

**Canton School Committee  
Open Meeting  
Thursday, April 11, 2024  
Minutes**

**A. Call to Order:** Chair O'Halloran asked for a motion to call to order the Thursday, April 11, 2024 School Committee Open Session Meeting at 5:23 pm. Laura Arboleda made the motion; Maureen Moran seconded. Roll call vote was unanimous at 3-0 and recorded as follows:

Laura Arboleda	yea
Maureen Moran	yea
Kendall O'Halloran	yea

3 yeas                      0 nays

**Attendees:**

Laura Arboleda  
Kimberly McCourt (arrived virtually via Zoom at 5:26 pm)  
Kristian Merenda (arrived virtually via Zoom at 5:26 pm)  
Maureen Moran  
Kendall O'Halloran  
Derek Folan, Superintendent  
Danika Seto, Student Representative (left meeting at 7:41 pm)  
Joanne Campbell, Recording Secretary  
Press/Public

**Absent:** Stephen Marshall, Assistant Superintendent of Finance & Operations

**Guests:** Joshua Fogel,  
Susan Donnellan, Interim Director of Student Services

**B. Executive Session (a)** Purpose 7 - G.L. c. 30A, section 22 - Approve executive session minutes (10/19/23, 3/7/2024, 3/21/24) **(b)** Purpose 2 - to discuss strategy in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel- Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations.

**Members returned from Executive Session at 6:04 pm.**

**C. School Committee Reorganization** Superintendent Folan reopened the Open Session to facilitate the election of School Committee Chair, Vice Chair and Clerk post recent town elections. Mr. Folan asked for nominations for School Committee Chair. Laura Arboleda nominated Kendall O'Halloran; Kimbelrly McCourt seconded. Hearing no further nominations for Chair, Mr. Folan closed nominations. Hearing no requests for discussion, Mr. Folan called for a roll call vote. Vote was unanimous at 5-0 and recorded as follows:

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

5 yeas                      0 nays

Mr. Folan then opened nominations for Vice-Chair. Maureen Moran nominated Laura Arboleda for Vice Chair; Kristian Merenda seconded. Hearing no further nominations for Vice-Chair, Mr. Folan closed nominations. Hearing no requests for discussion, Mr. Folan called for a roll call vote. Vote was unanimous at 5-0 and recorded as follows:

Laura Arboleda	yea
Maureen Moran	yea
Kimberly McCourt	yea
Kristian Merenda	yea
Kendall O'Halloran	yea
5 yeas	0 nays

Mr. Folan then opened nominations for Clerk. Kimberly McCourt nominated Kristian Merenda for Clerk; Kristian Merenda seconded. Hearing no further nominations for Clerk, Mr. Folan closed nominations. Hearing no requests for discussion, Mr. Folan called for a roll call vote. Vote was unanimous at 5-0 and recorded as follows:

Laura Arboleda	yea
Maureen Moran	yea
Kimberly McCourt	yea
Kristian Merenda	yea
Kendall O'Halloran	yea
5 yeas	0 nays

With all voting completed, Superintendent Folan turned over the Open Session meeting to Chair O'Halloran.

**D. Superintendent Report** Superintendent Folan presented District progress, highlights, and accolades.

**Champions of Excellence:**

Solar Eclipse 2024: The Solar Eclipse provided our school community with a fun and exciting memory and learning moment. The District provided eclipse glasses to students in K-8, and they used them to view the eclipse in a safe manner as they were dismissed from school. Very cool!

3rd Annual Great Canton Cleanup Day: A big thank you to the Canton community and the many volunteers who participated in the 3rd Annual Great Canton Cleanup Day. It was nice to see the community collaboration to help clean up many areas of town, especially the schools. A special thank you for Walk, Bike, Hike and the Park and Recreation Department for coordinating the event and the fabulous cookout. Special thanks to School Committee Members Kendall O'Halloran and Kristian Merenda and Principals Yeshi Lamour and Paul McKnight for helping, and thank you to Director Facilities David Buccelli for opening the buildings.

Ice Bucket Challenge: Thanks to the efforts of Ed Amico, a group of senior externship students came together on April 3 to raise money for two local families dealing with ALS by participating in an Ice Bucket Challenge. The event was very inspiring and I am proud to say that our staff and students made a difference in many lives in less than an hour by raising over 15,000 so far

for the Cunningham and Larsen families to assist with medical costs associated with ALS. Way to go Bulldogs!

All State Chorus: Congratulations on a job well done by Rosalyn Grady and Bradley Perlman for singing in the Allstate Chorus! All festival fees were sponsored by Musiccounts! This is an amazing honor and a show of excellence.

Scholastic Writing Awards: Please join me in congratulating the following students who have received a [Scholastic Writing Award](#):

"Unica" by Camila Cutter - Honorable Mention (Essay/Memoir)

"Cantonese" by Jaden Lam - Silver Key (Poetry)

"The Thorns of Grief" by Callie Robinson, Honorable Mention (Short Story)

Thank you to Tara Iacobucci, Rebecca Ashley and the entire CHS English department for helping our students reach academic excellence.

CHS Spring Concert: The CHS Spring Concert was on April 2. Kudos to all who performed. If you did not get a chance to see the concert, you can access [this link](#) to view it - enjoy!

Senior Externship: CHS Senior Externship started in full this week. Below are just some places where students are working. This year, 97 students are participating, over 40% of the senior class.

Canton Public Schools	Accurounds	Real Estate Companies
Law Offices	Dedham and Boston Courts	BCN Productions
Cramer	Personal Finance/Financial Services Companies	Matt Light Foundation
Interior Design	BioTech Company	Mechanic
Curry Athletic Department	Blue Hills Observatory	Fuji Restaurants
Animal Hospital	Dunkin Brands	Construction Company
Canton Town Hall	Canton Parks And Rec	Canton Fire Department
Matchingdonors.com	Marathon Sports (PT)	Brightview Senior Assisted Living
Dental Office	Mount Auburn Hospital	MGH
Rodman Ford		

## Updates

Canton Writes: Tomorrow is the deadline for Canton Writes submissions. As of this past Monday, there are already over 150. Thank you to the ELA Department Heads, Rebecca Ashley, Kristen Morgan and Jackie Abrams for helping coordinate with Mr. Kevin Boyce at Canton Writes - and to all the teachers who encouraged students to participate.

MCAS Schedule: Spring MCAS testing is underway. [Here](#) is a full schedule of ELA and Math MCAS dates. Please refer to this schedule and/or reach out to your building administration if you have any questions.

## Acknowledgments

Educational Assistants Day: Educational Support Professionals (ESPs) Day was April 3. Our EAs play an integral role in our schools and significantly contribute to day-to-day activities inside and outside the classroom. We are so appreciative of the work of all of our Educational Support staff and thank them for their efforts.

School Librarian Appreciation Day: April 4 was National School Librarian Appreciation Day. Thank you to our CPS librarians: CHS librarian Joanne Teliszewski, CHS library aide Annmarie Heelen, GMS librarian Nancy Stockwell-Alpert, and elementary library aides, Maura Bayliss, Emma Harding and Jammie Carty for your work in keeping our libraries in great working order and for helping students find the resources they need to continue learning.

National Assistant Principals Week: April 1-5 is National Assistant Principal Week. Please join me in thanking our Assistant Principals, Nick Fitzgerald, Derek Small, Jim Spillane, Karim Gibson, Kate Gallahue, Kelly Fahey, and Mike Maresca for their hard work and dedicated service to the students of CPS.

Volunteer Month is celebrated this month. A special thank you to CPS volunteers ranging from School Committee members, CAPT members, Room Parents, Field Trip Chaperones, Field Day helpers and so much more. Your work is so important and impactful and makes a difference. Thank you for all you do.

Welcome Returning School Committee members: As a District, we offer a warm welcome back to Kendall O'Halloran on her election for an additional three-year term on the Canton School Committee. We greatly appreciate your support of the school community.

## Important Dates and Events

April 15-19	No School, April Vacation
April 23	CPACSS Virtual Event, Practical Strategies to Boost Executive Functioning Skills, 6:00 pm. Register in advance for this webinar: <a href="https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_kNs3z1sfTAGnaQZa3MZ-xQ">https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_kNs3z1sfTAGnaQZa3MZ-xQ</a>
April 25	School Committee Meeting, 6:00 pm, CHS DLL

April 26	Early Release, PreK-12, Professional Development
May 3 & 4	Hansen Play, <i>Shrek Jr.</i> , 7:00 pm on May 3 and 2:00 pm on May 4
May 9	School Committee Meeting, 6:00 pm, CHS DLL
May 10	Early Release, PreK-12, Professional Development
May 10	CHS Cabaret, 7:00 pm, CHS Auditorium
May 13	Annual Town Meeting, 7:00 pm, CHS Auditorium - Will repeat on May 15, 20 and 22 as needed.
May 14	Scholastic Honors Night, 6:30 pm, CHS Auditorium - <i>School Committee Rep. needed</i>
May 16	World Language Recognition Night, 6:00 pm, CHS Auditorium - <i>School Committee rep. Kristian Merenda</i>
May 18	Canton Heritage Festival, 10-3, Paul Revere Heritage Site
May 21	CHS Scholarship Night, 6:00 pm, CHS Auditorium - <i>School Committee rep. Kim McCourt</i>
May 22	Senior Prom, 4:30 pm, CHS
May 23	School Committee Meeting, 6:00 pm, CHS DLL
May 24	Unity Day, All Day, GMS

Mr. Folan took a moment to publicly thank Ms. Susan Donnellan for stepping in as Interim Director of Student Services. Ms. Donnellan expressed gratitude for being given the opportunity to serve the Canton community.

**E. New Business**

1. **Recommendation and Introduction of Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations:** Superintendent Folan shared his recommendation for the appointment of Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations. Endorsing final candidate, Brian Lynch, Superintendent Folan catalogued Mr. Lynch’s background, noting his experience as a project coordinator for MSBA and his understanding of fiduciary responsibility. He also recognized that Mr. Lynch’s attributes align closely with CPS values.

Hearing no questions or requests for further discussion, Superintendent Folan asked for a motion to vote in support of Mr. Lynch’s appointment as Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations for Canton Public Schools. Laura Arboleda made the motion;

Maureen Moran seconded. Roll call vote was unanimous at 5-0 and recorded as follows:

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

5 yeas      0 nays

Mr. Folan thanked the committee for their support. He noted that Mr. Lynch will begin his official tenure on July 1, 2024, but will transition with Stephen Marshall, outgoing Assistant Superintendent before then.

**2. CHS Athletic Boosters and MusicCounts! Recognition:** Superintendent Folan and members of the School Committee acknowledged the efforts of the CHS Athletic Boosters leadership for their ongoing efforts and support. Carolyn Drury, President of the Boosters, was grateful for the acknowledgement, but also recognized the work and support of parents, alumni and friends to help meet the needs and wishes of sports programs. Describing present programs such as Senior Night, Sports Banquets, championship banners and the newly formed Strength and Conditioning Program, Ms. Drury also introduced new initiatives for 2025 that include a restructure of team fundraising and a larger fundraising event.

In the absence of its Director, Alan Abend, Superintendent Folan recognized the efforts of MusicCounts! in providing funding for performers, transportation, and tutelage of students. Mr. Folan also acknowledged the advocacy MusicCounts has championed in developing and advancing CantonStock.

**3. Town of Canton Code of Conduct for Appointed and Elected Officials:** Chair O'Halloran presented the *Town's Code of Conduct for Appointed and Elected Officials* document to School Committee members for their review. Members will provide feedback by next Friday, April 19, 2024.

**4. Residency Recertification Letter:** Superintendent Folan shared the updated Residency Recertification Letter (this letter is sent to incoming 6th and 9th grade families to certify residency in Canton). He discussed procedures and timelines and then asked the School Committee for a vote in support of initiating the process. Hearing no requests for further discussion, Chair O'Halloran asked for a motion for a vote of approval to launch the residency recertification process. Laura Arboleda made the motion; Maureen Moran seconded. Roll call vote was unanimous at 5-0 and recorded as follows:

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

5 years      0 nays

5. **District Goal Update:** Josh Fogel reported on the progress of Strategic Plan Priority #2-*building a multi-faceted platform in PowerSchool*. Mr. Fogel introduced and explained the Landing Page and Resource sites, and noted the timeline for a training schedule for all staff in user roles and operations of PowerSchool. Mr. Fogel expects all teaching staff and service providers, counselors, and administrative staff to be trained by June 2024 via Professional Development days in preparation for a go live date of July 1, 2024.

Available to the Canton community in late April, resource sites for families and staff have been created including “how-to” video links with step-by-step instructions.

Mr. Fogel continues to work on the Special Programs page that will allow access and all tools for management of documentation for students on learning plans. When completed, this page will also allow electronic signatures for IEP’s.

Mr. Fogel also announced that the MySchoolBucks page will be available publicly soon as well as the language preference page in the Student/Family portal. Currently, this page includes eleven of the most frequently spoken languages in the community.

PowerSchool also provides on-line enrollment, a graduation progress plan that manages required course progress, and a litany of reports, including enrollment and demographics.

School Committee members encouraged administration to reach out to the community for feedback (via the PowerSchool vendor) on the user experience to help determine what’s working and what could be improved.

6. **DESE Accountability System Update:** Indicating that this is the seventh time in seven years that DESE accountability standards have changed, Mr. Fogel brought forward the methodology changes and the variances that may be demonstrated in the “Lowest Performing Students” category due to the change.

While enrollment in the same school/district for two consecutive years remained unchanged, updated methodology includes:

1. only one year of MCAS testing. (Previous years required two years of testing in both ELA and Math.)
2. *Combined* average of 2023 ELA and Math scores. (Previous years required two years of test scores within each subject.)

Mr. Fogel indicated that CPS goals are still relevant; however, he is concerned that the new methodology will have a negative impact by widening the “Lowest Performing Students” gap without any additional funding from DESE to help mitigate these adjustments.

A discussion followed regarding the mismatch of MCAS testing and DESE expectations and methodology. School Committee members suggested that consistency of methodology for the evaluation process of MCAS and its efficacy without corresponding allocations from DESE might be considered for a future agenda item.

**F. Unfinished Business**

**1. Policy Section I:** Members of the Policy Subcommittee shared Section I of the Policy Manual for a 3rd read and possible vote of approval. Committee members indicated they were not able to access the final version incorporating members’ edits. Vote was tabled in favor of forwarding that document to the committee for further review of Section I.

**G. Public Comment:** No public comments were heard, in person or virtually.

**H. Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations Report:** Superintendent Folan reported that, following the most recent Budget and Finance Subcommittee meeting, Mr. Marshall is working on the next iteration for a balanced budget. The final budget will be presented at the next School Committee Open Session Meeting (scheduled for Thursday, April 25, 2024).

**I. Consent Agenda**

- 1. Open Session Minutes: March 7, 2024, March 21, 2024
- 2. Out-of-State Travel Approval:
  - a. CHS - DECA State Competition, Anaheim CA, April 27-May 1, 2024
  - b. GMS Level 99 Trip, Providence Rhode Island - June 11, 2024, Grade 8 End-of-Year Activity
  - c. GMS Canobie Lake Park Trip, Salem NH - June 12, 2024, Grade 8 End of Year Activity
- 3. Warrants: April 12, 2024

*[The CHS - Rodman Foundation Theatre Ticket Donation to The Disney Princess Concert, Providence Performing Arts Center, April 18, 2024 is canceled, therefore it was not voted on at this meeting.]*

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. Hearing none, Ms. O’Halloran asked for a motion to accept the Consent Agenda as written and presented. Laura Arboleda made the motion; Maureen Moran seconded. Roll call vote was unanimous at 4-0 and recorded as follows:

Laura Arboleda	yea
Kristian Merenda	yea
Maureen Moran	yea
Kendall O’Halloran	yea
4 yeas	0 nays

**J. Update of Sub-Committee, Task Force and Liaison Posts:** (membership changes in subcommittees will be noted at the next Open Session Meeting.)

**Derek Folan**-School Building Committee has received 6 formal proposals for the CRM at risk. Interviews will take place the week of April 22nd. Mr. Folan hopes to



ask for a vote of approval for the final candidate at the May 1 School Committee meeting.

**Kendall O'Halloran:**

1. The Policy Subcommittee has completed review of Section I of the Policy Manual and awaits approval by the full committee. Work has begun on editing Section J. Owing to its density and length, Section J has been subdivided into 3 subsections. Individual sections will be submitted to the full committee for approval one at a time.
2. Content & Communications-An article ran last week and the winter sports communication has been approved and is expected to be published shortly.
3. CCPC-the next meeting will be held in May.

**Laura Arboleda**-nothing more to report.

**Maureen Moran:** Budget & Finance Subcommittee continues to work on the 2025 budget, and AFSCME negotiations continue.

**Kristian Merenda:**

1. Master Planning Committee meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 22nd;
2. Invited all committee members to review the CMR-at risk candidates through the portal;
3. Suggested that Committee members share thoughts regarding roles as a delegate for School Committee Task Forces outside Canton—perhaps name an agenda item for this.

**K. Other Business:** None

**L. Future Business** The next Open Session meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 25, 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 adjourn the Thursday, April 11, 2024 School Committee Open Session Meeting at 8:07 pm. Laura Arboleda made the motion; Maureen Moran seconded. Roll Call vote was unanimous at 4-0 and recorded as follows:

Laura Arboleda	yea
Kristian Merenda	yea
Maureen Moran	yea
Kendall O'Halloran	yea

4 years      0 nays

**Documents reviewed:**

Superintendent's Report, Thursday, April 11, 2024

Policy Manual File BDA-School Committee Organizational Meeting

Policy Manual File BDB-School Committee Officers

CPS Re-Certification of Residency Form and Letter to Parents/Guardians

Policy Manual File JF-E-Residency Policy

CPS PowerSchool Implementation Update, April 11, 2024 (Strategic Plan Priority # 2)

CPS 2024 Accountability Updates

CPS Request for Overnight and Travel Out of State Field Trips-DECA International Competition, Garden Grove, CA

CPS Request for Overnight and Travel Out of State Field Trips-Grade 8 End of Year trip to Canobie Lake Park, Salem, NH