



Canton School Committee
Open Meeting Minutes
Thursday, June 8th, 2023

A. Call to Order: Chair O'Halloran called for a motion to convene the Thursday, June 8th, 2023 School Committee Open Session at 6:03 pm. Laura Arboleda made the motion; Kristian Merenda seconded. Vote was unanimous at 5-0 and recorded as:

Kendall O'Halloran	yea
Maureen Moran	yea
Kimberly McCourt	yea (left at 9:50 pm)
Kristian Merenda	yea
Laura Arboleda	yea (left at 10:00 pm)
5 yeas	0 nays

Attendees: Kendall O'Halloran
Maureen Moran
Laura Arboleda (left the meeting at 10:01 pm)
Kimberly McCourt (left the meeting at 9:58 pm)
Kristian Merenda
Derek Folan
Stephen Marshall
Emma Cummings
Sarah Shannon

Guests: Jacklyn Abrams
Jonathan Mulhern, Principal, Galvin Middle School
Jeffrey Sperling, Principal, Canton High School
Dr. Scott Borstel, TLA

B. Honor Retirees: Superintendent Folan and School Committee members recognized Cathy Spera, Donna Ferguson, Peggy Foley, Elaine Farinella, Sharyn Mathews, Grace Burega and Michael Keegan as they retired from CPS. Retirees were applauded for their service and presented with a Canton clock.

C. Honor Student Advisors and Volunteers: Superintendent Folan and Chair O'Halloran acknowledged Emma Cummings, Samantha Pham, Ryan Garrett, Disha Nayak, Viviana Truglia, Samantha Vrabel and Olivia Schnock for their service to the CPS community of students.

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

Highlights

End-of-Year Celebrations: Superintendent Folan recognized many year end celebrations.

Class of 2023 Graduation: Congratulations to the 206 graduates of the Class of 2023. CHS Principal Jeff Sperling and his team held a wonderful ceremony in the gymnasium on Friday, June 2.

Unity Day: We had a glorious Unity Day today, bringing all three 5th grade classes together for fun, games and activities.

Updates

Cultural Heritage Night: Cultural Heritage Night is on Friday, June 9, from 6-8 p.m., at GMS. Superintendent Folan encouraged all to attend.

Indicators of Excellence

GMS Civics Showcase: The GMS Civics Showcase exemplified excellence -- simply an amazing showcase. The 8th grade students engaged in civics projects related to climate change and benefited from interdisciplinary support in driving their learning and their project. Over 80 parents, guardians and family members visited to see the exhibits.

MCAS: An example of excellence is the preparation and learning for MCAS, and we share kudos to the students and educators for their work together to showcase their learning and growth. We administered 4196 exams over the course of several months, and our teams did a flawless job.

Luce Health Fair: Luce hosted its annual Health Fair, allowing students to share their learning in particular health topics. They designed engaging activities to help visitors learn about the topics.

Important Dates and Events

June 9	Early Release, Professional Development, Prek-12
June 9	Last Day of School PreK & K
June 9	Cultural Heritage Night, GMS, 6:00 pm
June 13-15	Kindergarten Screening
June 16	Last day of School, Early Release, Grades 1-11

E. Teaching and Learning: Ms. Jaclyn Abrams shared a reminder of the Summer Reading kick-off on June 16th at the Canton Public Library and then gave a Title 1 year-end update including numbers of students receiving Title 1 support in each of the elementary schools. Ms. Abrams highlighted elementary Title 1 Program successes, particularly the use of diagnostic assessments and the new look of Title 1 Progress Reports to parents. These reports now identify specific target areas of reading support the student is receiving, data indicating why the student was targeted for Title 1 intervention, and evidenced data points of student progress. The team also incorporated phone calls home, where appropriate, to offer a more personalized interaction with reading support professionals. Ms. Abrams noted that next steps will include identifying materials and resources that might be sent home for additional practice opportunities with family members. Ms. Abrams also recognized the five professionals with whom she worked alongside in reading intervention.

A discussion followed regarding equitable Tier 1 reading instruction, coaching and modeling in and out of classrooms to discern out how best to support the program.

F. Unfinished Business

1. **Human Resource Restructuring Recommendations:** Superintendent Folan discussed the proposed Central Office Restructure and Reorganization and requested consideration for a favorable vote by the School Committee for the following positions/title changes:
 - i. **Director of Personnel Services**-with evidence of an apparent need for an HR Director, Mr. Folan first put forward a recommendation for a Director of Personnel Services for Canton Public Schools. The incumbent would know education and technology, serve as the point person for all school HR matters, and work closely with the HR Director for the Town of Canton. Based on her expertise in technology and HR systems and processes in an educational setting, Mr. Folan recommended Julie Shore.
 - ii. **Director of Technology**-understanding that establishing the HR position would leave a gap in District Leadership roles and positions, the team determined that consolidation of the Director of Technology role and the Data Analytics Manager into the Director of Technology and Data Analytics would be optimal. Superintendent Folan recommended Mr. Fogel as he has established a strong foundation for data use and data analysis throughout the District;
 - iii. **Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations**-Mr. Folan proposed nominating Stephen Marshall for his exceptional and extensive financial and budgetary experience in school districts;
 - iv. **Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning**-Mr. Folan advocated title changes for Sarah Shannon and;
 - v. **Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment** for Deborah Rooney.
These changes represent refining and calibration of incumbents' responsibilities and their roles;
 - vi. **Director of Student Services**-currently held by Meghan Byrne, this title will remain as is.

Superintendent Folan stated that job descriptions are available. These changes do not require any budgetary enhancements, will not carry any extra benefits, and noted that the district will save money.

Ms. Moran requested a view of the overall scope of the Personal Services contracts, and financial costs, and recommended that School Committee members receive the ranges of salaries, including the highest salary options associated with TBD positions as well as FY24 personal service contract proposed increases. Ms. Merenda raised concerns about promotion clarity and the process of posting the positions outside the District for assurance of "best" candidates.

With no further questions or comments and with the consent of the members for a vote, Chair Merenda called for a motion to approve the Human Resource Restructuring Recommendations as written and presented. Kristian Merenda made the motion; Laura Arboleda seconded. Vote was recorded as 4-1:

Maureen Moran	nay
Kimberly McCourt	yea
Kristian Merenda	yea
Laura Arboleda	yea
4 yeas	1 nay

2. **DEI Solidarity Statements (1st Read)**: The School Committee shared a first read of two versions of the School Committee's solidarity statement against racism and discrimination for the committee's feedback. Members were asked to review both drafts and bring feedback to the next committee meeting. Both statements can be found on the CPS website.
3. **District Goal Update**: Assistant Superintendent Shannon provided an update on Priority #3, Goal #2 pertaining to creating a shared vision for high-quality curriculum planning, instruction and assessment (HQTLL) across the District. Committee members researched, collecting evidence from colleagues in several different settings, and engaged in "learning walks" with district leadership. During these walks, leadership noted what they were seeing, what they should be seeing, and what they had not considered as HALL. After several iterations, consideration of staff input, and review of DESE Educator Rubrics, a final draft version of the CPS Vision for HQTLL has been made available. Next steps include further definition of the draft and creation of a website to help understand what HQTLL is, defining a focus on curriculum and standards, and what is meaningful to the staff in giving students strong, equitable, deeper high quality learning. Timeline for identifying these focuses is the start of the 2023-24 school year.

G. New Business:

1. **Strategic Plan**: Superintendent Folan and members of the Teaching and Learning Alliance (TLA) discussed the Strategic Long-Term Planning process that will fully engage all stakeholders to shape the mission, vision, and values of CPS. Mr. Folan explained the process and its five year trajectory based around the GMS building. Focusing on student achievement, the committee:
 - a. constructed a Mission Statement:
 - i. *An exceptional education that develops innovative thinkers, curious and empowered learners, and compassionate citizens,"*
 - ii. prioritized and set actions that will be implemented to improve organization and help meet mission goals.
 - b. identified Core Values (REACH):
 - i. Respectful and collaborative relationships
 - ii. Educational equity
 - iii. Academic and personal excellence
 - iv. Community engagement
 - v. High-quality teaching, learning, and leading
 - c. devised a Vision for CPS and a set of actions for implementing vision objectives in:
 - i. Teaching, Learning and Leading;
 - ii. Management and Operations;
 - iii. Communications and Community Engagement;

iv. and Inclusive and Equitable Environments.

General and ambitious Strategic Objectives will be identified in the leadership retreat over the summer. Key actions, timelines, responsible parties and anticipated indicators of progress and measurement for each of these areas (SMARTIE goals) will be solidified and presented to the School Committee in August in anticipation of a favorable vote and approval by the School Committee. They will then be incorporated into Annual Goals.

School Committee members suggested reflection of five years of innovation, sustainability/climate change, cultural awareness of nutrition and health, and an accelerated learning path for K-8 students. Continuously considering whether the work being done is actually excellent, polished, and professionally written.

Recommendations from the members included:

1. avoid redundancy;
2. be deliberate about what is included;
3. Arrive at distinct, measurable and clear “rocks.”
4. Identify areas that will help the district grow.
5. Include safety, well-being, and optimal student and teacher learning;
6. diversity;
7. shared academic identity;
8. targets specific to total student growth—academic challenge for those that are looking for it. There is still a need for clarity and focus on accelerators of Academic Excellence. CPS needs to engage students in a clearer, higher level of academic rigor.

There was discussion over a Strategic Plan versus a District Improvement plan (DIP). Dr. Borstel stated that the strategic plan drives DIP. Summer Workshops will help in this process.

Any questions, ideas or suggestions should be directed to the Strategic Plan committee.

Full report is available on the CPS website.

2. CHS and GMS End-of-Year School Improvement Plans (SIPs): CHS Principal Sperling shared demographics of the high school, successes in student learning and growth, expanded engagement, and broadening student experiences beyond the classroom. Mr. Sperling reviewed successful end-of-year SIPs including expanded enrollment in Honors and AP classes, substantially increased data analysis and utilization, and development of a model for High-Quality Teaching, Learning and Leading. He also noted a recent restorative practices webinar that has been shared with the community, as well as a 49% reduction in suspension days partly attributed to a rise in trust in the administration. Mr. Sperling and his team are pursuing new goals for the 2023-24 academic year including attending the NEASC Collaborative Conference in October 2023, creating a comprehensive master schedule that builds in time for students to seek academic and personal assistance, and further expanding Restorative Practices.

Committee members asked Mr. Sperling to return to the School Committee at a later date to present further information and data on students returning to CPS from outside institutions, as well as educational and equity gaps noted by NEASC within CPS.

The full report may be found on the CPS website.

GMS Principal Mulhern reviewed highlights of the year at GMS including

demographics, (noting they remained mostly stable), learning outcomes (including MCAS results), and student school experiences-specifically instituting the Math Buddies program, continuing the successful Unified Sports project, and a robust extracurricular program. Mr. Mulhern noted that student progress since the return from COVID has improved as evidenced by the 8th grade capstone project. Mr. Mulhern spoke of meeting Priority Goals in educational excellence, community engagement, improved behavioral interventions and meeting the social and emotional needs of students while noting areas for potential improvement and new goals for the 2023-24 academic year. The full report is available on the CPS website.

3. MSBA Update: Superintendent Folan provided an MSBA update stating that MSBA officials noted the considerable number of respondents for the building design RFP. After day-long interviews and presentations, the larger group was culled to four design companies. These companies will present their vision and designs for renovation/new QMS building on Tuesday, June 20th. The Canton community is welcome and encouraged to join this meeting to view the work of these designers. Decisions on the final candidate for design will be chosen by July 1, 2023.

4. Summative Evaluation: Members of the School Committee shared the Superintendent's Summative Evaluation. Ms. Merenda took the opportunity to reflect on Superintendent Folan's performance and the District's good work of the year as well as the performance of the Superintendent and the District as a whole. Using criteria and standards set by DESE, committee members individually reviewed, rated and returned feedback to the designee (Ms. Merenda) who compiled the information into a final, common rating folded into a single document. The School Committee's overall rating of "Developing" was explained by Ms. Merenda. She commended Mr. Folan for his extraordinary efforts, progress, and partnership. She noted his work on high expectations for student achievement, learning accountability and growth, central office organizational restructuring, family engagement and communications, a district goals tracker and dashboard enabling better analysis and more transparency for all, improved protocols for incident reporting and response, and future district goals. The Committee offered feedback, suggestions, and expectations for growth, particularly in student learning and acceleration, performance and achievement, in each of the ratings, but felt grateful to Mr. Folan for his remarkable progress, meaningful results, and extraordinary effort. All members agreed he is doing great things in improving the District as a whole. The full report is on the website.

H. Public Comment: No public comments

H. Director of Finance and Operations Report: Mr. Marshall had nothing to report.

I. Consent Agenda:

1. Regular Session Minutes: May 11, 2023, May 22, 2023; Workshop, May 25, 2023, May 31, 2023 Workshop
2. Executive Session Minutes: May 25, 2023
3. Warrant: June 9, 2023

Chair O'Halloran suggested that all contents of the Consent Agenda other than the Warrant for June 9, 2023 be removed from the Consent Agenda and held until the full committee is in attendance. Ms. Moran and Ms. Merenda were in agreement. Ms. O'Halloran asked for a motion to approve the Warrant for June 9th, 2023 as written and presented. Maureen Moran made the motion; Kristia Merenda seconded. The vote was unanimous at 3-0 and recorded as:

Ms. O'Halloran	yea	
Ms. Merenda		yea
Ms. Moran		yea
3 yeas		0 nays

J. Update of Sub-Committee, Task Force and Liaison Posts: None

K. Other Business: None

L. Future Business: The next Open Session meeting is scheduled for Thursday, July 20, 2023 @ 6:00 pm.

M. Adjournment: Hearing no requests for further discussion on any items, Chair O'Halloran asked for a motion to adjourn the Thursday, June 8th, 2023 School Committee Meeting at 10:42 pm. Maureen Moran made the motion; Kristian Merenda seconded. Vote was unanimous at 3-0 and recorded as:

Kendall O'Halloran	yea	
Maureen Moran		yea
Kristian Merenda		yea
3 yeas		0 nays

Action Item:

Committee members requested that Mr. Sperling return to a School Committee meeting at a later date to present further information and data on students returning to CPS from outside institutions, as well as educational and equity gaps noted by NEASC within CPS.

Documents presented:

Superintendent's Report-June 8, 2023

Canton Public Schools 2022-23 Title I Program Evaluation

Human Resource Restructuring Recommendations

District Goals Update-Priority #3, Goal #2

Canton School Committee DEI Solidarity Statements (2)

Canton Public Schools Strategic Plan Update

2022-23 Canton High School Improvement Plan End-of-Year Report

2022-23 Galvin Middle School Improvement Plan End-of-Year Report

End-of-Cycle Summative Evaluation Report for Superintendent Folan