

Superintendent's Report

Concord Public Schools

Concord-Carlisle Regional School District

Dr. Laurie Hunter, Superintendent
John Flaherty, Deputy Supt. of Finance and Operations
Kristen Herbert, Director of Teaching and Learning
Kelly McCausland, Director of Human Resources
Jessica Murphy, Director of Special Education
Peter Kelly, Director of Information Technology
Mike Mastrullo, Concord-Carlisle High School Principal
Justin Cameron, Concord Middle School Principal
Sharon Young, Alcott Principal
Angel Charles, Thoreau Principal
Matt Lucey, Willard Principal

The mission of the Concord Public Schools and the Concord-Carlisle Regional School District is to educate all students to become lifelong learners, creative thinkers, caring citizens, and responsible contributors in our diverse global society. We are able to achieve our mission through the investment of educators, staff, parents, and community members who work tirelessly to improve our schools.

District Goals

Every school year, the administration develops district goals for the Concord Public Schools (CPS) and the Concord-Carlisle Regional School District (CCRS) which are approved by the School Committees. We focus on efforts to improve student learning by providing students with a rigorous and coherent curriculum and high quality instruction, monitoring student progress through common assessments, identifying appropriate interventions, adjusting instructional practices, and closing the achievement gap. The goals also specify improvements in authentic learning experiences, instructional strategies, integrating digital tools, respectful and responsible student citizenship, teacher collaboration and evaluation. In addition, we strive for prudent management of school budgets, resources, capital projects, the new high school building project, and resolution of fair collective bargaining contracts.

Teaching and Learning

All district efforts focus on improving student learning and teaching. There is a focus on four curriculum areas this year: STEAM, social studies, Spanish, and health. In each area, there is some new curricula and/or pedagogy which is intended to make students' learning experiences more relevant, more engaging, and more rigorous.

Exciting efforts are underway in the area of STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics) engineering. As may be remembered, a team of preK - 12 educators created a strategic plan three years ago to have all students involved in engaging STEAM tasks so that more students consider a future in this field. The fruits of this labor are coming to bear. At the preschool level, faculty worked over the summer designing age-appropriate tasks for their students. At the elementary level, a STEAM innovation Lab is being built at the Ripley building where each class would come twice a year for extended STEAM experiences, like designing a water filter system. While the actual Lab is in process, all elementary students participated in Innovation Lab Kick Off Days in December 2017 by building catapults, programming stop-motion movies, and designing robots that can draw. Fifth grade classes at each elementary school will be spending a day at the Innovation Lab in the early months of 2018 as we move towards the implementation of this initiative. At the middle school level, all students participated in the creation of a sculpture that represents measuring time as modelled on the work of Sarah Sze. At the high school, an exciting two week experience called, "Q5," is being developed for all students to choose among over 80 interdisciplinary courses.

A similar committee of preK-12 educators made recommendations as to improvements in our social studies curriculum and those changes are in process as well. The changes that were recommended included: enhanced study of the American Civil War and Reconstruction; more focus on World Geography; increased emphasis on principles of Economics; emphasis on depth over breadth in all areas; deeper study of Research Skills; and more pedagogy using the Inquiry Approach. Educators worked hard to develop or pilot new materials that met these content needs and continued the commitment to providing students with multiple perspectives. Educators are thankful for our community partners: Concord Museum, The Robbins House, Primary Source, Massachusetts Cultural Council, and Concord Education Fund.

In Health Education, a similar committee of preK-12 educators met over the course of last school year to evaluate the curriculum and suggest improvements and updates. The decision was made to do this to address: outdated curriculum materials (esp. K - 5); adding more drug use & abuse prevention due to Nationwide Opioid Crisis; including more Stress Reduction/Mindfulness activities; differences in gender

expression; responding to data from the Youth Risk Behavior Survey; choosing depth of understanding over breadth of coverage; and to teach students skills for understanding their own health. Teachers worked together at grades 2 - 5 to select The Great Body Shop as new elementary materials to pilot. At the middle and high school levels, teachers were paid to update and augment their existing units of study.

Like STEAM, social studies, and health, there have been some exciting updates in the teaching of world languages. Spanish classes began at each of the three elementary schools. A certified teacher of Spanish was hired for each school. The Spanish teachers worked over the summer and into September to develop a scope and sequence curriculum program for all students K - 5, with classes beginning in early October. Each class attends Spanish twice a week as the students begin their introduction to the Spanish language and culture of Spanish speaking countries. Spanish has been integrated into Music classes and individual classrooms to promote the generalization of these Spanish speaking skills across our schools. Students and teachers have embraced the introduction and inclusion of this new curriculum area into our elementary schools. At Concord Middle School(CMS), students could choose to take Latin now as an elective choice in addition to another world language. Many exciting updates happened at CCHS in the world language curricula.

Concord-Carlisle High School

Concord Carlisle High School (CCHS) remains one of the top achieving public high schools in the state of Massachusetts. When evaluated solely on academic performance, particularly on state and nationally standardized tests, CCHS ranks near the top of every list. In 2017, Boston Magazine ranked the 125 best schools systems in the Greater Boston area, and CCHS ranked #2.

Ninety-five percent of our students earned a 2.5 weighted grade point average (GPA) or better, and 100% of the Class of 2017 met or exceeded the Massachusetts Standards for Competency Determination. The number of CCHS graduates planning to continue their education in post-secondary placements was 96% with 78% of our students admitted to one of their top two college choices. Students were accepted to elite institutions including more than ten Ivy League acceptances.

A median SAT score of 1280 bests the state average by more than fifteen percentage points. CCHS students performed exceptionally well on College Board Advanced Placement Exams (AP) with nearly 95% of our students receiving a passing score of 3 or better versus a state and global average of 70% and 60% respectively. Further, an astounding 80% of students achieved top scores of 4 and 5. More than 1.5 million students nationally participated in the National Merit Scholarship Program. Impressively, seven CCHS students were named among 16,000 semifinalists, and five were named among the 7,500 finalists. Further, four students were recognized in prestigious math and science competitions; two scored in the top 5% in the national American Mathematics Competition Exam and two students were named semi-finalists in the prestigious and highly competitive Siemens Competition for Math, Science, and Technology.

Overall, 95% of our students participated in a club, group, or athletic team. Last year proved to be another stellar year for our athletic program. CCHS teams were victorious in 65% of their contests, and for the 10th consecutive year, we had at least one state champion, with Girls Indoor Track earning that honor. Multiple teams won Dual County League Championships including Boys and Girls Cross Country, Boys Soccer, Boys Basketball; numerous students received All-Scholastic recognitions from our local Boston

newspapers; however, the competitive spirit, sportsmanship, and citizenship displayed by our coaches and student-athletes are hallmarks of the program.

The CCHS Repertory and Concert Bands earned gold medals at the Massachusetts Instrumental and Choral Conductors Association (MICCA) State Concert Festival. Many student musicians (band, orchestra, jazz band, and chorus) were nominated and accepted into the MECH All-eastern Honors Ensembles.

Visual Arts students participated in the Boston Globe Scholastic Art Awards regional and national exhibitions and earned an incredible number of gold and silver keys distinguishing CCHS as one of the most award-winning schools in New England. Two students were recognized by the prestigious regional NATAS (Emmy) awards for their films. In the spring, students exhibit their artwork at the Concord Art Association, where a jury of professional artists awards scholarships for the best senior portfolios. A junior student was accepted to highly competitive Massachusetts Art All-State program.

In math, we continue to see an increase in the number of students taking Introduction to Statistics and AP Statistics. We expect this trend to continue as students become aware of the analytic requirements of many college majors. Also, students are frequently gravitating towards multiple math courses in a given year. Last spring twelve students and two teachers traveled to Mexico to do fieldwork related to BioStats. Student interest in our new Financial Literacy course continues to grow, and next year we hope to offer additional sections to meet demand.

Last year we added AP Environmental Science, and with increased demand, we plan to add additional sections next year. We adjusted our honors physics curriculum and relaunched the course as AP Physics I. We continue to see an increase in the number of students enrolled in our engineering program and awarded the highest number of Engineering Certificates last year. Thanks to the Concord Education Fund we had our first successful weather-balloon launch that recorded data in real time at an altitude of 93,000 feet.

The collaboration between English and Social Studies on an interdisciplinary course, Twice Told Tales, continues with carefully coordinated field trips enhancing the classroom experience. Our Rhetoric and Advanced Language and Senior Honors English teams continue to see improved student writing and analytical skills. More than 130 students completed an AP English exam with 93% scoring 3 or better.

The Social Studies department has continued to work to make courses engaging, challenging, and accessible to students of all learning profiles and learning styles. Last year we completed a K-12 Social Studies Curriculum Review, which culminated with a week of professional development. Students performed exceptionally well in the Moot Court Competition and argued cases in front teachers and Massachusetts Supreme Court justices.

2016-2017 marked the fifth year of Rivers and Revolutions. This interdisciplinary, experiential "school-within-a-school" prizes creative thought across all academic disciplines as students develop their capacity to think holistically and collaborate with their peers. This heterogeneous program has served over five hundred students of all backgrounds and abilities. Through the Stewardship portion of the program, students have engaged in meaningful work throughout the community, including projects at the Concord Museum, The Robbins House Interpretive Center, deCordova Sculpture Park, and Museum, Gaining Ground, the Umbrella Community Arts Center, The Ripley Playscape, and many more. Further, students have taught at all three of the elementary schools, helping to create meaningful connections between students and teachers across the entire district. Rivers and Revolutions has caught the interest of schools

from across the state and is frequently visited by students, teachers, and administrators who are looking to create their version of this innovative program.

The Special Education Department continues to work collaboratively with families, students, and colleagues to meet the diverse needs of our student body. Students in the Pathways Program have benefitted from a variety of placements that enhance their critical vocational behaviors associated with career exploration, acquisition, and retention. Placements include an eclectic range of services based on their skills, abilities, and interests. Off-campus sites include Concord Elder Services, Buddy Dog, Acton Discovery Museum, Goodnow Library, Drumlin Farm, TJ Maxx and the Acton Food Pantry. We are thankful for the supportive community.

The World Languages Program promotes linguistic and cultural literacy while cultivating a lifelong appreciation and enthusiasm for classical and modern languages and the cultures they reflect. At CCHS students pursue language acquisition in French, China, Latin, and Spanish with the latter three offering AP options. Students enrolled in a language are developing proficiency in the language they choose in an interactive, cooperative environment that emphasizes both oral and written expression through authentic linguistic experiences in the target language. Students enrolled in Latin will engage in an in-depth study of the Latin language and Roman history and culture. Students translate text, a task which requires analytical skills, problem-solving and creativity.

Linguistic and Cultural Exchanges are offered every other year for students studying Chinese, French, and Spanish. Students spend two weeks in Hangzhou, China, Versailles, France and Quito, Ecuador and then reciprocate by hosting these students in their homes for two weeks.

Last year several students earned their Global Literacy Certificate (GLC). This program is designed to foster global and cross-cultural awareness in high school students. These students completed 20 or more hours of service learning in a global/ international setting, at home or abroad. Also, they demonstrated a sincere appreciation and regard for diversity and the ability to interact respectfully with others, at home, and around the world.

Concord-Carlisle Community Connections (CCCC) provided a one-on-one career mentoring experience for 33 students, who engaged with area residents/professionals in a variety of career fields, such as architecture, biotechnology, and engineering. Nearly 50 students participated in the Senior Internship program, which is a unique five-week course rooted in career exploration that integrates study with planned and supervised career-related work experience.

Concord Middle School

At Concord Middle School (CMS) 85% of the students earned grades of B- or higher across academic subjects: English, math, world language, science, and social studies. CMS showed a strong performance on Next Generation MCAS as noted by their 4th in the state ranking in ELA, and 8th in Math and Science. According to state assessments, CMS special education students performed at such a level that they met the goal for making significant gains towards closing the achievement gap. The English department saw positive results from *Leveled Literacy Intervention*, our Response to Intervention (RtI) intensive, short-term, reading curriculum for 6th and 7th grade students and is continuing to offer it this year. The department is also taking advantage of the STAR Renaissance reading diagnostic assessment, which all students take, allowing teachers to more effectively differentiate assignments and assessments. Math teachers have increased the level of rigor in Independent level classes and they are

piloting Everyday Math in 6th grade Independent Math classes. This pilot is focused on providing students with real world application of abstract mathematical concepts in alignment with curriculum standards. The *iReady* growth monitoring and diagnostic tool is being utilized in Directed Math and Math Strategies classes. *iReady* supports the analysis of real-time mathematical assessment data which informs teacher instruction and skill remediation. Last year, Social Studies teachers engaged in a thorough review and realignment of their curriculum to best meet state standards and frameworks. This year they are piloting new textbooks. In science, after piloting Amplify Science last year and discovering it did not fit well to CMS student's needs, the department is working with the FOSS Science texts and experiencing a much better fit for our students. The World Language department has incorporated a Latin elective designed to provide students entering it in the 6th grade with an ability to begin Latin II when they enter high school. CMS students have also experienced increased opportunities to learn coding skills in 6th grade Digital Literacy class, coding electives, and during the Hour of Code in December. Coding develops computational fluency and analytical and iterative thinking skills necessary for success in all subjects. CMS students again participated in a summer reading challenge reading at least one book from a list of six and then moving on to read two others.

This year CMS is piloting a comprehensive new advisory program named homeBASE. Advisory programs, common in many middle schools, fill a number of purposes. At CMS we anticipate that student-teacher relationships will be enhanced, ensuring each student feels connected to at least one adult in the building. HomeBASE replaces homeroom, house huddles and the CMS Stands Together. HomeBASE groups meet almost daily and include extended meetings addressing topics such as bullying, academic advising, social and emotional support and entertainment and fun. Early feedback has been extremely positive from both student and staff participants.

Concord Middle School students explored, created, competed, and performed in a wide range of exploratory and extra-curricular activities through creative, scientific, and critical thinking pursuits. CMS students participated in Lego Robotics, Science Olympiad, Math Team competitions, Girls Who Code, and Model UN. The Spider Team consisting of a small group of students working in conjunction with MIT's Laboratory for Atomistic and Molecular Mechanics continues to investigate the structural properties of spider silk. The Lego Robotics club fielded three teams this year in the First Lego League Qualifying Competition. For the first time in program history, one team make it to the First Lego League State Finals at WPI.

Elementary K-5

For students in grades 3 - 5, CPS participated in the new MCAS 2.0 online assessment. This is a more rigorous assessment than the old MCAS/PARCC and Concord students continue to score at high levels.. Alcott, Thoreau, and Willard met the State's target for meeting the attendance levels and showed progress towards narrowing the proficiency gap between all students and high needs students and would have received the highest accountability rating, Level 1 had levels been given this year.

In the elementary schools, Grade 5 students participated in the national Mathematical Olympiad program, and all school teams were named to the National Math Olympiad Honor Roll for scoring in the 90th percentile or higher. Fourth grade students at all schools participated in a special year long science project nurturing the development of Blandings' Turtles in the classrooms. They worked with a local ecologist to collect and contribute data as part of an ecological research project. Elementary students in all the schools participated in Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math (STEAM) projects such as

the BeeBot robots at Willard, sea turtles at Thoreau, and Marble Challenge at Alcott. Highlights in fourth grade include the annual Chinese poetry and calligraphy project with a poet in residence, a special learning opportunity that is funded by a STARS Grant from the Massachusetts Cultural Council. All elementary students in 4th grade engaged in a day-long Immigration Day simulation which allowed students to simulate the immigrant experience as a culminating activity of the Immigration unit. Third graders enjoyed a variety of research projects including their study of Native Americans. Willard published *Willard Student Monthly For Kids* with students assuming all aspects of newspaper writing, cartooning, and production. Elementary students also participated in many musical events with chorus, string, band, and theater performances throughout the year including Monster Madness, A Christmas Carol and Annie. The Willard Chorus once again represented CPS by participating in the annual MLK Concert sponsored by the Concord-Carlisle Human Rights Council. The elementary school orchestra performed at the State House and twenty-five strings students attended the March String Fest in Billerica. Fifth grade band students from all three elementary school gathered at Willard for an Informance, an open rehearsal for parents and family members to observe the performance routines and rituals of the band experience.

Elementary teachers continued to infuse technology across the curriculum. A sampling of activities includes the use of iPads in K and grade 1 for story creation and skill practice, research projects in grades 2 -5, the 4th grade digital magazine project, the use of a variety of digital tools for writing and projects in the content areas. Fifth grade students continued to hone advanced technology skills as demonstrated by a PAX global read aloud project with skyping activity in a grade 5 classroom, the creation of tutorial videos to highlight and explain academic tasks in another 5th grade classroom, and the creative use of technology to demonstrate learning and creative expression in other 5th grade classrooms. All elementary students participated enthusiastically in the 2017 Hour of Code initiative with coding activities in their classrooms.

Elementary students engaged in a variety of community building and outreach efforts through the year including Grade 5 Service Day, Grade 5 Holiday Craft Day, Trick or Treat for UNICEF, From the Pumpkin Patch, Honoring our Veterans, Coats for Kids, Open Table, Concord Rec. Dept., Minuteman ARC, Emerson Hospital, Read to Feed, These Come from Trees, hosting visitors from Japan, and collaborating with CCHS student partners in the Rivers and Revolutions program.

CMS students developed cultural and community awareness and responsibility through involvement in a variety of leadership opportunities as members of Student Leaders and *CMS Stands Together*. Awareness was raised for local organizations through the Coats for Kids drive, fundraising walk for Children's Hospital, and the Animals and Planet club's second annual Pet Palooza, a fundraising pet show. In September, student leaders created a community quilt to highlight this year's CMS Stands Together bullying prevention program.

These activities and achievements are only a sampling of the wide range of student programs and projects at Alcott, Thoreau, Willard, CMS, and CCHS. For more information, visit the district website www.concordps.org.

METCO

One hundred and thirty-seven(137) students of color in grades K-12 who reside in Boston attend the Concord Public Schools and Concord-Carlisle High School via METCO. Our METCO Program is the sixth largest in Massachusetts. CPS provides a comprehensive orientation process for families of students

entering Kindergarten, concluding with a four-week summer readiness program at Alcott School to prepare students for the transition to Kindergarten. CPS also maintains a robust Family Friends Program and a strong relationship with Concord Recreation to provide enrichment opportunities for METCO students in grades K-8. Alcott's Kindergarten and First Grade partnered with The Umbrella Community Arts Center to provide three 9-week sessions of a weekly enrichment course for our METCO students and their Concord peers, with a focus on early literacy, mathematics, and the arts. In addition, Alcott provides an Extended Tuesday Tutoring Program to students in first and second grades needing extra practice in ELA and Math. CMS provides individualized progress monitoring for all METCO students with English and math teachers and one tutor. Prior to the beginning of school, CMS provides a summer workshop for rising 6th grade METCO students which focuses on building students' organization, time management, and self-advocacy skills. Students also develop a stronger connection to Concord through field experience at the Old North Bridge, Sleepy Hollow Cemetery, and the Robbins House Interpretive Center. CMS METCO students may also attend a summer "Math Academy" grades 5-8. At CCHS, all 9th grade METCO students are enrolled in Achievement Strategies, a course designed to improve executive functioning skills. CCHS math teachers offer a summer math program, "Algebridge" which incoming Boston students attend to increase their participation in higher-level math courses. CCHS METCO students also serve as mentors in POWER (Positive Opportunities with Engaging Relationships), a student leadership initiative in which each METCO freshman is matched with an upperclassman. CCHS continued its implementation of the Anti-Defamation League's World of Difference Institute, an anti-bias program designed to prepare students for competence in a multicultural society with 50 new students completing training as peer leaders for Advisory.

More than 200 K-8 students participated in summer learning in reading, math, special education, or English as a Second Language during the four weeks in July.

Special Education

The Special Education Department of Concord Public Schools and the Concord-Carlisle Regional School District is dedicated to providing quality services and programs for students with disabilities beginning on their 3rd birthday through their 22nd birthday. As the complexity of student needs continue to evolve, we remain committed to meeting the diverse needs of students with learning, medical, cognitive and social disabilities within their local communities. In line with the national trends, the numbers of students with complex disabilities are on the rise. We continue to look at providing opportunities both in and out of school to increase independence at all age and grade levels, especially for students who are turning 14 through the duration of their special education eligibility (either graduation or their 22nd birthday). The Transition Specialist at CCHS continues to expand the community experiences for students 14 and above, working to secure employment when appropriate. Additionally, we have broadened our relationships with other agencies including DCF, DDS and DMH. The Concord Integrated Preschool continues to meet the needs of our earliest learners. Beginning at age three, students with disabilities are learning with community peers (children who tuition into the special education preschool program) in all of our classrooms. By adding a fourth classroom in 2016, we have been able to meet the needs of more students in district. At the Elementary level, the special education teachers are working in collaboration with their grade level general education colleagues on the district's EM4 math curriculum implementation at all grade levels and have seen a tremendous skill growth. The special educators are also working on the science curriculum roll-out and are participating in the STEAM planning process. At CMS, we are continuing with our focus on executive functioning skills as well as examining our intervention programming. We have expanded the amount of time general education classes are supported, allowing students to more fully access the instruction being provided by their content teachers. At CCHS, the

special education department has continued to increase increasing self-advocacy and independence in accessing support. Executive functioning coaching is being interwoven into small group instruction as well as in a coaching model as appropriate. The programs and services for students with disabilities at CCHS reflect each student individually and are designed to meet each student's needs.

At the end of 2016, both Concord Public Schools and Concord Carlisle Regional School District participated in a mid-cycle review completed by the Department of Secondary and Elementary Education (DESE). As a result CPS was determined to be 100% in compliance in the areas monitored. CCRSD had 5 criteria areas that needed remediation and in October 2017, CCRSD was also in 100% compliance. Both district's mid cycle review reports can be found on the DESE website <http://www.doe.mass.edu/pqa/review/cpr/reports/followup.html#c>

Professional Development

The district continued to invest considerable resources in professional development, providing educators with learning opportunities in curriculum development and technology integration. A new professional development program, "*The Concord Fellows*," has been rolled out in the 2016 - 2017 school year. In this program, veteran teachers lead their colleagues in study on such topics as: Classroom Management; Mindfulness in the Classroom; Project Based Learning; Using Google Apps in the classroom. PreK-12 Teachers took courses in content areas , Open Circle, English Language Learners, and special education. Teachers participated in committee work on elementary math, K12 science, and K12 STEAM education. During the summer, K12 teachers participated in eighty (80) curriculum development projects. Many of these focused on the implementation of new, more rigorous math curriculum, new science curriculum, and initiatives in STEAM education.

Human Resources

In 2017 eight (8) staff members retired after many years of dedicated service. The districts hired one (1) superintendent, two (2) principals, one (1) assistant principal, twenty-one (21) teachers at CCHS & CPS, and twenty-seven (27) support staff members including bus drivers, food service employees, information technology, tutors, custodians, & assistants.

The majority of the new hires filled vacancies created by retirements, resignations, and temporary leaves of absences. Retention rates for educators continue to remain strong. The CCHS retention rate in 2017 for educators was 97.8% with an eight year average of 97.5%. The CPS retention rate in 2017 for educators was 98.6% with an eight year average of 97%.

The districts have significant mentoring programs to ensure that new educators swiftly and substantively become part of the learning communities at each school site. The human resources office continued supporting improvement in implementation of the new comprehensive supervision & evaluation system for educators including evaluators. The Teachers Associations and administration continued to meet regularly to discuss ideas, issues, and concerns.

Other activities include ongoing efforts to align professional development offerings with educator plans and goals, school improvement plans, and district goals; create opportunities to reuse, reduce, and recycle; and implement initiatives to build community through district-wide wellness activities. Contract negotiations concluded with the Secretaries Association and the Bus Drivers Association.

Information Technology

The IT department is focusing efforts on efficiency and productivity by tying together and automating core administrative systems. Reducing rework and complexity will improve delivery for the growing demand of data in compressed time frames. We continue to migrate towards a fully virtual server environment. As a result, we can decommission aging home directory servers and storage units housed in school buildings. Both students and staff have full access to Google Drive for document storage.

Upgrades to Middle School network wiring and hardware were necessary keep pace with our 1:1 learning environment. Replacing outmoded network cables with new Cat6 cabling in both Sanborn and Peabody took place over the summer. Added work included addressing areas without enough wiring, updating head-end rooms in both buildings, and more drops for improved wifi coverage.

We continue to optimize bandwidth to and within schools using QOS (Quality of Service). QOS is essential to manage the growth of high-bandwidth video and multimedia traffic. This helps assure that all buildings are getting acceptable bandwidth for students at each site.

We have introduced a help desk ticketing system (Spiceworks) at both the HS and MS. This provides faster response times and better service to both staff and students. We are also using the inventory module for this system.

Finance and Operations

The districts continue to maintain excellent academic programs while meeting challenging funding goals. Our core budgeting principles remain focused on using resources to support student learning and growth. The district goals approved by the school committees provided direction to the budget process to support student learning opportunities. The district administration and Concord School Committee submitted a Statement of Interest to the MSBA for the Concord Middle School and also conducted a CMS feasibility study. The FY2018 CPS school budget at \$36,810,111 represented a 3.22% increase above the FY2017 appropriation, and the FY 2018 operating budget for CCHS, \$28,042,499, increased by 5.39%. Both the CPS and CCHS FY2018 budget requests matched the Finance Committee guidelines, were within levy limits, and for the eleventh consecutive year did not require overrides. Both school districts managed successful FY2017 year-end closings. The Regional School District met its planned \$735,499 commitment towards its OPEB liability in the year-end closing process. CCRSD's Excess and Deficiency (E&D) fund balance for the past fiscal year declined from FY16's 4.2% to a projected 3.1% level. The AAA bond rating has been maintained.

Capital Projects and Transportation

The impact of the high efficiency boilers installed at Sanborn resulted in a reduction of natural gas consumption of more than 60%. Major FY17 projects completed included installation of two modular classrooms at Sanborn Building, completion of a Facility Assessment at CMS. Ongoing projects funded by the 2017 Town Meeting include irrigation of the Willard fields, assessment of a new bus loop configuration at the Thoreau School entrance and budget and scope alignment of the Ripley STEAM lab.

Transportation was successfully relocated to the new Knox trail depot, and implementation of the new later high school start time has been completed.

Summary

The major highlights of 2017 are the outstanding student achievement and the completion of the extraordinary high school building project. We are extremely proud of our students, faculties, and staff, and we are grateful for the Concord and Carlisle communities' support. The schools made significant progress in achieving the district goals by increasing student learning, improving curriculum and instruction, integrating technology into the classrooms, supporting faculty and staff, increasing teacher collaboration, developing responsive and responsible budgets, completing union contract negotiations, and building a beautiful, high performing high school. For more information, please visit the districts' website, www.concordps.org and review the CPS & CCRSD 2017 Performance Report.