

**Canton School Committee
Open Meeting
Thursday, December 21, 2023
Minutes**

A. Call to Order: Chair O'Halloran asked for a motion to call to order the Thursday, December 21, 2023 School Committee Open Session Meeting at 5:05 pm. Laura Arboleda made the motion; Kimberly McCourt seconded. Roll call vote was unanimous at 4-0 and recorded as follows:

Laura Arboleda	yea
Kristian Merenda	yea
Kimberly McCourt	yea
Kendall O'Halloran	yea
4 yeas	0 nays

Attendees: Laura Arboleda
Kimberly McCourt
Kristian Merenda
Kendall O'Halloran
Danica Seto, Student Representative (arrived at 6:12 pm)
Derek Folan, Superintendent
Stephen Marshall, Assistant Superintendent of Finance & Operations

Absent: Maureen Moran

B. Executive Session: Members went directly into Executive Session for: **(a)** Purpose 7 - G.L. c. 30A, section 22 - Approve executive session minutes (10/19/23, 11/16/23, 12/6/23 & 12/7/23), **(b)** Purpose 2 - to discuss strategy in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel- Superintendent.

School Committee members returned to Open Session at 6:09 pm.

C. Superintendent Report: Superintendent Folan reported on District progress, highlights, and accolades.

Champions of Excellence:

JFK Visit to Food Pantry: Grade 1 visited the Canton Food Pantry last week and helped stock shelves, weigh items and brought many donations that the JFK community collected. This visit was the culmination of a social studies unit that focused on community service and engagement. It was a phenomenal learning experience and it helped the community.

World Languages Induction Ceremony: Canton High School recently inducted 50 students into three world language Honor Societies.

CHS students pledge to study their respective language throughout their four years of high school. In addition to excelling academically, they must demonstrate curiosity and interest in other cultures and model leadership in using their target language to be included.

Madame Sharyn Hallal and Madame Rebecca Stiles led students in singing the French National Anthem after the induction. Frau Nikoletta Strasser – CHS German teacher, Honor Society advisor and German Exchange leader – inducted students into Delta Epsilon Phi, the German National Honor Society. Francis Burns, advisor of the Canton Chapter of the Spanish Honor Society “Macondo,” represented the CHS Spanish teachers and presided over the Spanish induction ceremony.

All inductees are members of either junior or senior classes. Students took part in the traditional candle lighting ceremony which symbolizes their “sincere commitment to using their language and cultural skills to promote global understanding.”

PreK-12 World Language Coordinator Heidi Olson served as the emcee of the ceremony, while myself and School Committee Member Kristian Merenda offered remarks, commending the students, staff and families for their commitment to excellence and the world languages.

YRBS: The District administered the Youth Risk Behavior Survey to our 7th and 8th graders, and Grade 9-12 at Canton High School. The YRBS, administered every two years, provides important data to inform our wellness curriculum, our school programming (especially in the realm of social emotional learning), and our student needs. High praise to preK-12 Wellness Coordinator Adam Hughes for coordinating the administration YRBS Survey, in conjunction with staff and building administration.

Winter Concert: CHS held its winter concert on Tuesday of this week. Congratulations to the CHS performing arts staff and students.

Important Dates and Events

Dec. 22	Early Release: PreK-12, Winter Break
Dec. 25 - Jan. 1	No School: Winter Break
Jan. 2	School resumes for all grades
Jan. 4	School Committee Meeting, 6:00 pm, CHS DLL
Jan. 5	Early Release, PreK-12, Professional Development
Jan. 12	CHS Talent Show, 6:30 pm, CHS Auditorium
Jan. 15	No School, Martin Luther King Jr. Day
Jan. 18	School Committee Meeting, 6:00 pm, CHS DLL

D. New Business

1. **GMS Building Project Progress Update:** Superintendent Folan reviewed decisions made at the joint meeting of the School Committee and School Building Committee on Wednesday, December 20th. Discussion and subsequent unanimous vote by School Committee members adopted the 5-8 grade configuration. Mr. Folan was grateful for the decision to allow expanded educational opportunities for students in a developmentally appropriate designed space. Mr. Folan also announced that the School Building Committee elected, again unanimously, to support a full, 800 seat auditorium, in part as an investment in the already strong Performing Arts programs in the District and the town. Canton awaits feedback from the MSBA on the recently submitted Education Plan.
2. **FY25 Rodman PreK Tuition:** Mr. Marshall presented the 2024-2025 Rodman Preschool tuition rates. He recommended a 3% increase for all programs (2,3,4,and 5 day) using comparables from surrounding towns as an indicator. He also noted that a vote of approval will allow the lottery process to begin. Chair O'Halloran asked for a motion for the approval to increase the tuition rates for the Rodman Early Childhood Program for the 2024-25 academic year. Kristian Merenda made the motion; Laura Arboleda seconded. Ensuing vote was unanimous and recorded as follows:

Laura Arboleda	yea
Kristian Merenda	yea
Kimberly McCourt	yea
Kendall O'Halloran	yea
4 yeas	0 nays
3. **Quarter 1 Financial Report:** Mr. Marshall presented the Q1 financial report, indicating that salaries, followed by out-of-district tuitions, transportation and utilities comprise the bulk of the budget. He gave a high level review of the budget, particularly explaining out of district tuition costs. Mr. Marshall attributed the costs to rate hikes of 7-14% rather than a rise in Student Services needs. He explained that CircuitBreaker, Esser Grants, and other state funds offset these costs up to 65%; however, these reimbursements are paid out in 4 quarterly payments beginning in September of the following academic year. Mr. Marshall summarized revolving accounts and provided several versions broken out by cost center, location, function, and Special Education for ease of review by the Committee. Hearing no further questions, Chair O'Halloran asked for a motion for a vote of approval for the Quarter 1 Financial Report. Laura Arboleda made the motion; Kimberly McCourt seconded. Ensuing vote was unanimous and recorded as follows:

Laura Arboleda	yea
Kristian Merenda	yea
Kimberly McCourt	yea

Kendall O'Halloran yea
4 yeas 0 nays

Article for Annual Town Meeting: Mr. Marshall presented the Article for the 2024 Annual Town Meeting requesting an increase in the Special Education Reserve account appropriation by \$1M. These funds, the actual amount of which is dependent on the availability of town operating budget funds, would only be used for Special Education expenses. Hearing no questions or comments, Chair O'Halloran asked for a motion for a vote of approval to submit the FY24 ATM Article to the Town for inclusion in the 2024 ATM warrant. Vote was held to post Public Comment to allow a Canton resident time to comment.

E. Unfinished Business

1. **Policy Section H:** Chair O'Halloran presented Section H, *Negotiation Goals*, for a vote of approval, indicating that the contents had been reviewed by the subcommittee and Mr. Jim Hardy of MASC. A typographical error was noted. Hearing no other comments or questions, Ms. O'Halloran called for a motion for approval of Policy Section H as written and presented, including the correction of the error. Kristian Merenda made the motion; Kimberly McCourt seconded. Ensuing vote was unanimous and recorded as follows:

Laura Arboleda yea
Kristian Merenda yea
Kimberly McCourt yea
Kendall O'Halloran yea
4 yeas 0 nays

F. Public Comment: Canton resident, Jennifer O'Donnell, raised concerns of parental notifications not published, as well as hearing no response from the District regarding her March 2023 correspondence cataloging her concerns of an incident in the schools and request for further information.

G. Chair O'Halloran then asked for a motion for a vote of approval to submit the FY24 ATM Article to the Town for inclusion in the 2024 ATM warrant. Laura Arboleda made the motion; Kristian Merenda seconded. Ensuing vote was unanimous and recorded as follows:

Laura Arboleda yea
Kristian Merenda yea
Kimberly McCourt yea
Kendall O'Halloran yea

4 yeas 0 nays

H. Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations Report: Mr. Marshall had nothing further to report.

I. Consent Agenda:

Open Session Minutes: December 7, 2023

Warrants: December 1, 2023, December 22, 2023

Chair O'Halloran announced the contents of the Consent Agenda asking if there were any requests for discussion or removal of any of the items for further review. Hearing none, Ms. O'Halloran asked for a motion to approve Open Session Minutes from 12.7.23 and Warrants for 12.1.23 and 12.22.23 as written and presented. Laura Arboleda made the motion; Kimberly McCourt seconded. Roll Call vote was unanimous at 4-0 and recorded as follows:

Laura Arboleda	yea
Kristian Merenda	yea
Kimberly McCourt	yea
Kendall O'Halloran	yea

4 yeas 0 nays

J. Update of Sub-Committee, Task Force and Liaison Posts:

Mr. Marshall: regarding CCPC funds, Mr. Marshall reported the JFK playground request will be funded at a reduced amount with gratitude to an expected generous donation.

Ms. Merenda:

1. School Building Committee meetings are scheduled for January 3rd and 17th;
2. BRC will meet 1/16/24;
3. In January, the town will ask for information as they begin to compile the Annual Report.

Ms. McCourt: met with students of the Hansen Garden Club; had a healthy conversation about goals and plans for landscaping. Will be forwarding information including ideas for plans.

Ms. Arboleda: nothing to report;

Ms. O'Halloran:

1. Policy Subcommittee meetings have been scheduled through January;
2. CCPC-Committee members will meet on January 8th to make decisions on funding;

3. Content & Communications-Fall Sports section ad has been delayed until next week; new student designer, Jaden Lamb, is doing an amazing job on graphics.

Superintendent Folan:

1. Special thanks to CAPTS for their work this time of year;
2. Technology Board of Directors-welcomed new Executive Director, Emily Parks;
3. To help advocate changing classroom spaces, at a January 2024 School committee meeting, Mr. Folan will provide informational notification of requests for additional funds to their capital reserve accounts for allocation of these changes.

Danica Seto:

1. National Honor Society Toys for Tots drive continues through 12.22;
2. Winter Concert was well attended and a huge hit;
3. the recent Book Drive collected 727 books that will be distributed among the elementary schools and the Rodman;
4. the Gingerbread Fund raised over \$500 for Habitat for Humanity;
5. media photos from the Captains Conference are available for viewing;
6. First round of College admissions are beginning to come in; seniors are excited.
7. Seniors are also working on their externships.

K. Other Business: None

L. Future Business: The next Open Session meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 4, 2024 @ 6:00 pm.

M. Adjournment: Hearing no further questions or requests for discussion on any topic, Chair O'Halloran asked for a motion to call to adjourn the Thursday, December 21, 2023 School Committee Open Session Meeting at 7:18 pm. Laura Arboleda made the motion; Kristian Merenda seconded. Roll call vote was unanimous at 4-0 and recorded as follows:

Laura Arboleda	yea
Kristian Merenda	yea
Kimberly McCourt	yea
Kendall O'Halloran	yea
4 yeas	0 nays

Documents viewed/reviewed:

Superintendent's Report, Thursday, December 21, 2023
FY25 Rodman Early Childhood Program Tuition Memo
FY24 1st Quarter Financial Report-as of September 30, 2023
FY24 ATM Articles Submission Memo
Policy Section H - Clean Copy dated December 21, 2023
Open Session Minutes of December 7, 2023