

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.

Landfill Remediation Planning

The Concord-Carlisle Regional School Committee discussed the process to address the required landfill remediation at the Concord-Carlisle High School site at the May business meeting. As part of the discussion, the Committee received an update from Kathleen Campbell of CDW Consulting who is the Licensed Site Professional managing the remediation project and coordination with the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) for the Regional School District.

Campbell reported that officials at MassDEP have classified the site as Tier I which indicates that the site is of high interest. The contaminants include heavy metals such as lead and zinc as well as ash-related chemicals. The lead concentrations are the highest risk to public health. Potential exposure pathways include ingestion of contaminated soils, respiration of dust particles from soil disturbance and the contaminants impacting a drinking water source area. The risk of human exposure is too high to leave the situation as is and MassDEP has set a deadline of February of 2018 for the Regional School District to achieve what is referred to as a Permanent Solution.

The safest and most cost effective manner to address the issue is to cap the impacted area and leave the material in place. The cap would consist of a geosynthetic clay liner, filter fabric, ordinary soil fill, and top soil. Following installation, the cap would have to be maintained to ensure the Regional School District remains compliant with MassDEP. Depending on the type of cap, an Activity and Use Limitation (AUL) would be created to outline how the area could be utilized.

As a result of town meeting and ballot question results in Concord, the Regional School Committee is now considering a planning process to better inform citizens of Concord and Carlisle about the remediation project. The focus of the process will be to ensure a broad understanding that the recommended remediation does not preclude future projects on the affected site from occurring. The current recommendation for a clay cap protects the adjacent water supply, meets DEP timelines and guidelines, specifically defines remediation costs, and also allows for a comprehensive planning process and cost estimating process for any future projects that may be considered. The District remains concerned that the site has been upgraded from a Tier II to Tier I designation due to elevated lead levels in two consecutive testing rounds, and more recently reported increased elevations of arsenic.

The School Committees Contact Information

You can link to the School Committees' emails on the Districts' home page at www.concordps.org. Or, you can email the Concord Public School Committee at concordschoolcommittee@concordps.org and the Concord-Carlisle Regional School Committee at 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. The district web site (www.concordps.org) contains updated reports, presentations and information on meetings.