



## OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

Sumbul Siddiqui  
Mayor

**To:** Cambridge City Council  
**From:** Sumbul Siddiqui, Mayor  
**Date:** January 22, 2026  
**Subject:** Communicating Information from the School Committee

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To the Honorable, the City Council:

I write to provide a summary of recent Cambridge School Committee activity. This update includes information from the Committee's regular meeting on Tuesday, January 20, 2026; an executive session held on Wednesday, January 14, 2026; a retreat convened on Friday, January 16, 2026; supplemental updates from Superintendent Murphy; and interim communications issued in advance of the meeting.

### **School Committee Meetings and Governance Work**

The School Committee held its regular meeting on January 20. At the meeting, we heard from City Manager Huang and Chief Finance Officer Washington about the [macroeconomic conditions under which the FY27 operating budget is being developed](#).

In addition, the Committee convened on January 16 for a retreat focused on governance and collaboration. The retreat was held with the purpose of clarifying roles, responsibilities, and norms; developing agreements for communication and engagement between the School Committee and the Superintendent; and establishing a timeline for mutually acceptable goals and objectives. Part II of the retreat is scheduled for February.

### **Curriculum, Assessment, and Student Learning Updates**

At the January 20 meeting, the School Committee received a [series of presentations on MCAS outcomes](#), including updates from the Science and Social Studies/History department heads. These presentations addressed curriculum alignment and improvement efforts, as well as the district's inaugural development of reliable common assessment data in eighth-grade civics. This work supports instructional coherence and continuous improvement across the district.

### **Communications, Operations, and Systems**

The Superintendent reported on several operational and communications initiatives, including district outreach to staff and families regarding modified school start and end times for the 2026–27 school year. He also shared that the CPS website has undergone a modest interface refresh as part of ongoing efforts to



improve usability and accessibility. User feedback will be collected to inform future enhancements.

### **Labor Relations and External Engagement**

The Superintendent reported that the Cambridge Education Association confirmed its first collective bargaining session for January 29, with additional dates under discussion.

He also shared that he has been invited by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to serve on an advisory group to the Governor's Graduation Council focused on potential changes to statewide high school graduation requirements.

### **Legal Matters and Executive Session**

The School Committee convened in executive session on January 14 to discuss collective bargaining strategy. A second executive session is scheduled for January 22.

### **School-Based Engagement**

In addition to attending formal meetings, I participated in several school-based events connected to School Committee work:

- The 4th Grade Poetry Gala at the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. School, which celebrated student writing and performance and highlighted student voice, creativity, and arts-based learning on January 11
- The Putnam Avenue Upper School "Story of Self" event on January 12, where students engaged in reflective work focused on identity, storytelling, and community-building
- The Community Budget Meeting held at the Cambridge Street Upper School on January 21

Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions or requests for additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sumbul Siddiqui".

Sumbul Siddiqui