

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

(Official Report)

Regular Meeting

April 4, 2017

Called for 6:00 PM in the Dr. Henrietta S. Attles Meeting Room, Cambridge Rindge and Latin School, 459 Broadway, Cambridge, for the purpose of discussing any and all business that may properly come before the Committee. The School Committee will vote on adoption of the FY2018 Proposed School Department Budget.

Members Present: Ms. Bowman, Ms. Dexter, Mr. Fantini, Mr. Harding (~~ABSENT~~), Ms. Kelly, Ms. Nolan and Mayor Simmons

Also Present: Student School Committee Members Mari Gashaw and Paul Sullivan (ABSENT)

Mayor Simmons in the Chair.

A quorum of the School Committee being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 6:05 PM

Mayor Simmons read the call of the meeting and informed everyone that there will be a capital update at the start of this meeting. She then read the School Committee Order C16-329 (on file in the School Committee office) and turned the meeting over to Mr. Louis DePasquale, City Manager, to present the Capital Update.

1. **Capital Update:** Presented by Mr. Louis DePasquale, City Manager; Ms. Lisa Peterson, Deputy City Manager and Mr. David Kale, Assistant City Manager for Fiscal Affairs.

The City Manager thanked Mayor Simmons for the opportunity to update the Committee on the scheduled framework for the 5 year contingency plan. He read a statement summarizing an overview of the capital budget (on file in the School Committee office) and explained that Ms. Peterson will go over the timetable. Mr. DePasquale explained that in fiscal year 2011, former Mayor Maher discussed the possibility of adding three new schools at an estimated cost of \$300 million. The City is prepared to honor the commitment; however, the cost has grown to a current estimated total cost of \$476 million. The King Open estimated cost is \$160 million, King Open/CSUS and Tobin estimated cost is \$220 million. The City 5 year plan is \$340 million, with \$211 million for school projects. He stated the "pay as you go" capital improvements for the other schools, i.e. boilers, security, playgrounds and other repairs is part of a \$5.9 million City plan. The City intends to work with the School Committee to make school improvements to existing buildings a priority.

Ms. Peterson gave specifics on the 2 major projects. She began with the King Open and Cambridge Street Upper school project, which is really a community complex that includes the Valenti branch library, Goldstar pool, CPS administration building and underground parking. It is a 266 thousand square foot facility that should be completed in June, 2019 and ready for occupancy by September, 2019. The pool will not be ready before 2020. They are looking at the former landfill area at the Tobin and Vassal Lane Upper School site and analyzing what it will take to be able to build there. The City is hoping the Tobin School will fit in this space and can be built on the Concord Avenue side. This will allow the students to remain at the existing Tobin School while they are building the new school. If we get approval and funding from MSBA, they will take the lead on designer selection. If we do not get the funding from MSBA, in 2018 we need to hire a team to do the feasibility study for us. By Sept. 2024, we will have an open facility at the Tobin. If the Tobin School is built on Concord Avenue, then the City would demolish the existing Tobin and rebuild the playing field.

Mayor Simmons asked for the pleasure of the Committee:

Ms. Nolan asked about the budget for the other school buildings that are not being rebuilt. Mr. Pasquale stated we don't have enough money to fix everything, but the two teams work together very well with Ms. Spinner and Mr. Maloney reporting to the capital committee. After the Tobin is completed, the City will decide on next steps to either rebuild or focus on existing buildings that need improvements.

Mr. Fantini thanked the City Manager and his team for their budgetary support and stated that Ms. Bowman is very active with the Buildings and Grounds Sub-Committee and suggested that she be involved with the capital committee.

Ms. Kelly stated she does not have any questions and is thankful for the update.

Mayor Simmons thanked everyone for coming, stating it is always great when both the City and School Committee work together. When Volpe is completed, there will be more families in the eastern part of Cambridge, hopefully this will all happen at the same time that the Tobin is completed.

Mr. Harding joined the meeting at 6:25 pm.

1a. Public Comment:

The following individuals were heard:

- Michael Bellomo, Allston Street, spoke in support of Motion #17-16 by Mr. Fantini and Mr. Harding, wants to know the status of the short term to long term plan of action to address the needs at the PAUS, how does the School Committee plan to align the budget with the PAUS improvement plan
- Emily Schatzoe, Fresh Pond, read a statement from retired teacher Chris Affleck in support of bringing restorative justice practices to the schools (on file in the School Committee office). Mr. Fantini motioned, Mr. Harding seconded to suspend the rules and let her finish the statement she was reading. She then spoke for herself, stating as a psychotherapist she is familiar with the work, she is excited about the link between a Harlem restorative justice high school and the Cambridge restorative program
- Dan Monahan, Lexington Ave, CEA President, spoke in support of motion by Ms. Kelly and Ms. Nolan #17-67 re MCAS 2.0, read a statement (on file in the School Committee office), stating they are not against assessments, they favor educating the whole child, he asked that they amend the motion to excuse those students that opt out
- Mary Elizabeth Cranton, Ellsworth Ave, CSUS math teacher and parent, spoke in favor of Ms. Kelly and Ms. Nolan's Motion #17-67 re MCAS 2.0, stating both options deserve respect and supports the proposed amendment

On a motion by Mr. Fantini, seconded by Mr. Harding, it was voted to close public comment.

2. Student School Committee Report:

Mari Gashaw reported that the parent teacher conferences were successful, mid terms are starting this week along with MCAS testing. She introduced her brother Mathias Mengistu, a third grader at the Peabody and an Early Bird Singer. He gave an informative presentation about his March 24, 2017 trip to Philadelphia, PA, and performing with the Early Bird singers at the National Conference for Kodaly Educators. They went to a museum, saw the Liberty Bell and George Washington's house, sang and relaxed at their hotel. He stated he learned many things, loved the food and recommends taking this trip again next year. Mayor Simmons added that they also sang at the airport and we should think about more opportunities for our students to go off campus.

Paul Sullivan was sick and therefore not in attendance.

3. Presentation of the Records for Approval:

On a motion by Mr. Fantini, seconded by Mr. Harding, on a voice vote, it was voted to accept the Minutes of the following meetings as presented:

- Special Meeting, March 16, 2017
- Regular Meeting March 21, 2017
- Special Meeting, March 21, 2017

4. Reconsiderations: None

5. Unfinished Business/Calendar: None

6. Awaiting Reports: None

7. Superintendent’s Agenda:

7a. Presentations: None

7b. Innovation Agenda:

7c. Consent Agenda:

Mr. Harding moved, seconded by Ms Kelly, to bring forward the Superintendent’s Consent Agenda for discussion and adoption. Ms. Kelly removed item **#17-61**. Ms. Nolan removed item **#17-63**. On the following roll call, items **#17-62** and **#17-64** were adopted: Mr. Fantini YEA; Mr. Harding YEA; Ms. Kelly YEA; Ms. Nolan YEA; Ms. Bowman YEA; Ms. Dexter YEA; Mayor Simmons YEA.

#17-62, Special Needs Contracts for Day and Residential Program Services not Available from the Cambridge School Department, that the School Committee award contracts to the institutions as detailed in the list in amounts not to exceed the shown rates, having been approved by the Operational Services Division of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, funds to be provided from the General Fund and/or Grant Fund Budget.

	<u># Active Contracts</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Day	1	\$39,215.55
Residential	0	0
45 Day Program	0	0
	<u>1</u>	<u>\$39,215.55</u>

#17-64 Grant Award, Approval of Gifts to Cambridge Public Schools, that the School Committee accept and approve the grant award in the amount and for the period indicated:

Nellie Mae Education Foundation, for the period April 4, 2017 to June 30, 2017, in the amount of \$10,000.00. Project/Grant SC17138.

Description: This grant will support tuition for qualified (by examination) CRLS juniors to take one of two college level English classes (ENG111 or ENG 112) for college credit. The classes are taught during the day at CRLS in collaboration with Bunker Hill Community College

8. Non-Consent Agenda:

Ms. Kelly moved, seconded by Mr. Harding, to bring forward item **#17-61** for discussion and adoption.

#17-61 Fiscal Year 2018 Recommended Budget, be adopted as follows: that the School Committee receive and approve the FY2018 General Fund Budget of the Cambridge Public Schools in the following Statutory Categories:

Salaries, Wages & Fringe Benefits	\$ 149,343,827.00
Other Ordinary Maintenance	\$ 32,013,569.00
Travel & Training	\$ 961,679.00
Extraordinary Expenditures	<u>\$ 727,370.00</u>
Total	\$ 183,046,445.00

Dr. Salim spoke on the memo he sent on Monday, April 3, 2017 re Adjustments to the FY 2017 Proposed Budget (on file in the School Committee office), which keeps the budget in balance. Dr. Salim highlighted the following changes:

Additional Reserve Teacher Position - \$70,000.00 for 6.0 FTEs (four teacher positions and two paraprofessional positions)

Upper School Summer Program - \$30,000.00 re summer programming for math at PAUS, there is an option to compliment it with DHSP to make it a full day program

Academic Support for Student Athletes - \$20,000 re tutoring, communications between teachers, coaches and parents about academic progress, and navigating the college application process

Communications - \$10,000.00 re marketing to promote CPS

Dr. Salim spoke about Revised Outcome Measures (on file in the School Committee office). All of the highlights will be incorporated into the adopted budget. He stated we have a good solid budget that will move us forward.

Mr. Harding thanked his co-chair for her wisdom and the time that she put into the budget. He also stated he is grateful to the Superintendent for his patience. He feels this document represents CPS values.

Mr. Fantini thanked the co-chairs, and asked for clarification about PAUS and communicating with the parents. Dr. Salim stated that communication is a hugely important part of understanding what the improvement plans are. Outcomes and Measures are pointed directly at PAUS. Mr. Fantini also asked for more information about restorative justice, stating the social emotional supports need explaining. Dr. Salim responded that restorative justice is very important work and that Ms. Chandra Banks has been doing a wonderful job of training other staff to be able to do this work also. Ms. Melanie Brazzo and Ms. Alice Cohen and Ms. Kim DeAndrade are working together with her to align everything under a common framework.

Ms. Dexter congratulated Dr. Salim for getting through his first budget process, and thanked the City Manager and his team, Ms. Spinner and her team and the Budget Co-Chairs. She spoke about what she found positive and also stated her hopes for next years' budget. Specifically, she has hopes for closing achievement gaps, equity, and RTI funding. Ms. Dexter stated there are too many chrome books. Teachers need more hands in the classroom, more work on school climate. She wants to expand the restorative justice office.

Ms. Bowman stated she would like more focus on the outcomes measures, stating what we have now is not really measureable. The achievement gaps still make her sick. She wants to push and take this a step further and speak to exactly what needs to be changed. We should be able to hold ourselves accountable at the end of the day. She expects more details in June on the achievement gap. Overall, she found the budget to be good. Entry plan work was done well; Dr. Salim has done the work and

listened to many voices. Ms. Bowman thanked him for his work and thanked all of the people who shared their input.

Ms. Nolan stated that she will support the budget, but she hopes there will be one clarification. She mentioned a pamphlet on Americas Languages that she will give to the Superintendent. She was very happy about the world language expansion and the 3 D's being incorporated into Human Resources and believes it will be a very positive experience. She mentioned a conference she attended in Atlanta - Race Matters. She agrees that we need to get to the next level on outcomes and measures. She agreed with Ms. Bowman, there is nothing to measure yet. We need to pay more attention to all learners, this year we focused on some, next year, hopefully we will focus on more students. Ms. Nolan read a substitute motion to the language on the budget regarding reserved positions.

Dr. Salim thanked everyone for their comments; he thanked his cabinet for all of their support, and gave a special thanks to the CFO, Ms. Claire Spinner and her team, Ms. Miranda Fasulo, Mr. Josh Collins and Ms. Tricia Rousseau.

Mayor Simmons stated this budget is very thorough; it is a well done product that she wants to see it used as a working document, to make sure it is effective. She is most proud of the acknowledgement of the students' voices, in particular on leveling up.

Mr. Fantini gave a speech mentioning the daily hard work of our teachers and the open discussions with the Members that helped moved the budget forward. He stated that because the Superintendent, in his entry plan, has focused on four goals: equity and access, support of the whole child, progress monitoring and innovation of partnerships, those themes will help us close the achievement gap. This budget will make Cambridge the best urban school system in the country; it is not just the school's budget but also the city's budget.

Ms. Kelly stated the tone was improved during this budget process and she thanked Dr. Salim and the Members for working so well together. She saw a lot of increased energy at the district level, and when she looked at the questions and the answers she was pleased with the issues on guidance and the upcoming program reviews. She stated that she will be sharing what she learned at the NSBA conference in Denver, Colorado regarding social/emotional learning.

Mr. Harding thanked his co-chair and the Members for their work. He stated that he has questions on restorative justice, and acknowledged there are at least 15 students that are trained in restorative justice, that Ms. Alice Cohen, Ms. Kim DeAndrade and Ms. Melanie Brazzo are on the team with Ms. Chandra Banks. He asked how many students were impacted by Restorative Justice last year, stating he wants clarity in order to know if it needs to become a department. Mr. Harding pointed out that there has been no proposal on restorative justice.

Dr. Turk responded that they are working on a proposal at this time. She provided titles to the names that have been mentioned, the positions are Program Leader for social/emotional learning and health education, Conflict Mediator, Welcoming Schools Coordinator and Lead teacher for social/emotional learning. To focus on the conflict mediator, she says we have the right number people to do the work. She does trainings. Out of 74 referrals, 39 mediation agreements were completed. Interns from Harvard University are also involved when requested. Other districts do not have this kind of resource.

Mr. Harding suggested bringing educational swat teams to the schools that need them. We need to figure out some language to make sure the folks at the Haggerty and PAUS have reserve teachers if needed. He would like clarity on what will be done at the HSEP? Mr. Harding stated he is excited about leveling up and 1:1 technology. He is hopeful about having resources for closing the achievement gap.

#17-63, Contract Award, that the School Committee award a contract to the following vendor for student transportation; funds to be provided from the General Fund. Procurement procedures for this contract have complied with Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Van Pool Transportation, P.O. Box 1000, Wilbraham, for the period July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2017, in the amount of \$40,500.00

Ms. Nolan asked about the timing of this contract, Ms. Spinner answered this particular student's contract was finalized later than usual due to some missed communications.

On the following roll call, **item #17-63** was adopted: Mr. Fantini YEA; Mr. Harding YEA; Ms. Kelly YEA; Ms. Nolan YEA; Ms. Bowman YEA; Ms. Dexter YEA; Mayor Simmons YEA.

On a motion by Ms. Kelly, seconded by Mr. Harding, on a voice vote, **item #17-61, Fiscal Year 2018 Recommended Budget**, was voted **as amended**, that the School Committee receive and approve the FY2018 General Fund Budget of the Cambridge Public Schools in the following Statutory Categories:

Salaries, Wages & Fringe Benefits	\$ 149,343,827.00
Other Ordinary Maintenance	\$ 32,013,569.00
Travel & Training	\$ 961,679.00
Extraordinary Expenditures	\$ 727,370.00
Total	\$ 183,046,445.00

On the following roll call, it was voted to adopt:

Salaries, Wages & Fringe Benefits	\$ 149,343,827.00
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Mr. Fantini YEA; Mr. Harding YEA; Ms. Kelly YEA; Ms. Nolan YEA; Ms. Bowman YEA; Ms. Dexter YEA; Mayor Simmons YEA.

Other Ordinary Maintenance	\$ 32,013,569.00
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Mr. Fantini YEA; Mr. Harding YEA; Ms. Kelly YEA; Ms. Nolan YEA; Ms. Bowman YEA; Ms. Dexter YEA; Mayor Simmons YEA.

Travel & Training	\$ 961,679.00
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Mr. Fantini YEA; Mr. Harding YEA; Ms. Kelly YEA; Ms. Nolan YEA; Ms. Bowman YEA; Ms. Dexter YEA; Mayor Simmons YEA.

Extraordinary Expenditures	\$ 727,370.00
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Mr. Fantini YEA; Mr. Harding YEA; Ms. Kelly YEA; Ms. Nolan YEA; Ms. Bowman YEA; Ms. Dexter YEA; Mayor Simmons YEA.

Total Budget	\$ 183,046,445.00
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Mr. Fantini YEA; Mr. Harding YEA; Ms. Kelly YEA; Ms. Nolan YEA; Ms. Bowman YEA; Ms. Dexter YEA; Mayor Simmons YEA.

Mayor Simmons entertained a motion to suspend the rules to take up the language in the budget. On a motion by Ms. Bowman, seconded by Mr. Harding, on a voice vote, it was voted to bring up the **two amendments** to the language in the budget document.

Mayor Simmons moved an amendment to the Budget, seconded by Ms. Nolan, System-wide Reserve Positions (Net Change 6.0 FTE): Reserve positions are budgeted in order to respond to unexpected enrollment requirements or other identified needs that may arise during the year. For SY 2017/18, 4.0 teacher FTE's and 2.0 paraprofessional FTEs are budgeted as a district level resource for school and program support. These positions, which are maintained as vacant until a need for additional staff is identified, are reserved for needs that may arise at any school (Elementary, Upper, Secondary schools), and for any program, including General Education, Special Education and English language learners.

Ms. Nolan moved an amendment, seconded by Ms. Dexter, that the reserve positions in the school budget be used for enrollment staff needs and for supporting schools in need, further specifically that

needs at the Haggerty School third grade cohort and PAUS math be assessed before the school year starts. And a report be provided to the School Committee and both school communities on the assessment.

It was moved by Mayor Simmons, seconded by Ms. Dexter to open the floor for discussion.

Ms. Dexter asked what criteria will be used to decide who gets the resources.

Dr. Salim answered that it is not uncommon for needs to arise at any school. The Administration is trying to think proactively of what these needs are, and having the funds in place before specific needs arise.

Mr. Harding stressed the importance of monitoring these needs. The fact that one single student has passed the algebra test for two years in a row makes him feel strongly that PAUS is a perfect candidate for these resources. The need for this support is now.

Ms. Bowman recommended separating Ms. Nolan's substitute motion from this area and bringing it back in a separate motion.

On a motion by Mr. Harding, seconded by Ms. Dexter, on a voice vote, on Mayor Simmons's motion to **amend the language of System-wide Reserve Positions (Net Change 6.0 FTE) was adopted as amended:** Reserve positions are budgeted in order to respond to unexpected enrollment requirements or other identified needs that may arise during the year. For SY 2017/18, 4.0 teacher FTE's and 2.0 paraprofessional FTEs are budgeted as a district level resource for school and program support. These positions, which are maintained as vacant until a need for additional staff is identified, are reserved for needs that may arise at any school (Elementary, Upper, Secondary schools), and for any program, including General Education, Special Education and English language learners.

Mr. Harding moved, seconded by Ms. Dexter with unanimous consent, on a voice vote, **Ms. Nolan withdrew her substitute motion**

On a motion by Mr. Fantini, seconded by Ms. Nolan, it was voted to suspend the Rules for the purpose of reconsideration of the foregoing vote. The Rules having been suspended for the purpose stated, a motion to reconsider the foregoing vote, hoping the same would not prevail, failed of adoption.

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

On a motion by Mr. Harding, seconded by Ms. Bowman, it was voted to bring the School Committee Agenda forward for discussion and adoption. Mr. Harding removed item **#17-65**. Ms. Nolan removed item **#17-66** and item **#17-67**

#17-65, Motion by Ms. Dexter, that whereas the School Committee is responsible for conducting an annual evaluation of the Superintendent of Schools, and
Whereas the current Superintendent joined the district on July 1, 2016,
Therefore be it resolved that the School Committee will complete the Superintendent's evaluation by September 12, 2017, and
Be it also resolved that the evaluation meeting will be scheduled for July 25, 2017, or for between September 5, 2017, and September 12, 2017, and that the vice-chair of the School Committee will determine and announce this date by June 6, 2017.

Ms. Dexter explained that it has been awhile since the Superintendent's evaluation has been discussed. Mr. Harding supports the motion, and asked what we are evaluating. She hopes we will have a clear set of metrics to evaluate the Superintendent.

Ms. Nolan supports it, but wants to change a few dates and the Superintendent Transition Sub-Committee already started this. She apologized for not speaking earlier on their progress. Dr. Salim will be doing a self evaluation in July. The Superintendent's evaluation will be in August. It is best to do it

after the Summer meeting and before the beginning of school. On a motion by Mr. Fantini, seconded by Mayor Simmons, on a voice vote, item **#17-65** was placed on the Calendar.

#17-66, Joint Motion by Mr. Harding and Ms. Kelly, that the Superintendent post the Cambridge Public Schools FY2018 Budget Guide at a Glance on the Cambridge Public School District website, communicate the Budget Guide's availability through social media and other communication channels regularly used by CPSD, and that print copies be made available at public buildings throughout Cambridge after the School Department's budget has been ratified by the School Committee and the City Council.

Ms. Kelly stated that the intent was to keep up with the times, and use technology. Print copies are important to some people. Who pays for Budget at a Glance?

Mr. Harding stated it is another way to promote CPS. We need to have another conversation about who exactly gets the documents. We are in a very competitive market for parents to find the right place for their children.

Ms. Nolan agrees it is a terrific document. 180 million is coming from all home-owners not just parents. She does not want it to stop being mailed to all non college households. She is fine with the technology part, but don't change the printable copies.

Mayor Simmons stated she thinks the City should send less, she mentioned the real estate industry. Ms. Kelly stated rather than go through a list of groups, let's just get people together and discuss it. Maybe we can imbed our document in one of the city's many documents. Ms. Kelly thought it was a wonderful idea.

Ms. Bowman added that she has not received this brochure and she has a 3 year old, so she wonders who is getting it.

Mr. Fantini motioned, Ms. Kelly seconded, on a voice vote, item **#17-66** was voted to be referred to the Budget Sub-Committee.

#17-67, Joint Motion by Ms. Nolan and Ms. Kelly, that whereas students will be taking the state standardized test, MCAS 2.0, and whereas the School Committee and district encourage all students to participate in the testing, and respect the rights of families to do what they believe is in the best interest of their own children, the School Committee acknowledges and supports parents and students who take the test and those who do not. Further, that the district communicates to principals not to pressure students who choose to opt-out, and ensure that families are informed that the choice to opt-out may create accountability consequences for their child's school and the district.

Ms. Kelly stated that the choice to opt out may cause accountability results. She added that the Superintendent did share a letter with the community regarding accountability consequences.

Ms. Nolan stated she reached out to DESE asking if it was a state law stating that students be treated with sensitivity. She read a portion of a letter from Deputy Commissioner Jeff Wilson, that stated in part, that they encourage all schools to treat students who do not take the test be treated with sensitivity.

Mr. Harding wants people to understand that when we fight testing across the board, while other districts prepare for testing, it can backfire. Unintended consequences need to be paramount in all minds. He also mentioned it should be a family decision, not a decision made by teachers. He would want to hear publicly what the Superintendent's perspective is on this issue.

Ms. Bowman wants more information. She can understand why some families want to opt out because some of these standardized tests are not culturally sensitive. What is the impact to the district?

Dr. Salim made a statement on how opting out will affect schools, stating if a school has below 90% participation it will automatically become a level three school. We need to keep a close eye on this, do the people know the accountability ratings? When we have level 3 schools, we are in danger of becoming a level 3 district. He read some letters, supporting all of the reasons we need test results. At the end of the day, we still need to be sensitive to students that opt out. While we as a leadership team do believe that they play a valuable role, we are still looking at the feedback. They are also looking at the classrooms to inform decisions.

Ms. Nolan emphasized the need to be clear and remember this motion states we encourage students to take the test and if students decide not to take the test, we support them.

Ms. Bowman supports the motion and the amendment. She wants the public to know the consequences and the impact to our most vulnerable students.

On a motion by Ms. Nolan, seconded by Mr. Harding, on a voice vote, the following amendment to **#17-67** was adopted: In addition that the Superintendent ensures that all schools have a plan for students opting-out that treats them with sensitivity.

On a motion by Ms. Nolan, seconded by Mr. Harding, on a voice vote, **#17-67** was adopted as amended: **#17-67, Joint Motion by Ms. Nolan and Ms. Kelly**, that whereas students will be taking the state standardized test, MCAS 2.0, and whereas the School Committee and district encourage all students to participate in the testing, and respect the rights of families to do what they believe is in the best interest of their own children, the School Committee acknowledges and supports parents and students who take the test and those who do not. Further, that the district communicates to principals not to pressure students who choose to opt-out, and ensure that families are informed that the choice to opt-out may create accountability consequences for their child's school and the district. In addition that the Superintendent ensures that all schools have a plan for students opting-out that threatens them with sensitivity.

#17-68, that the Report of the March 1, 2017 Sub-Committee on School Climate be accepted as presented.

Meeting of the School Climate Sub-Committee
School Committee Conference Room

Wednesday, March, 1, 2017
3:00 PM – 4:30 PM

Called for the purpose of reviewing student feedback about school climate issues at Cambridge Rindge and Latin High School. It is anticipated that this meeting will end by 4:30 PM

Members Present: Ms. Dexter, Chair; Ms. Bowman (ABSENT); Ms. Kelly

Also Present: Dr. Turk, Deputy Superintendent; Mr. Clark, Education Liaison to the Mayor (by remote participation); Dan Monahan, CEA President; Kester Messah-Hilla, Student Body President; and James Johnson, CRLS Senior

Ms. Dexter in the Chair.

A quorum of the Sub-Committee being present, Ms. Dexter called the meeting to order at 3:10 PM. Ms. Dexter read the call of the meeting and stated that a couple of weeks ago she met in the library with some CRLS students to go over climate issues. A handout of notes from that meeting was presented to aid the discussion.

There was a discussion on the lack of communication which involved the following concerns:

- There is no system in place for the student representatives to report back to the student body about what goes on during School Committee meetings
- The entire student body may not know that these positions exist
- A lot can be done to publicize these positions, i.e. during Community Meeting, DidYouKnow, the Register Forum

Ms. Kelly mentioned that student School Committee representatives were brought about in the 1970's. The student representatives usually keep School Committee Members up to date on what current events are happening in the school, also on occasion, policy issues have been brought to the table. She suggests that we should think of some ideas about how student government can communicate with the student body, beyond social media.

James Johnson suggested that once a week in Community Meeting something could be projected on the board regarding this issue.

Mr. Monahan stated that there have been times when students other than the student reps have interacted on controversial issues, two examples being feminine hygiene products and the dress code.

It was suggested to have a Know your School Committee Week. Ms. Dexter suggested School Committee have an assembly or make an introduction video to broadcast who they are and what they do. A history of the School Committee presented by the current student representatives Paul Sullivan and Mari Gashaw was a suggestion. Ms. Kelly agrees it is a good idea, and cautioned the need to be clear about the difference between Administrative roles and School Committee roles.

Dan Monahan will put together a presentation about how the Cambridge Education Association (CEA) functions and what the CEA role is.

It was mentioned that although many things are in place to support the student body, the students don't have access to or knowledge of what and where the supports are. Students have a lot to say and some ideas may lead to policy changes but the way to proceed is not clear.

Kester stated that he has been trying to bring some change in student government to welcome more voter participation by finding out who is voting and making student government more of a valued necessity. Ms. Kelly, in an effort to help students understand what a democracy is, how to petition for change and how to vote on bills, stated she is very agreeable to write out a chart on the 4 different branches of City, County, State and Federal government including their functions,

It was brought up that an annual Community Service Day, a day when students are released from classes during a regular school day and partner with different organizations and charities is in the planning stages. The plans are for student government to host club retreats with the deans being involved.

The following School Climate concerns were discussed:

- Teachers being better prepared for difficult conversations
- Teaching outside of the curriculum
- Making better use of CM
- Mandatory STARS class
- Students trained in Peer Leadership
- Have more X Blocks with student leading events and discussions
- The difference between School Council and School Committee
- There is a difference between non racist and anti racist, anti means taking action
- Introverted students need to have a way to comfortably express themselves
- Mr. Monahan stated clarification is needed for school level issues/problems verses School Committee level issues/problems
- Kester would like to have a mandatory Student Government and School Climate Sub-Committee meeting one day afterschool
- Facing hate in History classes

- The introduction of hatred in the elementary schools needs to be revisited in high school
- An assembly with elected officials in preparation for upcoming elections in June

On March 2, 2017, the first monthly X block will begin. X Blocks are designed to focus on difficult issues – the March 2nd X Block will center around all 5 incidents of negative graffiti. Mr. Maloney will be talking about what racist symbols mean. There will be a shared video and then a discussion will follow. Hopefully, this will be the first of many monthly X Blocks. At the end of the X block, they will look at what topic will be discussed next. Whatever the students put on their exit tickets plus the handout will govern next steps. Since the topics are hard, it is easier if they are brought up in a non confrontational manner. Teacher evaluations are filled out by some if not all students at the end of each year. As long as students' voices are communicated to the faculty and staff the School Climate purpose is being served.

Tony Clark joined the meeting by remote participation at 3:50 PM.

On the topic of competitiveness on GPA at CRLS the following issues were discussed:

- Is there a way to make it less severe
- Teaching styles are not as easy to govern
- There are many levels to this topic and the reasons are complicated
- Competiveness between departments/subjects
- Competiveness between schools
- Students should feel welcome to learn regardless of the grade
- This topic may be offered for an upcoming X Block
- The different views on state testing create stress and competitiveness

On a motion by Ms. Dexter, seconded by Ms. Kelly, the meeting adjourned at (4:15 PM)

Distributed Documents: (on file in the School Committee office)

- Notes from Feb. 2, 2016 mtg about School Climate with CRLS student leaders

Adjourned
Dosha Beard
Interim Executive Secretary to the School Committee

#17-69, that the Report of March 9, 2017 Sub-Committee on Buildings and Grounds be accepted as presented.

**Meeting of the Buildings & Grounds Sub-Committee
School Committee Conference Room**

**Date March 9, 2017
Time 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM**

Called for the purpose of reviewing feminine hygiene pilot program implementation, receive updates on Motion #16-266-Review of the current renovation project and five-year contingency planning regarding CPS capacity concerns and give feedback on CPSD leasing/rental policy.

Members Present: Ms Bowman, Chair; Mr Fantini, Ms Nolan

Also present: Ms Dexter, Mr Maloney, Chief Operating Officer, Mr Lane, Director of Facilities

A quorum of the Sub-Committee being present, Ms. Bowman called the meeting to order at 6:04 PM. Ms. Bowman read the call of the meeting and passed out an agenda.

Ms Bowman asked for updates about the feminine hygiene pilot program. Mr Lane said that they changed all of the feminine products machines from having a cost to free in CRLS. He says there are no issues with theft thus far. Ms Bowman asked when this pilot stage was added to all bathrooms. Mr Lane says that it started over February break.

Ms Nolan wondered what the process will be for learning of any concerns over the program. Mr Lane will be able to provide data at a future date.

Ms Bowman pointed out that Principal Smith has been engaged in this whole process.

Mr Maloney talked about potentially extending it to other schools. Ms Bowman wants a summary on the usage at the end of the year, and an announcement on which schools will be added for next fall.

Ms Bowman moved to discuss the renovation project and five-year contingency planning update. Wants to see how the process is moving forward.

Mr Maloney stated he wants to do smaller alterations to the Tobin Building. He said funding is a potential issue for this, he mentioned that it's being done in house.

Mr Lane passed out a project plan. They broke down costs for other schools to find cost projections for this project. It is broken down by the major costs of building such as HVAC, roof costs, bathroom renovations, elevator modernization projects and some other factors.

The second sheet is broken into a five year plan. The five year plan could potentially extend to about ten years due to costs. Mr Maloney mentioned that the five to ten year plan could be in addition to the seven year plan for the Tobin.

Mr Maloney suggested that many in the community consider the schools built in the 90s to be the new schools. Units are being replaced for the Haggerty and the Peabody. Mr Lane pointed out that after these maintenance projects are done, the high school will need maintenance, as they will become outdated.

Mr Maloney is interested in getting a painting program for the schools. Painting the schools is a very expensive task, it's difficult to paint during the school year and the odor is often an issue. It's difficult to have painters on staff. He relies heavily on summer help from college students. He's interested in getting into a five year replacement cycle for the paint jobs. Painting flooring and bathrooms are critical to the appearance of the building.

Ms Nolan stated she wants the chilling system to be more environmentally conscious in the Peabody and Haggerty schools. Mr Lane wants to do a complete HVAC replacement rather than a renovation. Mr Maloney said the distribution systems for the HVAC aren't at the end of their life and that they won't impact any environmental concerns

Ms Nolan asked about an EMG Inc study, Mr Maloney said it was done 8 years ago. The pricing is dated but the reports on the specific information will be relevant due to the facilities not changing dramatically. He said that the state did a review around the same time. The state was here this summer to do reports; they ranked the buildings on a scale of 1 to 4. The CPSD do not do well in these studies in general compared to other towns. The data is not available yet.

Ms Nolan mentioned that the Upton Street building is in the worst shape of all. Mr Maloney addressed some improvements that are being planned for the summer. He said that some of the older buildings were built to last, based on the architectural trends at the time. Some buildings are tired and were built at some bad architectural time periods. When the schools were built in the 60s and 70s Cambridge was a poor city so the schools were built in a budget minded manner.

Mr. Fantini asked if the documents presented have been given to the city. Mr Maloney answered that it has been but it is mostly conversational, nothing official.

Ms Nolan is concerned about safety issues that are listed on the document. She believes that these aren't issues that we can wait on. Mr Lane said that this is something that they are working on in house. Ms Nolan pointed out a few other safety issues that are listed and pointed out a need to prioritize these.

Ms Bowman wondered where we can invest and how to invest properly. The city needs to be a part of these conversations because they fund it.

Ms Nolan said she wants the repair and maintenance to be prioritized in these talks. We can't replace all of our buildings at once; she wants to jointly bring significant money to address the deferred maintenance. She wants to dedicate a workshop or roundtable in the summer to discuss the projections and the 5 year plan or beyond, wants to have a low medium and high growth projection.

Ms Bowman wants this to be a joint discussion with the city council. She's interested in a thoughtful and strategic plan with a vision. Growth projections indicate that we are going to need more space for schools in the immediate future, whether it is maintenance on older schools or a new building.

Mr. Maloney stated he believes the School Committee needs to personally convey this information to the city.

Ms Dexter pointed out that the entire town uses these schools and they aren't entirely for students.

Mr. Fantini left the meeting at 6:46

Ms Nolan said that there will be a need for a new elementary school and they must use exit data.

Mr. Maloney is concerned that there will be increased need and pressure for four year old kindergarten (junior kindergarten). Ms Nolan worries that our system is set up too much like a school district where there is immediately standardized testing which might not be attractive to parents; it might be negative for young students.

Mr. Maloney believes that eventually it will be a major issue for the School Committee. Ms Nolan pointed out that it's unusual to have a junior kindergarten, compared to other school districts. We don't have space to extend this program to four year olds.

Mr. Maloney talked about the Tobin timeline. Once it is figured out there are a lot of options that arise. Ms Nolan asked what a projection for the Tobin would be. Mr. Maloney is unsure. There are a lot of issues that residents will bring up when this is at the forefront. Ms Nolan said that there will be some backlash over losing fields. Ms Bowman's primary concern is what is best for the kids and wants to make that case to the public.

Ms Nolan wants to meet with a subcommittee from the City Council. Mr. Maloney suggested talking with the City Manager first. Ms Nolan doesn't want the Sub-Committee from the City Council to feel left out. Ms Bowman agreed and wants to collaborate to increase chances for results.

Ms Bowman passed over discussing CPSD leasing/rental policy feedback.

Ms Nolan motioned, Ms Bowman seconded to adjourn.
Meeting adjourned at 7:06 PM

Tyler W Stearns
Temporary Confidential Secretary to the School Committee

Documents Submitted > (on file in the School Committee office)

- Agenda
- CPSD Capital Project Plan

10. Resolutions:

#17-70, Motion by Mr. Fantini that the School Committee sends letters of congratulations to the CRLS students who won awards in the National Scholastics Art and Writing Awards where over 300,000 works of art and writing are judged. The following students were recognized for their excellent work:

Hanna Norris – National Gold Medal, National American Visions Medal, Regional Gold Key and Regional American Visions Award – Fashion

Maggie Thompson – National Silver Medal, Regional Gold Key – Photography

Callum Griffith – National Silver Medal, Regional Gold Key – Design

11. Announcements:

Ms. Dexter passed out the March 2017 Report from the Cambridge Community Foundation *Boomtown/Hometown* and announced the 11th annual Cambridge Science Festival will be on April 14-23, 2017; she mentioned some of the activities and passed out the program guide.

Mayor Simmons announced the Syracuse 8 will be at City Hall on April 18th, and that the City will honor Trailblazing Women: Mothers and Daughters Carrying on the Legacy, to be held on Wednesday April 12, 2017 at 5:45 pm in the Sullivan Chamber, they will be honoring Michele Scott and Renae Gray, Dr. Carolyn Turk and Muriel Turk, Joan Qualls Harris and Robin Harris, Sue Hyde and Jessi McGleughlin, Janet Moses and Maisha Moses

It was also announced that there will be a Town Hall meeting on LGBTQ on April 13, 2017 at 6:00 PM

Ms. Nolan announced that there will be a Cornell West fundraiser April 26th 6-8:30 pm at the Cambridge Street upper school around race and community.

12. Late Orders:

It was voted to adopt the following:

Motion by Mr. Fantini that the teachers associated with the National award winning students be noted with letters also. On a motion by Ms. Kelly, seconded by Mr. Harding, on a voice vote, it was voted to send letters of acknowledgement to the teachers.

Motion by Mr. Harding that a letter of congratulations be sent to Patrick Ewing for his new head coach position at Georgetown.

Motion by Mr. Harding that a letter of condolence be sent to Mr. Maloney on the loss of his sister Nanci.

Motion by Mayor Simmons that a letter of condolence be sent to Councilor Toomey on the loss of his aunt.

Motion by Ms. Nolan that a letter of condolence be sent to Ms. Ellen Varella on the loss of her husband Richard.

On a motion by Mr. Fantini, seconded by Ms. Bowman, on a voice vote, it was voted to adjourn the Regular Meeting (9:15 PM).

Dosha Beard
Interim Executive Secretary to the School Committee

Distributed Back-up Documents/Handouts: (copies on file in the School Committee office)

Statements and letters left at public comment by the following individuals:

- ✓ Christopher Anne Affleck
- ✓ Dan Monahan

Email communications received: None

The communications are on file in the Office of the Executive Secretary to the School Committee and can be viewed.