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CAMBRIDGE SCHOOL COMMITTEE
459 BROADWAY
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02138

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November 17, 2026

Proposed amendments to the *Rules of the School Committee 2026-2027*. (First Reading)

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
RULES

OF THE
SCHOOL COMMITTEE

2026-2027

Adopted January 5, 2026
Subject to future amendments and revisions.

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CHAPTER I

Organization

Section 1. **Organization of the School Committee.** The School Committee of the City of Cambridge shall meet on the first Monday of January after each biennial election, at a time to be designated, for the purpose of organization. A Chair and Vice-Chair shall be elected by roll call votes. The School Committee shall adopt rules of procedure to govern its actions.

Section 2. **Regular Meetings.** The regular meetings of the School Committee shall be held on the first and third Tuesday evening at 6:00 o'clock during the months of September through June. During the summer ~~months of July and August~~ one regular meeting of the School Committee shall be scheduled on the first Tuesday of August. No meeting of the School Committee shall go beyond 10:00 o'clock in the evening. Any extension of the meeting beyond 10:00 o'clock in the evening requires a motion and a two-thirds vote of the School Committee as provided below in Chapter II, Section 4.1. If necessary, the Chair shall have the option of calling a meeting as provided below in Chapter I, Section 3, Special Meetings.

Section 2.1. **Cancellation of Meetings.** ~~No meeting of the School Committee shall be canceled or otherwise postponed unless four (4) members shall notify the Executive Secretary to the School Committee in writing prior to the meeting. The Executive Secretary to the School Committee shall notify the City Clerk and the Office of the Superintendent immediately following receipt of notification of cancellation of a meeting. No meeting of any sub-committee of the School Committee shall be canceled or otherwise postponed unless a majority of members of the sub-committee, one of whom must be the chairperson, shall notify the Executive Secretary to the School Committee in writing, by telephone or in person prior to the meeting, except that the Sub-committee~~Subcommittee ~~on the Budget shall cancel or postpone its meeting only upon the written notification to the Executive Secretary to the School Committee by not less than four members.~~ The Chair shall have the right to cancel or postpone a meeting and will inform th~~Th~~e Executive Secretary to the School Committee as soon as possible. The Executive Secretary shall notify all members of the School Committee in the event of a cancellation or postponement of any meeting. In the event of an emergency due to extraordinary circumstances, ~~the requirement that notification of cancellation be provided in writing shall be waived, and~~ members may notify the Executive Secretary to the School Committee of their desire to cancel a meeting by telephone, email, ~~facsimile~~ or in person. Any verbal request for cancellation must be followed by a written request. ~~No regular meeting of the School Committee shall be canceled or otherwise postponed without the affirmative decision of two-thirds of the membership of the School Committee.~~

Section 3. **Special Meetings.** Special meetings of the School Committee may be called by the Chair and shall be called by the Executive Secretary upon the written request of not less than three members of the School Committee. Not less than forty-eight (48) hours (excluding

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Saturdays, Sundays and holidays) notice of a special meeting shall be given to each member. The Executive Secretary shall notify all members by telephone, email, ~~facsimile~~ and/or in person and shall follow any verbal notification with a written notification of such meeting to each member. The question or proposals for consideration shall be specifically stated in the notice and no other matter shall come before the meeting. The time and place of special meetings shall be designated in the call.

Section 3.1. Hearings. The second Tuesday of each month, during the months of September through June, shall be set aside for hearings required by law or as the Superintendent and School Committee jointly deem advisable. If no hearing is scheduled for the second Tuesday, the School Committee shall not be convened for that purpose. To give the School Committee an opportunity to study the matters heard, action on these matters will be deferred to a regular meeting of the School Committee. If necessary, the Chair shall have the option of calling a roundtable as provided for below in Chapter I, Section 3.2. Roundtables.

Section 3.2. Roundtables. The date for a particular roundtable shall be set in accordance with the provisions of Chapter I, Section 3. Special Meetings. At a Roundtable meeting, no votes shall be taken except upon a motion to adjourn. Roundtable meetings may be live streamed and broadcast and should not exceed two (2) hours. The Chair of the School Committee and the Superintendent shall jointly determine the agenda for a roundtable meeting in consultation with the other members of the School Committee.

Section 3.3. Joint Meeting with City Council. The Chair of the School Committee will schedule three annual joint meetings with the City Council - a budget meeting held in the spring, a more general meeting on goals and progress in the fall and a meeting occurring between October and January. Communication between the City Council and the School Committee will take place through the Chair of the School Committee and the Mayor.~~/or the School Committee's Executive Secretary.~~

Section 3.4. **Presentations by the Cambridge Education Association.** The Chair of the School Committee shall identify two (2) meetings over the course of each calendar year in which designated agenda space shall be afforded to a presentation by the Cambridge Education Association (CEA). The topic of each meeting will be mutually agreed upon in advance by the CEA and the School Committee and posted as part of the meeting agenda.

Section 3.5. Standing Meeting with Superintendent. The Chair and/or Vice-Chair of the School Committee will, when needed, have a standing meeting with the Superintendent prior to any scheduled public meeting, workshop or hearing to collaborate on Agenda setting and to help focus both the Agenda of the School Committee and the Superintendent of Schools on the goals of the School Committee. Such standing meetings will be held by agreement between the Superintendent and the Chair and/or Vice-Chair.

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Section 3.6. **Workshops**. The date for a particular workshop shall be set in accordance with the provisions of Chapter I, Section 3. Special Meetings. At a workshop, no votes shall be taken except upon a motion to adjourn. The meeting shall be broadcast on cable television and online. The Chair of the School Committee and the Superintendent shall jointly determine the agenda for a workshop in consultation with the other members of the School Committee.

Section 3.~~6~~7. Retreats. The date for a particular retreat shall be set in accordance with the provisions of Chapter I, Section 3. Special Meetings. At a retreat, no votes shall be taken except upon a motion to adjourn. The meeting shall not be broadcast on cable television or via Zoom/online. The Chair of the School Committee and the Superintendent shall jointly determine the agenda for a retreat in consultation with other members of the School Committee.

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Section 4. Minutes. The Minutes of the School Committee shall be published and distributed under the direction of the Executive Secretary. Minutes shall include the date, time, place; members present or absent; and a complete record of all decisions made and actions taken at each meeting, including a record of all votes and a summary of the discussions on each subject. On all matters on which there has been a roll-call vote, the Minutes shall reflect the votes of the individual members. A list of all documents and other exhibits used at the meeting must also be included in the Minutes.

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~~**Section 5. Office Hours.** The Office of the School Committee shall be open every day during September through June from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. , and during July and August from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., except Saturdays, Sundays and holidays. All other office hours shall be as stipulated in contracts with the Cambridge Education Association (CEA), Unit C (clerical unit) in force from time to time.~~

Section ~~5~~5. State and National Associations. The School Committee shall maintain an active membership in state and national school committee associations. Members of the School Committee who travel or attend meetings and conferences at school department expense shall be required to file with the Executive Secretary to the School Committee within thirty (30) days following the close of such meetings and conferences, a written statement of their expenses, including without limitation, copies of all receipts for expenses incurred in connection with such attendance.

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Section ~~6~~7. ~~Sub-committee~~Subcommittees: ~~Sub-committee~~Subcommittees, except the ~~Sub-committee~~Subcommittee on the Budget, which shall be a Committee of the Whole, shall be comprised of three Members. The Chair ~~Vice-Chair~~ shall appoint the ~~sub-committee~~subcommittees as needed, and designate the Chair of each ~~sub-committee~~subcommittee. The current ~~sub-committee~~subcommittees of the School Committee are as follows:

1. Budget – (Committee of the Whole)

2. Buildings and Grounds
~~1.~~3. School Climate
~~2.~~4. Curriculum and Achievement
~~3.~~5. Communication/Community Relations
~~4.~~6. Governance
~~3.~~7. Special Education and Student Supports

A quorum for ~~sub-committee~~subcommittees, in order to conduct business, shall be two, but no binding action shall be taken, only recommendations made to the full School Committee.

The Chair of the ~~Sub-committee~~Subcommittee should set the beginning and ending time of the meeting not to exceed two (2) hours. ~~Sub-committee~~Subcommittee Meetings can be held in-person or virtually and will be live-streamed on Cambridge Education Access TV Channel 26 and on the School Committee CPSD webpage.

No votes will be taken at ~~Sub-committee~~Subcommittee Meetings with the exception of voting to forward recommendations to the full School Committee and other appropriate parliamentary procedures. Public Comment may be heard at the discretion of the ~~Sub-committee~~Subcommittee Chair**.** The public sign-up for ~~sub-committees~~subcommittee meetings will begin when a meeting is officially noticed with an agenda/ designated purpose or two weeks before the subcommittee meeting, whichever is later.

~~Sub-committee~~Subcommittees may take up all business that may properly come before themit and matters that get referred by the entire School Committee. The Superintendent or their designee shall be assigned to each ~~sub-committees~~subcommittee established. ~~The Superintendent's ability to communicate to the School Committee about educational or curriculum issues through the Superintendent's Agenda remains.~~

The School Committee, by a vote of a majority of the total membership of the School Committee, shall reserve the right to recall any matter from subcommittee. ~~sub-committee.~~ A matter so recalled shall not again be eligible for referral to ~~sub-committee~~subcommittee without a vote by a majority of the total membership of the School Committee.

Section ~~6~~7.1~~.~~ Special ~~Sub-committee~~Subcommittees and Ad Hoc ~~Sub-committee~~Subcommittees: Special ~~sub-committees~~subcommittees and ad hoc ~~sub-committees~~subcommittees may be established as proposed by the Chair ~~Vice-Chair~~ and confirmed by vote of the School Committee with such membership and duties and for such duration as the School Committee deems fit. The Chair ~~Vice-Chair~~ shall appoint three members of any such special ~~sub-committees~~subcommittee and/or ad hoc ~~sub-committees~~subcommittee.

Section ~~7~~8. Student Representation. Student representatives serve as non-binding voting members of the School Committee. Student representatives can exercise their non-binding voting rights on all motions and resolutions that come before the School Committee and are encouraged to participate in School Committee meetings and have a designated line item on every Regular Meeting agenda for a report.

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CHAPTER II

Rules of Procedure

Section 1. **School Committee Business.** All School Committee business, including correspondence, must be received in the Office of the Executive Secretary to the School Committee not later than 4:00 p.m. on the Wednesday before the day (Tuesday) of the next regular meeting of the School Committee, and the Agenda, including the Superintendent's recommendations, motions by members, reports of ~~sub-committee~~subcommittees and other communications and reports to School Committee, shall be delivered to the School Committee by 4:00 p.m. on the Wednesday before the regular meeting. Supplemental recommendations from the Superintendent are to be submitted before 4:00 p.m. on the Monday preceding the Tuesday meeting. Members of the School Committee will make every effort to ask questions about the Superintendent's recommendations and/or supplemental recommendations to the Superintendent and/or their designee on the Monday preceding the Tuesday meeting.

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Section 1.1. **Order of Business**. At every regular meeting of the School Committee the order of business shall be as follows:

1. Public Comment
2. Student School Committee Report
3. Presentation of the Records for Approval

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4. Reconsiderations
5. Unfinished Business
6 Awaiting Reports
7 Superintendent's Agenda
   7a. Superintendent's Update
   7b. Presentations
   7c. CPS District Plan
   7d. Consent Agenda

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8. Non-Consent Agenda
9. School Committee Agenda (Policy Matters/Notifications/Requests for Information)
10. Resolutions (Letters of Congratulations, Letters of Condolence)

11. Announcements

12. Late Orders

13. Communications from City Officers

A member of the Committee, ~~The Chair,~~ however, may suspend the regular order of business by a majority vote of those members of the School Committee present.

~~**Section 1.2. Agenda.** The Chair of the School Committee and the Superintendent will arrange the order of the items on the Agenda so that the School Committee can accomplish its business as expeditiously as possible. The particular order may vary from meeting to meeting in keeping with the business at hand.~~

~~The School Committee will follow the order of business as established by the Agenda, except under a suspension of the Rules in order to expedite School Committee business or for the convenience of individuals appearing before the School Committee.~~

Section 1.2. ~~The~~ **Agenda**. The Agenda~~.~~ shall include a listing of all recommendations being brought forward. Such listing shall include the recommendation number, date of the recommendation, and descriptive title. The Agenda also shall include a listing of all motions, reports, and other communications and reports to the School Committee. Such listing shall include the number, date, and a brief description. The Chair of the School Committee and the Superintendent will arrange the order of the items in the agenda so that the School Committee can accomplish its business as expeditiously as possible.

The agenda for all regularly scheduled meetings held by the School Committee shall be available to the public and the press. Copies of the Agenda shall be filed with the Office of the City Clerk and posted in the Office of the School Committee, and on the Cambridge Public Schools website. ~~.~~ On the Monday prior to the meeting, copies of the Agenda shall be made available at the Cambridge Public Library, Cambridge Public Schools Office of the Superintendent, the Office of the School Committee and the main office at each Cambridge Public School.

Section 1.3. ~~—————~~**Notices of Meetings.** Except in an emergency, notices for all meetings of the School Committee shall be ~~posted on the Cambridge public schools website,~~ filed with the Office of the City Clerk sufficiently in advance to permit posting by the City Clerk ~~, and posted in the Office of the School Committee~~ at least forty-eight (48) hours, excluding Saturdays, Sundays and holidays, prior to such meetings. Except in an emergency, copies of the Notices of Meetings shall be posted on the Cambridge Public Schools website and the School Committee website, and ~~made~~ be made available at the ~~Cambridge Public Library,~~ Cambridge Public Schools Office of the Superintendent and Office of the School Committee ~~and on the School Committee website~~ at least forty-eight (48) hours, excluding Saturdays, Sundays and holidays, prior to such meetings. In an emergency, notice shall be posted as soon as reasonably

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possible prior to such meeting.

Section 1.4. **Unfinished Business.** Unfinished Business of the School Committee shall be addressed in the following manner:

A. Calendar. All items that are placed on the School Committee Calendar~~, pursuant to the provisions of the last sentence of Chapter II, Section 5, below,~~ shall automatically be placed on the School Committee's Agenda to be addressed and reviewed by the School Committee at its next scheduled meeting.

B. Awaiting Reports. Members of the School Committee will be limited to two report requests at any one time from the Superintendent's Office. This limitation includes reports requested by ~~sub-committees~~subcommittees of the School Committee. ~~Report requests must be approved by a two-thirds vote of the School Committee and may include a timetable for completion.~~ The Superintendent will designate a staff person to research and expedite these reports in a timely fashion. Upon completion, the report will be distributed to all members of the School Committee. The Superintendent will have the right to report back to the School Committee with an estimate of resources and/or cost for completion of the report and request a further vote of the School Committee to authorize the expenditure of such resources or costs. The Superintendent will provide the School Committee with the reports called for by the School Committee policy. The Executive Secretary shall maintain a shared log of requests and retain reports and written information responses for access by all members. Any questions by a member about the timeframe of a response to a report shall be directed to the Superintendent outside regular business meetings.

Section 1.5. **Policy Review and Adoption.**

The first time that a policy recommendation appears on the Agenda, the School Committee shall hear the public comment on the item and engage in discussion and comment on the policy recommendation (hereinafter referred to as the "First Reading"). The matter shall then be placed on the Calendar in accordance with the provisions of Section 1.4(A) above to be placed on the School Committee's Agenda to be addressed and reviewed by the School Committee at its next scheduled meeting (hereinafter referred to as the "Second Reading"). The Superintendent will be expected to respond to comments, questions, and concerns that are raised at the First Reading of the policy recommendation. If the proposed policy recommendation is modified by the Superintendent after the First Reading, then the School Committee shall permit the Superintendent to substitute the revised policy recommendation and the revised policy recommendation shall be the basis for public comment and discussion and comment by the School Committee at the Second Reading, otherwise, the original policy recommendation shall be the basis for public comment and discussion by the School Committee at the Second Reading. In accordance with the provisions of Chapter II, Section 1~~5~~6 of these

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Rules, the School Committee may suspend the Rules pertaining to this process by a two-thirds vote.

Section 1.6 Superintendent Review Process.

The Vice Chair shall coordinate and administer the evaluation process in accordance with the timeline and procedures established by the School Committee.

Section 1.~~7~~6. Remote Participation.

~~Remote Participation.~~ Pursuant to ~~the Governor's Executive order~~ Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2025~~,~~, remote participation shall be allowed for public meetings. Members of the School Committee will make every effort to attend in-person though, if one member is remote then all votes shall be conducted by roll call. If members of the School Committee are unable to attend in-person, they must inform the Executive Secretary who will make the accommodations for their participation.

Section 2. Quorum. Four members of the School Committee shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. The ~~Chair, or in their absence, the Vice Chair,~~presiding officer shall call the meeting to order. The presiding officer shall be the Chair, or in their absence the Vice Chair. In the absence of both the Chair and Vice Chair, the Executive Secretary shall hold a majority vote to select the presiding officer. In the absence of a quorum, the presiding officer, as the case may be, shall cause the Executive Secretary to determine whether there are sufficient members in the building to provide a quorum. Should the answer be in the negative, the presiding officer shall be required to rule "no quorum" and adjournment of the meeting shall be taken without the transaction of any business, subject to further call in accordance with the *Rules of the School Committee*.

Section 3. Open Meetings. All meetings of the School Committee, and any of its ~~sub-committee~~subcommittees, shall be open to the public and press; however, the School Committee has the right to sit in an executive session, closed to the public and the press, when it meets the following procedural conditions imposed by state law:

1. The School Committee shall first convene in an open session for which notice has been given.

2. The Chair, or in their absence, the presiding member, shall state the purpose for the executive session, stating all subjects that may be revealed without compromising the purpose for which the executive session was called.

3. The Chair, or the presiding member, shall state whether the School Committee shall reconvene in open session after the executive session.

4. A majority of the members must vote to enter the executive session with the vote taken by roll call and recorded in the official minutes.

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5. The School Committee shall enter executive session only to:

a. discuss the reputation, character, physical condition or mental health rather than the professional competence of an individual, or to discuss the discipline or dismissal of, or complaints or charges brought against, a public officer, employee, staff member or individual. The individual to be discussed in such executive session shall be notified in writing by the public body at least 48 hours prior to the proposed executive session; provided, however, that notification may be waived upon written agreement of the parties.

b. conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel.

c. discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares.

d. discuss the deployment of security personnel or devices, or strategies with respect thereto.

e. investigate charges of criminal misconduct or to discuss the filing of criminal complaints.

f. consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property, if the chair declares that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the public body.

g. comply with, or act under the authority of, any general or special law or federal grant-in-aid requirements.

~~g.~~h. consider or interview applicants for employment or appointment by a preliminary screening committee if the chair declares that an open meeting will have a detrimental effect in obtaining qualified applicants; provided, however, that this clause shall not apply to any meeting, including meetings of a preliminary screening committee, to consider and interview applicants who have passed a prior preliminary screening.

~~h.~~i. meet or confer with a mediator, as defined in section twenty-three C of chapter two hundred and thirty-three, with respect to any litigation or decision on any public business within its jurisdiction involving another party, group, or body, provided that: (a) any decision to participate in mediation shall be made in open meeting session and the parties, issues

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involved and purpose of the mediation shall be disclosed; and (b) no action shall be taken by any public body with respect to those issues which are the subject of the mediation without deliberation and approval for such action at an open meeting session.

In the case of 5(a) above, an open meeting shall be held if the individual requests an open meeting. To this end, any matter legally qualifying for discussion in closed session under 5(a) above shall be placed on the Calendar, and due notice shall be given to the individual involved within five (5) days after the regular meeting at which the matter was first raised. If the individual fails to inform the Executive Secretary to the School Committee at least four (4) days prior to the next scheduled regular meeting of the School Committee as to whether the issue should be discussed in open or executive session, the School Committee shall act as it sees fit, within the framework of the law and the best interests of the school department.

Accurate records of the proceedings conducted in the executive session shall be kept, setting forth the date, time, place, members present or absent, and action taken at each meeting. The records of each meeting shall become a public record and be available to the public, subject to any applicable exemption; provided, however, that the records of any executive session may remain secret as long as publication may defeat the lawful purposes of the executive session, but no longer. All votes taken in executive session shall be recorded roll call votes and shall become a part of the record of said executive sessions. ~~The School Committee shall ratify and affirm all votes taken in executive session in an open meeting.~~

The Superintendent or their designee shall attend all executive sessions of the School Committee, except those that pertain to strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with the Superintendent and/or strategy sessions with respect to litigation between the Superintendent and the School Committee. The School Committee and/or Superintendent may invite staff members and others to attend such executive sessions at their discretion.

Section 4. **Order.** The presiding officer shall preserve order in the meetings and decide all questions of order, subject to an appeal to the School Committee by any member, which appeal shall be decided without debate.

Section 4.1. **Starting and Ending Times of Regular Meetings**. Regular meetings will begin promptly at 6:00 PM. (assuming a quorum) and end by 10:00 PM. Motions to extend the meeting will require a two-thirds (2/3) vote.

Section 4.2. **Public Comment.** Public comment will be limited to three (3) minutes per individual and will be limited to those matters on the Agenda. Members of the public wishing to speak must register their intent prior to the meeting on a form provided for said purpose by the Executive Secretary to the School Committee or on the School Committee website. In addition to being able to provide public comment in-person, members of the public may provide public comment by participating remotely on Zoom. Members of the public wishing to participate remotely must register their intent prior to the meeting on the form for said purpose on the School Committee website. Members participating in-person will be heard first, followed by members participating remotely.

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The Chair may limit comment to two (2) minutes based on the number of individuals signed up to speak. The Chair will announce the time limit prior to the public comment period at every regular meeting. The public will also be encouraged to submit their comments in writing either by e-mail to SchoolCom@cpsd.us or by faxing or mailing them to the Executive Secretary to the School Committee. The public also may submit comments, in writing, to the School Committee on matters not on the Agenda by e-mail to SchoolCom@cpsd.us or by faxing or mailing them to the Executive Secretary to the School Committee.

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Public comment shall not take place at roundtable meetings or at public retreats of the School Committee, where no matter being discussed may be finally considered, in that no votes may be taken. Written comments will be accepted and made part of the record of the meeting. The opportunity for the public to comment on items discussed at roundtable meetings or at public retreats shall be at the regular or special meeting at which the item may be considered for action by the School Committee.

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Section 4.3. Meeting Etiquette. To promote efficient orderly meetings and in keeping with *Robert's Rules of Order*, the Chair will work to:

a.) Refer new matters that need further study or questioning to the Superintendent or to the ~~sub-committee~~subcommittee on budget or collective bargaining negotiations or any other ~~sub-committee~~subcommittee agreed upon by the School Committee and the Superintendent;

b.) Late orders are reserved for emergencies and issues that could not have been anticipated prior to the submission deadline. ~~Encourage late orders to be reserved for motions that are ceremonial rather than substantive;~~

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c.) Repeat the motion on the floor to make sure all members know what is being discussed and/or voted;

d.) Allow enough time after a main motion is introduced for members to bring in amendments and other types of motions as outlined in *Robert's Rules of Order*;
Call for a second, if one has not been heard, and announce failed motions and motions without a second so that it is clear that such motions have failed or do not have a second;

e.) Promote a formal atmosphere, with members referring to other members in the third person, and speaking to each other and to members of the public through the Chair; and

f.) Promote a courteous and respectful tone throughout the meetings.

g.) Maintain a neutral environment for discussion and deliberation by requiring signs, posters, and placards to remain outside the Dr. Henrietta Attles Meeting Room, or other meeting room.

Section 4.4. Debate on Motions. Debate on motions will be limited to five (5) minutes

per member in the first round and two (2) minutes in the second round. The Executive Secretary will keep time. The Chair may change the amount of time allotted to each member and may elect to use a "round robin" format to promote more efficient debate. The Chair will work to make sure comments are germane to the motions on the floor.

Section 5. **Motions.** The names of members introducing motions, orders and resolutions shall be recorded in the School Committee records. Motions, orders and resolutions shall require a second and no debate shall be in order until the Chair states the immediately pending question. Any order, motion or resolution may be passed through all its stages of legislation at any one session~~, except as hereinafter defined, provided that no member of the School Committee objects thereto; but if any member of the School Committee objects the measure shall be postponed for that meeting. Any measure postponed under this provision and placed on the School Committee's Calendar shall, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter II, Section 1.4(A) above, automatically be placed on the School Committee's Agenda to be addressed and reviewed by the School Committee at its next scheduled meeting.~~

Section 6. **Precedence of Motions.** When motions are made naming sums or fixing times, the largest sum or longest time shall first be put to a vote. If a question is under debate, the only motions in order shall be: (1) to adjourn; (2) to suspend the rules; (3) to lay on the table; (4) for the previous question; (5) to postpone to a day certain; (6) to commit or recommit; (7) to amend; (8) to postpone indefinitely. The motions shall have precedence in the order named.

Section 7. **Non-debatable Motions.** Motions to adjourn, to lay on the table or take from the table and for the previous question shall be decided without debate unless unanimous consent of the School Committee is granted a member to speak. The previous question shall be put in this form, "Shall the main question now be put?" The adoption of this question shall end debate and bring the School Committee to a vote on pending amendments, if there are any, and then upon the main question.

Section 8. **Adjournment.** A motion to adjourn shall always be in order, except when a member has the floor or a question has been put and not decided.

Section 9. **Rescission and Withdrawal.**

~~Rescind.~~ A motion to rescind seeks to repeal a previously adopted action. It shall be held over until the next regular meeting and shall require four (4) affirmative votes for passage.

A motion may be withdrawn by its maker without permission before the Chair states the motion. After the Chair states the motion, withdrawal requires a majority vote of the School Committee and must occur before voting begins.

~~Any motion to rescind shall lay on the table until the next regular meeting and shall require four (4) votes for passage.~~

Section 10. **Reconsideration.** The actions of the School Committee on any question shall not be reconsidered at the same meeting except under suspension of the Rules. If any member shall

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Commented [KC12]: After some research, Rescinding a motion is different than Withdrawing a motion. Withdraw: Removes a motion before it is voted on, as if it was never made.
Rescind: Cancels a motion after it has already been adopted.c

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give notice in writing to the Executive Secretary to the School Committee at the meeting or before 5:00 p.m. of the second day following that on which the meeting was held of their intention to do so, they may move reconsideration at only the next meeting of the School Committee. Only one motion for this purpose shall be in order.

~~**Section 11. Executive Secretary to Retain Papers.** The Executive Secretary to the School Committee shall retain in their possession all papers upon which action has been taken by the School Committee at any meeting. Additionally, all documents and other exhibits used at any meeting must be retained.~~

Section 11.~~1.~~ Votes. A majority of the members present shall suffice to pass any vote, order or resolution (except as hereinafter defined), but motions calling for the appropriation or expenditure of money shall require the affirmative vote of four (4) members.

Section 12.~~3.~~ Roll Call. The call of the roll shall be taken on any question whenever a member shall so request and the order of roll call shall rotate alphabetically from meeting to meeting.

Section 13.4. Appeals from Ruling of the Chair. The Chair or the presiding officer in the absence of the Chair shall have the sole authority to rule on all questions of order subject to appeal by any member of the School Committee. The question shall be, "Shall the ruling of the Chair be sustained?" Such appeal, if seconded, shall immediately be put to vote, without debate, save that the Chair or the presiding officer in the absence of the Chair shall be permitted two (2) minutes in which to explain the ruling in question. An affirmative vote of ~~the~~a majority ~~vote~~ of those present shall be required to reverse a ruling by the Chair or the presiding officer in the absence of the Chair.

Section 14.~~5.~~ Amendments. Any amendment of these Rules shall be proposed at a regular meeting in writing, but shall not be voted upon before the next meeting.

Section 15.~~6.~~ Parliamentary Procedure. The conduct of the meetings and business of the School Committee shall be in accordance with the rules of parliamentary procedure as laid down in the most recently revised edition of *Robert's Rules of Order*, except as specifically provided elsewhere in these Rules of the School Committee or by law. In accordance with *Robert's Rules of Order*, the School Committee may suspend parliamentary rules of order by a two-thirds vote.

Section 16.~~7.~~ Biennial Election Year. No appointment or promotion shall be made or recommended and no increase in salaries of any of the personnel shall be granted after the date of the biennial election to hold anyone beyond the term of the present School Committee. Further, this rule shall not apply to the appointment of teachers.

Section 17.~~8.~~ Acceptance of Grants for Expenditure. Pursuant to the provisions of M.G.L.c. 44, §53A, the Superintendent or their designee may submit applications for grants or gifts from federal, state, charitable foundation, private corporation or individual. Grant or gift awards for educational purposes must be submitted to the School Committee for acceptance and approval prior to expenditure.

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Section 18.9. Approval of Service Contracts and Travel. Service contracts and travel by staff under ~~twenty-five~~fifty thousand dollars ($~~2~~50,000) will not require approval by the School Committee with the exception of service contracts, travel by staff that cumulatively total more than ~~twenty-five~~fifty thousand dollars ($~~2~~50,000) in a fiscal year, or when the City's Purchasing Director authorizes an emergency procurement under the provisions of M.G.L. c. 30B, Section 8 over ~~twenty-five~~fifty thousand dollars ($~~2~~50,000). If such emergency procurements occur, the School Committee would be notified by the Superintendent or~~of~~ designee. Contracts will be submitted in a timely fashion and stale dates will be the exception not the rule. A list of all contracts and travel by staff ~~under twenty-five thousand dollars ($25,000)~~ will be forwarded to the School Committee semi-annually~~, and a list of all travel by staff under twenty-five ($25,000) will be forwarded to the School Committee semi-annually~~.

Commented [KC13]: Not in practice.

Section 19.~~20.~~ Annual Review of Rules. The School Committee will annually review these Rules, and shall bring forward proposed amendments or revisions in accordance with the provisions of Chapter II, Section 1~~4~~5 above. Any amendments or revisions that are adopted by the School Committee shall be incorporated into the text of the *Rules of the School Committee*. ~~and the "Citizens' Guide to Public Comment" will be revised, as necessary, to reflect any such amendments or revisions.~~

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Section 2~~0~~1. City Council Information Requests. All requests for information or motions passed by the Cambridge City Council that pertain to the Cambridge Public School Department shall be sent to the School Committee for part of the Agenda. The School Committee will refer such requests for information or motions to the Superintendent.

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CHAPTER III

Duties of the Executive Secretary

Section 1. School Committee Meetings. The Executive Secretary shall be present and act as Executive Secretary at all School Committee meetings.

Section 2. General Duties. The Executive Secretary shall give the members of the School Committee written notice of all meetings, call special meetings of the School Committee when requested to do so by the Chair ~~Mayor~~ or three or more members of the School Committee, attend the meetings of the School Committee, record its votes, orders, and proceedings in a permanent record book, be the custodian of the School Committee's records and other papers. The Executive Secretary shall ensure that the Minutes are posted on the School Committee web page as soon as they have been approved by the Committee. The duties of the Executive Secretary are further defined in a job description for said position.

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Section 3. Custodian and Agent of School Committee. The Executive Secretary shall be custodian of the School Committee's records and other papers and preserve files of communications and documents of the School Committee. Additionally, the Executive Secretary

shall act as an agent of the School Committee.

Section 4. **Signing of Approved Agreements.** The Executive Secretary shall sign any agreements that have been approved by a majority of the School Committee on a roll call vote. A copy of the order approving said agreements shall be attached to the signature page of said agreements.

ADDENDUM
School Committee Norms
Statement of Intent:

We acknowledge that a School Committee meeting is a working meeting of the School Committee that is held in public, not a public meeting. The below norms will ensure that committee meetings are effective and efficient.

How we communicate:

- The School Committee will remain respectful and professional while deliberating issues collaboratively. The School Committee will focus on issues rather than individuals.
- The School Committee and Superintendent recognize the importance of proactive communication and agree there will be no surprises. If members of the School Committee or the Superintendent have questions or concerns, they agree to contact each other well in advance of the meeting to facilitate informed and reflective conversation.
- School Committee members agree to refer important questions they receive from members of the school community to the Superintendent. The Superintendent will investigate and provide ALL members with the information needed to respond to an issue.
- It is our responsibility to set the tone for the entire school system, and we will make every effort to promote a positive image for our school system. We will operate transparently and respectfully, maintain confidentiality, and respect the Open Meeting laws.
- School Ceommittee members will channel requests for information, reports and data through the Superintendent and the School Committee Chair rather than directly to staff. The Superintendent will ensure that each member has equal access to this information.
- The Superintendent and School Committee recognize the importance of working collaboratively with City officials to improve our schools, and we will actively seek ways to enlist their support in our efforts.

How we govern:

- The School Committee will strive to reach decisions by consensus.
- Members should bring their best intentions and an open mind to each meeting to seek creative solutions to the issues before them.

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- The School Committee as a whole is a policy-making body and members are elected to represent the entire Cambridge community. The powers of the School Committee are granted to the committee of the whole when a quorum exists, and not to individual members.
- School Committee members agree to thoughtfully seek and support solutions that will provide the greatest benefit to students. Once the School Committee has taken action, Committee members will support the official position of the School Committee.
- We acknowledge the importance of ~~sub-committee~~subcommittees, and we agree to treat ~~sub-committee~~subcommittee membership and participation with the same gravity and weight as the Committee as a whole. We agree to utilize them to focus on a specific topic in-depth and prepare for presentation, deliberation, and possible action by the full School Committee. The ~~sub-committee~~subcommittee will not usurp the authority of the Committee of the whole.*

How we improve:

- The School Committee is committed to implementing an ongoing norm monitoring process and an annual self-assessment.
- School Committee members and the Superintendent recognize the importance of joint professional growth and development, and they agree to participate in experiences designed to deepen knowledge and strengthen working relationships to advance the work of the Cambridge Public Schools.
- The annual Superintendent evaluation is the responsibility of the School Committee as a whole and will represent the composite of all member feedback.
- We recognize the importance of honoring our agreed-upon norms and beliefs, and we agree to take responsibility for reminding one another when we get off track.

We gratefully acknowledge the Taunton School Committee and their work on norms, which helped us formulate ours. We are thankful for their full approval for us to use their norms within our framework.

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Current Proposed Changes to the School Committee Rules

Updated November 12, 2026. This summary reflects the proposed text in the accompanying 2026–2027 Rules draft. Section references use the revised numbering; items requiring discussion and clarification are listed at the end.

Chapter I

Section 2. Clarifies that one regular summer meeting is held on the first Tuesday in August.

Section 2.1. Authorizes the Chair to cancel or postpone meetings and updates notification requirements.

Section 3.3. Provides that communication between the School Committee and City Council takes place through the School Committee Chair and the Mayor.

Section 3.4. Adds designated agenda space for two Cambridge Education Association presentations each calendar year, with topics mutually agreed upon in advance and posted on the agenda.

Section 3.7. Clarifies that retreats are not broadcast on cable television or via Zoom or online.

Former Section 5. Removes the outdated provision establishing specific School Committee office hours and renumbers subsequent sections.

Section 6. Standardizes “Subcommittee” throughout the Rules, gives the Chair responsibility for appointing subcommittees and their chairs, and removes the sentence preserving the Superintendent’s ability to communicate through the Superintendent’s Agenda.

Section 6.1. Transfers authority from the Vice Chair to the Chair to propose special and ad hoc subcommittees, subject to Committee approval, and specifies that the Chair appoints three members.

Chapter II

Section 1.1. Allows any member, rather than only the Chair, to seek suspension of the regular order of business by majority vote of members present.

Section 1.2. Removes repetitive agenda language while retaining the Chair and Superintendent’s joint responsibility for arranging agenda items. The current draft still requires Monday agenda copies at the Cambridge Public Library.

Section 1.3. Clarifies meeting-notice posting requirements, including emergency notices, and removes the Cambridge Public Library from the required notice distribution locations.

Section 1.4. Removes the requirement for a two-thirds vote to approve report requests. Requires the Executive Secretary to maintain a shared request log and retain reports and written information responses for all members’ access.

Section 1.6. Adds a Superintendent Review Process section assigning the Vice Chair responsibility for coordinating and administering the evaluation under the Committee’s timeline and procedures.

Section 1.7. Updates the remote-participation reference to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2025. Retains the expectation of in-person attendance, advance notice to the Executive Secretary when remote participation is needed, and roll-call votes when any member participates remotely.

Section 2. Provides for a majority vote, conducted by the Executive Secretary, to select a presiding officer when both the Chair and Vice Chair are absent.

Section 3. Removes the requirement to ratify and affirm executive-session votes in open session and clarifies that public access to meeting records is subject to applicable exemptions.

Section 4.3. Reserves late orders for emergencies and issues that could not have been anticipated before the submission deadline. Requires signs, posters, and placards to remain outside the meeting room.

Section 5. Removes the provision allowing a single member's objection to postpone a measure automatically to the next meeting, along with the related cross-reference in Section 1.4.

Section 9. Renames the section "Rescission and Withdrawal." Distinguishes repeal of an adopted action from withdrawal of a pending motion. Retains the next-regular-meeting holdover and four affirmative votes for rescission. Allows the maker to withdraw before the Chair states the motion; afterward, requires a majority vote before voting begins.

Former Section 11. Removes the separate "Executive Secretary to Retain Papers" provision and renumbers subsequent sections.

Section 13. Clarifies that reversing a ruling of the Chair or other presiding officer requires an affirmative vote of a majority of members present.

Section 18. Raises the service-contract and staff-travel approval threshold from $25,000 to $50,000, including the corresponding cumulative and emergency-procurement thresholds. Requires a semiannual list of all contracts and staff travel, regardless of cost.

Section 19. Removes the outdated reference to revising the "Citizens' Guide to Public Comment."

Chapter III

Section 2. Replaces "Mayor" with "Chair" in the provision directing the Executive Secretary to call special meetings when requested by the Chair or three or more Committee members.

Points of Discussion

New Chapter I Section 3.4 CEA presentations. Discuss whether to establish designated agenda space for two CEA presentations each calendar year.

Chapter II Section 1.4 Awaiting Reports. Clarify whether the two-request limit applies to each member or to the Committee as a whole, and distinguish an official report request from an individual member's information request. The shared-log and retention language now addresses archiving; the draft deletes the two-thirds approval requirement previously noted as not followed in practice.