

School Committee Update

Following the Joint School Committee Meeting on March 27, 2012

School Budgets

The Concord School Committee and the Concord Finance Committee (FinCom) reached an agreement about school budgets for fiscal year 2013 (FY13). On March 22, the Concord FinCom voted to adjust the Guideline for the Concord Public School (CPS) budget, closing the \$332,328 gap between the budget approved by the School Committee and the previous FinCom Guideline. Anticipated level-funding in Chapter 70 state aid, instead of a projected decrease, allowed the CCRSD budget to meet the Concord FinCom Guideline. The Regional School Committee voted to reapprove the CCRSD FY13 budget with revised revenue sources.

For the sixth year in a row, the CPS and CCRSD proposed budgets are within the levy limit and will not require a Proposition 2½ override. The budgets will be presented in Article 7 and Article 10 on the first evening of Concord Town Meeting, Monday, April 23. The CCRSD budget will also be presented at Carlisle Town Meeting on April 30. We encourage all citizens to attend Town Meeting.

School Performance Report

The School Committees reviewed the 2012 Performance Report. The annual report includes information on student enrollment, student achievement and community service, special education, curricular initiatives, and staff data. A financial overview summarizes the 5-year operating budget history, state and federal funding, capital improvements, and information about the bond rating. The report contains comparative demographics, tax rates, bond ratings, education spending, MCAS scores, and college attendance for surrounding and similar communities. The report is mailed to every household in Concord and Carlisle each spring.

Transportation Services

Responses to the Request For Proposals (RFP) for the lease of a facility to house bus maintenance services are due on March 30. The proposals will be evaluated by a team that includes Deputy Superintendent of Finance and Operations, John Flaherty, Facilities Director, Dave Anderson, and Transportation Manager, Wayne Busa. Responses to the Invitation For Bid (IFB) for private transportation services are due on April 17, and proposals for the purchase of the bus fleet are due on April 20. The Town of Concord has offered the use of a shed on the landfill for one year. Significant improvements to the building and site would be necessary and a cost analysis is underway. A detailed report on the transportation proposals, including a safety comparison, will be presented to the School Committee in May.

Some citizens have recommended charging a bus fee to pay for maintaining district-owned transportation services. The School Committee and administration would like to know whether parents are willing to incur this additional expense. The school administration has partnered with K12 Insight for the development and deployment of a parent survey that will be sent out to the parents of current students in grades K-12.

Concord Special Town Meeting

Two articles on the Warrant for the Concord Special Town Meeting seek to compel or request that the School Committee take particular actions with regard to student transportation services.

A third article seeks to request that the School Committee produce “rainbow budget books” as was done in the 1980s and 1990s. Members of the School Committee and school administration will attend the Public Hearing on April 2, and the Committee will discuss how to respond to these articles at the School Committee meeting on April 10. The Special Town Meeting is scheduled for the evening of Tuesday, April 24, and we encourage all citizens to attend.

Other Business/Reports

CCHS students described their experiences at the International Weather Society Conference in New Orleans. They were the only high school students to attend the conference and received an award for one of their poster presentations.

The School Committee discussed policy revisions related to advertising on school property and approved a request from Concord Carlisle Youth Baseball/Softball (CCYB/S) to post sponsors on the scoreboard at the Ripley baseball field. The final reading of a revised policy will be at the April 10 meeting.

The School Committee received an update on the progress of the CCHS building project. The design development phase is almost complete, and the architect and the construction manager will be obtaining cost estimates for the project. The project manager has recommended accelerating the timeline in order to save a significant amount of money on construction expenses. The CCHS Building Committee and the design team plan to outreach to neighbors to keep them informed about the project. More information is available at www.cchsbuilding.org.

Superintendent Diana Rigby presented a model rubric for the evaluation of Principals and Superintendents that will go into effect for the 2012-13 school year. The School Committee is responsible for the annual evaluation of the Superintendent, and the Committee agreed to hold a workshop to review the new evaluation process in detail in July.

For previous School Committee Updates and other information and reports, please go to the School Committee page on the district web site, www.concordpublicschools.net.