

CAMBRIDGE SCHOOL COMMITTEE FY 2014 BUDGET GUIDELINES
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Our Mission: *The Cambridge Public Schools will be a diverse urban school system that works with families and the community to successfully educate ALL of its students at high levels.*

Our Goal: *The School Committee's overarching goal is academic excellence and social justice for every student.*

Budget Guideline purpose: *Budget Guidelines are meant to provide broad, overarching themes to assist the Superintendent in development of the budget. These guidelines are not meant to identify specific programs or initiatives but rather to operate on a macro level and to express the major themes the School Committee wishes to be addressed in the development of the FY14 budget.*

I. STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

The School Committee requests that the Superintendent place an emphasis on student achievement in the development of the FY14 budget. Decisions regarding programing, staffing, curriculum etc. should be tied to our joint goal and mission of academic excellence and social justice for all children and this should be the driving force in budget decisions. Consideration should be given to how to improve attendance throughout the District.

II. INNOVATION AGENDA (as it pertains to Elementary, Upper and Amigos schools)

The School Committee requests that the Superintendent make appropriate budget decisions to enter into the second year of the Innovation Agenda as it pertains to K-5, 6-8 and Amigos School. In determining budget decisions, the Superintendent should consider any staffing, programming or facility changes that will further deliver on the Innovation Agenda's promise of academic excellence and social justice and provide our students with a well-rounded educational and social experience that prepares them for high school and beyond. Such areas for consideration in year II of the IA may include, K-5 foreign language, review of electives and after school integration.

III.PROGRAM & CURRICULUM EVALUATION

The School Committee believes that the FY14 budget should include funds for systematic program evaluation which is an important tool for making thoughtful decisions about which programs have the greatest positive impact on student achievement and that the four year curriculum review cycle, initiated in FY11, should be continued so that in time all curriculum areas join the review cycle to ensure students are receiving effective instruction of an excellent curriculum in every subject area and that teaching and learning standards are well-conceived and aligned with the Common Core and the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. Funding to implement improvements recommended in the evaluations should be available. Consideration should be given to development of alternative measures of achievement, as well as increasing District's internal capacity to evaluate programs.

IV. HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM

The School Committee requests that the Superintendent fund Cambridge Rindge and Latin School in way that continues the academic, social and extracurricular excellence we have come to expect and that all populations at CRLS receive the support, guidance and challenge they deserve in order to prepare them for whatever their future endeavors post-graduation.

V.SPECIAL POPULATIONS

The School Committee requests that the Superintendent develop a budget where all students in special populations, such as special needs students and English language learners, have access to the same high quality school experience provided to other students, with particular consideration given to the further implementation of the West Ed Report, a comprehensive review of the Special Education program conducted in FY 11, as well as departmental recommendations to strengthen the K-12 program. The state's program Rethinking Equity and Teaching for English Language Learners (RETELL) requires professional development for all educators and support to improve instruction for English Language Learners. Funding to support this requirement should be available.

VI. FAMILY ENGAGEMENT AND SCHOOL CLIMATE

The School Committee requests that the Superintendent develop a budget that includes strategic initiatives to effectively engage families and the Cambridge community in support of student achievement and builds upon the successes of the past year and that the budget continue to support our mutual goal of building a safe, supportive and nurturing environment that allows students and staff to focus of achievement without distraction. The FY14 Budget should support and enhance effective programs and curriculum that produce students who are physically, mentally, emotionally and socially healthy and safe.

VII. OPERATIONS & LONG RANGE PLANNING

The School Committee requests that the Superintendent develop a budget that considers staff levels for school-based and non-school based personnel, on-going review and assessment of operational departments and on an ongoing basis, the year budget should ensure funding for continued capital projects so that our schools are safe for students, staff and families. In addition, the district should identify cost-savings through energy efficiency and sustainability in all school buildings and explore a permanent location for District Administration.