

## **School Committee Update – Following the Joint Meeting, February 28, 2012**

### **School Budgets**

The School Committees reviewed and provided input on the presentations prepared by Superintendent Diana Rigby and Deputy Superintendent John Flaherty for the Concord Public School (CPS) and Concord-Carlisle Regional School District (CCRSD) budgets and other school-related articles in preparation for the Public Hearing and Town Meeting.

School-related Articles for the 2012 Concord Town Meeting are:

- Article 7 Concord Public School Budget
- Article 8 Concord Public School Renovations
- Article 9 Concord Public Schools – Supplemental Appropriation for Current Year
- Article 10 Concord-Carlisle Regional High School Budget
- Article 11 Concord-Carlisle Regional School District Technology Stabilization Fund Transfer

The Concord School Committee has recommended a budget increase of 4.50% over the current fiscal year spending level for the Concord Public Schools (preK-8). The recommended increase is \$331,328 greater than that recommended by the Concord Finance Committee. At CCHS, the Concord-Carlisle School Committee has recommended a budget increase of 1.78%, a difference of \$86,322 with the Concord Finance Committee's guideline. The School Committee Statement of February 21, 2012 ([www.concordpublicschools.net](http://www.concordpublicschools.net)) gives an overview of FY13 budget development. The recommended budgets of 4.5% increase for CPS and 1.78% increase for CCRSD are within the levy limit and will not require an override.

The other school-related articles address capital renovations at Sanborn, Peabody, Alcott and Ripley, potential budget shortfalls for the current fiscal year, and the equipping of the new high school. The CPS supplemental appropriation article is necessary to meet special education expenses for the current school year, although the amount is yet to be determined.

### **Transportation Services**

The School Committees continue to plan for student transportation for the 2012-13 school year and beyond. A Request For Proposals (RFP) has been issued for the lease of a facility to house bus maintenance services. Proposals are due on March 30, 2012 at 10:00am, and will be evaluated by a team including members of the schools' finance department, maintenance department, and the transportation manager.

At the February 14, 2012 meeting, the School Committee authorized the administration to issue an RFP for leasing a facility suitable for repair of school vehicles. It is not known at this point if a suitable facility can be found and secured. The School Committee also voted to authorize the administration to prepare an Invitation For Bid (IFB) for private transportation services. The IFB was to be used in the event that we cannot find an appropriate rental property or the FY13 school budgets do not pass at adequate levels. Should these scenarios occur, we would still need to be prepared to provide student

transportation for the 2012-13 school year, and we would need to be prepared to use private transportation services.

At the February 28, 2012 meeting, the administration informed the school committees that waiting until Concord Town Meeting in late April to issue the IFB makes the timeline is too tight to provide busing for September 2012. The School Committees discussed the issue at length and concluded that we need to get accurate numbers for private services instead of just speculative estimates, in order to make fact-based decisions. The Committees authorized the administration to proceed in issuing the IFB for transportation services, which this time will also include the sale of the buses. The Committees will be able to evaluate transportation expenses in more detail, but will not be locked into accepting a bid. In the meantime, we expect to hear results of the RFP for a maintenance facility on or soon after March 30.

### **Concord Education Fund Grants**

The School Committees approved grants from the Concord Ed Fund in the amount of \$144,238 for 2012-13. These generous donations provide for enrichment activities and curricular enhancements that cannot be accomplished through the regular school budgets. Grant funding includes an elementary-level FIRST Robotics team, animation software, iPads for programs at CMS and CCHS, and a Green Entrepreneurs seminar at CCHS. We are very grateful for the support of the Concord Ed Fund and for the teachers who are piloting these initiatives.

Submitted by:

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For the Concord and Concord-Carlisle School Committees