

**CAMBRIDGE
SCHOOL COMMITTEE****(Official Minutes)****Regular Meeting****September 17, 2019**

Called for 6:00 p.m. 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: Ms. Bowman, Ms. Dexter, Mr. Fantini, Ms. Kelly, Mr. Kimbrough, Ms. Nolan,
Mayor McGovern

Also Present: Ms. Green, Mr. Kanner, Student School Committee Representatives

Mayor McGovern in the Chair

A quorum of the School Committee being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

1. Public Comment:

The following individuals were heard:

- Nina Nolan, Putnam Ave., re: **#19-239**, a parent of a 6th grader at PAUS, she understands that middle school is not an easy age group. The teachers at PAUS care about each individual child; there is a wonderful environment for student voice and strong self identity. There are improvements every year.
- Abdi Samata, Walden Square Rd, re **#19-239**, parent of 8th grader at PAUS, he wants the School Committee and the community to work together.
- Edward Bartholomew, Cottage St., re: **#19-239**, a parent that is happy with PAUS, his son has teachers that look like him which has been a huge benefit. His son struggled with math before PAUS and is doing better than ever now. The School Committee should reach out to the community.
- Rebecca Xiong, River St., re: **#19-239**, the recently publicized data on PAUS is very troubling, she supports the motion. Tutoring was suggested. Please look for deeper solutions, open discussions and collaboration.
- Donielle Buie, Memorial Drive, re: **#19-239**, stayed in Cambridge for the diversity and academic excellence. She and her husband are very concerned about math for children of color. Speaking of their combined experiences in education they want the same for their children, this is not acceptable.
- Diane Johnson, Montgomery Street, re: **#19-239**, praised RAUC and proposed that the teachers at RAUC mentor the teachers at PAUS and Julie Ward, math Coordinator, direct teacher to teacher support in the best way possibly to support educators.
- Erin Johnson, re: **#19-239**, parent of a 9th grader that came from PAUS, stated the data of past rates of the Algebra test are outdated. Her child did not pass the Algebra test, but will be entering geometry at CRLS.
- Marina Viola, Prince St., re **#19-239**, her child did not begin to like math until she entered PAUS. She is very happy with the environment at PAUS. Please listen to the needs and treat the school with the respect it deserves before condemning it.
- Kanku Kabongo, Hickory St., Allston, re **#19-240**, Since the time that BSU walked out, nothing has changed. This Committee should not respond to what they believe in. Are we teaching our students what it means to protest? What is being sacrificed? More conversation needs to happen.
- Kunjal Shah, Norfolk St., re **#19-239**, Family Liaison at PAUS, her son was not a good student as a 6th grader, but the nurturing community at PAUS helped him gain confidence to his fullest potential. He passed the Algebra II exam on the third day of high school, no thanks to CRLS, it

was because of his math teachers at PAUS over the summer by emails, encouragement and tutoring.

- Piotr Mitros, Michael St., re: **#19-239**, PAUS and the district have a math problem. The pipeline problem starts right here and solving it starts right here. Bob Moses talks about this in his book. We should talk about how to solve the issue.
- Lynette Sholl, Surrey St., **#19-239**, parent of children at PAUS, they suffered anxiety when their children got there. She doesn't know what the process of the curriculum for children to move up. She doesn't know how to interpret the data.

On a motion by Ms. Bowman, seconded by Ms Nolan, it was voted to close public comment. Mr. Fantini moved, seconded by Ms. Bowman, to suspend the rules to bring both **#19-239** and **#19-240** forward for discussion and adoption. On a voice vote, it was voted to suspend the rules for the reason stated.

#19-239, Motion by Ms. Nolan, whereas the School Committee has focused on providing support for schools in need; and Whereas Putnam Avenue Upper School (PAUS) has graduated a total of only 22 students in the last seven years who successfully completed Algebra in 8th grade, compared to an average of 132 students from the other Upper Schools - five times as many -who met that standard; That the district explore implementing an intensive tutoring program at PAUS this school year in math.

Discussion followed on **#19-239**.

Ms. Nolan read a statement on the intention of her motion. She is not wedded to only one solution; if not tutoring there are other options and she is open to them. She stated that it is not her role to go to any school and speak to a Principal, or Teacher, she shouldn't seek the opinions of people or the community, she feels her duty is to the entire district. This motion is only about math, it has nothing to do with any of the other wonderful things going on at PAUS. She hopes that the 2019 MCAS results show that the test scores have improved; we do know that Algebra has not gone up and this has been a troubling issue for a range of different students. She hopes the school is given the support it deserves in this specific area.

Dr. Salim stated to have conversations based on one data point is very concerning. He introduced some additional background and information to the Committee. Algebra 1 is one of the factors used to determine placements for students at CRLS in terms of math course work along with MCAS results and course grades. The staff and leadership team have looked at some of the root causes of why we are focused on this tonight. There were some staff changes last year, and there have been tutoring supports. The district and the staff have been looking at de-tracking math in CSUS and PAUS middle schools. It is not the responsibility of the 5 teachers that are teaching math at PAUS, it is everyone's responsibility. There have been supports during the summer, before and after school. There are optional opportunities with many choices that students and families can make to give our students more incentives to learn math. There are some policy level systemic issues that need to be ironed out also. Dr. Salim let it be known that there are members of the math curriculum and math leadership team here tonight to answer questions the Members may have.

Mayor McGovern stated that we have heard a lot of passion on both sides of the aisle regarding this issue. Both sides can be true. He asked that everyone try to be careful about how we phrase statements tonight, keep in mind the messages we send to the young people can be damaging. We will not necessarily be failures in the world if we are not good at math.

Ms. Bowman thanked the Mayor for his comments. We need to have cultural responsive comments and we need to stop objectifying our students of color. There are other cohorts that struggle and do not receive the same type of attention that Black and Brown students receive when it comes to math at PAUS. As a policy maker, the way this motion came to the Committee is not the correct way. This motion stirs a pot. She suggested making this motion a standing agenda item on a Sub-Committee. We need to have an informed conversation in the proper setting.

Vice Chair Kelly stated that we as Committee Members need to do a lot more listening and a lot less talking. We should not give a lecture or lengthy speech after the community comes forward and speaks from their hearts.

Committee Member Dexter thanked Dr. Salim for his explanation of what is happening at PAUS. She doesn't see different sides; she recognized it is awkward with so much emotion in the room. Math is an issue, statewide, district wide, and school wide. It is an issue. Period.

Mr. Kimbrough stated that what is unique about this issue is the racial attention paid to academic achievement in math. This school has been perceived negatively since it's inception. There are racist attacks against the leader of the school who is a person of color, almost 50% of PAUS teachers are TOC, and the school has been under attack from day one. Welcome to America. This feels like a uniquely American issue. It doesn't have to be specific to PAUS, all schools can benefit from whatever conversation that moves this problem forward to a solution.

Mr. Fantini thanked all of the speakers. He feels that there should be more collaboration between the middle schools. There are a lot of good things being said about PAUS, there needs to be more communication between all schools.

Mr. Kimbrough wanted to be clear about the fact that when he visited PAUS, in his opinion, the math teachers are on the cutting edge of teaching and he is not afraid to send his children to PAUS. Our White students as well need to recognize the importance of having educators of color. He appreciates the faculty.

Ms. Nolan would like an update, it is surprising to her that there is more information; it would have been very helpful to have had that data point. She is all about trying to provide support.

Dr. Salim spoke about presentations to the Committee. Updates have been communicated to the Committee in the form of MCAS updates, and in other ways, they have deliberately provided updates on the single data point on the enhanced math program and MCAS. There are additional supports at Putnam Ave. They are committed to continuous improvement and ambitious instruction under the leadership of Julie Ward.

Mayor McGovern mentioned the parent that gave her child the option of studying for MCAS or doing a portfolio. We go back and forth with supporting and boycotting MCAS. He offered to refer motion **#19-239** to Superintendent Salim.

Community Member Dexter says we are accountable to the community to look at data. We all want the same thing for our kids.

Ms. Bowman believes as the policy body of this organization, it is up to us to figure out how to achieve our goals. She reiterated that if it is really important, we need to have it as a standard agenda item on a Sub-Committee.

On a voice vote, six Members voting YEA, Mr. Kimbrough voting NAY, **#19-239** was referred to the Superintendent.

#19-240, Motion by Ms. Nolan, that whereas there are sometimes circumstances that lead students to not be in school; and
Whereas students across the country are organizing a strike on September 20, 2019 to ask for action on the climate crisis;
That the School Committee direct the Administration to ensure no punitive measures be taken against students who choose to participate.

Discussion followed on **#19-240**.

Ms. Nolan believes this motion is important enough for School Committee to take a stand on it. She also stated that she agrees that this motion is tricky. There are a lot of comments from parents in support of this motion. The issue is important enough that the School Committee should take a stand in support of this.

Dr. Salim stated that we support our students' first amendment rights; at the same time, he cautions the students on supporting any political message. A strike is considered civil disobedience, our approach is an unexcused absence, it is part of our system and he recommends not deviating from that. A call will go out to the parent saying your child is not in class. He would rather have our process remain constant.

Ms. Green stated that when the students walked out to fight sexual assault, she participated and was marked as unexcused. She feels it would be wrong to not do the same on the climate walk out. She cautions that School Committee be careful about picking and choosing what walkouts to support, they should do the same across the board.

Committee Member Dexter supports the motion adding they made the wrong decision on the sexual harassment walkout. Committee Member Dexter admits that she does not know everything, but she does not believe this walk out is civil disobedience.

Ms. Bowman asked the Superintendent if there are any restrictions on how many days students can be out of class. We may open the door for a diverse amount of reasons to not attend class. She worries about what it means to be part of an action and to recognize the consequences that go with that action. Going against policy for a bigger cause they believe in should not be separated from the consequences.

Dr. Salim responded that the attendance policy is 180 days of school and 990 hours of instructional time.

Mr. Kanner stated this body is on the verge of sending a message to students about what is an allowable protest and what isn't. When it happened in Sweden, they had to deal with the consequences. If our students take up the mantle, they should be prepared to deal with the consequences also.

Mayor McGovern asked Ms. Nolan to define punitive.

Ms. Nolan says we have always supported student activism. This motion is not just about CRLS, the elementary and middle schools are included also. Parents at all levels are thrilled about it. She was unable to define exactly what punitive means in this motion.

Mayor McGovern feels that we are backed into a corner with this motion. If we treat it differently than other walkouts, we are wrong. If we vote it up or down, it goes against us in the newspapers during election season. We have not done this for every other walk out, what would we do if there was a walkout on something we don't believe in – at the end of the day it would look like we don't support our students.

Committee Member Dexter stated that for technical clarification, students will be recorded with an unexcused absence for attending this walkout with or without the School Committees' support.

Mr. Fantini offered an amendment to include there will be an unexcused absence by the teacher. He does not view unexcused absence as punitive.

Mr. Kimbrough wants to know about a student that engages in this protest, when does the excused or unexcused absence turn into an AV? He does not believe each child will suffer the same consequence.

Dr. Salim stated that one sole absence does not mean much; many unexcused absences lead to Attendance Violations.

Mr. Kimbrough raised a question to end debate. On the following roll call vote, continued debate failed of adoption: Mr. Kimbrough YEA; Ms. Nolan NAY; Ms. Bowman YEA; Ms. Dexter NAY; Mr. Fantini NAY; Ms. Kelly YEA; May McGovern NAY.

Ms. Nolan offered an amendment to remove the language ***direct the Administration to ensure no punitive measures be taken against students who choose to participate***, and replace that language with ***go on record supporting***

On a voice vote, **#19-240** was adopted as amended.

#19-240, Motion by Ms. Nolan, that whereas there are sometimes circumstances that lead students to not be in school; and
Whereas students across the country are organizing a strike on September 20, 2019 to ask for action on the climate crisis;
That the School Committee ***go on record supporting*** students who choose to participate.

2. Student School Committee Report:

Mr. Kanner reported the following: The beginning of school has been pretty smooth. Student Government still does not have an Advisor and there is a discussion beginning about a revised detention policy between Principal Smith, members of the BSU and members of other student groups

Ms. Green stated they have been searching for an Advisor since the end of last semester; and it is concerning that we are two weeks into school without an Advisor, she wonders if there have been many people turning the position down.

Mr. Kimbrough asked for an update on the Student Government Advisor from Dr. Turk.

Dr. Turk does not have an update. She stated that this is the first she is hearing about it, she will be meeting with Principal Smith tomorrow and will be able to get an update.

The Mayor asked if the Advisor has to be a faculty member.

Ms. Allen stated typically Advisors are CRLS faculty members, but to her knowledge it is not limited to faculty.

Dr. Turk verified that it can be all staff.

3. Presentation of the Records for Approval:

On a motion by Mr. Fantini, seconded by Ms. Bowman, it was voted to accept the following Minutes as presented:

- Special Meeting, Superintendent Evaluation, August 22, 2019
- Regular Meeting, September 3, 2019

4. Reconsiderations: None

5. Unfinished Business/Calendar:

#19-201 Joint Motion by Ms. Nolan and Mr. Kimbrough, whereas the School Committee passed an order related to reviewing school building namesakes relation to the slave trade and whereas the School Committee also wishes to understand if any school buildings are named for people who sought to oppress women, now therefore the School Committee ask that the historical review of ties to slavery include a review of ties of namesakes to the oppression of women. (8-6-19, McGovern)

Discussion followed on **#19-201**.

Mr. Kimbrough stated it is worth having a conversation about reviewing the names of our schools; also to look at what the standards are that set the names of our schools. The struggle for Black women in American is real; the double jeopardy against Black women in this country is real. He does not want this motion to suggest there is higher value of other people over Black women. He just wants to end the current culture of perpetual sexism.

Ms. Bowman asked the motion makers to withdraw motion **#19-201**.

The Chair spoke on the policy of renaming the streets and municipal buildings. The School Committee does not have the authority to direct the Historical Commission or the City Manager to do anything, however it can be brought before the Mayors office and he can direct them to take action.

Ms. Nolan agrees with Mr. Kimbrough, and shares his concern for the city as a whole of overt sexism of all women.

Mr. Kimbrough takes ownership of the motion stating that it could have been worded better, he apologized about that.

Mr. Kimbrough moved, seconded by Ms. Nolan requesting unanimous consent to remove **#19-201** from the unfinished business section of the Agenda. On a voice vote of unanimous consent, **#19-201** was withdrawn and placed on file.

6. Awaiting Reports:

C19-064 That the following be amended and referred to the Superintendent:

Whereas the School Committee worked to raise the level of instruction for all students through the Level Up initiative at CRLS; and

Whereas a recent Globe project on valedictorians documented a sobering and critically important question of whether high schools are preparing students for success; and

Whereas the recent report The Opportunity Myth by The New Teachers Project found that despite 71% of students in a national representative sample of audited classes met classroom expectations and succeeded on assignments, only 17% of those assignments were on grade level when evaluated; and

Whereas both the Valedictorian Project and The New Teachers Project identified the need for high expectations and intentional focus on rigorous curriculum, instruction and assignments as key to delivering on the promise of success in college and life; and

Whereas there were gaps by racial subgroups in performance on common assessment; and

Whereas nearly 1 in 3 CRLS students indicated that teachers do not have very high expectations of them; Therefore, the School Committee directs the Administration to evaluate the Level Up ELA classes, to ensure that the initiative is as successful as possible. The School Committee requests the Superintendent submits a report no later than the August 6, 2019 Regular Summer Meeting.

Discussion followed on **C19-064**.

Mr. Kimbrough understands the concerns of the English curriculum and the need for a better system of preparedness before being promoted to the next grade. He is concerned that we are not giving the kids what they need even though they graduate. The problem is that they attend college and cannot pass college level courses. He would like to hear from the Administration on where they stand on this. Mr. Kimbrough asked for thoughts on a policy on how to address social promotion in the future.

Dr. Salim stated he hesitates to dive into this issue, it is too meaty. He doesn't think we can have a robust conversation about learning tonight. The assessment was provided from Bunker Hill as requested. More material needs to be submitted in order to have a deeper conversation about college preparedness.

Ms. Nolan shares Mr. Kimbrough's view and she still wants an independent outside review, she feels we should move this to another venue for full engagement.

Because the assessment was provided from Bunker Hill as requested, on a voice vote, it was agreed to remove **C19-064** from Awaiting Reports.

C19-181 That the following be adopted as amended:

That whereas bottled water is environmentally devastating, and
Whereas bottled water costs approximately 50 times more than city water, and
Whereas Cambridge's water routinely exceeds health and safety standards, and

Whereas the school district and the city have sought to reduce waste and encourage city water consumption over bottled water, and
Whereas the City Council passed an order recognizing this issue on January 28, 2019, be it ordered
That the district establish a policy that no district funds, unless necessary, may be used to purchase bottled water, and
That this policy be referred to the Superintendent for a report by the summer meeting, and
That this policy be communicated to all schools.

Discussion followed on **C19-181**.

Ms. Nolan stated she has been visiting many school events and even though district funds may not be used for the purchases, there is bottled water all over the place. She wonders if the message went out that we need to cut back on bottled water.

Dr. Salim mentioned only in extreme cases, like overnight field trips, etc. is bottled water a standard; they have increased the number of water dispensers and bubblers in our schools which makes the motion more feasible.

On a voice vote, it was agreed to remove **C19-181** from Awaiting Reports.

#19-205, 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. **#19-205** was passed over.

C19-210 That the following be adopted as amended:

Due to legislation passed by the State Legislature that requests early screenings of students to identify if they have dyslexia,
That the Superintendent take appropriate steps to ensure that students are screened and that students who are identified receive appropriate and timely supports and that training and support for teachers is in place. Superintendent will report back on how the district will comply with the present law by the Regular meeting in November.

Discussion followed on **C19-210**.

Mayor McGovern stated a lot has been going on while this issue sits on Awaiting Reports. Dr. Morgan, parents and others are still trying to address this issue while they continue to wait for State regulations. This coming Monday, the City Council will be voting on it, if and when it passes, City Hall will be lit up in red for Dyslexia Awareness Day.

7. Superintendent's Agenda:

Moved by Ms. Dexter, seconded by Vice Chair Kelly, on a voice vote, the Superintendent's Agenda was brought forward for discussion and adoption.

Dr. Salim made opening remarks on the presentation section of the Agenda and then turned the microphone over to Ms. Barbara Allen, Executive Director of Human Resources. The PowerPoint presentation is on file in the School Committee office and is also online. The presentation can be viewed on the video of this Regular Meeting.

7a. Presentations: Dynamic Diversity Development.....Barbara Allen,
Executive Director of Human Resources

Ramon DeJesus, Program Manager for
Diversity Development

At the end of the presentation, the Mayor opened the floor for questions.

Ms. Nolan asked for data on the retention for teachers of color (TOC).

Ms. Allen stated that they have not had a chance to look at the analysis the data yet, she will share the data during the middle of the year.

Ms. Nolan also wanted to know about the pool of teachers,

Mr. De Jesus answered that the pool is akin to the cultivating of relationships and looking at the pool as inviting a group of people into your home.

Dr. Salim noted that the district has had anti-bias training, presentations on the importance around racial equity training and social justice training. In addition to the diversity progress in this district, Cambridge is seen as a model for our peers across Massachusetts. Mr. De Jesus has been invited to DESE to be part of the State's hiring practices.

Committee Member Dexter thanked them for the presentation and asked what the long term goal is. Mr. De Jesus shies does not find them beneficial. He is more concerned with the fact that students can count on one hand how many TOC they have had. Or they never had a teacher of color.

Mr. Kimbrough is curious if we can share data within the label of the TOC as people who identify as Latinx, African American or Haitian and Asian American.

Mr. De Jesus informed the assembly that the data dashboard has not been updated to accommodate this much specificity. He agrees that TOC doesn't get it. If you mean black, say black. The data dashboard will be updated this Fall to better reflect the categories we have and eliminate some of the grey area in the term TOC.

Ms. Bowman thanked them both for their hard work. She would like the district to focus on the fact that the schools that met the 30% goal; have principals that are people of color. What does this say about the schools that do not have leaders of color? What does that tell us in terms of hiring practice?

Mr. Fantini asked if we hire 100 teachers a year, giving us a 10% turnover per year, he is curious as to how that compares with other districts.

Ms. Allen stated she does not analyze other districts, our turnovers are not based on unhappiness. We are at 1300 teachers.

Mr. Fantini asked about those with bachelors degrees, how long before the masters is needed.

It was answered that within five years of receiving their license is the limit.

Vice Chair Kelly let it be known that only 5 percent of the Superintendents in the state of Massachusetts are people of color.

Mr. Fantini gave kudos to the Superintendent for doing a great job.
The Mayor asked about the anti bias training for the hiring committee.

Ms Allen stated that they are $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way to completion.

Ms. Bowman thanked the Superintendent for putting the structures in place to bring the district to this point.

7b. CPS District Plan: None

7c. Consent Agenda:

Ms. Nolan removed **#19-230**. On the following roll call, items **19-225** through **19-229** and **19-231** through **19-234** were adopted. Mr. Kimbrough YEA; Ms. Nolan YEA; Ms. Bowman YEA; Ms. Dexter YEA; Mr. Fantini YEA; Ms. Kelly YEA; Mayor McGovern YEA.

#19-225, 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 Budget and/or Grant Fund Budget.

	<u>#</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Day Program Tuition Contracts	3	\$230,966.31
Residential Program Tuition Contracts		
45 Day Program Contracts		
Total	3	\$230,966.31

19-226, Contract Award that the School Committee award a contract to the following vendor for professional development, funds to be provided from the General Fund Budget, Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts having been complied with:

Everfi, Inc, 3299 K Street NW, 4th Floor, Washington, DC for the period
October 1, 2019 to September 30, 2020, in the amount of \$20,000.00;
October 1, 2020 to September 30, 2021, in the amount of \$20,000.00;
October 1, 2021 to September 30, 2022, in the amount of \$20,000.00.
Total Contract: \$60,000.00

19-227, Contract Award that the School Committee award a contract to the following vendor for educational services, funds to be provided from the General Fund, Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts having been complied with:

Tutoring Plus of Cambridge, Inc., 225 Windsor Street, Cambridge, for the period July 1, 2019 to August 31, 2020, in the amount of \$30,000.00.

19-228, Contract Award that the School Committee award a contract to the following vendor for Educational Services, funds to be provided from the General Fund Budget, Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts having been complied with:

Cambridge Housing Authority, 362 Green Street, Cambridge, for the period
July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020, in the amount of \$54,325.00.

19-229, Contract Award that the School Committee award a contract to following vendor for fresh meat products for Food Services, funds to be provided from the Revolving Fund Budget, Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts having been complied with:

Somerville Live Poultry, Inc., DBA Mayflower Poultry Co., 621 Cambridge Street, Cambridge,
for the period September 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020, in the amount of \$79,875.50
for the period July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021 in the amount of \$85,466.79
for the period July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022 in the amount of \$91,449.47.
Total Amount \$256,791.76.

19-231, Contract Award that the School Committee award a contract to the following vendor for Student Transportation, funds to be provided from the General Fund, Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts having been complied with:

Van Pool Transportation, P.O. Box 1000, Wilbraham, for the period, July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020, in the amount of \$59,925.00.

19-232, Grant Award, that the School Committee accept and approve the grant award in the amount and for the period indicated:

FY20 Title III: English Language Acquisition for Limited English Proficient (LEP) Students, for the period September 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020, in the amount of \$79,603.00. Project/Grant SC20737

Description: This grant will fund three five-week supplemental summer enrichment programs for English Language Learners (ELL's) at the Graham and Parks, Kennedy/Longfellow, and Vassal Lane Upper School. The programs will improve educational performance by assisting these students to learn English and meet State academic content standards. It will also provide support for Parent ESL classes, field trips for the summer programs, and registration for Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) teachers to attend the annual MATSOL Conference. ELL's at a private school who are assessed for eligibility will receive tutoring services on a proportional basis.

19-233, Grant Award, that the School Committee accept and approve the grant award in the amount and for the period indicated:

Emergency Impact Aid for Homeless Students Project/Grant SC20155, in the amount of \$950.00 for the period September 1, 2019 to August 31, 2020.

Description: This grant will be used to provide referral services as well as winter clothing and school supplies for students displaced to our district in 2017-2018 from Puerto Rico and the USVI as a result of hurricanes.

19-234, Grant Award, that the School Committee accept and approve the grant award in the amount and for the period indicated:

FY20 McKinney Vento Homeless Students, for the period September 1, 2019 to August 31, 2020, in the amount of \$15,000.00. Project/Grant SC20707.

Description: This grant provides referral services for homeless children and their families, through the services of two Homeless Outreach Workers who connect families with resources and services throughout the school year and summer. It also provides scholarships for summer camps, training by Transition House on domestic violence issues for school and community staff, and conference attendance by the district's Homeless Liaison. Title I includes an additional \$10,000 for supplies and basic necessities for homeless students, and the Emergency Impact Aid Grant will also contribute resources (\$950).

8. Non-Consent Agenda:

19-230, Contract Award that the School Committee award a contract to the following vendor for professional development, funds to be provided from the General Fund Budget, Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts having been complied with:

Teaching & Learning Alliance, 800 W. Cummings Park, Suite 5900, Woburn, for the period September 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020, in the amount of \$64,900.00.

Discussion followed on **#19-230**

Ms. Nolan wants to know how the evaluations and reviews of these programs will happen. She is hoping that at some point as the Administration sees the evaluations they will share them with the School Committee

Dr. Salim answered that for part of these phonics programs, the in class student assessments used to inform the instruction will be used, they will also look for lagging indicators like performance in MCAS and other indicators, i.e. Foundations and the Teaching and Learning Alliance Resource.

Committee Member Dexter asked how teachers are differentiated within the classrooms seeing as the students are on so many levels.

Dr. Salim stated that it is similar to many other domains; he will need more time to be able to provide specific information later because there is not just one specific answer across programs. On the following roll call vote, **#19-230** was adopted: Mr. Kimbrough YEA; Ms. Nolan NAY; Ms. Bowman YEA; Ms. Dexter NAY; Mr. Fantini NAY; Ms. Kelly YEA; May McGovern NAY.

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

Mr. Kimbrough moved seconded by Ms. Dexter, on a voice vote, the School Committee Agenda was brought forward for discussion and adoption. Committee Member Dexter removed all motions.

19-235, Joint Motion by Ms. Nolan, Vice Chair Kelly, and Committee Member Dexter whereas current research and evidence related to vaping has documented the serious harmful health effects, including the possibility of lung blockage and death; and
Whereas increasing numbers of adolescents and young adults are using vaping products, which are readily available in our community;
That the School Committee requests the District Leadership add a health unit on the effects of vaping to the 9th grade health curriculum that explains the highly addictive effects of nicotine and lung damage caused by oils in vaping products. Additionally, the District Leadership will create an action plan that outlines the important public health measures that will be taken to protect our families, students, and staff.

Discussion followed on **#19-235**.

Ms. Kelly stated that since she wrote this motion, she would like to read it in its entirety and offer an amendment to remove the language ***add a health unit***, and replace it with the language ***incorporate information***.

Ms. Nolan highlighted that while the 9th grade is noted, we understand that this is about protecting families and staff in the earlier grades also. The action plan is meant to be part of a city wide involvement.

Vice Chair Kelly also mentioned there is something happening on the city side. The manufacturers are trying to sell this as a cleaner product and it is not at all.

The Mayor informed the assembly that he has asked the City to amend the tobacco ordinance to ban the sale of vaping products for anyone that is not 21 years or older.

Committee Member Dexter stated that they are vaping during recess in the middle schools on school grounds.

Mr. Kanner reported that student government is also involved with this issue stating that they met with the Cambridge Health Alliance and he will report back to the School Committee on how that meeting went. He doesn't have any information yet.

Dr. Salim spoke on the issues and injuries that our youth have endured. He asked Dr Turk to speak on her work with CRLS Nurse, Tracy Rose Tynes.

Dr. Turk spoke about information Ms. Rose Tynes informed everyone of a meeting with school leaders. Dr. Turk shared that she learned vaping is happening in plain sight, right in front of us. There is a new product out, hoodies, which is a mechanism in the strings of hoodies that easily accomodate vaping. Ms. Rose-Tynes brought instruments to the meeting so that folks could see what the devices look like. Some look like flash drives. Our young people in the upper schools are vaping at an alarming rate. Our Health person Jenny Flynn is working with our Upper Schools on the Catch my Breath Youth E Cigarette Prevention Program. They are working with CRLS also.

Mayor McGovern added that on October 29, 2019 the City Council will be taking up this matter at the Windsor Street Health Center. There will also be another meeting in October to reach beyond the high school.

Ms. Bowman spoke on climate and culture. There is always a desire for youth to explore things. On a voice vote, the amendment to **#19-235** was adopted. On a voice vote, **#19-235** was adopted as amended.

19-235, Joint Motion by Ms. Nolan, Vice Chair Kelly, and Committee Member Dexter whereas current research and evidence related to vaping has documented the serious harmful health effects, including the possibility of lung blockage and death; and Whereas increasing numbers of adolescents and young adults are using vaping products, which are readily available in our community; That the School Committee requests the District Leadership *incorporate information* on the effects of vaping to the 9th grade health curriculum that explains the highly addictive effects of nicotine and lung damage caused by oils in vaping products. Additionally, the District Leadership will create an action plan that outlines the important public health measures that will be taken to protect our families, students, and staff

19-236, Motion by School Committee Member Dexter that whereas the School Committee has expressed concern about the Cambridge Public Schools practice of suspending students in grades PreK-2, a practice abolished in some other districts, the Committee requests data from the Administration from the 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 school years on the total number of PreK-2nd grade students who were suspended one or more times in either or both of these years, with, if possible, specification of the number of these suspended PreK-2nd grade students who were African American/Black or Latino boys. This data is requested by October 15, 2019. Committee Member Dexter placed **#19-236** on the Calendar.

19-237, Motion by School Committee Member Dexter that whereas the School Committee has expressed ongoing concern about the CRLS practices of reducing grades for high school students who are frequently absent or tardy without accepted excuses (Attendance Violations), the School Committee requests data from the Administration from the first and second semesters of 2018-2019 on the total number of students whose grades were reduced due to Attendance Violations, as well as these grade reduction frequencies disaggregated by gender, race, income, ELL status, and disability status. This data is requested before October 15, 2019. The School Committee further requests that, going forward, this data be provided to the School Committee after each semester of the 2019-2020 school year, in order for the School Committee to evaluate the effect of the new Attendance Violation policy. Committee Member Dexter placed **#19-237** on the Calendar.

19-238, Motion by Mr. Kimbrough whereas the Cambridge Public Schools has created the strategic objective of creating stronger relationships with community partners and creating a more culturally competent workforce; Be it resolved that the Cambridge Public Schools will work with DHSP and other non-profit organizations that the district gives financial assistance to create a policy where participation can lead to earning high school credit; and Further, that the high school will look to create an after-school focus group around race and equity in which CRLS students and teachers can earn credit towards graduation and professional development points (PDP's) with the desire to begin both opportunities beginning in the 20-21 school year.

Discussion followed on **#19-238**

Mr. Kimbrough offered an amendment to strike the language *work with DHSP and other non-profit organizations* he believes this work is already taking place and does not need to be there. He has read about a group of students and teachers that have been looking at what it feels like to be a student of color and most of the teachers are White. This may be an important way for our teachers to learn from our students. There needs to be a proper process for us to go through for DESE to change the description of the course in order for our students to earn credit.

Dr. Turk stated that they did speak briefly about this motion and there are three pieces to it. 1. Interest in awarding high school credit. 2. Interest in awarding possible pdp's and 3. The Focus Group. The way to be most effective, would be to brainstorm with others to ensure an alignment with our standards, being consistent with criteria for awarding pdp's for credit and working with partners inside and outside of the high school setting. There also needs to be opportunities for DESE requirements, there are many opportunities in the DESE world.

Dr. Salim mentioned the Building Equity Bridges Project would fit nicely into this also. He feels it is less about a focus group and more toward courses.

Ms. Bowman supports the spirit of the motion; she wonders about the framework of a focus group that will include our faculty or will we be using outside folks to lead conversations about race. We did this last year and it didn't turn out very well. Who would be leading that work?

The Mayor mentioned that bringing this in, what happens when someone is traumatized.

Mr. Kimbrough believes we have educators that are capable of doing this work; they feel it is important enough for them to do it. Avocation process may not be the correct description, but there needs to be a way that ensures they have the skills to care for folks that may experience harm during this work.

There was a discussion on possible amendments to **#19-238**. How many amendments are needed?

Mr. Kimbrough asked for a point of information on when teachers can earn pdp's can it also happen during school hours or only at the usual out of school hours?

Dr. Salim responded that operationally, during class time with prep periods included, it would depend on how strong the incentive is to make this happen during school.

Mr. Kimbrough offered a second amendment to strike the language ***after school focus group*** and replace it with language that says ***a course***

Ms. Bowman is hesitant to repeat what we did last year, it did not go well. She offered referring this motion to the Superintendent before we try to pass it.

Mr. Kimbrough stated that his purpose is not to refer motions to the Superintendent, they have enough work to do. He is comfortable with the vote. Our teachers and students will benefit from it, and of course, we need qualified staffing.

Ms. Bowman offered an amendment to include outside support.

Mr. Kimbrough believes we have qualified educators to do this work. He doesn't want to pay anyone else to do what our faculty can provide. He will go along with outside help if it makes his colleagues feel better.

The Mayor wants to think of the unintended consequences. In order to do this well, it takes a specific skill set that we may think we have, but don't actually have.

Mr. Fantini exercised his Charter Rights and placed **#19-238** on the Calendar.

10. Resolutions (letters of congratulations, letters of condolence): None

11. Announcements:

Parking Day is Friday, when the city departments occupy parking spaces and provide different events and activities.

Port day is Saturday

This month is national recovery month. The opioid spoon is on display at the main library for the next two weeks.

12. Late Orders: None

13. Communications from City Officers: None

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

- Agenda
- PowerPoint Presentation on Dynamic Diversity Development

Statements from Public Comment (copies on file in the School Committee office)

- ✓ Letter supports motion **#19-239** signed by 92 parents
- ✓ Letter opposes motion **#19-239** no name on the letter
- ✓ Diane Johnson, supports motion **#19-239**
- ✓ Donielle Buie, supports motion **#19-239**
- ✓ Nina Nolan, opposes motion **#19-239**
- ✓ Kanku Kabongo, opposes motion **#19-240**

E-Mail communications (copies on file in the School Committee office)

- | | |
|--|---|
| • Piotr Mitros, supports and opposes motion #19-239 | |
| • Tien-Yi Lee, supports motion #19-239 | |
| • Diane Johnson, in support of motion #19-239 | David Rand, supports motion #19-239 |
| • Natalia Forbath, supports motion #19-239 | Anna Henschman, support motion #19-239 |
| • Liz Vandermark, supports motion #19-239 | Adel Daghmouri, supports motion #19-240 |
| • Miranda Pearce, supports motion #19-239 | Kathy Roberts, supports motion #19-240 |
| • Rebacca S. Lester, supports motion #19-240 | Katherine Wolff, supports motion #19-240 |
| • Gina Solman, supports motion #19-239 | Beth Stokes, supports motion #19-240 |
| • Kit Hickey, supports motion #19-240 | Kathleen FitzGerald, opposes motion #19-240 |
| • Caitlin Roberts, supports motion #19-239 | Vanessa Ruget, supports motion #19-240 |
| • Robin Lippert, supports motion #19-240 | Ajantha Subramanian, supports motion #19-240 |
| • John Roberts, supports motion #19-240 | Janice StClair, support motion #19-239 |
| • Celeste Ng, supports motion #19-239 | Kevin Dua, opposes motion #19-240 |

On a motion by Mr. Fantini, seconded by Ms. Nolan, it was voted to adjourn (9:40 p.m.)

Attest:



Dosha Beard
Executive Secretary
to the School Committee