158 Spring Street Programming Discussion

Spring 2026

CAMBRIDGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS
EMPOWERING STUDENT EXCELLENCE

What is CPS looking to accomplish?

(What problem are we trying to solve?)

How do we put more CPS **students in better positions to succeed**, with a particular emphasis on supporting students qualifying in high-need categories?

Critical principles to guide deliberation:

- Analysis must apply a **district-wide lens** so that the strategy is congruent with the other challenges and opportunities the district is confronting.
- Investment cannot be contingent upon particular set of specialized interests without factoring **long-term and community-wide implications**.
- Analysis must take into account the **financial limitations** and **relevant timelines**.
- Building must be **fully utilized with a coherent educational program** that capitalizes on the infrastructure rather than coexisting with it.
- Consistent commitment to prioritize **students qualifying as high-need**.

What is the context for this discussion?

(How do we ensure this decision is not made in a vacuum?)

How do we ensure that the decision as to which school(s) or program(s) occupy 158 Spring Street enhance the district's capacity to serve all students?



- District's strategic planning process is underway to establish long-term goals, specifically a four-year plan and 10-year vision arc.
- City completed major infrastructure investment with the opening of Tobin/DVUS (preceded by MLK/PAUS and KO/CSUS).
- City implemented three-path universal preschool program (year 3).
- Current feeder pattern developed through Innovation Agenda.
- Controlled Choice Policy governing school assignment, contemplating specific educational pathways, i.e. language immersion and Montessori program.
- Long-term facilities condition assessment identifies specific capital improvement needs across remaining school infrastructure.

What are some specific challenges that could be confronted?

(How does CPS maximize the impact of this opportunity?)

Given the context in which this discussion will unfold, what are some considerations for how to maximize the positive impact of this decision?

Opportunities:

- Support for lower performing schools to create conditions more likely to yield higher student achievement.
- Response to enrollment demands.
- Alignment of high-need and/or early childhood programs.
- Foster more choice.
- Prioritize students qualifying as high-need.
- Safeguard against school deterioration.
- Maximize operational efficiency.

How/why did 158 Spring Street become a priority for Capital Investment?

Key elements to the conversation around infrastructure and programmatic decisions:

1	**High concentration of CPS students live in the vicinity of 158 Spring Street**	CPS fully committed to maintain elementary school presence in East Cambridge
2	**Existing facility has capacity to seat over 650 students**	Opportunity to enroll a significantly higher number of students to provide for the more efficient utilization of resources
3	**Abutting John A Ahern field affords an opportunity for optimization of space for use by school community and Cambridge community at-large**	Significant play space available, more so than most other schools especially in the Eastern part of city
4	**Opportunities for instructional synergies with programs that support students in high-need categories.**	Opportunities to incorporate programs supporting high-need students into infrastructure planning

Preliminary Renovation Priorities Inside Building

Area for Potential Improvement	Impact Type	Priorities
Auditorium Gymnasium Technology Flex space(s)	Instructional	Vendors and school/city officials have already begun reexamining the building to determine what critical infrastructure needs to be incorporated into renovations. There will be high/medium/and low priorities identified. There will be multiple scenarios considered, but ultimately given the limitation on the investment, projects will proceed according to urgency and systems' conditions.
Cafeteria floor and ceiling Restroom floors Framing and drywall Finish carpentry Reception area/lobby	Aesthetic	
Sanitary systems and pest control Asbestos abatement PA systems	Safety	
HVAC systems Elevators Plumbing systems	Operational	

Variability of those costs will influence what can be accomplished during this renovation. Some items listed will be addressed cosmetically, others operationally.

Opportunities to Consider for 158 Spring Street

These are potential uses/plans for 158 Spring Street: All require more community input.

Option A:

MOVE A SCHOOL

Option B:

MERGE TWO ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Option C:

MERGE TWO UPPER SCHOOLS



Option D:

CREATE A SCHOOL or ELC

Option E:

RELINQUISH BUILDING

Option F:

PRESERVE AS SWING SPACE/USE AS ADMIN

What's Next?

1. Circulate options with greater specificity (implications)
2. Reduce options based on feasibility
3. Inform and engage community - answer questions
4. Engage specific school communities that could be affected
5. Engage City of Cambridge municipal government
6. Engage East Cambridge residents
7. Cambridge School Committee guidance and deliberation