



# FINANCE COMMITTEE

## COMMITTEE MEETING

~ MINUTESS ~

Wednesday, June 3, 2020

6:00 PM

Sullivan Chamber

### Call to Order

Attendee Name	Present	Absent	Late	Arrived
Timothy J. Toomey	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
E. Denise Simmons	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Patricia Nolan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Dennis J. Carlone	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sumbul Siddiqui	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Marc C. McGovern	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Alanna Mallon	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Quinton Zondervan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Jivan Sobrinho-Wheeler	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

School Committee members present:  
 Vice-Chair Manikka Bowman  
 Committee member Alfred Fantini  
 Committee member Jose Luis Rojas Villarreal  
 Committee member David Weinstein  
 Committee member Rachel Weinstein  
 Committee member Ayesha Wilson

**The Finance Committee will conduct public hearings on the city and school budgets covering the fiscal period July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2021.**



**CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL FINANCE COMMITTEE**

COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS, CHAIR

COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE, CO-CHAIR

COMMITTEE MEETING

TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS

JUNE 3, 2020

6:00 PM, SULLIVAN CHAMBER

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** (Gavel) The time for the Finance Committee budget hearing meeting having a ro-- having come. We'll call this meeting to order. Today is Wednesday, June, 6th, the hour 6:00 PM. The call of the meeting is as follows. The Finance Committee will conduct public hearings on the city and school budgets covering the fiscal period July 1st, 2020 to June 30th, 2021.

This evening's meeting is to discuss the school department's budget. We are gonna be joined by our school superintendent, the members of our school committee who-- who is our co-equal governing body, the governing body that-- Whose jurisdiction are the-- Is the schools. I believe you'll be joined by the City Manager at some point. We're gonna begin our meeting by remarks from our Co-chairs, after which we are going to have public comment. I read my agenda. Yep.

And then we will have remarks from the budget chair of the school committee, remarks from our Mayor, short remarks from our superintendent and questions from the finance committee of the City Council. Now, the Finance Committee of the City Council is a committee as the whole. And so those that may be viewing will notice that all nine members

of the City Council are present. Members of the finance committee will then have the opportunity to ask two questions of the committee. And if time permits, we'll go around again.

The reason we-- This is a--this is similar to the format we used in the--the, uh, last two budget meetings that we've had. After which we'll have a vote on the school committee budget and then adjourn. At this time, I will yield the floor to my Co-chair, Councillor Carlone. Councillor Carlone, you have the floor. I'm sorry. Oh, wait a minute. I have my own notes and not reading them. We are gonna first call the roll of the City Council.

We will call the roll of the school committee and then we will go check again just to make sure that the meeting is audible to all members. With that I yield the floor to our clerk. Thank you, Mr. Clerk.

**City Clerk Anthony Wilson called the roll:**

Councillor Dennis J. Carlone - Present.

Vice Mayor Alanna M. Mallon - Present.

Councillor Marc C. McGovern - Present.

Councillor Patricia M. Nolan - Present.

Councillor E. Denis Simmons - Present.

Councillor Jivan Sobrinho-Wheeler - Present.

Councillor Timothy J. Toomey Jr. - Present.

Councillor Quinton Y. Zondervan - Present.

Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui - Present.

**Present - 9, Absent - 0**

**CLERK ANTONY WILSON:** I'll now move on to the school committee.

Vice Chair Manikka L. Bowman -Present.

Committee Member Alfred B. Fantini -Present

Committee Member José Luis Rojas Villarreal - Present

Committee Member David Weinstein - Present

Committee Member Rachel Weinstein -Present

Committee Member Ayesha Wilson -Present

All Members of City Council- Present

All Members of school committee - Present

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Mr. Clerk, should we do an audit -- an audio check or do you think the role is sufficient?

**CLERK ANTONY WILSON:** Check.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** The clerk will now do an audio check. This check is to make sure you can be heard and that we can hear you. You can hear us, excuse me.

City Clerk Antony Wilson called audio check:

Vice Mayor Alanna M. Mallon- Yes

Councillor Marc C. McGovern -Yes

Councillor Jivan Sobrinho-Wheeler -Yes

Councillor Quinton Y. Zondervan -Yes

Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui -Yes

Vice Chair Manikka L. Bowman -Yes

Committee Member Alfred B. Fantini- Yes

Committee Member José Luis Rojas Villarreal -Yes

Committee Member David Weinstein -Yes

Committee Member Rachel Weinstein -Yes

Committee Member Ayesha Wilson -Yes

**CLERK ANTONY WILSON:** The meeting is clearly audible to all remote members.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Thank you, Mr. Clerk. I apologize if I got the pledge and the moment of silence. So, at this time we are going to stand, have the pledge of allegiance. Please stand where you are and then we are going to pause for a moment of silence to remember the man in Minnesota.

But there's so many other people who have lost their lives to police brutality. I pledge allegiance to the flag

of the United States of America and to the republic for which it stands. One nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all. (Gavel) Thank you. Mr. Co-Chair, I yield the floor to you.

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** Thank you, Madam Chair. My comments will be brief. Um, just as with the city budget, there is a lot of information in the school budget document and if you take the time to review it, you can learn quite a bit. Um, my questions tonight will probably be solely based on what different statistics mean. Um, but it is an impressive document. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Thank you, Mr. Co-Chair. We'll now hear from-- Mr. City Manager, I know you said you did not necessarily want to speak, but did you want to speak? Seen that you're here.

**CITY MANAGER LOUISE A. DEPASQUALE:** Uh, through you, Madame Chair, uh, I guess I could say that I just want to thank everybody for working together to come up with this budget. Uh, the relationship between the City Manager and the superintendent and the school and the City Council and the school committee. Since the 40 years I've been involved with school budgets, there's always been one to work

together.

I think this year is--is the same as it's always been. We've really worked hard to come up with this budget. I'm extremely proud of the fact that even during the Covid 19 budget revision, we were able to keep the school budget whole. And I think it's very important, especially based on the importance that the city and all our residents placed on education. So, I'm here to listen, but I will be here. Thank you.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Thank you Mr. City Manager. We'll now turn to public comment. I believe there are two people that have signed up and they are-- Who's the first person? 'Cause I can't see any names. It's Dan--Dan Monahan. Are you there?

**DAN MONAHAN:** I am here. Can you hear me?

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Yes. You, uh, you have three minutes to--to participate in public comment and you now have the floor. Please give your name and your address for the record.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Dan Monahan, 229 Lexington Ave, expressed her appreciation to the city for managing and maintaining its



finances to allow for the planned budget. She strongly believed in doing the right thing by making the motion to pass in order to support the scholars and caregivers most in crisis due to the pandemic as well as trauma that many particularly black and brown communities have. She agreed with the superintendent that the budget alone is neither the sole nor the most powerful level lever for anti-racism change. She also insisted on believing the effects of the building equity bridges work to begin to have positive impact on Cambridge public schools. Therefore, she urged to vote in favor of the budget in order to get the critical work of changing how education in Cambridge is done.

Tony Clark, 17 Elm Street, Newton, questioned that do this budget really addresses anti-racism and the inequities in this particular school district? She wanted to ask the members which points are aspirational and which points are more succinct in this budget. She hoped to look at the fact that talking about anti-racism is one thing, being critical and doing the work is another.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Thank you, Mr. Clark. Thank you very much for your testimony. This is-- Mr. Clark was the last person that was signed up for public comment.

We'll leave public comment open for 30 minutes as, uh, is our practice at our meetings.

We'll move now. And so, Mr. Clerk, please remind us at the 6:30 time, we will have remarks from the budget co-chair of the school committee. Ms. Manikka Bowman. Madame Vice chair, you have the floor.

**VICE CHAIR MANIKKA L. BOWMAN:** Thank you, Councillor Simmons. Good evening to my colleagues of the City Council and municipal staff who work tirelessly to ensure Cambridge public schools have the resources needed to educate our scholars. We come before this body fully aware of the challenging times we find ourselves in.

When my budget co-chair, Mr. Fantini and I started the formal budget process in January of this year, our goal was to transform how the school committee engaged the public.

We held interactive budget meetings with the community and shared the how and the what of the budget process with CPS families as a means to share power and knowledge and centered the importance of student data in our decision making.

In all of the committee's budget conversations, at the center of it was creating equitable academic outcomes and a

sense of place for our students that are historically left behind within our school district. We wanted to make sure that they were front and center. And then COVID 19 hit us. Our students and our educators were abruptly taken from the classroom and thrown into remote learning.

They were placed in a position where they were not able to have their end of school rituals and adapt to an environment that was foreign for both students as well as educators. We are fully aware that the task before us is really challenging.

We know that the impacts of COVID 19 has been highlighted in our budget process through the leadership of our Mayor in collaboration with our administration, as well as with the budget co-chairs to extend the conversation so we can really understand what are the impacts that COVID 19 will have on the school district.

And we're still discovering what those challenges are. Unlike districts from across the nation and across the commonwealth, we are adding 11 million plus dollars to our budget. We are positioned to tackle some of the unthinkable things that we now have to put in place to mitigate the health concerns that are associated with Covid 19, as well

as hold those things intention with the achievement gap that is constantly before us when it comes to the work that we do as leaders within the Cambridge Public School District.

I am grateful that our City Manager has been committed to giving our district the resources needed to ensure we are able to tackle the challenging moment we find ourselves in. And as I close, I want to thank my colleagues for having a robust conversation on what are the challenges that our students will be facing in the context of COVID 19, in the context of equity and in the context of how we work collaboratively to move the district forward.

I want to thank my Co-Chair, Mr. Fantini. Um, I want to also thank, Mrs. Spinner, who is our chief financial officer and her staff for putting in tons of hours to ensure that we have the necessary information so we can make informed decisions as it relates to our budget.

And of course, last but not least, our leader of our school district, Dr. Kenny Salim, who worked collaboratively with myself, um, my budget Co-Chair, and the Mayor, Mayor Siddiqui, to ensure that we can have the necessary conversations to bring forth this budget. And at

this time, I yield the floor. Thank you so much.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Thank you, Madam Vice Chair. Thank you for your remarks and thank you for your commitment to the school, the scholars and their families. We'll now hear from our Mayor. Mayor Siddiqui, you have the floor.

**MAYOR SUMBUL SIDDIQUI:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Uh, good evening everyone. So, as the Vice Chair stated, I think this budget process, uh, for me and, uh, for at least four other members was new, right? Uh, on the school side. So we had five new school committee members. Uh, and then while the process started in January, uh, it almost felt-- it still felt really short because there were always a lot of questions, uh, there was always new information to learn.

And I'll admit, there's still and I think many of us still feel this way, uh, there's still, um, questions around how a budget comes together, uh, with-- And then we were faced with COVID, uh, in early March.

And that has been a challenge on its own and which is why I, in collaboration with the committee members, wanted to call a series of special meetings before we moved on

voting the budget, uh, to really understand that context. We have, I think, more questions than answers at this point, too, uh, and it's going to be even a more challenging process because we've--we're further exacerbating, uh, this pandemic is further exacerbating the, uh, data that we already have, this achievement gap, uh, that we talk about, this opportunity gap that we talk about.

So, I think that as we move forward, the critical questions that I know many of you will ask, uh, and some of you, I've spoken to, I'll admit, I don't have the--the answers, uh, but I do know that we have a huge, huge, uh, responsibility to figure out how we get to those answers, uh, and how we make sure that if we are spending almost 30,000, uh, per pupil and we have these persisting gaps, how are we closing them? Uh, what are we doing well and what are we not doing well? Uh, and I think that being transparent about that is key.

And I think all of us on the committee--on the school committee side, we--we know that, uh, and--and I think we--we are struggling with that. And I think you'll see in this budget, there's a lot of, uh, key initiatives that we hope

will be the, you know, the anecdote. Uh, but again, they may not be, uh, and I--I think we have to keep thinking collaboratively around how we--how we get there. Uh, because right now, uh, with this pandemic, we--we have a long, long way to go. So, with that said, uh, you know, I think this budget process, uh, there were a lot of key learnings. We tried new things, uh, that didn't happen in the past, uh, that the Vice Chair discussed.

I think moving forward, we have a lot of other things that we'll have to incorporate. Student voice is one of them. Uh, and so there's a lot of key things that we've learned, uh, that I'm committed to, along with the school committee to implement as we move forward.

Uh, I'm happy to say more at the end, and I look forward to the questions that my colleagues, uh, the important questions that my colleagues will raise. Thank you.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Uh, thank you, Madam Mayor. Before we-- I turn the floor to the superintendent, I wanna speak, uh, specifically to the school committee members. First, I wanted to welcome you to this process.

I know we have had the opportunity to be together in

our round table, but we have not because of circumstances far beyond our control, been able to enjoy the opportunity and the camaraderie we usually enjoy when circumstances are quite different.

So, please, like, I like to personally thank you for the work that you've done preparing this budget. Unlike the City Council, the school committee is far more hands on than the City Council and I, so I know that you've turned and churned and had hearings and wrote and rewrote and I certainly do respect the amount of work, the time, and the effort that you put in, in developing this budget.

I wanna thank you for your commitment to children, I know that--that our children, you call them scholars, I really like that word.

I wanna thank you for your commitment to the CPSD scholars and their families. It shows in your hard work that you show every first and third Tuesday and all those sub committee meetings in the middle. So, I certainly appreciate having been a former school committee member, the work that you do and with no disrespect or to belittle the work of the City Council, I often say the school committee works twice as hard as the City Council does.



And so, with that, again, I wanna thank you for your hard work. I look forward to having this discussion over your budget. And with that, I will turn, uh, the floor to our superintendent, Kenny--Dr. Kenny Salim. I don't know who is with you, Dr. Salim. This is-- The part of this process is so surreal. I can't see anyone, so I'm just talk--talking to blank chairs.

So, Dr. Salim, uh, the floor is yours for brief remarks, after which we will open the floor to the finance committee for questions. Dr. Salim.

**SUPERINTENDENT DR. KENNETH SALIM:** Thank you, uh, Madam Chair. Um, so thanks for, um, having us this evening and for, uh, this hearing. Thanks to the City Council, um, all the councillors. And we do have members of my, uh, leadership team, including deputy superintendent, um, Dr. Spark. Um, and Chief Financial Officer Claire Spinner, who will join us, um, uh, by video visually, um, as we get to the questioning period. Um, as--as, um, uh, Vice Chair Bowman and, uh, Mayor Siddiqui have already pointed out, you know, we-- When we were putting together this budget, we were in a very different circumstance when I actually presented a proposed budget on March, 12th.

It was actually, uh, the same evening that we announced, um, the, uh, initial two week closure, um, of schools. And so over the last, um, uh, couple months now, uh, we've had an opportunity to, um, uh, really make a shift in terms of how we've been talking about the budget, um, particularly with the focus around our, um, needs related to budgets and the COVID 19 recovery plan.

Um, I'm gonna, uh, share a set of slides, which I'll go through as--as efficiently as--as possible, um, and then turn it over to the, uh, to, uh, to you Madam Chair to, uh, facilitate questions. Um, one of the things that we did in putting together this presentation was to build on some of the discussion that we had at the round table that we had in February.

Originally, uh, we had, uh, had some conversations around having some follow up, um, which of course was not, um, uh, possible due to, um, due to the closures, um, and, uh, the changes that happened, uh, but wanted to, as you'll see as we put together this agenda, um, it was--it was informed by the, uh, the comments and thinking, um, at that time. So, I'm gonna go to my, um, screen here.

And, so, starting off, um, just to give overview of

where we're headed, uh, we'll, um, share, um, uh, briefly just sort of summary around the district plan outcomes, the seven outcomes that we've set, uh, for the district plan, uh, as well as where we are with regard to those outcomes. I'll talk about the FY21 budget broadly in terms of the investments, um, uh, specifically, um, uh, where we are, uh, looking at new investments, um, share a summary around our covid 19 recovery planning and some of the steps underway.

Uh, we've heard a number of questions around, uh, district focus and proposal around equity inclusion belonging, uh, which I'll speak about. And then we'll close with a few slides just around this planning for summer 2020.

Another area that we've heard that, uh, councillors have had, uh, questions and interest in learning more about. So, starting off, um, uh, many councillors and--and certainly the school committee members are familiar with our district plan strategic objectives, our vision around rigorous joyful culture responsive learning plus personalized support leading to post success and engaged community members. And since, uh, the development of this

plan, which, uh, was done in collaboration with many members of our, uh, community and, uh, various stakeholders of educator students, uh, families, administrators, committee members, uh, we developed, um, this plan, uh, centered on, uh, these objectives that--that you see here. Um, and equity and access has, uh, continued to be, uh, central focus.

A big part of developing the district plan. Um, and actually this was done, um, uh, when, uh, Councillor Simmons was, um, uh, Mayor and--and chair of the school committee is we, uh, also established, um, not just the outcomes, but also targets related to, um, these seven areas and the school committee, uh, determine, uh, these outcomes to have a mix of not just academic, uh, traditional academic measures, um, like MCASTs and, uh, advanced placement, but also looking at other measures that are important to the, uh, Cambridge public schools and our entire community.

Um, and areas that we know are important. When we think about, uh, the challenges of the opportunity gaps that exist for our students, uh, the percentage of teachers of color, the school climate, um, the way in which

students, um, uh, believe they have meaningful relationships with adults, as well as, um, their attendance, uh, chronic absenteeism as a measure in schools as well. The first measure around, uh, grade three literacy is an area where, uh, we have seen, uh, growth over the last, uh, couple of years.

Um, you see in the, um, both in the aggregate as well as, um, on the bottom part of the slide, uh, just a breakdown in terms of how different demographic groups are, uh, performing. And while it is only just one measure, we do provide, uh, the state comparison because that is a, uh, a comparison that, um, is available to us, um, to give a picture of--of where we see the performance of our students.

Um, and while we do see, um, a year of our year of 2017 was the baseline year when there was a new next generation MCAST. Um, we've seen growth since that time. Uh, but we do see also, um, uh, troubling gaps that, uh, continue, uh, with a number of our demographic groups where we've tried to, in our current budget, uh, really tried to address some of these areas, include the systematic phonics instruction, uh, but now is in place in every elementary

school. Um, new curriculum, a focus around responsive teaching, um, as a few, uh, specific areas.

Grade 8, math is another area that has been, um, part of our outcomes. And as you can see also that, um, there's been, um, year over year growth from since 2017, uh, where we've had, um, uh, increase in, uh, that first year as well as in the second year. Whereas actually at the state level, we see, um, there was a dip in the past in the most recent data.

And again, we see some of the, um, demographic data in terms of overall performance, um, in the, uh, most recent 2019, um, MCAST results. We have been, um, uh, really focusing on, uh, a couple of key areas, the work around enhanced maths and deep track, um, mathematics at the upper school level, um, to provide more access to--to students, to, um, uh, to, uh, high, um, uh, standards and expectations, uh, to be able to engage in, um, ambitious, um, routines--instructional routines.

Um, we've also, um, rolled out, um, this--this current year, K to five math interventionist across all of our elementary schools as part of our strategy.

AP and honors is the third outcome, uh, that looks at

a number of different measures related to this, including, uh, the--the free, uh, participation of students.

Um, in the AP, uh, in taking AP exams, um, in enrolling in AP classes, as well as in, uh, performance. And you can see, um, the increase, um, in the last year, um, in test taking as well as enrollment, um, and a, uh--uh, sort of stable and then slight dip into, um, from 2017 to '18, '19 in terms of percentage of--of students, uh, scoring three to five as we've also expanded number of students.

Um, the level up strategy at the high school is one of the areas that has been a major investment to try to, um, increase that pipeline to advance coursework, um, as well as more, uh, tactical pieces for communication to families, um, student AP preparation, um, as well as partnerships, uh, with a number of organizations, um, to provide opportunities for students to, um, engage in, uh, pre-AP and AP work.

The percentage of teachers of color has been, um, a--a focus of the school committee for many, uh, years. Uh, we're pleased, uh, that we've been able to make, um, uh, gains, uh, year over year in the last, uh, number of years,

uh, where, uh, when we--we began, um, uh, in '16, '17 with a percentage of 20%, um, have increased to this current year of 25%. And that is, uh, truly due to a real, um, uh, investment and focus and reorganization around a dynamic diversity office, an explicit focus on how recruitment, retention, um, and hiring, um, can be, um, uh, designed to attract, uh, diverse candidates, um, as well as focusing on retention. Uh, we have employee resource groups, which are affinity spaces for, uh--uh, better race based, uh, for educators, um, as well as expanding the pipeline for paraprofessionals into the teaching, uh, profession, as well as, um, uh, strategies like, uh, training and implicit bias, um, and overhauling job descriptions.

The next couple of outcomes relate to school climate and student relationships. And these are areas where we've either been stagnant or have--have, uh, dipped a little bit in the last, um, a couple of years, um, and you see, uh, some of the, uh, so one of the things that we did over the last, uh, as part of the district plan was to create this new outcome in this new measure with school climate surveys that had not been done, uh, before we had, um, launched the district plan.



And so you see that we, um, uh, launched such in, um, uh, in--in 2018. And, uh, we're measuring both favorable rating as well as family survey participation. With students meaningful connection to adults. We've been using a teen health survey and middle grades, uh, health survey, a specific question related to how students identify, uh, whether they have a meaningful connection with adults.

And, um, uh, we have some of the--the targets here as well as, uh, what you see in terms of demographic subgroups. Also, some, um--um, very concerning, um, uh, gaps in the aggregate as well as across our different demographic groups. Uh, when we look at, uh, both the high school and upper first school.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Dr. Salim, can you-- Dr. Salim, can you hold just for a moment. I need to entertain--entertain a motion by Councillor Carlone to close public comment-- All those in-- Oh, I was gonna say, all those in favor. Mr. Clerk, would you please call the roll?

City Clerk Antony Wilson called the roll:

Councillor Dennis J. Carlone - Yes.

Vice Mayor Alanna M. Mallon - Yes.

Councillor Marc C. McGovern - Yes.

Councillor Patricia M. Nolan - Yes.

Councillor E. Denis Simmons - Yes.

Councillor Jivan Sobrinho-Wheeler - Yes.

Councillor Timothy J. Toomey Jr. - Yes.

Councillor Quinton Y. Zondervan - Yes.

Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui - Yes.

**All present.**

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Thank you, Mr. Clerk.

Dr. Salim, please continue. You have the floor.

**SUPERINTENDENT DR. KENNETH SALIM:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Um, and so the seventh outcome is around chronic absenteeism, which is also a measure that's used by the state as part of our overall accountability system.

And, uh, this is an area where we did see, um, uh, a slight decrease and, uh, have been working with the, um, uh, across schools and high school in particular, around, um, strategies around, um, supporting teachers, um, uh, communicating with families and using a--a data dashboard. So, across all of these outcomes, a big part of our--our plan is to make sure that we are as, um, transparent as--as possible, um, to be able to engage in--in--in conversations around improvement. We need to know where we are, both

where our successes are, as well as where our continuing, um, challenges are.

And so we do have a data dashboard on our website where any of this information is--is available, and that we also, at the school level also use school level data and--and range of different assessments, um, to also inform, uh, decisions instructionally, um, as well as programmatically. Um, the next part, uh, I'm gonna speak to is an overall, uh, summary around our FY21 budget.

Um, as, uh, councillors, uh, may know we've, uh, had, um, uh, increase in terms of enrollment, uh, really over the last, uh, decade but you'll see here this slide talking about the last, um, uh, six years or so, uh, where in the, um, uh, we're projected into the next year, um, an increase again, um, going up to about a little over 7,300 students. Um, and the five year increase, about 8.7%. And so this is also something that, um, as we describe in our budget, uh, we have a number of investments that are enrollment based, uh, due to the increased number of students, as well as the, uh, specific needs of students, um, that are part of our population. When we talk about the alignment of resources to improve outcomes, we think about it certainly

in terms of, uh, financial dollars, but also how we're using time, how we're using staff.

Um, and when we put together the priorities for this budget, um, in collaboration, uh, with the--with the, uh, school committee, we looked at how, uh, organizing around these areas, improving instruction, prioritizing equity, inclusion, belonging, um, looking at how we can increase access to engaging high school coursework and post-secondary pathways, looking at out school time opportunities, um, and how we can continue to, um, use that important lever, um, to, uh, to support student academic success, continuing to incre-- Make progress in increasing educator diversity.

And then, um, evaluating and improving our use of resources. And since, um, the March, 12th, uh, proposed budget, um, uh, a real focus recently, certainly around the COVID 19 recovery plan, looking at, um, the--the resources necessary to protect the health and safety of students and staff, as well as focusing on what we know will, um, are and continue to be academic and social emotional and mental health needs of our students.

The budget increase is an increase of, uh, 5.9% or

11.9 million. Um, and as was noted, um, uh, earlier, uh, we're grateful to the partnership with the City Manager, um, and his team as we have looked to, um, look at not just maintaining, um, support for our students and our families with the existing resources and the increasing enrollment, uh, but also new and expanded investments, uh, to support the district plan. The dis-- The--this budget increase includes an increase of, uh, 57 and a half FTEs, uh, which are a combination of both, um--um, enrollment and programmatic needs.

Uh, so programmatic needs referred to, um, needs related to, uh, for example, special education programs, um, and district plan budget priorities refer to initiatives that I'll--that I'll be speaking to in--in--in a moment. Um, there also are, um, the increases that are just part of the cost of, um, of--of--of regular increases happen year over year, including step and lane increases for, um, salaries, um, contract increases in this case, um, specifically transportation as well as maintenance, safety and, uh, administrative and technology and supply increases.

When developing the budget, um, there were some real

clear, um, uh, themes that came from the round tables, the budget retreats, the community meetings, as well as feedback from principals, administrators, and teachers. And--and, um, uh, this--the-- What you see on the right and the bullet points are really collectively, um, what are some of the themes that came from all of those sources.

Um, the idea around making sure to connect the work to outcomes, to think about the needs of struggling, um, learners, um, and identification of them. Uh, prioritizing equity initiatives, um, including, um, uh, the antibodies, anti-racism, cultural proficiency training for staff and families, um, recruitment, retention and professional pathways for educators of color. Um, continuing to look at how we deepen our objective around family engagement and partnership.

Um, and also with our, um, outer school time partners as part of our community, uh, level up in de-tracking as well as social, emotional and mental health and behavioral needs. When looking at the budget priorities and the investments across the, um, budget, um, this slide summarizes, um, what are, uh, some of those investments at that are aligned with the district plan needs.

Um, so, um, you'll see the literacy invention and instructional coaching, um, investments partnership with the Landmark School, specifically with our language-based learning disability program, um, that is at the Ground Parks and upper school, um, and high school, um, equity inclusion belonging. Um, an area that I'll speak a little bit more about in a--in a little bit in the presentation. Um, that includes both the work around, uh, racial equity as well as, uh, family engagement, partnership and social emotional learning and behavioral mental health.

Um, we have an investment in terms of a partnership with Leslie University called Project Elevate to, um, expand the opportunities for paraprofessionals to attain, uh, master's degrees, um, and also teaching particularly in high needs areas like special education, high school coursework, and postsecondary pathways, the work around Level Up, continuing to expand that as that program, uh, expands investments in early college and expanding those opportunities for students to get credits in high school before they, uh, graduate, um, CRS and Rista, um, physicians, um, to expand opportunities for students, as well as a review of the, um, CT Rista program. Um, that's

part of our, um, budget.

Out-of-school time opportunity is a position to launch an elementary OST network that is, um, really building on some of the lessons learned from the middle school network that's been in place for, uh, a number of years in Cambridge. And looking at how we can have, um, as robust a, uh, partnership with our elementary programs and elementary, um, partners, as well as summer and school year programs as well. And then finally, the improved use of-- of, uh, strategic scheduling, evaluation and research and specific areas where we have, um, found ways to, uh, to support that work as part of our improvement objective.

A few, uh, slides just around the COVID 19 recovery planning. Um, as we have engaged in the planning, we've thought about these five different areas. Um, there certainly are things like facilities and--and--and safety related to the health and--and safety of our, uh, students and families and educators.

Um, the teaching and learning and student support, as we think about how we, um, continue to, uh, to--to strengthen, uh, distance learning, which, um, as everyone knows, we--we sort of meet a--meet a--a shift to, along



with every other, um, uh--uh, district and the commonwealth in--in very, uh, rapid fashion and thinking about what is the educator staff support in order to support that. We also have, um, uh, thought a lot about family support and how do we, uh, make sure there--there are supports in place also to support families during this next stage, as well as, um, uh, overall system support, thinking about how we maintain also our operations, um, uh, centrally as we move, uh, forward.

And so we know that while there's still a lot unknown, we're planning for multiple scenarios, um, including in-person remote learning and potential hybrid models. Um, uh, we anticipate the state will be providing more specific, uh, guidance around the health and safety requirements and potential social distancing requirements in mid-June.

And we also are thinking about this not just as a short, mid, and long term, um, in terms of needs. In terms of planning structure, we are finalizing the, um, uh, a task force, which is comprised of, um, uh, experts in--in different, um, areas as we are thinking about, um, the different, um, areas both related to health and safety, distance learning, uh, family engagement, um, as well as,

um, having a different stakeholder voice as part of that task force.

Uh, there'll be a--a steering committee that helps to organize, um--um, a lot of the development of the plan moving forward. Uh, we've started also in partnership, um, with our, uh, school committee members of using subcommittees for also having forums, uh, for, um, uh, discussing specific issues. And then we are, uh, designing a set of working groups that'll include, um, various stakeholders, um, as we develop this plan to be able to have an inclusive process.

School-based planning teams will also be coming together in the summer in order to, uh, develop operational plans, and they'll be, um, also technical support that we'll be engaging to support this work. When we think sort of budget related, specifically related to, uh, preliminary, uh, projections, uh, related to the, uh, recovery plan, uh, we've, um, uh, mapped out, um, a range, um, that will certainly be, um, refined over time as more information becomes available.

Um, but you see here related to both health and safety around teaching and learning technology and staff

development, uh, potential costs, um, uh, between 3.8 and 6.0 million. And when we think about the funding sources to support that, um, there are federal funds that have been issued to a school district as part of the CRS Act.

Um, there's a range still of, uh, that is still being finalized as we figure out the--the--the details of that. Um, there may be additional federal funding, um, uh, in time. Um, we also are, um, have--have looked in, uh, at our current, um, FY21 budget. And so as part of the budget process in the last several weeks, um, leading to the adoption of the budget by the school committee, uh, we've identified 1.4 million that we've redid--redirected or reallocated or identified as ways we can, uh, redirect to the, uh, recovery costs.

Um, in terms of, um, end of year balance, also looking to, uh, bring those, um, uh, forward and have, uh, in collaboration with the City Manager, um, and--and his support, um, look at the way of bringing those, uh, dollars forward and, uh, will I also identify, uh, depending as the year, uh, progresses, what additional onetime funds might be, um, necessary based on, um, the recovery needs. Shifting a little bit to, uh, the specific focus on equity

inclusion, belonging, I wanna share just a couple slides related to this work.

Um, as councillors, um, uh, no, um, we've shared this in, um, uh, last year's presentation as well, that as part of our work, um, around equity and racial equity, we have quantified with the school committee, um, definitions related to, um, both of these, um, uh, pieces, um, in our work, um, and building on that, have really looked at how, uh, we can think about what it means for us to be, um, uh, a district that can move more towards being an anti-racist district.

Over the last number of years, there've been a number of different, um, uh, efforts to, um, that are equity related initiatives, um, that in addition to the, um, adoption of the--of the definition, uh, we launched the Building Equity Bridges, um, project, uh, funded by the Nellie Mae Education Foundation, um, partnering with the Cambridge Education Association, uh, was a commitment I made, um, a couple of years ago, uh, to pursue this effort in order to better, um, examine the root causes of inequity, um, to inform our work.

And so, a lot of what we talk about with the, um,

equity inclusion, belonging, uh, focus has come from, uh, the findings of that work. But we've hired and retained more educators of color, um, as well as, as I mentioned earlier, launched Project Elevate to increase the pipeline, uh, worked on, uh, district-wide and school-based, um, uh, trainings as, um, uh, focus specific line racial equity, um, culture proficiency is a part of all school improvement plans and, um, the de-tracking efforts at--at the high school and the upper schools with level up and enhanced math that the upper schools are also a key, um, equity strategy.

And then finally, um, uh, the student staff and family surveys as ways of also, um, elevating stakeholder voice. A big part of the, um, adopted budget is this new office of equity inclusion belonging, uh, which will be led by a chief equity officer, uh, includes, um, staff that, um, are, um, part of this office that include, um, uh, a new, uh, director of, uh, family engagement, a principal and assignment, uh, family, um, engagement specialist, as well as, um, in addition to the chief equity officer, additional staff member, and, uh, an incident reporting specialist, um, that would be housed, um, at the high

school.

Uh, we've looked at these four domains, um, around climate relationships, social emotional learning and mental behavioral health, family engagement, and racial equity and anti-racism, as living together in this office because of, um, we wanna make sure that we're not siloing these, um, pieces from another--one another.

And, um, thinking about how we're using common measures and the intersection of this work, um, to, uh, strengthen, um, uh, our--our work around racial equity, um, uh, across the district. And then the last section just to, uh, briefly share just a couple of slides around summer 2020. Um, the way we have approached this is to think about how we can, um, really leverage, um, uh, the summer in a way to have more small group and, um, individualized support to have a range of options, uh, and choices for families, uh, to prioritize the needs of students that need more support, um, as well as to, um, and--and thinking about, um, uh, how we have designed this.

Um, know that, um, summer is--is going to look very different and--and--and, um, and--and it's not the summer that we're--we're accustomed to. And so we're really

looking at fostering, um, uh, community and relationships, uh, having a specific focus around academics with the CPS program, a maximum ratio of 10 students to one adult, um, which would enable opportunities for small group of one-on-one engagement, as well as, um, a different programming across our--our district.

Where we've looked at our, uh, across our different, uh, levels. Summer academic programs, um, will, um, include opportunities that are district-wide school base, um, focus on, uh, three hours of, um, uh, remote engagement, um, and a capacity for over 2100 students. And then we also think about summer as an opportunity to really sort of, um, look at the partnership.

And so continue to work with our, um, out-of-school time partners and Department of Human Service programs of thinking about how, uh, we can support families in, um, making, uh, connections and putting together the puzzle of, um, uh, support and engagement, uh, engaging, uh, experiences for our, um, for our young, uh, young people. These are some just FAQs related to, uh, summer and, um, uh, what we have done, um, in terms of, uh, planning, uh, the summer programs, uh, academic programs for CPS will be

held virtually.

Um, they'll be, uh, taking place in July and August. Um, we are, um, sending out a communication to families at the end of this week, um, families have already started, uh, schools have already started to, um, uh, do the work of, um, identifying, uh, students and their teams, um, at the JK to five and upper school level. And, um, we'll have a centralized registration for CPS, um, programs, which is a--a new effort.

So, we're looking at, you know, some of the other kind of innovations that we might also work, um, through and also having an opportunity in--in building our out-of-school time partnerships to, uh, provide more access in terms of the, um, uh, data sharing, um, so that we can also, um, uh, have an opportunity to track, uh, enrollment progress and--and work. So with that, I am going to, um, turn the floor over, back to Madam Chair and look forward to hearing the discussion questions from the council.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Thank you, Dr. Salim. I also wanna thank and acknowledge Dr. Turk and Ms. Spinner for their work and have--and being here with us this evening. We've now heard from the superintendent. We'll,



now--we'll move to the questions from the Finance Committee of the City Council. I believe everyone has gotten the agenda. Just to remind folks, members of the finance committee, we'll have an opportunity to ask two questions to the school--school committee, and we'll try to go around again, if time permits.

Please use the chat feature or the raise your hand feature, excuse me. Raise the--raise the hand feature on--on the screen so that we'll know--I will know what the queue is. With that, um, Clerk Wilson, Ms. Naomi, Ms.-- Do we have anyone signed up to speak? If not, I can work from the floor here. Councillor McGovern, you have the floor.

COUNCILLOR MARC C. MCGOVERN: All right. I never get to go first. Okay. Uh, thank you. Um, I wanna thank, uh, the budget Co-Chairs, the school committee, the Superintendent, your whole team, the teachers.

Um, you know, I've been on--on--on your side of the Zoom call a few times, and I know the challenges of putting, um, these budgets together. So, I really want to thank you. And--and I do wanna say that, um, we discussed this when, uh, talking about the city budget, uh, just really the--the acknowledging the, um, strong position

we're in, even though we are for us, in a financial crunch that we haven't seen in many, many years. Um, I read two articles this week, Randolph, which is a city, um, you know, kind of similar to Cambridge.

It's a very diverse, uh, city. They have cut all music, all art, and all Phys Ed from all of their schools because of budget deficits and Brookline, which is less like us, uh, demographically, but, uh, the district that people like to compare us to are laying off 300 public school staff members.

Uh, and here we are talking about, once again, how are we gonna do more? Um, so I just wanna acknowledge that. And I--I think it's--I think it's important we can certainly debate how the money is used and everything end results, but we are in an envious position and--and I'm happy that we're talking about this rather than how do we lay off 300 people. Um, so, I've got, I mean, thank you for the presentation, uh, Dr. Salim, there's so much in there. I've got a million things I want to know about, um, but I-- We'll try to keep this to budget related, uh, questions.

Um, I guess I'm really--I'm really happy, uh, to see the Office of Equity, Inclusion and Belonging, getting more

money, um, but as, uh, Mr. Monahan said in his comments, there's lots of different ways that we can work on equity and, uh, deconstructing structural racism, uh, in our district.

It's not always at a-- From a department, but it's what happens in the schools and what happens with teachers. So, the two things I want to ask about, um, in this round, I was really happy to see that there are some increases in the number of social workers.

Um, I've been banging this drum for a long time, and I'm gonna continue to bang it until I see at least one full-time social worker in every school. Um, this is something I know a little bit about, uh, professionally, and it's-- You can't--you--you--you can't plan a crisis, right? And if you have a half-time social worker who is there certain days a week, or splitting their time between schools, um, and something should happen at a time when that social worker who has a relationship with a particular scholar is not there, that's not good.

And, um, and so I--I'm happy to see that some schools are getting increases, but I'm still seeing too many 0.5, uh, in some of our schools.

So, I'm wondering if you could talk about, and--and-- and--and just quickly, the other thing is, it's hard to know because we could look at caseloads and you could say, how many kids are on IEPs? How many kids are high risk? But those aren't the only kids that need help from social workers.

You could have a straight A student who's not on anybody's radar, who everyone thinks his, you know, has a great family life and everything else, and their grandmother could die, or their family could be going-- parents could be going through a divorce, and they need that support.

So, it's really-- Every kid in the district could benefit at one time or another from a social worker. So, where are we with that? Are we moving towards getting social workers full-time in every school? Um--

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Dr. Salim, you have the floor.

**COUNCILLOR MARC C. MCGOVERN:** I didn't wanna disappoint you by not bringing it up again this year, so-

**SUPERINTENDENT DR. KENNETH SALIM:** Yeah, I know. Thank you. Uh, Council McGovern for the question. And I think,

you know, as--as you--you see from this, the budget we are, um, moving, um, uh, in the--in the direction where we, of course are--are adding, uh, additional positions as--as--as--as, you know, um, this has been, um--um, an approach over a number of years as we've looked at ways of--of strengthening areas. And even in the last, um, number of weeks as we've talked about the, uh, the Covid recovery, um, also, um, added additional, um, to social workers at the high school, um, uh, in order to provide additional support.

Now we know that, um, we're gonna also need to look at how we can also have other partnerships to also augment, uh, leverage and--and--and augment, um, access, um, for, uh--uh, students across, um, across our district.

Um, uh, but when we do, uh, when we did look at, you know, sort of the--the schools with the, uh, particularly the greatest needs, um, uh, that is where the full-time social workers are at this point. So, previously--in previous, uh, this year, um, Kenny Longfellow was the only, uh, elementary school with a full-time, uh, social worker. And we've expanded that to, um, uh, the King Open, the Fletcher-Maynard Academy, and the Morse, uh, the Baldwin

also has a full-time social worker now, as well as, um, uh, the range of upper campus because of the structured academics, um, uh, program.

And so, you know, definitely hear your--your, uh, real strong interest and as--as--as--as certainly, um, you advocated for, as--as Mayor on the--on the school committee around continuing to expand that direction.

But I do, um, uh, believe that this--this budget also, you know, uh, continues to--to move in that direction around, um, expanding those types of, uh--uh, important resources and opportunities, particularly during this time.

**COUNCILLOR MARC C. MCGOVERN:** Okay. Thank you. And, um, I'm sure others are gonna ask a lot about the Office of Equity Inclusion and Belonging. I have a couple questions on that, but I'll hold that until we come to a second round.

'Cause I want-- Another thing that I think is important when we talk about equity and--and doing anti-racism work in our schools, is really the number of teachers of color that we have, uh, in our schools. And I-- I, um, Councillor Simmons, when she was Mayor the first time, and I was on school committee, we filed the--the

motion to raise the goal from 25% to 30%. And I know we're--we're moving in that direction.

I think it's a little deceiving because you have the district number, which is 25%, which I think puts us number two maybe behind Boston. Um, but when you actually break that down by individual schools, it's very different. You have some schools that have many, you have Putnam Avenue Upper School that has many teachers of color, and then you have other schools that have very few.

And so I'm really happy to see more funding going into Project Elevate to help our, um, paraprofessionals move sort of up the--the career ladder. Um, my question though is, and in terms of that program is, you know, the hiring for teachers is school based. And this is something that Mr. Kimbro talked a lot about last--last term, when he was on the committee, that there's a--that there's still a lot of implicit bias in hiring.

And again, not saying that anyone necessarily is doing anything willingly or whatever, but, you know, we know that there's, um, implicit bias and--and so what are we doing to make sure that these paraprofessionals who now earn their credentials and--and are ready to be full-time teachers,

how are we ensuring that they're actually gonna be hired at the school level when all of that is--when that process is really, um, as at such a local level as the school and not really at the district level?

**SUPERINTENDENT DR. KENNETH SALIM:** Yeah, thanks for the question. So, I would say that it has become, while certainly there, you know, the hiring team still take place at the school level, and that still makes sense as a--as a process.

Um, I would say that it's--it is not as much a kind of isolated process from, uh, the work of--of the district. We have a diversity dashboard where we do share, um, you know, some of the, uh, the data regularly, uh, with--with schools as we're going to the hiring season. Um, uh, the, uh, director of diversity, Rayen DeJesus, um, works with principals, um, and, uh, providing, um, resumes and candidates and--and, you know, as--as a relative of his recruitment process.

And I'll share that as--as--as recently as this afternoon, um, you know, approved the hiring of a--of a new, um, teacher who is part of the project Elevate, um, uh, pipeline. And so it is something that folks know is



our, um, is our--is our, um, uh, our priority. And, um, when we've done the, um, anti-bias, um, training with all of our, um, all of our, uh, admin, uh, council leaders, um, it's--it's to, uh, support that.

And what we're doing is trying to look at all their ways of--of also having opportunities for all members of hiring committees. It's a little tricky, and we're looking for ways because, you know, memory hiring committees are comprised of, uh, of--of--of family members and--and--and others for whom, you know, kind of taking addition, they were already taking, um, significant time to participate in the hiring committee to sort of do an additional, uh, training is something that, um, I know that, um, our HR department is looking at what are--what are some--some effective ways of--of going, am I doing that? But I think that, um, one of the things that is sort of underlies the number as numbers as well, is that we are, um, expanding the numbers of positions over the last couple of years, um, that are typically harder to staff positions.

Um, so whether they be, um, uh, math interventionists or special education positions or, um--um, or other kind of hard to staff positions historically.

And so the fact that we've still been able to also, uh, maintain, uh--uh, this positive increase in terms of the percentage of educators of color has been a real testament to, I think just a really--real, kind of--real focus. And--and it's something that we talk about, um, a lot, you know, with our--with our team--with our, um, with our principals, and certainly, um, with the work, um, of hiring at every level.

**COUNCILLOR MARC C. MCGOVERN:** Okay. Thank you. And, um, so those are, I guess I--I--I only get two, but a--a quick, uh, Madam Chair point of personal privilege, because I don't know if it'll get around to me again. Um, I just wanna just give a shout out and a thank you to Barbara Allen and Maryanne McDonald who are retiring. Um, I'm not gonna be at the school committee meeting, obviously, for their final meeting. So, this is my shot.

Um, I have worked with them both, uh, professionally and personally for a really long time and they're stars and I wish them the best. And so I just wanted to publicly thank you, uh, for your work and, um, good luck with your golf game, and I'll miss you.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Uh, thank you,

Councillor. Councillor McGovern yields the floor. We now go to the following councillors are in queue. Councillor Zondervan, councillor Nolan, councillor Toomey, are the-- So, we'll now hear from councillor Zondervan. Councillor Zondervan, you have the floor.

**COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN:** Thank you, Madam Chair and through you, uh, to Mr. Salim and his staff. Um, thank you for this budget and the presentation. Um, my first question is really around the Office of Equity and Inclusion, um, which is--is definitely a great initiative. Um, but I'm a little bit confused about the staffing and--and the funding.

It--it's a little bit unclear to me how that's being, um, done exactly because it looks like we're creating three positions, but then your presentation just now says seven, only one of which is a fully funded new hire. So, if you could just clarify that a little bit.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Dr. Salim.

**SUPERINTENDENT DR. KENNETH SALIM:** Sure. Thank you, through you, Madam Chair. So the, um, as we developed, um, this proposal around the Office of Equity Inclusion and Belonging, one of the things that has been, um, something

I've tried to keep, um, at the center as this idea that I didn't want to create an office that was, um, fully prescribed in terms of what, uh, the structure and, um, and--and, um, you know, core, um, pieces of that were, um, because I think a big part of the--the--the sort of the barriers to equity that we've been talking about is the idea around having, um, real community stakeholder voice, um, uh, particularly, uh, thinking about our families and caregivers of color, um, students and--and educators of color.

And so, there has been admittedly this sort of, this, I think, healthy tension as we have, uh, gone through the budget process in developing this office and what I have tried to, um, identify really as--as--as, uh, discretionary dollars that then could be, um, uh, allocated in different ways, um, based on, um, how this office, um, develops again in partnership with, um, with, uh, with, uh, stakeholders across our community.

And so, um, so in addition to the positions, um, there are, um, a total, um, of com--combining, um, general funds as well as, uh, grant funds as well as, uh, funds that come from other departments about, um, 470,000, um, uh, \$500

that are, um, sort of considered discretionary, uh, for this office.

Uh, what I've done as part of this process is to spell out how these dollars could be utilized, uh, particularly to support, um, uh, efforts that have--that I've heard, uh, as proposals from the educators of color coalition from a family, uh, caregiver, uh, of color coalition that's emerging, um, as well as, um, uh, a number of different areas, um, like some of our work that we've, uh, talked about in terms of, um, uh, equity audits, uh, um, uh--uh, restorative justice training, um, as well as, um, uh, support in the social emotional mental health space, um, as well with regards to the positions.

So, the three positions that you're referring to are positions that are specifically in the, um, uh, in the specific sort of racial equity domain of the office. Um, there are these two other ones that include family engagement and social-emotional learning.

And so those are, um, uh, where the kind of, you know, the additional four, um, come from because there's a, um, uh, um, a--a, you know, as part of the proposal also the, uh, or as part of the, um, uh, the budget, um, the director

of family, um--um, engagement or, uh, which is a principal and assignment position, um, that, um, uh, Robin Harris is in a new family engagement specialist, um, position as well.

So, those are--those are some of the other roles, um, that are, uh, part of, um, the budget. And so there-- there's sort are two pieces. There's the staffing piece, um, which is about 335,000. And then there's the, um, uh, discretionary dollar piece as well.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Councillor Zondervan.

**COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN:** Thank you, Madam Chair, I'm still confused. Are--are we hiring three new people and the other four are existing positions that were moving into this office? Are we hiring seven new people? Can you--can you help me understand exactly what's happening?

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Dr. Salim?

**SUPERINTENDENT DR. KENNETH SALIM:** Yes. So we are in the office of-- In the-- So, there's the chief equity officer, which is a new position. There's a second position, um, in that office. And then there's the incident report of reporting specialists. So, those are three new

positions. Um, there is a new position that is the director of family engagement that, um, has been filled.

So, I've appointed Robin Harrison to that position. There's a family engagement specialist position, um, that is new. So, those, um, five positions, um, are new. And then there are two additional social workers that are district-wide, um, that make up then the--the total of seven.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Councillor Zondervan.

**COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN:** Thank you. So, all seven are--are new positions except for Principal Harris, which you've already filled. Um, and then are all the three-- In the racial equity are all the three positions funded in the budget for the entire year 'cause it--it didn't read to me that way.

**SUPERINTENDENT DR. KENNETH SALIM:** Yes, they are. And just to clarify, they're actually--there are five new positions. There are, um, and two, um, and two are existing, um, uh, social workers, um, that are districtwide.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Councillor Zondervan.

**SUPERINTENDENT DR. KENNETH SALIM:** Oh, I'm sorry. And

then the three positions, sorry, the piece that I do need to clarify is the three positions I'm referring to, the chief equity officer and the incident reporting specialists are, um, funded full year.

What we've done is as part of our, um, reallocation around, um, recovery, uh, planning dollars, the second position in the, um, equity office, um, we are going to be hiring in January, uh, because we also recognize that once we hire Chief Equity Officer, there's gonna be, um, some time that is needed. So, we anticipate that, that time is going to, um, uh, we're going to be able to have some of those savings from--from that delayed, um, uh, not delayed, but basically just later hiring.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Councillor Zondervan.

**SUPERINTENDENT DR. KENNETH SALIM:** Thank you, Madam Chair. And--and through you, I--I certainly understand and appreciate that, um, it may take till January to hire the second position, but it--it's also possible that it happens sooner. So, I--I guess similar to our overall city budget, I--I'm not a fan of the, you know, partial allocations that we're doing here.

So, my preference would be that--that we fully fund,



uh, all the positions that we're anticipating for the year. Um, my second question is that I've heard from a lot of parents, um, that the online learning transition is--is really not working out and that families are struggling, uh, trying to run a school in their house while in many cases doing their, uh, jobs from home. And certainly appreciate that we're all struggling with, uh, the COVID 19 pandemic crisis. But as we start to head into the summer and--and into the fall, it's very concerning that we're not, uh, clear on--on what's going to happen and how we're going to ensure that our students get the education that--that we're paying for because at this point, it's my understanding that, that's not happening.

And as we get into the fall, um, it--it would be, um, very concerning if--if that continues. So, if you could say a little bit more about how we are preparing for that and--and what the real likelihood is that we will be returning to some kind of, uh, normal school attendance in the fall.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** And--and just to remind my colleagues and, um, your-- And--and in your answer, Dr. Salim, we're doing this in the context of the budget. Dr. Salim?

**SUPERINTENDENT DR. KENNETH SALIM:** Uh, sure. Thank you. Um, uh, Madam Chair, just, I'm sort of shifting in my mind, sort of thinking about in the--in the specific budget, uh, context, the--the--the question. Um, I mean, certainly, you know, this is--this--this transition has been, uh, an enormous challenge for everyone. Um, and, um, you know, as--as there are, um, many of these, um, uh--uh, you know, and sort of making the shift into distance learning for educators and families and students has been, um, uh, a huge challenge, you know, across our, um, our system and our, um, whole commonwealth and--and--and across the country.

And, um, what we're, um, what we're--what we're doing this summer as part of our, um, recovery planning is to really focus around, um, you know, a few key areas, uh, distance learning, um, uh, and social-emotional, uh, mental health, um, as--as a second key area. And then thirdly related to those is also how we're also, um, supporting families.

And, um, because, you know, I've also heard from many families who--who feel like they, you know, are being, um, you know, asked to be their--their--their children's

teacher. And--and, you know, that's particularly true, you know, at the JK to two level with our youngest learners where, you know, screen time is, you know, not the most optimal way of--of engaging. And so, you know, there are a lot of, um, you know, some real serious challenges that we, um, don't have all of the, um, answers to, but we're really trying to work on elevating some of the things that we have learned and that, uh, folks that have had practices, um, that have been right. Okay. So, you don't have to, sorry, excuse me one second. I'm sorry.

**SUPERINTENDENT DR. KENNETH SALIM:** Why don't you take care of that. Vice Mayor Bowman-- Vice Chair Bowman wants to speak to his-- Vice--Vice Chair are you there?

**VICE CHAIR MANIKKA L. BOWMAN:** I'm here. Thank you very much. Um, I just wanted to be intentional about just talking about the district wide plan, although, um, the remote learning plan, although that's not directly connected to the budget, um, in a committee meeting we had last night, we did pass a motion to do a review of the implementation of our plan as it relates to how we've been able to engage parents in the context of pre-recorded videos as well as real-time learning, um, opportunities.

And so we recognize that there have been differences, um, as it relates to how these, um, how the plan was implemented across the district.

And when we get that information back, we'll be able to leverage that as we go into the fall, recognizing that there's a high probability that there will be rolling closures based on, um, upticks in COVID cases. But I just want to clarify that because, um, to say that we don't have a plan in place is not necessarily completely accurate, but we do recognize that there's been, um, differences as it relates to the implementation of some of these plans and the rollout of some of those plans.

And we're looking to make sure that we have continuous improvement so we can meet the needs of our scholars. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Thank you, Madam Vice-- Vice Chair. Is the superintendent back?

**SUPERINTENDENT DR. KENNETH SALIM:** Yes, thank you. Sorry, I had to make sure they didn't turn the alarm on, um, on me. Um, so the, um, yeah, so in terms of, you know, how we're thinking about also, um, augmenting, you know, based on, um, you know, what the technology, uh, distance

learning tool needs are of--of, uh, educators, uh, working with our, um, ICTs department to create modules.

Um, so that folks can, um, who may not have as--as strong, um--um, experience with some of these tools. Um, we're really using this, um, this time to be able to bolster those. I think, um, also just as I--as I, uh, mentioned briefly, you know, we are planning for four different scenarios. There could be situations where we have, um, you know, the full closure that we're in right now. It could be, um, a case where there's something more of a hybrid where some students are in school and some students are out of school.

And so there are different, um, instructional approaches that we're--we're--were--we're also coming to play as we think about those different scenarios.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Thank you. Councillor Zondervan.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I guess I-- Hello?

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** I can hear you. We can hear you.

**COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN:** Okay. Um, thank you,

Ma'am Chair, I guess I--I'm not quite hearing an answer to my question. I'm just left with complete uncertainty or are we planning to open the schools or not? Are we expecting that the schools will open or not?

Um, I recognize that you're planning for different scenarios, but, you know, at some point relatively soon, we--we need to give some clarity to our--to our families as to what they should expect for the fall, um, to the best of our ability to do that.

And if we're going to continue in some kind of distance learning, we--we'll need to make a lot of improvements because it's--it's really not working. And--and I'm not saying that you don't have a plan or that anybody's, you know, not--not doing everything they possibly can to make it work, but the hard reality is that it's just not working, uh, for our kids. So, you know, I--I don't expect a different answer, so I'll--I'll yield--yield the floor but I look forward to clarity as soon as that is possible. Thank you.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Thank you, councillor Zondervan. Councillor Zondervan yields the floor. Councillor Nolan the floor is yours. I know it. And I just

wanna say, I know it's very difficult to kind of talk in the scope and in relation to the budget, but this is a budget hearing.

I do hope and I look forward and I know the Mayor has committed to have a round table, so we can take a deeper dive into other discussions. But I want us to use our time wisely, so please, endeavor, just stay focused on the budget. Councillor Nolan.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** The floor is yours.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** I don't think I've spoken through my mask into a microphone, so, if I'm not--

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** It's--it's great. If I'm not articulate or--or need to be talked differently, let me know. Hello, my former colleagues and, uh, the new colleagues on the school committee, I did send, um, a few questions/comments, um, in advance 'cause I thought that might be helpful.

So, I will start with, uh, one of them, which is the question of, there's a--there's a budget for an additional research person, which is half grant--grant funded, I understand. And half it sounds like from the general

budget. And so this general question is, how is it that we are evaluating our programs and how is it that we're actually using our budget to ensure that we know what's working?

So, I would welcome this expenditure if there's evidence in the rest of the budget document that there have been comprehensive evaluations of areas of failure and evaluations of the Hallmark Programs designed to address ongoing achievement issues.

For instance, there was supposed to be an evaluation of Level Up to ensure that we're delivering on the promise of raises expectations. So, I don't know if that analysis has been done and what it showed.

Um, I would've hoped for an independent review, but even if there wasn't that numbers such as success in 10th grade, honors by demographic group would be critically important. Another example is there's a budget priority initiative to add literacy interventionists for English language learners at two of the upper schools. Reng Vassal Lane on page 10. And yet there's not a mention of an area that is, uh, equally important, which is, um, at two of the--the other two middle schools.



There's been and especially high needs students, there's a very low achievement in math. Both schools math achievement percentile for high needs was below the 20th percentile by far the lowest in the district. And there wasn't really an analysis driven acknowledgement of why and how to address it.

And especially since those schools were among the first to detract math, and yet to have the most troubling results for all subgroups for the achievement percentile in both 2018 and 2019, I would've expected intervention and discussion of that. Um, and an example of, in the--in the book, we heard about the--the eighth grade math, which we know, but if we're not addressing clearly the issues, 29% overall of eighth graders in math met expectations for African-American.

But in one school it was 7% of African-American students and another school is 59%. Same thing with economically disadvantaged. One school was 14%, one was, uh, 56% in Hispanic Latino, same thing. One school was 13%. Another was 82% met expectations. So, we don't fix problems if we don't acknowledge them.

And I'm concerned that throughout the budget in

putting together, uh, these budget areas, it didn't seem to match what it is that we know where those issues are. The summer program sound great, but Camp Summit didn't have the results that would've expected. Now, I think one hypothesis, which I'd mentioned at the time, was that it didn't follow the best practice of ensuring that the only the most effective teachers were hired as opposed to just hiring people who were available.

I think we really have to monitor the-- I'm glad the-- the Vice Chair mentioned monitoring, um, the effectiveness of the, uh, late on the online, um, that just transition to online learning. I think check-ins with every single student at a minimum every week. I have a number of, uh, I've talked to a number of people in districts across the state. That seems to be a minimum of making sure that you are checking in every week at least, if not a couple times a week.

So, if we don't have a sense of how we're gonna monitor that, the relationship, the achievement is not gonna be, um, what it needs to be. Um, another example, which I mentioned to you all, was that, you know, for years, CPS has spent four times the state average on a per

basis on professional development. And yet again, I didn't see anything in this budget reflecting how it is that we're gonna demonstrate effectiveness of that investment. We're just continuing to pour money into it. Um, we really need to be much clearer. And I would like to hear from you about how evaluation is being done, how specific measures of accountability, not just intentional be accomplished.

And, uh, I was glad, for instance, to see the superintendent mentioned that the Office of Equity Inclusion would not-- We--we recognize we don't wanna do siloing, and yet all the research shows that pushing accountability and staff to the school level is the best and most effective way to achieve results and to ensure that equity is across the district.

So, I think overall what I'd like to hear is how is it that we can be assured that in this budget, the--the decisions are being driven by an evaluation of programs? And are we willing and able to evaluate our own programs? 'Cause if not, I think instead of hiring yet another person to do it, that money should be redirected perhaps to outside independent evaluators to ensure that we're spending this over, we're approaching \$30,000 a student,

and we all know we're sitting here with results that, um, that we keep saying will get better. And yet we--we-- It hasn't happened yet. So, That's--that's my first question, which I know I sent you in--in advance, so hopefully we have some answers.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Dr. Salim.

**SUPERINTENDENT DR. KENNETH SALIM:** Uh, thank you, Madam Chair through you. So, um, first just specifically around the, uh, position. So, this was a, uh--uh, position that is, uh, partly grant funded by the Biogen Foundation. And so it's actually looking also at how we can, um, help to evaluate participation in, um, some of the STEM programs that our students are, um, engaged in.

And also, uh, program participation so that we can also augment how we're using Aspen, uh, to be able to track, um, student participation in--in different, um, uh, programs including out-of-school time programs. That's something that, um, has not, um, uh, we have not had an opportunity to really, um--um, emerge and use. And--and I think it also, uh, led itself to be more, uh, effective, um, uh, case management. Um, we are, um, you know, as we have put together, um, our budget, um, uh, proposals here,

um, they are informed by, um, how we are looking at, um, uh, results from, um, our outcomes and, um, and--and data and so making decisions based on that.

The interventionist piece. Um, so this has been, um, in some ways similar to the, uh, discussion around social workers are multi-year efforts, um, over a number of years. As--as--as--as--as you probably remember, we've also invested in math interventionists at the upper school. And some of those interventionist investments have been, um, at a higher level at, um, uh, at a couple of schools, um, more than others.

We also, uh, do, uh, leverage, um, title \$1 as part of investing, um, additional, um, supports, um, for, uh, for what we're doing. In terms of the sort of overall program evaluation. So we, um, are, we do look at this as--as a multi-year, um, uh, process and thinking about, um, uh, one of the things that we are doing is, uh, um, participating in a--in--in and something with Jesse around, um, uh, a program evaluation, uh, pilot and actually, one of the things that was part of that was, um, looking at, uh, Level Up.

Um, unfortunately, that was interrupted, um, uh, by

the closure, um, process. And so that has been, um, uh, put on hold. But that program evaluation pilot is something that we and a handful of other districts, um, are participating in, um--um, across the commonwealth. Um, in the, um, in the--in the, uh, adopted budget as well, um, you see there also are efforts to look at, um, the Rista Program.

Uh, so a specific focus, um, on and looking at, um, evaluation, um, of some of the, um, uh, outcomes and, um, uh, and--and other aspects, um, as part of that program as well. So, generally we try to, you know, kind of move this, um, really have this improvement mindset and thinking about how we are, um, assessing, um, uh, this approach.

Um, you know, while the, um, you know, for example, even with the, um, Summit, um, uh, Program from last year also used some of the, um, uh, we actually did see also some positive results for students in terms of some of the math, um, supports. They, um, also had received also looking at how we can leverage that, um, as part of our summer planning. Um, this--this, um, for the summer.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Councillor Nolan.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thanks. I--I guess I

was hoping you, so what will be different? And specifically, we know math at the upper schools at a couple-- When you have 7% in one school and 59% in another, or 14% of economic disadvantage in one school and 56%. I mean, I didn't-- Did I miss it? I didn't see anything that was different about how it is that we're going to address those very specific ongoing problems which can be addressed. So, maybe I missed it, but--

**SUPERINTENDENT DR. KENNETH SALIM:** Well, I think it's--it's--it's the focus on instructional improvement and, um, real focus around, um, upper school. Um, math has been on, um, specific, um, mathematical instructional practices on ambitious instructional routines on--on drawing on, um--um--um, effective practices that have been, um, uh, born out of, uh, the research and, um, to--to--to utilize strategies like math talks. And then also, you know, thinking about the pipeline of students coming in from, uh, the elementary level as well. The lot of the work that, um, we're doing this year around the math intervention was--was a--a specific focus on that.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Yeah, I--I--I want it to be successful. I just, and you've heard this from me

before, Dr. Salim, my-- It's still a passion. Again, it's-- it's--it's wanting it to be successful and really encouraging more specific intentional in those and acknowledge those problem areas 'cause part of the problem, as we know, if we don't.

All right, I'll go on to the next, um, question, which is in and this is in the context of the budget, um, uh, Chair Simmons and which is in that question of how are we using our outcomes measures, again, to direct our budget spending.

And I sent you a, um, uh, an email explaining how uncomfortable I am to have this budget before us that doesn't actually have any outcomes measures whatsoever for the next year. The ones that I helped pass have expired this year. They're for the--they, you know, for--for 2017 to 2020. The next school year is 2021 and it needs updating and change.

And will this, I guess the--the overarching question is, will this budget get us to outcomes that are high across the board, are we committing 100% to saying that our outcomes measures are the same for all kids? Because last year the outcomes measures expectation was that less than



half of third graders who are black, Hispanic, economically disadvantaged students with disabilities or English language learners would meet expectations while 80% of white and Asian third graders would.

And as I wrote to you as former school committee member, Lawrence Kimbro and former CPS teacher, Dr. Parker reminded us all that is literally putting in writing lower expectations, which I pledged when I talked to them about it a year ago, that I would never again vote for disparate expectations. It is the definition of growth mindset for us to send the message that we believe all kids can achieve. So, and I think it's doable.

I actually have faith, but I do think we need to ramp it up, take it as an urgent message. This--this era that we're in should make it unacceptable for us not to use that equity lens of this budget to say every single thing that we're looking at in the budget needs to say that we know we can achieve those in outcomes for all kids across the board.

Not just in, I mean, that-- What at all it would mean is that for existing kindergartners, current and kindergarten, we're--we're only talking 500 kids, less than

half of whom would need this intervention. That's a couple 100 kids who in three years we have to commit to saying they are going to be on grade level in three years by the time they get to third grade, which is a marker.

And while I agree that the, uh, lower schools also have an--have a real role to play in ensuring that our eighth grade math goals are met, let's remember that the current outcomes were lower than they were 12 years ago.

In 2008, we expected all students to read at grade level and the math, the district used to aspire in writing to have every eighth grader successfully complete algebra before high school. And today we expect less than half to do that.

So, I want to hear whether this budget is ready and prepared to say that we are going to have goal, have outcome measures that are the same for every single kid, whether it's my kid and looks like me, or whether-- What if it looks like, um, the range of--of students that are before us.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Dr. Salim.

**SUPERINTENDENT DR. KENNETH SALIM:** Thank you, Madam Chair through you. So the, certainly, you know, we've--

we've had some, uh, discussions in the last term, um, of the school committee, um, on this question around outcomes and targets and adjustments, um, when, uh, there are certain targets that have been met, um, as well as this question around, um, how targets are set.

And, um, and I--and I certainly hear, um, uh, your, your--your point and passion around the point. And, um, and I--and--and--and I know that, you know, that when we did set these targets originally as part of the district plan, what we used was information from the state around what they had identified would be ambitious, but attainable targets.

And so that concept of ambitious and attainable was based on an analysis of--of, uh, you know, all students across the state and where there had been, um--um, the--the districts or schools that have made the most significant progress for, um, uh, for students, um, along demographic groups.

Um, but I hear, you know, the point, and I think that the committee, um, has started to have this emerging conversation around, um, what we do communicate, um, when we actually set these outcomes. Um, I will say that our

revision of the district plan was interrupted, um, uh, by the closure we had, um, you know, we're a retreat with the school committee, um, back in February and had hoped to, um, follow it up. And, um, you know, that is a really important, um, discussion and--and decision that, um, I know that the, um, you know, I'll be, um, engaging the committee with, um--um, as we think about, um, outcomes and targets, um, as part of also our recovery plan.

Uh, 'cause we also know that because MCAST wasn't administered this year, that we're also gonna have to look at, um, different measures, um, as we both think about, um, uh--uh, measuring our progress, um, during this--this period of time.

Um, so, you know, absolutely here--here the point, I know that we've had some, again, just, um, sort of beginning conversations with the--the committee about this, but it is, uh, an important area to continue to, um, uh, to, uh, to--to explore and--and make decisions around.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Uh, thank you, Dr. Salim. Vice Chair Bowman, did you wanna say something on this?

**VICE CHAIR MANIKKA L. BOWMAN:** I did. Um, and to my

former colleague, um, Councillor Nolan, I just wanna-- Just fully acknowledge that, you know, we are at the end of our planning, um, of the district plan. And as Dr. Salim spoke, um, that COVID 19 has had an impact on the--the operations of school committee, um, as well as just the district in general.

Um, and we, there's certain things that we weren't not able to--to move forward that we will be moving forward in the future. Um, so I want to just fully acknowledge that I appreciate, um, you mentioning the end of our district, um, plan. And as a committee we have to come up with new ones.

Um, we of course disagree as it relates to, um, academic, um--um, the--the--the way in which we view our scholars as it relates to what they're able to achieve and not achieve as it relates to how these outcomes are set. But, um, want to honor the fact that we are going to move forward as a committee to make sure that we have a new, um, three year plan in place as we move forward with managing, um, the impacts of COVID on the school district.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Thank you, Madam Vice Chair. Councillor Nolan, is that--is that--was that your last question? Are you yielding the floor?

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Yeah, for now, but I just wanna make a quick comment that I totally agree. I--I know and I appreciate the COVID 19, as Vice Chair Bowman just mentioned, it's been a challenge. However, I will say some of those goals, the three year goal was met in one year. That says to me, in fact, they were not ambitious goals. They were not ambitious enough.

We-- And we don't have to wonder what message that sends to kids. We know that growth mindset is out there. And when we are literally putting in writing the kids who look like me, we expect to perform differently than kids who don't look like me.

And yes, those might have been state goals. We are spending \$29,000 a student that is double the state average. If we can't blast through and have 100% proficiency for all kids, then we should--we should give it up. Like we shouldn't be spending that much money. So, I just wanna push back some to say, because I fought at that time, I have said for 10 years that we should have 100% of kids graduate past algebra and eighth grade.

Remember, most kids coming to CPS, whether it's from a charter school or an independent school, they have finished

algebra successfully in eighth grade. And it's a range of kids and yet most of ours are not. So, let's-- Okay, thank you.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** And I think you may very point Counsel--councillor Nolan.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** I yield the floor. Sorry, I'm just so passionate about it.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** That's where I was going with that. Um, Councillor Toomey, you now have the floor followed by Councillor Jivan Sobrinho-Wheeler.

**COUNCILLOR TIMOTHY J. TOOMEY JR.:** Thank you, uh, Madame Co-Chair. Uh, first of all, I wanna thank the superintendent and his staff, uh, for having prepared this budget. I particularly wanna commend, uh, the five new school committee members, um, on the preparation of the first budget. And, uh, Mayor, this was her third budget, but this is the first budget that she helped actually prepare. Uh, so I commend the, uh, those new members, uh, for this presentation tonight. Uh, I remember my first budget when I was elected the school committee.

I was the co-chair with Fran Cooper, and we actually had to present a budget with a couple million dollars in

MCATS. So, certainly times have changed and, uh, we are very fortunate, um, that, uh, we, those days hopefully behind us, uh, we were fortunate, uh, when we came to the City Council in this chamber, the City Council, uh, acted very responsibly and taught me a lesson and restored everything that we cut.

So, that was quite a lesson. So, um, but I do appreciate all the hard work that's going in and gone into this budget. I have two questions. The first one to Dr. Salim and one of the slides you showed, it said there were-- It's a 17.6% chronically absent students. Is that-- Did I read that correctly? 17.6 chronically absent students in our system?

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Mr. Superintendent?

**SUPERINTENDENT DR. KENNETH SALIM:** Yes. So, uh, 17.6%. Yes. That is the, um, percentage, uh, from 2019.

**COUNCILLOR TIMOTHY J. TOOMEY JR.:** Well, to me that is totally unacceptable. And I guess my question--my further question is what are we doing to make sure that's down to the zero? I mean, 17.0% of kids absent every day in the system is, to me it's astounding and whatever it takes to make sure that those students get to school, whether



there's a staff member going to that home every morning to make sure that child is--is prepared to--to--to go to school.

So, sure you've been addressing it, but to me, 17.6%, I--I almost fell over my chair here when I saw that slide. And that wasn't even one of my questions, but I had to raise that because that concerns me that much.

**SUPERINTENDENT DR. KENNETH SALIM:** So, let me, sorry, I just need to be, uh, clarify. That doesn't mean that 17.6% of students are absent every day. What it means is 17.6 of students have missed 10% of more days in the school year, which is still, you know, obviously, uh, too high, but it does not, um, mean that, that many students are out any given day.

**COUNCILLOR TIMOTHY J. TOOMEY JR.:** But that's a couple hundred students that missing 10 more days of school year. So, I mean that-- And is there a pattern? Is it the same students? And I'm not sure how that information, but is it those students identified that it seems that it might be the same students and that are being absent?

**SUPERINTENDENT DR. KENNETH SALIM:** Yeah, so part of the work that, um--um, you know, has been happening is to

really, you know, kind of share reports around attendance, um, regularly so that school-based teams can review and create a plan to, you know, communicate earlier and daily with, um, with families, um, when students are--are absent, um, at the high school extension program, um, there's been an effort specifically around, um, you know, specific, uh, personalized, um, uh, plans around, um, attendance. And so what we've done is we've done also weekly, um--um, weekly reports to all schools on daily attendance and, uh, chronic absenteeism, uh, data with historical data, um, to provide, uh, tools to--to, um, uh, to--to, uh, to schools.

**COUNCILLOR TIMOTHY J. TOOMEY JR.:** Thank you. I would just assume then that, you know, if there is a parent of a family that obviously there might be additional resources that have to be provided to those families to make sure, you know, there might be other issues in that household that at the school department should be aware of.

And if they need more services, those families, I think it's imperative that we follow through on that. Uh, my other, um, uh, question concern is, uh, when looking at the school enrollment by race and ethnicity, uh, there are seven schools that are above 45% are white, and the, uh, we

have one school that's 86% non-white.

Um, and I'm just curious, in one school that's 61% white, and just curious in 2020 how those figures, um, mesh with our school desegregation, and I mean, one school, 86% non-white, one school 61% white. And why-- How, just how is that allowed and I'm not sure saying that, you know, it ties into the achievement gap, but certainly the achievement gap is a concern of all of us. But I-- Those numbers really astounded me. The seven schools are 45% or more, uh, white, 61% and one 86% non-white.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** So, councillor Toomey, your question as it pertains to the budget is what are-- what are--what funds are being allocated to balance the schools more? I'm trying to--

**COUNCILLOR TIMOTHY J. TOOMEY JR.:** Well, I--I thought the policy that we would--would have all of our schools somewhat integrated, 86% non-white students in one school to me, is not saying that, that school is desegregated. So, unless the policy has changed, but, um, that's a glaring figure to me, uh, in one school 61% white.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** So I, uh, I believe councillor Toomey is asking a non-budget question, which is

why the schools are out of balance. I hope that you try to answer it within the budget as best you can. Councillor-- Superintendent Salim?

**SUPERINTENDENT DR. KENNETH SALIM:** Uh, yes, thank you. Um, Madam Chair. So, um, I'm thinking about just the framing of the--of--of the response. Um, so, you know, I think as we--as we think about just sort of the different, um, uh, just sort of, uh, demographic makeups across, um--um, our--our school system and--and just different needs, um, that exists, um, uh, um, you know, that exist at--at--at school based on, you know, kind of high needs, um, uh, measures, um, that we use to make decisions around, you know, title one allocations and others.

Um, you know, we have in--in Cambridge, as everyone knows, a control choice system. Um, we do not use race as a--as a measure, um, or as a--as a, um, a factor, uh, for assigning students. Uh, but instead it's a socioeconomic status. So, Whether, um, families identify as, um, eligible to, uh, pay lunch, uh, for lunch or not.

And, um, that is, um, how the assignment's made. And so it is a result of that--of that choice program, uh, that results in the, um, you know, demographic makeup. And then

based on that and--and based on individual school needs, um, we make, uh, different budgetary decisions to provide, um, you know, additional, um, supports for, uh, schools that may have, uh, greater need. For example, a higher percentage of students with disabilities or a higher percentage of English language learners, um, in their schools.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Thank you, councillor Salim. Councillor Toomey.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Thank you, uh, Madam Mayor, certainly make this--this debate, this issue tonight, but I--I really don't accept, uh, the explanation that this was given. And so is the school that's 86% non-white getting like double resources of the other schools, uh, to assist those students? Um--

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Dr. Salim.

**COUNCILLOR TIMOTHY J. TOOMEY JR.:** When I go further and looking at the budget to see how much the money resources center to that school compared to other schools, you are telling me I'm gonna see a greater increase or greater percentage of funds into that school in resources than other schools.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Dr. Salim?

**SUPERINTENDENT DR. KENNETH SALIM:** Yes. So, the way, um, additional resources are--are--are typically, um, or the framework that we use is, um, looking at, um, the high needs, um, uh, population and also, uh, socioeconomic status. And so, um, you know, title \$1 are, um, also allocated on top of general fund dollars, um, to support, um, schools. So, additional, um, interventionists or, um, reading specialists or other roles, um, are also provided, um, uh, to those specific schools.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Councillor Toomey.

**COUNCILLOR TIMOTHY J. TOOMEY JR.:** Uh--uh, again, you know, I'll--I'm gonna delve more into this, but I believe when I did a first, um, look at the, uh, socio-economic, uh, I'm not sure that the schools are, um, showing equity across that all schools is showing the same percentage economic, um, equity there. Um, you know, in--in 1982 is when, you know, Cambridge entered into the voluntary desegregation plan. So, maybe that's no longer going on in--in effect, but that was, I believe, in 1982, Cambridge into the voluntarily so that we weren't forced to, uh, to--into a desegregation plan by the the Commonwealth. But, um,

I will certainly pursue this, and I say, just to say, just again, you know, to me, the looking at this on the face of it shows some inequities in the distribution. Yes. So, that really concerns me.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Councillor Toomey, are you yielding the floor? councillor Toomey yields the floor. Councillor Jivan, Sobrinho-Wheeler, you have the floor.

**COUNCILLOR JIVAN SOBRINHO-WHEELER:** Thank you, Madame Chair through you. Um, I wanna thank the school committee and the superintendent, uh, for the deliberation on this budget, uh, and just the work that's gone into the last couple months as, uh, so much of the--the school year has changed.

I'm sure it's been a--it's a herculean effort. Um, so thank you for all you've done. Um, I wanted to start, uh, by asking about the school district's relationship with the, uh, city's police department, which is, of course tied into the--the anti-racism discussion that CPS has been having.

Uh, as I'm sure you're aware, uh, the Minneapolis Public School severed its contract with the Minneapolis Police Department for School Resource Officers this week

after the killing of George Floyd, uh, and is going to be figuring out alternatives to guarantee public safety for its students.

Uh, and a lot of the conversation over the last week and even before has been how do we shift away from policing by addressing root causes and funding safety via alternative means? Uh, in reading through the budget, I understand that Cambridge's school resource officers, uh, are funded actually on the--the city side of the budget, but given that I'm sure the school district is involved in these decisions, uh, and that all our job as policy makers is often to figure out how to be proactive rather than reactive when it comes to these issues, uh, has the school district ever talked about shifting away from the model of school resource officers from the police department and towards other approaches to public safety?

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** So, Dr. Salim, the context of the budget, my colleague wants to know, if you're thinking about using your resources--financial resources away from police. Would you say resource--resource officers councillor to?

**COUNCILLOR JIVAN SOBRINHO-WHEELER:** Yep--yeah. From,



uh, funding public safety, uh, which I know is part of the school district budget, uh, so that, uh, city police resource officers, uh, weren't needed.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Dr. Salim, do you understand the question?

**SUPERINTENDENT DR. KENNETH SALIM:** Um, I--I think so. Um, so I think, you know, uh, the--the Cambridge Police Department, along with other agencies are part of, uh, um--um, you know, a multi-department effort around safety net, which I know that, you know, councillors are, uh, familiar with.

And so, um, uh, they, along with, um--um, our, um, uh, you know, kind of use that as a way of--of providing the additional supports that we were, um, just speaking about, um, uh, as well.

Um, the resource officers, um, uh, that we, uh, work with at the--at the various schools, um, you know, do, um, also have, um, you know, proactively kind of engage, um, students and families.

Um, uh, they do have a, I think, a very strong positive relationship with, um, uh, the resource officers, um--um, across our schools whenever there are, um, you

know, whenever we've had, um, opportunities where, uh, students have, um, engaged in, uh, walkouts or other types of, um, uh, um, uh, of--of activities of protest, um, you know, it is our school resource officers that are typically the ones that are, um, on site because they do have the relationships with students.

And so it's, um, you know, they are--they--they don't have the, I guess, you know, um, kind of, uh, their--their function is really around, um, really building, um, uh, community relationships.

They are helpful with us for doing, you know, wellness checks and--and other types of supports, um, for families across, um, uh, the system, um, you know, related to kind the budget, which is, um, maybe a bit of a--of a, um, of a, you know, some connection I think to, to some of what you're asking about is, you know, efforts also we're looking at in terms of more restorative practices related to discipline.

Um, uh, the incident reporting specialist, that is a position to be able to have somebody for students to go to, um, that, um, to report any, um, you know, experiences with microaggressions or, um, other, um, uh, racism experiences,

um, and, um, uh, so those are other, you know, we--we see this as part of a, um, you know, sort of a--a multi-layered system or--or--or a structure around, you know, supporting students, um--um, you know, and their--and--and their various needs.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler, you have the floor.

**COUNCILLOR JIVAN SOBRINHO-WHEELER:** Thank you. Yeah. Uh, and my second question, uh, I wanted to ask about, uh, universal Pre-K, which I know is, uh, a big priority for the school committee, even if it's, uh, sort of not, uh, mentioned a lot of times in the budget. Um, and I know, uh, a lot the conversation has been sort of a chicken and egg go on around space, uh, and that a lot of the--the Pre-K funding comes from the city side on the Department of Human Services. Uh, I just wanted to get a sense of where, uh, those discussions, uh, were at, uh, with this year's budget, um, in thinking about Pre-K.

**SUPERINTENDENT DR. KENNETH SALIM:** Uh, yes, um, Madam Chair through you. So, as--as you noted, um, uh, there's the, the city side, um, of--of the budget in terms of, um, early childhood, um, the pieces that are part of, um, uh,

the CPS budget are, um, that include our--our youngest learners or things like the Special Start program, uh, for students that need, uh, specific services.

That's a program that has continued to, um, expand in numbers of classrooms, um, across the district, uh, for a number of years now. Um, we also, as part of the, um, uh, Tobin Vassel Lane Project, um, also added, uh, an additional classroom at the, um, uh, projected, uh, at the new building. Um, so that, um, there could also be additional three row seats on--on that front.

Um, and we, uh, do work closely with the term Environment of Human Services Programs, um, and as well as the Birth of Grade 3 partnership where, um, I wanna say earlier this winter, we had a chance to, um, meet with, um, uh, providers across the system, um, to talk about this, um, you know, the report that was, uh, that we--we had shared earlier, um, this year on a mixed delivery system and, uh, the planning related to that.

Um, so those are some of the things, um, you know, the funding is on the city side, but there is, um, uh, you know, deep collaboration. We do have staff including, uh, Leon Ellis, um, that also are part of our, um, uh, part of

the--the Cambridge public schools, uh, where a lot of the work as part of the Birth of Grade 3 through partnership is, um, uh, trying to ensure as seamless a transition as possible from preschool into our JK and K programs.

**COUNCILLOR JIVAN SOBRINHO-WHEELER:** Okay, thank you. Uh, I yield back.

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** Thank you. This is Co-Chair Carlone. Um, Co-Chair Simmons will be back momentarily. Uh, so I'll be chairing the meeting for a while and as coincidence would have it, I'm next on the list with my questions.

**VICE CHAIR MANIKKA L. BOWMAN:** Co-Chair Carlone?

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** Yes.

**VICE CHAIR MANIKKA L. BOWMAN:** Hi. Um, I saw that, uh, my Co-Chair wanted to respond, maybe?

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** Please--please do.

**ALFRED B. FANTINI:** Yeah. Thank you. It's, um, oh, can you hear me okay?

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** Yes.

**ALFRED B. FANTINI:** Oh, I just--I just wanted to make a quick comment on the, uh, school resource offices.

I just-- I--I don't know what they do in other

communities, but our school resource--resource offices is, it's a nationally recognized model, and, um, and our--our school resource offices, as I think most people know, some of the strongest, uh, the strongest, uh, connections to our kids. Um--um, and I know Commissioner Bard could respond as well, but--but the incident, you know, and--and--and those, and some of those school resource officers, you know, they--they instruct at the YMCA, so they're constantly keeping in touch with the young people, and they're serving as a safety net to make sure young kids don't get into trouble. So, other--other communities do it differently, have different roles.

But Cambridge, the school resource offices are an unbelievable asset to our schools, and, um, serve in a very different way than other communities. So, I--I just, you know, I just wanted to, um, make that statement. Thank you.

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** Thank you, School Committee Member Fantini. Uh, my comments are pretty much, uh, straightforward, but first I wanted to thank councillor Patty Nolan for her in-depth questioning. I-- My comments related to her questions, but, um, would not have been in such detail and I respect that and the responses. Uh, but

clearly we have work to do.

I'm very curious about what the Vice Chair and I believe the Superintendent discussed, and that is the community meetings to discuss the budget. We and the Council really don't do that. We have another method, and that is, uh, people voting for additional projects. So, I would, uh, appreciate it if the Vice Chair or the Superintendent, whoever, uh, you feel should lead the discussion.

Tell us about your community meetings, the feedback you--you heard and the change to the budget. Um, this intrigues the Council very much and we greatly, uh, congratulate you for pursuing that approach.

**VICE CHAIR MANIKKA L. BOWMAN:** Co-Chair Carlone, I can start and then, um, Dr. Salim can, um, jump in. So, from a structural perspective, one of the things that we heard, um, from the community prior to this budget process is whenever you go into a school committee, um, in our school committee chamber, um, there's--there's the way our meetings--our budget meetings were set up.

There wasn't an opportunity to actually engage and have dialogue with school committee members. It was, you

sign up for your two minutes, you get to say what you want. It kind of felt like a Christmas list and there wasn't really a dialogue around the complexity of the, um, all of the different demands and needs that go into a budgetary process for a school district.

And so, myself and, um, Co-Chair Fantini decided to really take a step back and figure out, "Okay, how do we get--let's get out of the school committee chambers first and then second, how do we give people the information that they need so they can actively participate in a budget process?" And so, that's how we structured our meetings. Um, our, um, school committee members, um, sat at different tables and engaged people, um, and had more of a dialogue than having a one way, um, dialogue towards us with a list of things that they want.

Now, there were opportunities for growth there and it'll be interesting to see how this plays out in the context of COVID 19 moving forward. Um, you know, we would--would have loved to see more people participate, um, uh--uh, and we're gonna work on that really hard to ensure that, that happens.

The second piece that, um, we weren't able to achieve



this time around, we wanted to go to either a community center or maybe one of, um--um, the centers that's attached to the Cambridge Housing Authority to have, um, our budget meetings. But it didn't work out for this time because of just the notice that we gave those different facilities. They couldn't accommodate us.

So, moving forward, tho--those are the things that we're trying to put in place. So, we can diver--we can engage a diversity of people and give them the tools needed so they can understand the complexity of the budget process. That's really about, um, listening to multiple voices to then influence how a budget come to us that then gets voted upon. That then comes before this body for a vote. And I'll hand it over to Dr. Salim from there.

**SUPERINTENDENT DR. KENNETH SALIM:** Thank you, Vice Chair Bowman. And I know that, um, after, uh, I share some--some--some points. Um, Mayor Siddiqui also would like to--to, uh, to wayne as well. Um, just more specifically around what these times look like, that I think were instructive. We tried to really reduce barriers.

Um, you know, similar to what, uh, Vice Chair Bowman spoke about in terms of, you know, even the barrier of

coming to the school committee chambers and, you know, stating your name and address and speaking publicly, which not everyone's comfortable with, is to have, um, people be able to speak at tables. We had family liaisons, uh, facilitate, um, conversations at--at tables.

We, uh, did make childcare available. We had, um, uh, you know, we provided, uh, breakfast or lunch, um, and we-- and we looked at times so that we had, um, uh, the family facing, um, community session on a Saturday at an afternoons for educators. Um, and I think, you know, we-- we--we learned, um, some from this--from this, uh, and--and we're not, you know, fully there yet. There are certainly areas for improvement as we think about the participation.

I think one of the things that's interesting, um, from, you know, this whole, whole experience that we're on connecting within each other electronically, is what are some ways that actually, that is actually a, uh, maybe a way of reducing barriers for some people as well, to be able to--to weigh in or chime in on, you know, uh, on making comments that they otherwise, uh, wouldn't be able to.

So, um, you know, we also work with the community

engagement team, um, in terms of outreach, um, and also use it as an opportunity to give some, um, uh, overview around the budget, because I think, um, you know, it--it--it to most--to many people, I think, um, who, you know, don't tune into meetings regularly, um, you know, the budget can feel like this really opaque process. And so, understanding some of the basics around how we approach and think about, uh, tying the budget to, um, our outcomes and tying it to our, um, priorities is something that, um, uh, both Vice Chair Bowman and Member Fantini, uh, wanted to make sure we're our priority as we engage community members.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Thank you, Dr. Salim.

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** Did Mayor Siddiqui-- Did she wanna follow up?

**MAYOR SUMBUL SIDDIQUI:** Yes. Thank you. Thank you, Madam Co-Chairs. Uh, so I think the-- It was a pilot and I'm so glad we went--went ahead and did it. Uh, just a point of information. Um, the early January, the first one was for educators and staff, and that was about 30 participants. Um, the--the families and staff, one that happened, um, later that was about 20 participants. Uh, and so, you know, we all talked about we'd love, uh, more

engagement.

So, the things to build--build on from the-- What the Vice Chair said, you know, thinking about approving our budget calendar earlier, uh, thinking about, uh, timing to accommodate, uh, teacher schedules, thinking about for families, can we do a weekday evening, uh, doing additional outreach? I think something that is really important to all the committee members is language support, right? For non-English speakers, uh--uh, that--that's really key.

And if we really want, um, widespread engagement and finally, I mentioned this in my earlier points, but thinking about for students--our school student, um, committee members have said, "Get us involved." And so, I think we--we would really love to do that, uh, in the future. So, that's just what I wanted to add. Thank you.

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** I wanted to thank all of you. And I--I hope that, um, somehow the rest of the council can learn from this Madam Mayor. And that may be the finance committee co-chairs can meet with you and talk about this in the future. My--my second question is more of a comment, um, most people know I'm an architect, an urban designer by training. And I don't see how a school district

can rely on only 1.8 million in their budget for school repairs. Um, and that's been fairly consistent.

I've been on, uh, this is my fourth term, and, uh, I understand that we're building new schools and therefore we have to control renovations. But I also know 1.8 million doesn't go very far, uh, anymore. Is that number strictly developed because we're doing new schools or in reality, the Superintendent and school committee believe that is sufficient for existing schools. I'm not trying to be controversial here. I'm really stunned and I would love to hear your thoughts.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** So, the Co-Chair of the school department's budget would like to respond. Mr. Fantini, can you hear me?

**ALFRED B. FANTINI:** Oh--oh, thank you. Oh, no, I didn't wanna respond to that question, Ma, um, Madam Chair.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Well, then you don't have to talk.

**ALFRED B. FANTINI:** Okay. I won't--I won't. Thank you--thank you.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Who would you like to respond? The Mayor or the Superintendent?

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** Who--whoever feels.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** The floor is open to either the Mayor or the Superintendent to answer that question. But do-- Mr. Fantini, I do wanna come back to you to see what you might wanna say after this response. Mr. Superintendent, did you wanna respond to my colleague?

**SUPERINTENDENT DR. KENNETH SALIM:** Uh, yeah. Thank you, uh, Madam Chair. So, I'm gonna, um, ask our Chief Operating Officer, uh, Jim Maloney to, uh, come on to speak to that. Does-- As he's coming on, you know, there--there are, um, you know, there certainly are, um, other many, uh, renovation projects that we do undergo. So, outside of the, um, with, uh, MSDA, um, uh, accelerated repair programs, um, you know, that happen across our district, um, but also, you know, a number of maintenance efforts that also, um, happen on a regular basis. Mr. Maloney?

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Uh, thank you, Mr. Superintendent. We will hear--hear from Mr. Maloney. And I believe, uh, Mr.-- Our City Manager, Mr. DePasquale wants to weigh in on this. So, we'll go to Mr. Maloney first, and then to our City Manager. Mr. Maloney, you have the floor.

**CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER JAMES P. MALONEY:** Uh, thank

you, Madam Mayor, uh, Madam Chair. So, I--I, you know, I think it's, um, there are several factors that going to play here.

Um, I--I--I was at your, uh, capital meeting yesterday and--and, uh, I think the City Manager pointed out, um, that we've actually seen an increase, uh, in recent years, uh, for which we're happy, number one. Number two, we're in a position where with the Morse Roof being done this summer, um, all of our roofs are solid and in good shape. Um, the same with our boilers and--and heating systems. Um, we certainly, you know, I--I think, I can't deny that we have, um, lots of other projects that--that are in the pipeline. But in addition to a money issue, uh, there's a capacity issue.

There's a capacity of management issue and there's a capacity to where to put the students when you're doing the work. So, um, it's not just a money issue.

Uh, when we talk about our capital budget it's a management capacity and it's also more importantly a enrollment and student, uh, capacity. Where do you put them? This coming year we're, uh, gonna be struggling with, um, uh, perhaps social distancing, uh, depending upon

guidelines that we're waiting for from the state and public health.

Um, so that's another matter. It's--it's--it's more than just money when we--when we talk about this, um, and, you know, we, um, appreciate your support greatly, but, uh, I think that, uh, I have to qualify that a little bit, um, beyond just money.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Mr. DePasquale, do you wanna follow up, please?

**CITY MANAGER LOUIS A. DEPASQUALE:** Uh, through you, Madam Chair, that's actually a very good question, Co-Chair. But one of the ways we've addressed this is, well, there's a public investment committee, which the school has a member on, but almost like firetrucks, we have taken a look at free cash to help support the school capital needs over and above the debt service for the school.

So, if you take a look at the last three years, we have put in about \$12 million in other type appropriations for roofs, for HVAC, VHC, for playgrounds related to the school.

So, in the budget, it's increased, but we are spending annually more than the budget with free cash appropriation.



So, this is just another way that we have helped offset some of the issues that they've had. So, I just wanted to bring that point across. But now, 1.8 would be pretty difficult. But that's why when bigger items come up, we work with Jim and Claire and usually can fund the true free cash, which then has to go to the council.

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** Um, my--my only comment on that would be, again, there should be an asterisk that says what else is happening. Because if it's a misnomer, it-- Some people are gonna think, "Well, they're not putting money into my school. And that's not true. Thank you. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Uh, Mr.-- Co-Chair, Carlone, I believe Mr. Fantini wanted-- I dunno if you wanted to speak directly to this, Mr. Fantini. You have the floor.

**ALFRED B. FANTINI:** Oh, no, thank you. The--the--the manager said what I was gonna say, so thank you.

**CITY MANAGER LOUIS A. DEPASQUALE:** Thank you.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Very good. Councillor Carlone yields the floor. Vice Mayor Mallon.

**VICE MAYOR ALANNA M. MALLON:** Thank you, Madam Co-

chair through you. Um, I just briefly wanted to touch on something that, um, my fellow colleague brought up earlier about the school resource officers.

Um, I--I certainly appreciate the question, and I think it's a conversation we definitely should have as a community, um, moving forward. In fact, you know, I've spoken to Member Weinstein and the Mayor today around that program.

Um, the--the school resource officers in Minneapolis have been a problem for a decade, um, and so, you know, when I think about Officer Pam and Nicole Patco, and how much of a part of the community they are for their particular schools and the other school resource officers, um, as part of this conversation, um, about whether or not to keep this program, I think we should probably think about surveys of students and past students and figure out, um, how successful or not successful this program is.

So, I just wanted to say that--that I do think it is a--a very worthy conversation in a context of what's been going on and it's something I think we should talk about as a community in the weeks and months, uh, moving forward. So, um, to the school committee, uh, the five new members,

I know this was a tremendous task, uh, particularly thrown in with a pandemic.

Um, so I applaud you for getting to this moment. I know that this, uh, budget was delayed, um, because there was a really a--a need for you all to work together and make sure that you got the budget to a place-- To the City Council where you felt comfortable, um, moving forward. And I appreciate the more robust process that you went through, um, this year to gather that community conversation and really make the budget a more, um, a less opaque process.

And, uh, I--I hope that, um, you know, given that we have all been able to shift to very digital, uh, engagement tools over the past three months, and we did it very quickly, that, um, you know, it does provide us a different opportunity to reach out to hard to reach families or non-traditionally reached families to really get, um, input that is, um, diverse and necessary in formulating a budget going forward.

Um, if there's a silver lining in--in any of this, it's that we now, um, have different tools to--to engage with--with residents.

Um, I think I agree with Dan Monahan, um, that, you

know, this--this budget is a start of a transformation. It's a step in the right direction. Um, but I also agree with Tony Clark that it isn't quite as transformational as maybe, um, I had hoped for in terms of the narrative.

Um, and in terms of, you know, I think one of the things I called out at--at the only meeting we've had the round table, was that there's a lack of data, um, and to my colleagues earlier point, I was disappointed that there was not any data on where we're trying to get to, um, in the next school year in terms of outcomes. I understand that there's a district plan, and it was a three year plan, and it ended in 2020.

And, but at the same time, I don't know how we hold ourselves accountable if we don't even have any metrics, um, to do that work. How do we at this point next year say, "Gosh, we did a great job, or, really, these programs didn't work, um, because we didn't meet our goals." Um, so, you know, there's no goals for fiscal '21, you know, for school year '21. And then in the budget priorities, their progress measures aren't--they're--they're measures that I'm not sure how we're actually going to--to reach.

So, for example, we've got a, you know, a budget

priority for improved instruction for language-based learning disabilities and literacy focused staffing, which focus on those two big outcomes, right? That we think about third grade reading and eighth grade math.

The progress measures are observable instructional improvements in students receiving--receiving intervention or participating. We'll see improvements on assessments, measuring literacy and language acquisition.

Um, you know, how many kids are retargeting, what kind of improvements on assessments, how will we know that these interventions were effective? So, when we think about a transformational budget and a transformational narrative, that's where I feel like we need to be. I think we need to know where we're going, um, and then I also, you know, I'm just thinking about what Dan Monahan said and that the budget isn't the only lever, um, to--to really think about equity in the district.

Um, we have a few opportunities with the cabinet level positions, not only with the Office of Equity that is new and hopefully will not be siloed, but we've got three cabinet level positions that we're filling for right now. Um, and this is an opportunity to be transformational, and

how are we looking to fill those positions, um, with people whose lens and focus has been traditionally in their work life on equity.

So, that's my first question is really around how are we using different opportunities that are presented to us, like these cabinet level positions to fill them with transformational leaders who are thinking about equity at every step, right?

So, I will just use, for example, um, the AP exams that we had during this remote learning time, that was an opportunity to, for us to look at that through an equity lens, knowing that lots of our kids have poor connectivity at--at--at home. Um, lots of our kids don't have a quiet space at home to take a really important exam. How did we think about that through an equity lens and--and--and really be thoughtful about how to reach out to them beforehand and make sure they had a safe space to make sure that they had great connectivity and they could pass that AP exam.

Um, you know, that's how we're gonna be transformational when we think about every single thing through an equity lens. So, another example is we've been

trying to--to close this digital divide for--for years. Um, and it turns out we just needed to get 400 kids a hotspot, and we did it, you know, over a week.

So, where are those places that we can be really transformational and think about that equity piece, um, from every aspect. So I, sorry, this is a very long-winded question. Way of me asking the question, how are we--how are we thinking about those cabinet level positions that we're hiring for and making sure that we are--are hiring, um, the next level team of leaders in our district?

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Dr. Salim?

**SUPERINTENDENT DR. KENNETH SALIM:** Uh, yes, thank you, Madam Chair through you. So, um, you know, certainly at both in terms of how we have, uh, recruited, uh, for positions as well as, uh, through the--the screening process, uh, the focus around equity and racial equity in particular, um, has been, um, uh, central, um, both through, um, just knowing the, uh, focus around, uh, Cambridge public schools.

So, as we engaged a search firm in that process, um, that was something that, um, was--was very clear. Um, secondly, in terms of our screening committees, um, we did

expand those. We had, um, uh, educators of color and family caregivers of color, um, that were part of that, um, uh, process as well as other, um, roles represented on that, um, uh, screening committee.

And then the questions, um, and--and the task that we have, um--um, asked, have--have had equity at the center at every stage.

And so I agree with you. I mean, this is, um, these are, um, when we think about, um, you know, there's the budget and the dollars, and there are other, um, important levers as we think about, um, advancing, um, our district to becoming more anti-racist.

And--and that has to be part of, um, both, um, how we're developing, um, uh, ourselves as--as--as leaders and as educators across the district, as well as being a clear priority as we are, uh, bringing on, um, uh, uh, leaders in--in--in every role, um, across our system. So, that applies to, you know, kind of our--our--our--our--our principal searches, our, um, and then also how, um, many, um, uh, teams, even at the school level as they're also interviewing, um, classroom teachers as well.

Um, having specific questions around, um, how they



think about their own identities, um, and support for, um, uh, students and how they think about, um, uh, racial equity as part of their work. Um, and I know as a--as a--as a focus of--of many screening committees, um, you know, across the district.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Vice Mayor Mallon.

**VICE MAYOR ALANNA M. MALLON:** Thank you, Madam Co-Chair. And, um, just as a follow up, I mean, these are multimillion dollar decisions. Um, these are folks that are going to be making, um, over \$150,000 a year.

They are going to be with us. Um, they're gonna probably outlast you, um, in this district. And so I--I'm curious, how many, uh, rounds of interviews and panels will a finalist go through, right?

Like, is it just going to be like one round with a--a--an interview panel and then it gets to you when you make a decision or are there gonna be multiple panels and, um, are there projects or research are-- What are we asking these folks to do in order to make this multimillion dollar decision, um, and--and really be focused on equity?

**SUPERINTENDENT DR. KENNETH SALIM:** Um, so I hesitate to go into too much detail just given sort of the--some of

the--the processes that we have underway. But it is, um, uh, both sort of interview processes as well as other tasks that we also ask, um, uh, candidates to--to complete, um, to try to get as--as--as complete a picture. And of course, um, you know, uh, checks, uh, reference checks with, um, others in terms of what their, um, you know, experiences have been, um, you know, in their current and previous roles. So, all of that, I think we've--we've had a, um, uh, an in depth and robust process, um, around the screening process. Um, uh, that's, you know, is--is currently still underway.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Uh, I believe the Vice Chair of the school committee wants to speak a little bit to this. Vice Chair Bowman.

**VICE CHAIR MANIKKA L. BOWMAN:** Yes--yes, thank you. Um, I just wanted to go back to Councillor Mallon's, um, Mallon's point around our, um, being a data driven district and really committed to our district-wide plan in the context of this school year. And I just wanna, for the public's sake, just put some perspective around this. Um, we knew that outgoing committee where a--a--a significant amount of our body would be transitioning out and a new set

of members would be coming into our school committee. And so, we intentionally wanted to engage our new members on setting some of those targets as it relates to our three year plan and then culled hit.

And so at that point, he-- We started to have some staffing challenges in our office and at one point we did not have staffing, um, within our school committee office. So, that had an impact on the things that we need to--to prioritize and the priority was getting this budget before the council. Um, we fully recognize there is a body of work that, um, was put on the side because there was, um, we had to prioritize.

And so I just don't want the public to think in any way, shape, form, or fashion that this school committee, as well as our leadership, is not committed to being data driven. One new thing in this budget book is our district-wide, um, goals and outcomes. They're actually in the book now and that has not been a practice before this point. And the reason that we did that is because we want transparency.

We want people to know that the dollars in which we voted upon, how it's directly connected to the academic

achievement as it relates to our priorities and the district plans and our goals and objectives, that those things are clearly tied together and people can see that in one place.

And so, I just wanted to make sure that the public as well as, um, make sure that you know that we are definitely committed to being a data-driven committee, and we look forward to working as a body to move forward with identifying what the next set of goals and targets will be for our district-wide plan, um, as we move forward with this new committee. Thanks so much.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Thank you, Vice Chair. Vice Mayor Mallon.

**VICE MAYOR ALANNA M. MALLON:** Thank you. And thank you to the Vice Chair for explaining that. Um, I do agree that the priority is the budget, but the budget is the roadmap that tells us where we're going. And it's also a good look back and trying to figure out, "Did we get there? Did we meet our goals?" Um, you know, to not see any expectations, uh, for--for school year '21 about wh--where we want, particularly the--the grade three reading and the grade eight, uh, math where we have identified those as, you

know, real--real goals on where we wanna get to.

I just-- I don't see where we're going. So, um, you know, that was my point. I don't, obviously, I understand that we're a data-driven, um, district. I know that we do a tremendous amount of assessments.

I'm just not seeing it in this book. So, um, thank you to the Superintendent for, um, explaining the process on the hiring of the cabinet level positions. And I--I hope that we really do, um, do some deep work and make sure that we are hiring the best people, um, to handle some of this, um, really tricky stuff that we've been--we've been, you know, trying to handle for a long time, um, around equity, around our achievement gap.

Um, so just my next question is, um, around Rista and the Career Pathways review and study that, um, we've allocated \$75,000 in the budget to make sure that we do. And I'm very excited to see this allocation 'cause I think, um, this is something we really need to do. Uh, you know, a number of us went to Minuteman, uh, Regional Vocational High School, uh, back before COVID hit.

And it was, um, a real revelation in what, um, our kids could be exposed to outside of Rista, right? So, those

programs that we don't offer on onsite at Rista, um, but we also, you know, we really need to look at what is available onsite at Rista.

Is it, um, is it as robust as it needs to be? Are they the programs that we need and want and are, um, you know, the 21st century, uh, what--what those jobs are, what--what's available? So, when will that study be underway and when will it be completed?

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Dr. Salim?

**SUPERINTENDENT DR. KENNETH SALIM:** Yes. Thank you. Um, Madam Chair. I'm--I'm gonna ask, um, Deputy Superintendent Dr. Turk to speak this 'cause I know that there was a, um, an initial launch meeting, um, that happened around, um, the review to, I think look at some initial research questions.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Dr. Turk, you have the floor.

**DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT DR. CAROLYN L. TURK:** Thank you. Uh, Madam Vice Chair. Yes. Um, as Dr. Salim, just stated, we, uh, a group of us recently met within probably the last, uh, two week window, uh, to, uh, begin to gather, uh, some initial information that we will need in terms of

being able to write a, uh, scope of--of services and the, um, information also needs to be aligned with, uh, some of the work that, or the requirements rather of, uh, the department of--of elementary, uh, education, uh, that also completes reviews of--of all of the career and technical education, uh, programs across the--the state.

Uh, so one of the things that, uh, not all people are aware of is that, um, in terms of, um, being able to either, uh, add a program or delete a program, uh, from an existing site, that, uh, there does need to be some work around, uh, exec--some of the pieces that were just mentioned, uh, by you Vice Mayor, in terms of what are the, uh, job outlooks, uh, what, uh, is the feasibility of being able to, uh--uh, implement a program, uh, at the current site.

Um, I'll use as--as one example because I know there has been some interest on the part of some--some of our--our students who have asked about, um, programs that, uh--uh, focus in on, um, uh, veterinary, uh, work and in most cases of schools that have that as an opportunity, there is also, uh, an environment where the--the institution is able to have animals on site.

And so that may not necessarily be something that we are able to do, um, although there is an interest. So, there are--are definitely, uh, several pieces to this in terms of preparation to be able to have the evaluation.

But that is in process and we would expect, um, during the first part of the new school year to be able to have that, um, uh, proposal, uh, out and available so that the, uh, um, the evaluation would be able to start, uh, perhaps, uh, late fall, um, perhaps in the late fall area. I would say that.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Thank you, Dr. Turk.  
Vice Mayor?

**VICE MAYOR ALANNA M. MALLON:** So, starting in the late fall, Dr. Turk. And then how long do you think that-- I know it's hard to say without an RFP in a, um, scope, but like six months, a year, four months?

**DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT DR. CAROLYN L. TURK:** And you are correct. I mean, it is somewhat difficult to say and I would not want to make a--a commitment on the floor that is then outside of what is actually put together. Um, what I can, uh, use as a measurement, however, is that when we have participated in reviews, um, uh, with, uh, the



Department of--of Education, they are typ--they typically run a few months. And so I would suspect that, um, with an outside agency as well, that it would still be in that-- that area of a few months.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Vice Mayor.

**VICE MAYOR ALANNA M. MALLON:** Thank you and thank you Dr. Turk, for speaking to that. I mean, I think we have currently an agreement in place where our students can access, um, within a network programs that aren't actually available, uh, onsite at Rista.

It's not heavily used. Um, and just to speak to your veterinary services, uh, conversation before Minuteman was starting a veterinary services, because it is such a--a--a hot topic, um, an area for a lot of students and an, um, environmental sciences, they-- I mean, I really hope that, um, we can--we can enter into an agreement with Minuteman, um, to send our students for programs that don't exist and won't exist, uh, after this study is done at onsite at Rista 'cause I think our kids would really love the opportunity, um, to--to experience that school and the offerings that it--that it--it provides.

I mean, it's really, really, really impressive. Um,

and it runs the gamut and, you know, Rista can't do it all, and it does not seem like the--the program that we use, um, to go outside is--is something that is being utilized, um, in any way, um, that's, um, effective.

So, I just wanna throw that out there. I--I really loved the Minuteman Program. Um, I'm glad that we're doing this work with Rista and--and really taking a look at what we need and what our kids need and what the community needs. So, I'll yield the floor at this time, but thank you, um, again, to the school committee, um, to the Vice Chairs for putting this budget together under such a tremendous strain, um, during a pandemic, brand new members, um, doing it all online.

I know how many meetings you guys have been at, I've been at almost all of them myself. Um, but I really-- I commend you for--for persevering and getting to this place. Thank you, Madam Chair. I yield the floor.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Uh, I believe, but I'm not sure, may I ask, did the Vice Chair wanna weigh in on this? Madam Vice Chair?

**VICE CHAIR MANIKKA L. BOWMAN:** No--no.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** No. Very good. Okay. The

Vice Mayor yields the floor. Uh, I have a few questions in this round and then I'll see if members want to go through again. Just very quickly, I was very pleased to see in the--in the budget detail in the very back of the book.

So, the addendum-- I--I-- The first thing I always-- I look for three things, family, liaisons and around equity and--and inclusion. Those are my--my top--top areas of interest. So, I was very pleased to see that the family liaisons are full-time in the schools.

That's--that's a great thing. I did see a little inequity from school to school, and I wasn't sure if that was because some schools were using their school improvement money or it was because some family liaisons were there longer than others.

I wasn't sure. But what I walked away with was that the--the family liaison says, I mean, the family liaison makes \$46,658. That's the--the average or the starting. I-- I worked for the school department for a very short time, uh, and it was as apparent liaison before we had the--the good sense and knowledge to change the word, uh, parent to family. So, it'd be more inclusive, which--which--which-- which we did in the 1990s. And I was proud to be a part of

that. But when you looked at the 466, and I'm not great at math, so someone can correct me if I'm wrong. It's about \$15 an hour that we're paying our family liaisons. This is what stands out. We have--we've put \$335,254 into this new idea, Equity Inclusion and Belonging. And Dr. Salim, knows anything about me, buzzwords make me crazy.

And--and so I don't know what the belonging means. You don't have to describe it to me now. I--I think if anything I walk away from this finance hearing with is that we do have to have an opportunity, and I know The Mayor's committed to doing it, of having a round table so we can just talk about our shared interests, hear more about what the school committee is doing, and maybe get a better idea of what Equity Inclusion and Belonging really mean.

But that being said, the family liaisons that are in schools now, first full-time for however long that took making about \$15 an hour. And for those of us that spend time working on issues of pay equity, know that a living wage is closer to \$25 an hour and not \$15 an hour.

So, where I'm very happy to see, well, I'm not gonna say I'm happy to see about the Equity Inclusion and Belonging 'cause I don't--I don't understand it. I read it.

Um, I don't get it--I don't get how it applies. And I do understand though, I'm not a policy maker on the school committee, and the school committee decides that this is something that they think is important. I'll wait to see what the outcome is.

But I am troubled about the fact that I believe that we grossly underpay our family liaisons or I should say you grossly underpay your family liaisons who are, well, and again, mostly women that we're paying, it looks to be between 15 and \$17 an--an hour. And I hope at some point, the school committee will have a conversation about their value, the work that they do, and also think about bringing their--their rate of pay up higher.

That's number one. Number two, I also looked at the extension program. I know that's a small cohort of--of students, but I also know that this a cohort of students that have a great number of needs. So, I'm curious why we don't have a family liaison even part-time. I suspect you're gonna say that Greta Haden is doing it, but Greta Haden who does an extraordinary job is at the high school, and there's--that's a huge population.

So, I would like to hear the, uh, two youth of the

superintendent, what the thinking is that there's not a family liaison at the extension program. And then--then lastly, before I just get let go of this item around equity and inclusion, so we have the--the Inclusion-- Equity Inclusion and Belonging, 335,254. We have building equity bridges, which I know that's a grant that's going away, which is 65,000. And it's just not clear how I cannot connect the money to the work and the work to an outcome.

And it may not be something that we can answer tonight. So, this is more saying to my colleagues on the school committee, I look forward to an opportunity, particularly around issues of race, class, equity and diversity, to have a real conversation around where we are going as a city. And then also get a better sense of having the discussion about what--what the intent beyond what's in the book on this Equity, Inclusion and Belonging. And then lastly, to that is I do see Rayen DeJesus, I was not able to find him in the book, but I'm hoping that in all of this race work, that the work that he's doing around recruitment and tenement--retention is held harmless and doesn't get diminished because I think he's extraordinary.

I think he does extraordinary work. I'm very sad to

see that Barbara Allen is going because what an awesome team of individuals really trying to deliver the goods and services to our scholars and their families and the district.

So, my question after that long preamble is, um, what's the thinking around the low pay of the family liaisons? Why isn't there one at the High School Extension Program, Mr. Superintendent or Dr. Turk?

**SUPERINTENDENT DR. KENNETH SALIM:** Uh, yes, thank you. Um, Madam Chair. So, um, as you've seen as part of the budget, we expanded the number of hours for upper school liaisons to--to match the, um, uh, elementary liaisons, which actually is a, um, a 30 hour work week and so, uh, the hourly rate is actually closer to 40 per hour. Um, uh, when you--when you do that, we are governed by, um, uh, the actual collective bargaining agreements, um, that we have, um, uh, you know, with the--with the liaison, um, unit, um, that--that does, uh, determine, um, what those, um--

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** So, you're saying the liaisons are getting \$40 an hour?

**SUPERINTENDENT DR. KENNETH SALIM:** I believe that's if you're--if the year schedule's about 188, um, days and the

work week is 30, um, hours per week, um, then yes, on average. I think there--there's still steps, um, that exist in the contract.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** You get the more hours served because it comes out--if it's coming out to \$46,000, to me it's still underpayment. I'm not gonna belabor that issue, but I think you get my point.

**SUPERINTENDENT DR. KENNETH SALIM:** Um, so, there is-- there is a, um, a range. Yes. Um, but, um, uh, I--I hear you talking about sort of the overall, um, uh, piece there. In terms of the high school extension, um, so it is, um, uh, as you know, a program, um, that for the number of students has, uh, a--a higher proportion of staff. And so, um, there are a number of staff members that serve that kind of family outreach role, um, including, um, uh, the clerk actually, uh--uh, Goodwin that actually, um, joins the family liaison group, um, or when they have their-- their regular meetings. So, that, um, high school extension program clerk as well as the councillor, um, at High School Extension Program, um, do, um, uh, do you engage in that work? Um, and I will, um, ask Dr. Turk to--to speak a little bit more about the types of things, um, that these



roles, um, do as part of family engagement at High School Extension.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Dr. Turk?

**DEPUTY SUPERINTENDENT DR. CAROLYN L. TURK:** Yes, thank you. Uh, yes as--as, uh, Dr. Salim just mentioned, there are several, uh, educator roles and non-educator roles in the Extension program, uh, that serve in a capacity that one would, um, look at as similar to a family liaison. And that is by design. That is something that the staff has worked on together and in fact, the model that they are-- are using now that they have sort of moved to within the last, uh, year under the new leadership is one where, uh, each student is, uh, almost assigned to an individual, uh, to an educator, so that there is a, um, uh, an ongoing, uh, connection.

And in that way it is, uh, it could be looked at almost as each student having their own, uh, family liaison or family person or person who will connect with them and their families. Uh, so they really do operate in a different kind of way, uh, which, uh, has a very family feel to it, which sometimes those students enjoy, and other times not so much but it is effective. And as a result of

it, they have been able to make some dramatic increases in terms of, uh, student--student and family participation, uh, in the program.

I will just say one last thing, as an example. Uh, when the current principal, uh, first began, uh, two years ago, and, um, had his first, um, uh, family evening, there was one family that attended, uh, the event, uh, if you were to go to any event, uh, at this point, uh, right up until before COVID, there are anywhere from 15 to 20 families who routinely attend, uh, events with their students. And that is both for academic and non-academic purposes.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Thank you, Dr. Turk. That's hopeful to know, but it's--it's--it--it's not apparent in the budget, so it's hard to--to figure out. Uh, but I--I--I appreciate your answer. Again, I would say--say, uh, to you, Dr. Salim and to my colleagues on the school committee. Again, my concern is that we pay the liaison to equal--equal pay for equal work.

And I'm--I'm willing to certainly have maybe one of our round tables more of a discussion to see if that-- To make sure that is happening. And then--then lastly, uh, Dr.

Salim, you spoke to, um, in your earlier presentation, you talked about the, uh, the achievement and--and, um, access gap, and you presented as some numbers. But when I reviewed the numbers and I looked at 3rd grade reading levels, looking at '17, '18, and '19, in 2017, all children were 54% African-Americans, 37, 2018 all children, 61% African-Americans 40%, 2019 all children, all students, 68% African Americans, 44%.

And that was in 3rd grade reading. And it, I was on the school committee when we made third grade reading a benchmark, because we understood that if students weren't on grade level by third grade, that they would probably never catch up. I go further on to look at eighth grade math and grade--and eighth grade math is a huge, uh, determinant of how successful a student's going to be particularly in high school.

And then 2017, all students, 43% African-American 10%, 2018 all students 53% African Americans 30%, 2019 all students, 58% or 55% African Americans, 29%, as my colleague earlier said, Ms. Nolan, we're spending close to 30,000 per student. And that's--that' s an--an incredible figure. Now, I know you don't have 2020 figures. I know,

because of COVID and--and inability to use the usual assessments that you use to educate where students are. Um, you don't have that, and I'm--I'm not gonna judge you on that, but I have to tell you, I'm in the same place I was, um, less budget processing. It's hard to explain to John and Jane citizens strictly those that don't have children, and look at these numbers to see how we are underperforming in this crucial area.

And here in this time, where the black community is clearly under assault, our students ability to be successful in navigate through some of these harsh times is their ability to perform, interact, and be successful in the world. And they don't need the impediment of under education. And so I just raised that because it concerned me, and I--I--I have to ask myself, "Why is this--why is this not happening?" And--and I look at this in the context of the budget.

So, is there a lack of accountability or low expectations or both? It's like we go take our students on a trip where we only bring 29% of them back or 30% of them back. There--there's some--there's no--there's no reason that I can really understand. I mean, one thing about

Cambridge is it has a lot of money, you know? And so we have an embarrassment of riches in how we cannot educate do better. Yeah. So, all the kids are going up, but the--but the gap is not closing. I'm just very disappointed and I take responsibility and that's why I hold myself accountable, and I hold all others that are in this work as well, intended as we may be that we have to work harder for better outcomes.

And so when I see something about Equity, Inclusion and Belonging, I feel like-- So, we--we-- This is another fad that we're buying. Uh, and I still haven't seen why what we were doing prior hadn't been more successful. So, I--I just raised that it probably doesn't warrant an answer. I think it--it--it is something that's gonna take more discussion, but in the context of the budget, it's hard to look at \$30,000 per pupil.

And I know it's the average per pupil cost. And those kind of outcomes. I, uh, to my colleagues, we could now do a second round. And in that regard, I would just using the same order. Now, if someone does not wanna speak, they can yield. Councillor McGovern, is there a follow up question that you'd like to raise?

**COUNCILLOR MARC C. MCGOVERN:** Uh, yes. Thank you. Um, I'm wondering if you can, uh, an issue that came up a lot, um, last term was around the language based, uh, learning disabilities. And I know that the state was, um, was coming out with some--some mandates that hadn't come out, and we were waiting.

And, you know, so if you could-- I know we're--we have in the budget more money for the Landmark Program. Can you talk a little bit about what we're doing, uh, in--in terms of early assessment, uh, early identification, uh, and what that funding for Landmark is--is--is gonna do not just for those students who are in the, um, self separate, uh, classrooms, but also for kids who, uh, you know, may not have gotten to that point, but are still struggling with language-based learning disabilities.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Dr. Salim.

**SUPERINTENDENT DR. KENNETH SALIM:** Thank you, Madam Chair through you. Um, I'm going to ask, um, Dr. Alexis Morgan, our assistant superintendent for student services, um, to speak on the Landmark piece with regard to assessments so that we've had a, um, uh, team that's been actually reviewing our, uh, different, uh, screeners and

assessment tools and, uh, looking to make those types of, um, adjustments to be able to align more with early, uh, literacy screening, um--um, with, um, uh, experts in, um, uh, dyslexia research, um, uh, that, uh, have been part of the work.

So, that's not something that is, excuse me, part of the sort of, um, you know, specific initiative area around the budget. Uh, but it is a practice that we are, um, adjusting for.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Dr. Alexis Morgan, you have the floor

**DR. ALEXIS MORGAN:** Yes. Can you everybody hear me? Can--

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Yes, we hear you. Thank you.

**DR. ALEXIS MORGAN:** Yes. So, our work with Landmark actually started last spring. We've been working, um, with Ann Larson, uh, supporting our two schools, starting off with Graham and Parks and Vassal Lane Upper School. And Larson has been meeting with both the special educators in the sub-separate and those general education, um, teachers who are their partners.

We've been doing monthly trainings. We're reviewing all of the IEPs, um, making sure that we target, um, our interventions and support based upon the profile of the student. We are also revamping, um, we are also looking at how we are supporting our students who have more intensive needs versus students who have more, um, or who have more of a moderate based language-based learning disability. We're expanding that next year, uh, continuing the work at the upper schools and our goal for year three is to really develop and expand our program at the high school level.

We are working not only with our school psychologists in this, but also with the building-based principles so that we can ensure continuity for students as they, um, as they go across the grade levels, as they move, um, to different subject areas to ensure that those accommodations and those supports are targeted towards the students. We've noticed that there has been some discontinuity. There has been, um, in the past we've noticed that maybe best practices weren't always elevated.

And so, we're making sure that, that's something that all of our students receive regardless of where they are in this system. We're looking at to make sure that, uh, with



Dr. Michelle Madera with the screenings, we're also looking to make sure that we identify our students earlier. We've heard from a number of students that there was a delay in the identification process. We've heard from our families, uh, over and over again, uh, we are also working, um, excuse me, to, um, looking at our assessments and making sure that our--our school psychologists, uh, who are, uh--uh, superiorly, um, trained and--and very knowledgeable, but also that they are able to, uh, really understand the nuances of our students, um, abilities as well as, um, areas of growth.

And so we've been working with Dr. Larson, um, Ms. Larson, every single month in all areas to--to really support not only our students but our staff and families as well.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Thank you, Dr. Morgan.  
Councillor--

**COUNCILLOR MARC C. MCGOVERN:** Thank you. Oh, thank you. And I'm just--just a quick follow up, um, just-- I know that last year we had, uh, talked about and I think it may have started a little bit that there was this task force that was working with some of the parents, um, who've

been talking about this for a while. Is that--is that still happening? Did it-- Because of everything, did it kind of get--get put aside or where are we with--with that?

**DR. ALEXIS MORGAN:** No. We still, we, um, the--the task, the--the committee, the group working group was, um, developed and it was led by, um, Ms. Mercedes Soto. We worked in collaboration with Ms. Soto.

We've, um, of course with the pandemic that kind of interrupted some things, but we led a district-wide for parents, um, uh, session--training session. We brought in, uh, guest speakers. We, uh, did Dyslexia Awareness Month for all of our schools. Uh, we brought different materials, children books, developed lesson plans and dispersed them to all of our elementary schools to really bring more awareness about, uh, within our school community. Mercedes Soto, along with, uh, Lisa Downing, uh, they worked with the city in order to light up, um, call, you were being there, light up the city.

Uh, there was different, um, endeavor, uh, there were different efforts made on that part. And we are--we'll be reconvening again, um, of course the--the pandemic sort of disrupted some of our--our monthly meetings. But we'll be

meeting again, uh, starting in the summer to continue to expand and increase our vision.

And so miss, uh, the--the committee, uh, and it was not just for our students with dyslexia, it was for our students with reading difficulties 'cause we wanted to really, um, they really wanted to expand that and not limit, uh, families who had a concern about their, uh, for their child. But our-- The goal with the--the com, um, working with the committee, we, um, provided more clarity and understanding about the current assessments we use in the district. So, we had our folks from, um, research and assessment and our literacy coordinators provide more training for our families.

Uh, we worked with, um, some of the leading, um, some of the leading, uh, doctors in this area--research experts in this area around dyslexia screeners to provide our overview for our families, for the committee and for the staff.

We worked in tandem to, uh, do the report and, uh, with the district, uh, with, uh, and Dr. Michelle Madera, we're working with MIT in order to bring additional training, uh, for our, uh, for our teachers, for our

paraprofessionals and for our special educators in August.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Thank you, Dr. Morgan.  
Councillor McGovern.

**COUNCILLOR MARC C. MCGOVERN:** Yeah, I will. Um, you know, there's a lot, obviously, as you said Madam Chair, there's, uh, there's a lot to talk about. Um, but it's late and I will stop there. Thank you.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Thank you, councillor.  
Councillor Zondervan.

**COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN:** Thank you, Ma'am Chair. Um, I have a question about the transportation expenses. Um, it looks like we're spending an additional million dollars in FY21 total of 11.5 million with about a 15% increase. Can--can you help us understand why we need to spend so much money on--on student transportation?

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Dr. Salim?

**SUPERINTENDENT DR. KENNETH SALIM:** Yes. I'm gonna have our Chief Operating Officer, uh, Jim Malony to speak to that.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Mr. Maloney, you have the floor.

**CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER JAMES P. MALONEY:** Thank you,

Madam Chair. So our, um, we went back out to bid this year, um, and those prices reflect, um, the bid prices. We do have as a district, a--a, um, a, uh, policy that--that allows, uh, all children, um--um, who live more than, um, one mile, uh, away from this school and ages K to five to, um, qualify for transportation. For the upper school students, it's a mile and a half. Um, we have a citywide assignment policy as opposed to most districts, uh, in the greater Boston area. Many of the districts in the greater Boston and around the country that have, uh, neighborhood or schools, um--um, those all add to our costs.

Um, we--we also, quite frankly, expect that those that may be higher, um, as, uh--uh, Dr. Salim pointed out in his earlier comments, um, uh, social distancing on buses, if that's where we end up in the fall, is going to have, uh, an enormous impact on the number of buses that we will need. Um, so that is sort of a summary of why we're spending that kind of money.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Dr. Salim, do you wanna add anything? Otherwise, I'll go back to councillor Zondervan.

**SUPERINTENDENT DR. KENNETH SALIM:** Uh, no, I think,

uh, Mr. Malony captured it.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Councillor Zondervan.

**COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN:** Thank you, Ma'am Chair. I guess, you know, based on some of the comments, councillor Toomey made earlier, it--it is disconcerting that we're on the one hand not achieving the kind of desegregation that we would like to see in our schools. And on the other hand, spending so much money on--on busing.

And then on the third hand, if we have three hands, um, not--not meeting our--our achievement goals, uh, in the district. So, it--it just seems like there must be a better way to put these resources to work so that we can achieve the--the results we're looking for.

Um, again, I--I don't expect a different answer, so I appreciate that explanation and I--I will yield the floor. Thank you.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Did you want an answer from Dr. Salim?

**COUNCILLOR QUINTON Y. ZONDERVAN:** Uh, no thank you. I yield the floor.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Councillor Zondervan yields the floor. Councillor Nolan.

**COUNCILLOR PATRICIA M. NOLAN:** Thank you. This'll be a kind of short, um, question 'cause I-- It was the third question I had and it is in the context of a budget because the entire reason we're doing the budget is to provide a quality education. And I was disappointed that there was no mention in the budget of addressing the ongoing need to follow our own policies and provide support for schools that are struggling.

'Cause I know the-- I was on it, the school committee even before me and during me past several orders saying what we really need to do is bring programmatic change to schools that are struggling to achieve the goals. So, any school that has struggled in achievement, we're not doing well for those students.

We know, if your accountability percentile is in the bottom 20% of the state for years in a row, let's do what we know works. Cambridge's own data shows clearly Montessori, when we brought that into the Tobin, it shifted to being literally off the charts now in the 95th percentile for every subgroup across the ones that we're-- we're marking in terms of achievement in English and in math. The wraparound model at the Fletcher Maynard gives it

a solid performance, bilingual immersion at the King School has turned around and is now one among the highest performing in the district after the Chinese Immersion.

And the Chinese Neha was brought in an amigos has always provided an off the charts experience for Hispanic, um, and Latino students. So, what I hope we do with our-- with these budgets, again, I'm really focused on disruptive change. Stop accepting that schools that are at the lowest in the state for achievement do not need programmatic change. And I'm not sure there's an answer to this, I expect it to see that in the budget, but I recognize COVID may have taken it over, but let's not ever lose focus.

It all has to be about every single one of our students be high achieving. And I guess that's a time to say, now I'm so totally torn about this budget. It is so underwhelming because of this. It is exactly the same not addressing these key, key issues and--and--and I'm tired of it. And I also wanna support the new school committee. I want that leadership to get the message that I will be there for you. That I will do everything I can to remind us all of the promises that if we really mean equity, we literally have to say every single one of our schools, our



schools that are performing well. And right now they're not.

And I--I just can't emphasize enough that--that the answer usually is, well, we're working on it. Well, so much of it is what has been done in the past and we really need disruptive change. And I appreciate, um, I served with, uh, Chair Simmons when she was Mayor and she really pushed us to--to say the same thing.

So, I--I--I have decided I--I can vote for it only if for this year to give one year and if--but if there's not massive change and certainly outcome measures that are across the board, 100% proficient for every kid, I can never vote for that again. And I really encourage us to take the hard look, be disruptive, follow our own policies, and have a budget that says and--and actually puts money behind it for proven programs that work. I share some of the, um, the chair's concerns that flavor of the day. You know, we've been there before and there's many programs out there that are working with districts with half of our budget that, um, we need to learn from them instead of--instead of not acting with--with the urgency that--that we deserve and our kids deserve.

That's a question other than-- 'Cause, you know, I was disappointed to see it in the budget of the programmatic change, I think it has to come for us to make sure we provide him with every single student a high quality education. So, I hope to see it in a future budget.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Councillor Nolan yields the floor. The--the rest of the, uh, lineup is as follows. Uh, councillor Toomey, now he yields, councillor Carlone, councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler, our Vice Mayor, uh, may or may have some remarks. So this, now we go to councillor Toomey, you have the floor.

**COUNCILLOR TIMOTHY J. TOOMEY JR.:** Thank you. Uh, Madam Mayor, I just wanna go back to the student assignment process again. Uh, you, the Superintendent. So, definitely race is not used as a factor at all in the student assignment, is that what you said?

**SUPERINTENDENT DR. KENNETH SALIM:** Yes. And--and so that's actually federal law that, uh, we are unable to use race. And so like many communities that try to have some type of, um, uh, desegregation, uh, voluntary program, uh, we do use, uh, you know, a socioeconomic status as that, um, as that measure.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Councillor Toomey.

**COUNCILLOR TIMOTHY J. TOOMEY JR.:** I know that student assignment process is very, very difficult for--for parents to absorb. I believe it was former school community woman, Nancy Wal actually wrote a book on how to--on the student assignment process. But can someone give a just a quick brief, um, how the student assignment process works and does it meet that at the end of the-- Once those students are assigned, does all those schools meet that policy that we--that you have in effect? And just looking at, as I said, looking at the numbers, clearly to me it doesn't have one school can end up 61% white and, um, 86% non-white.

So, if someone give a, you know, a quick, and maybe you can put it in writing how the student assignment process works and whether we are adhering to the socio-- even the socioeconomic briefly looking at that, I don't think a lot of the schools are meeting that either.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** So--so councillor Toomey, I would almost encourage you to ask for this in writing. This is--it's not quite a budget question. I understand your concern about, um, why we do what the controlled choice program--the controlled choice program,

which could be an evening unto itself.

Um, when you look at it, if you take it back to your earlier question, which was the context is how does that affect the budget when you have this inequity, I would offer to our Superintendent to then answer the question to say, how does the program work in the context of there's some schools that seem to be racially out of balance and how does that impact the budget which, would be appropriate for this context, but to follow up on what you wanna know, which is how does this program work and why are there such inequities by, um, by race is certainly a valid one. Dr. Salim, do you wanna make an attempt to talk about-- No, you, alright.

**VICE CHAIR MANIKKA L. BOWMAN:** Madam Chair, Vice Chair Bowman. Yeah, I wouldn't mind, um, tackling this. I'll try to be as really brief as possible and I--I wanna answer it from the perspective of a parent that just recently went through the process of identifying, um, a school for my child.

Um, this is a very layered question and there was recently an article that came out, um, through, um, the-- the Harvard Education, um, School. It was research about

how people choose schools to send their children to. And so a lot of times, um, particularly in these progressive communities, the article pointed too, that some of the challenges with school choice is that when people are of privilege and, um, of a certain race, they tend to choose schools that make sense, that--that--that kind of aligns with--with their socioeconomic and racial status.

And the same thing could be true, um, as it relates to cohorts of color. And I think that's some of the pieces that we're trying to get at and a lot, and you layer that with, um, the--the dynamic of people want to go to school, pick a school that's close to their home in their community, and all of those things kind of play out in the school choice program. Then, you layer in some of these programs that Ms., Um, I'm sorry, that councillor Nolan was talking about.

Um, if you are, um, of a, um, background where you, English is not your first language or you speak English, but you don't speak the language of the school that you want to put your child in, those are barriers for those parents choosing those schools that have higher academic outcomes. And that in and of itself is an inequity. So, it

becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy around who selects certain schools based on, um, their identity based on location and based on the preferences that they want for their school. Um, I'll be intentional about sending that article out to everyone here today, but some of this stuff really goes a deep, um, a bit deeper as it relates to how parents make decisions around the places that they want to send their children to.

A lot of times that falls onto black families to go to those schools where there are predominantly, um, white families, but the reverse isn't there a lot. Um, you don't see tons of white families trying to go to the Fletcher Maynard and they have great programming. A principal Harris, who's gonna be a district leader, um, soon is a phenomenal principal.

Um, and she really meets the needs of her--her--her--her--her students, um, but that still does not encourage certain cohorts and demographics of people within the city, particularly white families to go to that school. So, it's a very layered question and I think that, um, councillor Simmons is right that we should have a round table on it because it gets to all of these issues that we are dealing

with in the public square right now when it comes to the intersection of race and systemic racism, that's, um, been a part of all of our institutions for a very long time that is systematically set up to undermine particularly kids of color and some of that is by the decisions that we make as a community.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** I certainly agree with this, and this was the difficulty of the finance, um, committee or this meeting. It is a finance and reason why I'm sort of trying to keep the hard line here, it is the finance committee and we're, uh, inclined to sort of go outside of the lines and it's because we want to hear this information and know the impact.

And they may not always be budget related to go--but to go back to councillor Toomey's question, it's--is when you see the schools on paper, you-- And when you go to the graduations, which is even more telling, you see this disparity and there's those of us that work so hard to hold up, lift up and hold onto controlled choice. But you also see that in the budget where it looks as, if I think this is councillor Toomey's point to bring it back, excuse me, into the budget context, is that there--there are schools

that then become resource rich, um, and--and also look like they have more on paper and maybe they do because of the parent body there.

So, it's a longer conversation, uh, Madam Vice Chair and I know you get that. And, um, I do appreciate councillor Toomey's question. And it's just is two things. One, it's something that we all need to look at as a--as a group and have a conversation. And again, I know the, uh, Mayor's been looking to--to find dates and times and juggle COVID 19 and all its nuances and the same time. But it would be very important for us to have that conversation and--and figure out if there's something 'cause we're all responsible.

You know, I always say there's only one child and that child's called all children and they belong to all of us. So, how do we as a body work to see if we can get that-- that what looks like what is and looks like inequity, more equitable councillor Toomey.

**COUNCILLOR TIMOTHY J. TOOMEY JR.:** Thank you, um, uh, Madam Co-Chair and, uh, the Vice Chair, uh, Bowman for their comments. And I do believe you're correct that this is a--a larger discussion that should take place and



hopefully in the round table, uh, on--on this issue. And so I look forward to that. And as an aside, it's my understanding that the principal Fletcher Maynard Academy, Robin Harris is retiring this year. And I just wanna thank her for her many years of dedicated and long service to the campus public school students.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** So, councillor Toomey, she's retiring from the--the school, but she's going into the administration. She's going into the administration. She's going to be the equity bridges and belonging person, I think. Don't hold me to that. Uh, thank you for your question councillor Toomey. Councillor Toomey is yielding the floor to you councillor Carlone.

**COUNCILLOR DENNIS J. CARLONE:** Thank you, Madam Mayor. I have no more questions related to the budget. I yield.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Thank you councillor. Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler, you have the floor.

**COUNCILLOR JIVAN SOBRINHO-WHEELER:** I have no, uh, further questions and yield back. Thank you.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Thank you, councillor. Vice Mayor Mallon, you have the floor.

**VICE MAYOR ALANNA M. MALLON:** I have no further

questions, Madam Co-Chair. Thank you. I yield.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Thank you, Madam Vice Mayor. Madam Mayor, is there something that you would like to say before we call for a vote?

**MAYOR SUMBUL SIDDIQUI:** Um, I just wanna thank my colleagues on the City Council for their questions. Um, you know, I--I think a lot of people have raised really, um, key points that I think that this committee has--has, you know, had a challenge with, right? It is about looking at, um, the data and the outcomes. And I think we have, uh, to look to the future and in the midst of what COVID is doing. And I'm certainly committed, uh, as I know some, many of the committee members are of figuring out, um, you know, even in this process who we're not engaging and who can't be engaged.

Those are the same--same people who, um, were reflected as scholars were reflected in our outcomes. So, I--I think I understand that first, uh, frustration. I feel it. Um, and you know, I--I--I really, uh, but wanna say that we--we do have our work cut out for us, um, and it's gonna take new ideas, new people, um, and in--in our system, uh, and, you know, structural change, right? I

wanted to read you something really briefly.

Uh, Education Week article noted, um, that more people are likely to pass the bar exam than an elementary teacher licensing exam with more than half of all aspiring elementary teachers failing the exam the first time. And only 38% of black candidates and 57% of Latinx candidates ever passing the most common teacher licensing tests compared to 75% of white candidates. And this year, the committee went to Dessie, wrote a letter to saying, "We need alternate assessments. Uh, we need to be thinking not only about this budget, but a lot of the policy, um, that exists that really undermines anything we try to do in this budget." Uh, so it--it's, you know, a lot of work, um, is ahead.

Uh, and, you know, we--we--we really, we--we have to hold ourselves accountable, uh, and, you know, I'm committed to doing it and the committee members are, um, and there's a lot we will need, um, support and--and help on, and some things that we won't--aren't gonna get right and haven't been getting right. Uh, and I think we'll even have to see during this process, we'll need to go to the City Manager.

Um, and if that is because of work that's related to anti-racism, if it's work related to obviously COVID, uh, I'm, you know, committed to working together with the City Manager and--and getting what--what we need. So, just thanks again to all my councillors, um, for--for raising really good, important questions.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Thank--thank you, Madam Mayor, uh, Vice Chair Bowman and Co-Chair Fantini, any last remarks before we, um, take, uh, our final vote? I believe our Co-Chair Fantini is going to close us out, so Co-Chair Fantini, before we call for the vote, I will have you take the floor.

**ALFRED B. FANTINI:** Well, tha--thank you Madam Mayor. Actually, I, um, I--I think I--I'll just keep it really short 'cause we've had a long night. I just want to thank--thank the City Council for, uh, the questions that they've asked and for the reasonable and responsible challenges that they put before us that I can assure you that in future meetings with you, we'll--we'll, uh, I think convince you that we're making progress on all of the challenges that you put for us and we have more time to talk.

And I--and I think it's important that we also recognize that there's wraparound services that all our children need and we need to engage the City Council in those discussions as well. So, I--I'd just like to close and say, you know, we--we got a unanimous vote for the budget with the school committee. There were five new members. Um, I think through the process, we've learned to grow and respect each other and to pass a budget that--that, uh, we think starts to move us in the right direction. And so, um, I think the momentum of five new members has put us in a different and better place. And I hope that same momentum, uh, tonight, uh, delivers a, um, majority vote for us to continue that work. Thank you.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Uh, and thank you Co-Chair Fantini for your remarks and also for your service. To my colleagues on the school committee, Mr. R Weinstein. Ms. Weinstein, Mr. Rojas, Ms. Wilson, I think I got everyone I hope. I wanna thank you for your petition--participation this evening.

You're gonna say, "Well, we really didn't participate." And the--the unusual part of the--of the, uh, budget hearing is we don't necessarily hear from the school

committee members, but by their representatives, which are the co-chairs. But I do look forward to having an opportunity to sit down, look in your faces somehow and have a robust discussion around some of the issues that came up, like the equity and inclusion, controlled choice, buildings and grounds.

And I--I've--I did tune in to you off a few of your meetings and I know that you work very, very hard and I thank you for that work. So again, I will thank you for your participation this evening and I look forward to working for you in the future. So, the Chair would like to entertain a vote to send the school department budget to the City Council with a favorable recommendation. Is there a motion?

**COUNCILLOR TIMOTHY J. TOOMEY JR.:** Motion moved.

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** On a motion by councillor Toomey to move it forward. Mr. Clark, would you please call the roll.

**City Clerk Antony Wilson Called the roll:**

Councillor Dennis J. Carlone- Yes.

Vice Mayor Alanna M. Mallon - Yes

Councillor Marc C. McGovern - Yes.

Councillor Patricia M. Nolan - Yes.

Councillor E. Denis Simmons - Yes.

Councillor Jivan Sobrinho-Wheeler - Yes.

Councillor Timothy J. Toomey Jr. - Yes.

Councillor Quinton Y. Zondervan - Yes.

Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui - Yes

**All present**

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** Thank you Mr. Clerk.

I'll entertain a motion to adjourn on a motion by Co-Chair Carlone to adjourn the Finance Committee's meeting. Mr. Clerk, please call the roll.

**CLERK ANTONY WILSON:** On a motion to adjourn.

Councillor Dennis J. Carlone- Yes.

Vice Mayor Alanna M. Mallon - Yes

Councillor Marc C. McGovern - Yes.

Councillor Patricia M. Nolan - Yes.

Councillor E. Denis Simmons - Yes.

Councillor Jivan Sobrinho-Wheeler - Yes.

Councillor Timothy J. Toomey Jr. - Yes.

Councillor Quinton Y. Zondervan - Yes.

Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui - Yes

**Yes-6, No-0. Motion Passed.**

**COUNCILLOR E. DENIS SIMMONS:** The Finance Committee meeting is adjourned. Thank you.

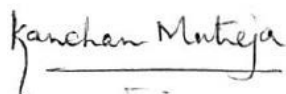
**The Cambridge City Council Finance Committee adjourned at approximately 9:11 pm.**



C E R T I F I C A T E

I, **Kanchan Mutreja**, a transcriber for Datagain, do hereby certify: That said proceedings were listened to and transcribed by me and were prepared using standard electronic transcription equipment under my direction and supervision; and I hereby certify that the foregoing transcript of the proceedings is a full, true, and accurate transcript to the best of my ability.

In witness whereof, I have hereunto subscribed my name this 6th day of February 2023.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kanchan Mutreja". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Signature of Transcriber