



**C A M B R I D G E
S C H O O L C O M M I T T E E**

(Official Minutes)

Regular Meeting

October 16, 2018

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 (ABSENT), Ms. Dexter, Mr. Fantini, Ms. Kelly, Mr. Kimbrough, Ms. Nolan, Mayor McGovern

Also Present: Student School Committee Representatives Mr. Anthony Grassi and Mr. Antonio Escallon,

Mayor McGovern in the Chair

A quorum of the School Committee being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m.

1. Public Comment:

The following individuals were heard:

- Grace Austin, Chestnut St., **#18-248**, Homework Policy, student government surveyed opinions from students with perspectives from families. The policy has been molded to mix family time during vacation with some homework. They also looked at Brookline High, which has had success with a similar policy. They are working to implement equity through chromebook for information on deadlines to complete assignments. Overall there has been widespread support for this policy.
- Grace Austin, Chestnut St., **#18-307**, supports the CRLS Participatory Budget, CRLS students have innovative and creative ideas, its important for them to have a platform to allow more sustainable systems.
- Ross Benson, Brookline St., **#18-248**, Homework Policy, since there has not been a single comment was against the policy, he urges the School Committee to pass the policy as soon as possible, and can be updated as needed.
- Zoe Padilla, Davenport St., Junior at CRLS, **#18-248**, Homework Policy, focusing on religious holidays, assigning homework over Yom Kippur seems unfair to those who celebrate this holiday. Currently there is no restriction of this in the policy, teachers are allowed to choose to observe the holidays they please rather than the holidays they must observe.
- Brigitte Sandberg, Howard St., parent **#18-305**, Wellness policy, is shocked by the amount of sweets and treats given out for special occasions during school time. They are raising their children on very limited sugar and it is disturbing to her that Cambridge is serving juice and chocolate milk. The amount of sugar the kids are receiving is not healthy. The wellness policy has recommendations only regarding soda and candy not being in the schools.
- Natalie Dickerman, Mt. Pleasant St. **#18-248**, leader of the Jewish Heritage club, supports raising awareness regarding other religions as it relates to the homework policy, would like more consideration when giving out homework during sacred days to her peers of various beliefs.

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

2. Student School Committee Report:

Mr. Grassi reported on the following:

Over the last two weeks they have been preparing the homework policy, it has been a conclusive process including feedback from students, faculty, and administration working together.

Mr. Escallon reported on the following:

The number of devices used that are not chromebooks has not been reduced. They are using their hotspots to provide internet for their laptops. His chromebook works a lot faster than it did in the beginning of the school year; he realizes Chromebooks are for the betterment of the community. There is a loophole in this policy, but we need to find a way to have everyone invested. Included in last year's budget, the Black Student Union was given a certain amount of funding to create a platform for anti racism work and to their knowledge, that has not happened. There was not enough money in the budget for the projects the students would like to accomplish, so doubling that will be a good idea.

3. Presentation of the Records for Approval:

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

- Regular Meeting, September 25, 2018
- Regular Meeting, October 2, 2018

4. **Reconsiderations:** None

5. **Unfinished Business/Calendar:** None

6. **Awaiting Reports:**

Ms. Nolan asked to bring item **#18-248** forward for discussion.

#18-248, Motion by Ms. Nolan, whereas there has been an overall policy on homework and a policy on homework for K-8 students and

Whereas CRLS students have worked to establish a thoughtful homework policy, that the School Committee supports the work and establishes the attached policy for the upcoming school year. *The Superintendent will provide a report back to the School Committee by the second Regular meeting in October, 2018.*

Further that the policy be communicated to all staff and students as soon as practicable (first reading). Attachment: Regulation of out-of-class time. (8-7-18 C18-304)

Discussion followed on **#18-248**.

Ms. Nolan would like to have a first reading of this policy at our only Regular November meeting on November 20, 2018 so that they may implement it.

Dr. Salim would like to thank Mr. Benson and all of the students that have been involved in the policy and guidelines. The Superintendent suggested looking at the language and reconciling this new policy with the old policy. It is possible that some of the language may be better placed in the guidelines instead of the policy. Because there was a timeline around this, he will continue to work with administration and faculty around implementation for this for the following semester.

Mayor McGovern reminded the body that we are allowed to waive the second reading on the 20th of November, consequently it would not be delayed.

Mr. Fantini stated that we can make some adjustments, however unless Principal Smith objects to the changes in the guidelines, we can move forward with what we have.

On a voice vote, it was voted to pass over the remaining Awaiting Reports.

#18-114 Joint Motion by Mr. Kimbrough and Ms. Nolan, whereas the CPS has included in its district plan a goal to address equity and access and
Whereas a walkout in 2016 on the uncomfortable environment at CRLS as documented by students led to a number of changes and an action plan to address issues of sexual harassment, and
Whereas CPS district outcomes look to measure student/family comfort levels in our schools and meaningful relationships with teachers, and
Whereas female, LGBTQ+ students at CRLS have written in the register forum on multiple occasions to express their concerns regarding discomfort as a female, LGBTQ+ students at CRLS
be it resolved that the Superintendent will by the Summer meeting:
1) update the School Committee on the status of work on addressing issues in CRLS and district wide,
2) update the School Committee on our districts professional development regarding supporting our teachers to support our female, LGBTQ+ scholars
3) share specific details about the current work in the district with our male students that addresses hyper masculinity and creating anti-sexist spaces for female, LGBTQ+. (5-1-18 C18-137)

#18-143, Joint Motion by Ms. Nolan and Mr. Fantini, that whereas the district has a longstanding goal of program evaluation being used to direct initiatives and whereas the Compass summer program has been in operation for many years with a goal of supporting students, that the district provide a report on any past evaluations of the program effectiveness by the last meeting in June and further that the district ensure that this summer pre and post achievement assessment data for each student enrolled be provided in a report by the first meeting in September. (5-15-18 C18-188)

#18-144, Joint Motion by Mr. Fantini and Vice Chair Kelly, whereas strong internship programs have been proven to create success for student career and college aspirations, *that the School Committee ask the Superintendent for a report* describing our present internship program(s), and the district's plan to create enhanced internship programs in our schools. (5-15-18 C18-189)

Mayor McGovern turned the next part of the meeting over to Superintendent Salim.

7. Superintendent's Agenda:

7a. Presentations: District Outcome Chronic Absenteeism.....Carolyn Turk,
Deputy Superintendent
James Maloney,
Chief Operating Officer
Damon Smith,
Principal, CRLS
Ryan Souliotis,
Principal, High School Extension
Angeline UyHam
District Design & Innovation Coach

Dr. Salim introduced everyone and made opening remarks for this presentation.

Mr. Maloney began with an overview of what they have been doing at the high school which included the following:

- Overview of Design Process
- What we have found
- What we are doing
- Looking ahead

Mr. Maloney explained they started at the high school because it is where the biggest challenge is and that the definition of chronic absenteeism is students who are absent 10% or more days, which is consistent with the state's definition. It is a combination of three types of absences: Excused, Unexcused

and Suspensions. Our district average is 3.7% over the state average. They have three goals in place to improve attendance and to reduce the average down to 2.0%.

Ms. Angie UyHam explained that all learning is not linear. The design process was explained and they have been interpreting the information in useful ways. Ms. UyHam explained how to decrease absenteeism and increase engagement. They analyzed their resources to make sure they were using accurate data.

Principal Smith went over the procedures that involved all students. They moved on to engagement, recognizing the need to identify the students early in the day on a daily basis. Next they needed to identify some of our chronically absent students in order to help them, recognize and prevent upcoming students from following the same pattern. They will continue to have Design Lab meetings every week with Principals and Deans. They are going to have their first Clerk Specialist led meeting for the Deans on November 1, 2018. The Clerk Specialists will be presenting on who does and who does not arrive when they should to aid the teachers and deans to know what is going on. An internal Data Dashboard will be created of the most chronically absent students to gauge reasons for absences and potential supports.

High School Extension Program Principal Souliotis spoke about the personalized learning plans at the High School Extension Program.

Dr. Turk explained that one of the key factors in this work is making sure it is not done in isolation. There needs to be a good amount of connectedness. What happens within a school day, how the policies and procedures play into this and need to be shared. She mentioned the AV Ad Hoc Sub-Committee as part of what has been taken into consideration as they do this work. Dr. Turk explained the Tiered Structure of Support to Chronic Absenteeism. If you are not in attendance, you cannot be expected to be a successful part of the community.

Dr. Turk shared some highlights from Attendance Violation Discussions at CRLS. Dr. Turk reiterated the fact that the teams have been focusing on three methods: Prevention, Intervention and Recovery instead of focusing on the punitive method. They found by listening to people, that there are a range of reasons why students are not in class. There is no one answer to this issue. She explained the general Tier system. Tier 1 is for all students. Tier 2 is for the student that needs a bit more help. If this is not enough, Tier 3 supports students and families as needed primarily to their particular needs that are not being met in the first two tiers.

Mr. Maloney stated the data needs to be consistent and viewed on a regular basis. He informed the body that the school Clerk Specialists have been very valuable in this work. They will be working more closely with upper schools and elementary schools clerical staff. He mentioned the appendix that they will not be getting into tonight. (on file in the School Committee office). It explores Chronic Absenteeism Student Tracking Form, Personalized Learning Plan, PAUS Attendance Tracking and Intervention Protocols and added that they will create all new absence codes. The existing codes are obsolete.

Ms. Nolan asked about the two million data points on the report of students one hundred forty four students with D+ and lower grades. Does this work benefit them?

Principal Smith answered that in the student tracking form they have tried to make a list of why the students are out. Student performance is certainly a reason to give up and stop coming to class. This group is bringing more focus on the need to spend more time concentrating on that.

Ms. Nolan wants to know if we have a sense of what grade percentage district wide has more absenteeism.

Mr. Maloney answered that the change happens from 8th to 9th grade and continues to grow through high school.

Vice Chair Kelly wondered if there was a particular reason why?

Principal Smith stated that there are many factors that contribute to why a student is late or absent. There are a multitude of reasons, he wanted it to be known that some students attend school very little and are able to meet the demands of the curriculum with ease.

Vice Chair Kelly asked for a better sense of what Recovery means.

Dr. Turk responded that administration needs to understand why they are out. They need to let the students know that the administration understands life happens and collectively they can find a way to recover from an unfortunate or bleak situation. They want to strongly emphasize that ALL students can recover no matter what and can get back on track. Vice Chair Kelly mentioned that trauma will also add to making students feel hopeless.

Mr. Escallon stated that sometimes it is expensive and hard to get to school if you live on the other side of the city. Is there reduced transportation for all?

Mr. Maloney responded that there are subsidized passes and they need to examine free T passes and that is under review by the city solicitors office.

The Mayor stated that it has come up for a couple of years and he will be happy to talk about it soon.

Emily Dexter asked how well is the buyback working? Also, what is the best consequence for not having a buyback?

Principal Smith stated that he appreciates the Ad Hoc meetings, and he is being very honest in saying they are going to have to focus on the kids that are on the cusp of being absent and also focus on the kids that are always late. He stated that the buyback monitoring process is time consuming and sometimes difficult. The success is strong in some areas and weak in others.

Mr. Fantini thanked all involved for the report, he can tell that everyone is working hard on this and he really appreciates it. Mr. Fantini suggested to always take the worst case scenario in your school and recommended it as a good way to begin. There are about 500 students that are chronically absent. Getting benchmarks from other school systems; then run a report that shows what is happening to these 500 kids. Since they are having weekly meetings, he would like the School Committee to get a monthly report about this. It was interesting to note that chronic absences include excused absences. It was discovered that the phone calls are made by machine, except the HSEP. The deans do the text messages themselves. Mr. Fantini suggested dollar incentives.

Mr. Kimbrough also appreciates the work and collaboration. He stated that the public schools are based on an antiquated system that does not intend for all students to succeed. He suggested that we need to be looking holistically at what school should be in today's society in order to support all students. In a capitalistic society, our schools are not created for the have-nots to succeed.

Emily Dexter would like to see a reduction at each grade level. She believes we need a city wide campaign on this issue. A public health campaign would be just as good as a campaign for getting rid of smoking.

The Mayor stated that one of the down sides of his going last is that prior speakers say what he planned on saying. He likes the idea of the city wide campaign also. The stakeholders are vast, and they should be involved early on. Block scheduling is an issue. He likes the approach of both short and long term goals. He agrees with everything Mr. Kimbrough stated. We need find a way to leverage our human and financial resources.

Vice Chair Kelly added the way high school is set up can be difficult to create a sense of belonging.

Mr. Mayor mentioned the dollar incentive, asking what happened to the quest for knowledge. We need to face the fact that our traditional old ways of thinking are not based on the reality of today. What is going to get the kid to school? If we have to pay them, lets' just make sure we are thinking very openly.

Ms. Nolan thanked her colleagues for reminding her of what schools are set up for. The automatic messages that are going out are only going out are only in English, she suggested that be worked on.

Dr. Salim appreciates the discussion; attendance in general is fundamental and connects to the very regular function of the school. The strategic objectives connect to improving students' sense of belonging and wanting to be in school. The Superintendent stated that another concept when thinking about attendance is the push and pull factor. A pull factor may be what is going on away from school and the push factor may be what is happening in the school. Our hopes for the outcomes are frameworks that have realistic targets for support.

The Mayor stated that a few years back they added an item that would get families to back to school night etc., the numbers rocketed. Are there ways to help when older siblings need to take care of their younger siblings because a parent cannot miss work on a given day?

Mr. Maloney stated that engagement with partners and learners is the next step.

Mr. Fantini would like to go to 10 students' homes to get them to school.

Vice Chair Kelly thought it might be good idea if students went to students' homes as a motivator to come to school.

7b. CPS District Plan: None

7c. Consent Agenda:

Mr. Fantini moved, seconded by Ms. Nolan, to bring forward the Superintendent's Consent Agenda for discussion and adoption. Ms. Nolan removed **#18-300**.

On the following roll call vote, items **#18-297, #18-298, #18-299, #18-301 to #18-304** were adopted: Ms. Nolan YEA; Ms Bowman ABSENT; Ms. Dexter YEA; Mr. Fantini YEA; Ms. Kelly; Mr. Kimbrough; YEA; Mr. Mayor YEA.

#18-297, that the School Committee approve the attached agreement between the Cambridge School Committee and the Cambridge Safety Specialist Association to correct an error in the outside user paid detail rate in the collective bargaining agreement.

#18-298, 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 Program Tuition Contracts:	1	\$64,759.20
Residential Program Tuition Contracts:		
45 Day Program Contracts	<u>3</u>	<u>\$193,347.64</u>
Total	4	\$258,106.84

#18-299, that the School Committee award a contract to the following vendor for kitchen equipment, funds to be provided from the Food Service Revolving Fund, Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts having been complied with:

Kittredge Equipment Company, 100 Bowles Road, Agawam, for the period October 19, 2018 to June 30, 2019, in the amount of \$46,578.23.

#18-301, that the School Committee accept and approve the following gifts and receipts as described.
An in-kind donation of a potter's wheel to the CRLS Visual & Performing Arts Department.
An in-kind donation of one 4x5 150 mm Schneider-Kreuznach Enlarging Lens and a printer to support the photography program at CRLS.

#18-302, that the School Committee accept and approve the grant award in the amount and for the period indicated:

Federal Emergency Impact Aid, for the period, November 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018, in the amount of \$28,958.00. Project/Grant SC18152.

Description: this grant will be used to reimburse CPS for expenses incurred during FY18 related to meeting the educational needs of students displaced to our district from Puerto Rico and the USVI as a result of hurricanes. Although the funds were received in September 2018, Federal requirements stipulate that this funding may only be used to offset FY18 expenses.

#18-303, that the School Committee accept and approve the grant award in the amount and for the period indicated:

FY19 Occupational Education Vocational Skills, for the period, October 15, 2018 to August 31, 2019, in the amount of \$87,416.00. Project/Grant SC19606.

Description: The Perkins Grant will be used to purchase equipment and supplies for student use in Chapter 74 approved programs, including Creative Design, Health Assisting, Printing, Automotive, Computer Science, Culinary, Biotech and Engineering. In addition, funds will support professional development for computer science instruction.

#18-304, that the School Committee accept and approve the grant award in the amount and for the period indicated:

VMR-Biotech, for the period, September 17, 2018 to September 17, 2019, in the amount of \$10,000.00. Project/Grant SC19151.

Description: This grant will support RSTA Biotech lab through the purchase of smaller lab equipment not covered by the previous MA Life Sciences grant, including electronic balances, water bath, lab notebooks, spectrophotometer, benchtop centrifuge and other equipment.

8. Non-Consent Agenda:

#18-300, that the School Committee award a contract to the following vendor for professional development, funds to be provided from the General Fund, Chapter 30B of the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts having been complied with:

Gene Thompson-Grove, 29 Green Street #1, Brookline, for the period
September 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019, in the amount of \$45,000.00.

Ms. Nolan asked for more information about this. She would like to understand what a daily rate is for a consultant.

Discussion followed on **#18-300**.

The Superintendent offered for Asst. Superintendent Dr. Adams to answer this question. Dr. Adams stated that it is about \$2,000.00 per day. On the following roll call vote, item **#18-300** was adopted: Ms. Nolan YEA; Ms Bowman ABSENT; Ms. Dexter YEA; Mr. Fantini YEA; Ms. Kelly; Mr. Kimbrough YEA; Mr. Mayor YEA.

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

Mr. Kimbrough moved, seconded by Ms. Kelly, to bring forward the School Committee Agenda for discussion and adoption. Emily Dexter removed all items.

#18-305, Whereas good health and nutrition are important for student learning and wellbeing; and

Whereas CPS has a clear and detailed "Wellness Policy" and "Implementation Guidelines and Procedures";

Be it resolved that the School Committee requests that the CPS administration ensure that all educators, administrators, and staff are aware of and adhering to the CPS Wellness Policy *and* Implementation Guidelines and Procedures, and communicating the policy/guidelines/procedures to parents and caregivers, with particular attention to:

Ensuring that preK-8th grade students are provided with 20 minutes for lunch and 20 minutes for recess every day;

Encouraging non-food birthdays and celebrations;

Encouraging healthy foods and discouraging sugary foods (cakes, cookies, pies, ice cream, popsicles, punch) at classroom events and celebrations, *including food brought in by parents*.

Making provisions for students to drink water throughout the day;

Sending home snack suggestions in at least four languages.

http://www.cpsd.us/UserFiles/Servers/Server_3042785/File/departments/administration/legal/wellness_guidelines.pdf

Discussion followed on **#18-305**

Emily Dexter stated that there is a lot of sugar in our schools and we have a policy in place that says to discourage that. Sugary foods have a detrimental effect on girls and how they think about their bodies. Brookline has already taken juice out of their cafeterias during lunch. They are not able to remove it from breakfast, due to state mandates.

Ms. Nolan is thankful for this motion. She believes this is to share communication and not change the policy. She is ready to prohibit the ability to bring sugary foods into the school during the school day, instead of only discouraging it. She emphasized that discouraging is not strong enough, it just says you are allowed to do it instead of saying you are prohibited. Ms. Nolan feels that sugar really is a toxin in many ways and it does not mean we cannot have sweet things.

Vice Chair Kelly does not want to mix the discussion of sugar with the weight of middle school girls and food.

Mr. Escallon shared his feelings that it is important to limit sweets at celebrations; however, if there was no chocolate milk, no milk would be drunk. As for juice, students are not going to only drink water all day. It would be better, in his opinion, to concentrate more on what additional foods are brought in from the outside.

Mr. Grassi shared that he feels what is outlined here is very good. It will have lasting impacts on what we condone now because the tendency is that it will last forever. He also brought up the section that includes the 20 minutes for lunch and recess as being too limited, adding that taking recess away from a child is not good.

Mr. Escallon asked if all students are allowed to go outside during recess. The Superintendent stated that yes, all kids go outside unless the weather is too harsh.

Mayor McGovern stated that recess and the taking away of recess as a consequence has come up for years, adding we need to stay vigilant making sure that all dietary restrictions by parents are respected.

Mr. Fantini suggested a soft implementation of giving parents time to buy into a new policy of no sweets. On an unanimous voice vote, motion **#18-305** was adopted.

#18-306, Whereas it is critical for high school students to arrive to school on time; and Whereas expensive instructional resources, teacher time in particular, are wasted when students are late to class; and

Whereas MBTA buses from some Cambridge neighborhoods are unreliable, resulting in some students being frequently late to school;

The School Committee requests from the administration an estimate of the cost of providing morning school buses for CRLS students: 1) from all neighborhoods, and 2) from specific neighborhoods poorly served by MBTA buses. This estimate is requested by December 1, 2018.

Discussion followed on **#18-306**.

Emily Dexter stated that the buses are not getting students to school on time.

Ms. Nolan referenced whether or not we have a separate motion on getting free monthly passes for all students. She wants students to get here on time, however if we need to add more buses to crowded roads, it may not work.

Vice Chair Kelly following up on the conversation about wellness and food, asked if there any students that can actually walk to school, adding it is a good habit. On a voice vote, **#18-306** was adopted.

#18-307, That the amount of money allocated for the CRLS Participatory Budgeting project for school year 2018-19 be doubled to \$10,000.

Discussion followed on **#18-307**.

Ms. Nolan stated that a little more money will go a long way. She also appreciates the report they all got from the Superintendent that explains how the money was spent. Based on lessons learned, maybe this should be included in the upper schools.

The Mayor stated we are being looked at nationally as a model.

Ms. Nolan stated that this is not a new program; we are already doing it, just increasing it.

Dr. Salim invited Ms. Spinner to the table to explain. She stated that they have worked closely with the city budget office and there has been some transition in that office. Ms. Julia Guida has met with both the staff here and at the city. She supported Ms. Nolan's statement of going from \$5,000.00 to \$10,000.00 as a good thing. Asking the school to be thinking about these things is a positive process. She is not so sure it will be as good in the upper schools, it is extremely appropriate in the high school.

Mr. Grassi supports the participatory budget at CRLS stating it helps increase school community and he believes it will strengthen student creativity.

Emily Dexter wants to know what students participated in this process and who voted.

The Mayor also wanted to know who participates and votes. It was answered that 186 students voted. On the following roll call vote, **#18-307** was adopted: Ms. Nolan YEA; Ms Bowman ABSENT; Ms. Dexter YEA; Mr. Fantini YEA; Ms. Kelly; Mr. Kimbrough YEA; Mr. Mayor YEA.

#18-308, the Report of the May 31, 2018 Special Education & Student Supports Sub-Committee meeting was accepted as presented:

Meeting of Special Education & Student Supports Sub-Committee
Attles Meeting Room
6pm - 8pm
May 31, 2018

Called for the purpose of discussing inclusion with a review of Universal Design for Learning at the Morse School and the Putnam Avenue Upper School.

Members Present: Ms. Kathleen Kelly, Chair; Mr. Laurance Kimbrough, Ms. Emily Dexter, Ms. Patty Nolan

Also Present: Ms. Patricia Beggy, Principal of the Morse School; Ms. Jean Spera, Interim Superintendent of OSS; Ms. Maryann MacDonald, Assistant Superintendent for Elementary

Education; Ms. Karen Dobak, Co-Chair of Cambridge CEA-PAC; Ms. Karyn Grace, Coordinator of Student Services; Ms. Lisa Downing, CPS Parent of two students; Ms. Cambria Russell, CPS Parent of two students; Ms. Marisol Soto, CPS Parent of two students; Ms. Lovette Holloman CPS Parent of one student; Ms. Karen Allen, CPS Parent of two students; Ms. Rachael Gordon, CPS Parent of three students

In the Chair: Vice Chair Kelly

A quorum of the School Committee being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 6:17 pm

The meeting was turned over to Ms. Spera who gave a presentation entitled Universal Design for Learning Guidelines.

Ms. Spera stated that Universal Design for Learning is a seamless way to provide a link between Special Education and General Education platforms. She also credited Principal Beggy with being the driving force to get Universal Design implemented at the Morse School. Principal Beggy explained how she began this process over three years ago when her staff at the Morse School started to express that they wanted to find a way to reach all learners at the same time. She explained that The Morse School has a very high percentage of students on IEP's one of the highest in the district and also a high percentage of students whose first language is not English therefore her staff was facing a challenge of how to provide the best quality education to everyone. Her staff was already working hard but they wanted to work smarter so she began to do some research along with her research team and was introduced to UDL "Universal Design for Learning". This year a diverse group of 48 staff members attended UDL trainings which included general education, special education, sub-separate, learning disability tutors, and library media staff members. The training consisted of 11 hours of professional development spread out over the course of 4 days between December 2017 and May 2018. The trainers were able to come in for 3 full school days in between sessions which allowed them to go on walkabouts, to monitor the teachers and the students so they could make adjustments throughout the training process. All remaining staff members that weren't trained attended a 90 minute UDL introduction. All of this work was able to be completed during contractual hours which required a huge commitment and a lot of creative scheduling. New staff members will be able to access this training through Google documents which is extremely helpful.

Principal Beggy explained that UDL is not a fix it plan but a tool that helps educators examine how they teach. The staff at the Morse school is really committed to collaboration around inclusion and Positive Behavior Intervention Support. It is also a way for educators to think about their teachings and to build upon their current and recent work. It also connects well with the work that the district and schools are already doing on equity and access. Educators that have taken this training now have the ability while planning their lessons to stop and think about what's missing, who may get stuck and why they may not understand. It helps educators think about the barriers or what might be getting in the way of a child reaching their highest learning potential. UDL is able to be used across the board in all subjects and content areas. Principal Beggy also mentioned that the training is also a type of coaching that allows for collaboration amongst all the different types of educators which is why it's so successful. Ms. Spera concluded the presentation by stating the way UDL is framed educators are not just thinking about disability and ability but instead variability in all learners.

Questions

Q- How would you measure compliance vs engagement?

A- By using the written criteria of success for UDL the teacher can ask the questions are the students just doing the checklist or are they going above and beyond and also by receiving feedback from students which really helps to engage the student.

Q- Has UDL changed any patterns of push out, pull in work that special educators do with students that have IEP's.

A- Not yet because the work first needs to be done before changes could be decided however UDL has improved collaborations and communications among the different types of educators.

Q- What were the conversations with families around UDL being implemented?

A- So far the families know that the staff have been engaged in this work and in the last newsletter of the school year there will be write up of what has happened so far and what the future plans look like.

Q- Are there any plans to do any UDL workshops with the families?

A- Every other month at the Morse School on Wednesday mornings there are workshops for the families.

Q- Are there any examples of ways that specific children's behavior was improved by UDL?

A- Because this is the first year that we are using UDL we wanted to get the teachers familiar with it before we start determining if it's working so that the teachers won't feel judged.

Q- Is the new principal of the Morse School, Mr. Chad Lief, interested in continuing UDL.

A- Yes he is committed to continuing this work he has already been to the school to meet with the students and staff members.

Q- Has there been any attempts to speak with the older students to receive feedback on UDL?

A- There has not been a lot of feedback attempts made especially since this is still relatively new there will be more focus during the upcoming school year on feedback.

Q- What was the UDL experience like for the Upper School?

A- Two 7th grades teachers at the Putnam Avenue Upper School along with head of the school Mr. Mirko Chardin, attended a conference on UDL and together they framed lessons based on the UDL framework. The idea was to see how it worked in these two classrooms and then plan the next steps based off that outcome. At the time of this meeting there was not any further update on UDL at the Putnam Avenue Upper School.

Q- What other schools districts are currently using UDL? How long have these districts been using UDL?

A- Multiple schools in Boston are using UDL and have been using for at least 3+ plus years. The Groton district is also using UDL.

Q- Has there been any conversation about other schools in the district trying UDL.

A- Office of Student Services has spoken with principal of the Baldwin School who is very interested in learning about UDL. There have been four elementary school principals that have expressed a great desire to learn more about UDL as well.

Q- What happens once an "ISS" instructional support services is working with a specific student and student move on to a different in district school who then starts working with the student.

A- The idea of the "ISS" team is not to service students but to provide modeling, consulting and helping teachers learn new skills so that they could better support students.

Q- Have there been any feedback from the teachers requesting more co-teaching opportunities?

A- There has not been any conversations at the Morse School in relations to co-teaching.

Ms. Spera spoke about some of the other things that district has been working on:

- -Every school is working on building collaboration opportunities between general education and special education for planning.
- -A couple of the elementary schools are going to be working on implementing scheduling mapping
- -Dr. Marilyn Friend the guru of inclusive education and co teaching has began to work with the elementary special educators so that they will know how to go in to elementary classroom and work corporately with the teachers.
- Assigning three inclusive instructional specialists to one school. Schools that were chosen had a good number of sub-separate classrooms. The inclusive instructional specialist is able to assist in the general education classroom in a purposeful way and to also assist with students that have IEP's and other behavioral differences within the building so that they can provide some support to these teachers.

- -There were two district wide inclusive instructional specialists hired by the district.
- -There will be an additional inclusive instructional specialist hired for the incoming school year.
- -There will be a district wide social worker hired for the upcoming school year who will also be added to the strategic focus group.

Ms. Grace spoke briefly on the roll of the two district wide inclusive instructional specialists who worked in collaboration with the district in terms of the targeted support model. She commented that the feedback from the principals that were engaged with the strategic focus group has been very, very positive so far.

Comments

- From a parents perspective if they are looking to place their special needs child in kindergarten and they know there is only one school in the district that offers UDL that's the school they would be registering for. There is going to be a shift of parents with special needs children requesting the Morse School for their top pick and that's going to create a huge unbalance amongst the schools in the district. At some point leadership needs to tell the other schools that in order to truly educate students in this district UDL has to happen.
- UDL seems like a great program it needs to be done consistently from school to school with the consistent support from the principals for the teachers especially those in the general education classrooms.
- There should be at least one "ISS" inclusive instructional specialist at every school in the district with four stationed at CRLS.
- There needs to be more consistently among the schools throughout the district in terms of teaching for example all the elementary schools should be teaching math the same way using the same programs so that by the time the students get to the upper schools the teachers won't be starting from scratch trying to figure who learned what and which way.
- The district needs to do better with transparency with the families and the educators.

Erin Grant
Temporary Confidential Secretary for the School Committee

Meeting was adjourned at 7:50 pm by Ms. Kelly and Ms. Dexter seconded.
Documents on file in School Committee Office
Universal Design for Learning Guidelines

#18-309, the Report of the October 4, 2018 Communication Sub-Committee meeting was accepted as presented:

Communication Sub-Committee Meeting Thursday, October 4, 2018 @ 5:30 PM School Committee Conference Room

Called for the purpose of Review of Open Data Policy for sharing parent information, Social Media Policy-Develop Policy for CPSD staff and a set of recommendations for students and CPSD families, and to review progress on the CPSD website revisions.

Members Present: Ms. Bowman, Chair; Ms. Nolan

Also Present: Dan Monahan, CEA President; Barbara Allen, Executive Director of Human Resources; Steve Smith, Chief Information Officer; Lisa Waters, Web & Online Services Manager; Rosalie Rippey, Family Communications Manager; Melissa Xiong, Parent

Maureen MacFarlane, Legal Counsel joined the meeting at 6:45 PM

A quorum of the Sub-Committee being present, Ms. Bowman called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM and read the call of the meeting.

Social Media Policy – Development for CPSD staff and a set of recommendations for students and CPSD families: Ms. Bowman passed out the Agenda. The 2nd page has a statement of “Why Create a CPSD Social Media Policy for Staff and Students”. What framework should we use to make a policy for CPS? Encourage staff and students to use it and not be afraid of it. What are the boundaries? Put together common sense measures for how employees interact with students outside of the school system platform, and how to structure it, and a timeline to get this done.

Ms. Bowman handed out two school district policies for reference. They define what each term is so no one takes anything for granted. There is a motion this week for the teachers to work with the CEA to bring a policy forward.

Ms. Nolan thought there were some guidelines for students in the student handbook.

Ms. Allen agrees it would be helpful to have guidelines in place in terms of relating to students. Many school districts set up guidelines and others end up policies. The range is a well thought out and written policy with tips and guidelines for teachers. She cautioned because our policies are densely written, directing it toward staff can be prohibitive to staff taking time to read them.

Mr. Smith thinks it's a great idea asking are you envisioning the use of social media in the schools? Where is the line crossed using Facebook and classrooms assignments? Right now it is strictly separated, we don't use social media around educational purposes because there are issues around being able to retain the data.

Ms. Nolan added it is tricky particularly lately the hacking into social medial sites and people's information is being compromised. How do we, as a district, interact with parents and students? How do we protect kids to make sure they are safe?

Ms. Waters stated right now if a staff member wants to put a picture of a child on the district website we would need to get a signed media release form.

Ms. Bowman added that she is aware that there are employees posting pictures on their social media and if the parents did not sign the media release form, that they are violating the policy. We need to respect people's privacy, intent vs. impact.

Ms. Waters said it is almost impossible to monitor that.

Ms. Rippey added how do we define the boundaries while the district enforces privacy?

Ms. Allen explained that there are some districts that mandate staff to set up a separate account. What are acceptable boundaries? What are the risks? Liability? Protecting the rights of kids.

Ms. Nolan stated it's important to know what has been communicated to the staff. A few years ago it was plainly stated “remember staff you cannot take pictures of kids”. She has been at events at schools where the kids that can be photographed are in front and others are hidden in back. Enforcement is always difficult but staff has been vigilant about not posting pictures. Every student in the district gets training in social media in the 6th or 7th grade.

Mr. Monahan appreciates this effort. Right now there are no clear boundaries and educators have 1st amendment rights of free speech. He tells new teachers that there is language in the law for educators

about “conduct unbecoming a teacher” and as a public school employee some of your rights are limited and you are held to a higher standard.

Ms. Bowman understands that people have the right of free speech but this process can clarify that. The district is responsible to send things out. Yes, you have the right to speak but there are certain situations where the district needs to have control boundaries within the district.

Ms. Nolan suggested having two separate accounts; one for “teacher Patty” and a separate account for “personal Patty”.

Ms. Waters asked what is the purpose for posting that and there might be another way for professional development without using social media. Either way both accounts (personal or public) are public and student’s information can’t be put on it.

Ms. Allen added from an HR perspective that problem rarely occurs. There were a couple of situations where teachers were posting unfavorable things like I can’t stand my kids but that went away. During the recent election there were many things brought to me because teachers posted political views vs. school district. It is about posting events at a school or an activity that involved students or a class and it is not inappropriate but not quite right to post it, ‘as innocent as it might be.

Ms. Rippey said the Family Liaisons are very clear about the media release form. There may be a student that could have a safety issue that could happen.

Ms. Nolan said even if one teacher posts a picture of another teacher they should get permission. It has sometimes been uncomfortable for people.

Mr. Monahan knows there is not an enforcer but there are some things that could be problematic and we need to think about whether there are consequences if the policy is violated. We also don’t want it to be a “gotcha” issue; ask so you know what the policy is.

Ms. Bowman stated one example in a policy is if you post something by mistake and it is caught you have the ability to change it and notify the district so they would not be caught off guard. The purpose of this meeting is an initial kick off. Who wants to volunteer to help her write the policy? Ms. Nolan is happy to review any drafts and will ask MASC if there is a Massachusetts law they could include. They should start with one that is already written and amend it.

Ms. Bowman will reach out to Ms. MacFarlane and Ms. Nolan will contact MASC to see if we can adapt one. Mr. Smith will also help out.

Mr. Smith stated with a new policy and guidelines we might need to revisit social media/Facebook. Right now there are blocks on Facebook.

Ms. Allen stated that might fall into a cell phone policy at the high school.

Ms. Nolan said that might be under the Governance or Curriculum Sub-Committee we should reach out to them.

Mr. Monahan can review the policy but has no time to write it. He can get a couple of teachers to look it over too.

Ms. Bowman suggested if Mr. Monahan can get a couple of teachers by December to contribute and be part of the editorial process to be included would be good.

Ms. Nolan said students might need to be included too. She thinks there is a lot of stuff coming up and it may take longer to complete than April or May but it will be in place by next year. This needs to be done by the second meeting in June.

Ms. Bowman thinks it would take a month to review and vote on it.

Mr. Monahan left the meeting.

Review Progress on the CPSD Website Revisions: Ms. Waters handed out “Cambridge Public Schools Refresh Project” and stated the website needs a re-design, it has been five years since it was done. She went through the handout (on file in the School Committee Office). The process is important and we need to get feedback from focus groups; students, staff and community. There will be a new fresh bright Color Palette.

Ms. Nolan stated that some colors are linked to schools; CRLS is associated with black.

Ms. Waters replied that team colors would remain the same. When you look at the website they all have a similar color palette.

Ms. Rippey added each school has a different color pallet.

Ms. Waters stated that it is recommended to refresh the website every 3-5 years and with the new District Design Plan now is a great time to do it. In January a law was passed that all websites have to be Level A in terms of accessibility. We have 100,000 pages of content on our website. It is a lot of work but we can do it. We have grown and have more departments. We will have a new calendar and there is better coding in the back end. She is in the process of going through every page now. She made a spreadsheet of other websites and noted what they like about the design and structure.

Ms. Bowman asked for a district our size what is the average size of websites?

Ms. Waters doesn't know but vendor's charge by the page. It is good that we get information out to the parents in an organized way. She wants our mission and vision to match our Strategic Plan.

Ms. Bowman asked how do you see this Sub-Committee being helpful?

Ms. Waters responded by getting feedback, for example, how do you use the site? What is best for the homepage? What are you hearing from people what do they like or dislike about it?

Ms. Allen stated for example the School Committee page looks out dated.

Ms. Nolan is not sure people know that the School Committee Agenda number is linked to the presentation item. Some districts, such as Springfield and Brookline have wonderful, easy to understand websites. What's the best website in Massachusetts? They might let us use their template. We are looking for the structure. It is confusing for parents. Put the Menu on the front page not 17 community meetings. Parents want to have the entry to Aspen through the website so they can get their child's information. We are ahead of the curve. The difficulty of finding information depends on the pocket of the website. If we can't update information we need to be careful about adding it on the website. We would need the staff to make it fresh and updated.

Ms. Bowman asked if every school is able to update their content. Could there be a person at each school that can update information?

Ms. Rippey responded we tried that and it did not work, every school knows to send information to Lisa and Amy.

Ms. Waters replied the problem is getting the content to update the information. Some schools don't feel the website is a priority. That is an issue.

Ms. Bowman stated that is an operational issue. The Administration can tell staff it is not negotiable, they need to have a staff person do it and have a broader leadership conversation so we can set it up for success.

Ms. Nolan suggested having a group of parents review it or go to every School Council meeting and have them look at it to see what's useful.

Ms. Rippey thinks the balance is going to be the opportunities for input based on the vision of the work that has already been done. Different audiences have different ways to look at things. We did some surveys and with the limited infrastructure we have, how many big meetings do we need to have.

Ms. Bowman stated we can be more pro-active, collaborate and call a meeting.

Ms. Waters asked to think about what functionality they want that we don't already have? Melissa Xiong (a parent) offered to help with that.

Review of Open Data Policy for sharing parent information: Ms. Bowman handed out the present policy (on file in the School Committee Office) regarding student records. Melissa Xiong spoke to Ms. Bowman in the summer at a School Committee meeting regarding access to parent's addresses and phone numbers. The District has an opt-in rather than an opt-out policy which is mostly to do with issues around privacy protection and domestic violence. It gives parents more control over what information is shared.

Ms. Nolan stated there have been no system wide school directories around family engagements. At some school's parents have created their own which turns out to be inequitable across the district. We want parents engaged and to opt-in. She personally would rather have an opt-out than opt-in policy. There is the directory information that you have to opt-out and another that they have to opt-in which is confusing. There are two issues with it. Should it be available in electronic form for parent organizations? Printing has a cost associated with it.

Ms. Bowman understands the sensitivity around it but for organizing parents it is a great concept.

Ms. Allen spoke to Ms. MacFarlane and another issue is if it were to be formally an opt-out policy, it would be public information not just to the Cambridge community it gets opened up to outside groups, marketing groups, etc.

Ms. Bowman added parents don't have any ill intent but we have to acknowledge the world we live in and need to protect our family's data and personal information. She also falls on the side of parents that don't want to opt-out. The language is confusing but we could change it to be clearer.

Ms. Rippey suggested they thought it would help get more responses using opt-in. Parents can make edits electronically.

Ms. Waters stated on the paper form they opt-in whoever is listed in Aspen is the primary parent. If they want to make changes they can edit on-line to not use another parent's information. Or for example, we could let the "Friends of Baldwin" access only the Friends of Baldwin information.

Mr. Smith added it would be another box to check off to give additional consent.

Ms. Rippey said the vision is to have it all electronically. Right now there is a piece of paper that parents have to sign/check off which takes time to enter.

Ms. Nolan asked how would you speed that up?

Ms. Waters replied digitally it could be live. The printing is what takes time and getting the Principal's approval. Clerks need to enter all the paper documents but electronically they could copy and paste information into another document.

Ms. Rippey stated her understanding is one reason we have paper is its more secure. If we have signed consent from the parent and give it to the "Friends of" they don't have to follow our policy and can do certain things that schools cannot do (that we don't have control over) with the information.

Ms. Nolan added we could have them sign something.

Ms. MacFarlane added the "Friends of" could say they're an independent nonprofit organization they can ask for information.

Patty they could check off to opt-in.

Ms. Allen asked if there is any data on how many families opt-in. Does the majority opt-in or half?

Ms. Rippey responded mostly elementary opt-in but she can provide the information.

Ms. Waters added some schools have a computer in the lobby for parents to sign up their contact information.

Public Comment:

Ms. Xiong stated that their school PTO has 23 volunteers and their own directory. For example, at Fletcher Maynard Academy most parents don't opt-in so it is a huge equity problem because there is no direct way to get out information to all of them. If there is access digitally, she thinks it would be easier to obtain the information. For example, Belmont lists out what is in the directory and who it is released to.

Ms. Rippey added there could be some layer of protection by password.

Ms. MacFarlane stated if it is password protected only they could access information but that's only as good as the people that are using password protection.

Ms. Waters added access has to be done every year.

Ms. Rippey would separate outside groups, electronically.

Ms. MacFarlane stated an organization could ask why are you releasing information to some organizations and not to others? There could be legal problems. Why are you picking one over another organization? There are issues that can be raised. There are potential risks.

Ms. Bowman said right now we don't share information to "Friends of" organizations. If we did do password protected they could only see a certain school.

Mr. Smith replied they can only see it on the screen but can't download it.

Ms. Bowman reinforced that people's family situations are complex and it can have a negative impact, domestic violence, abuse, adoption; but it would be great to connect families within a school.

Ms. Nolan stated it would be good to know what other districts do.

Ms. Rippey added it is not safe to assume that people don't opt-in because they don't know about, for example PTO's. That's not where most of our resources are devoted; its building relationships between schools and families. It is not a priority to focus research time on but we can spend time on it.

Ms. Bowman asked can we do a 3-year time period of the number of how many families have opted in/out.

Ms. Nolan added we don't know because we don't have neighborhood based schools. That is part of the challenge we have as a city and that is why we want to have a directory so parents can reach out to others.

Ms. Waters stated a benefit of digitally is they can sort by teacher, address, middle schools are categorized as grade 6, 7, and 8 then alphabetically.

Ms. Bowman asked to do a digital version, does it need a vote?

Ms. MacFarlane replied it just says a book not whether it is digital format. Directory information is a federal statute.

Ms. Bowman stated our three next steps are;

1. Digital access for families or community based groups that want to organize
2. Figure out the past few years whether they have opt-in vs. opt-out
3. Review other districts across the Commonwealth to see how they manage this policy

Motion to adjourn at 7:08 PM by Ms. Nolan seconded by Ms. Bowman.

Terry Gist
Confidential Secretary to the School Committee

Submitted Documents:

- Social Media and Digital Communication Guidelines for Staff
- Jackson Public Schools – Social Media Policy and Guidelines – Staff
- Social Media Guidelines for Faculty and Staff
- JRA-Student Records
- Cambridge Public Schools Refresh Project

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

Late Motion by Ms. Bowman: that the School Committee send a letter of congratulations to honor the 145th anniversary of St. Paul AME Church in Cambridge MA. Saint Paul AME is the first African-American church established in the city and the school district is directly connected to that legacy through the service of former School Committee Member Dr. Henrietta S. Attles who also shared a significant history with this church as being one of the First Ladies of St. Paul AME Church.

10. Announcements:

The Mayor announced that last night the City Council unanimously voted to pass the City Manager's allocation of \$160,000.00 for the expansion of food services to all students that previously qualified for a reduced lunch they will now qualify for full free lunch, and a universal breakfast across CPSD (starting with K-8) and DHSP preschools.

The Mayor and Dr. Salim will be serving lunch to CRLS students in celebration of National School Lunch Week tomorrow, October 18, 2018 in the main cafeteria. Mr. Kimbrough volunteered to be there also.

Mayor McGovern thanked all supporters and volunteers who participated in the Cradles to Crayons drive which ends on Thursday, October 18, 2018.

The Cambridge Citizens Committee on Civic Unity is hosting an interactive presentation on implicit bias by Dr. Mahzarin R. Banaji on Wednesday, October 17, 2018 at the Cambridge Rindge and Latin School in the Fitzgerald Theatre at 6:00 p.m.

11. Late Orders:

It was voted to adopt the following:

Motion by Mr. Fantini, that the School Committee send a letter of condolence to Mr. Robert Travers on the loss of his uncle Joseph W. Travers, a retired navy veteran in WWII.

Motion by Mr. Fantini, that the School Committee send a letter of condolence to Mr. James Monagle on the loss of his father Paul Monagle, a retired navy veteran in WWII.

12. Communications from City Officers: None

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

- Agenda
- District Outcomes: Chronic Absenteeism PowerPoint presentation
- Public Schools of Brookline Weight/Obesity and Middle/High School Health Survey Data

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

- Natalie Dickerman, item **#18-248**

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

- Piotr Mitros Chronic absenteeism

On a motion by Ms. Nolan, seconded by Ms. Fantini, it was voted to adjourn (8:40 p.m.).

Attest:


Dosha Beard
Executive Secretary