

The Innovation Agenda: Revisions & Clarifications

Presented to the Cambridge School Committee

By Superintendent Jeffrey Young

March 8, 2011

Extensive Outreach & Dialogue

- School Committee Roundtable, Feb 3
- Innovation Agenda Town Hall Meetings, Feb 9 & 10
- School Committee Public Hearing, Feb 15
- NAACP Innovation Agenda Public Meeting, Feb 21
- Innovation Agenda Individual Elementary School Meetings
 - 12 meetings in total
- Email to CPS planning site, Superintendent & School Committee

We have listened

The community's feedback,
concerns, and suggestions have
improved the Innovation Agenda

Revisions

- Creation of an upper school campus in the Cambridgeport/Riverside neighborhood
- Continuation of language immersion JK-8 for Ola and Amigos
- Tobin Montessori and Graham & Parks to remain in current locations
- Revised staffing for upper school campuses

Four Upper School Campuses

- Cambridge Street (*same feeder pattern*)
 - King Open; Fletcher Maynard; Cambridgeport
- Rindge Avenue (*no longer serving King School*)
 - Peabody; Baldwin
- Vassal Lane (*same feeder pattern*)
 - Tobin Montessori; Graham & Parks; Haggerty
- Putnam Avenue (*new campus*)
 - King; Morse; Kennedy-Longfellow

Spring Street Building

- Kennedy-Longfellow JK-5
 - \$2 million technology grant in partnership with Lesley
 - District to explore with community additional programming to revitalize academic program
- No longer housing an upper school campus
- May serve as expansion site for 5th campus, should enrollment climb

JK-8 Language Immersion

- Ola Portuguese Immersion Program JK-8
 - Remaining at Cambridge Street building
- Amigos Spanish Immersion School JK-8
 - Moving to Upton Street building
 - District to review school request for student assignment to be subject to Controlled Choice SES policy
 - District to evaluate admissions policies/language testing
 - School to create Retention & Recruitment Plan for underrepresented student groups
- High School Extension Program at Broadway building
 - To accommodate Amigos move to Upton Street

Tobin and Graham & Parks

- Both schools remain in current location, JK-5, as a result of community feedback
- While it can prove challenging to integrate some students with disabilities into Montessori classrooms, there are students with disabilities successfully attending Montessori at this time
- 6th grade students from the Tobin Montessori will have the opportunity to participate in leadership projects within the Upper School Program

Upper School Staffing Plan

- Innovation Agenda staffing and budget increased
 - To provide additional specialists at all campuses
 - To provide additional core teachers for larger campus
- Three campuses projected to enroll 75-88 students/grade
 - Rindge Avenue, Cambridge Street, Putnam Avenue
- One campus projected to enroll 90-100 students/grade
 - Vassal Lane
- One additional teacher in each core area for larger campus

Upper School Staff

- 1 Instructional Leader (Dean/Principal)
- 1 Student Support (Guidance Counselor/Social Worker)
- 1 Library/Media/Technology Specialist
- 2 World Language Teachers
- 4 Music/Drama/Art Teachers
- 1-2 Physical Education Teachers
- 12 core teachers: ELA, math, social studies, science
 - Additional core teachers (4) for larger campus

Budget

- Innovation Agenda total projected cost ranges from \$380K-\$650K
- Reflects costs of additional staff
 - Upper School Program Developer (1)
 - Instructional Leaders (Deans/Principals) (4)
 - Student Support (Guidance Counselors/Social Workers) (4)
 - Library/Media/Technology Specialists (4)

Clarifications

- CPS best practices
- Differentiated academic challenge (tracking)
- Upper school governance, autonomy, and schedule
- Teacher assignment and upper school teams
- Role of teachers and families
- Controlled Choice and Kindergarten registration
- Family Resource Center (FRC) improvements

CPS Best Practices

- Project-based and experiential learning
- Interdisciplinary curriculum and instruction
- Authentic assessment, such as portfolios
- Developmental Design
- Analyzing student work to improve instruction
- Humanities
- Teacher teams that address learning needs of all students
- Professional Learning Communities

Differentiated Academic Challenge

- Committed to flexible groupings in heterogeneous classrooms
- Committed to providing professional support for teachers to provide effective differentiated instruction
- Leveled math classes explored as part of Math Curriculum Review Cycle (CRC)
 - Only leveled classes under consideration for upper school
 - Will await findings in this area

Upper School Governance & Autonomy

- School Council adhering to education reform guidelines
 - Also includes parent members from all feeder schools
- District-wide common practices, for example:
 - Assessment and accountability
 - Minimum number of instructional minutes/subject
- Autonomy by each campus, for example:
 - Mission, vision, educational philosophy
 - Daily schedule
- Looping and mixed grades possible if deemed to meet district assessment & accountability practices

Teacher Assignment & Teams

- District values stability and collaboration in our teaching teams
- Innovation Agenda to build on existing professional relationships and current strengths/expertise when possible
- Will create strongest upper school teams, with most committed, qualified teachers
- Look forward to working with CTA and our middle grades educators

Role of Teachers & Families

- Teachers from all schools to be engaged in developing upper school curriculum
 - Design of process to begin with Innovation Agenda approval
 - Stipend funds included in budget
- Family participation critical in developing upper school transition and community development plans
 - All City School Council Advisory Group a possible resource in designing this process

Controlled Choice & FRC

- Controlled Choice issues not addressed by Innovation Agenda
 - Controlled Choice Team will continue to meet
 - An area of future work
- Family Resource Center (FRC) improvements in process
 - Receiving bids for online registration system
 - Hiring consultant to revise all forms and materials
 - Exploring infrastructure systems to improve service

District Work in Progress

- Upper School Leadership and Human Resource issues
 - Instructional Leadership (Dean vs. Principal)
 - Student Support (Guidance Counselor vs. Social Worker)
 - Impact on JK-5 roles and responsibilities
 - Job descriptions
 - Organizational charts
- Implementation Plan and Timeline (*draft included*)
- Innovation Agenda performance measurements

Our thanks to the
Cambridge community for their
engagement in the Innovation Agenda

*A Design for Excellence in the
Cambridge Public Schools*