



Canton School Committee
Open Meeting Minutes
November 3, 2022

- A. Call to Order** Chair Merenda made a motion to convene the November 3, 2022 Canton School Committee meeting at 5:31 pm. Motion was made by Laura Arboleda and seconded by Maureen Moran.

Vote was recorded as:

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

Absent: Nichola Gallagher
Ms. Emma Cummings

Also Present:

Mr.Derek Folan, Superintendent
Ms. Sarah Shannon, Assistant Superintendent
Mr. Stephen Marshall, Director of Finance and Operations
Joanne Campbell, Recording Secretary

Guests:

Ms. Meghan Byrne, Interim Director of Student Service
Ms. Jaclyn Abrams, Humanities Coordinator, PreK-5
Ms. Samira Mourad, JFK Kindergarten Teacher
Ms. Libby Dickson, JFK Kindergarten Teacher
Mr. Jeffrey Sperling, CHS Principal
Mr. Joshua Fogel, District Data Analytics Manager

Executive Session: Chair Merenda called for a motion to convene Executive Session at 5:32 pm for the purpose of discussing strategy with respect to collective bargaining, Unit A and Unit E, as an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body. Motion was made by Laura Arboleda and seconded by Maureen Moran.

Vote was recorded as:

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

Open Session Chair Merenda reconvened Open Session at 6:05 pm.

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

Highlights

Unified Basketball: Unified basketball had a tremendous season this year with a 5-0 record. Students learned lessons about inclusivity, acceptance, and understanding; but more importantly, they created lifelong friendships on and off the courts.

Math Night -- K-2 and 3-5: On Wednesday, November 2, two math webinars were held for elementary parents/guardians in Grades K-2 and 3-5 on Wednesday, November 2nd. The webinar shared information about our curriculum review process. A webinar for middle school parents and guardians is coming up on November 15 at 6:00 pm.

Canton Diversity Equity Inclusion Event: The CDEI committee hosted a Global Diversity Awareness event last Thursday at the Canton Library.

Safe Schools Program: CPS students have become very involved in the state regional meetings sponsored by the Safe Schools Program. Atlas Curran Barker has taken the lead for the Gay Straight Alliance (GSA) at CHS.

Acknowledgments

Veteran's Day: Veterans' Day is celebrated on Friday, November 11, 2022. Veterans Day honors all men and women who have served as military veterans in the United States Armed Forces. Please join us in celebrating the service of all United States military veterans including Canton Public School's own.

American Indian & Alaska Native Heritage Month: During this month, we recognize and pay tribute to the diverse cultures and traditions of the Native people and acknowledge their important contributions.

Updates

One Time At Home COVID-19 Distribution: CPS is taking part in a one-time at-home COVID-19 testing distribution through the Executive Office of Health and Human Services and DESE. ***Participation will be completely voluntary.***

Cantonstock: Cantonstock is scheduled for Saturday, November 5 from 12-4 at CHS. The mission is to raise funds for music programming for all students.

School Safety Drills: All CPS buildings have completed their school safety drills. As part of this review, we will consider a review of camera functionality and access, the functionality of phones, egresses, everyday safety tips, how visitors enter the building, safety measures for outside activities, etc.

Indicators of Excellence

National Honor Society Induction: National Honor Society (NHS) inductees will be recognized on Wednesday, November 9 at 6:30 in the CHS Auditorium. Following induction, NHS members do a community project and each student works on individual service projects.

MIAA Tournament Time: Four of our teams have qualified for the state tournament earning home game advantage in the first round. Follow the link below to access all scheduling and ticket information.

<http://chsbulldogsathletics.blogspot.com/2022/10/miaa-fall-tournament-information.html>

PreK Visit: Superintendent Folan attended the Rodman PreK program. He was so struck by the amazing work of the educators who design instruction and play that really brings joy and excitement for the students along with the level of interventions and differentiated instruction to meet the needs of the students.

Important Dates and Events

Nov. 5	Cantonstock, 12:00 pm, CHS
Nov. 8	No School, PreK-12 PD
Nov. 11	No School, Veterans Day, Full day PD
Nov. 17	School Committee Meeting, CHS DLL, 6:00 pm
Nov. 18	Early Release, PreK-8, Conferences
Nov. 18-20	CHS Drama Fall Play, CHS Auditorium, 7:00 pm on Nov. 18 & 19, 2:00 pm on Nov. 20
Nov. 23	Early Release - Thanksgiving Break
Nov. 24-25	No School - Thanksgiving Break

ACTION ITEM: Ms. Moran asked for an agenda for the full day Professional Development scheduled for November 8th. Mr. Folan gave a quick overview. Chair Merenda suggested that these announcements become a part of the Superintendent's Report.

Teaching and Learning Report Ms. Jaclyn Abrams, Humanities Coordinator, PreK-5, and Kindergarten teachers, Samira Mourad and Libby Dickson presented changes in Dyslexia screening laws, Chapter 71 related to district screening related to Dyslexia. It was noted that the legislation does not diagnose dyslexia, but rather who is at risk for Dyslexia. The purpose of the new legislation is to avoid the "wait for fail." Changes in these laws will go into effect July 1, 2023 and will include screening for students in grades K-3 twice a year and parents must receive a "parent report" within 30 days of screening. In Canton, screening already takes place three times a year for K-5 grades. Students who need additional

screening and monitoring are given CBM's (Curriculum Based Measures) to gather additional data on their foundational skills. Subsequent services based on low proficiency scores are available to anyone who is at risk. If any student shows little improvement after time, the student's information is sent to Student Services for review for further services. Mr. Fogel and Ms. Abrams will work together to use any data mined to assess the efficacy of the STAR program.

Ms. Abrams then discussed new curriculum resources including investments in tools such as decodable texts for grades K-2 classrooms and professional learning for teachers focused on data driven targeted small group instruction. Borrowing the ideas of a DESE resource "Appleseeds," Ms. Dickson and Ms. Mourad mined materials and built a "CantonSeeds" slide deck curriculum for Kindergarten and implemented this program to help teach decodable text with explicit directions for all the foundational skills in the "before the reading part," and shared them with all 12 Kindergarten teachers. Ms. Moran offered the School Committee's financial support if there is a need to purchase supplemental workbooks or other supplies. School Committee members also wondered if there is consideration for reading aids to supplement 4th or 5th grade students who may need help reaching appropriate grade levels in reading. Ms. Abrams noted there is access to on-line tools and a wide variety of books available to older children.

ACTION ITEM: Ms. Abrams was invited back to a future School Committee meeting to present considerations and take a deeper look that might be available to older students who are struggling to attain grade level reading. Ms. Abrams suggested discussing the Spelling connection program.

Unfinished Business:

1. **Transportation:** Superintendent Folan, Mr. Marshall, and First Student representatives, Jessica Quint and Barby Doherty, reported marked improvement in transportation in the last two weeks. A daily open meeting from 10am-1pm between Canton and First Student personnel has allowed for quick decisions and resolution of issues. The app has been effectively deployed with the exception of the C1 route (a district bus, not part of the First Student fleet). First Student continues to work with the district to untangle this concern. Most routes are running smoothly, there are less parental concerns, and 95% of the issues are being handled by Mrs. McCloud. Percent of AM on-time drop off (5 minutes before school starts) is 100% of the time when there is not an issue (unusual traffic due to an accident, etc.) The Luce/St.John's bus issues persist, and maximum time on the bus from dismissal is still 1 hour, but Mr. Marshall stated he is continuing to work on both these matters, but reports that afternoon timing is improving. School Committee members inquired about several issues disclosed at the October 20th School Committee meeting:

1. **Accuracy of the data provided by First Student:** Mr. Marshall responded that since the app has been deployed, he is confident the District is receiving good data.
2. **On-bus safety concerns:** Ms. Quint indicated that there has been no instances of overcrowding that would have left a student standing, but will

look at tapes and communicate the district's concern to the drivers. Ms. Quint acknowledged that some behaviors have been identified, and reemphasized the use of the written statement. She will coach drivers on how to manage these behaviors in the future. First Student will hold safety drills on how to ride a bus to help reinforce the same behaviors as expected in school. Ms. Quint will also consider adding bus monitors. A question was posed on how students are empowered to self-identify and report bad behaviors. Ms. Quint noted that First Student reinforces positive behaviors; however, should a student need to report a bad behavior, they should go to the driver; the driver will report the incident to dispatch. Students are directed to go to the principal or any adult.

3. **GPS malfunction:** Mr. Marshall reported the malfunction is almost totally resolved.
4. **Email/phone responses to parents:** Current conversations are less about complaints and more about suggestions. CPS staff are responding quickly.
5. **Administrative leadership time on bus issues:** Both Superintendent Folan and Mr. Marshall have returned to their regular duties.

Chair Merenda asked, in hindsight, what would you have changed or done differently? Mr. Marshall offered suggestions that included starting open collaboration and standing meetings as early as July as it may have produced faster resolution of issues; having District level software, and replicating a tracker for the District bus. Mr. Marshall also noted that several issues were not expected including traffic patterns and timing. Chair Merenda inquired if there was a known sense of the percent of students being served versus the number who are supposed to be being served. Mr. Marshall suggested this was hard to tell, but estimated about 70-80%. Ms. Quint offered to run a "ridership count" as soon as Fall sports are over to allow a true count.

There are similar challenges (long rides and delays) with van transportation. This issue is related to driver shortages, route changes, increased traffic, and the inability to meet the increase in demand. CPS has tried to expand to other vendors, but are finding the challenges are similar.

ACTION ITEM: School Committee members were troubled at the lack of communication and partnership exhibited from VanPool and requested administration set up a call with Vanpool officials. Mr. Marshall will arrange a call.

Mr. Marshall announced that the district has brought on a transportation consultant beginning November 15th through February 2023. As a first task, the consultant will make the van issue a top priority; he will also be charged with providing analysis on current bus routes, cost effectiveness and efficiency of the district's transportation, identifying issues;

reviewing practices and procedures; budget; capital for District owned vehicles; reviewing current contracts, and offering best next steps.

New Business:

1. **New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) Presentation:** Principal Sperling described the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) accreditation process and explained how Canton expects to manage their progress through the cycle. After a 1 year postponement was requested and granted for 2021-2022, CPS is now in Self-Reflection, the first step of the cycle, for 2022-23. Efforts include identifying and training Accreditation Coordinators, Dr. Fitzgerald and Dr. Chamberland, and building a steering committee that is identifying priorities (it is expected that these priorities will be tied to school and district goals post Equity audit, and the vision of the district in general.) Targeted completion for in town self-reflection is April 2023 to allow editing and revisions of the document by NEASC deadline of June 2023. Progress includes completion of NEASC Faculty Training; staff was divided into 5 standards-based groups (Learning Culture, Student Learning, Professional Practices, Learning Support and Learning Resources.) It is important to note that all staff were able to join their first choice of these groups; training will be scheduled in the near future. October 4th and 5th, 2023 will mark the next step when a Collaborative Conference is held where a NEASC team visits CHS to assess identified priorities and school growth/improvement plan, evaluate the CPS self-ratings and submit feedback and action steps for school growth/improvement plan. Finally, the NEASC Accreditation Visit is scheduled for October 5-8, 2025.

Mr. Sperling believes this process is worthwhile and necessary. After the last accreditation process, changes included better access opportunities, consolidation of CP/Honors/AP classes, elevating teaching and learning, and removing prerequisites that generated stretch learning.

MCAS Action Step Presentation: Principal Sperling presented an overview of MCAS action steps based on MCAS changes and their impact on student outcomes. During COVID, several factors impacted student scoring outcomes: a substantial increase in chronic absenteeism, inconsistent engagement during remote learning, navigating new MCAS technology where the learning curve of the on-line testing led to gaps in scoring, and an increase in response options. The MCAS action steps, which are included in the School Improvement Plan (SIP), consist of specific, measurable priorities for Math, English and Science using diagnostic assessments to determine the breadth of need in each area. Historically challenging courses in Math will be woven into multiple years allowing students to shift as needed, and before and after school help will be available in the library to all students in a variety of subject areas, including math. There will be a rotating team of teachers who will be available to help all students.

A future consideration is a 4-year math requirement beginning with the Class of 2026. This aligns with the minimum for state college/university acceptance and allows students to

complete an Educational Proficiency Plan. MASS Core changes will need to be voted on by the School Committee.

There is also consideration for a Math Interventionist who would provide targeted interventions during the school day.

ACTION ITEM: Ms. Arboleda asked Mr. Sperling to consider bringing back extra support for high school and middle school students to help address gaps in learning without removing students from the classroom.

ACTION ITEM: Ms. Moran requested serious consideration to add Civics as a requirement for graduation.

2. **2023-2024 School Start Date:** Superintendent Folan proposed a school start date prior to Labor Day for the school year 2023-2024, specifically asking staff to report for professional development on Mon. August 28th and Tuesday, August 29th. The first day of school for grades 1-12 will be Wednesday, August 30th. There will be no school on Friday, September 1st. This proposal will result in the last day of school for grades 1-11 on Thursday, June 13, 2024—subject to change due to snow days or other calendar adjustments.
- With no questions or requests for further discussion, Chair Merenda called for a motion to approve the 2023-24 school start dates as presented. Laura Arboleda made the motion and Kendall O’Halloran seconded. Vote was unanimous and recorded as:

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

3. **Capital Budget Presentation:** Mr. Marshall presented the 1st read of the FY24 Capital Budget. The Finance Subcommittee forwarded a budget of \$900,000 allowing for discussion with the School Committee on how to disburse the remaining \$100k. Mr. Marshall detailed the budget line item requests. The full cash capital summary of requests can be found on the School Committee website under meetings/minutes/agendas. Items that were not funded

Building and Repair/Improvements

#6-replacement of the Art Wing Corridor flooring at CHS;

#8-District wide HVAC maintenance.

#9-11-**Tiling floors**-Mr. Marshall suggested moving forward on refurbishing tiling in the Art corridor of the high school as well as first floors at Hansen and JFK. Replacing JFK nurses’ office sink and adding storage via another budgeting source this year.

#13 **Screen project** for the first floor Luce windows-it was suggested that there be further investigation of this request before making a decision.

#14 **Luce Cafeteria Updates**- Mr. Marshall does not recommend painting the wood wall covering as the wood is stained. The solution needs more research, but Mr. Marshall reported that replacement tables will be afforded outside of the capital budget realm.

#15 **Innovation Lab Renovation**-Both Mr. Folan and Mr. Marshall are in favor of granting this request as it completes the last phase of the renovation. It will include finishing

touches such as seating, desks, and cabinets.

16. Installation of magnetic pads for fire doors at GMS-this request will not be funded. This issue could be resolved by establishing clear guidelines about not propping doors open and confirming doors are closed when exiting the building.

17. GMS Gym Bleacher replacement-Mr. Marshall did not recommend granting this request as a new building is on the horizon.

18-19. Roof Top Units (RFU) at CHS and over the Library at the Luce: Mr. Marshall recommends approving this request including one additional cooling unit.

Grounds Improvement:

23. Landscaping & Grounds Improvement: Mr. Marshall and Superintendent Folan wholeheartedly agreed this request is important to the curb appeal of CPS. However, they asked for consideration of a longer term plan to maintain the improvements. An additional groundskeeper will need to be hired before bringing this request forward. This person would be responsible for bringing a proposal forward that will include building a thorough and intentional landscape plan including scheduled maintenance.

Information Technology:

26. Grades 4 & 5 Chromebooks Replacement Cycle: Mr. Marshall feels justified in moving this request forward as well as requesting consideration to start building this technology in the operating budget as “curricular material” rather than the capital budget. Ms. Moran suggested looking for trends around loss or broken devices.

27. Teacher Pilot Devices-CHS: Surface Pro’s are being replaced by ACER as it seems to be better in the classroom setting. This request provides a pilot program. Mr. Marshall advocates moving forward with this request and will look for feedback from teachers in making final decisions.

28. Security System Server Upgrade-CHS & GMS: Mr. Marshall recommends moving this request forward. Current servers expire in 2022; Microsoft cannot make any further updates; upgraded replacements are necessary. Historical footage will remain available.

30. Replacement of Classroom Phones: this is a necessary update, especially for 911 calls and should be part of this cycle of capital improvements.

31. Touchview Boards-District Wide: This request is for the next phase of replacing overhead projectors. Mr. Marshall asked for additional information from educators. Some classroom teachers already have a board and are asking for a second one. Mr. Marshall suggested moving this budget item forward for replacement Touchview Boards, but would like consideration to pause on additional boards in the classroom.

32. Airtime Upgrades: Mr. Marshall feels these software upgrades are necessary and recommends moving this request forward.

33. Laptops for Unit E Members: This will be Phase 2 of 3 phases. Mr. Marshall is working on some grant funding for these laptops. Information will not be available until Spring 2023.

Safety and Security:

36. Integrated Security and Access Control System-District Wide:

Mr. Marshall and Superintendent Folan agreed that this is an important update, but is a larger scale project for which the school system may not be ready. Both suggest continued relationship building with new Fire and Police Chiefs and further investigation of systems and language used in any emergency.

Program Improvement:

39. Reclaim Rm 154 as Classroom/relocate Robotics to Rm 157: A move to the first floor will give the Physics program a lab to help bring physics alive to the students. Mr. Marshall is in favor of moving this request forward, but does not need to be fully funded.

40. AP Physics 2 Equipment-CHS-Mr. Marshall recommended moving forward with this request.

41. Outfit Chemical Storage Closet to OSHA Regulations-CHS: This move is more about convenience than necessity; there are concerns about warranty issues, particularly roof warranties, with this construction. Mr. Marshall does not recommend granting approval for this request.

42. Performing Arts Platform CHS auditorium: Mr. Marshall recommended moving forward on this request.

43. Technology IMAC Upgrades-Music and Theater Production-CHS: Mr. Marshall recommended moving forward on this request.

44. Replacement of Classroom Based Instruments-District Wide: The music department would like to replace some wind instruments and add a saxophone to build inventory that will keep up with student interest. Mr. Marshall recommends moving this request forward. There was a question about replacement instruments and whether these are on a replacement cycle or necessary due to misuse and breakage

ACTION ITEM: Ms. Moran would like more information on the question of instrument and Chrome book replacement and what is the responsibility of the student for these items.

45. LowerField Storage Module-CHS-Mr. Marshall noted that an athletic container will be moved down to the field as a solution to this request.

46.Volleyball System Upgrade-CHS-Mr. Marshall supports this line item and is looking at pricing.

47. Replace Indoor Basketball Hoops-JFK: Mr. Marshall supports this line item and is looking at pricing. Interim plans for both these requests (46-47) include fitting items from GMS into the elementary schools.

Furniture and Fixtures:

50-52. Ms. Lawless has requested updated steamer and tilting skillets equipment in both GMS and JFK as well as the Cafeteria Line in JFK. While Mr. Marshall recognizes the difficulty in the old steam technology, he prefers not making any updates at the Middle School as it is expected to be torn down. Mr. Marshall did, however, suggest that the JFK service line should be replaced and will use monies from food sales income

53. Visual Arts Replacement Furniture-District Wide: Mr. Marshall thought this was a small request and was in favor of it.

54. Elementary Library Furniture Enhancement-Tech requested some furniture for

instructional purposes. Mr. Marshall thought it made sense to outfit the space in the library.

Extraordinary Maintenance/Vehicle Replacement:

57-59. District Vehicle Needs: Mr. Marshall removed consideration to purchasing a smaller 24 passenger white van as the need for a full bus is greater. However, Mr. Marshall did recommend the purchase of a town utility truck so both maintenance workers have a district vehicle for district needs.

Superintendent Folan listed his priorities as follows: 1. a very close look at some kind of a van; 2 the touchview boards; 3. shift in the Science Room for Robotics, including furniture.

Requests from the School Committee included more information regarding the landscaping request; the windows/screen issue at the Luce and relief from the temperatures in the rooms; kitchen updates at GMS that could be moved to a different location once the new school is built.

Ms. Moran asked the School Committee to forward feedback to her in time for the next Finance Subcommittee meeting scheduled for Thursday, November 10th, 2022.

4. **MSBA Update:** Superintendent Folan reported that as of October 26, 2022, the GMS project has moved to the MSBA's Feasibility Phase. This includes a \$1.5 million financial investment from the town of Canton and will take 20-24 months to complete. The inaugural School Building Committee met on Wednesday, November 2, 2022. It is composed of a large and diverse contingent of community members who bring experience and expertise to the table. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 7, 2022 at 6pm. The agenda will include the OPM selection team, grade configuration (5-8 vs 6-8) discussion, space for the new building, and general community engagement.
5. **Superintendent Professional Improvement Goal Update:** Superintendent Folan provided an update on his New Superintendent Induction Program (NSIP) classes. They include instructional sections and online coaching sessions where Mr. Folan is able to connect with his coach who offers good advice, networking, and legal, legislative and professional connections that allow engagement with MASS. Recently, Mr. Folan participated in Race Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion workshops where Equity policy and communications sessions included participants to share human experiences.
6. **District Goal Updates:** Superintendent Folan provided an update on District Goal #1. The Equity Audit process is progressing. There are weekly standing meetings, survey work is complete, there has been community interview work. The School Committee is reviewing the data and artifacts. Superintendent Folan suggested transitioning equity lens/threads into all pillars in the spirit of elevating all goals and action steps. Superintendent Folan noted the kick off of district wide "Learning Walks." An opportunity to see high quality teaching in the classroom, structures and systems within these classroom walk-throughs will facilitate development of high quality teaching and learning and an instructional vision.

Mr. Fogel presented a first draft of a forward-facing, interactive dashboard accountability system that will be visible and available to the public. The 2022-23 District Action Goal Tracker is interactive and updates in real time. The tracker is capable of harvesting all levels of data including key actions, who is responsible for them, and the status of the actions. It then draws indicators of progress from them. It will be made live soon. Chair Merenda applauded Mr. Fogel's work and offered anything needed to continue the fantastic work.

H. Public Comment: None

I. Director of Finance and Operations Report: Mr. Marshall's presentation of the Alpha Solutions Capital Planning proposal was tabled until the next School Committee meeting, scheduled for Thursday, November 17, 2022.

J. Consent Agenda: Chair Merenda asked for a motion to accept all items on the Consent agenda as written.

1. Regular Session Minutes: October 20, 2022, and October 20, 2022 Workshop
2. Executive Session Minutes: October 19, 2022, October 20, 2022
3. Out-of-State Travel Request: Robotics Competition, Vt. State Championship @ University of Vermont, February 10-12, 2023
4. Warrants: November 4, 2022

Vice-Chair O'Halloran made the motion and Laura Arboleda seconded. Vote was unanimous and recorded as:

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

K. Update of Sub-Committee, Task Force and Liaison Posts: Updates were tabled until the next School Committee Meeting scheduled for Thursday, November 17, 2022.

L. Other Business : None

M. Future Business The next Open Session meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 17, 2022, @ 6:00 pm.

N. Adjournment: Chair Merenda made a motion to adjourn the November 3, 2022 Canton School Committee meeting at 10:10 pm. Motion was made by Kendall O'Halloran and seconded by Laura Arboleda.

Vote was unanimous and recorded as:

Kristian Merenda	yea
Kendall O'Halloran	yea

Maureen Moran yea
Laura Arboleda yea

4 yeas 0 nays