

CAMBRIDGE SCHOOL COMMITTEE FY 2016 BUDGET GUIDELINES

Our Mission: *The Cambridge Public Schools will be a diverse urban school system that works with families and the community to successfully educate ALL of its students at high levels.*

Budget Guideline purpose: *Budget Guidelines are meant to provide broad, overarching themes to assist the Superintendent in development of the budget. These guidelines are not meant to identify specific programs or initiatives but rather to operate on a macro level and to express the major themes the School Committee wishes to be addressed in the development of the FY16 budget.*

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Budget decisions regarding programming, staffing, curriculum etc. should be data-driven and tied to the goal of improving academic outcomes for all students. We ask the superintendent to place particular emphasis on raising achievement for all students, with accelerated achievement growth for students in certain sub-groups to reduce achievement gaps, as well as providing appropriate academic challenge for high-achieving students. The FY16 budget should provide adequate funding for continued improvements in programs for students with disabilities and students who are English language learners.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

Adequate funding should be allocated to accommodate increased student enrollment and the continued implementation of a multi-tiered system of student assessments and interventions at each school. The School Committee requests that the superintendent provide recommendations for increasing the percentage students who are assessed as reading at a “proficient” level by grade three.

UPPER SCHOOLS

Ongoing support for the Upper Schools is essential to building a successful program in grades 6 through 8. The School Committee requests that the superintendent continue to refine the Upper School program in order to meet the Innovation Agenda goal of providing a superior academic and social experience for all students that prepares them for success in high school and post-secondary education. We ask the superintendent to make recommendations on strengthening the academic program and building a support system for social/emotional learning.

HIGH SCHOOL

The School Committee requests that the superintendent fund Cambridge Rindge and Latin School, RSTA and the High School Extension Program in ways that continue the academic, social and extracurricular excellence we have come to expect. All students in grades 9-12 should receive the support, guidance and challenge they deserve in order to prepare them for

whatever their future endeavors post-graduation. The FY16 Budget should support favorable class size in CRLS classes.

PROGRAM & CURRICULUM EVALUATION

The School Committee believes that the FY16 budget should continue to support systematic curriculum and program evaluation to ensure that students are receiving excellent instruction and coherent, high-quality curriculum in every subject area. Teaching and learning standards must be well planned and aligned with the Common Core and the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. Funding should be available to implement improvements recommended in the program evaluations. Consideration should be given to development of alternative measures of achievement.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Every CPS school should provide a safe, welcoming environment for all students and their families/caregivers. The School Committee requests that the superintendent to strengthen efforts to effectively engage families and the Cambridge community in support of student achievement. The FY16 Budget should support improved mechanisms for communicating our successes to the Cambridge community.

SCHOOL CLIMATE

We ask that the superintendent continue to support our mutual goal of educating students in inclusive environments based on their individual needs. Every school should provide a safe, supportive and nurturing environment that allows students and staff to focus of achievement without distraction. The FY16 Budget should support and enhance effective programs and curriculum that produce students who are physically, mentally, emotionally and socially healthy and safe. The FY16 Budget should support the goal of building a district-wide faculty that more closely reflects the diversity of our student body.

OPERATIONS & LONG RANGE PLANNING

The School Committee requests that the superintendent develop a budget that considers staff levels for school-based and non-school based personnel, ongoing review and assessment of operational departments. The budget should ensure funding for continued capital projects so that our schools are safe and supportive of evolving requirements of modern teaching and learning for students, staff and families. In addition, the district should identify cost-savings through energy efficiency and sustainability in all school buildings and explore a permanent location for CPS Administration.