

2021 Town Annual Report

Report of the

CANTON SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

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Hours of Operation Monday through Friday 8 AM to 4 PM

OVERVIEW

Throughout 2021, in collaboration with staff, families, and community, the Canton Public Schools (CPS) engaged students in strong learning experiences, all the while navigating ever-changing COVID-19 pandemic guidance to implement numerous, layered mitigation strategies to ensure a safe learning environment for all our students.

At every step, the District was committed to educational continuity, excellence and equity for all, and student and staff well-being. Although moving between the learning models necessitated by the COVID-19 pandemic was challenging, CPS strived to create optimal learning conditions, a sense of normalcy, and moments of joy for our school community. The shift from the Hybrid Learning Model to All-In Learning in spring 2021 was met with celebration and excitement; summer brought an array of new enrichment and Summer Scholars programming; and fall 2021 marked the start of our *#ChampionsofExcellence* mantra, which calls every member of our school community to embrace a renewed and deepened “Culture of Achievement, Equity, Inspiration and Joy.”

CPS extends deep gratitude to Nurse Leader Lauren Pushard and the District’s nursing team; School Physician Dr. Dan Muse; and the Canton Board of Health for their extraordinary service in providing us well-researched COVID-19 protocol guidance, administering various testing programs (test and stay, pooled testing, and at-home antigen tests), and offering ongoing counsel to CPS so that we could maintain student and staff health and safety during the pandemic.

Even as CPS grappled with educating students in a pandemic, we celebrated milestones that point to a bright future for our students:

- In its quest to renovate or replace the Galvin Middle School, the District moved into the Senior Study portion of the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) process.
- Governor Charlie Baker, Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito and Education Commissioner Jeff Riley visited GMS to recognize its approach to project-based learning and STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and math) initiatives.
- Many of our teachers were recognized as leaders in their fields, including Mike Eromin, CHS Social Studies teacher, who was selected for the William Spratt Award for Excellence in Teaching Secondary Social Studies by the Massachusetts Council for the Social Studies; Michael Farkas, CHS Spanish teacher, who was nominated as an ACTFL (American Council on the Teaching of

Foreign Languages) Emerging Leader for the Leadership Initiative for Language Learning by the Massachusetts Foreign Language Association Board of Directors; and Heidi Olson, Pre-K-12 World Languages Coordinator and Spanish teacher, who was named a model unit planner and a webinar facilitator for the Massachusetts World Languages Framework Volunteer Implementation Team by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

- Canton High School was ranked 47 among Massachusetts public high schools in the 2021 *US News and World Best High Schools* report.
- The District had several notable staffing changes, including the appointment of Assistant Superintendent Derek Folan to the position of Interim Superintendent for the 2021-2022 school year. In addition, GMS Principal Sarah Shannon was appointed Interim Assistant Superintendent, and Stephen Marshall joined the district as Director of Finance and Operations.
- Jeffrey Sperling was named CHS Principal, and Dr. Michael Green stepped in as Interim GMS Principal. Jaclyn Abrams was named PreK-5 Humanities Coordinator.
- Drawing from the CPS 2019-2024 Strategic Framework, the School Committee and CPS leadership established and made significant progress on District Action Goals for the 2021-2022 school year. The collaboration resulted in agreed-upon focus areas and expectations that drove operations to create the best learning environment for all students.

BUDGET

The School Department operating budget for the 2021-2022 school year is distributed as follows:

Salaries	\$39,892,811
Expenses	<u>\$7,899,851</u>
Total	\$47,792,662

The above figure represents a 3.48% increase above the 2020-2021 budget.

The operating budget of \$47,792,662 is supplemented with revenue offsets projected at \$3,072,715 from revolving (fee-based) accounts and reserve fund accounts and \$3,013,003 of federal, state and private grants.

Revolving Accounts/Reserve Funds

Athletic User Fees	\$100,000
Building Rental Fees	\$50,000
Pre-School Revolving	\$100,000
Special Education Circuit Breaker Revolving	\$2,572,715
Special Education Reserve	\$250,000
TOTAL	\$3,072,715

Federal/ State/Private Grants

SPECIAL EDUCATION 94-142	\$881,724
AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN:IDEA	\$186,368
AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN:IDEA-EARLY CHILDHOOD	\$16,580
AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN:IDEA-YOUTH II	\$4,991

SPECIAL EDUCATION Early Childhood	\$30,839
PROFICIENCY-BASED OUTCOMES FOR LANGUAGES OTHER THAN ENGLISH	\$14,320
STUDENT OPPORTUNITY ACT EVIDENCE BASED PROGRAMS	\$62,260
SUMMER SCHOOL EXPANSION AND ENGAGEMENT	\$90,800
QUALITY ENHANCEMENTS IN AFTER-SCHOOL AND OUT-OF-SCHOOL TIME	\$54,500
FY22 TITLE I	\$138,310
FY21 TITLE I	\$17,689
FY22 TITLE II	\$53,991
FY21 TITLE II	\$26,722
TITLE III	\$12,958
FY22 TITLE IV	\$10,000
FY21 TITLE IV	\$10,000
CARES ESSER II EMERGENCY RELIEF (FY21 CARRYOVER)*	\$340,987
CARES ESSER III EMERGENCY RELIEF	\$929,679
i2LEARNING	\$19,800
COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL HEALTH SERVICES	\$80,000
KYLE CARES	\$1,000
PROJECT LEAD THE WAY (CHS)	\$21,567
PROJECT LEAD THE WAY (GMS)	\$7,918
TOTAL	\$3,013,003

**Unspent prior year grant funds carried over to FY22.*

The District's FY22 budget, approved at Annual Town Meeting, totaled \$47,792,662. This 3.48% increase from the previous year's budget supports the District's efforts to effectively meet the needs of all our students from grades PreK-12.

The FY22 budget supported the following actions:

- Advance operating expenses to support the Strategic Framework and its four Strategic Objectives.
- Continue to meet the contractual obligations of all collective bargaining agreements.
- Address special education out-of-district tuition and transportation expenses that have been increasing since FY18.

The District's FY22 Cash Capital Budget totaled \$800,000. The district used the cash capital funds to address the following:

Building/Grounds Repairs and Improvements

- Fitness Centers Upgrades - GMS and CHS
- Replacement Classrooms and Main Lobby Floor Tiles - Luce

- Painting and Furnishing of Lobby - JFK
- Replacement 2nd Floor Corridor Tiles - Hansen
- HVAC Maintenance - District
- Library Carpet Replacement - GMS
- Innovation Lab Renovation - CHS
- Installation of (4) Basketball Hoops with Backboards - JFK

Technology

- Administrative (Non-Instructional) Staff Desktop Upgrade - District
- Replacement Classroom Phones - District
- Chromebooks - Grade 3 Elementary
- Classroom Projector and Amplifier - CHS
- Café Projector Screen - JFK
- iPads - Kindergarten Elementary
- Replacement Laptops - District
- Ruckus Classroom Access Points - District

Safety & Security

- Creation of a Strategic Operations Plan - District
- Door Lock Hardware & Interior Door Window Coverings - District

Program Improvements

- PreK-5 Classroom Libraries - Elementary
- K-5 Book Rooms - Elementary
- K-5 Professional Resources for Literacy Instruction - Elementary
- K-5 Literacy Assessment - Elementary
- Visual Arts DSLR Cameras - CHS
- Visual Arts Computer Lab - CHS
- Visual Arts Display Cases - GMS
- Memorial Field Lighting Control System - CHS
- CHS Auditorium Updates - CHS
- Replacement of Classroom-Based Instruments - District
- Ukuleles - Elementary
- Laboratory Probes Science - CHS

Furniture & Fixtures

- Stainless Steel Worktables - District
- Round Cafeteria Tables - GMS
- Custodial Equipment - District
- Forklift - District

Debt Capital

- Unit Ventilators - Hansen
- Unit Ventilators - GMS
- Rooftop Unit - CHS

STUDENT ENROLLMENT

The following are enrollment figures for the pre-school, elementary, middle and high schools for October 2020 (school year 2020-21) and October 2021 (school year 2021-22):

	2020-2021 Oct. 1, 2019	2021-2022 Oct. 1, 2020	Difference
Pre-school	25	79	+54
Elementary	1421	1456	+35
Middle School	770	790	+20
High School	957	903	-54
Out-of-District	52	58	+6
Total	3225	3286	+61

Demographics 2020 and 2021

The chart below shows the race/ethnicity percentages of the Canton Public Schools student population in 2020 (total enrollment 3173) and 2021 (total enrollment 3253, not including out-of-district students).

Race/Ethnicity

	% in 2020	% in 2021	% Difference
African American/Black	11	11.3	+0.3
Asian	10.9	11.1	+0.2
Hispanic	5.9	6.8	+0.9
Native American	.1	.1	0
White	65.9	63.8	-2.1
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Island	.2	.2	0
Multi-race Non-Hispanic	6.2	6.7	+0.5
Total Enrollment	3173	3253	+80

Other Student Sub-Groups

	% in 2020	% in 2021	% Difference
Limited English Proficient	2.2	2.8	+0.6
Students with Disabilities	12.9	14	+1.1
Economically Disadvantaged	17	22	+5

RETIREMENTS

The following staff members retired during 2021.

<u>Employee</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Years of Service</u>
Sarah Armour-Nemetz	Educational Assistant	11
Stephen Bauer	Teacher	14
Margaret Clifford	Teacher	26
Julie Davidson	OT	13
Denise Duffett	Administrative Assistant	22
Nancy Feeny	Administrative Assistant	21
Jennifer Fischer-Mueller	Superintendent	5
Deborah Gray	Food Services	30
Diane Griffin	Administrative Assistant	15
Lisa Hansen	Teacher	22
Claire Lund	Teacher	23
Susan McManus	Teacher	28
Michelle Mendez	Teacher	17
Barry Nectow	Business Manager	7
Cathy Paciorkowski	Teacher	27
Donna Scott	Food Services	33
Doreen Shea	Administrative Assistant	23
Cathy Slusarz	Educational Assistant	20
June Warren	Nurse	21
Patricia Willis	Teacher	34
Elba Zayas	Administrative Assistant	27

Congratulations and thanks to all our retirees for their decades of service to the Canton Public Schools.

STUDENT HONORS, AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Each year, CHS holds both a Scholastic Honors Night and a Scholarship Night. In 2021, these events were held virtually because of the pandemic. We extend our most sincere thanks and appreciation to our community partners whose generosity awarded the class of 2021 \$294,584 in scholarship money. Below are just some of the notable achievements:

- **Principals Student Service Awards**
 - Kathryn Benson, Elias Jabbour, Anisha Cherukuri, Meghan Labelle, Jack Hernon, Gabrielle McDuffie, Abigail Nix
- **Canton High School Citizenship Award**
 - Nicole Desjardins, Maria Femia, Amy Hysten, Meghan Labelle, Faith Nelson, Abigail Dimock, Allie Gefteas, William Keefe, Marie Messinger, Alexis Newton, Amanda Signorini, Renee Dooley, Matthew Giglio, Mary Kelley, Jacqueline Morrissey, Eric Poole
- **Shayne M. Cabino Memorial Scholarship Fund**
 - Norah Brown, Owen Donovan, Isabella Botelho, Maddison Rousseau
- **Scott M. Herr Memorial Foundation Scholarship**
 - Grace Hannigan, Katherine Lane, Ellie Roberts, Thomas Singleton
- **James & Beatrice Salah Family Foundation Scholarship**
 - Olivia Chinsen, Renee Dooley, Paige Drury, Matthew McDonough, Elissa Praik
- **Balsamo Family Memorial Charitable Foundation Scholarship**
 - Michael Gaffney, Mary Kelley
- **CAASA Scholarship**
 - Amy Hysten, Shannon Malloy, Amanda Signorini
- **Don and Marilyn Rodman Scholarship**
 - Alexis Newton
- **Friends of Doc. Levrault Scholarship-**
 - Kanitta Conard, Thomas Singleton
- **“Spirit of 76” Award**
 - Amy Hysten, Jack Albert
- **American Association of University of Women (A.A.U.W.)**
 - Amy Hysten, Rachel Kupferman
- **BNI Scholarship Fund**
 - Abigail Dimock
- **Canton High School Alumni Scholarship**
 - Owen Donovan, Shannon Malloy
- **Don Smith Memorial Award**
 - James DeLello
- **The Duggan Scholarship Fund**
 - Amaya Christopher, Matthew Seto
- **The Bud Herzog Theater Arts Scholarship Fund**
 - Laura Emde
- **Matthew Christian Memorial Scholarship**
 - Kanitta Conard, Patrick O’Leary
- **Virginia Merchant Memorial Scholarship**
 - Kanitta Conard, Nicole Wright
- **Ponkapoag Civic Association Scholarship**
 - Caitlyn Cahill, Grace Lesser, Thomas Singleton
- **Ponkapoag Grange Scholarship**
 - Nicole Desjardins
- **The Frank B & Elizabeth Simoni Foundation Scholarship**
 - Alexander Lopez, Marie Messinger
- **William Raveis Real Estate Scholarship**
 - Nicole Wright

National Merit Scholarship Semifinalists

Four Canton High seniors qualified as National Merit Scholarship Semifinalists: Warda Ahmed, Suraj Ramanathan, Hannah Wang and Alison Ye. The National Merit Scholarship Program is an academic competition that recognizes students for their outstanding performance on the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT).

Massachusetts State Seal of Biliteracy

In June 2021, Canton High School students participated in the Massachusetts State Seal of Biliteracy for the first time. All four students who took the Assessment of Performance toward Proficiency in Languages assessments earned Language Coalition Awards at the Intermediate Mid, Intermediate High, and Advanced Low proficiency in French (Camila Cruz and Harshitha Valluri), Mandarin (Eric Yang and Zoe Yu), and Spanish (Camila Cruz). One student from the class of 2021, Camila Cruz, was awarded the Massachusetts State Seal of Biliteracy in French and the Massachusetts State Seal of Biliteracy with Distinction in Spanish at graduation.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

CPS students continue to perform well across multiple measures, including state and national standardized assessments. For more details about Canton students' achievement, visit the Canton Public Schools District profile on the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) website (profiles.doe.mass.edu). The information is also linked here:

<https://reportcards.doe.mass.edu/2021/DistrictReportcard/00500000>.

MCAS Results

In 2021, students in grades 3-8 took modified 2021 Spring MCAS exams. Each student completed one session of a grade-level exam in English Language Arts (ELA) and Math, and Grade 5 and 8 completed one session of Science, Technology and Engineering. In a typical year, students would have had two sessions of each subject. Students in Grades 3-8 on our Remote Learning Pathway were allowed to take the MCAS exam from home. Results should be analyzed with caution due to the modified format. Students in Grade 10 took two sessions of the exam, and all students were required to come into school for in-person testing sessions.

The chart below details the percentage of students who met or exceeded expectations on the MCAS Achievement tests in Spring 2021. For each grade and for each test – ELA, Math or Science – Canton students, on average, outperformed students from across the Commonwealth.

MCAS 2021 Results: Percentage of Students Scoring at Meeting or Exceeding Expectations (or Proficient/Advanced)						
	ELA		Math		Science	
Grade	Canton	State	Canton	State	Canton	State
3-8	60	46	45	33	53	42
HS	77	64	64	52	*	*

*Grade 10 results for Spring 2021 STE are not provided because students in the class of 2023 were not required to take the STE test.

COVID-19 also disrupted the College Board testing in 2021. Tests were modified due to the pandemic, and students were impacted by hybrid and remote learning structures. CHS was able to increase the number of AP tests taken despite many challenges, and our students performed well on these assessments.

Advanced Placement Test Score Results: 2021

Number of AP Courses offered at	Number of AP Tests Taken	% AP Tests with
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CHS		Scores of 3 or Above
18	572	61%

CHS CLASS OF 2021 – Colleges and Universities

The list below shows the *attending* colleges and universities for the graduating class of 2021. Canton’s ongoing support creates a high-quality school district that serves the children of Canton well.

Post-graduation plans for the Class of 2021

- 86% attended a 4-year college
- 7% attended a 2-year college
- 2% participated in continuing education (prep school and our 18-22 program)
- 2% joined the military
- 3% joined the workforce
- 95% of students continued their education after CHS

American Musical and Dramatic Academy	Laboure College	Stonehill College
Assumption College	Lehigh University	Suffolk University
Babson College	Loyola University New Orleans	The New School
Bates College	Massachusetts Bay Community College	The University of Alabama
Bennington College	Massachusetts College of Art and Design	The University of Tampa
Bentley University	Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts	The University of Tennessee-Knoxville
Berklee College of Music	Massachusetts Maritime Academy	Tulane University of Louisiana
Boston College	Massasoit Community College	Union College
Boston University	McGill University	United States Air Force
Bridgewater State University	MCPHS University	United States Air Force Academy
Bryant University	Merrimack College	United States Coast Guard
Bryn Mawr College	Miami University-Oxford	United States Marines
Carleton University	Michigan State University	United States Military Academy Preparatory School - Army
Carnegie Mellon University	Middlebury College	University of Bridgeport
Clemson University	Military	University of California-Irvine
Coastal Carolina University	Nazareth College	University of Colorado Boulder
College of Charleston	New York University	University of Connecticut
College of the Holy Cross	Northeastern University	University of Delaware
Continuing Education	Pace University	University of Hawaii at Manoa
Cornell University	Pennsylvania State University	University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Curry College	Plymouth State University	University of Maine
Cushing Academy	Porter and Chester	University of Massachusetts-Amherst
Dartmouth College	Prep School	University of Massachusetts-Boston
Dean College	Providence College	University of Massachusetts-Dartmouth
Delgado Community College	Purdue University-Main Campus	University of Massachusetts-Lowell
Emerson College	Quincy College	University of Miami
Employment	Quinnipiac University	University of New Hampshire-Main Campus
Fairfield University	Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute	University of Rhode Island
Fitchburg State University	Rhode Island School of Design	University of South Carolina-Columbia
Florida Gulf Coast	Rivier University	University of Southern California
Framingham State University	Roger Williams University	University of Utah
Gap year	Rollins College	University of Vermont

George Washington University	Roxbury Community College	University of Massachusetts-Boston
Hampton University	Sacred Heart University	Villanova University
Hartwick College	Saint Anselm	Wentworth Institute of Technology
High Point University	Saint Michael's College	West Virginia University
Howard University	Salve Regina University	Western New England University
James Madison University	Simmons University	Worcester Polytechnic Institute
		Worcester State University

SCHOOL COMMITTEE UPDATE

In 2021, the School Committee continued align priorities and set high professional standards against the four pillars of the CPS Strategic Framework: Achieving Educational Excellence and Ensuring Equity; Cultivating School Culture and Climate; Transforming Teaching and Learning; and Achieving District Excellence.

In support of this, the School Committee embarked upon a relationship with the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC) to adopt and implement best practices around District oversight and decision-making. With a focus on collaboration, accountability and transparency, the Committee pursued work in a number of key areas in 2021 that included but were not limited to:

- ***Leadership during Transition*** - The School Committee successfully navigated the retirements of Superintendent Dr. Jennifer Fischer-Mueller and Business Manager Barry Nectow, moving quickly to create a transition plan and appoint Assistant Superintendent Derek Folan as Interim Superintendent and hire Stephen Marshall as the new Director of Finance and Operations.

In addition, the Committee welcomed two new members in 2021, Kendall O’Halloran (elected April 2021) and Laura Arboleda (appointed December 2021) and, together with the Select Board, managed a mid-cycle appointment to fill a Committee seat vacated by Charles Rae.

- ***Accountable District Action Performance*** - In collaboration with MASC and CPS administrators, the School Committee held three summer workshops that focused on operations, efficiency and District goal setting. The resulting *2021-2022 District Action Goals* were presented in September 2021. A long-term planning agenda was implemented to ensure that District Action Goals would be a core focus of School Committee meetings; strategic revisions made to the School Committee meeting agenda resulted in regular reports on Teaching and Learning; School Committee members captured and quantified their involvement in subcommittees, task forces and liaison roles at the local, regional and state levels; and the Committee launched the consent agenda, set clear timeframe expectations for presentations, and approved new guidelines for public comment.
- ***Policy Work Process Improvement*** - Early in 2021, the Policy Subcommittee (Kristian Darigan Merenda and Kendall O’Halloran) reviewed and made recommendations that resulted in the School Committee approving 32 amended or new policies. Responding to the COVID-19 pandemic alone required multiple revisions of the District’s Face Covering Policy and the CPS COVID-19 Protocols document. Upon the Policy Subcommittee’s recommendation, the School Committee contracted with the MASC Policy Service to perform a complete legal review of the entire CPS policy manual every three years, thereby setting a standard of excellence for best policy practices and legal alignment.
- ***Focus on Financial Transparency and Planning*** - The Finance Subcommittee (Nichola Gallagher and Maureen Moran) and Comprehensive Financial Review Task Force (Kristian Darigan Merenda and Maureen Moran) collaborated with new Director of Finance and

Operations Stephen Marshall to assess past budget practice and improve processes and reporting formats, with the goal of providing greater transparency around the District's financial decisions. In addition, a Comprehensive Financial Review Task Force was created in 2021 to review and support short- and long-term financial planning.

- ***Community Context, Collaboration and Communications*** – To better understand its role within the community, the School Committee conducted a thorough review of educational and leadership industry standards and delved into the history of CPS and the School Committee. Myriad informal discussions with stakeholders, as well as reviewing surveys of parents, guardians and staff, helped School Committee members identify areas of excellence and those needing advancement. The School Committee has prioritized enhancing communication style, substance and format for the administration and schools. Refreshed approaches to emails, blogs, annualized surveys, detailed regular reporting, District- and school-level listening sessions, and special topic presentations were rolled out and well-received.

The School Committee has identified the following initiatives for deliverables in 2022:

- Develop a five-year District Strategic Plan, including academic achievement, financial and operations targets measured in part by a Data Dashboard
- Develop a 2022-2023 District Action Plan
- Conduct contract negotiations with Canton Teachers Association (Unit A), Canton Educational Support Personnel Association (Unit E), and the Administrative Assistants Association, Custodians/Maintenance Union, and Canton Schools Cafeteria Union (AFSCME)
- Conduct Interim Superintendent formative and summative reviews
- Support MSBA funding work for GMS
- Complete a Comprehensive Financial Review
- Review findings from the District Calendar Task Force
- Conduct Routine CPS Legal Counsel Review
- Offer improved, hybrid School Committee member/panelist participation format
- Honor the work of CPS Support Organizations including CAPT, CAPE, etc. in various ways to recognize their contribution and help recruit new volunteers
- Provide greater recognition for all CPS retirees and teachers who achieve professional status

CLOSING

Members of the Canton community continue to be proud of their public schools and understand the relationship between a great town and great schools -- especially through the COVID-19 pandemic.

We are experiencing dramatic changes in our world that drive the needs of our public schools. We focus on the appropriate demand for excellence for every child in our diverse society. We understand the power of culture and climate in our schools to enhance every child's authentic sense of belonging and the need for safety and security. We are adapting the historical nature of public school teaching and learning to prepare students for their unpredictable futures. Finally, we are striving to maintain and enhance our mission-driven school district.

It is with the continued commitment and leadership of the School Committee and support of the Town that the Canton Public Schools will continue its success and be worthy of such pride.

Respectfully submitted,

Kristian Darigan Merenda, Chair, School Committee
Derek Folan, Interim Superintendent of Schools