

## **The School Committees Report**

The School Committees and Superintendent are dedicated to achieving their educational goals 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.

## **Town Meeting and Budget Update**

Carlisle and Concord Town Meetings have concluded and School Committee members are grateful for the voter support for articles related to the FY15 CPS budget (\$32.4 million), for CPS renovations and stabilization, technology, transportation infrastructure, and the FY15 budget for CCHS (\$27.4 million).

The Committee members appreciate the hard work of John Flaherty (Deputy Superintendent) and the team in the School Department's Business Office for preparing the TM articles.

At its scheduled meeting of May 13, the School Committee discussed recommendations to address the implications of the tie vote on Article 10, the CPS Supplemental Appropriation for the current school year. This article was intended to address a projected budget deficit of approximately \$130,000. In preparation for the School Committee discussion, Superintendent Rigby met with the K-8 principals and together they proposed taking the following actions: eliminate or charge for field trips, place restrictions on use of substitute teachers, restrict professional development through the end of the school year and restrict custodial overtime. Members of the School Committee acknowledged that these measures would create challenges for the school community's stakeholders including teachers, staff, students and families. The School Committee Chairs and the Superintendent relayed information that the PTG presidents from the K-8 schools were exploring the idea of contributing funds to support some field trip expenses where possible. Feedback from PTG groups indicated that this type of support would not be sustainable in future years.

The School Committees indicated that community members, who have children in the school system, approached them and expressed their desire to participate in school funding decisions, but cited the difficulties they face in attending TM on Sunday afternoons.

## **Retiring School Committee Members Honored**

Despite a full agenda of Town Meeting business, Superintendent Rigby and local citizens paused at Town Meeting to recognize retiring School Committee members Pam Gannon and Louis Salemy.

### **Pam Gannon**

Pam's efforts and leadership during her six years on the School Committee have had an enormous and positive impact on the schools and the Towns of Concord and Carlisle. She served as Chair of the Concord Public Schools for three years, the Finance Committee liaison for four years and was on the Policy Subcommittee for five years. She also was an active participant on the EdCo Collaborative Roundtables, which is an organization comprised of 20 member school districts from Acton to Winchester.

During Pam's time on the School Committees, the budgets for both districts have come in under the Proposition 2 1/2 levy limit. The new Willard School Building opened and was recognized for its sustainable design by the state. Pam was instrumental in the efforts to secure local and state financing for the high school building project and managed the evaluation process for the superintendent, including leading the Committees through the implementation of the new Massachusetts Model System for Educator Evaluations adopted in 2013.

Pam leads by example and builds consensus through evidence-based decision making. Pam performs exhaustive research, letting relevant policies, practices and precedents guide the decision making process. She takes complex materials and distills them into logical and accessible criteria and procedures for taking action.

The foundation for these skills were formed in her undergraduate studies at Massachusetts Institute of Technology while pursuing a degree in Materials Science and Engineering earning a doctoral degree from the Tufts University School of Medicine in Cellular and Molecular Physiology. Pam is published in numerous scientific journals and writes, consults and edits for a number of organizations.

Pam is an avid volunteer and in addition to her work on she the School Committees, she served on the boards of numerous local organizations.

### **Louis Salemy**

Louis is a strong leader who brought passion and a tireless work ethic to the School Committee. He was an ardent advocate for the new high school building project and anyone who has heard Louis give a progress report at School Committee meeting knows his excitement and enthusiasm for this project. Few people know of his efforts in the marathon meetings associated with the project's Guaranteed Maximum Price process to reconcile issues with the project manager, the contractor and architects. Louis was determined to keep the project on scope, on schedule and within budget regardless of rising material and labor costs and other macro-economic issues. He succeeded in steering the project through the storms and the sustainable, state-of-the-art educational building will be a testament to his perseverance and effort.

Most recently, Louis has taken his passion for teaching and learning to a new level as a Lecturer for the Undergraduate School of Management at Boston College. In this role, Louis is sharing the accounting acumen as an undergraduate at Boston College and at the Stern School of Business at NYU and the professional skills and expertise he developed as a Certified Public Accountant and Certified Financial Analyst at Touche Ross and later as an Analyst and Fund Manager at Fidelity.

His engagement in philanthropic endeavors include serving as a Board Member of Harlem Leadership Lacrosse – a nationally recognized school-based, non-profit program that provides academic intervention, leadership training and lacrosse to at-risk students in New York City.

He is most proud of the fact that despite the economic downturn, the School Committee and the Administration have worked with teachers and staff to manage budgets tightly and avoid the layoffs that many districts around us were forced to undertake.

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

The School Committees and Superintendent are committed to on-going public dialogue and to ensuring that residents of Carlisle and Concord are informed. 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 information on meetings and interested individuals can contact the Concord School Committee via email at [concordschoolcommittee@colonial.net](mailto:concordschoolcommittee@colonial.net) and the Concord-Carlisle Regional School Committee at [concordcarliseschoolcommittee@colonial.net](mailto:concordcarliseschoolcommittee@colonial.net) or the Your Voice link on the District's home page at [www.concordpublicschools.net](http://www.concordpublicschools.net).