available to students regardless of their financial ability to cover the costs of such trips; and

WHEREAS: Travel opportunities and field trips may be most convenient and preferable to take place outside of the school calendar year; therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That the School Committee direct the Superintendent to redraft CPSD Field Trip Policy to allow for reasonable financial support for overnight, out-of-state or out-of-country travel for our students, particularly those who would not otherwise be able to access such travel; and be it further

RESOLVED: That certain criteria be established to ensure that such trips are safe, equitable, and provide for significant learning experiences; and be it further

RESOLVED: That such travel opportunities and field trips may take place during the summer, outside of the school calendar year.

#23-071 Joint Motion By Member Weinstein, Vice Chair Rachel, and Member Fantini

WHEREAS: The Massachusetts State Legislature is considering passage of H.495/S.246, "An Act empowering students and schools to thrive" also known as "the Thrive Act" (see full text here: <https://malegislature.gov/Bills/193/HD3162> and here: <https://malegislature.gov/Bills/193/SD2067>); and

WHEREAS: The Thrive Act would end the use of MCAS scores as a graduation requirement; and

WHEREAS: The Thrive Act would establish a new process for identifying and supporting schools

"designated as in need of comprehensive support and improvement"; and

WHEREAS: The Thrive Act would maintain MCAS assessments and related reporting and accountability requirements to the extent mandated by federal law; and

WHEREAS: The use of MCAS scores as a graduation requirement has not catalyzed the closing of opportunity gaps in Massachusetts and the test can be a barrier to graduation for students who do not perform well on standardized tests despite their understanding of a subject; and

WHEREAS: The Thrive Act would establish a modified graduation requirement based on coursework rather than high-stakes standardized testing, and implement a new 'comprehensive support and improvement' system designed to empower local communities to give students the tools and resources they need to succeed; and

WHEREAS: The Thrive Act would establish a commission to study and make recommendations for a "more authentic and accurate system for assessing students, schools and school districts,"; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That the Cambridge School Committee supports H.495/S.246, “An Act empowering students and schools to thrive” also known as “the Thrive Act” and will send a copy of this motion to the Cambridge state delegation and Governor Healey.

#23-072 Joint Motion by the Communications and Community Relations Subcommittee: Co-Chairs David Weinstein and Fred Fantini and Member Ayesha Wilson

WHEREAS: School Councils play a critical and valued role in the Cambridge Public Schools by assisting school principals in planning for and implementing best practices that enhance the achievement of all students; and

WHEREAS: The School Committee seeks to support our schools and our School Council members by ensuring School Councils in CPSD:

- follow uniform policies and practices while being able to adopt practices that best serve each school community;
- are inclusive, diverse, and equitable spaces that reflect the diversity of our students, with representation from parents/guardians, caregivers, secondary-level students, teachers, and community members; and
- function as they should under state law and regulations and are supported to do so; and

WHEREAS: The School Committee is grateful for the work from March - June of 2021 of the School Council Working Group, which included a diverse group of parents/guardians/caregivers, students, family liaisons, teachers, and administrators, listed by name in the Handbook, in partnership with the then-newly formed CPSD Family Engagement Office, and is grateful for the subsequent review of the handbook by the CPSD administrative team and for the additional input and feedback of members of the CPSD community who reviewed draft versions of the Handbook; and

WHEREAS: The Communications and Community Relations Subcommittee of the School Committee has convened multiple meetings to review and revise proposed versions of the Handbook resulting from this process and is satisfied that the attached version is ready for full implementation, with regular review with the aim of continuous improvement; therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That the School Committee approves the attached [School Council Handbook](#) ; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the School Committee notes that at the time of this motion being submitted, current law related to extending certain state emergency accommodations, which, among other things, extends the provision allowing public bodies to continue holding meetings remotely without a quorum of the body physically present at a meeting location and to provide “adequate, alternative” access to remote meetings until March 31, 2023, has not yet been further extended, and therefore the language in this handbook will be adjusted to ensure compliance with Open Meeting Law as in effect of April 1, 2023, if this provision is not further extended.

#23-073 Joint Motion by Vice Chair Rachel, Member Fantini, and Member Rojas

WHEREAS: Hungry children struggle to learn and grow; and

WHEREAS: School meals provide a critical source of nutrition for students in our city, state, and across the country; and

WHEREAS: According to Project Bread, 20% of households in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts are food insecure, with Black, Latino, and multiracial families disproportionately impacted; and

WHEREAS: The federal government provided universal free meals through School Year 2021-22, and the Commonwealth continued school meals for all through School Year 2022-23; and

WHEREAS: Roughly 400,000 students in Massachusetts are in danger of going hungry if universal free schools are not continued; and

WHEREAS: The Cambridge Public Schools are committed to closing opportunity gaps; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That the School Committee strongly urges our state delegation to enact School Meals for All legislation – including H. 603, S. 261, and a budget that includes funding for universal free meals for School Year 2023-24 – and make such funding permanent; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the Executive Secretary to the School Committee forward copies of this resolution to each member of the state delegation on behalf of the entire School Committee.

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

#23-074 Joint Resolution by Vice-Chair Rachel and Member Fantini

WHEREAS: Kristen Joy Emack has been named a 2022-2023 John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellow in photography, one of the highest honors an American photographer can earn; and
WHEREAS: Kristen has been a beloved and integral staff member of the Cambridgeport School since 2000, as a Community Schools staff member, paraprofessional, and currently as the Family Liaison, and has lived in Cambridge for 26 years and raised two children here; and

WHEREAS: Kristen has two ongoing bodies of work that explore girlhood, kinship, and visibility, as well as a finished series that explores the theme of grief; and

WHEREAS: Kristen has won numerous awards and is also a MacDowell Fellow, a Mass Cultural Council Fellow, a Saint Botolph Fellow; and

WHEREAS: Kristen has accomplished this honor while working full time at Cambridgeport School, and modeled for students that pursuing passions outside of work is an important part of life; and

WHEREAS: Kristen has built positive and lasting relationships with countless children and families at the Cambridgeport School and works to ensure that all members of the community feel welcome, now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That the School Committee goes on record congratulating Kristen on her recognition as a Guggenheim Fellow and her many accomplishments in photography; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the Executive Secretary to the School Committee forwards suitably engrossed copies of this resolution to Kristen Joy Emack and the Cambridgeport School on behalf of the entire School Committee.

11. Late Orders: None

12. Communications and Reports from City Officers: None