



CAMBRIDGE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Virtual Special Meeting

March 11, 2026

Called for 6:00 p.m. and broadcast from the Media Arts Studio, 454 Broadway, Cambridge for the purpose of a presentation of the Superintendent's Proposed FY27 Budget. The meeting is anticipated to end by or before 8:00 p.m. There will be no public comment.

Members Present: Member de Paula Santos, Vice Chair Dube, Member Harding, Member Hudson (ABSENT), Member Jaikumar, Mayor Siddiqui, Chair Weinstein

Also Present: David Murphy, Superintendent; Ivy Washington, Chief Financial Officer

Chair Weinstein in the Chair.

A quorum of the School Committee being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

The Chair read the call of the meeting and explained that this meeting is being televised and recorded. Votes will not be taken and there will be no public comment.

The meeting proceeded with a roll call of members present: Member Harding, ABSENT; Member Hudson, ABSENT, Member Jaikumar, PRESENT, Member de Paula Santos, PRESENT; Vice Chair Dube, PRESENT; Chair Weinstein, PRESENT

Member Harding joined at 6:25 p.m.

Mayor Siddiqui left the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Superintendent Murphy and CFO Washington gave the following presentation which can be found on this [website](#).

Superintendent Murphy shared that the proposed budget reflects a continued focus on the district's core priorities: educator effectiveness, family engagement, and strengthening student supports. He emphasized that the budget is designed to build on existing work, deepen impact, and align resources with the district's strategic goals.

A central focus of the FY27 proposal is the enhancement of student support systems, particularly through expanded intervention services and increased investment in paraprofessionals and specialized staff. Superintendent Murphy noted the goal to create more consistent and equitable staffing structures across schools using a tiered model based on enrollment and student need.

Additional investments include strengthening data capacity to better inform decision-making, expanding experiential learning opportunities, and addressing long-standing needs in areas such as visual and performing arts resources. The budget also introduces a small, centralized fund to support innovative field trip opportunities across schools.

The Superintendent noted that the district continues to face significant financial pressures, including contractual salary increases and rising health insurance costs, which limit flexibility for new spending. As a result, the FY27 budget prioritizes strategic reallocation of existing resources and improved execution over large-scale new investments.

Enrollment trends and facilities constraints have also informed several adjustments, including changes to kindergarten classroom allocations and continued planning related to program placement and building use.

Mayor Siddiqui raised questions about how the budget advances early literacy, including summer programming, tutoring, and progress monitoring. Superintendent Murphy affirmed literacy as a top instructional priority and indicated additional clarity and potential enhancements will be explored at upcoming workshops. **Mayor Siddiqui** also requested clarification on special education and inclusion investments, including new roles supporting early learners, intervention programming, and the proposed Shore Collaborative program to expand in-district specialized placements.

Member Harding emphasized the importance of clearly understanding the budget's impact on literacy and asked for a more detailed articulation of how investments align with improving literacy outcomes. He also inquired about the expanded data position, requesting additional detail on how increased data capacity would support student achievement and inform school-level decision-making.

Vice Chair Dube emphasized the importance of clearly demonstrating the connection between spending and strategic goals, suggesting that future presentations include a more explicit and visual breakdown showing how specific investments (staffing, professional development, and interventionists) directly support those priorities, along with the associated funding levels. She noted that this would improve both the Committee's understanding and public communication. In addition, she asked for greater detail on paraprofessional staffing at the upper schools, specifically whether a district-wide allocation formula exists similar to what is available for elementary schools, and how those staffing decisions are determined.

Member Jaikumar indicated interest in additional questions and discussion, noting that further inquiries would be raised during upcoming budget workshops.

On a motion by Vice Chair Dube, seconded by Member de Paula Santos the meeting was adjourned on the following roll call vote: Member Harding, YEA; Member Hudson, ABSENT, Member Jaikumar, YEA, Member de Paula Santos, YEA; Vice Chair Dube, YEA; Chair Weinstein, YEA (7:55 p.m.)

Attest:



Katherine Christo
Executive Secretary to the School Committee