



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

Sumbul Siddiqui
Mayor (2020-21, 2022-23, 2026-27)

To: Cambridge City Council
From: Sumbul Siddiqui, Mayor
Date: March 26, 2026
Subject: Communicating Information from the School Committee

To the Honorable, the City Council:

I write to provide an updated summary of recent Cambridge School Committee activity:

Buildings and Grounds Subcommittee—March 18, 2025

The Subcommittee reviewed capital improvement plans for 158 Spring Street, a site identified as a district priority given its proximity to a high concentration of Cambridge Public Schools students, its capacity to serve over 650 students, and its substantial outdoor space adjacent to Ahern Field. The project reflects CPS's ongoing commitment to maintaining a strong elementary school presence in East Cambridge and improving how facilities serve students, particularly those with the greatest needs.

Discussion centered on guiding principles including the importance of a district-wide perspective, long-term planning, fiscal responsibility, and ensuring any investment results in a fully utilized building with a cohesive educational program. Preliminary renovation priorities include core infrastructure upgrades—HVAC, plumbing, and safety systems—alongside improvements to instructional and shared spaces such as the auditorium, gymnasium, and flexible learning areas. Work will be phased according to urgency, system condition, and available funding.

The anticipated timeline includes public engagement sessions on the building's future use to begin in May 2026, with revisions and further discussion in June and resolution expected later this year. Renovation completion is projected for the 2027–2028 school year. More information is available [here](#).

The Subcommittee also reviewed ongoing district-wide transportation improvement projects. CPS has implemented enhanced GPS tracking for both general education and door-to-door transportation, enabling families to monitor routes in real time and improving overall reliability. Early data show increased adoption and a reduction in reported tracking issues.

Beginning in the 2026–2027 school year, CPS will transition to a two-tier bell schedule to streamline transportation logistics. Complementing this change, the district is undertaking route optimization efforts—using real-time data to address delays and consolidate stops where appropriate—with pilot



adjustments expected this spring and broader implementation to follow. These efforts reflect a continued focus on improving student experience, operational efficiency, and long-term planning across the district.

Curriculum and Achievement Subcommittee—March 19, 2025

I also attended the Curriculum and Achievement Subcommittee meeting on March 19th where the Subcommittee reviewed the elementary literacy assessments used across CPS in grades PreK–5, including Really Great Reading, mCLASS (DIBELS), i-Ready Reading, and MCAS ELA. The presentation described how these tools measure distinct aspects of reading development—from early, teacher-administered screenings targeting foundational skills such as phonological awareness and decoding, to computer-adaptive and state assessments measuring comprehension and grade-level proficiency. Members discussed how these instruments serve different purposes and are not interchangeable, but are used in combination to build a fuller picture of student learning. Educators draw on multiple data points over time to identify needs, monitor growth, and adjust instruction accordingly. The full presentation is available [here](#).

Taken together, the work reviewed at both subcommittees reflects the district's sustained focus on student outcomes, operational efficiency, and sound long-term planning.

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

Sincerely,

Sumbul Siddiqui
Mayor of Cambridge (2020-21, 2022-23, 2026-27)