

Canton School Committee
Open Meeting Minutes
Thursday, October 19, 2023

A. Call to Order: The meeting of the School Committee is called to order at 5:03 pm. Motion to go into Executive Session made by Maureen Moran to (a) Approve executive session minutes (10/5/23), (b) conduct contract negotiations with nonunion personnel - Superintendent, (c) discuss the reputation, character, physical condition or mental health, rather than professional competence, of an individual, or to discuss the discipline or dismissal of, or complaints or charges brought against, a public officer, employee, staff member or individual. Seconded by Kim McCourt. Chair O'Halloran declared that an Open Meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the body. It was voted unanimously by roll 4-0.

Laura Arboleda	yea
Kimberly McCourt	yea
Maureen Moran	yea
Kendall O'Halloran	yea
4 yeas	0 nays

School Committee Members returned to Open Session at 6:10 pm

Attendees:

Laura Arboleda (virtual-for Executive Session only)
Attorney Michael Maccaro (virtual for Exec. only)
Derek Folan, Superintendent
Stephen Marshall, Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operations
Kimberly McCourt
Kristian Merenda (arrived at 5:11 pm)
Maureen Moran
Kendall O'Halloran
Sarah Shannon, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning
Joanne Campbell, Recording Secretary

Absent: Laura Arboleda
Emma Cummings

Guests:

Justin Thibeault, Ai3
Jennifer Carlson, LeftField
Jeffrey Sperling, Principal, CHS
Jonathan Mulhern, Principal, GMS
Samantha Phan, CHS Student Representative
Leah Factor, CHS Senior, Co-Organizer of Champions of Wellness 5K
Yeshi Lamour, Principal, Luce Elementary School

Saundra Watson, Principal, JFK Elementary School
Paul McKnight, Principal, Hansen Elementary School
Shelley Evans, PreK Coordinator
Nicholas Fitzgerald, Assistant Principal, Canton High School
Sarah Shannon, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning

B. Student Member Report & Champions of Wellness 5k Organizers - introductions and presentation - School Committee Student Advisor, Samantha Pham, celebrated community events by sharing CHS updates including a Student Council workshop, welcoming College representatives at CHS, and reporting on a recent and successful “coffeehouse” event supported by CHS Drama Club. Ms. Pham acknowledged the winning ways of the Fall CHS sports teams, particularly the Girls’ Volleyball team who remain undefeated, and reported on the recent Canton Health Fair.

Mr. Nicholas Fitzgerald introduced Ms. Leah Factor, one of the organizers of the Champions of Wellness 5k, who shared details about the event scheduled for November 19, 2023. Anyone interested in participating in either the 5K or the Kids Fun Run can sign up on the Canton Public Schools website or on the RACEWIRE app.

C. New Business

1. **Ai3 Educational Plan Update & Approval:** Ai3 Representative, Justin Thibeault, provided an update on the GMS Educational Program. This document includes all requirements for submission to the MSBA. It identifies the existing education delivery in the District and its current constraints, as well as the goals and vision of the District defined through conversations, meetings, discussions, and activities within the District and Canton community. Following MSBA guidelines, the Educational Program includes an inventory of all existing spaces and every space needed for educational delivery and/or to support the building. Eight (8) different Space Summaries will be submitted to the MSBA as part of the GMS project. Each option is weighted by size, based on grade configuration (5-8 or 6-8), and whether or not an auditorium is included.
School Committee members emphasized key areas of focus including an engaged environment of instruction, high-level security and safety, inclusion, building community through “teaming,” sustainability of the building, and movable furniture and spaces (including adjacent “Specials” space). These spaces will allow “spill-ability” to support learners of all kinds track and succeed at project-based learning.
With no further questions or requests for further discussion, Chair O’Halloran called for a motion to approve the Galvin Middle School Educational Plan as written and presented by Ai3 representatives. Kristian Merenda made the motion; Kimberly McCourt seconded. Ensuing vote was unanimous at 4-0 and recorded as:

Kimberly McCourt	yea
Kristian Merenda	yea
Maureen Moran	yea

Kendall O'Halloran yea

4 yeas 0 nays

2. **Preview Considerations for the Upcoming GMS Community Forum:** The next GMS Community Forum is scheduled for 7 pm on Wednesday, October 25, 2023 in the GMS Library. Along with a project schedule and overview, the agenda will include student centered discussions, elementary population analysis, and social emotional learning aspects. Community input will be critical to making an informed decision on Galvin grade configuration (6-8 or 5-8). The District is looking to have as many perspectives on grade configuration as possible. Suggestions were made to have 5th grade teachers available for their input; invite former parents and students of GMS for their perspective; add social media; and to make child care available. For those in attendance, there will be a live poll at the end. For those who cannot attend, the Forum will be filmed and available after the meeting. Opinions/suggestions/ concerns are highly encouraged and may be submitted to Administration.
3. **2023-2024 School Improvement Plans (SIPs):**
 - i. **Canton High School-**Principal Sperling presented three improvement priorities for the 2023-24 year:
 - a. developing a better, more consistent written curriculum across all departments. By using available data, Mr. Sperling expects to put templates in place, shift unit and lesson plans to guide instruction, remediation and recommendations, and develop an intervention schedule based on in class written assessment results. Additionally, Mr. Sperling will develop professional learning models for AP teachers based on best practices and educator reports of challenges and obstacles to meeting goals. This process will start as soon as test results are available.
 - b. CHS will continue to offer events and opportunities to engage and interact with the school community. Mr. Sperling looks to find ways to showcase academic and community programs, and expand senior externships and projects.
 - c. Provide equity-based professional learning opportunities that will complement and augment the CPS model of HQTLL especially in classroom interventions.
 - ii. **Galvin Middle School:** Principal Mulhern offered two overarching objectives in defining his plan-a tight alignment of the CPS Strategic Plan and continued positive momentum. His three goals included:
 - a. Priority 1 is to have GMS students earn 1.5% more available points on constructed response questions in all MCAS tests in 2024. He reported that educators are already working on strategies. Using specific, available data, this goal will be met with

- Professional Learning, department meetings with specific agendas, and stronger unit and lesson plans focusing on writing.
- b. Family community engagement opportunities to all families at least once per term by advertising events, particularly wellness focused events, in the weekly newsletter, highlighting events and celebrating school highlights on social media, and building out the SIS.
 - c. Weekly HQTLL strategies to reduce the disproportionality discipline ration by .5% for selected populations at GMS. Mr. Mulhern will begin by hosting Learning Walks, renaming Restorative circles to Community circles, and taking steps to choose topics by grade level and add a student voice to topics. He will give equal attention to putting innovative practices in play before the “new” Galvin opens and reducing disproportionality.

iii. JFK Elementary School: Principal Watson reported on her goals for 2023-24 at the JFK. The four priorities include:

- a. a 25% increase of students meeting or exceeding expectations for the lowest performing quartile on the ELA MCAS and a 3-5% increase in all students meeting or exceeding expectations. This will be accomplished by all teachers focusing on writing in Language Arts across all content areas, and using STAR Assessment data to meet the differentiated needs of students.
- b. to disrupt inequitable student experiences by increasing reflective practices and continuous learning for staff by raising general awareness, participating in at least one round of professional inquiry, reflection, and learning in both literacy and math. Development of teacher instructional practices through observation and feedback cycles, instructional walkthroughs and data collection and analysis.
- c. Increase in family engagement in home-school connection evidenced by a 10% increase in JFK SEL Committee surveys indicating a better understanding of what social-emotional supports are available to their children. This will be achieved with monthly family “coffee” forums and academic learning nights as well as home-school connections.
- d. 100% of classroom teachers will implement a Tier 1 social emotional learning (SEL) curriculum continuing to incorporate restorative practices in conjunction with traditional, progressive measures in accountability practices. This goal will be realized by staff training, peer observation, co-teaching opportunities and PD with the Restorative Justice Consultant as well as family surveys and SEL forums.
- e. Principal Watson is currently evaluating a tangible, creative tracker that will monitor progress.

iv. Luce Elementary School: Principal Lamour reported on her four goals for the Luce. They include:

- a. in ELA, 10% of Luce students in the lowest performing percentile will improve by at least one performance standard, and the percentage of all students meeting or exceeding expectations will increase by 3-5%. Expectations for meeting this goal will begin with building based data analysis of student achievement, three times a year data meetings to update information and inform lesson planning and instructional practices; differentiated Tier 1 instruction, and focusing on writing in ELA classes and content area study in Science and Social Studies;
- b. to disrupt inequitable student experiences by adding peer modeling and increasing reflective practices and continuous learning for staff by raising general awareness; participating in at least one round of professional inquiry, reflection, and learning in both literacy and math. Development of teacher instructional practices will be made through observation and feedback cycles, instructional walkthroughs and data collection and analysis.
- c. to eliminate communication barriers in order to provide access to all families. Action steps to reach this goal will include implementing a DEI Culture Calendar and publicly celebrating more cultures; using the Language Line to communicate with families whose primary language is not English; better application of the weekly Smore and supplying more information to families about curriculum and initiatives.
- d. 100% of classroom teachers will implement a Tier 1 social emotional learning (SEL) curriculum continuing to incorporate restorative practices in conjunction with traditional, progressive measures in our accountability practices. This goal will be realized by implementing the Wayfinder SEL curriculum, strengthening the Student Support Team (SST); deepening implementation of Restorative Justice practices across all classrooms; hosting family meetings using the Tuesday Tea/CAPT meeting platform; and developing student voices and leadership.

v. Hansen Elementary School: Principal McNight identified and acknowledged low scoring and plans to mitigate them with the following goals:

- a. raise ELA MCAS scores for the lowest performing quartile to 15% of students meeting and raise the scoring of all students exceeding expectations by 3-5%. This goal will be met by compiling building based data analysis of student achievement; building instructional practice through PD in Reveal Math, evidence based literacy instruction and use of inquiry-designed Social Studies; and implementing high impact academic structures.

- b. to disrupt inequitable student experiences by educator participation in at least one round of job-embedded professional inquiry with the support of Instructional Resource Specialists; PD opportunities in all curriculum initiatives; continue implementing high impact academic structures and professional development;
- c. Increase and improve effective collaboration between home and school by engaging in two-way communication with families by including "Playground with the Principals," Boo-Hoo/Yahoo Breakfast for Kindergarten families, Curriculum nights, and CAPT mystery readers; as well as using the Language Line and other translation resources to communicate with families;
- d. 100% implementation of Tier 1 social emotional learning (SEL) curriculum supported by student centered practices. This will be accomplished by bolstering weekly morning meetings with Wayfinder and including circle time or whole class discussion to build community; staff participation in PD centered around restorative justice; and engaging families, students, and staff around school behavioral expectations and steps to build relationships and connections with students.

vi. Rodman Early Childhood Program: Ms. Shelley Needle, Interim Early Childhood Coordinator, introduced her Improvement Plan with the following goals:

- a. identifying assessments and instructional routine in phonological awareness to build literacy skills. This will be achieved through specialized training, creating assessments and instructional routines for preschool students and developing students' abilities to segment words in sentences orally.
- b. increase early preschool/kindergarten transition introductions by creating structured communication practices, overlapping opportunities across preschool and kindergarten teachers, and creating data based sharing structures;
- c. create structured practice for the Student Support/Child Study Team to support and engage a tiered practice of intervention by identifying best practices, building a structured foundation of identification, monitoring and actions steps, and monitoring progress of data-based actions steps.

Full reports of School Improvement Plans may be found on the CPS [website](#).

4. Q4 Financial Report including Donations and Grant Approvals:

Mr. Marshall presented the Quarter 4 financial report summarizing the total budget for FY23. He reviewed the FY23 school operating budget (\$55,384,985). 93% of operating budget expenditures were comprised of salaries and expenses including out-of-district tuitions, transportation and utilities. He also noted the major components of total school department spending. Mr. Marshall gave an update on

Special Education indicating that tuition and transportation are the largest and most volatile expenses. There was a 14% increase this year, and the District should expect more increases. Mr. Marshall identified Grants the District received (ESSER III Covid Relief Funds and the Special Education Grant) and cataloged where the funds were applied.

Mr. Marshall acknowledged that government budget funds did increase, but reminded the group that these funds are paid in arrears.

He also recognized that the District will need funds for additional preschool space, some athletic needs at the high school, and other school committee priorities.

Mr. Marshall then announced the grant awards (several from DESE, Department of Public Health and a state earmarked Italian language pilot) and donations asking the School Committee to accept them.

Hearing no questions or requests for further discussion, Ms. O'Halloran asked for a motion to approve the FY23 4th Quarter Financial Report (as of June 30, 2023) and Grants and Donations as written and presented. Maureen Moran made the motion; Kimberly McCourt seconded. Ensuing vote was unanimous at 4-0 and recorded as:

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

4 yeas 0 nays

5. School Committee Member Conference Attendance: Members reviewed **File BIBA, School Committee Conferences, Conventions and Workshops**. After a short discussion, Ms. O'Halloran called for a motion to approve the conference attendance and reimbursement of a School Committee member at the MASC/MASS conference in November 2023 with the caveat that documented, reimbursable expenses will be disbursed after the event. Maureen Moran made the motion; Kimberly McCourt seconded. Ensuing vote was recorded as 3-0;

Kimberly McCourt	yea
Kristian Merenda	abstained
Maureen Moran	yea
Kendall O'Halloran	yea

3 yeas 0 nays 1 abstention

After some discussion over staff reimbursement, Ms. Moran agreed to contact the town's Select Board for information on staff reimbursement.

D. Unfinished Business:

- 1. Concussion Protocols:** The updated concussion policy, including all appendices, was presented to the Committee by Ms. O'Halloran. Hearing no questions or

requests for further discussion, Ms. O'Halloran called for a motion to approve the Concussion Management Policy as written and presented. Maureen Moran made the motion; Kimberly McCourt seconded. Ensuing vote was unanimous at 4-0 and recorded as follows:

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

4 yeas 0 nays

2. **Section H:** Ms. O'Halloran recommended the Committee defer the vote for Section H to the next scheduled School Committee meeting.

E. Public Comment: Canton resident, Jennifer O'Donnell, noting legal fees and private tuitions paid, spoke of her concern that the Canton School Committee and its administration may not be prioritizing the use of public funds for optimal learning of children in the Canton School System.

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

G. Consent Agenda:

1. Regular Session Minutes: August 3, 2023, October 5, 2023
2. Warrants: October 20, 2023

Ms. O'Halloran announced the contents of the Consent agenda, and requested that Regular Session Minutes from August 3rd, 2023 be pulled for further review. With no further requests for removal of other items in the Consent Agenda, Chair O'Halloran then called for a motion to accept Regular Session Minutes of October 5, 2023 and the October 20, 2023 Warrant. Kristian Merenda made the motion; Maureen Moran seconded. Ensuing vote was unanimous at 4-0 and recorded as follows:

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

4 yeas 0 nays

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

- a. Stephen Marshall:
 - i. Budget- & Finance meeting Fri. 10/20-working on Capital Project priorities;

ii. Full CCPC applications are due on Friday, October 27, 2023;

iii. The Sustainability Committee-still has not met.

b. Derek Folan: noted appreciation for the SBC Committee's work on the GMS Educational Plan and continued attention to the rigorous MSBA process.

c. Kendall O'Halloran:

i. CCPC-applications are in progress;

ii. Policy Subcommittee-continues with progress on Policies updates;

iii. Content & Communications-nothing to report;

iv. The next GMS Building Community Forum is scheduled for Wednesday, October 25th at 7pm in the Galvin School Library;

d. Maureen Moran:

i. continuing work on budget proposals and priorities with the Budget & Finance Committee. Scheduled meetings will be held Fri.Oct. 20 and Fri. Oct. 27th.

e. Kristian Merenda:

i. Nothing new to report on Master Planning Implementation Committee;

ii. Building and Renovations Committee will meet week of Oct. 23rd;

iii. Suggested a near future discussion and possible vote for a Subcommittee for Negotiations for Unit B.

J. Other Business: None

K. Future Business: The next Open Session meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 2, 2023 @ 6:00 pm.

L. Adjournment: Hearing no questions or requests for further discussion, Chair O'Halloran asked for a motion to adjourn the Thursday, October 19, 2023 School Committee meeting at 9:10 pm. Maureen Moran made the motion; Kristian Merenda seconded. Voting was unanimous at 4-0 and recorded as follows:

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

4 yeas	0 nays
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Documents Reviewed:

Ai3 Educational Plan
GMS Community Forum #2 Proposed Agenda
CHS School Improvement Plan
GMS School Improvement Plan
JFK Elementary School Improvement Plan
Luce Elementary School Improvement Plan
Hansen Elementary School Improvement Plan
Rodman Early Childhood Program Improvement Plan
CPS Grant & Donation Request for Approval
FY23 4th Quarter Financial Report as of June 30, 2023
Policy BID-School Committee Member Compensation and Expenses
Concussion Management Policy
Policy Manual-Section H-Negotiations