

School Committee Update

Following the Concord School Committee Meeting on March 13, 2012

Concord Middle School (CMS)

Students and teachers presented the community-building and anti-bullying program, CMS Stands Together. The program, which was started last year, is led by students and facilitated by faculty. After a short video, CMS and CCHS students shared their experiences with the program.

Principal Lynne Beattie presented a proposal for the possible reorganization of CMS, placing all 6th graders at Peabody and all 7th and 8th graders at Sanborn. Ms. Beattie sent a letter to parents (cms.colonial.net/Administration/Principal/) and is gathering input from staff, parents, and students. She is speaking with other districts and conducting a logistical and cost analysis. Potential benefits are decreased transition stress for 6th graders and increased opportunities for teacher collaboration. Ongoing input and analysis will continue until March 30, when Ms. Beattie expects to make a decision on the reorganization.

Preparation for Concord Town Meeting

The school budget articles will come up for vote on the first evening of Town Meeting, Monday, April 23. We encourage all citizens to attend Town Meeting.

The School Committee will not be moving Article 9 Concord Public Schools – Supplemental Appropriation for Current Year in the amount of \$325,000. This article was originally deemed necessary to cover special education (SPED) expenses for the current year (2011-12). Due to lack of snow removal expenditures, favorable natural gas prices, and no growth beyond the initial projected deficit for SPED costs, Deputy Superintendent John Flaherty informed the School Committee that this appropriation will not be necessary.

Transportation Services

A Request For Proposals (RFP) has been issued for the lease of a facility to house bus maintenance services for 2012-13. The RFP has been advertised widely and proposals are due on March 30, 2012. Although more than 12 copies of the RFP have been requested, we do not know how many bids will be submitted. Deputy Superintendent John Flaherty has been reaching out to local realtors and making site visits to the extent permitted by law. Our legal counsel has been consulted throughout the process.

An Invitation For Bid (IFB) for private transportation services and the sale of the bus fleet is currently being reviewed by attorneys and will be issued on March 15, 2012. The bids will be due on April 17, 2012. The IFB includes verified route information and additional services information from the transportation management.

The goal of the School Committee is to obtain factual information in order to make informed decisions regarding student transportation services. Over the next two months, the committee will learn the results of the RFP and the IFB. Work in progress includes a

review of the safety record of the current transportation department and development of a method to evaluate the safety records of private providers, as was suggested at previous school committee meetings. In addition, the committee discussed preparing a survey to ask parents about their willingness to pay bus fees. The School Committee will be setting up an FAQ section on the web site to provide answers to commonly-asked questions about transportation services.

Other Business

The school committee discussed policy revisions related to advertising on school property in response to a request from Concord Carlisle Youth Baseball (CCYB) to post sponsors on the scoreboard at the Ripley baseball field. The committee approved the installation of a backstop by CCYB at Thoreau School.

Superintendent Diana Rigby presented a model rubric of standards and indicators of effective teaching practice from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). A teacher evaluation rubric that complies with state standards must be in place for CPS for the 2013-14 school year, and the administration and teachers are working toward this goal.

Communication

The School Committee page on the district web site has been updated (www.concordpublicschools.net/school-committee.php) and new information will be posted as soon as possible. There has been some confusion regarding Citizens' Comments at School Committee meetings. According to the CPS and CCRSD Policy Manual (policy.ctspublish.com/concord-carlisle-masc/), citizens may make brief comments and statements, however the School Committee will not respond to those statements at the time they are made. Please be aware that comments from citizens are carefully considered by school committee members, and all comments are noted in the meeting minutes. The email address cps@colonial.net reaches all the Concord School Committee members and cchs@colonial.net reaches all the Regional School Committee members.

Submitted by:
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For the Concord School Committee