

March 31st City Council - School Committee Roundtable

Overview of School Initiatives (60 minutes)

Introduction

Dr. Jeff Young
Superintendent

Elementary Schools

Maryann MacDonald
Asst. Superintendent for Elementary
Schools

- Curriculum development, including World Language
- Level 3 schools

Secondary Schools

Dr. Carolyn Turk
Deputy Superintendent

Family Engagement

Lori Likis
Chief Planning Officer CPSD

Budget

Claire Spinner
Chief Financial Officer CPSD

Enrollment Management

James Maloney
Chief Operating Officer CPSD

- Projected student enrollment and space issues
- Charter School/Parent Surveys

Human Resources Update

Barbara Allen
Exec. Director Human Resources

- Educator Evaluation
- Staff Diversity

Technology Update

Steve Smith
Chief Technology Officer CPSD

School Climate

Dr. Carolyn Turk
Deputy Superintendent

Office of Student Services

Dr. Victoria Greer
Asst. Superintendent for Student
Services

District-wide Improvement

Dr. Jessica Huizenga
Asst. Superintendent for Curriculum

- Achievement gaps
- MCAS/PARCC testing

Questions and Answers (60-90 minutes)

Comments/ Maryann MacDonald
City Council/ School Committee Roundtable
March 31, 2014

With the implementation of the new Upper Schools came the creation of 11 new elementary schools and the opportunity to focus on creating the best educational experiences for our youngest students. Now that the initial phase of the Upper School program is underway, we look forward to a second phase of the work that includes a review of the elementary program.

The principals of Cambridge's new elementary schools spoke to the School Committee a few weeks ago to share their excitement and commitment to implementing an elementary program of the highest quality. As a team of educational leaders, they spoke about their work and the need to focus and prioritize.

They spoke about the proficiency gaps that exist for certain sub-groups of our students as being unacceptable, and committed to reducing those disparities. They recommitted to the goal of all students being proficient readers by third grade and, at a meeting just last Friday agreed to set goals for first grade as well because, as you know, in many ways grade 3 is too late to close the achievement gap.

This year all elementary schools are implementing Response to Intervention so that students' needs in reading and math are diagnosed early on and targeted interventions are provided.

We are piloting the new Massachusetts Kindergarten Entry Assessment (MKEA) along with districts across the state to assess growth and learning in all developmental areas and provide a seamless transition from a child's pre-school years into kindergarten.

We are working to improve our programs to better meet the behavioral, social and emotional needs of our students.

At the same time we are proud of our visual and performing arts, library media, technology, physical education and health programs and are working to build upon them.

Teachers and administrators are receiving professional development to better understand the needs of our growing population of English Language Learners and we are continuing to strengthen our dual language immersion programs.

Our goal is to build upon an already strong program to make it even stronger.

The principals acknowledged and supported the benefits of learning multiple languages at an early age and are aware that in the global workforce, knowing more than one language is a critical skill. However, they shared serious concerns about commencing a new World Language program at this time given our short school day.

As you are aware, the school day in the elementary schools in Cambridge is six (6) hours long. We are under significant time constraints, and our teachers are challenged to provide adequate time for instruction in core curriculum areas such as literacy, math, science and social studies. New

expectations related to the Common Core State Standards will demand even greater attention to core subjects in the elementary grades. Adding another subject, World Language, within the existing school day, would give us less time to continue our work on closing the achievement gaps.

Finally I want to talk about the work that we are doing to support our two schools that have been designated as Level 3 by the state, the Kennedy Longfellow and the King Open. These schools have not met their MCAS targets and are in the lowest 20% of schools as compared to elementary schools across the state.

The schools are receiving support from both inside and outside the district. Both schools have redesigned their school improvement plans this year, and principals and their leadership teams have met with district leaders to review and approve these plans. They will be receiving assistance from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's District and School Assistance Center (DSAC) staff, and are currently identifying the nature of this intervention support. As a district, CPS is eligible for up to \$13,000 in state funds to support Level 3 schools. Both schools are also receiving Title I support for improvement initiatives and we are in conversation with the School Committee re: additional funding. We are committing resources to prioritize the work of these schools moving forward.

This evening you will hear from other members of our Teaching and Learning Team about the specific initiatives that are underway. As a new team we are excited about our work together in ensuring success for all of Cambridge's students.

City Council: Family Engagement Talking Points

I. Karen Mapp

Worked with us in SY 12-13; 4 workshops for family liaisons; 1 w/ liaisons & principals; 1 with CPS admin; session with CSAG. Karen's vision and message: FE must be linked to student learning

Karen's recommendations for CPS moving forward:

- Develop CPS vision of family engagement
- Develop CPS family engagement plan
- Examine family liaison program – consistency in role focused on CPS vision
- Launch cultural proficiency initiative that would help develop CPS as a welcoming, inclusive district in which our differences were a strength

II. Strides toward CP this year: CET relationship

- Part of Kids Council, citywide initiative
- Developed MOU: ~~\$25k~~^{15k} in CPS budget; access to 11 outreach workers; 832 hours of OW time allocated strategically to schools/district
- Wildly successful: Sept-Dec, CET contacted 799 parents; recommended 33 events; 173 parents attended events; 96 parents attended CPS event for first time
- Will be looking at new ways of using this resource in SY14-15

III. Vision and Planning Work in Process Now

- FE Planning Team formed: Robin, Chris, Melody, Rosalie, Michelle Godfrey from CET and Center for Families (includes family liaisons, principals, teachers)
- Vision: collaborating with partner Lesley, Creativity Commons; engaging diverse group of families and CET outreach workers; using art to level the playing field and explore the question: What does culturally proficient and equitable family engagement look like in CPS? Working with directors of Creativity Commons to design and facilitate; planning team will explore how to expand discussion/results across city
- Planning: Using the MA Family, School, and Community Partnership Fundamentals as standards; adopted by Board of Ed in June 2012; research-based best practice standards established by team of experts; has rubric for self assessment. Will be hosting inclusive meeting and other mechanisms that provide opportunity for people within/outside district to assess district and identify standards for improvement which will be focus of our planning. Family liaisons will be critical in planning work and discussion of strategies for improvement

BUDGET DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The School Dept budget comprises about 30% of the City's operating budget. Although we are a department of the City, the Cambridge Public Schools is a complex organization with a separate elected governing body, 17 schools and 40 plus departments including curriculum departments, operation departments such as transportation, plant maintenance and IT, and central admin departments such as the superintendent's office, finance and HR.

We take very seriously the need to include all stakeholders in the process of crafting our budget. We have many—elected officials, families, principals and departments heads, teachers and other staff. We begin our work on the budget in Oct/Nov. An important beginning of our process is the School Committee's work on developing the Budget Guidelines, generally in the Fall, although this year the committee choose to finalize the guidelines in January with new committee members. These guides our budget development work. In Nov & Dec, Superintendent, Jim, Carolyn and I ~~are working~~ ^{in its own} ~~right~~ closely with the city manager and city fiscal staff to determine the CPS budget allocation for the upcoming year. Each year in the fall, Jeff and I also meet with the CSAG parent group to give them an update and overview of the CPS budget process.

Our internal budget kickoff with CPS principals and department heads happened in early December. This year, we spent that time developing strategic objectives that support the School Committee Budget Guidelines and the district's core values of academic excellence and social justice and mission of accelerated student achievement. The purpose of developing these was to us make budget decisions regarding the allocation of district resources.

Refine the upper school program

Create an aligned curriculum and instruction system

Develop inclusive schooling across the district

Develop effective educators and instructional leaders.

In January, we began internal meeting with all principals and department heads to discuss budget initiatives that aligned with the strategic objectives and also to discuss particular budget needs specific to a school or department. We also held a public hearing for parents and other community members and several budget retreats with the School Committee. The budget retreats, which are public meetings, are an opportunity for the Superintendent and his team to share information that we have from our internal budget meetings and to hear further from SC members about their priorities and concerns.

Based on all of this input, the superintendent and his team makes discussion about budget priorities by mid/late February and my department and I put together the Superintendent's Proposed Budget. The Proposed Budget was presented by the superintendent to the School Committee and the public on Mar 11. Since then we have had two meetings for public comment (Mar 18 and Mar 25).

The superintendent generally presents some budget adjustments in response to school committee feedback in advance of the school committee's vote to adopt the budget.

The School Committee will vote to adopt the budget in April, and then my staff and I prepare the Adopted Budget document which will be forwarded to the City Council in advance of our meeting with you on May 21.

1. CPSD is in the midst of a study enrollment increase.
2. Current year enrollment is 6518 an increase of 733 students or 12.7% since the low point in CPSD enrollment in 2006-07.
3. Enrollment today is up in every grade from the 2006-07 school year except grade 7 and grade 12.
4. Enrollment is expected to increase by an additional 333 or 5.1% over the next three school years.
5. *within* Kindergarten for this September is currently over enrolled – that is we currently have more students enrolled as we have seats and that is with the addition of two kindergarten classrooms for the fall.
6. Including these new kindergarten classrooms we have added 14 kindergarten classrooms in recent years.
7. Might point out that all told we have opened over 30 classrooms in recent years including SEI (Sheltered English Immersion), OSS (Office of Student Services) and mainstream.
8. Enrollment increases in recent years have come at traditional entry points of kindergarten and grade 9. Although interestingly this year's grade 6 is the largest since 2004-05 and is virtually full at the four upper schools.
9. While it is true that the enrollment decline as grades increase this is a pattern that goes back decades perhaps the Post WWII baby boom and reflects the City's demographics for children.
10. The enrollment increase has placed a strain on space in our buildings. As I mentioned currently overenrolled for next year's kindergarten and in the current year we have approximately 40 empty seats in grade 1 and grade 6 is essentially full.

6-20-15
09-16-15
11-13-15

Staff Diversity

Although we have made great strides over time in diversifying our administrative staff, including Principals, progress in greater diversification among our teaching staff has not occurred over time, despite increasing the goal from 25% to 30%.

For the past many years, the numbers have hovered around 18% 20% of our teaching staff being persons of color, with the same percentages of new hires each year – 18% - 20%. despite recruiting locally and regionally, annual recruiting trips to historically black colleges and universities in the South, steps to support diversity in hiring committee representation, etc

In large part, this may be due to some statistics we can't deny: - people of color are entering the teaching profession in far lesser numbers than their white counterparts and in fact less than 10% of all teachers throughout Massachusetts are people of color.

Try as we might, the pool just isn't there in terms of the number of teachers of color we'd like to see represented.

It is clear that we need to stimulate and grow the number of future teachers of color – grow, or cultivate our own, and we plan to do this through a program called Today's Students, Tomorrow's Students (TSTT).

TSTT will focus on supporting and encouraging Cambridge's own students to enter the teaching profession, and bring their talents back to the City's school when they graduate with their degree in Education.

TSTT has a number of member colleges and universities throughout several states who have committed to provide TSTT students with scholarships equaling 50% of annual tuition throughout their four years of college. In Cambridge, Lesley University has partnered with TSTT in this scholarship effort.

The focus is on early identification of promising students of color and students who may be considered at risk in 8th and 9th grades, assigning those students mentors, providing training and entry teaching opportunities through the high school years, supporting them in the college application process, and working with and supporting them throughout their college years, until they are ready to enter the workforce upon graduation.

We think this initiative has a lot of promise, and are very excited about the prospect of implementing a well-designed, proven program that should increase the number of Cambridge who return to our schools later in their young adult years as teachers.

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Educator Evaluation

- One major initiative has been the implementation of the new educator evaluation system, which was rolled out last year in Cambridge and across the state.
- As we know, the quality of the classroom teacher has perhaps the largest impact on student achievement.
- The emphasis of the new educator evaluation system is to provide teachers with enhanced feedback with the goal of improving and refining teacher practice.
- It includes a process of reflection and self-assessment, development goals that tie into school and district improvement plans, frequent classroom observations by administrators, and timely feedback to teachers.
- Last year, all administrators and teachers were trained in the new system, and all administrators responsible for teacher evaluation were provided with iPads purchased under the RTTT grant, to facilitate notetaking and record-keeping while conducting classroom observations and allow rapid feedback to teachers.
- Last year, the state set a goal of 50% of all teachers being evaluated - we met and exceeded that with 65% of teachers being evaluated.
- We are now in year 2 of implementation, with a focus on administrator evaluations.
- Other major phases scheduled to be added in the next two years include evaluation results are ratings for a teacher's impact on student learning and whether that teacher has a high, moderate, or low impact on learning (based on student growth percentiles as measured by MCAS scores and DDM's – district-determined measures), student feedback on teacher performance, and staff feedback on administrative performance.

Technology Overview

- ICTS Department

- Short description of ICTS & reasons for merging EdTech, Library Media MAS etc...
- Staffing; core, technical, ed tech Library Media MAS

- Technology

- 6000+ devices
 - Admin, Classroom, mobile etc...
 - All OSs multiple management tools
- robust network
- managed wireless
 - secure & Public
 - integrated with city wireless
- VM environment (50+ servers)
- two Internet connections
 - Shared Level 3 with city
 - Internet 2 partnership with Harvard
- Student information system
 - core of all data systems
 - 40+ other systems integrate with SIS data
- Infrastructure partially shared with City ITD - Network
 - serve on eGov & ITD Realignment project

- FOCUSED SUPPORT

All above to provided services in 4 main categories

- Support of Teaching & Learning
- Student Data capturing & Reporting
- Web/online & mobile services
- Admin Services Support
 - HR, Payroll etc....

- EVOLUTION

- CPS has always been well positioned when it comes to supporting 4 major areas
- 2 years ago received notice of the buy out of our SIS - CORE System that drives everything else.
 - Took opportunity to take a step back and ensure we were headed in right direction
 - created cross functional district team to review options and took one year to select replacement SIS - ASPEN

ASPEN

- Supports the Teaching & Learning, Student Data mgt/reporting, Web service
- This year's roll out included parent & student portals at CRLS with grade book

- move down to "upper schools" next year
- K-5 following

IF TIME -

- Technology Planning

- Long range plan
- Classroom tech updated by grades CRLS, 6-8, 3-5, K-2
 - sustainable budget
 - classroom tech decided per grade
 - Driven by actual curricular needs
 - K-12 Technology benchmarks of what students need to be able to do
- K-12 systems to support T&L
 - T&L Systems Steering Committee
 - Instructional delivery
 - Student data reporting
 - Curriculum development
 - RTI etc
- Online Services/Family Engagement
 - Web Site Update (new CMS)
 - Reclass in house position to continue enhancing web & mobile presense
 - Increase and improvement in communication
 - Alignment of print, online & Cablecast
 - Social Media
 - ShareIt - internal communications
 - Improved Accessibility when using Mobile or Tablet devices due to responsive design (rolled out next school year)

- City ITD & Schools Collaboration

- Shared infrastructure
- serve on eGov
- Project Team for ITD realignment

From: Victoria Greer [mailto:VGreer@cpsd.us]
Sent: Tuesday, April 01, 2014 8:31 PM
To: Albano, Sandra
Subject: Re:

Good Evening...I'm going to discuss the Office of Student Services The Office of Student Services has a Primary focus to provide special education services and supports to students with disabilities... Our Secondary focus is to ensure alignment with general education to support students who are at-risk for academic, social, emotional and behavior needs

Students with disabilities include students identified in one of the 13 eligibility categories (such as Learning Disability, autism, developmental delay, cognitive impairment)-just to name a few-these areas are determined and outlined by the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP)-(federal)and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE)-(state) Students with disabilities can be serviced through an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) as a special education function or a 504 accommodation plan which is a general education function

Approximately 20%/ (about 1300 students) of the students enrolled in Cambridge Public Schools have a disability and are served either on an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or a 504 accommodation plan

We serve students beginning at age 3 and students with an IEP can receive services until their 22nd birthday

This year we are 1-building a stronger foundation for student support in the district at all levels 2-by establishing more processes and procedures for special education services 3-by establishing stronger communication with parents/families and school staff by sharing bi-monthly, bi-weekly newsletters and communications...we are also deeply emersed in designing an OSS operations manual and parent handbook of policies, processes, programs and procedures
4- we are working to create better alignment between general and special education
5- by strategically phasing in schools to prepare for the integration of students with disabilities in the general education classroom-beginning at kindergarten this September beginning with the Haggerty school, this work will continue over the next
4 years continuing through the grades-
6-Another major area of our work is the implementation of a Universal Summer Program for students with disabilities. We are continually collaborating around ways to expand and improve services to students with disabilities and are at risk...

District-wide Improvement

Dr. Jessica

Huizenga

Good Evening,

At this time, my office is embarking on a 6 year improvement process that will Analyze and Review, Develop, Implement, and Evaluate all curricular areas, Jk-12. This process will ensure that our teaching and learning programs are aligned to the new state frameworks, as well as provide a clear roadmap for ALL educators to teach and assess authentic, rigorous, and relevant learning experiences for students using a Backwards Design process. (Ensuring horizontal and vertical alignment of learning Jk-12) – *In The Area of Assessment* **ADD IN MCAS AND PARCC information here.**

The broader picture to this 6 year process is the establishment of aligned curricular and instructional

system, that we believe will set us up for greater inclusionary practices, broad ranges of learning opportunities and technological innovation, which enable us to finally chip away at the pervasive achievement gap that has challenged every leader and educator in this city for decades.

This system consists of 4 key components which 1) guarantees a high quality standards based curriculum, and high leverage instructional practices in every classroom, 2) tiered systems of support for both academic and behavioral needs, 3) a professional development program that support educators to continually develop and improve the practice of teaching, and 4) proper structures and supports at the school level. All of which of course requires support and accountability- from central administration.

I am certain there is widespread agreement that one of the greatest challenges we face as a city is the achievement gaps between our White and Asian students, and our Minority, Low Income, and Special Education populations. However, this data is nothing new here in the city of Cambridge or nationwide. In fact, historically, I'm sure we could find evidence of this same concern 30 years ago. But more recently however, in the year 2000, there was a 40% point spread in reading proficiency rates on the Stanford 9 between White and Black students, and 44% between whites and Hispanics. At the start of MCAS in 2003, when achievement standards were raised we saw nearly 30% point gaps between whites and blacks, and low income students. Fast forward to 2014, 10 years later, our gaps have not narrowed, in fact they have widened.

As I've said before to the School Committee, in that time we have placed our bets in many places, but never towards a guaranteed and viable curricular and instructional system, or in ways that were systemic, or coherent (or long enough to do them well before the focus shifted to something else)

When the achievement between whites and minority students have not decreased in 30 years, but rather they've widened in the past 10, despite the additional supports and programs we have across the district, with pockets of excellence in places, rather than at scale, I deeply believe we now need to shift the conversation from 'intervention,' to 'prevention.'

It's at this point when we have to look at our core... and ask ourselves, could it be the core of our work; curriculum, instruction, and assessment that has issues so prevalent, that they are more of an obstacle 'to learning', rather than a

catalyst 'of learning' in our schools, before we think about adding more programs, or people or things.

And we are doing this very thing as highlighted in our budget initiatives; addressing our core. In fact, this year, we have three district wide teams of 30-40 staff members in the areas of Science, World Language, and ELA who are beginning the process of revamping our curriculum across the district. This work will be taking place over the next 15 months-2 years, and will be part of a strategic roll out, ALL supported by professional development. We have all 12 Elementary schools now beginning the implementation of Tiered Systems of support, **which includes the provisions of systematic, research-based instruction and interventions to struggling learners**, otherwise known as RTI and PBIS, a new joint Professional Development Committee with the CEA, re-vamped New Teacher

Induction Program, and Educator Leader Academy led by John Saphier of Research for Better Teaching.

Some members of our community have suggested that if we only were to add tutors, or more staff, we would make great inroads to the achievement gap? I have to answer that statement with a question. What would that new staff do differently than the 14 Reading Recovery/Interventionists, 22 coach/interventionists, and 5 title one tutors we have now across the district? By just adding more people, you only address the symptoms, not the causes of the gaps. In the hundreds of interviews, meetings, and discussions I've had with parents, teachers, school leaders, and community members, all have acknowledged challenges in the quality of curriculum, the inequities in curriculum across our schools, teaching to the test, and challenges in the area of quality instruction. Furthermore, new teachers especially

who come to Cambridge all said one of the biggest challenges, amongst many, they faced when they began was, “What do I teach?”

Now I want to be clear, no one, particularly me, is purporting that curriculum and instruction alone will solve the world’s ills, or close the achievement gap on it’s own.

But what it will do is put us on the path to do so. This prospect of an aligned system, along with strong partnerships, which bring the our organization into alignment with families, out of school providers, and the vast array of services this amazing city provides, we can then be assured that all students will have access to an equitable, and excellent education built on learning principles such as resilience, adaptability, empathy, and creativity...and most importantly grounded in our core value of social justice.