

School Committee - Regular Meeting

December 16, 2025 at 6:00 p.m.

Held in and broadcast from the Dr. Henrietta S. Attles Meeting Room, Cambridge Rindge, and Latin School, 459 Broadway, Cambridge for the purpose of discussing the agenda items listed below.

Individuals may sign up in advance to provide public comment for the December 16 Regular Meeting: The sign-up window is Friday, December 12 through Tuesday, December 16 at 12:00 PM (by phone) and 5:30 PM (online).

To register for public comment during the sign-up times:

- Visit the School Committee online portal: https://secure1.cpsd.us/school_committee.
- Or contact the School Committee office at 617.349.6620.

Regular Meetings will be live-streamed at www.cpsd.us and broadcast on Cambridge Educational Access TV (CEATV) Channel 26, as usual. The meeting can also be viewed on Zoom at <https://zoom.us/j/96081106637>. This meeting will be video and audio recorded which may include third party devices.

AGENDA

1. Public Comment

2. Student School Committee Report:

3. Presentation of Records for Approval:

- December 2, 2025, Special Meeting
- December 2, 2025, Regular Meeting

4. Reconsiderations: None

5. Unfinished Business/Calendar: None

6. Awaiting Reports: None

7a. Superintendent's Update:

The Superintendent will provide an update on pending matters and highlight various initiatives. The report will include a follow up overview of the school committee's pending consideration of the high school competency determination policy as well as the administration's analysis of the efforts to improve on-time performance for district-funded transportation and the implications for the elementary and upper school start time system

7b. Presentation:

The Superintendent and members of the administration will take any questions from members of the school committee on the items posted on the agenda including the aforementioned policy considerations.

7c. District Plan None

7d. Consent Agenda

#25-302 Recommendation: Approval of Cambridge Public Schools Competency Determination Policy (Second Reading)

#25-303 Recommendation: Approval of Revisions to the High School Graduation Requirements Policy (Second Reading)

- #25-304 Recommendation: Day & Residential Program Services not Available from the Cambridge School Department
- #25-305 Recommendation: Contract Award: Star Dance School LLC: Dance Program
- #25-306 Recommendation: Grant Award: FY26 Municipal ADA Improvement Grant (SC26871)

8. Non-Consent Agenda:

9. School Committee Agenda (Policy Matters/Notifications/Requests for Information):

- #25-307 **School Climate Subcommittee Report – November 6, 2025**
- #25-308 **Buildings and Grounds Subcommittee Report – November 20, 2025**

#25-309 On Time Bus Arrivals and Start Time Adjustments for School 2026-2027 – Member Hudson & Member Rojas

WHEREAS: All students have the right to arrive to school via district-funded transportation on time with sufficient time to prepare for the instructional day; and

WHEREAS: The Cambridge Public Schools have struggled for years to consistently and reliably deliver all students to school in a timely manner via school district-funded transportation; and

WHEREAS: The Superintendent has provided data suggesting that the current three-tiered system of start and end times across CPS schools implemented in 1993 and revised in 2024 represents a significant impediment to ensuring all students traveling via district-funded transportation arrive on time (because some buses that serve multiple schools back to back don't have sufficient time in between those start times to begin the second route on time); and

WHEREAS: The Superintendent has provided evidence that a modification to a two-tiered start and end time system would significantly improve the prospects of on-time arrivals for all students via district-funded transportation (by allowing more time between routes); now therefore be it

RESOLVED: That the Superintendent is directed to determine start and end times of all CPS schools for the 2026 - 2027 school year no later than January 20, 2026; and be it further

RESOLVED: That any changes to the start and end times for CPS schools in 2026 - 2027 school year shall not exceed a 15 minute difference than the current start and end times for any respective school; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the Superintendent will present publicly by no later than February 3, 2026 a full schedule of caregiver and labor engagement to ensure any school community affected by such a change is fully informed and any impact of such a change is taken into account prior to implementation.

#25-310 Proposed Changes and Amendments to the School Committee Rules – Mayor Simmons and Vice Chair Hunter

That the School Committee adopt the attached proposed changes and amendments as a working document, to be reviewed and provisionally adopted at the Meeting of Organization, with the understanding that further revisions may be made at a later date.

10. Resolutions (letters of congratulations, letters of condolences):

- #25-311 **Resolution honoring Member Rojas – Member Rachel and Member Weinstein**

WHEREAS: Member José Luis Rojas Villareal has been an active and committed member of the Cambridge community for more than 25 years, formerly served on the Amigos School Council, and is a proud parent of two sons who benefitted from the Cambridge Public Schools; and

WHEREAS: Member Rojas brought to the School Committee his own experience as an immigrant from Mexico and a multilingual student, he has been a steadfast champion for multilingual education and for addressing the needs of English learners, firmly believing that a diverse community enriches learning and strengthens the district overall; and

WHEREAS: Since joining the Cambridge School Committee in 2020, he has drawn on his extensive experience in economic development and community investment finance, including his work as Managing Director at LEAF, a nonprofit supporting cooperatives and small businesses throughout Massachusetts; and WHEREAS: He consistently emphasized the importance of experiential learning as a powerful tool for student engagement, recognizing that meaningful learning also happens beyond the classroom and serves as essential preparation for life after high school; and

WHEREAS: Member Rojas served as Chair of the Buildings and Grounds Subcommittee during the unprecedented challenges of the global COVID-19 pandemic, listening to and partnering closely with community members, and helping draft the district's Health & Safety Manual, which allowed Cambridge to reopen classrooms safely and earlier than most districts; and

WHEREAS: As Co-Chair of the Budget Subcommittee, he helped shift the district's budget discussions toward monitoring, evaluation, and continuous improvement, ensuring that resources were aligned with program effectiveness and evolving student needs; and

WHEREAS: Member Rojas helped bring to the forefront the need for thoughtful integration of artificial intelligence (AI) in the classroom, encouraging the district to examine how emerging technologies can better meet students' needs while ensuring responsible implementation; and

WHEREAS: He worked to strengthen transparency and accountability within School Committee operations, championing the Committee's self-assessment process and advocating for ongoing Massachusetts Association of School Committees training to ensure members remained grounded in current laws and good governance standards; and

WHEREAS: Member Rojas approached his role as a lifelong learner, consistently seeking information, studying best practices from other districts, and participating in local and national conferences to help inform his fellow Committee members and to better serve Cambridge's students; and

WHEREAS: Member Rojas served with deep humility, integrity, and thoughtfulness, never speaking more than necessary, always preparing for meetings, and voting alone when his conscience called him to; and WHEREAS: Member Rojas demonstrated his deep respect for and support of Cambridge Public Schools teachers, administrators, and staff in his collaborative approach to crafting policy and setting priorities to meet the needs of Cambridge students; and

WHEREAS: Member Rojas is known for his ability to bring people together across differing viewpoints, often serving as a trusted "voice of reason," and fostering collaboration in service of the district's shared mission to provide the best possible education for all Cambridge students; now therefore be it

RESOLVED: That the Cambridge School Committee extends its deepest gratitude and appreciation to Member Rojas for his dedicated service, thoughtful leadership, and steadfast commitment to the students and families of Cambridge; and be it further

RESOLVED: That a formal copy of this resolution be prepared by the Executive Secretary to the School Committee and presented to Member José Luis Rojas Villareal with profound gratitude and respect.

#25-312 Resolution honoring Vice Chair Hunter – Member Rojas

WHEREAS: Vice Chair Hunter was born and raised in New Orleans during segregation and as a first-generation

college graduate, she earned her undergraduate degree Xavier University and Master of Education degrees from both Antioch and the Harvard Graduate School of Education; and

WHEREAS: Vice Chair Hunter is a proud parent of her daughter, Lisette Williams, whom she raised in Cambridge, and who benefited from a full CPS education, attending Cambridge Public Schools from kindergarten through graduation at CRLS; and

WHEREAS: Early in her career, demonstrating courageous leadership and advocacy, Vice Chair Hunter worked as a chemist at the Polaroid Corporation and helped organize a worker-led movement that successfully pushed Polaroid to divest from apartheid South Africa; and

WHEREAS: Vice Chair Hunter's leadership and advocacy have earned national and international recognition from distinguished organizations, with honors that include the Dr. Effie Jones Humanitarian Award, the Rosa Parks Memorial Award, and the Amandla Award, among many others; and

WHEREAS: Vice Chair Hunter went on to serve the Cambridge Public Schools in a wide range of roles at Cambridge Rindge & Latin School, including, math teacher, student government advisor, supervisor of the student teaching program and assistant vice principal; and

WHEREAS: Vice Chair Hunter co-authored the Concerned Black Staff Report at CRLS which analyzed racial disparities in achievement at CRLS, helping to launch the district's longstanding practice of publishing disaggregated student achievement data and informing ongoing efforts to close opportunity and achievement gaps; and

WHEREAS: In 1996, Vice Chair Hunter, determined to expand high quality educational opportunities for all of Cambridge's students, co-founded the Benjamin Banneker Charter School, recognized as one of the more successful urban charter elementary schools in Massachusetts; and

WHEREAS: In her role on the School Committee, Ms. Hunter has consistently centered educational equity, focusing on closing academic opportunity gaps, notably in third-grade reading and eighth-grade math. She has been a tireless advocate for Black and Brown scholars and students from historically marginalized communities; and

WHEREAS: Vice Chair Hunter devoted countless hours in partnership with Attorney MacFarlane to successfully negotiate eight union contracts, helping to build a cooperative and respectful labor environment with the district's educators, clerks, family liaisons, custodians, safety specialists, food service staff, and facilities personnel, all of whom she recognized as the lifeblood of a thriving and successful school district; and

WHEREAS: During her tenure, Vice Chair Hunter worked tirelessly in service to the Cambridge Public Schools, regularly visiting schools and classrooms, participating in student story times, supporting student volunteer initiatives, and engaging in community events, demonstrating an unwavering commitment to listening, learning, and uplifting the voices of students, families, and educators; and

WHEREAS: In her role as Vice Chair, she demonstrated steadfast support for the Executive Secretary and the Confidential Secretary, meeting with them regularly to exchange ideas, offer mentorship, and ensure their work was supported; and under her leadership, the School Committee Office digitized hundreds of meeting minutes and policy orders, improving accessibility and significantly enhancing operational efficiency; and

WHEREAS: Vice Chair Hunter approached her responsibilities with integrity, humility, and deep respect for students, families, and colleagues, modeling what it means to serve as both a public official and a community activist whose "service never stops"; now therefore be it

RESOLVED: That the Cambridge School Committee extends its deepest gratitude to Vice Chair Hunter her decades of unwavering leadership and steadfast advocacy for Cambridge's children; and be it further

RESOLVED: That a formal copy of this resolution be prepared by the Executive Secretary to the School Committee and presented to Vice Chair Hunter with profound gratitude and respect.

11. Announcements:

12. Late Orders:

13. Communications and Reports from City Officers:

City Council/School Committee Joint Roundtable, November 10, 2025 Meeting Minutes

School Committee Office Report Out – Vice Chair Hunter