

FY24 Proposed Budget  
School Committee Questions  
Updated: Mar 23, 2023

**1. What is the difference between a coach and a lead teacher?**

*Answer:* There are some similarities, in the role: both work directly with teachers, other coaches and interventionists in providing direct coaching as well as professional learning, curriculum/assessment development, etc. The most significant differences are that teachers are not required to work with a coach and coaches do not evaluate teachers, while lead teachers may evaluate teachers.

**2. What is our sustainability plan for the positions we are funding with ESSER (e.g. career pathway program, early college coordinator) that will outlast COVID recovery?**

*Answer:* The plan will be to shift these positions onto the general fund and other grants that we have such as the CTE Career and Technical Education Partnership Grant. We shifted several positions to the general fund, Title I and IDEA as part of our FY24 budget to ensure that there is not a funding cliff at the end of ESSER.

**3. How did we evaluate partner programs to decide whether/how much to increase funding? Have we started to set expectations of annual evaluation?**

*Answer:* A review of annual funding requests takes into consideration elements such as: (a) relationship to the District's Strategic Vision/Mission/Goals/Focus Initiatives; (b) documented impact on students/families (both academic & non-academic); (c) number of students/families served; (d) program growth and/or innovation. The deputy superintendent is researching/developing more formal processes for evaluating programs so that a (public) rubric can be designed and implemented for SY:23-24. During a recent Gathering of Partners, participants expressed agreement regarding the importance of not only maintaining a comprehensive picture of how partnerships are working as a tool to support connections & improvement but also the importance of partners having a shared understanding of evaluation criteria, for funding & programmatic purposes. Evaluation development work will continue during the spring/summer of 2023.

**4. Is the main driver of wide variance in per pupil by school whether or not we have sub-separate classrooms?**

*Answer:*

**Staff Allocations:** Variations across school in per pupil expenditures for staff costs result from many factors. Staffing for sub-separate classrooms (OSS and SEI) is one driver. Other contributors are the number of additional staff allocated based on student need, including English language

learners and or students with disabilities not in sub-separate classrooms, additional support staff such as interventionists (Title I and other), as well as lower enrollment numbers resulting in smaller class sizes at some schools.

**Discretionary (non-personnel) Allocations** The per pupil calculation of the discretionary budgets also varies based on overall enrollment and the percent of high needs students at each school (i.e. low income, students with disabilities, English language learners). Each school receives two main categories of discretionary funding: (1) a general allocation for supplies, materials and services (sometimes called “per pupil”); and (2) a school improvement plan budget. The allocation formulas are based on a tiered formula, which gives a base amount to each school based, then adds funding based on enrollment, starting with total enrollment, then adds funding based on student need. This funding intentionally provides more funding on a per pupil basis to schools that have a higher percentage of high needs students. Please see page 205 and 206 of the budget for the formula details by school.

- 5. **Would like to see an increase in school improvement funds for schools. Fundraising has been difficult for schools this year and they could use more support. Costs for buses for field trips - continuing to adjust for increased costs of busing.**

*Answer:* The FY24 additional allocation to elementary schools for field trips ranges between \$3,765 and \$6,738 per elementary school (totaling \$60,000 across all schools). The formula for allocating the field trip funds considers both total enrollment and the percentage of families qualifying for free or reduced meals.

In addition to the specific field trip allocation that must be spent on field trips, principals also may use their discretionary budgets (general allocation or SIP) to increase the amount for field trips so that they are not dependent solely on fundraising for field trips and other student activities. While bus costs have increased each year based on the Eastern Bus contract, the overall budget for school based discretionary funds has also increased.

Between FY 2019 and FY 2024, overall funding for school discretionary budgets **increased** from \$3,802,903 to \$4,432,852, an increase of \$629,949 or 16.5%, despite the fact that enrollment has declined by 5.6% over that same time period (based on project enrollment for SY 2023-24).

	FY19	FY24	Chg	%Chg
School Discretionary Budget Funding	\$3,802,903	\$4,432,852	+\$629,949	+ 17%
Enrollment	7,204	6,824	-380	- 5%

**6. Funding for International Travel**

*Answer:* The School Committee’s Field Trip Policy (IJOA) states that “No financial support will be available from the Cambridge Public School Department or the Cambridge School Committee for any overnight, out-of-state or out-of-country travel unless an athletic team or academic team or competition has qualified for an overnight, out-of-state or out-of-country competition and in these narrow circumstances final approval of funding for such travel by an athletic team or academic team is subject to final approval by the Superintendent.”  
(<https://z2policy.ctspublish.com/masc/browse/cambridgeset/cambridge/IJOA>)

**7. Are the projected enrollment numbers for schools based on demand data, in addition to the 5-year weighted formula?**

*Answer:* Enrollment is projected for each school and grade based on a 5 year weighted formula that calculates the grade progression ratio, or the percent of students in the prior grade that move to the next grade. The formula takes into account new enrollment, withdrawals, and transfers. Throughout each year, district enrollment is managed based on the controlled choice policy and available seats at each school.

**8. What is the new FTE in Communications (goes from 2 people to 3)?**

*Answer:* This is not an overall addition to CPS staff, but reflects reconfiguration of staff into the Communications dept: the Berkshire St. receptionist position was transferred from the COO dept to Communications at the beginning of this year.

**9. What are the 3 new FTEs in the Elementary and Secondary Education Department (Office of the Assistant Superintendents of Elementary & Secondary Education)?**

*Answer:* The addition reflects 3 new positions: Exec. Director of Early Childhood, Exec. Director of College and Career Pathways, and the Program Manager of Career Pathways (work based learning position) -

**10. Will all ESSER funded teachers being reduced actually need to leave the district?**

*Answer:* Not necessarily, those who choose to remain will have an opportunity to assume open positions in the district. If they have professional status; they are guaranteed a position per the contract. We have already started planning with the CEA to support the non-professional status teachers by putting on a hiring fair to retain those teachers in the district in comparable positions.

**11. Are we implementing both a new English and Math curriculum? Is that doable?**

*Answer:* We are implementing new literacy and math curriculums, but at different grade levels and phases of implementation. Yes, it is doable.

**12. Please provide information about the need for the HR positions. Do we have comparisons with other districts?**

*Answer:* The human resources department is responsible for supporting close to 2000 staff for the district in all schools and departments. The need to support employee needs in areas such as onboarding, licensure, retention, training, improved staff morale and difficult employee matters (investigations) has increased substantially over the years and is having a very adverse impact. The proposed budget adds support to ensure that the data is valid and reported accurately as well as support in addressing the many challenges related to labor relations across all eight bargaining units as well as non-union employee groups is needed to maintain a productive, safe and orderly work environment.

Additionally, according to the Society of Human Resources Management (SHRM) the suggested staffing levels for a HR department is 1 HR Person for every 150 employees. An organization with a more intricate organizational structure such as CPS, may need a larger HR Department than suggested to effectively manage all HR tasks. Below are comps for other districts within the region: Brookline Public Schools-5 person HR Dept supporting 1600-1900 employees; Newton Public Schools-7 person HR Dept supporting 3300 employees; Wellesley Public Schools-4 person HR Dept supporting 1240 employees.

Also, according to PowerSchool's 2022 K-12 Talent Index Education Research Report, high performing K-12 organizations held the following common attributes: automated systems, integrated processes, data efficiencies, data driven decision making and faster, easier onboarding and contracts, all of which are areas of growth for CPS.

**13. Will the Ola program be provided with a Portuguese speaking building sub?**

*Answer:* Each elementary and upper school has two building substitute positions and may fill these positions with staff that best meet the needs of the school.

**14. How will we sustain COVID-19 testing?**

*Answer:* During the budget planning process for FY2025, in collaboration with the COVID-19 Health and Safety Working Group, we will determine what funding is necessary for testing.

**15. How will we fund replacement of HEPA Filters and replacement filters?**

*Answer:* While the district's commitment to more optimal air quality requires investment in the infrastructure necessary to ensure more frequent air exchanges than was typical prior to the pandemic, the more expensive equipment has already been procured. Going forward, routine maintenance (i.e. filter changes) as well as repairs and replacement of the occasional malfunctioning HEPA filter will be incorporated into the district's operating budget.

**16. Funding for facilities - aging buildings not slated for repair - how/will they be spruced up over the summer? Are there plans for upgrading furniture?**

*Answer:* The district is in the process of developing a cyclical review process to provide school leaders with the opportunity to identify and prioritize specific repairs and the replacement of furniture or other infrastructure-related needs within their schools. This review process will work in conjunction with the annual capital repairs budget process to ensure that capital priorities and maintenance projects reflect the totality of the district’s infrastructure needs.

**17. Are there AED devices in all our facilities?**

*Answer:* Yes.

**18. Is there a capital budget - long term plan?**

*Answer:* CPS is partnering with the City of Cambridge on a long-term facilities condition assessment that is meant to be published during calendar year 2023. This report will identify both urgent facilities maintenance issues in all schools as well as identify potential strategic options for future renovation or construction projects. In addition, CPS anticipates a budgetary allocation similar to previous fiscal years meant to address significant capital needs, i.e. roof repairs, boiler replacements, etc. This funding, which is separate from the overall operating budget, is part of the annual capital review process on which the five-year capital plans are based.

**19. Access to students/families about available programs - not on website, need digitally and in print with all resources**

*Answer:* The “[Families](#)” tab on the website has a comprehensive list of resources that is continuously updated, particularly “[Before and Afterschool Opportunities](#),” which links to a variety of internal and external resources (Agenda for Children). [FindIt Cambridge](#) is also an excellent resource and is embedded in our school newsletters as a standing item. The Family Policy Council will also be unveiling/launching its Cradle to Career Ecosystem Map, which will help CPS and other city departments help connect families with resources in a variety of areas.

Multiple flyers for different resources and events are available at schools and the family liaisons are an excellent point-of-contact to assist families with their individual needs.

**20. How many students don’t pass MCAS/drop out of CRLS, at risk of not graduating?**

*Answer:* This year alone, the re-engagement program at HSEP has served 21 students. This year 11 of those students will graduate. Three students are 21 years old, 3 are out of school on felony charges, 3 dropped out of school because of attendance issues.

HSEP data going back to 2017 when Principal Souliotis arrived. The data shows students who have not completed school with HSEP and the reasons why.

	Total Students Grades 9-12	Graduates	Certificate of Completion	Transferred	Dropped Out	Dropped for Attendance	
2017-2018	62	17 27.42%	1 1.61%	2 3.23%	2 3.23%	11 17.74%	
2018-2019	62	15 24.19%	0 0.00%	5 8.06%	3 4.84%	5 8.06%	
2019-2020	56	24 42.86%	0 0.00%	5 8.93%	3 5.36%	1 1.79%	
2020-2021	33	18 54.55%	0 0.00%	1 3.03%	0 0.00%	2 6.06%	
2021-2022	47	16 34.04%	0 0.00%	5 10.64%	0 0.00%	3 6.38%	Remote & Hybrid Years
2022-2023	67	22 32.84%	4 5.97%	1 1.49%	3 4.48%	1 1.49%	

\*Likely will increase with quarter 4

\*Waiting on MCAS

**21. Please provide an update on BRYT? How did that expansion go? Is there a need for further expansion?**

*Answer:*

**Mission and Basic Description:** CRLS-BRYT provides clinical support, academic coordination, family support, and care coordination services to CRLS students who are transitioning back to a full schedule after missing extensive amounts of learning due to serious mental health, medical, and/or life transition challenges. BRYT is a short-term, intensive (Tier 3) general education program open to students with and without disabilities; its supports are customized to each student’s needs, culturally competent, clinically informed, and flexible. Program staff strive to coordinate resources within CRLS and the wider community, and partner effectively with families, to help each participating student make the most efficient transition possible and finish the school year on track for graduation.

**Core Services:**

- ❖ *Direct clinical supports to students:* intentional/planned clinical supports (customized to each student), on-demand supports; crisis intervention where needed
- ❖ *Academic coordination:* direct academic support (tutoring) along with communication/negotiation with a student’s teachers to modify assignments and/or secure direct teacher support as needed for the student to demonstrate sufficient mastery to accrue credits.
- ❖ *Family engagement:* consistent, culturally-appropriate two-way communication with parents/guardians about student progress needs; provision of support, learning, and leadership opportunities for family members.
- ❖ *Care coordination:* consultation/collaboration with all in-school supports and collateral providers (available to each student to maximize her/his success).

**Staff :**

- 1 Clinical Coordinator
- 1 Academic Manager
- 1 Paraprofessional

**Students**

Currently 14 students are accessing BRYT (Overall, 20 students so far this year).

**Since we started in Spring 2017**

School Year	Number of Students who Accessed
Spring 2017	7 students
2017-2018	12 students
2018-2019	13 students
2019-2020	21 students
2020-2021	16 students
2021-2022	22 students
2022-2023	20 students (so far)
Total	111 students

- During this timespan, we had 5 students who were offered the BRYT Program and did not engage with BRYT or moved away.
- 22% of students from BRYT have been referred to Structured Academics.

**22. What is the planned professional learning?**

*Answer:* Professional learning opportunities will focus on improving Tier 1 instruction, as high quality tier 1 instruction is essential to improving student outcomes. With that said, there will be training for ELA and math teachers aligned to any new curriculum rollout and to continue support for existing curriculum. Additionally, there will be training on mCLASS (K-2 screener), Science of Reading, Complex Instruction (6-12), ST Math, and iReady.

It is also important to note that a new Director of Professional Learning and Leadership will be identified. It is the plan that this person, in collaboration with the different departments, will

provide opportunities for teachers new to CPS to experience the previously mentioned professional learning opportunities. The goal is to ensure all professional learning opportunities are aligned with the district’s mission, vision, plan, and initiatives and that equity is the foundation.

**23. Please provide more information about role based professional development.**

*Answer:* There will be content training during the district professional development days. There will also be training for New Teachers, Principals, and Assistant Principals. Principals and Assistant Principals are trained during monthly meetings. Our goal is to also create professional learning opportunities for paraprofessionals.

**24. Student success planning—how is that happening, where is the budget for that?**

*Answer:* In collaboration with Harvard’s Education Redesign Lab, CPS has begun the development of a district specific success plan. The recommended draft provides tailored support for students both inside and outside of school, and will be piloted with 8th grade students preparing to enter high school.

**25. The Kennedy Longfellow School has the largest reduction in staff. We recognize that this is enrollment driven, but want to make sure that they are supported.**

*Answer:* Although we are reducing the number of classroom teachers (one 2nd grade teacher and one 3rd grade teacher) due to enrollment in those grades, other important student supports will continue in SY23-24, including five interventionists ( 4 literacy and 1 math), six paras (in addition to 2 kindergarten and 6 SEI paras), and three special educators.

**26. Which language will the proposed addition of a 0.5 FTE bilingual liaison support?**

*Answer:* This .5 FTE bilingual liaison position will specialize in the Amharic language. This year, we received a significant increase in demand from Amharic-speaking families and we expect this demand to continue next year. This additional staff member will allow us to provide that additional critical support necessary.

**27. How many CPS students are experiencing homelessness?**

*Answer:* As of March 21, 2023 we currently have 131 students registered under the McKinney-Vento Act at Cambridge Public Schools. “The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act is a federal law created to support the enrollment and education of homeless students. McKinney-Vento is intended to provide homeless students the same educational opportunities as housed students by removing as many barriers to learning for homeless students as possible.”

It is important to note that this number (131 students) does not reflect families who have not reported being “Doubled Up”, which refers to the students for whom a shelter is not always an



option. Doubled-up arrangements often serve as temporary shelter, until permanent housing arrangements can be made.

To support students experiencing homeless, some of the resources provided by the CPS social worker for students/families experiencing housing insecurity include but are not limited to:

- Transportation arrangements
- Legal services through multi-service center
- MBTA cards
- Attendance tracking
- Social work services through the Cambridge Public Library
- Clothing, school supplies and hygiene Items
- Crisis Outreach & Support Services
- Summer camps/After school resources
- Food access
- Translation services
- Ensures that children and youth experiencing homelessness have equal and immediate access to public education
- Provides educational support to promote school success
- Monthly meetings

**28. A number of Equity Audits were funded in the current year budget, will there be a presentation or update on those? When will preliminary findings from the equity audits be available with feedback about positions?**

*Answer:* OEIB defines an Equity Audit as audits conducted by an external consultant and a School Based Equity Assessment as an audit conducted by the school's equity team that highlight some of the inequities that exist in a school and ways the equity team and the school community can address, dismantle or mitigate these inequities.

During the 2021-22 school year, schools participated in the School-Based Equity Self-Assessment Process. The School-Based Equity Self-Assessment Process was an extensive collaboration between the OEIB, the Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium (MAEC), and CPS School-Based Equity Teams. Each school had their own version of school-based equity teams (please see the [school-based equity team guidelines](#)).

Based on the results from the School-Based Equity Self-Assessment Process, we expected to select two to three schools to participate in an external equity audit this year (during the 2022-23 school year). However, after sharing with school leaders their individual results, an overwhelming majority expressed interest in undergoing an external audit but wanted their school-based equity teams to initially focus on responding to the findings of School-Based Equity Self-Assessment. Therefore, we will be collaborating with the Academics and Schools team to identify aspects of the teaching and learning to be audited. The resources we are

currently considering are [Leadership Academy- Equity Self Assessment -Instruction and Adult Learning](#) and the [MAEC Equity Audit Tool](#).

The summary of the district-wide findings were presented to OEIB from the MAEC team in December 2022 and the summary was shared with the ELT in January 2023. Next steps include presenting the findings to school leaders, the Curriculum and Instruction Team, and the School Committee and community for their input on next steps for the OEIB and district. These dates have not yet been set.

## **29. How many students participate in the Calculus Project and YPP?**

*Answer:*

### **The Calculus Project (TCP)**

We partnered with the Calculus Project 2 years ago. There are currently 21 students in The Calculus Project (TCP) @ CRLS. 16 are sophomores and 5 are freshmen. We had a slight interruption in recruitment due to the coordinator at CRLS going out on maternity leave for a year with another teacher stepping in to support the students in her absence. The coordinator has returned and is now collaborating with the teacher that supported during her leave. The purpose of TCP is to increase the numbers of our underrepresented population in higher level math classes. All 21 students involved are representative of this population. 19 of these 21 students are currently enrolled in an Honors level math class. 6 of these students are on track to take AP Calculus during their junior year and all 21 are on track to take AP Calculus their senior year if they choose to do so. All 21 students meet as a cohort weekly during their Falcon Block for emotional and academic support from one of TCP's coordinators. Over the past 2 years, students have also benefited from the coordinator pushing into their class and/or meeting outside class time for extra support. All 21 students have had opportunities to attend TCP's summer program on the BU campus, which returned to in person last summer, as well as special STEM focused events.

### **YPP**

Currently, one of our upper schools has the YPP Flagway program embedded within their school day. Several folks from the district were able to go and observe one of their classes and looked on as students engaged in fun math games while simultaneously learning or enhancing their knowledge of foundational math skills. Last year, this school pulled specific data regarding the students that took this class and came to the following conclusions based on this data:

- Average MCAS growth school wide was 46, compared to 63 for students in Flagway. (NOTE: 50 is considered average, and a difference of 10 or more points is considered significant.)
- Average iReady growth school wide was 111% compared to 178% for students in Flagway. (NOTE: 100% is considered average).

- Based on both this qualitative and quantitative data, we are proposing to work with YPP and upper schools to explore what this could look like in other schools. For example, there is another upper school that has an active Flagway program after school as well.

**30. Why was the Design Lab coach eliminated in the Proposed FY24 Budget and what is the rationale for reinstating the position at this point?**

*Answer:* As we were looking for efficiencies in the budget to allocate resources to other district initiatives, the Design Coach was eliminated because it has not been embedded in the overall district strategy for improvement. However, after review and discussion with the Chief of Academics and Schools, it was determined that the position could be utilized to leverage the improvements in the Professional Learning Department and complement the strategies that we will be implementing in the 2023-2024 school year.

**31. Please provide a list of all new administrative positions that we did not have three years ago.**

*Administrative Positions Added FY21 – FY24*

<b>Position Title</b>	<b>Year Added</b>	<b>FTE</b>	<b>Funding Source</b>
Chief Equity Officer	FY21	1.0	General Fund
Director, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging	FY21	1.0	General Fund
Director, Family Engagement	FY21	1.0	General Fund
Family Engagement Specialist	FY21	1.0	General Fund
Assistant Program Manager, Elementary OST	FY21	1.0	General Fund
Data Management Assistant (0.5 FTE)	FY21	0.5	General Fund
Clerk, OSS (0.5 FTE)	FY21	0.5	General Fund
Clerk, Athletics/PE-Health	FY21	1.0	General Fund
Communications/Engagement Specialist, Food & Nutrition Dept.	FY21	1.0	General Fund
OEIB Curriculum & Training Specialist	FY22	1.0	General Fund
Administrative Assistant, OEIB/Strategy	FY22	1.0	General Fund
Google Systems Administrator	FY22	1.0	General Fund
Communications Project Assistant	FY22	1.0	General Fund

Clerk Specialist, Academics & Schools	FY23	1.0	General Fund
Career Pathways Program Manager	FY23	1.0	ESSER
Chief of Academics & Schools	FY23	1.0	General Fund
Director, MTSS	FY23	1.0	IDEA
Early College Program Manager (0.8 FTE)	FY23	1.0	ESSER
Summer/Vacation Program Manager	FY23	1.0	ESSER
SEL Director	FY23	1.0	ESSER
BRYT Program Manager	FY23	1.0	General Fund
Family Engagement Assistant Program Manager	FY23	0.5	General Fund
Payroll Clerk	FY23	1.0	General Fund
Executive Director, Early Childhood	FY24	1.0	General Fund
Executive Director, Career & College Pathways	FY24	1.0	General Fund
RSTA Operations Manager	FY24	1.0	General Fund
Cybersecurity Specialist	FY24	1.0	General Fund
Employee & Labor Relations Specialist	FY24	1.0	General Fund
HRIS Coordinator (0.5 FTE)	FY24	0.5	General Fund
<b>Four Year Total</b>		<b>27.0</b>	