

JOINT SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Concord-Carlisle School Committee
Concord School Committee
CCHS Library
September 23, 2014

Present: Jennifer Munn, Chair, CCSC; CSC
Kathleen Snook, Chair, CSC; CCSC
Phil Benincasa, Vice Chair, CSC; CCSC
Johana Boynton, Vice Chair, CCSC; CSC
Wallace Johnston, CSC; CCSC
William Fink, CCSC
Mary Storrs, CCSC

Present from Administration: Diana Rigby, Superintendent of Schools, CPS & CCRSD
John Flaherty, Deputy Superintendent of Finance & Operations, CPS & CCRSD

I. CALL TO ORDER

The Session was called to order by Ms. Munn for CCSC and Ms. Snook for CSC at 6:32 PM. Ms. Snook noted that the meeting is being recorded.

Student Rep, Samantha Shea, spoke regarding the students concern for the Tech Initiative and also about the “Kicks for Cancer,” tournament and stated that all grades will be rallying together and that the event involved several other schools. Mr. Benincasa asked how the students felt regarding the new school and Samantha said they were excited and looking forward to it.

Ms. Munn reviewed the Committees’ policy on public comments and mentioned that comments should be brief and less than 3 minutes. She also spoke about moving the comments to the beginning of the meeting and indicated that at tonight’s meeting, the Committee will address the Region business first and then the Concord Public Schools items.

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS

1. Anne Hayden, 342 Sudbury Rd., Concord. Ms. Hayden spoke regarding public records requests and how they differ from how the town handles requests. She recommended steps that the District could follow to improve the handling of public records requests and provided the committee with written comments.
2. Miguel Echavarri, 210 Border Rd., Concord. Mr. Echavarri spoke regarding requesting public records and how long it takes for the District to send copies. He was also unhappy with the cost involved in receiving the records. He provided the committee with written comments.
3. Dean Banfield, 73 Walden Terr., Concord. Mr. Banfield was happy with the Fields Project and thought the Fields Agreement was very good. He was unhappy that trees were cut down in order to put in the sidewalk. He also spoke regarding the increased cost of transportation.

III. READING OF THE MINUTES

A. Open Session - Joint Meeting - A motion was made by Mr. Benincasa, for CSC and CCSC, seconded by Ms. Storrs, for CCSC and Ms. Boynton for CSC, to approve the minutes for the August 26, 2014 Joint School Committee Meeting. The motion was unanimously approved.

IV. CHAIRS REPORT

A. Ms. Munn spoke regarding the First Labor Relations Meeting of the year. Final agreements regarding the April

move went smoothly. Principal Peter Badalament will be setting up department tours. Ms. Munn stated that she and Ms. Snook attended the Chairs Breakfast where all Chairs from town committees meet and share their activities. Ms. Munn stated that she and Ms. Snook would be panelists at the League of Women Voters meeting on September 24, 2014.

B. Ms. Snook reminded the Committee that they had agreed to look for, and announce at the meetings, activities in Town related to students and education. Ms. Snook stated that she learned at the Chairs Breakfast that the Youth and Community Services office has a new E- newsletter. Interested persons can sign up on line to receive the newsletter. Ms. Snook stated that the School Committee Community Coffee would be Tuesday, September 30, 2014 at Ripley from 11:30 am – 1 pm. She also stated that the next School Committee meeting on October 14, 2014 would be a Joint Meeting, if members from Carlisle were available to attend, and will be held at the Ripley building. The Committee will address CCRSD business first, and then CPS items.

V. CORRESPONDENCE

A. The Collaborative for High Performance Schools. Ms. Rigby stated that an official letter was received from the Collaborative for High Performance Schools stating that CCHS qualifies as a High Performance School.

B. Payment – MSBA Prior Grants – CCHS. Ms. Rigby indicated the MSBA sent notice of payment of prior grants.

C. Massachusetts Teachers Retirement System. Ms. Rigby stated that the District received a new requirement for pension audits. She stated that the DESE requirements have tripled. Mr. Benincasa noted how time consuming these requirements can be.

D. Ms. Snook noted that a letter was received stating that on September 29, 2014, the Joint Coordination Meeting would occur with the Town. The Committees received five emails: 2 regarding transportation, 1 for CC Fields renovation and the walking trail, 1 referencing technology and community groups, and 1 from the League of Women Voters indicating they were sending the Committee their newsletter.

VI. RECOGNITIONS

A. CCHS: Mr. Badalament recognized

- Samantha Shea and Raul Chopra for their service to the school committee. He recognized Adam Gooder who had a photograph accepted into the Roddy Competition at the Concord Art Association. He also noted that Joe Pickman had paintings featured in a book called Creating Abstract Art. He also recognized the leadership of Hannah Bruno and Aaron Joncas for organizing the “Powers” event, which is a kickoff event for METCO Project Adventure activity.

- Keirsten Brady, Caroline Burns, Elizabeth Pacelle, and Olivia Thayer for their work on hosting a 5K race that raised \$15,000 for the Concord Police Dept. to support the new K9.

- National Merit Scholarship Semi-Finalists Michelle Chen, Madeline Guth, Eliana Ishii, Daniel Murphy and Valerie Zhu. Twenty-five students also received letters of Commendation. Mr. Badalament praised the guidance department and parents for their support of all of these students.

VII. REPORTS AND ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION

A. FY16 CCRSD Budget Proposal. Mr. Flaherty presented the proposed CCRSD FY16 budget. The budget recommends an increase in the operating budget by 6.38%, which includes an increase in the OPEB contribution. If OPEB is removed, the increase is 5.06%. He indicated that the drivers of the budget are steps, lanes and scales, as well as increased costs in special education, transportation, and personnel. Ms. Rigby indicated that the budget proposal would go before the Finance Committee on October 9, 2014.

Ms. Rigby spoke of the increase in program services including a special education student moving up to the High School, which will also include an increase in transportation services. She indicated the new Assistant Principal would enhance the CCHS leader team, especially in the areas of the supervision and evaluation system requirements and NEASC. She noted that it is critical that CCHS increase their instructional supplies, which have been depleted. She also

noted that the CCHS enrollment has increased. There have been several requests to extend the library hours, so Ms. Rigby indicated that it is reasonable to provide support to the students by extending the hours. Additional FTEs include a transition specialist and tutor for special needs students. The Committee discussed the District's efforts to restore and improve programs and materials diminished in the recent years of reduced budgets.

B. 2014-2015 CCHS School Calendar Change. Ms. Rigby noted that the HS Admin and CCTA, including Peter Badalament and Peter Atlas, have been working together to facilitate a time for teachers to move into the new building. They agreed to have a release day on April 17, 2014 allowing the teachers to pack up their personal items and then have another release day to unpack on April 27, 2014. School will be in session seamlessly in the new building with students returning on April 28, 2014. The new final day (without snow days) for CCHS students is June 19, 2015. Ms. Rigby asked that the Committee re-vote the calendar for the calendar change to support this effort.

C. 2014-2015 Draft District Goals. Ms. Rigby gave an overview of the 2014-2015 District Goals, including: Increasing student achievement and narrowing the gaps for identified student groups, Providing students with authentic learning experiences, Increasing instructional strategies that promote student thinking and communication, Fostering a respectful and empathetic learning environment, Increasing professional collaboration, Effectively implementing the new Educator Evaluation System, Developing FY16 budgets to support educational excellence and enrollment growth while maintaining fiscal sustainability, Managing the CCHS Building project to completion and April 2015 move-in, Implement interim plan for Transportation Services for 2015-2016, Completing collective bargaining contract settlements with CTA, Secretaries unit, CCHS and Building Service Workers, and Maintenance, and Building support, consensus and community engagement around the District mission, core values, goals, challenges, accomplishments, and critical decisions. Ms. Rigby indicated that school site Principals would return to the School Committees at future meetings to address progress on their own School Improvement Plans. The Committee discussed these goals as well as their actions and expected outcomes. The Committee will vote on the District Goals at the next meeting.

VIII. ACTION ITEMS

A. Vote to approve Ecuador Exchange Trip 2015. Eric Pohl, a Spanish Teacher at CCHS, presented a video of the previous years class trip to Ecuador. Two current students, Robert Wharton and Ethan Pohl, spoke about their feelings regarding the trip. They both shared that the trip was very meaningful and quite phenomenal. A motion was made by Ms. Boynton and seconded by Mr. Benincasa for CCSC to approve the request to plan an exchange trip to Ecuador. The motion was unanimously approved.

B. Vote to accept donation from the Ruettgers Family Charitable Foundation. A motion was made by Ms. Storrs and seconded by Ms. Boynton that the CCSC accept a gift in the amount of \$20,000 to the Concord-Carlisle High School Ruettgers Enrichment Series Fund. The motion was unanimously approved with gratitude. Mr. Badalament thanked the Ruettgers Foundation and indicated the fund allows high-level classes where faculty members share their areas of expertise.

C. Vote to approve CCHS Community Use Agreement with Concord. Ms. Munn indicated that the outdoor athletic facilities use agreement required editing to ensure consistency and clarity. A new version of the CUA was distributed to members. Ms. Munn asked members to review the new document and proposed that the vote be deferred until October 14, 2014.

D. Vote to approve CCHS School Calendar Change 2014-2015. A motion was made by Ms. Boynton and seconded by Mr. Benincasa that the CCSC vote to approve the CCHS School Calendar Change 2014-15. The motion was unanimously approved.

E. Vote to accept Target Take Charge of Education donation to CCHS and CMS. A motion was made by Ms. Boynton and seconded by Mr. Benincasa that the CCSC accept the Target Take Charge of Education donation to CCHS in the amount of \$287.84. A motion was made by Mr. Johnston and seconded by Mr. Benincasa that the CSC accept the Target Take Charge of Education donation to CMS in the amount of \$26.83. Both motions were unanimously approved with gratitude.

IX. OLD BUSINESS

A. Transportation. Ms. Snook stated the District has a long-term solution in Knox Trail and WR Grace land for the summer of 2016. She stressed that the Districts must be able to get all students to school safely and on time each, and every one, of the 180 days school is in session. There is a gap between July 2015 when the current maintenance lease expires and October 2015 when the current parking lease expires and the anticipated move into a permanent transportation operations facility on the WR Grace land in the summer of 2016. The District needs a bridge plan to park and maintain the buses during this gap. Ms. Boynton noted that they are working on permits and conditions to acquire the Knox Trail land that will provide a paved access road to the WR Grace land. Mr. Flaherty provided a state of the fleet report on the age, mileage and expected replacement years of the 36 District owned buses. The cost to replace a bus is approximately \$100,000. Mr. Flaherty expects that the District will put forth a warrant article for debt exclusions for CCRSD and CPS to begin replacing the buses. He also reported that October 17, 2014 is the final date to hear back from the RFP's that have been sent out for interim parking and maintenance.

B. CCHS Building Project. Mr. Flaherty stated that the HS building project is going well and they are receiving positive feedback. He also stated that there is a very good team working on the project and it's been great working with them all.

C. CCHS Fields Renovation Project. Ms. Munn stated that everything is on target for substantial completion by November. The only thing delaying the completion would be the weather. There will be ongoing treatment on the fields needed in the spring. Plans for Phase 2 fundraising are now under way.

X. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

A. Public Records Request. Ms. Rigby stated the goal is to provide easy access to all of the public information by providing information on the website. Ms. Rigby reviewed state law and local policies regarding PRR. She stated that the school's information is very different from the town's information because it is linked to private student/family information. After researching other school Districts, she found that CCRSD had a significantly higher rate of requests than other Districts, and that those requests required more redactions. She presented data for PRR in 2013 that indicated that 48 requests were made by seven individuals and five organizations, with two individuals accounting for 34 of the 48 requests. The committee discussed the redaction process and the cost of redactions, as well as which records the District provides with no charge and which items are posted on the web site. Ms. Rigby recommended suspending the collection of fees for the remainder of the year and tracking the number and type of requests and amount of time spent on PRR.

B. FY15 Enrollment. Ms. Rigby reported on current enrollments: Willard - 486, Alcott - 462, Thoreau - 454, Middle School - 696, HS - 1260. Average class sizes are 15/16 - 22.

XI. PUBLIC COMMENTS

1. Anne Hayden, 342 Sudbury Rd., Concord. Ms. Hayden supplied information regarding the 13 requests she had submitted. She was very pleased with the decision to stop charging fees for the remainder of the year. She was also pleased that additional information will be provided on the website and wants all requests fulfilled electronically.

2. Miguel Echavarri, 210 Border Rd., Concord. Mr. Echavarri noted that long-time residents have made most of the requests. He stated that the District said he made 18 requests, but he noted that he only made 8 requests. He was unhappy with the amount charged for redaction, but was happy with the idea of not charging for the rest of the year. He also stated all records should be released electronically.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Boynton, seconded by Mr. Benincasa, made a motion for CCSC to adjourn the meeting. The motion was unanimously approved and the CCSC meeting adjourned at 10:00PM.

XIII. REPORTS AND ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION

A. FY16 CPS Budget Proposal. Mr. Flaherty noted the CPS proposed budget requests an increase of 6.79%. The 5-year annualized average increase is 4.58%. The cost drivers at the CPS level include the costs for steps, lanes and scale, as well as the costs for integrated preschool, a new CMS Assistant Principal, restoration of materials and supplies, scheduled technology replacements at Alcott and Thoreau, and possible changes in programs and materials (Math and Foreign Language). The Committee again discussed the District’s efforts to restore and improve programs and materials diminished in the recent years of reduced budgets.

Ms. Rigby and the Committee thanked Mr. Flaherty and his staff for all of their work on the budget.

XIV. PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments were made.

XV. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Johnston, seconded by Ms. Boynton, made a motion to adjourn the CSC meeting. The motion was unanimously approved and the meeting ended at 10:22.

Respectfully submitted,

Erin E. Higgins
Approved: 10/14/14

Abbreviations:

- CSC Concord School Committee
- CCSC Concord-Carlisle District School Committee
- CPS Concord Public Schools
- CCRSR Concord-Carlisle Regional School District
- CCHS Concord-Carlisle Regional High School
- CHPS The Collaborative for High Performance Schools
- OPEB Other Post-Employment Benefits