

**CAMBRIDGE  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

**(Official Minutes)**

**Regular Meeting**

**January 7, 2020**

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.

Members Present: Mayor Siddiqui, Vice-Chair Bowman, Mr. Fantini, Mr. Rojas, Ms. Weinstein, Ms. Wilson

Student School Committee Members: Sophia Green, Hersh Kanner

Also Present: Superintendent Salim, Ms. Spinner, Mr. Maloney, Ms. MacFarlane, Ms. Allen, Ms. MacDonald, Mr. Monahan

Mayor Siddiqui in the Chair. A quorum of the School Committee being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM. Mayor Siddiqui announced that she had inadvertently forgotten to thank Terry, the Interim Executive Secretary for the wonderful job putting the School Committee Inauguration together.

1. **Public Comment** – Mayor Siddiqui explained that citizens who wish to speak to the Committee during Public Comment may sign up to speak for 3 minutes on any item listed on the Agenda. The Mayor stated that a member of the press is taping the meeting.

There was no public comment.

On a motion by Mr. Fantini, seconded by Ms. Weinstein, public comment was closed.

2. **Student School Committee Member Report** – Mayor Siddiqui stated that the Student School Committee Members did a great job at last night's Inauguration as MC's. Mr. Kanner reported that finals are next week and that Student Government is continuing to draft the Internal Reporting Policy with the BSU and Feminism Club.

Ms. Green reported that next week is Falcon Pride week. We will have a skating night, spirit day, and a hot chocolate day that should be fun.

3. **Presentation of the Records**

- Regular Meeting, December 10, 2019
- Regular Meeting, December 17, 2019

On a Motion by Vice Chair Bowman, seconded by Ms. Wilson, on a voice vote, it was voted to accept the Minutes as presented.

4. **Reconsiderations** – None

5. **Unfinished Business/Calendar** None

6. **Awaiting Reports:**

Mayor Siddiqui stated that the Superintendent will have an update this month on **#19-178**. Superintendent Salim added that interviews have been conducted for the Lead Teacher for Advanced Learners position and he will have an update in the coming weeks.

**#19-178, Joint Motion by Ms. Nolan, Vice Chair Kelly and Mr. Fantini**

That whereas the district has a commitment to all learners; and  
Whereas the position of lead teacher for advanced learners has not had stable leadership for some time;  
and

Whereas the district has been reviewing protocols to address advanced learners needs; and  
Whereas at times circumstances are such that students' needs cannot be met in a classroom;

That the School Committee request, before the next school year begins, a report on recruitment efforts for the position, on supports for learners, including existing statistics on existing plans, and future updates to procedures, policies and protocols, including changing the existing system of relying on parents and guardians to identify students, which is inherently inequitable, and to ensure transparency and clarity, and under what circumstances a student may advance a grade (C19-205).

## **7. Superintendent's Agenda:**

On a Motion by Mr. Fantini seconded by Vice Chair Bowman the Superintendent's Agenda was brought forward.

### **7a. Presentation: FY20-21 Budget Process & Key Dates      Claire Spinner, CFO**

Mayor Siddiqui turned the meeting over to Superintendent Salim who stated that Ms. Spinner the Chief Financial Officer will give an overview of the FY20-21 budget process and key dates. The schedule for the budget was adopted by the School Committee and this is the first meeting of the budget process. Next week there will be a Budget Retreat.

Ms. Spinner provided a handout detailing an overview of the budget process and key dates (on file in the School Committee office). Ms. Spinner stated that the goal of tonight's presentation is to provide an overview and timeline. We want to create a more transparent and inclusive budget process. The CPS budget reflects ongoing investments in high quality, well resourced schools. Some of the costs that are funded each year are for small schools with small class sizes; school leadership; ample supports; strong arts, athletics and co-curricular programming; a large, highly qualified and well compensated teaching staff; investments in technology for students and staff; and a Controlled Choice student assignment system. She spoke about the District Plan being in its 3<sup>rd</sup> year and the roles and responsibilities in developing the annual budget. The School Committee Budget Sub-Committee, Budget Co-Chairs, the Superintendent, City Manager and City Council all collaborate and ultimately adopt the Budget. The School Department is 30% of the City's total Budget. The Budget development takes about 6 months to complete from planning and improvement activities, analysis, proposing, review and adoption.

Mayor Siddiqui asked the pleasure of the Committee. Ms. Bowman thanked the Administration for taking a step back and thinking of strategies to make the budget more transparent so the public understands.

Ms. Weinstein is glad to see the two community meetings on the schedule and have everyone participate in the discussions. Can there be a later date than in January? Superintendent Salim responded the community meetings will take place in tandem with our priority discussions with the schools. She was pleased to see the number of groups that will participate.

Ms. Wilson likes the collaborative approach so we hear from everyone, which is important.

Mr. Fantini added the budget calendar has added the Community Meetings to make it a better process than last year. Last year the budget was approved by only one vote by the City Council. The Mayor needs to sell the budget to the City Council. He asked the Superintendent if this is the last year of the 3 year District Plan. Superintendent Salim responded that we look at improvements in the district and what has been successful and the work that has been done. Mr. Fantini added we will have to work on your personal goals as well.

Mr. Rojas found the Presentation useful and interesting. It seems that the City Manager allocates revenue before the School Committee sees the proposed budget. What is the best way for the School Committee to help the Supt. and the City Manager? The Superintendent answered Ms. Spinner and Mr. Maloney and I look at the previous allocations and our needs and the targets we have set. The Committee has not had a specific role. The City Manager sets the expectation of what we need. Mr. Rojas clarified that it would be for the next budget session not this one. The Superintendent answered the community meetings will help with ideas and tools that will be helpful in the process for the next session. Mr. Rojas asked where the negotiations take place in the process. Ms. Spinner replied we have an estimate in the budget projections that will be in the budget and will be confidential. We have an open contract now with the CEA and won't know the settlement details before we do the budget. All other contracts are settled and we do know the particulars.

Ms. Bowman stated we have a lot of set costs. As we continue the process how does the district know if we will have additional revenue. What initiatives help our most needy kids? Equity is all our kids no matter their race they should be able to read by 3<sup>rd</sup> grade.

Ms. Wilson asked what impact the students can have on the budget. Ms. Spinner answered we are trying to think broadly including adding graphical content that could help students understand the process. We will put that in the mix.

Mr. Kanner added that the student voice is being prioritized and student government will work with students to make a list of suggestions for the budget.

Mayor Siddiqui agrees with Mr. Fantini that City Council needs to be communicating with the School Committee and will invite and encourage them to come to the community meetings.

**7b. CPS District Plan: None**

**7c. Superintendent's Consent Agenda:**

On a motion by Ms. Bowman, seconded by Ms. Weinstein to bring the Superintendent's Consent Agenda forward. On a voice vote the Superintendent's Consent Agenda was brought forward for discussion and adoption.

**#20-01** Recommendation: Day & Residential Program Services not available from CPSD.  
**Requires acceptance and approval from the School Committee**

**#20-02** Recommendation: Contract Award: Norfolk County Agricultural High School:  
SY19-20 Student Tuition  
**Requires acceptance and approval from the School Committee**

**#20-03** Recommendation: Contract Award: Essex Short Agricultural & Technical School:  
SY19-20 Student Tuition  
**Requires acceptance and approval from the School Committee**

**#20-04** Recommendation: Contract Award: NOVAtime Technology Inc.  
Software Maintenance for Time & Attendance System  
**Requires acceptance and approval from the School Committee**

Ms. Bowman Moved, seconded by Mr. Fantini to adopt all items on the Superintendent's Consent Agenda. On a roll call vote all items were adopted. Mr. Fantini (YEA), Mr. Rojas (YEA), Ms. Weinstein (YEA), Ms. Wilson (YEA), Mayor Siddiqui (YEA), Ms. Bowman (YEA).

**8. Non-Consent Agenda: None**

**9. School Committee Agenda: None**

**10. Resolutions: None**

**11. Announcements:** Mayor Siddiqui read an announcement that Ms. Susan Noonan-Forster passed away. Her wake will be on January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2020 at Keefe Funeral Home. Ms. Noonan-Forster was a teacher and past president of the CTA/CEA. There will be a private burial and a memorial service will be held later in the spring.

Mayor Siddiqui is very excited to be working with the School Committee Members.

Ms. Bowman stated that we closed out our last term with some challenges but I have spoken to every person here and the new Members have a great sense of optimism.

Ms. Weinstein added that most of us attended the Cambridge Public Schools or have children in the schools and that says something for the CPS.

**12. Late Orders: None**

**13. Communications from City Officials: None**

On a Motion by Mr. Fantini, seconded by Ms. Bowman, the Meeting adjourned at 7:00 PM.

**Documents on file in the School Committee office:**

- Agenda
- PowerPoint Presentation on the FY 2021 Budget Development: Process and Key Dates