

School Committee Update

Following the meetings of January 8 and January 22, 2013

CCHS Building Project

The Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) has reinstated funding for the Concord-Carlisle High School (CCHS) building project. In a letter dated January 10, 2013, the MSBA offered an amendment to the Project Funding Agreement (PFA) that affirms the original agreement between the Concord-Carlisle Regional School District (CCRSD) and the MSBA. The signed amendment will allow the project to submit requests for state reimbursement as outlined in the PFA for more than \$28 million.

The 60% Construction Documents will be completed at the end of January, and the CCHS Building Committee expects to formally submit the package to the MSBA in early February. The contractor, Turner Construction, will begin mobilization which includes installing fencing, surveying, and limited demolition in early/mid February, followed by full scale site work and earth moving in March. The project is maintaining completion dates within the PFA schedule and expects student to move in April 2015. Please visit the CCHS Building web site for updated information at www.cchsbuilding.org.

School Security and Safety

Lt. Roy Mulcahy and Det. Scott Camillieri have been meeting with the school administration to review emergency procedures. They described emergency response enhancements to the School Committee. The schools have been conducting “lockdown” drills for over 10 years, but CCHS and Concord Middle School (CMS) will augment the current emergency protocol by implementing the ALICE (Alert, Lock-down, Inform, Counter, Evacuate) program. The police have begun training the faculty and staff at CMS and CCHS. There will be no changes to the elementary school (K-5) emergency response protocol at this time. Superintendent Diana Rigby expressed appreciation to the Concord Police for their leadership and collaboration in keeping students and staff safe.

John Flaherty, Deputy Superintendent for Finance and Operations, and Dave Anderson, Facilities Manager, have evaluated the building access systems for each Concord Public School (CPS) building. They recommended that the elementary schools and middle schools install card-access systems (similar to Willard’s card system) and video cameras at the entrances. The School Committee approved the appropriation of funding to enhance security and access control at CPS buildings in an amount not to exceed \$325,000. Several capital projects were deferred to provide funding.

Youth Risk Behavior Survey Results

Kathy Codianne, Director of Teaching and Learning, reported on the results of the 2012 Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS). The survey is sponsored by Emerson Hospital, and Concord and Concord-Carlisle have been participating in the program since 1998. The survey addresses: safety, violence-related behavior, self-injurious behavior, tobacco use, alcohol use, drug use, sexual behavior, dietary behavior, physical activity, and stress. Students in grades 6, 8 and 9-12 took the survey in March 2012.

The 2012 results were compared to the 2012 nine district aggregate, the 2011 Massachusetts YRBS, and also compared with results from previous years. New questions addressed prescription medication use and stress. Areas of concern at the high school are alcohol use allowed by parents and marijuana use. Areas of concern at the middle school are transition issues, such as stress and cyber-bullying. Anti-bullying and peer support programs at CCHS (Advisory Program) and CMS (CMS Stands Together) have been effective in reducing the instances of bullying. At both CCHS and CMS, student support systems are strong and important; the goal is that all students are connected to their peers and to their teachers. The results of the survey are available at www.concordpublicschools.net/schoolcommittee/attachments/2013-01-22-AT.pdf

2013-14 School Calendars

Ms. Rigby presented the proposed 2013-14 school calendar developed by the calendar committee. The first draft calendar proposed teachers starting on August 28 and students starting on September 3. The first draft calendar was accepted by Concord Teachers' Association (CTA) but not by the Concord-Carlisle Teachers' Association (CCTA). The consent of both the CTA and the CCTA to start prior to September 1 is a contractual obligation.

The final proposed calendar has a start date of September 3 for teachers and September 6 for students, with school ending for students on June 23. Massachusetts requires districts to schedule five emergency days at the end of each school year. With the emergency days included, the last day of school for students is June 30. The observance of religious holidays has been reinstated for 2013-14. The School Committees voted to approve the school calendars but expressed concern about the late start/end dates. The calendars are posted on the district website at www.concordpublicschools.net/calendars/.

Transportation Update

The Concord School Committee voted to award the contract for the Transportation Feasibility Study for the land at the former landfill at 759 Walden Street, Concord. The study will include: feasibility study, cost estimate, traffic analysis, and civil design. Three proposals were received and evaluated. The Committee expects the results of the study before the 2013 Town Meeting.

Mr. Flaherty updated the School Committees on transportation planning and the demobilization of the bus depot on the regional district property. Fuel tanks will be evacuated by hazardous waste specialists and removed from the property. Bus repair operations were transferred to the Billerica facility at the beginning of the 2012-13. Utilization of the Acton bus parking lot will commence in early February and the site will include a trailer for administrative and driver needs. Mr. Flaherty anticipates no delays or changes to the current student bus schedules.

Other Business

The School Committees voted to approve a one-year successor agreement with the Bus Drivers Association. The Committees reviewed enrolment information from NESDEC: historical enrollments, percentage changes, and enrollment projections for Alcott, Thoreau and Willard, CMS and CCHS. The Regional School Committee also approved the CC Fencing Team trip to Huntington, NY.

The School Committee Chairs submitted the 2012 annual reports to be published in the Concord Town Report. The reports are posted on the district web site.

For more information, please go to the School Committee page on the district web site, www.concordpublicschools.net/school-committee. All School Committee meetings are recorded and rebroadcast on CCTV and are available as video-on-demand (www.concordtv.org).