

CONCORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Concord – Carlisle School Committee
Concord School Committee
Ripley Building
February 13, 2018

Present: Heather Bout, Chair, CSC; CCSC
Johanna Boynton, Vice Chair, CSC; CCSC
Daniel Conti, Chair, CCSC; CSC
Robert Grom, Vice Chair, CCSC; CSC
Wallace Johnston, CSC; CCSC

Present from Administration: Dr. Laurie Hunter, Superintendent of Schools, CPS & CCRSD
John Flaherty, Deputy Superintendent of Finance & Operations, CPS & CCRSD

I. CALL TO ORDER

The CSC meeting was called to order by Ms. Bout at 6:00 PM and she noted that the meeting was being recorded. A motion was made by Mr. Grom, seconded by Ms. Boynton, that the CSC would enter into Executive Session under Purpose 3 of the Open Meeting Law: To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and return to Open Session at approximately 6:30. The motion passed by roll call: Johnston, aye; Grom, aye; Bout, aye; Boynton, aye.

At 6:40 PM, Ms. Bout called the CSC back into order, noting that they are being recorded.

II. RECOGNITIONS

Project 351. Justin Cameron, CMS Principal, stated that Peabody student, Jim Hoagland, was nominated by his house as the 8th grade representative from Concord for Project 351. Jim shared his experience with Project 351 in which he attended an event at the JFK Library in Boston, where Governor Charlie Baker spoke about leadership and volunteering. He also shared his experience in helping out with the Pine Street Inn, noting how the message was helping the community and changing the world for the better.

A motion was made by Mr. Johnston, seconded by Ms. Boynton, to move the Children’s Center Lease portion of the meeting from under New Business to earlier in the meeting, after Public Comments. The motion was unanimously approved.

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

A. Children’s Center Lease (New Business). Pat Nelson, Executive Director Children’s Center, and Penni Hensley Wagner, Ripley Program Director, spoke regarding an idea for the Children’s Center at Ripley. Ms. Nelson stated that the Children’s Center has been at Ripley since 1981 and they have outgrown their space that is currently being leased, noting that they have no administrative space. She noted the increase in number of students interested in the after school program, but that they are unable to accommodate them due to space constraints. Ms. Nelson stated that the Children’s Center is interested in building out on their current space and shared some ideas from plans that were created in 2009, which would add 1,500 square feet to the current space. She requested the SC’s support for their desire to increase their space to the Concord Town Manager, noting that they could issue an RFP if another 10-year lease is agreed upon. Ms. Nelson stated that a longer term plan would be to create an additional 2,600 square feet, which would accommodate the addition of an infant room and two toddler rooms. The SC members agreed that it would be beneficial to add on to support the needs of the Children’s Center and Ms. Bout stated that she would draft a letter to present to Town Manager, Chris Whelan, in support of their request.

VI. READING OF THE MINUTES

None.

V. CHAIRS & LIASONS REPORT

Ms. Bout stated that she and Mr. Conti have an article in the Journal this coming Thursday regarding support of the budget. She stated that the Finance Committee is holding a public forum on fiscal sustainability on Thursday evening at 7:00 PM at the Harvey Wheeler Center. Ms. Bout stated that they got a read from the Ethics Commission regarding the SC's ability to communicate out leading up to Town Meeting, noting that she had reached out to them to ensure they didn't mistakenly step over any bounds that they shouldn't in communicating budget information before Town Meeting. She stated that the Commission stated that the SC has the right to communicate out the budget information and that they should communicate out the information. She also noted that they indicated that the SC has the right to advocate for people to vote in a certain way when sending out messages. Ms. Bout stated that she, Dr. Hunter and Mr. Grom attended the PTG President's meeting earlier in the week, noting there were great discussions and that they were looking for information regarding the budget. Ms. Bout stated that she is working on an information sheet that will include all of the budget information and she will begin disseminating it out to the PTGs and other groups within the town. Ms. Boynton shared a hard copy of the upcoming coffees. Ms. Bout stated that there is a lot of interest in learning about the budget in town.

Mr. Johnston stated that he attended the League of Women Voters breakfast, noting that they were interested in having a presentation on the budget. Ms. Bout noted that she is coordinating a presentation with Diane Proctor, President of the League of Women Voters. Mr. Johnston stated that the Long Range Planning Committee met with the schools, noting that he felt that it went well. He also stated that the Budget Subcommittee is working on benchmarking.

Mr. Grom stated that he has been attending meetings of a newly formed subcommittee of FINCOM that is working on how to define fiscal sustainability. He noted that they would be having a public forum this Thursday at the Harvey Wheeler building at 7:00 PM. Mr. Grom stated that he attended the League of Women Voters Education Committee meeting, noting that the League will be deciding what Town Meeting articles to support.

VI. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Hunter stated that the Planning Team met with the consultant regarding Strategic Planning visioning, noting how positive the energy was. She stated that they would be holding forums over the next 6 weeks and having students participate in advisory and also staff engaging at each school, as well as multiple opportunities across the community. She stated that the next 6 weeks would involve data collection. Dr. Hunter stated that there is a vision statement for the district-wide Mindfulness efforts. She noted that an emerging theme is that this is not a top down initiative and that they are building more exposure opportunities for the kids. Dr. Hunter stated that the Cultural Competency Committee has met twice, under Kristin Herbert's leadership, noting that they are working on short term and long-term ideas. *Mr. Conti arrived at the meeting.* Dr. Hunter stated that she would be meeting with the Concord Education Fund, SEPAC and PTGs. She stated that she joined CMS and CCHS faculty and leadership with Dr. Jerry Goldberg's presentation on the basics on Response to Intervention. Dr. Hunter stated that they would be doing another round of visits with the STEAM lab due to the success of the 1st set of visits. She stated that they have begun the bid process for the space, noting that they are on track to have the space ready by September. Dr. Hunter stated that she spent the morning at the Regional Superintendents meeting, noting that they discussed: level funding at the governor's level, Chapter 70 having a 2.6% increase, and Circuit Breaker decrease from 75% to 65% for FY18. Dr. Hunter shared a timeline for interviews and postings for Mr. Flaherty's position that she worked on with Kelly McCausland, Director of Human Resources. Dr. Hunter requested the SC's feedback and thoughts on the timeline.

VII. CORRESPONDENCE

Ms. Bout stated that she received an invitation to join CMS this Thursday, at 9:00 AM, because the 8th grade student would be having a guest speaker talk about justice and the judicial system. Ms. Bout stated that they have received questions regarding the budget as well.

VIII. REPORTS FOR DISCUSSION

A. CMS Reconfiguration. Dr. Hunter stated that Mr. Cameron has done some work on short-term plans for CMS, noting that they are considering having 6th grade at Sanborn and 7th and 8th grades at Peabody. Ms. Herbert reviewed the CMS Reconfiguration presentation that had been created 2 years ago, noting several updates/changes. She reviewed the work of the master schedule subcommittee and space configuration subcommittee. Mr. Cameron stated that the overall goal is still to have 1 building and noted that a reconfiguration of the schools would allow students to identify as CMS students, and not as "Peabody" or "Sanborn" students. He shared some of the discussions that took

place at a recent professional development day, noting that 54% present were in favor of reconfiguring CMS next year and 37% were in support, but wanted to slow down the process. He noted the amount of work to be done in reconfiguring, including master scheduling and facilities work. Dr. Hunter stated the importance of listening to each individual's needs to consider what each individual's transition would look like, noting that slowing down the process was important. Mr. Johnston stated that he is a big proponent of reconfiguring, noting how beneficial it would be to the cohesion of the students. Mr. Conti stated that it makes a lot of sense developmentally and noted that it would help to inform the facilities planning of a possible new building in the future. Ms. Boynton agreed that it would be beneficial for the students, noting that she was a huge proponent. Ms. Bout stated that the reconfiguration would aid the sense of comradery amongst the Concord students going into the high school, noting that they would need to think about helping the Carlisle students in their transition to the high school as well. Mr. Flaherty stated that they would need to create a timeline of the work that needs to be done in relation to the capital fund.

B. CMS Facility Update. Ms. Bout stated that since CMS is not in the MSBA pipeline this year, it doesn't make sense to fund a feasibility study. She reviewed the cost estimates from Feingold Alexander, Architects, for renovating the buildings for a 10-year plan. She stated that Sanborn's estimate was \$21 million and Peabody's estimate was \$26 million, for a total of \$47 million. She stated that the conclusion was that they needed 1 facility for CMS. She reviewed the renovation options (@ \$60 million) and rebuild options (from low \$60 million to high \$60 million). She stated that they are resubmitting a statement of interest to the MSBA. Ms. Bout stated that they could discuss creating a feasibility study warrant article for Town Meeting 2019 in the fall. Dr. Hunter noted that they need to consider not being invited into the MSBA process next year. Mr. Johnston stated that they should get a better sense of what is needed in the recommended action category sooner than 10 years. He stated that they need to figure out when the cost of waiting is more expensive and what is the appropriate thing to do for the quality of education for the kids of Concord. He stated that the sooner they do the analysis, the better. Ms. Bout asked Mr. Flaherty to review the list of what needs to be done structurally to sustain the buildings for the next 6-7 years and Ms. Boynton recommended also folding in the reconfiguration into the analysis. Dr. Hunter stated that it's important that they involve the parent community in the reconfiguration discussion. Ms. Bout stated that she would bring a revised version of the committee's charge to the next CPS meeting.

C. FY19 Budget Update. Ms. Bout stated that there is still a large gap in the CPS budget and the FINCOM's guidelines. She stated that if they don't pass the budget at town meeting, they are facing cuts that the community has not seen in a long time. She stated that they brought the idea of decreasing their number due to the early separation incentive, but do not know what the response will be from FINCOM. Dr. Hunter reviewed the 1st level of cuts that have been taken to get to the current recommended budget, including: instructional supplies and materials, computer instructional hardware, library assistants, admin support, teacher and tutor staff, maintenance contracted services, personnel adjustments, curriculum materials and additional reductions, totaling \$1,085,924. Ms. Bout thanked Dr. Hunter for finding areas to cut, but noted how painful the other cuts are. Dr. Hunter stated that the current delta between the CPS recommended budget number and FINCOM's is \$592,367.

Dr. Hunter reviewed the potential list of reductions and offsets to meet FINCOM's guideline, including: early separation incentive, K-5 Spanish, regular education summer school, K-8 building specialist, digital literacy administrator and field trips. Ms. Boynton noted her discontent with not getting an answer on the \$135,000 offset that they presented to FINCOM. She stated how frustrated she was with what's happening and how unfair it is to all of the people whose jobs are in question. Mr. Conti agreed with Ms. Boynton's frustration, noting how much they have already cut. Mr. Johnston stated that they have just recovered from 2008, noting that having to cut the budget makes no sense, especially to the parent community. Mr. Conti noted how frustrating it is because they are talking about people's livelihoods. Ms. Bout stated that she doesn't feel the community understands the potential cuts and will be shocked when they find out what programs may be impacted, noting that it will be cutting into the schools' standard of excellence. Mr. Grom questioned why they would not go back to FINCOM with a new number to include the early retirement incentive and Mr. Flaherty stated that they are expecting 2019 to be challenging and Dr. Hunter noted the possibility of restoring a reduction from the 1st round of cuts. The SC agreed to stick with the current budget recommendation and see what FINCOM comes back with on March 1st, noting that they need to educate the community on their budget recommendation.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

B. FinCom Sustainability Forum 15th. Ms. Bout stated that FINCOM would be holding a forum on fiscal sustainability on Thursday, February 15th, noting that she would like to say something on behalf of the SC regarding the fact that sustainability isn't limited to cutting taxes, but also effects sustaining values and services that have been designated as priorities in Concord. Mr. Johnston stated that he feels a committee of many different stakeholders in town should be formed to discuss fiscal sustainability and he feels they are currently discussing fiscal restraint more than fiscal sustainability, noting that they are 2 different things. He stated that it's important for the SC to maintain the quality of education in Concord until told otherwise. Mr. Grom stated that the FINCOM working group has started the looking at sustainability and he feels that the SC could approach them and offer input in the form of liaisons.

X. ACTION ITEMS OLD BUSINESS

A. Vote to surplus books at Willard School. A motion was made by Ms. Boynton, seconded by Mr. Johnston, to surplus books at Willard School. The motion was unanimously approved.

B. Vote to accept Exxon Mobil donations. A motion was made by Ms. Boynton, seconded by Mr. Conti, to accept 2 Exxon Mobil grants in the amount of \$500 each, totaling \$1,000. The motion was unanimously approve, with thanks.

Mr. Conti thanked everyone for their work on the budget and Dr. Hunter noted that it's been a collaborative effort.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Ms. Boynton, seconded by Mr. Conti, to adjourn the meeting. The motion was unanimously approved and the meeting adjourned at 9:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Erin E. Higgins

Approved: 3/20/18

Abbreviations:

ACLU	American Civil Liberties Union
CASE	Cooperative Association for Special Education
CSC	Concord School Committee
CCSC	Concord-Carlisle Regional District School Committee
CMLP	Concord Municipal Light Plant
CPA	Community Preservation Act
CPC	Community Preservation Committee
CPS	Concord Public Schools
CCRSD	Concord-Carlisle Regional School District
CCHS	Concord-Carlisle High School
CHPS	The Collaborative for High Performance Schools
CSEC	Comprehensive Sustainable Energy Committee
CPW	Concord Public Works
CTA	Concord Teachers Association
DESE	Department of Elementary & Secondary Education
ELA	English Language Arts
FAAC	Financial Audit Advisory Committee
FINCOM	Finance Committee
FCCPF	Friends of Concord Carlisle Playing Fields
MASC	Massachusetts Association of School Committees
MIAA	Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association
NEASC	New England Association of Schools and Colleges
NESDEC	The New England School Development Council

OPEB	Other Post-Employment Benefits
RTI	Response to Intervention
SEPAC	Special Education Advisory Council
SOI	Statement of Interest
SPED	Special Education
SWOT	Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities, Threats
YRBS	Youth Risk Behavior Survey