

**FINANCE COMMITTEE****COMMITTEE MEETING**

~ MINUTES ~

**Wednesday, May 10, 2023****6:00 PM****Sullivan Chamber  
795 Massachusetts Avenue  
Cambridge, MA 02139****The Finance Committee will conduct a public hearing to discuss the School Department budget covering the fiscal period July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024**

| <b>Attendee Name</b> | <b>Present</b>                      | <b>Absent</b>                       | <b>Late</b>              | <b>Arrived</b> |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------|
| Dennis J. Carlone    | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |                |
| Patricia Nolan       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/> |                |
| Burhan Azeem         | <input type="checkbox"/> Remote     | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/> |                |
| Alanna Mallon        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/> |                |
| Marc C. McGovern     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/> |                |
| Sumbul Siddiqui      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/> |                |
| E. Denise Simmons    | <input type="checkbox"/> Remote     | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/> | 6:19 PM        |
| Quinton Zondervan    | <input type="checkbox"/> Remote     | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/> |                |
| Paul F. Toner        | <input type="checkbox"/> Remote     | <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/> |                |

A public meeting of the Cambridge City Council's Finance Committee was held on Wednesday, May 10, 2023. The meeting was Called to Order at 6:00 p.m. by the Chair, Councillor Nolan. Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023 adopted by Massachusetts General Court and approved by the Governor, the City is authorized to use remote participation. This public meeting was hybrid, allowing participation in person, in the Sullivan Chamber, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, City Hall, 795 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA and by remote participation via zoom.

**At the request of the Chair, Deputy City Clerk Crane called the roll.****Councillor Nolan – Present/In Sullivan Chamber****Councillor Azeem – Present/Remote****Councillor Carlone -Absent****Vice Mayor Mallon – Present/In Sullivan Chamber****Councillor McGovern – Present/In Sullivan Chamber****Councillor Simmons – Absent\*****Councillor Toner – Present/Remote****Councillor Zondervan – Present/Remote****Mayor Siddiqui – Present/In Sullivan Chamber****Present – 7, Absent – 2. Quorum established.****\*Councillor Simmons was marked present and remote at 6:19p.m.**

The Chair, Councillor Nolan offered opening remarks and noted that the call of the meeting was to discuss the School Department budget covering the fiscal period July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024. Councillor Nolan introduced Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Victoria Greer, who was

Minutes Acceptance: Minutes of May 10, 2023 6:00 PM (Committee Reports)

joined by School Committee members and School Department staff who were participating both in person and via Zoom.

The Chair, Councillor Nolan recognized Vice Chair Rachel Weinstein, School Committee member, who gave a brief overview of the School Department budget process and shared her excitement for passing the budget unanimously at the School Committee meeting. They shared that the budget reflects and responds to what was heard from the community and is aligned with a strategic plan that has been worked on by both the School Department and the School Committee and is a step forward for the students.

**The Chair, Councillor Nolan opened Public Comment.**

Banke Oluwole, 73 Bolton Street, MA, Specialist at the Fletcher Maynard Academy, read highlights from an email that was sent to the City Council that shared concerns of the transparency of the budget process regarding parents and public input.

Maritza Soto, 82 Fresh Pond Parkway, Cambridge, MA, urged the City that more funds and resources go towards other schools to help Special Need students and students with IEPs to help population needs and not just enrollment numbers.

Sara Flynn, 103 Larch Road, Cambridge, MA, shared concerns about the proposed staff cuts to paraprofessionals and interventionists and urged the School Department to reconsider and make room for the staff to be able to stay to help the students who need it.

The Chair, Councillor Nolan recognized Dr. Greer who gave a presentation titled “Cambridge Public School FY 2024 Adopted Budget” (**Attachment A**). The presentation reviewed strategic objectives and initiatives and shared that the budget would be supporting the salary increases for employees and operational costs, enrollment, students, school-based needs, investments that are aligned with the 2022-2025 district plan, and will help continued organizational realignment.

The Chair, Councillor Nolan shared that the City Council had submitted six questions (**Attachment B**) to the School Department which have already received answers but would like to review and discuss them further. It was noted by the Chair that the six questions came from Councillor McGovern and herself. Dr. Greer, along with her team, offered more insight and clarity into the responses that were provided in advance of the meeting and made themselves available to respond to any further questions or concerns that were brought forward by Councillors. Councillor Nolan shared concerns about the budget and not seeing the results in students that the City and the School Department strive to see.

The Chair, Councilor Nolan recognized Councillor Zondervan who shared that he has similar concerns as Councillor Nolan about not seeing the results that are needed in the schools. Councillor Zondervan asked if by letting go paraprofessionals that were hired during COVID would affect students who may be relying on them for assistance post pandemic. Dr. Greer shared that paraprofessionals were hired to help with assisting students during COVID to help with smaller class sizes and distancing. Councillor Zondervan shared that he feels the right decisions are not being made towards the overall budget.

The Chair, Councillor Nolan recognized Vice Mayor Mallon who thanked everyone for their efforts towards the budget. She had a question on the RSTA review and if there was a job inventory during the review to help replace jobs that may not have a successful career path in the world right now. Dr. Greer shared that a review was done, and many jobs came from student interests, and there will be a shift in the future to adapt to jobs that are no longer needed in the community. Vice Mayor Mallon shared that she is excited to see the evolution of RSTA in the future to help students succeed in the world.

The Chair, Councillor Nolan recognized Councillor Toner who shared he would like to see added focus on the RSTA program and workforce development to help young people and the economy. Councillor Toner shared his excitement for the accomplishments of the School Department, including afterschool programs, AP classes, electives, and sports programs. He shared that there is always be room for improvement and would also like to see better results in the classroom.

The Chair, Councillor Nolan recognized Councillor Azeem who asked the School Department about their thoughts on the conversations and criticism around eighth grade algebra. School Committee Member David Weinstein responded by sharing that it is something that the Committee is in strong support of and are looking at how to align algebra with the School Department's goals and values. Councillor Azeem thanked the Committee and the School Department for their hard work.

**The Chair, Councillor Nolan recognized Mayor Siddiqui who made a motion to forward the School Departments FY24 Budget to the full City Council with a favorable recommendation.**

**Deputy City Clerk Crane called the roll.**

**Councillor Azeem – Yes**

**Councillor Carlone – Absent**

**Vice Mayor Mallon – Yes**

**Councillor McGovern – Yes**

**Councillor Nolan – No**

**Councillor Simmons – Yes**

**Councillor Toner – Yes**

**Councillor Zondervan – No**

**Mayor Siddiqui – Yes**

**Yes – 6, No – 2, Absent – 1. Motion passed.**

The Chair, Councillor Nolan recognized Councillor Simmons who thanked the School Department for their extraordinary work with children and families.

**The Chair, Councillor Nolan made a motion to adjourn the meeting.**

**Deputy City Clerk Crane called the roll.**

**Councillor Azeem – Yes**

**Councillor Carlone – Absent**

**Vice Mayor Mallon – Yes**

**Councillor McGovern – Yes**

**Councillor Nolan – Yes**

**Councillor Simmons – Yes**

**Councillor Toner – Yes**

**Councillor Zondervan – Yes**

**Mayor Siddiqui – Yes**

**Yes – 8, No – 0, Absent – 1. Meeting adjourned at 7:56p.m.**

Attachment A – Presentation titled “Cambridge Public School FY 2024 Adopted Budget”

Attachment B – City Council Questions: School Committee Budget

**Clerk’s Note:** The City of Cambridge/22 City View records every City Council meeting and every City Council Committee meeting. This is a permanent record. The video for this meeting can be viewed at:

[https://cambridgema.granicus.com/player/clip/502?view\\_id=1&redirect=true&h=6769734cf760c0a6224468d567aa7959](https://cambridgema.granicus.com/player/clip/502?view_id=1&redirect=true&h=6769734cf760c0a6224468d567aa7959)

Transmitting Communication from Yi-An Huang, City Manager, relative to the FY2024 submitted budget and appropriation orders. .

A communication was received from Budget Director Taha Jennings, transmitting the Schedule for the upcoming Budget hearings.

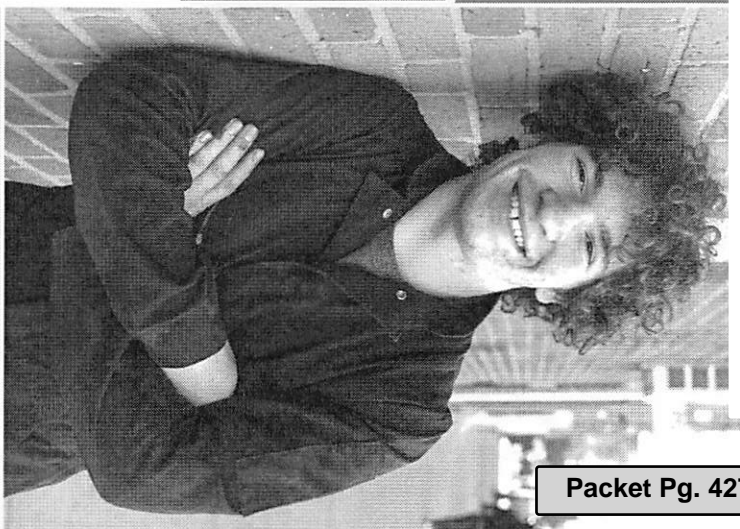
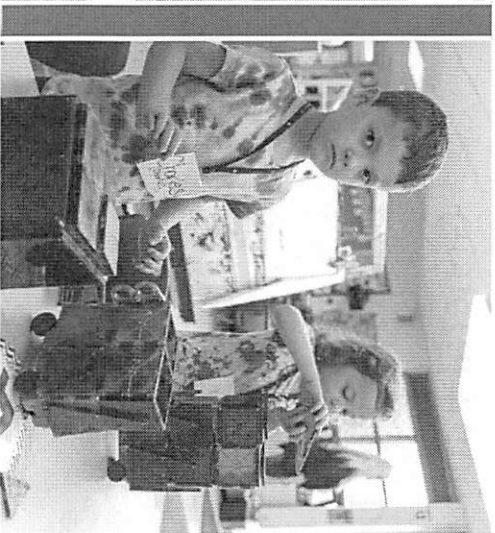
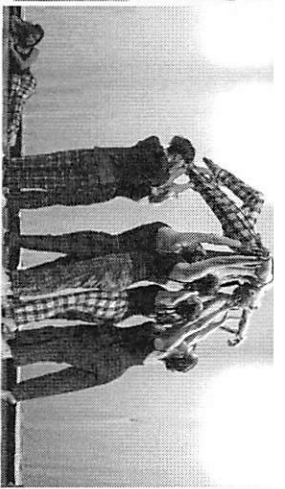
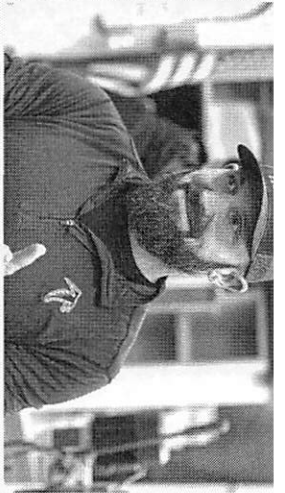
A communication was received from Elaine Carrieri Executive Assistant Office of the Superintendent Cambridge Public Schools transmitting a presentation slides regarding CPS FY24 Adopted Budget.

A communication was received from Elaine Carrieri Executive Assistant Office of the Superintendent Cambridge Public Schools transmitting FY24 Proposed Budget School Committee Questions.



ATTACHMENT A

Minutes Acceptance: Minutes of May 10, 2023 6:00 PM (Committee Reports)



# Cambridge Public Schools

## FY 2024 Adopted Budget

City Council Hearing  
May 10, 2023



# Tonight's Agenda

- FY 2024 Adopted Budget Overview
  - General Fund Budget
  - ESSER Plan
- Community Feedback
- New Investments in Key Priorities
- Organizational Alignment & Capacity
- Discussion





High Expectations ● Equitable Opportunity ● Joy of Learning ● Wellness

## VISION

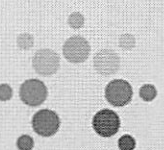
Cambridge Public Schools is widely recognized as an institution of excellence. **Our schools** deliver an inclusive, safe, high-quality learning experience that cultivates every student's potential, works to dismantle educational inequities, and strengthens family and community partnerships. **Our students** are critical thinkers, lifelong learners, and builders of a more equitable society who graduate prepared to make informed choices about their future.

## MISSION

Cambridge Public Schools delivers an excellent education that **inspires, acknowledges, empowers, and supports** every student on their personal journey to achieve their highest potential in and beyond school and as productive members of their communities.



Sense of Belonging ● Personal & Collective Responsibility ● Partnership



Continuous Improvement ●



# Strategic Objectives and Initiatives



## OBJECTIVE 1: Deliver Ambitious Instruction & Effective Supports

1. Define a districtwide **instructional framework** that guides consistent, high-quality instruction in every classroom.\*
2. Align **instructional practices and resources** to instructional framework across content areas and grade bands.
3. Establish robust **multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS)** to support students' academic, social, emotional, and behavioral needs.



## OBJECTIVE 3: Effective Staff Learning & Support

7. Strengthen and **expand educator and leader career pathway programs**, prioritizing hard-to-staff roles and diversification of staff.\*
8. Establish a **comprehensive, role-based professional learning strategy and system** that improves practices in alignment with district vision.
9. Improve **evaluation systems** for all staff to support professional growth as part of a culture of continuous improvement.



## OBJECTIVE 2: Provide Accessible College & Career Pathways

4. Collaborate to implement a city-wide plan for **universal preschool** to promote equitable access as a foundation for student success.\*
5. Implement a system of **individualized student success planning and supports** that prepare students for effective transitions and post-graduation success.\*
6. Embed **college & career exploration** and experiences across the JK-12 continuum.



## OBJECTIVE 4: Build Welcoming & Supportive Schools & District

10. Improve **families' access to resources** within and beyond CPS.
11. Promote positive school cultures and climate through district-wide vision of **inclusive and restorative discipline** policies and practices.
12. Develop a multi-year **facilities improvement plan** based on pending building study.



# Superintendent's FY 2024 Proposed Budget

- A comprehensive plan for the general fund budget and the remaining ESSER\* grant funds.
- Aligns resources with the CPS 2022-2025 District Plan
- Includes an additional \$17 million in projected expenditures
  - +**12.6** million in **general fund** expenditures
  - +**3.9** million in federal **ESSER** grant expenditures
  - +**0.4** million in new **Title I & IDEA\*\*** grant investments.
- Supports:
  - Salary & benefit increases for existing employees & ongoing operational costs
  - Enrollment, student, and school-based needs
  - Strategic investments aligned with the 2022 - 2025 District Plan
  - Continued organizational realignment

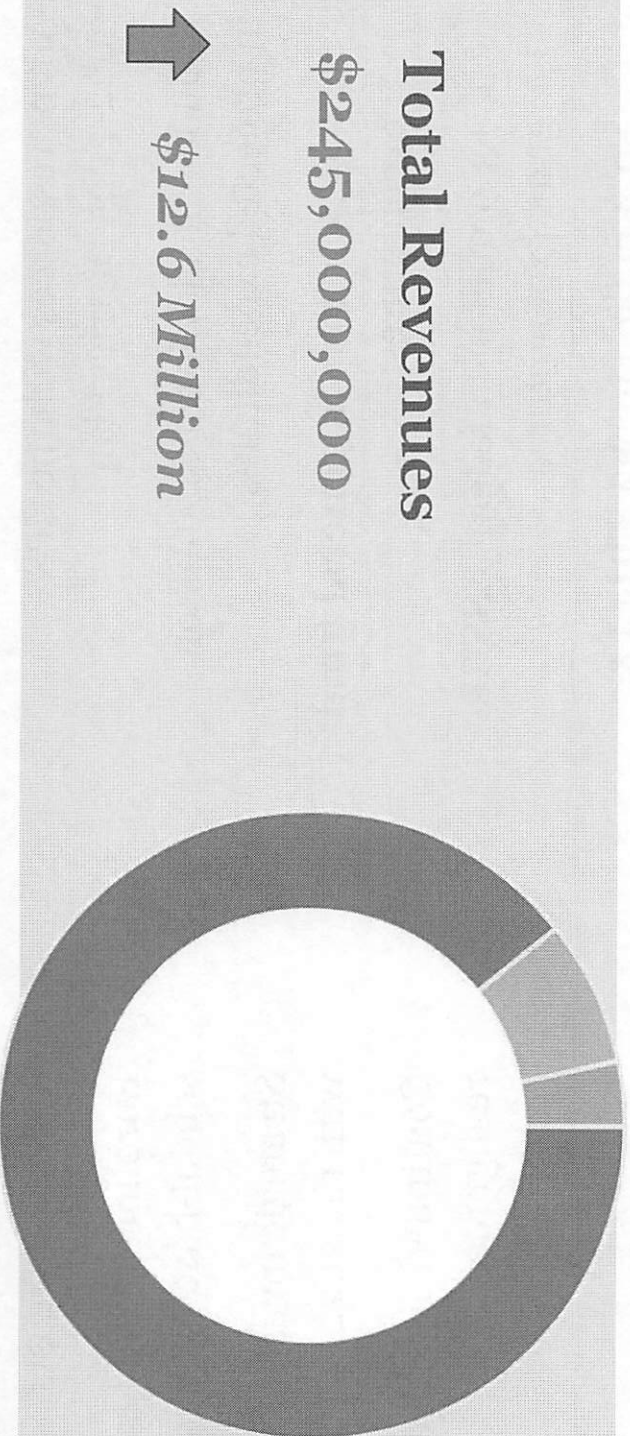
\*Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER), federal funds allocated to assist school districts with recovery from COVID-19 which must be expended by Sept 2024.

\*\*Individuals with Disabilities Act federal grant.



# General Fund Revenues

- Property taxes are the main source of revenue for CPS, funding 90% of the general fund budget



89.8%

**Property Taxes**  
\$220.0 million

8.0%

**Education Aid**  
\$19.7 million

2.2%

**Other**  
\$6.5 Million

Ch. 70

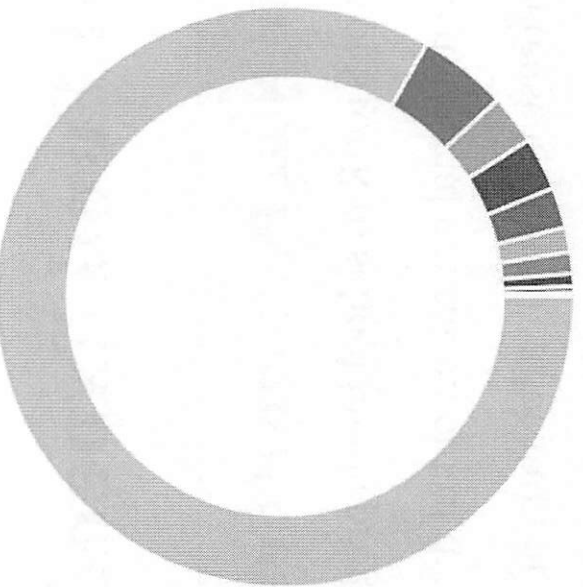


# General Fund Expenditures \$245,000,000

**Increase of \$12.6 million (5.4%)**

## Salary & Benefits

- Salaries and benefits total 83% (\$204 million) of district's budget, an increase of 12.7 million
- Net increase of 4.3 FTEs
- Increases related to current employees:
  - \$9 million for COLA, steps, \$1.7 million for 3 professional days for teachers
  - \$3 million in health, dental, & pension costs



- Salaries & Benefits
- Student Transportation
- Out of District Tuition
- Bldg Maint. & Energy
- Instructional
- Materials/Services
- Other Supplies & Services
- Technology
- Professional Development
- Professional & Technical



# General Fund Expenditures - Continued

## Changes in Non-Personnel Costs

- Increase of \$100K to school meals program general fund subsidy (FY24 total is \$850K)
- Decrease to special education out of district (OOD) tuition (-\$1.0M)
  - Decrease is offset by allocation of unspent balances in the FY23 Circuit Breaker grant.
  - The budget for special education OOD tuition is \$16.8 million.
- Other cost increases include software license costs, facilities maintenance & rental costs, and instructional materials and services.

| Category                              | Increase/Decrease |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|
| School Meals                          | \$100K            |
| Tuition                               | (\$994K)          |
| Instructional Materials/Services & PD | \$177K            |
| Technology                            | \$291K            |
| Facilities                            | \$277K            |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                          | <b>(\$149K)</b>   |

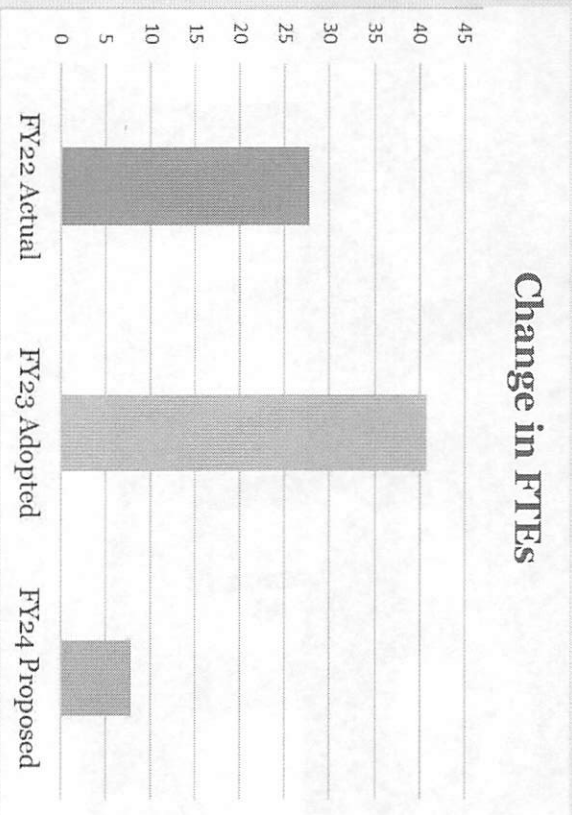


# Federal COVID-19 Relief Grants

## Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER)

- CPS received a total of \$12.6 million in ESSER funds to support three broad areas of recovery: academics, social emotional learning and health and safety.
- Funds must be fully expended by Sept.2024.
- Projected expenditures for FY 2024 are \$3.9 million.
- Investment decisions for FY 2024 considered:
  - District plan priorities
  - Evolving needs
  - Financial sustainability
- FTEs supported by the grant will decrease from 40.8 to 7.8

| Fiscal Year             | Expenditures    |
|-------------------------|-----------------|
| FY 2022 Actual          | \$3.3M          |
| FY 2023 Projected       | \$5.4 M         |
| <b>FY 2024 Proposed</b> | <b>\$3.9M</b>   |
| <b>Total</b>            | <b>\$12.6 M</b> |





# FY 2024 Community Perspectives



Minutes Acceptance: Minutes of May 10, 2023 6:00 PM (Committee Reports)



# Stakeholder Engagement

## Who did we hear from?

Approximately 600 individuals participated in meetings and surveys

### In-Person & Virtual Community Meetings

75

individuals attended (primarily families / community members)

### Survey (multiple languages)

Online survey

519

responses:

- Parent / Families / Caregivers (388)
- CPS Staff (140)
- Community Partners (13)
- Students (3)

### Student engagement

Student-led session

- 53 students registered
- ~55 students participated
- 25 students submitted written feedback

Falcon Block survey

20 students

Phone Outreach by DHSP Community Engagement Team

120 families participated



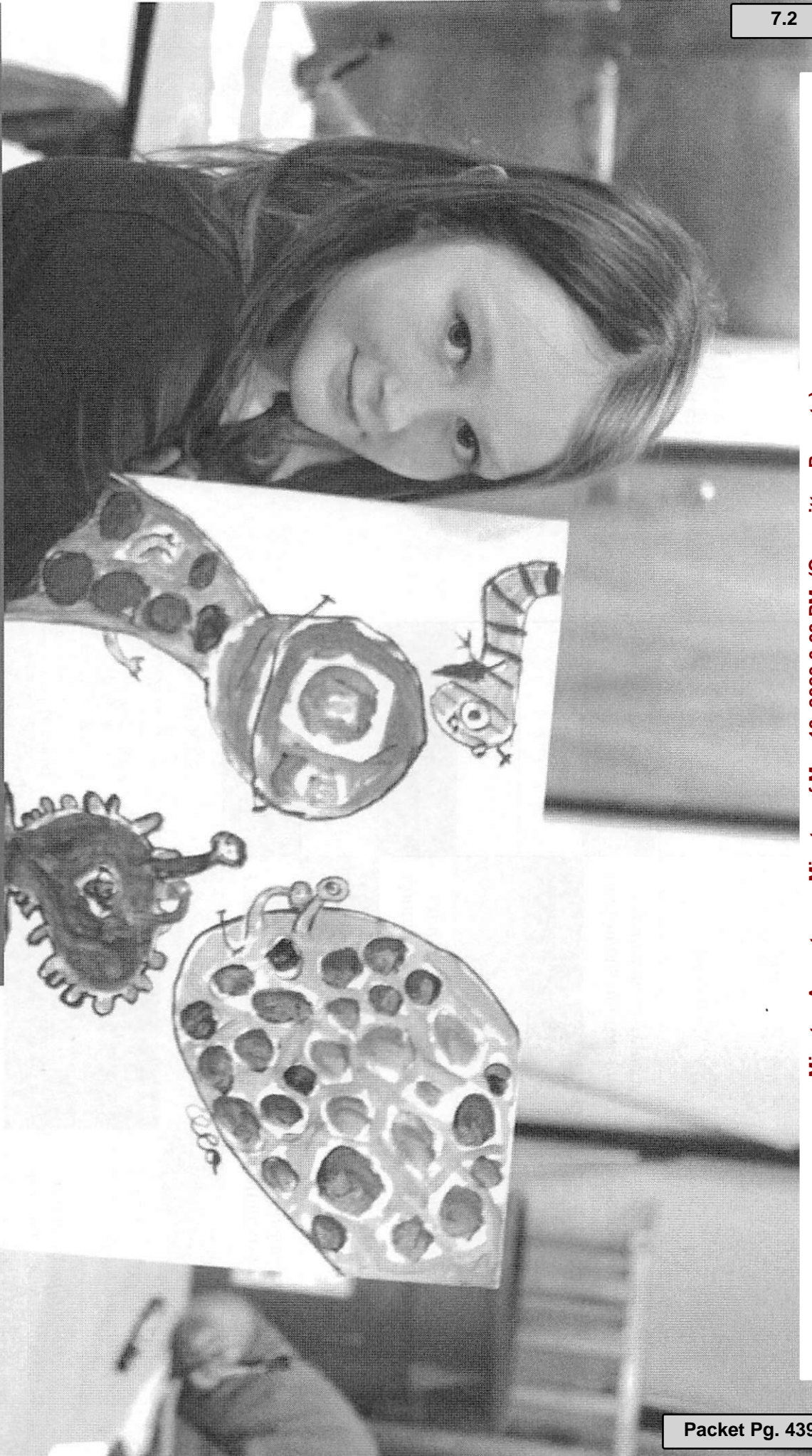
# What we heard

## Key takeaway from community stakeholders

| Students   | Families  | Staff   |
|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen support for college- and career-planning, including internships and jobs during high school</li> <li>Strengthen support for clubs</li> <li>Improve educator diversity</li> <li>Address concerns about bathrooms and CRLS wifi</li> <li>Address concerns about student behavior and inappropriate technology use</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide high expectations and rigorous instruction, including for those students who are behind and those students who are ahead</li> <li>Strengthen literacy and math instruction and outcomes</li> <li>Expand access to after school opportunities</li> <li>Support universal preschool</li> <li>Support continuation of free lunch</li> <li>Address concerns about student behavior and inappropriate technology use</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide dedicated role-based training on instructional priorities, including for substitutes and paraprofessionals</li> <li>Address challenges in staffing coverage due to absences, vacancies, and substitute shortages</li> <li>Build staff capacity to address behavioral, mental health, and socio-emotional needs as part of classroom instruction and services</li> <li>Support recruitment and retention of staff, especially staff of color, through enhanced recruitment, career pathways, and support</li> </ul> |






## FY24 District Plan Budget Priorities





# District Plan

## Proposed Focus Initiatives for FY24

| District Plan Objective & Initiative  |   |  |  | Year 1: FY23 | Year 2: FY24                                 | Year 3: FY25                                 |
|---|---|--|--|--------------|--|--|
|  | 1. Instructional framework  |  |  | FOCUS        | Continuous improvement, expansion, alignment | Continuous improvement, expansion, alignment |
|   | 2. Aligned instructional resources                                |  |  | Pre-work     | FOCUS  | Continuous improvement, expansion, alignment |
|   | 3. Multi-tiered systems of support                                |  |  | Pre-work     | FOCUS  | Continuous improvement, expansion, alignment |
|   | 4. Universal preschool  |  |  | FOCUS        | FOCUS  | FOCUS - LAUNCH                               |
|    | 5. Individual student success planning                            |  |  | FOCUS        | Continuous improvement, expansion, alignment | Continuous improvement, expansion, alignment |
|   | 6. College & career experiences                                   |  |  | Pre-work     | FOCUS  | Continuous improvement, expansion, alignment |
|   | 7. Staff pathways   |  |  | FOCUS        | Continuous improvement, expansion, alignment | Continuous improvement, expansion, alignment |
|    | 8. Professional learning  |  |  |              | Pre-work                                     | FOCUS  |
|   | 9. Evaluation Systems   |  |  |              | FOCUS  | FOCUS  |
|   | 10. Family access to resources                                    |  |  | FOCUS        | Continuous improvement, expansion, alignment | Continuous improvement, expansion, alignment |
|   | 11. Discipline (behavioral expectations, policies, and practices) |  |  |              | Pre-work                                     | FOCUS  |
|    | 12. Facilities plan   |  |  |              | Pre-work                                     | FOCUS  |







# FY 24 Budget Guiding Principles

- The FY 24 budget process will encompass the General Fund Budget and the Elementary & Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) III federal grant.

- The FY 24 Budget will align resources with the CPS District Plan objectives and annual focused initiatives.

## District Plan Objectives:

- 
 Deliver Ambitious Instruction and Effective Supports
- 
 Provide Accessible College and Career Pathways
- 
 Implement Effective Staff Learning and Support
- 
 Build Welcoming and Supportive Schools and District.



In making budget decisions we considered the following:

- Does it align with student outcome data & improvement priorities?
- Does it align with school-based data & improvement priorities?
- Is it researched and evidenced based?
- Are resources directed towards our most vulnerable students
- Can we measure return on investment?
- What is our theory of change for the investment?



# District Plan Objective 1

## Deliver Ambitious Instruction

### Initiative 1: Align instructional practices

- Math and literacy district leads (+2.33 FTEs)
- Curriculum and assessment purchases for math, ELA, and health

### Initiative 2: Tiered systems of support

- Strategic tutoring and acceleration academies
- High School Extension Program
- Re-engagement team (+2 FTEs)
- Partnering with Young People's Project Flagway program

**Budget Impact**  
+\$1.7M +4.3 FTEs

Funding Source: ESSER,  
General Fund, other grants





# A New Framework for the ELA and Mathematics Departments to ensure:

1 Initiatives and resources are consistent, cost-effective and organized across the district.

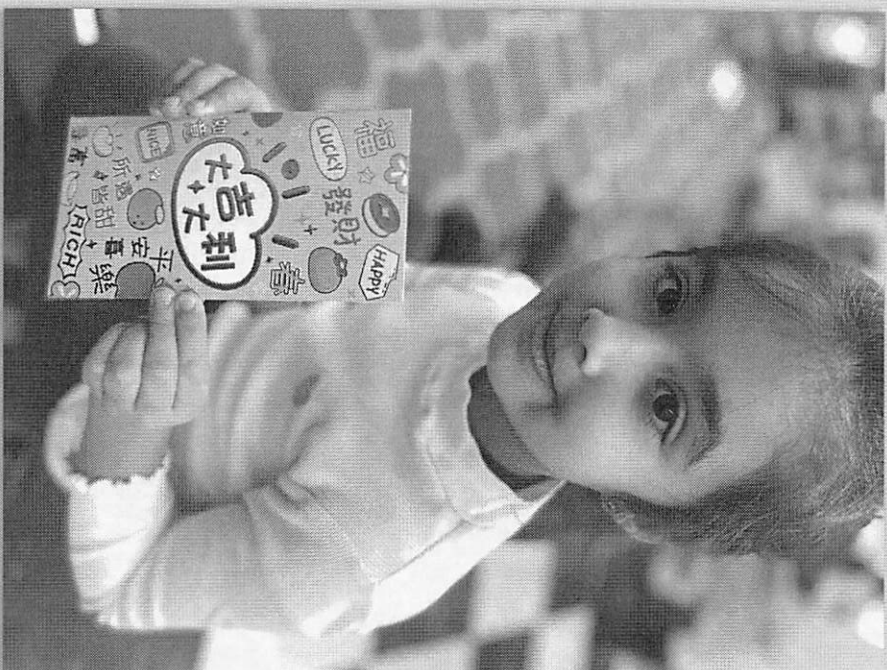
2 JK-12 curriculum, instruction and assessments are aligned to research-based and evidenced-based practices.

3 Clearly articulated and aligned systems of communication and accountability.

4 Improved transparency and trust for students, staff, caregivers and stakeholders.



# Overview of Strategic Tutoring and Acceleration Academies



- Collaborating with Out-of-School Time Partners
- Before and after-school opportunities for tutoring
- Tutoring opportunities prioritized for CPS licensed educators
- Research/evidence-based
- Aligned to current and evolving literacy and math improvement strategies and interventions
- Math Acceleration Academies - vacation weeks and summer programming



## District Plan Objective 2

### Implement Accessible College & Career Pathways

**Budget Impact**  
+\$396K +2.0 FTEs  
Funding Sources: ESSER  
& General Fund

#### Initiative 4: Universal preschool program

- Executive Director of Early Childhood Education

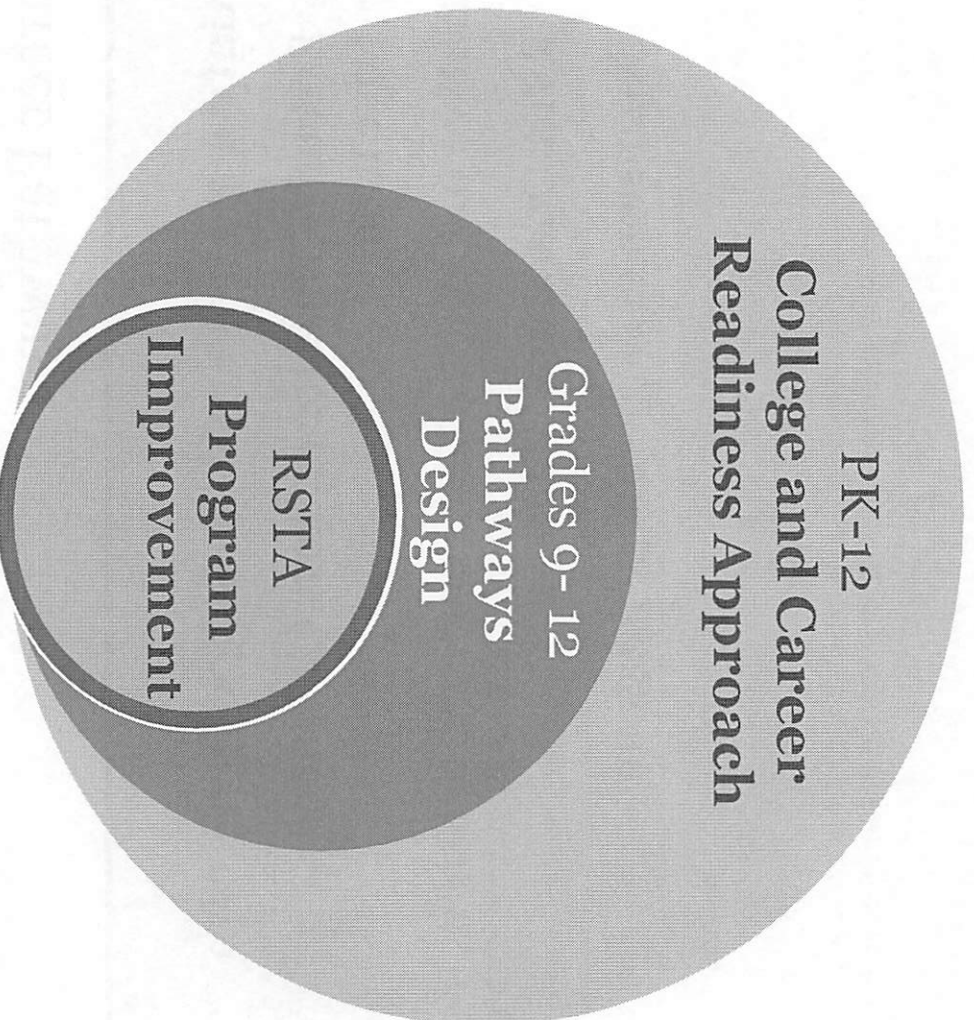
#### Initiative 6: College & career exploration.

- RSTA Operations Manager
- Expansion of early college program





# Implement Accessible College & Career Pathways



1. Develop a district-wide structure to support and develop College and Career Pathways (**Preschool thru Grade 12**)
2. Expand access to students for Early College
3. Program Manager to support the operations/oversight of RSTA; requested by RSTA Executive Director



# District Plan Objective 3

## Implement Effective Staff Learning & Support

**Budget Impact**  
**+\$326K**  
 Funding Sources: ESSER,  
 General Fund & IDEA

### Initiative 7: Educator career pathway programs.

- Expand educator pathway program to include both Lesley College and Cambridge College programs
- MTTEL preparation support

### Initiative 8 Professional Learning

- Stipends and professional development contracts





# District Plan Objective 4

## Welcoming Schools & District

**Budget Impact**  
**+\$462K +1.5 FTEs**  
 Funding Source: ESSER,  
 General Fund, other grants

### Initiative 10: Families' access to resources

- Social worker for families experiencing homelessness
- Bilingual liaison

### COVID Mitigation

- Test kits and mailing costs





# Organizational Alignment & Capacity

## Entry Plan Findings

**Goal:** To improve organizational effectiveness and efficiency to improve the outcome for our students and support for educators.

### Areas of Needed Growth:

- Inconsistencies (decision-making)
- Lack of clear reporting and primary responsibility (Teaching & Learning)
- Lack of alignment of the curricular areas
  - Interventions
  - Special education
  - Coaching support
- Lack of clearly articulated principal supervision and coaching framework
- Lack of clearly articulated district priorities: Instructional vision/framework



# Organizational Improvements

**Budget Impact**  
+\$24.5K +2.1 FTEs

Funding: General Fund

## Increase organizational effectiveness

- Reclassify an existing position to a lead teacher for dual language programs.
- Add cybersecurity specialist to the ICTS department.
  - Add/Reclassify staff in Human Resource (HR) department:
  - Employee & labor relations specialist
  - Reclassify Confidential Secretary to HR project manager





# Discussion Prompts

1

Clarifying  
Questions

2

Please share warm  
*(positive)*  
feedback regarding  
the overall budget

3

Please share cool  
*(critical)*  
feedback regarding  
the overall budget



# Appendix

Minutes Acceptance: Minutes of May 10, 2023 6:00 PM (Committee Reports)



# Strategic Tutoring - Best Practices

- Tutoring is most effective when conducted at school, during school hours, and in three or more sessions per week for at least 30 minutes each.
- Tutoring provides additional, intensive instructional time and does not replace or take place during core instruction.
- Tutoring is more effective when conducted by teachers or professional tutors who are well trained and supervised rather than by volunteers, peers, or parent tutors.
- Early-grade students (pre-K–1) benefit from 1:1 tutoring; students in grades 2–5 benefit from small groups with a tutor-student ratio of 1:3 or 1:4; secondary students benefit from small groups with a tutor-student ratio of no more than 1:4.
- Effective before/after school tutoring uses highly trained staff; includes small group or 1:1 opportunities; is data driven and aligns to current assessments and instructional tools.

## City Council Questions: School Committee Budget

### COUNCILLOR NOLAN:

1. Does the budget include the resources needed to ensure that every current first grader reads and writes at grade level by the end of grade 3 and every current fifth grader successfully completes enough math to have mastered the equivalent of a full algebra course by the end of grade 8 so they can start their math journey in high school in Geometry or Algebra 2?

CPS uses a multi-pronged approach to address student achievement:

- The CPS 2022 -2025 District Plan Objective I, *Deliver Ambitious Instruction and Effective Supports* includes the following strategic initiatives to improve outcomes for all students:
  - **Strategic initiative 1:** The creation of an **instructional framework** to guide consistent high quality instruction in every classroom. The district is in the process of finalizing the framework and rolling out to educators and the community.
  - **Strategic initiative 2:** The **alignment of instructional practices and resources to the instructional framework** across content areas and grade bands. As part of this initiative, the district is investing in new literacy and math curriculum and professional development which will be implemented in FY24. In addition, district level support and oversight of literacy and math intervention and coaching is being restructured in order to ensure consistent, coherent instruction across grade bands.
  - **Strategic Initiative 3:** Creation of a robust **multi-tiered system of support (MTSS)** to support students' academic, social, emotional, and behavioral health needs. In FY24, this will include the implementation of a **strategic tutoring** program.
- The CPS staffing model for elementary and upper school includes math and literacy interventionists at each school, with additional positions allocated to schools that have a larger percentage of high needs students.

2. What is the status of the district providing individual learning plans for every student?

The District Plan's **Strategic Initiative 5** supports the implementation of a system of **individualized student success planning and supports** that prepare students for effective transitions and post-graduation success. As part of this effort, CPS has applied to participate in the EdRedesign Institute for Success Planning at Harvard University. The next step in the process is for our Success Planning team to participate in an interview with the EdRedesign Institute so that they can learn more about the work in CPS, our goals and so that they can provide us with additional information about the success planning framework and the supports that will guide our developing individualized student success plans for CPS students.



3. How is the effectiveness of the Innovation Agenda and Level Up initiatives that are ten and five years old respectively being evaluated and measured?

The district is developing a system of regular evaluation to drive improvement. The following evaluations occurred or are underway in the current year:

- A review of the RSTA program was completed and the district is beginning the implementation of recommendations.
- An audit of elementary school and upper school schedules is currently underway, and the district anticipates recommendations that will enable us to leverage school schedules to support student achievement.
- An audit of special education staff workloads to ensure that students receiving special education services have the personnel needed to access learning successfully .

In the upcoming year, we plan to evaluate the multilingual programs, including the three language immersion programs and conduct a high school schedule audit. As we finalize the program evaluation cycle, we will be able to communicate a timeline for a review of the level up and upper school programs.

4. With spending up to \$35K/student and the state average at \$19K/student, how does the district explain in achievement terms the justification for the doubled spending?

The Cambridge community values choice, small schools and class sizes, and paying our staff well. As a result, our per pupil expenditures are higher than the state average and most other school districts in Massachusetts.

We agree that our achievement is not where we want it to be or in line with our per pupil expenditure. However, we have developed our district plan that includes strategic objectives and initiatives that specifically are developed to improve our achievement level that we believe overtime will begin to match our expenditures. While we have started to implement various strategies for continuous improvement; one barrier that we have yet to address is that our school day and time on learning is not in line with other schools in the Commonwealth which has a significant impact on student achievement and outcomes.

#### COUNCILLOR MCGOVERN

1. Can you comment on the loss of ESSER, IDEA, Title 1 funds of \$5.5 million? I heard it could result in the loss of 32 FTE positions, mainly interventionist and paras. Is this accurate? If so, shouldn't we be making up these funds?

**ESSER FUNDS:** The ESSER funds were an unprecedented infusion of **one time monies** to assist elementary and secondary school districts in mitigating the impact of COVID-19. In total, the district received 12.6 million in ESSER funds across the three ESSER allocations, each with its own spending deadline. The district has/will expend approximately \$8.7 million by the end of this school year. The remaining ESSER funds (approximately \$3.9 million) must be fully expended no later than Sept. 2024.

The district has been intentional and transparent about the short term nature of this. We allocated interventionists and paraprofessionals to elementary schools for two years (SY21-22 and SY22-23) to address the immediate academic and social, emotional impacts of COVID-19 which



were particularly acute following the school closure of Spring 2020 and hybrid schooling of SY21-22. These positions, which were temporary in nature, were in addition to interventionists and paraprofessionals positions that already existed at each school as part of the permanent staffing model. In this next phase of recovery and improvement, CPS is transitioning to a research and evidenced based strategic tutoring model for students who need additional support and will not be continuing to fund the additional interventionists and paraprofessional positions.

**TITLE I and IDEA:** There is no substantive change in the district's funding from these sources, which we receive on an annual basis.

2. We provide more financial resources to schools that have more high needs scholars, but it doesn't appear that the additional funds are proportional to the difference in high needs students. For example, in an email from CTE president, Dan Monahan, he notes that KLO has 84.7% high needs students compared to Baldwin that has 32.9%, a 160% difference, yet they only receive 43% more funding. How are these amounts determined?

Mr. Monahan is referring to the discretionary funding allocation for the school. This allocation is a student based formula and should be compared on a per student basis and not a per school basis. As the table below illustrates, the Kennedy Longfellow school receives **\$622** per student, which is the **highest** per student funding, which correlates to having the highest percentage of high needs students. In contrast, the Baldwin's per student funding is **\$413** per student, which is the **lowest** per student funding.

| School                     | FY24<br>Projected<br>Enrollment | FY23 % High<br>Needs | FY24 Per<br>Student<br>Amount | Total<br>Discretionary<br>Funding |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Kennedy-Longfellow School. | 183                             | 84.8%                | <b>\$622</b>                  | <b>113,882</b>                    |
| Fletcher Maynard Academy   | 266                             | 77.2%                | \$588                         | 156,517                           |
| Graham & Parks School      | 376                             | 62.7%                | \$482                         | 181,060                           |
| Haggerty School            | 228                             | 59.1%                | \$481                         | 109,606                           |
| King Open School           | 365                             | 54.7%                | \$498                         | 181,773                           |
| Peabody School             | 325                             | 50.6%                | \$474                         | 154,153                           |
| Morse School               | 294                             | 48.6%                | \$492                         | 144,711                           |
| Tobin School               | 327                             | 42.2%                | \$488                         | 159,714                           |
| Cambridgeport School       | 256                             | 37.3%                | \$438                         | 112,085                           |
| M. L. King Jr. School      | 328                             | 36.7%                | \$415                         | 136,079                           |
| Amigos School (JK-8)       | 415                             | 35.9%                | \$432                         | 179,296                           |
| Baldwin School             | 347                             | 32.9%                | <b>\$413</b>                  | <b>143,295</b>                    |
| Total                      | 3,710                           | AVG:                 | <b>\$478</b>                  | <b>\$1,772,171</b>                |