

JOINT SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Concord – Carlisle School Committee
Concord School Committee
Ripley Building
December 12, 2017

Present:

Heather Bout, Chair, CSC; CCSC
Johanna Boynton, Vice Chair, CSC; CCSC
Dan Conti, Chair, CCSC; CSC
Robert Grom, Vice Chair, CCSC; CSC
Wallace Johnston, CSC; CCSC
Melissa McMorrow, CCSC
Mary Storrs, CCSC

Present from Administration:

Dr. Laurie Hunter, Superintendent of Schools, CPS & CCRSD
John Flaherty, Deputy Superintendent of Finance & Operations, CPS & CCRSD

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Ms. Bout, for CSC, and Mr. Conti, for CCSC, at 6:35 PM. Both noted that the meeting was being recorded. Ms. Bout welcomed everyone.

II. RECOGNITIONS

A. K-5 STEAM Kick Off. Dr. Hunter recognized the K-5 STEAM kick off and thanked the Concord Education Fund for providing all of the supplies that were used at the kick off. She shared a video that captured highlights of the students participating in kick off activities.

III. PUBLIC COMMENTS

1. Sheldon Hines, 74 The Valley Road, Concord, MA. Mr. Hines stated that he has lived in Concord for over 30 years and all 3 of his children went to CCHS. He shared parts of a letter he had written to the Editor of the Concord Journal regarding the possibility of cell phone towers at the high school. The letter noted the zoning bylaw, which protects schools from proximity to cell phone antennas. It also noted that a written application for zoning approval should be presented to the zoning board prior to any other steps. He stated that for the CCSC to issue an RFP is completely out of order. He also noted that an analysis of alternative sites is required under the bylaw. He stated that there is no public support for having cell antennas at the high school, but that there is support for having them in another alternative, available location. He stated that it was mandatory that the SC withdraw their support for issuing an RFP and that if the schools need additional money, they should seek it through the Town.

IV. READING OF THE MINUTES

A. Open Session – Jt. Meeting – 11/14/17. A motion was made by Mr. Johnston, seconded by Ms. Bout, to approve the Joint Meeting minutes from 11/14/17. Ms. Bout noted 2 edits to be made. The motion was unanimously approved, as edited.

V. CHAIRS & LIASONS REPORT

Mr. Conti stated that he and Dr. Hunter met informally with representatives from Verizon to gather information regarding their desire to put cell phone towers at CCHS. Dr. Hunter stated that Verizon is creating a document to provide more information so the SC could make an informed decision.

Ms. Bout stated that they heard back from the MSBA regarding their Statement of Interest for funding a potential new middle school and stated that Concord was not invited into their process. She stated that they would be discussing what next steps would be in moving forward at CMS. She noted that they would continue to move forward with the CMS educational visioning.

Ms. Storrs stated that members of the Campus Advisory Committee are working on public outreach and the process for stakeholder input. She stated that their next meeting will be December 19th at 3:30 PM and would begin with a campus walkthrough. She noted that anyone is welcome to join the walkthrough.

VI. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Hunter stated that she met with the CCHS student advisory council, noting that she gained a lot of great feedback and is looking forward to future discussions. She stated that the 1st meeting with the CMS students would be in January. She stated that she would bring in her entry plan findings on January 23rd. Dr. Hunter and the SC discussed the proposed composition of the Strategic Planning Team and the rotation of SC's participation at the meetings. Dr. Hunter stated that the Mindfulness Committee completed a SWOT analysis of District Mindfulness resources, built a vision and is now talking about implementation. Dr. Hunter stated that she and Carlisle Superintendent Jim O'Shea attended a League of Women Voter's luncheon last week. She stated that she has been meeting with different stakeholder groups, including the bus drivers, noting how important it is that they feel supported. Dr. Hunter stated that they are continuing to build the RTI plans on the regular education side and will have a full day workshop in January with the consultant.

Ariel Waldmen, CCHS student rep, stated that the annual Warriors for Warriors hockey game against Lincoln Sudbury would take place on Saturday. She stated that the boy's soccer team won the state championship and that CCHS set a record, having 40 students accepted into the MMEA (Massachusetts Music Educators Association) District festival. She stated that the volleyball team went undefeated in the small school division of the DCL (Duel County League). She stated that the girl's cross-country team had an undefeated season. She also stated that the class Twice Told Tales went on a field trip to the Museum of Fine Arts. She stated that the CCHS Pep Band performed October 20th at the Crop Walk. She stated that the PRISM concert would be taking place on December 16th, to benefit the Alfred W. Dentino Excellence in Music fund. Ariel stated that the Community & Light concert would be taking place this evening and the Improv Club would be presenting RIOT on Friday.

VII. CORRESPONDENCE

Mr. Conti stated that he received the budget guidelines from Concord Finance Director, Kerry Lafleur and Ms. Bout stated that she received a suggestion regarding the Strategic Planning Committee and the letter from the MSBA.

VIII. REPORTS FOR DISCUSSION

A. FY19 Budget Memo to School Committee – CPS. Dr. Hunter stated that they have been reviewing the draft budget against the Concord Finance Committee's guideline. She reviewed the FY19 cost escalators, including: teacher salaries, special education, other non-teacher salary adjustments, custodial, maintenance and transportation, new early childhood special education program, Assistant Facilities Manager and additional increases; for a total of a 7.44% increase. She reviewed the 1st round of reductions identified, including: instructional supplies and materials, computer instructional hardware, K-8 library assistants and support staff, teacher and tutor enrollment staff, maintenance contracted services and additional reductions; for a total reduction of \$910,924 or an increase of 4.96%.

Dr. Hunter stated that the delta from the Concord Finance Committee's guideline and the 4.96% was 2.25%. She stated that they identified additional reductions, including: personnel adjustments and curriculum materials, for a total of \$175,000. She noted that this would bring the percent increase down from 4.96% to 4.48%. She stated that on November 30th, the Finance Committee increased their guideline to 2.88%, which would still leave a delta of \$592,367.

Dr. Hunter reviewed a menu of options to close the gap, including reductions in: K-5 Spanish, CMS Latin, 4 counselors K-8, regular education summer school, K-5 building specialists, 4 tutors K-8, Digital Literacy Administrator, field trips and the Alcott tutoring program. She noted the early separation incentive and that she was even looking into transportation to possibly consolidate routes. Dr. Hunter stressed that she didn't recommend any of these, noting that her recommended budget does not include these reductions. *Ms. Boynton arrived at the meeting.*

Mr. Johnston stated that he would not be in favor of any of these additional reductions. Ms. Bout noted that Dr. Hunter and Mr. Flaherty have found every efficiency possible in the budget. Dr. Hunter stated that there is work to be done long term to look at efficiencies. Mr. Conti stressed that these reductions were unacceptable. The SC discussed the importance and benefits of each of the items on the additional reductions list. Mr. Conti noted that people move to Concord for the excellence in the school system, noting that they owe it to the community to sustain excellence. Ms.

Boynton stated that it's disheartening because these cuts involve people and that the reductions are reactionary and detrimental to the education of the kids. Ms. Bout summarized that no one on the SC was behind the additional cuts and that they look forward to looking into the budget going forward long-term.

FY19 Budget Memo to School Committee – CCRSD. Dr. Hunter stated that the 2% shift in enrollment has increased Concord's assessment to the budget. She stated that the use of E&D funds, circuit breaker carryover, medical insurance increases and OPEB contributions have contributed to the regional budget. She reviewed the cost increases, including: teacher salaries, special education, other non-teacher salary adjustments and increases, assessments, insurance and retirement, utilities, transportation and additional increases; totaling an 8% increase. She reviewed the 1st round of adjustments, including: contingencies, staffing, administrative support, special education transportation and supplies, materials & professional development; totaling \$778,503. Dr. Hunter stated that the reductions brought the increase down to a 5.22% operational increase. She stated that FINCOM's tentative guideline was 4.71%, which included the assessment shift. She noted that the 5.22% plus the assessment shift, would total a 10% increase to Concord. Dr. Hunter stated that the overall gap from November 14th was \$1.2 million.

Dr. Hunter stated that if they reduced the OPEB contribution by \$200,000 and reduced personnel by \$50,000; it would net an increase of \$1.2 million, or 4.3%. She stated that in FINCOM's guideline issued on November 30th, the operational and assessment increase increased to 5.34% versus the 3.71%. She noted that Concord's increase would then be under 9% and the operational increase at 1.25% overall. She stated that the overall delta would be \$863,620 (\$651,681 for Concord and \$211,930 for Carlisle).

Dr. Hunter reviewed a menu of possible reductions to close the gap, including reductions in: school psychologist, 5 FTE professional teaching staff core subjects, 1 FTE professional teaching staff fine & performing arts, 2 tutors, 2 administrative assistants, campus security and Digital Literacy administrator. She also noted the early separation incentive, OPEB contribution and athletic fee increase. The SC reviewed the menu of reductions and discussed the importance and benefits of each item. Dr. Hunter stated that she does not support any of these reductions.

Ms. Storrs stated that increasing the athletic fee is not the answer to the budget issue, but that it should be reviewed moving forward. Mr. Conti stated that he doesn't support any of these reductions. Mr. Johnston noted that there is a district administrator and building administrator who will be looking into the budget issues on a long-term basis. He stated that he couldn't recommend any of these cuts. He stated that he originally felt OPEB contributions shouldn't be decreased, but noted that due to the structural change of the assessment shift, it may need to be an option. Mr. Conti noted that the budget doesn't include any added programs, aside from the early childhood special education program, which should save money long term. Dr. Hunter stated that transportation wasn't included on the possible reduction list for the region because the region's transportation is reimbursed from the state. Ms. Bout noted that they have a responsibility to educate the community on the budget. Ms. McMorrow noted that the community also needs to understand that there is a risk of these reductions happening. Mr. Johnston recommended creating a schedule for Committee outreach to the community by the next joint meeting and Ms. Boynton stated that she would work on a schedule.

B. Draft Concord Warrant Articles. Dr. Hunter shared the Warrant Articles, including the CPS and CCRSD budgets, supplemental appropriation (as a place holder), CPS renovations and CCRSD campus projects. Mr. Conti noted that he still did not feel comfortable with the 1st round of cuts that brought them to the new budget number. Dr. Hunter stated that the staff is sending in options for alternative ideas. Ms. Bout stated that the CPS Budget amount on the warrant article was \$38,461,880. Mr. Flaherty stated that the supplemental appropriation of \$400,000 was for the purposes of funding extraordinary or unforeseen expenditures. Mr. Flaherty reviewed the CPS renovations article for the sum of \$900,000, which included several projects at CPS, noting that the projects may need to be reconfigured now that the MSBA has provided a response regarding CMS. Regarding the CCRSD budget, Mr. Flaherty stated that the total budget was \$33,905,081 and includes assessment of \$23,051,352 (\$19,544,198 assessment for the operating budget and \$3,507,154 assessment for debt). Mr. Flaherty stated that the CCRSD campus project warrant of \$1,000,000 would be a debt project that would be financed over a period of 5 or more years. He noted the projects would include: paving campus entrance roads, improving external lighting and possible short-term recommendations from the Campus Advisory Committee.

C. FY18 Budget Status and Transfers. Mr. Flaherty shared a list of budget transfers from accounts with deficits to accounts with surpluses. He noted that there are fairly large deficits in special education because they haven't applied circuit breaker yet. Dr. Hunter noted that the goal for the year was to be more communicative on transfers and to help inform the FY19 budget. Mr. Conti questioned if this was new and Mr. Flaherty stated it was new to them because they usually manage to the bottom line. Mr. Johnston recommended adding "to and from" for each program line that had money being transferred.

D. CCHS Early Release Proposal. Dr. Hunter shared the CCHS Early Release Proposal, including 4 early release days. She noted that Mr. Mastrullo is working with the union on one last piece and then they could sign the MOA (Memorandum of Agreement), noting that she could sign on the SC's behalf. She noted how impressed she was with the commitment on both sides in working effectively, efficiently and collaboratively.

IX. OLD BUSINESS

A. Religious Holiday Accommodation Policy / Religious and Cultural Observance Accommodation Policy Implementation Plan. Mr. Conti stated that it was useful to think of the policy in the context of the larger plan of implementation, noting how well Dr. Hunter outlined the implementation. Ms. Storrs stated that the Policy Subcommittee held a special meeting to gain public input and also had Legal review the policy. She stated that they wanted the policy to ensure that student stress level was reduced and teachers were able to carry out a normal school day. Ms. Bout noted how incredible the input was at the public form and noted how much she appreciates the time put into creating the draft policy. Mr. Grom stated that because this is a new policy, they should revisit it moving forward, getting input and feedback from the teachers. Mr. Conti stated that the policy should eliminate anxiety by providing clarity and consistency, noting that it may possibly be a work in progress moving forward. Mr. Johnston stated that there is an underlying responsibility not to infringe upon students' ability to observe and ensure there is no adverse effect in observing. He stated that he feels it may need to be more prescriptive.

Mr. Conti suggested adding a preamble to the policy to provide context. Ms. Storrs noted that the preamble had been specifically removed from other policies and had been removed from this one. Ms. Boynton stated that they need to move forward at some point with the policy and implementation, noting that they will not get it perfectly from the start. Mr. Conti agreed that it was going to be a work in progress. Ms. Bout also agreed, noting that they need to have faith in Dr. Hunter to take it forward and communicate the policy. Dr. Hunter stated that she needs the policy as a tool to move forward to the next step. The SC discussed the wording and language used in the policy around making up missed work and agreed upon changes to that section, as well as other sections. Mr. Conti acknowledged all of the hard work put into this policy and Dr. Hunter stated that she appreciated the SC's efforts in finalizing the policy.

B. Retirement/Separation Incentive for Administrators. Dr. Hunter stated that the Retirement/Separation Incentive for Administrators would have the same terms apply as the teachers' incentive. Ms. Boynton stated that she feels it makes sense to offer the incentive to both groups.

A motion was made by Ms. Boynton, for both CSC and CCSC, seconded by Ms. Bout, for both CSC and CCSC, to accept the Administrators Separation Incentive, as articulated in the memo dated 12/11/17 from Dr. Hunter. The motion was unanimously approved.

X. ACTION ITEMS

A. Vote to accept donation to Concord Integrated Preschool. A motion was made by Ms. Boynton, seconded by Mr. Grom, to accept a \$250 donation to the Concord Integrated Preschool from Drew & Michelle Clemens of 36 Old Bridge Road, Concord, MA. Dr. Hunter noted that the donation was made with much gratitude towards the Integrated Preschool program. The motion was unanimously approved, with gratitude.

B. Vote to approve \$1,200,000 BAN Sale. A motion was made by Ms. Boynton, seconded by Mr. Johnston, to award the contract for a \$1,200,000 BAN sale to Eastern Bank of Boston, MA at an interest rate of 1.35%. The motion was unanimously approved.

C. Vote to approve School Committee Policies

- File GCRD – Tutoring for Pay

- File JICE – Student Publications
- File GBL – Vacation Time Payouts for School Administrators
- File ACA – Policy Prohibiting Harassment
- File IC – School Year
- File ICA – School Calendar
- File ID – School Day
- File IE – Organization of Instruction
- File IGA – Curriculum Development
- File IGB – Curriculum Research

A motion was made by Ms. Boynton, for both CSC and CCSC, seconded by Mr. Johnston, for both CSC and CCSC, to approve the above policies. The motion was unanimously approved.

D. Vote to accept CEF Out of Cycle Grant. A motion was made by Ms. Storrs, seconded by Ms. Boynton, to accept the CEF grant award in the amount of \$3,000 to the choral program at CCHS. The motion was unanimously approved, with thanks.

E. Vote Accommodations for Religious & Cultural Observances Policy. A motion was made by Ms. Boynton, for both CSC and CCSC, seconded by Mr. Johnston, for both CSC and CCSC, to approve SC Policy IMDA – Accommodations for Religious and Cultural Observances as edited, pending legal review. Ms. Storrs noted that there are other related policies that need to be revisited and aligned with the implementation plan. Ms. Storrs abstained from the vote. The other members approved the vote.

F. Vote FY19 Budget. A motion was made by Ms. Boynton, for CSC, seconded by Mr. Conti, to approve the FY19 CPS budget, in the amount of \$38,461,880. The motion was unanimously approved.

A motion was made by Ms. Boynton, for CCSC, seconded by Mr. Conti, to approve the FY19 CCRSD budget, in the amount of \$33,905,081, with an operating budget of \$29,257,381. The motion was unanimously approved.

G. Vote Concord Warrant Articles. A motion was made by Mr. Johnston, seconded by Ms. Boynton, to approve the Concord Warrant Articles as written in the FY19 Warrant Articles memo. The motion was unanimously approved.

H. Vote to approve Nordic Ski Trip. A motion was made by Ms. Boynton, seconded by Ms. McMorrow, to approve the overnight Nordic Ski Trip from 1/13/18-1/15/18. The motion was unanimously approved.

I. Vote to approve China Exchange Program & Cultural Trip. Dr. Hunter noted that she is working on next steps to help with the financial piece of these types of trips. A motion was made by Ms. Boynton, seconded by Mr. Johnston, to approve the China Exchange Program & Cultural Trip from 4/11/18- 4/22/18. The motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Conti stated that he has decided not to run for another term on the school committee and the SC members stated what a great loss he will be.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Ms. Boynton, for both CSC and CCSC, seconded by Mr. Grom, to adjourn the meeting. The motion was unanimously approved and the meeting adjourned at 10:36 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Erin E. Higgins

Approved: 1/9/18

Abbreviations:

ACLU	American Civil Liberties Union
CASE	Cooperative Association for Special Education
CSC	Concord School Committee
CCSC	Concord-Carlisle Regional District School Committee
CPA	Community Preservation Act
CPC	Community Preservation Committee
CPS	Concord Public Schools
CCRSD	Concord-Carlisle Regional School District
CCHS	Concord-Carlisle High School
CHPS	The Collaborative for High Performance Schools
CSEC	Comprehensive Sustainable Energy Committee
CPW	Concord Public Works
CTA	Concord Teachers Association
DESE	Department of Elementary & Secondary Education
ELA	English Language Arts
FAAC	Financial Audit Advisory Committee
FINCOM	Finance Committee
FCCPF	Friends of Concord Carlisle Playing Fields
MASC	Massachusetts Association of School Committees
MIAA	Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association
NEASC	New England Association of Schools and Colleges
NESDEC	The New England School Development Council
OPEB	Other Post-Employment Benefits
RTI	Response to Intervention
SEPAC	Special Education Advisory Council
SOI	Statement of Interest
SPED	Special Education
SWOT	Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities, Threats
YRBS	Youth Risk Behavior Survey