

## **The School Committees Report**

The School Committees are dedicated to supporting the school districts' educational goals for Concord, Carlisle and Boston students while maintaining a transparent public process related to policy decisions. This article is one in a series that is intended to update and inform the residents of Concord and Carlisle about the districts' on-going activities, initiatives and policies.

## **School Related Town Meeting Warrants**

Members of the School Committees are supporting the school related Articles at the upcoming Town Meeting. Members of both Committees expressed that they reviewed all items included in the recommended budgets and worked to ensure that the modest increases were sensitive to the impact on taxpayers. In both budget requests, reductions were made to mitigate the impact of the escalation and cost drivers.

The budget proposals are the culmination of a six-month process that began with the submittal of the annual School Improvement Plans from each school which are developed with input from teachers, parents, and administrators at each school site. Based on these plans, the Superintendent and the Deputy Superintendent propose budgets to the School Committees who further develop the recommendations and present them to the Concord and Carlisle Finance Committees for their review. Throughout this process, the School Committees engage with the public by encouraging them to attend regularly scheduled business meetings and through discussions at Parent Teacher Group meetings and at School Committee Community Coffees.

The recommendations for both the Concord-Carlisle Regional School Committee and the Concord School Committee are in alignment with Concord Finance Committee guidelines. Final budget levels will be set by the vote of citizens at Town Meeting.

The Concord School Committee approved an operating budget of \$35,660,111 (Article #11) which represents a 3.23% increase from the prior year and is below the five year operating average increase of 4.62%. The largest cost driver in the increase is the contracted salary escalation for teachers which accounts for \$860,973 of the \$1.1 million increase over the previous budget. Educational program levels are consistent with the current year while service levels increase to include the purchase of two new buses.

The Concord-Carlisle Regional School Committee advanced a recommendation for an operating budget of \$26,608,381 (Article #13) which is an increase of 3.12% over the previous year and represents a five year operating average increase of 2.76%. This recommendation includes the resumption of the technology replacement cycle and one bus purchase

The Concord School Committee advanced Article 12 that would authorize \$870,000 for construction, renovations, repairs and related work at various Concord Public School facilities. Highlights of the work include a new roof for the Sanborn Building and replacing aging HVAC equipment at Peabody and Sanborn.

The Concord-Carlisle Regional School Committee advanced Article 14 for \$1,100,000 to address the remediation of the former private landfill located on the Concord-Carlisle Regional

School District land. Article 14 funds a fixed price contract and adherence to the approved remediation plan eliminates additional financial exposure to taxpayers. Funding of this article is critical to maintain the State approved remediation plan and project timeline approved by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection.

The Concord School Committee unanimously supported the Supplemental Appropriation for the School Transportation Facility in Article 15, which would appropriate 1.95M to the building of a new Transportation Facility on the WR Grace Land for their transportation and busing needs.

### **Committee Members Honor Service of Kathi Snook**

Superintendent Diana Rigby and Committee members took time at the March 22<sup>nd</sup> business meeting to honor the contributions of Kathi Snook who will complete her 3-year term at the close of Town Meeting.

Members lauded Kathi's integrity, work ethic, analytical skills, leadership, and preparation. Kathi, a West Point graduate who also earned a Doctorate in Education from B.U., worked to improve transparency and communication between the Committees and the public while also advancing contract negotiations with both Teachers Unions, School Committee Policy Review, and creating Advisory Committees regarding school calendar and alternative fuel transportation. She worked hard to ensure that Concord provides the best educational programs and environment for children.

A steadfast supporter of the Concord Schools and Concord-Carlisle High School, Kathi's passions include education and service and she plans to stay active in Concord.

### **The School Committees Contact Information**

You can link to the School Committees' emails on the Districts' home page at [www.concordps.org](http://www.concordps.org). Or, you can email the Concord Public School Committee at [concordschoolcommittee@concordps.org](mailto:concordschoolcommittee@concordps.org) and the Concord-Carlisle Regional School Committee at [concordcarliseschoolcommittee@concordps.org](mailto:concordcarliseschoolcommittee@concordps.org). You can reach out to the Superintendent and the School Committees through the Your Voice Matters link on the Districts' home page.

School Committee meetings are open to the public and the public is encouraged to attend. The meetings are broadcast on CCTV and are available on demand at [www.concordtv.org](http://www.concordtv.org). The district web site ([www.concordpublicschools.net](http://www.concordpublicschools.net)) contains updated reports, presentations and information on meetings.