

JOINT SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Concord – Carlisle School Committee
Concord School Committee
Ripley Building
March 20, 2018

Present: Heather Bout, Chair, CSC; CCSC
Johanna Boynton, Vice Chair, CSC; CCSC
Dan Conti, Chair, CCSC; CSC
Robert Grom, Vice Chair, CCSC; CSC
Wallace Johnston, CSC; CCSC
Mary Storrs, CCSC
Melissa McMorrow, CCSC

Present from Administration: Dr. Laurie Hunter, Superintendent of Schools, CPS & CCRSD

Absent from Administration: John Flaherty, Deputy Superintendent of Finance & Operations, CPS & CCRSD

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Conti called the CCSC meeting to order at 6:49 PM and he noted that the meeting was being recorded. The CSC meeting was called to order by Ms. Bout at 6:50 PM.

II. RECOGNITIONS

Dr. Hunter recognized the incredible work of the maintenance, custodial and transportation departments, stating that they have been working non stop over the last few weeks with the multiple storms that have occurred. She noted the difficulty involved in clearing the snow from the buses, noting her appreciation for all of the hard work.

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS

1. Cynthia Rainey, 80 Hunters Ridge Road, Concord, MA. Ms. Rainey shared a spreadsheet of data that included CCHS per athlete prices for sports, noting that most of the data provided came from the district. She noted that she's not against raising athletic fees, but encouraged the SC to look across the portfolio of teams and their spending, noting the ice time for the hockey teams and equipment fees for the football teams. She stated that asking a cross-country athlete to pay \$300 to support another team is not fair. She also stated that the athletic fee increase might have a dampening effect on boosters, noting what an important part they play in the sports at CC. She also noted that many teams need new items, noting that the lacrosse team hasn't bought new uniforms in 8 years, so the boosters are providing new uniforms.

2. Miguel Echavarri, 255 Commonwealth Avenue, Concord, MA. Mr. Echavarri stated that he wanted to address Article 13 regarding the capital improvements on campus (paving and lighting) , noting that he feels it should be delayed a year. He stated that the SC's interest as well as the communities' interest would be well served if they had some assurance that they are following good business practices. He stated that, for each of the projects to be funded under Article 13, he would expect to see: any project over a certain value would have 3 bidders on every RFP, every RFP is structured for apples to apples comparison, every bid submitted should reference technical specifications as well as other conditions. He stated that the SC has not been historically the best at capital projects, noting the signage project. He stated that he feels there are improvements being made with the new administration being brought in.

IV. REPORTS FOR DISCUSSION

A motion was made by Mr. Johnston, for both CSC and CCSC, seconded by Mr. Grom, for both CSC and CCSC, to move the discussions of the FY18 Budget Update ahead of the FY19 Budget discussions (IV. Reports for Discussion and X. New Business). The motion was unanimously approved.

A. FY18 Budget Update. Dr. Hunter shared a list of FY18 budget transfers, noting that both budgets have been frozen for several months. She stated that although there may be balances in some areas, it doesn't necessarily mean that the money was not allocated, but that they have chosen not to allocate it now in order to compensate for overages

that needed to be addressed. Dr. Hunter stated that the regional budget is tighter than they had hoped it would be. Mr. Johnston asked if there were any expenses for snow removal that were not accounted for and Dr. Hunter stated that there hasn't been anything significantly extraordinary like in 2015. Ms. Bout noted that many of the transfers seemed to be in salaries and questioned if that was due to changes mid year. Dr. Hunter stated that they were adjustments and clean up.

B. FY19 Budget. Dr. Hunter reviewed the recommended budget increase of 4.33% from December 12, 2017, which included several reductions. She stated that as of March 1, 2018, FINCOM had increased their guideline to \$1,354,836, noting that this equates to a 7.55% overall operational and assessment increase to Concord's portion. She stated that the total increase in revenue based on the increase to state aid proposed by the Governor's budget is \$180,591. Dr. Hunter stated that FINCOM's targeted operational increase is now 3.78% and CCRSD increase is 4.33%, noting that the gap has been decreased. She stated that after the increased revenue from the Governor's budget and the Carlisle match to FINCOM, the delta is \$155,661. Dr. Hunter reviewed the 2nd list of reductions and offsets.

Mr. Conti stated that the early separation incentive, insurance savings and Digital Literacy Administrator position would bring them to \$155,000, noting that the athletic fee discussion should be separate from this discussion because the athletic fees could be reinvested into the athletic program. Mr. Johnston agreed that the athletic fee increase needs additional discussion, noting that it doesn't sit well with him to use the athletic fees to close a budget gap. Dr. Hunter stated that the Digital Literacy Administrator is a hard recommendation, but noted that it does not directly touch kids. Ms. Boynton stated that they need to be thorough and make sure that they agree that they need to cut in order to reach FINCOM's guideline.

Mr. Johnston stated that they didn't come to this budget number with the idea that it was a negotiating tactic, but with a sense that this is where they need to be without cutting services to students. He stated that the process with the Finance Committee was very challenging this year, noting that the SC has been consistent throughout with what they felt was the right number for the schools. He stated that a gap between FINCOM's guideline and the school budgets isn't necessarily a bad thing. He stated that he's glad that the FINCOM number is where it is, but that they have put people's jobs at risk over the last few months during the process. He questioned why they had to go through the 2 ½ months to then find new revenue and also find that FINCOM would split the remaining difference. He stated that they need to continue to make it clear that they are not voting a negotiating number, but a number that is necessary for the schools. He stated that what happened this year with both budgets was disconcerting. He noted that if the Chapter 70 money changes to their detriment, there's no adjustment for that.

Mr. Grom stated that he was in favor of meeting the Finance guidelines with the 3 items, including: early separation incentive, insurance savings and Digital Literacy Administrator position. He noted that there is interest on the SC side as well as FINCOM's side to improve the budget process moving forward.

Ms. Bout stated that she agreed with Mr. Johnston on not setting a precedent that the number on the warrant is to be negotiated. She stated that they have been cutting the budgets very close and they don't want to risk digging into E&D every year. She noted that if they are able to reach the guideline, then they should. She spoke about the Digital Literacy Administrator position, noting that it's harder to defend since it doesn't directly touch the students.

Ms. Storrs questioned the administrative assistant positions listed on the 2nd cut list, in regards to how much they directly touch the students. Dr. Hunter stated that they have already reduced one admin at the high school in the 1st round of cuts. She stated that she was invited to meet with several departments at CCHS that would be directly impacted by the admin cuts and stated that the admin positions are on the front line of kids needs all day long. She stated that there is direct service to kids going on. Ms. Boynton questioned that since the admin positions would go from 3 to 2 would they carry a bigger load? Dr. Hunter stated that they need to revisit the 1st round of cuts to ensure that everything that was proposed in October is still doable.

Mr. Johnston noted that he doesn't want what he said to be misconstrued in the sense that there will be times with future school committees to look at where we they are relative to external economics. He noted that he's not proposing that they always come to town meeting with level funding budgeting. He stated that they need to be careful on cuts that they know they will want to bring back because of the difficulty in bringing them back.

Ms. McMorrow stated that she supports the recommendation of meeting the FINCOM guideline, noting that she is concerned about the lack of contingencies. Mr. Conti stated that if they were to lose teachers at the high school, it would also be programs and could take up to 10 years to get them back. He stated that the way they arrive at this point with FINCOM needs to change and urged the new chair to reach out to FINCOM to redesign the process.

Ms. Boynton stated that she was enormously frustrated with the process early on and noted that they are collectively getting to the guideline number, noting that it's important to not set a precedence of negotiation. Mr. Conti noted that they couldn't reduce the OPEB contribution more since they've already reduced the number. Ms. Bout noted that FINCOM is in support of Dr. Hunter and that the SC appreciates the vote of confidence in her and the SC. She stated that it's important in building the relationship if they could get to the FINCOM guideline.

Mr. Johnston noted that a big issue this year was the assessment shift because Concord's ratio of students relative to Carlisle is higher than last year. He stated the operational budget and the assessment shift need to be more clearly separated from each other. Mr. Conti stated that the assessment is a function from a regional agreement from 1957, noting that there is a different way of doing it called a mandatory statutory contribution, based on a 3 year rolling average, so the blow to each town is lessened from year to year.

A motion was made by Ms. Boynton, seconded by Ms. McMorrow, to approve the CCRSD FY19 Budget of \$33,749,420. Ms. Bout stated that this number is based on the assumptions of using the early separation incentive, insurance savings and cutting the digital literacy administrator position. The motion was unanimously approved.

C. Capital Warrant Article. Dr. Hunter reviewed the items included in the \$1 million Warrant Article: CCHS - re-piping of emergency shower controls, re-work spray booth ductwork for NFPA Compliance, side walk cut for MAAB access by nurses, driveway improvements Walden to Thoreau, lighting along driveway Walden to Thoreau, well system installation for field irrigation, updated controls for RTU'S, replacement of non-potable water hot water heater and more parking. Dr. Hunter stated that they received a bid for the paving of the road along the Beede Center for \$195,200. She shared two drawings for possible parking spaces - one that would add 59 spots for an estimated \$150-200K and one that would add 117 spots for an estimated \$300-400K. She noted that a study has not been completed yet.

Mr. Conti noted that the parking issue has been there since the new high school opened and that they have come to the conclusion that more spots are needed. Ms. Bout noted that this sparks the debate over encouraging behavior changes like carpooling and taking the bus. Dr. Hunter recommended an article for: \$400,000 for parking, \$100,000 for the small items listed (shower, spray booth), and \$100,000 for a study for entire campus (paving, lighting). Mr. Conti noted that certain segments need to drive to save money for college, etc., so they cannot assume one type of student needs to drive. Ms. Storrs noted her concern for doing a parking study and then doing a full campus study. Dr. Hunter stated that it was a timing issue and that the parking study would be on a smaller scale. Ms. Storrs noted her concern over deciding to put parking at the Beede Center without looking at the entire campus for other parking possibilities, noting that she understands it's a timing issue.

Mr. Johnston stated that he couldn't vote for this without a continued effort to limit parking. He stated that he would like to explore whether a different enhanced after practice bus schedule would be possible. *At 8:07 PM, Ms. Storrs left the meeting.* Mr. Johnston stated that he doesn't feel as though this would pass at town meeting. Ms. Boynton stated that she senses the urgency and desperation and it needs a resolution to take some pressure out of it. Ms. Bout stated that she agreed with Mr. Johnston about putting the number forward with a plan on looking into parking later as a comprehensive discussion with buy in from the community. She also noted that she's heard the desire for more parking from other members of the community. Dr. Hunter noted how early students are arriving at school to get a spot, also noting that it is adding to the student stress level. The SC agreed to vote at the next meeting.

D. Athletic Fee Increases. Dr. Hunter stated that 60 families met the family cap. She thanked Mr. Haley and his office for breaking out the cost per sport. She stated that the only modifications being made to her original recommendation were to change the user fee to \$300 and modify the family cap from \$600 to \$900 (instead of \$1,200). Mr. Johnston noted the high cost of some sports, such as hockey, and how they are basically asking the other athletic activities to subsidize that. Ms. Bout stated that given the information and the new athletic director, it makes sense to extend the discussion. Ms. Boynton stated that there's a tremendous amount of fundraising going on within the teams

and she feels uncomfortable starting to evaluate one experience over another with respect to price and cost. She stated that this is an opportunity for more comprehensive and thorough conversations. Mr. Grom stated that they need to ensure that kids who want to play certain sports can afford to. Dr. Hunter stated that they ensure that sports are accessible to all students. Mr. Johnston stated that there are some expenses to sports that parents provide, such as surcharges and ski equipment. Mr. Grom stated it would be helpful to know how much money the booster clubs provide. The SC agreed that the decision regarding the fee increase could be discussed again in the spring since it wouldn't have any effect on the current budget.

V. ACTION ITEMS

A. Gift Acceptance: New England Patriots Charitable Foundation. A motion was made by Ms. Boynton, seconded by Ms. McMorrow, to accept the check in the amount of \$3,000 from the New England Patriots Charitable Foundation. The motion was unanimously approved, with thanks.

B. Vote to approve CCHS Junior State Spring Event. A motion was made by Ms. Boynton, seconded by Ms. McMorrow, to approve the Junior State trip to Stamford, CT on April 28-29, 2018 with the condition that a signed district liability insurance waiver (MIIA) is received from all participants. The motion was unanimously approved.

VI. ADJOURNMENT for the Concord-Carlisle School Committee

A motion was made by Ms. McMorrow, for CCSC, seconded by Mr. Grom, for CCSC, to adjourn the meeting. The motion was unanimously approved and the Concord-Carlisle School Committee meeting adjourned at 8:29 PM.

VII. READING OF THE MINUTES

A. Open Session – CPS Meeting 2/13/18. A motion was made by Ms. Boynton, seconded by Mr. Johnston, to approve the CPS meeting minutes from 2/13/18. The motion was unanimously approved.

VIII. CHAIRS & LIASONS REPORT

Ms. Bout stated that they have had several coffees, noting that the schedule will be adjusted going forward. She stated that there will be 1 community coffee per week: Thursday, March 22nd at CCHS, Monday, March 26th in the morning at Thoreau, Thursday, April 5th from 6:00 – 7:30 PM at Sanborn.

Ms. Bout stated that she and Mr. Conti attended the League of Women Voters warrant article review. Mr. Conti thanked the League; noting that he thought the event was very productive. Ms. Bout stated that she joined several of the League members at their Education Committee meeting, noting that they had good follow up discussions regarding the budget.

Ms. Bout stated that the contract between CCTV and the Town might be extended. She stated that the PEG Access Advisory Committee is asking the SC to appoint a member. Ms. Bout stated that the Board of Health would be coming to the next SC meeting to follow up on the marijuana discussion. Mr. Johnston noted that they would be expected to take a position, so the SC should be thinking about how they feel regarding the marijuana issue.

Ms. Bout stated that they received several emails regarding make up days and the PEG Access Advisory Committee.

Mr. Johnston stated that the Long Range Planning Committee has rescheduled the public hearing for April 25th.

Mr. Grom stated that the Select Board meeting addressed their stance on warrant articles and Article 11 - CPS capital projects was recommended for affirmative action. He stated that they also recommended affirmative action on Article 18 – allowing 17 year olds to vote.

IX. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Hunter stated that the CMS walkouts were conducted the past week and the CCHS event is scheduled for March 21st. She noted that they are working hard to support students, regardless of how they want to participate. She stated that they are on track with strategic planning, noting how positive the conversations have been. Dr. Hunter thanked Ms. Boynton for all of her hard work with the strategic planning. Dr. Hunter stated that cultural proficiency work is moving along very nicely and they are on track with the implementation plan. She stated that several people from the district attended the diversity hiring fair on March 17th noting how many qualified candidates from diverse

backgrounds were in attendance. She also noted that they have been in contact with several of them. Dr. Hunter stated that she continues to meet with the CTA and CCTA at least monthly and attends different departments and events at each of the schools. She stated that the RFP is out for the Innovation Lab and that it should be open for September. Dr. Hunter stated that they've had an extensive search for the Director of Finance and Operations position, noting that they've had a deep pool of experienced candidates. She stated that they have 2 candidates that will be coming back in to meet with the administrators and her. Dr. Hunter stated that they have begun the K-8 Special Education review.

Mr. Conti thanked Dr. Hunter for supporting the students with the walkout and for maintaining structure in the process. Dr. Hunter noted how thoughtful the students were with the walkout.

X. NEW BUSINESS

A. FY18 Budget Status. Dr. Hunter stated that they have been watching the CPS budget very closely. She noted that the outcome of the freeze process has been positive and they are feeling comfortable with withdrawing the supplemental appropriation. She noted that the themes on the staffing line transfers are similar to the CCRSD budget. Ms. Bout thanked Dr. Hunter and Mr. Flaherty for all of their hard work.

B. FY19 Budget. Dr. Hunter reviewed the budget voted on from December 12th, with the 4.48% increase, including the reductions taken to arrive at that number. She noted that they would be reviewing the list of cuts, but that the dollar amount of \$1,085,924 in reductions will remain. She stated that as of March 1st, the FINCOM guideline went to a 3.9% increase, totaling \$1,436,784. She stated that there is now a delta of \$214,985, noting that the town has taken many of the assumptions with the Governor's budget. She shared a list of possible reductions and offsets, noting that she increased the amount of the early separation offset. Ms. Bout noted that they cut out the Digital Literacy Administrator position in the CCRSD budget, so that would be a given in this budget, noting that this position combined with the early separation incentive would close the gap. Ms. Boynton acknowledged Dr. Hunter's idea of the early separation incentive and it's important role in closing the gap. Ms. Bout noted her uncomfot with the levels of contingency, but that they could close the gap.

A motion was made by Ms. Boynton, seconded by Mr. Conti, to revote the FY19 CPS budget to \$38,246,896. The motion was unanimously approved. Dr. Hunter thanked the SC on behalf of the faculty and school system for their unity and advocacy. Ms. Bout thanked the Finance Committee for their movement in helping to bridge the gap.

C. CPS Calendar: Good Friday. Dr. Hunter stated that CPS has been closed 7 times due to snow, noting that many districts are in the same predicament. She stated that the high school's last day has landed at Friday, June 22nd and CPS's last day has landed at Monday, June 25th. She stated that the 25th might be challenging due to vacations and camps, noting that they looked into the option of holding school on Good Friday. She stated that teachers were surveyed about their availability to work on Good Friday and that they wouldn't be able to staff the schools adequately, with over 30 potential absences at K-8. Ms. Boynton questioned if there would be the same issue with teachers not being able to work on June 25th and Dr. Hunter stated that teachers understand that they are here until school gets out, noting that attendance on the student side could be more of an issue on the 25th. Mr. Conti questioned structuring the last days for 5th and 8th grades differently and Dr. Hunter stated that they could look at those discussions. Mr. Conti suggested that since the 25th would be a half-day, that they could hold field day on that last day. Dr. Hunter stated that the state has reminded them that 180 days holds unless the snow day happens after June 1st.

D. CMS Facilities Committee Charge. Ms. Bout stated that the 3rd Phase is no longer relevant due to timing, so they adjusted the charge. She noted that they might need to revise it again in the future after hearing from MSBA.

A motion was made by Mr. Johnston, seconded by Ms. Boynton, to adjust the charge for the CMS Facilities Committee charge as presented. The motion was unanimously approved.

XI. ACTION ITEMS

A. Vote to accept donation to Concord Integrated Preschool Program. A motion was made by Ms. Boynton, seconded by Mr. Grom, to accept a \$50 donation to the Concord Integrated Preschool from Thomas Woods of Concord, MA. The motion was unanimously approved, with thanks.

XII. ADJOURNEMENT

A motion was made by Ms. Boynton, seconded by Mr. Grom, to adjourn the meeting. The motion was unanimously approved and the meeting adjourned at 9:29 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Erin E. Higgins

Approved: 4/24/18

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
MAAB	Massachusetts Architectural Access Board
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
NFPA	National Fire Protection Association
OPEB	Other Post-Employment Benefits
RTI	Response to Intervention
SEPAC	Special Education Parent Advisory Council
SOI	Statement of Interest
SPED	Special Education
SWOT	Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities, Threats
YRBS	Youth Risk Behavior Survey