

Town of Canton
Canton School Committee Minutes of the Meeting of April 8, 2021
Remote Meeting Zoom Webinar

- A. **Call to Order** The meeting of the School Committee is called to order at 7:01 pm by Vice Chair Merenda. Roll Call 5-0. Motion to move into Executive Session made by Nichola Gallagher. Second by Maureen Moran.

Kristian Merenda	yea
Maureen Moran	yea
Nichola Gallagher	yea
Chuck Rae	yea
Kendall O'Halloran	yea

Also Remotely Present:

Jennifer Fischer-Mueller, Superintendent
Derek Folan, Assistant Superintendent
Barry Nectow, School Business Administrator
Colleen Hutchinson, Recording Secretary
Debbie Rooney, Director of Teaching and Learning
Julie Shore, Director of Technology and Digital Learning
Dianna Mullen, Director of Student Services
Lauren Pushard, Nurse Leader
Ryan Gordy, PreK-12 Wellness Coordinator
Anisha Cherukuri, Student Member
Cynthia Holcombe, CDEI member

- B. Open Session: Superintendent Jennifer Fischer-Mueller calls the meeting to order at 7:04 PM.
- C. Reorganization: Superintendent Jennifer Fischer-Mueller welcomed new member Kendall O'Halloran. Superintendent Fischer-Mueller immediately opened the floor for nominations for School Committee Chair.

Nomination to appoint Kristian Merenda as School Committee Chair:

Nichola Gallagher

Second: Maureen Moran

Roll Call Vote: 5-0

Kristian Merenda	yea
Nichola Gallagher	yea
Maureen Moran	yea
Chuck Rae	yea
Kendall O'Halloran	yea

Chair Merenda opened nominations for members to serve as Vice Chair and Secretary.

Nomination to appoint Nichola Gallagher as School Committee Vice

Chair: Maureen Moran

Second: Chuck Rae

Roll Call Vote: 5-0

Kristian Merenda	yea
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Nichola Gallagher yea
Maureen Moran yea
Chuck Rae yea
Kendall O'Halloran yea

Ms. Maureen Moran is nominated by Nichola Gallagher as School Committee Secretary.

Ms. Kendall O'Halloran is nominated by Chuck Rae as School Committee Secretary.

Ms. O'Halloran declined her nomination as Secretary and respectfully asked for time to get settled into the Committee.

Second the nomination for Ms. Moran to serve as School Committee Secretary: Chuck Rae

Roll Call Vote: 5-0

Kristian Merenda yea
Nichola Gallagher yea
Maureen Moran yea
Chuck Rae yea
Kendall O'Halloran yea

Motion to postpone subcommittee reassignments until the April 29 meeting: Maureen Moran

Second: Chuck Rae

Roll Call Vote: 5-0

Kristian Merenda yea
Nichola Gallagher yea
Maureen Moran yea
Chuck Rae yea
Kendall O'Halloran yea

Chair Merenda announced that Public Comment will be moved up in the agenda this evening. Public comment will take place just before New Business Agenda items.

- D. **Student Member Report** Anisha Cherukuri shared her excitement for CHS to start the All-in process. She is looking forward to the outdoor graduation ceremony, AP exams and connecting with peers.

E. **Superintendent's Report**
Superintendent Highlights

MusicCounts! Donation: Thank you to MusicCounts!, the music booster group for CPS, for their generous donation of Pentatonic Freechimes for each elementary school and a Quatro post for the Rodman Preschool playground.

All-in...Game on: Superintendent Fischer-Mueller visited Ms. Durang's 3rd grade classroom last week as they transitioned to All-in learning.

CHS Externship: 75 students are participating in the Senior Externship program this year. The externship runs for 5 week (25-school days) from April 12 thru May 21. It is an unpaid independent study program offering seniors an opportunity to learn in an educational environment not previously available to them.

Updates

After School and Out of School Time Grant: CPS was notified that the After School and Out of School Time (ASOST) grant has been accepted by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. The Canton Public Schools will receive \$50,000 which will be used to support summer school programming at both CHS and GMS. The grant will support staffing and transportation for a 5-week summer school program that will run from July 6-August 5, four days a week Monday through Thursday.

Changes to MCAS: Below is the Commissioner's information on MCAS from his April 5, 2021 Weekly Update.

On Thursday, April 1, [Commissioner Riley announced](#) that he will recommend to the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education that they modify the state graduation requirements for the Class of 2022. If approved, this year's 11th graders would not be required to take the MCAS test. In addition, the timeline for administering the tests in grades 3 through 8 and 10 will be extended until June 11 in an effort to provide maximum flexibility for school districts.

Current juniors and seniors may still take the test this spring to qualify for the [Adams Scholarship](#) and [Koplik Certificate of Mastery](#). Juniors who do not participate this spring will be able to test for scholarships during the retest period in fall 2021.

In addition, DESE will offer remote administration of the English language arts, mathematics, and science assessments this spring for grades 3 through 8 to accommodate families who chose to have their children learn remotely through the end of the school year. The Department will provide school districts with additional information in the coming weeks.

Indicators of Excellence

Massachusetts Art Education Association (MAEA) Exhibit: This year, artwork from several Canton High School students was included in the MAEA exhibit.

Massachusetts Partnership for Diversity in Education (MPDE) Virtual Job Fair: Thank you to Human Resources Administrative Assistant, Ms. Kim Eardley for her excellent work with the MPDE virtual job fair on March 31. The Massachusetts Partnership for Diversity in Education is committed to recruiting and assisting in producing career opportunities for educators and administrators from diverse backgrounds and forming collaborative relationships that will enhance staff diversity within school districts.

Important Dates and Events

April 8	Initial return of some PreK Community Peers
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April 12-13	GMS Students, No School – Staff PD/Prep Days
April 15	GMS All-in
April 19	Patriot’s Day: District Offices Closed
April 19-23	No School: April Vacation
April 26-27	CHS Students, No School – Staff PD/Prep Days
April 28	K-8 In Person Early Release
April 28	CHS All-in
April 29	School Committee Meeting, 7:00 pm, virtual

Questions were raised with regard to how many students would be served through the summer grant program. This information is not available yet. Students are being identified by Principals at GMS and CHS. A variety of metrics will be used to identify criteria for student eligibility.

F. Public Comment

Ms. Catherine Hoberg - Expressed concerns with the new GMS therapeutic classroom. She would like to learn more about the details, timing and how the program would transition into CHS. Ms. Hoberg said that the School Committee needs to continue to ask questions and raise concerns about items not being addressed. She does not believe educators should be making all the decisions. Concerned that the School Committee is lacking the understanding of the difference between special education students and general education students.

Ms. Melanie Martin - Thanked Nichola Gallagher for inviting her to this meeting. Spoke in support of the CDEI joint statement on anti-hate. Would like to see resources through CPS updated.

G. New Business

1. Bullying Prevention Intervention Plan (BPIP): Mr. Ryan Gordy presented the updated BPIP for a possible vote of approval. Mr. Gordy explained that the BPIP was reviewed with CPS Health staff, Administrators, Student Services staff, at the Policy subcommittee meeting, and with the Student Wellness Advisory Committee (SWAC). All groups recommended no changes other than minor grammatical changes. There are no changes to the law. Once the BPIP is approved, the CPS health staff are coordinating training with other staff using resources they gathered from Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center (MARC) training. CPS Wellness Department will be adding a Student Wellness Advisory Group (SWAG). CPS staff continues its work with Kyle Cares to bring QPR training (question, persuade and refer) to students.
Ms. Gallagher raised several questions about the consequences of actions and how much the plan should include. Mr. Folan explained that the BPIP was reviewed with

the attorney and stated that the BPIP is meant to be student-centered. Other concerns raised pertained to the definition of harassment and if it should be part of the plan, not just in the appendix. The district administration will circle back with the attorney. The Committee revisits the BPIP at the next meeting for further review.

H. Unfinished Business

1. FY22 Budget Presentation: Superintendent Fischer-Mueller and Mr. Barry Nectow presented the FY22 Operating Budget for a vote of approval. Currently, the District's proposed budget is \$121,437 above the Fincom target. Mr. Nectow presented 2 options, 1. vote target Fincom budget with the difference and continue working to offset difference, 2. vote something other than the target to be sent to Fincom which may or may not be approved by Fincom, it would be up to voters to accept at Town meeting.

The School Committee voted the allocated Fincom target budget of \$47,792,662, even though there is a gap of \$121,437. The current budget equals \$47,914,099, or 3.74% increase. The Committee will continue to work to find options to get the budget down to the targeted number.

Mr. Nectow shared a budget analysis for FY21-23 and discussed details of revolving accounts and how they affect the FY22 and FY23 budgets. The GMS Therapeutic Classroom will be funded separately through the Special Education Reserve Account. Over time, the plan to fund the GMS Therapeutic program comes from tuition savings from students returning from out of district placements. By FY23, the cost of the program will be absorbed in the operating budget.

The budget will now be sent back to the Town Finance Committee for its vote. Town Meeting is in May for the final vote.

Ms. Mullen will do an in-depth presentation of the GMS program at the next meeting.

Motion to approve the FY22 Operating Budget of \$47,792,662: Nichola Gallagher

Second: Maureen Moran

Roll Call Vote: 5-0

Kristian Merenda yea

Nichola Gallagher yea

Maureen Moran yea

Chuck Rae yea

Kendall O'Halloran yea

2. 2021-2022 School Calendar: Superintendent Fischer-Mueller presented the 2021-2022 school calendar for further discussion and a vote of approval. Feedback from the Canton Teachers' Association and families regarding the first day of school and early release days have been received. The CTA voted and agreed to go back to school earlier than September 1 for the 2021-2022 school year. A survey to parents/guardians regarding early release days showed that a majority of parents preferred Friday as the early release day over Wednesday. 62% of CTA preferred the Friday early release day. The early release day which typically falls in November, on election day, has been moved to March 11, 2022. The Committee was presented with two calendars. One with early release days on Wednesday and the other with Friday. The first day of school for students is September 1, 2021, 180 days puts the last day of school (with no snow days) on June 16, 2022.

Motion to approve the 2021-2022 School Calendar with Friday Early Release Days: Nichola Gallagher

Second: Chuck Rae

Roll Call Vote: 5-0

Kristian Merenda yea

Nichola Gallagher yea

Maureen Moran yea

Chuck Rae yea

Kendall O'Halloran yea

3. **"All-in" Updates:** Superintendent Fischer-Mueller and members of the Central Office Team provided "All-in" updates. Canton is currently in the yellow phase. Assistant Superintendent Folan reminded families and staff to remain vigilant and follow protocols. Pooled testing for JFK Grade 2 started on Tuesday, April 6. GMS continues and has added another grade 7 team and will continue to expand to other grades at GMS. After testing JFK for a few weeks another elementary school will be added. Since March 9 CPS has had 17 negative pools. DESE will provide funding for pooled testing until the end of the school year.

Preschool started All-in started today and they welcomed back a few community peers. GMS all in will start on Thursday, April 15. There will be no school for GMS students on April 12 & 13 for staff prep days. Wednesday, April 14 is the last remote Wednesday for GMS. CHS will be all on April 28. There will be no school for CHS students on April 26 & 27 for staff prep day. Building inspections continue with the Fire Chief, Building Inspector and Health Department. Air quality testing is being done on April 8. Refer to Principal's Newsletters for the most current building based information. Superintendent Fischer-Mueller reminded families that the Remote Learning Pathway will not be an option next year, 2021-2022.

4. **CDEI Joint Statement on Anti-Hate:** Ms. Nichola Gallagher continued the discussion regarding the issuance of a statement about the recent acts of violence and the impact on our community. CDEI Co-Chair, Ms. Cynthia Holcombe joined the meeting and read the statement aloud. The statement can be found on the School Committee webpage under Meetings/Agendas/Minutes. This statement has been shared with the Canton Select Board, CDEI Committee and Canton School Committee. The School Committee is the first group to vote on the issuance of this joint statement. The purpose of this statement is to reach people and Ms. Gallagher explained that this School Committee meeting was a platform to do so. Although the statement does state that Canton stands against all types of hate, the reference specific to Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) remains in the statement in light of recent events and in response to a request.

Motion to approve the release of the CDEI joint statement on Anti Hate:

Maureen Moran

Second: Kendall O'Halloran

Roll Call Vote: 4-0-1

Kristian Merenda yea

Nichola Gallagher yea

Maureen Moran yea

Chuck Rae abstain

Kendall O'Halloran yea

I. **Business Manager's Report** None

J. **Routine Matters**

1. Approve Minutes dated March 30, 2021

Move: Nichola Gallagher

Second: Maureen Moran

Roll Call Vote: 5-0

Kristian Merenda yea

Nichola Gallagher yea

Maureen Moran yea

Chuck Rae yea

Kendall O'Halloran yea

2. Announcement that the warrant dated April 2, 2021 has been signed and delivered and April 9, 2021 has been signed and will be delivered tomorrow.

K. Sub-Committee Reports

1. CCPC - vacant
2. BRC - Chuck Rae - nothing new to report
3. Wellness- Chuck Rae - nothing new to report
4. Finance - Maureen Moran/Nichola Gallagher -nothing new to report
5. Policy - Kristian Merenda – nothing new to report
6. PRHC – Nichola Gallagher - nothing new to report
7. CDEI - Nichola Gallagher - nothing new to report
8. Master Planning Committee - Kristian Merenda - nothing to report

L. Other Business Topics not reasonably anticipated 48 hours in advance of the meeting.

M. Future Business The next School Committee Meeting will be held Thursday, April 29, 2021, at 7:00 pm.

N. Adjournment Nichola Gallagher motioned to close the Open Session at 9:41 pm. Maureen Moran seconded. It was voted by a roll call vote 5-0.

Maureen Moran yea

Nichola Gallagher yea

Kristian Merenda yea

Chuck Rae yea

Kendall O'Halloran yea

Documents used during the meeting:

1. Superintendent's Report, April 8, 2021
2. FY22 Superintendent Budget Request Summary
3. Operating Budget Analysis, 4/7/21
4. Canton March 2021 Enrollment
5. SC All-in update April 8, 2021 ppt
6. MARC Committee BPIP Policy- updated by CPH Health Teachers
7. MARC Committee BPIP Policy- updated by Student Services Team
8. Final BPIP Policy
9. Final BPIP Appendices 20-21
10. Anti-Hate Joint Statement
11. Draft 2021-2022 CPS Calendar - Wednesday Early Release Option
12. Draft 2021-2022 CPS Calendar - Friday Early Release Option
13. CPS Parent Survey - Early Release