

**Canton School Committee
Thursday, March 7, 2024
Open Meeting
Minutes**

- A. **Call to Order:** Chair O'Halloran asked for a motion to call to order the Thursday, March 7, 2024 School Committee Open Session Meeting at 5:12 pm. Kristian Merenda made the motion; Laura Arboleda seconded. Roll call vote was unanimous at 5-0 and recorded as follows:

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

Attendees:

Laura Arboleda
Kimberly McCourt
Kristian Merenda
Maureen Moran
Kendall O'Halloran
Derek Folan, Superintendent
Stephen Marshall, Assistant Superintendent of Finance & Operations
Joanne Campbell, Recording Secretary
Press/Public

Absent: Emma Commings, Student Representative

- B. **Executive Session (a)** Purpose 7 - G.L. c. 30A, section 22 - Approve executive session minutes (2/15/24, 2/28/24) **(b)** Purpose 3 - to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body.

School Committee members returned from Executive Session at 6:12 pm

- C. **Student Report:** School Committee Student Advisor, Brianna Geoghan, was scheduled to share Hansen School updates, but is playing in CHS Girls Hockey play-offs this evening. Ms. Geoghan will be invited back at a later date.

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

Champions of Excellence

World Languages Week: This week, GMS and CHS are celebrating World Languages Week. During regularly scheduled World Languages classes, there were music brackets, classroom swaps, speakers, workshops, and more, as well as plenty of after-school activities for ALL faculty and staff to enjoy.

GMS Matilda Performance: Congratulations to the GMS staff and students involved in the production of *Matilda*. Approximately 80 GMS students were involved, and high school tech crew students mentored the GMS tech crew. Huge thanks to all who had a part in getting ready for show time and to parents who donated materials and concessions, worked concessions and cast-o-grams, and organized the cast party. Both shows had nearly 700 attendees.

National Youth Art Month: The CHS Visual Arts Department will present ***Perceptions***, a selection of student work celebrating National Youth Art Month. The event takes place from March 2-23 at the Canton Public Library. There is an Artist's Reception on Saturday, March 9 from 2-4. All are welcome to attend.

JFK Family Learning Night: In January and February, JFK Resource Specialists, Erin Aylward and Kerri Falzone, hosted two family learning nights. Over 50 families were engaged in various interactive learning opportunities. Math stations were filled with fun games, focusing on building fluency in all operations. Literacy focused on discussing what reading looks like in K-2 vs. 3-5 and ideas to support each stage of their child's development using hands-on activities.

Black History Month Celebration: On Tuesday evening, February 27th, the Canton Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee hosted a "Know the Past, Shape the Future" Black History Month celebration at the Copper Mill Hall located above Northern Spy. Participants in the celebration included the Canton High School's Jazz Ensemble directed by Brian Thomas, a beautiful performance of "Lift Every Voice and Sing" by Anita Bien-Aime and Ervin Voltaire, and a panel conversation centered around the intersectionality of Black Culture and the LGBTQ+ community with Jam Hammond and Lisa Patrick from the organization SpeakOUT. Candida Rose, a vocalist, entertainer and cultural educator performed multiple songs throughout the evening.

February and March (as well as other month-long identity celebrations) provide us with the opportunity not only to highlight one heritage or identity but also to educate ourselves and others on how the intersection of our identities can shape us.

CHS Athletics: I want to commend all of our CHS winter student-athletes, coaches and families. The Bulldogs athletic programs are thriving, and CHS experienced great success. The Girls Hockey team is still alive in tournament action tonight, and we commend the boys hockey and boys basketball teams for their efforts and spirited competition in the tournament.

Our CHS cheerleading squad earned an at-large bid to States, a remarkable accomplishment. The competition will be held March 10 at Worcester State. Commendations to the extraordinary

performances of wrestlers Ruairi Ritson and Max Kupferman, who earned invitations to the New England Championships after top finishes in the State. Trackster Katie Oliver also competed at the New England Championships in long jump after being crowned Hockomock Champion and finished in the top level at States.

Updates

Kindergarten Registration: Next week March 12-14 is Kindergarten and First Grade Students new to Canton Public Schools. Registration will be held at the school your child will attend. School addresses are Hansen Elementary School - 25 Pecunit Street, Kennedy Elementary School - 100 Dedham Street, Luce Elementary School - 45 Independence Street. School assignments are available on the [registration page](#). Pick the date and time convenient for you.

Tuesday, March 12, 2024

9:15 - 10:30 AM

Wednesday, March 13, 2024

1:00 - 2:30 PM

Thursday, March 14, 2024

6:00 - 7:30 PM

You will need your child's official birth certificate, immunization records, completed [registration packet](#) and necessary proofs of residency. For further information please call **Brett McCloud @ 781-821-5060, ext 1156**.

MCAS Schedule: Spring MCAS Testing starts at the end of this month. CHS grade 10 ELA testing will be held March 26 & 27; Hansen School ELA testing is on March 26 & 28. JFK ELA testing is on March 26 & 27. [Here](#) is a full schedule of all spring ELA and Math MCAS.

NAEP: About 30 CHS seniors participated in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) last Friday. Half of the students took an English assessment and half took a Math assessment. Principal Jeff Sperling was very appreciative of their participation and effort.

Acknowledgments

Maintenance Worker Appreciation Day: March 4 was Maintenance Worker Appreciation Day. We thank our maintenance staff for keeping our buildings and grounds clean and safe throughout the year.

School Social Worker Week: This week is National School Social Worker Week. We extend my heartfelt thanks to our Home School Interventionists and Social Workers for helping our students succeed and achieve their goals.

National Athletic Trainer Month: Special shout out to our Athletic Trainer Kristen Aguiar. We celebrate and recognize her for his vital role in the development of our athletes. Thanks for all your hard work and dedication, and the value that you place on genuine care and relationships.

Women's History Month: March is Women's History Month. Please join me in celebrating the amazing accomplishments women have made in our history, culture, and society.

National Nutrition Month: March is also National Nutrition Month. We thank Food Services Director Martha Lawless and all of our Food Services staff for helping students learn about making informed food choices and guiding them in developing healthy eating habits.

Important Dates and Events

March 8-9	Junior Districts Festival, CHS, All day event
March 12-14	Kindergarten Registration, All Elementary Schools
March 15	Early Release, PreK-12 Professional Development
March 15-17	CHS Musical, Legally Blonde, CHS Auditorium, 7 pm on 3/15 and 3/16, 2 pm on 3/17
March 20	School Building Committee Meeting, 4:00 pm, GMS Library
March 21	School Committee Meeting, 6:00 pm, CHS DLL
March 29	No School, Good Friday

D. Unfinished Business:

1. **2024-2025 School Committee Meeting Calendar**: Chair O'Halloran presented the School Committee meeting calendar for the 2024-2025 school year. Ms. O'Halloran noted that School Committee meetings have been added. She specifically pointed to July 11, 2024. This date may be used as a regular committee meeting if there is a need or a workshop for members. A member suggested drafting a topic calendar of proposed content and goals for the 2024-25 academic year. Ms. O'Halloran will adjust current version and share with committee members.

Hearing no further questions or comments, Chair O'Halloran asked for a motion to approve the 2024-2025 School Committee Meeting Calendar as written and presented. Maureen Moran made the motion; Kimberly McCourt seconded. Ensuing roll call vote was unanimous at 5-0 and recorded as follows:

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

5 yeas 0 nays

2. **Policy Review**: Members of the policy subcommittee discussed the following policies.

- a. **JLCEA & JLCEA-R** - Food Allergy-no vote necessary. School Committee members had approved and voted to accept proposed changes at a previous meeting.
- b. **EBCFA** - Face coverings and COVID protocols: Mr. Folan indicated that the current policy reflects current practices. On the advice of CPS physician, Dr. Muse, Mr. Folan endorsed a vote of approval of staying with current practices, recommending that current COVID protocols remain in place until the Department of Public Health clarifies any new direction of protocols.

Hearing no further comments or concerns, Chair O'Halloran asked for a motion to approve Policy EBCFA (Facecoverings and COVID protocols) as written and presented. Maureen Moran made the motion; Kimberly McCourt seconded. Ensuing roll call vote was unanimous at 5-0 and recorded as follows:

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

E. New Business:

- 1. **Q2 Financial Report (VOTE)**: Mr. Marshall reviewed FY24 Q2 Financial Report. Noting the total annual sum of funds to operate the district (approximately \$62.6 million), Mr. Marshall reported YTD line item expenditures through December 31, 2023 including OOD tuition, Professional Development, Services, Supplies, Transportation and Utilities, indicating that salaries make up 81% of the budget, and acknowledging that OOD tuition and transportation are overspent. He does expect to move these expenses to the Operating Budget this fiscal year, and will ask the town to help replenish the Special Education Reserve Funds at the upcoming Special Town Meeting. Mr. Marshall also explained that CircuitBreaker funds do reimburse some SPED costs, but these reimbursements are not realized until the following school year. He indicated too, that CPS is not expected to be eligible for CircuitBreaker relief for much longer. He and his team are working on redesigning the Chart of Accounts with the town, and is hopeful the new design will be rolled out in the Fall of 2024.
- 2. **GMS Building Project Update**: Superintendent Folan provided a GMS Building Project update. He included key Feasibility Study decisions-the submission of the Education

Plan, how GMS grades will be configured, the design of the building including a separate 800 seat auditorium and 2 full basketball courts. He briefed the committee on recent meetings and communications with District and Town partners, explained how the Construction Manager at-Risk process will unfold, and summarized upcoming steps in the MSBA approval process. The next School Building Committee meeting will be on Wednesday, March 20th at 4 pm in the GMS Library. All are welcome to attend.

3. **Policy Section I (1st Read)**: Members of the policy subcommittee shared Section I, Instruction, of the Policy Manual for a 1st read. Noting Ms. Merenda's revision requests, Ms. O'Halloran explained that the newest version incorporated her recommendations, including policies CPS previously were not incorporated. Ms. Moran expressed the following concerns:
 - a. School Calendar-is it prescribed by DESE or Mass. Executive Office of Education? Ms. O'Halloran will review and adjust appropriately.
 - b. Current hours per school year for GMS is 900 vs CHS 990. Mr. Folan indicated that GMS is at 990. Hearing that change, Ms. Moran asked that Section II of the Policy be adjusted to reflect that GMS school hours number is 990.
 - c. Curriculum overview **(IG)**-“Common Core” replace with curriculum framework;
 - d. Graduation Requirements-**(IKF)**-Ms. Moran would like to see the added recommendations of the following additions to graduation requirements:
 - a. 3 years of lab-based Science;
 - b. Civics requirement
 - c. Personal Finance
 - e. **IHBF**-Delivery Method of Instructions for Home or Hospital bound Students. Superintendent Folan advised that this policy should not have categorical specifics. Each situation will require a personalized plan separate from policy.

Ms. Merenda and Ms. Moran will review most current draft and return with feedback and recommendations for their edits and questions.

Discussion ensued about the process of changing graduation requirements. School Committee members asked for a plan to understand this process and its timeline. Mr. Folan will share these concerns with CHS Principal Sterling; however, he clearly stated that any/all changes cannot be unilateral; all modifications/changes to graduation requirements must go through School Councils.

4. **Empower (formerly Cole Harrington) Transition Plans**: Superintendent Folan shared Empower's transition plans from the Rodman School to .32 Health (formerly the Reebok site). This move is a culmination of a two year effort between CPS and Empower to identify and secure a space that can accommodate all appropriate requirements of Empower. .32 Health meets all these needs. The move is expected to take place by the end of June 2024. Once the transition is complete, CPS will redesign and expand needed classroom and professional space.
5. **Communication and Community Engagement Action Step Update**:

Superintendent Folan provided an update on District Goal #3. He acknowledged that PowerSchool has been an incredible vehicle in providing translations for community members allowing greater reach for the District. Naming meetings with all the CAPTs, instituting an LPAC for the community, GMS project forums, AP Night at CHS, and the recent CDEI event, Superintendent Folan noted the value of broadening his face-to-face opportunities with and among the Canton community.

Mr. Folan highlighted the recent investment in a Public Relations firm and the initiation of a social media presence. Pointing to the number of newsprint features (41) in addition to social media, Canton is celebrating schools, students, learning, and special events. These tools, he indicated, have laid the foundation for elevating communication and encouraging engagement throughout the District and community.

G. Public Comment: Canton resident, Ms. Kathleen Howley, spoke of the recent gun threat in a CPS school. Noting that parents should know details, Ms. Holly voiced concern over a seeming lack of consequences for the alleged suspect and failure by the administration to convey much detail. She called for the introduction of an ombudsman to manage communications, as well as policies to address this issue.

Ms. Jennifer O'Donnell raised concerns regarding bullying and asked for a District action plan to combat bullying and its physical and emotional effects on children.

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

I. Consent Agenda:

1. Open Session Minutes: February 15, 2024
2. Scholarship Approval: Canton Historical Society Paul Mitcheroney Memorial Scholarship
3. Warrants: March 8, 2024

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. Ms. Moran suggested that each warrant should be named to assure integrity of the warrants. Rather than change the practice, Mr. Marshall recommended that each amount be verbally stated. Ms. O'Halloran then asked for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as written and presented. Laura Arboleda made the motion; Kristian Merenda seconded. Roll call vote was unanimous at 5-0 and recorded as follows:

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

Following the vote, there was a suggestion to establish name blind applications for scholarships. Pros and cons were discussed. After further conversation, members agreed to

follow-up with Dr. Chamberland for an assessment of best practices in regard to these applications.

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

Laura Arboleda-Policy Subcommittee continues to review the CPS Policy Manual; members have moved to weekly meetings in an effort to complete review and updates by end of June 2024. Ms. Arboleda requested that School Committee members provide feedback for Section I at their earliest convenience.

Derek Folan-nothing further to report.

Stephen Marshall- nothing further to report.

Kimberly McCourt- the next Budget & Finance Subcommittee Meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 19th.

Kristian Merenda:

1. Next meeting for Master Planning Committee will be held on March 28th;
2. SBC-a selection subcommittee has been formed for the procurement.

Maureen Moran- nothing further to report.

Kendall O'Halloran:

1. CCPC will meet the week of March 11th to discuss timelines for 2024-25 submissions for requests and identify meeting dates for this calendar year.
2. Content & Communications: an assortment of ads have been created. Ms. O'Halloran welcomes feedback on them from the Committee.

K. Other Business: None

L. Future Business: The next Open Session meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 21, 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, March 7, 2024 School Committee Open Session Meeting at 8:28 pm. Maureen Moran made the motion; Kristian Merenda seconded. Ensuing vote was unanimous at 5-0 and recorded as follows:

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

Documents reviewed:

Superintendent's Report, Thursday, March 7, 2024

Canton Public Schools 2024-2025 School Committee Calendar

Canton Public Schools 2024-2025 School Year Calendar

CPS Policy Manual, JLCEA & JLCEA-R regarding *Food Allergies*

CPS Policy Manual, EBCFA regarding *Face Coverings and COVID-19 Protocols*

FY24 2nd Quarter Financial Report (as of December 31, 2023)

Galvin Middle School Update

CPS Policy Manual Section I

Canton Historical Society Paul Mitcheroney Memorial Scholarship-Requirements