



CAMBRIDGE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Virtual Special Meeting

March 25, 2026

Called for 6:00 p.m. and broadcast from the Media Arts Studio, 454 Broadway, Cambridge for the purpose of a Budget Workshop to review the 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 (ABSENT), Member Harding, Member Hudson, Member Jaikumar, Mayor Siddiqui, Chair Weinstein

Also Present: Kim Huffer, Director of SEL; Chad Leith, Director of Accountability; David Murphy, Superintendent; Desiree Phillips, Executive Director of Special Education; 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 6:01 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: Mayor Siddiqui, PRESENT; Member de Paula Santos, PRESENT; Vice Chair Dube, ABSENT; Member Harding, ABSENT, Member Hudson, PRESENT; Member Jaikumar, PRESENT; Chair Weinstein, PRESENT

Member Harding joined at 6:20 p.m.

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

Superintendent David Murphy and his team provided an overview of the FY27 proposed budget, noting:

- Total budget: \$293.5 million
- Increase: \$13.25 million (approximately 4.7%)
- Majority of the budget is allocated to personnel costs
- Minor revisions included a \$105,000 adjustment to salary lines
- Budget composition remains largely unchanged
- Key cost drivers include personnel, transportation, and out-of-district tuition

Staffing and Personnel

- Approximately \$244 million of the budget is allocated to personnel
- CPS employs roughly 2,200 staff members
- About 90% of Unit A & B staff are student-facing
- Net decrease of approximately 20 FTEs, primarily due to:
 - Long-term vacancies
 - Position reallocations
- Approximately 45 FTEs redistributed across schools to support student-facing roles

Key Investments and Priorities

Student Supports

- Expansion of upper school intervention system

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- Focus on:
 - Chronic absenteeism
 - Student re-engagement

Operations & Infrastructure

- Transportation staffing increase (0.5 FTE) to improve service
- Data Analyst position (1.0 FTE) to strengthen progress monitoring and data use

Academic Supports

- Early childhood science programming continued
- Addition of 0.5 Social Studies/History coach
- Increased focus on elementary literacy
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King Open School Adjustment

Following community feedback and data review:

- Budget modified to increase staffing support at King Open
- Total increase: approximately 6.97 FTE (up from ~5.97 FTE)
- Addition includes:
 - Math interventionist
 - Literacy support
 - Staffing aligned with increased enrollment

Interventionist Staffing Model

- All elementary schools receive:
 - 1.0 ELA interventionist
 - 1.0 Math interventionist
- Additional supports based on:
 - Enrollment (schools >320 students)
 - Student need (Tier 3 supports)
 - Specialized programming (e.g., SEI, dual language)
- Enhanced support provided at:
 - Fletcher Maynard Academy
 - King Open School

Elementary Literacy Initiatives

Planned investments include:

- Expansion of Excel tutoring to Grade 2
- Summer programming with literacy interventionists
- Review of Pre-K and Kindergarten curriculum alignment
- Increased focus on progress monitoring and instructional practices

Special Education Update

Executive Director Phillips introduced:

- Partnership with Shore Collaborative
- Creation of a K–2 therapeutic classroom in Cambridge
- Program to include:
 - Teacher, paraprofessionals, and clinician
 - CPS-provided related services (OT, PT, speech)
- Goal: increase in-district capacity and student connection to CPS schools

Committee Discussion & Feedback from Committee members included:

- Requested clearer understanding of staffing changes and FTE impacts
- Emphasized equitable staffing based on student need, not just enrollment
- Raised concerns about King Open staffing and intervention supports
- Asked for stronger data transparency and outcome tracking

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- Sought clarity on interventionist allocation across schools
- Highlighted importance of early literacy and earlier interventions
- Questioned role and impact of non-school-based positions
- Noted need to improve transportation services
- Supported focus on student supports (attendance, mental health, re-engagement)

On a motion by Mayor Siddiqui, seconded by Member Harding the meeting was adjourned on the following roll call vote: Mayor Siddiqui, YEA; Member de Paula Santos, YEA; Vice Chair Dube, ABSENT; Member Harding, YEA; Member Hudson, YEA; Member Jaikumar, YEA; Chair Weinstein, YEA (8:00 p.m.)

Attest:

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Katherine Christo".

Katherine Christo
Executive Secretary to the School Committee