

JOINT SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Concord – Carlisle School Committee  
Concord School Committee  
Ripley Building  
January 9, 2018

Present: Heather Bout, Chair, CSC; CCSC  
Johanna Boynton, Vice Chair, CSC; CCSC (*via Skype*)  
Dan Conti, Chair, CCSC; CSC  
Robert Grom, Vice Chair, CCSC; CSC  
Wallace Johnston, CSC; CCSC  
Melissa McMorrow, CCSC

Absent: 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 CSC meeting was called to order by Ms. Bout, at 5:34 PM. She noted that the meeting was being recorded. A motion was made by Mr. Conti, seconded by Mr. Grom, that the Concord School Committee would enter into Executive Session under Purpose 3 of the Open Meeting Law: To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and return to Open Session at approximately 7:00 PM. Ms. Bout stated that the meeting would be called back into session after the Calendar Forum. The motion passed by roll call: Johnston, aye; Grom, aye; Conti, aye; Bout, aye.

Ms. Bout called the CSC meeting back into session at 7:00 PM. Mr. Conti called the CCSC meeting into session, noting that the meeting is being recorded.

**II. ACTION ITEMS**

A. Vote to allow remote participation of members (CCSC). A motion was made by Ms. McMorrow, for CCSC, seconded by Mr. Johnston, to allow remote participation of CCSC member, Johanna Boynton. Ms. Boynton stated that her reason for remote participation was physical distance. The motion passed by roll call: McMorrow, aye; Johnston, aye; Grom, aye; Conti, aye; Bout, aye; Boynton, aye. A motion was made by Mr. Conti, for CSC, seconded by Mr. Johnston, to allow remote participation of CCSC member, Johanna Boynton. The motion passed by roll call: Johnston, aye; Grom, aye; Conti, aye; Bout, aye; Boynton, aye.

**III. RECOGNITIONS**

A. K-5 Spanish. Ms. Bout welcomed the K-5 Spanish students and teachers. Iolanda Volpe, CCHS Spanish Teacher and Chair of the Language Dept., thanked everyone for their support of the Spanish program. The K-5 Spanish teachers introduced themselves: Rachel Washa (Alcott), Annette Howard (Thoreau) and Marietta Lees (Willard). Ms. Volpe shared several websites with information on the teaching and learning of world languages. The teachers shared videos of students learning colors, numbers and animals in Spanish. Ms. Lees demonstrated a Spanish lesson with the students that were present at the meeting and the students spoke about what they like about Spanish class and what they are looking forward to learning. Ms. Bout noted how exciting it was to see the students' enthusiasm with the program.

**IV. REPORTS FOR DISCUSSION**

A. Draft 2018-2019 School Calendar & Calendar Memo. Dr. Hunter shared a timeline of the background of the calendar discussion. She noted that legal counsel, Peter Ebb, was present and thanked him for coming. Dr. Hunter shared some recent data from the prior year on absenteeism, noting that there seemed to be other variables at play, making the data hard to be conclusive. She stated that the calendar is only a piece of the discussion and that the work on cultural proficiency will be ongoing. She noted the conversations she has had with parents, stating that student stress is the common theme. She noted that the policy for accommodations for religious and cultural observances has

been well received at the schools and is opening the discussion. Dr. Hunter noted how challenging it is to run a school system with 2 different calendars. She stated that the calendar vote would occur at the next meeting.

Ms. Bout thanked Dr. Hunter for all of her work on the calendar. Mr. Conti noted that this is just a piece and not an end to the process. Ms. McMorrow thanked everyone for all of their hard work on the calendar. Ms. Boynton stated that the calendar was supported by everyone on the Calendar Committee and that she supports the calendar for both districts, with the expectation that the work has just started, and with sensitivity to what a change this would be to some. Mr. Conti stated that this calendar doesn't exist in a vacuum, noting the new policy for accommodations for religious and cultural observances. Ms. Bout stated that she feels they can only look at secular factors for the calendar and the data for religious holidays does not bring it to a level of closing school. She also stated that the cultural policy would help to ensure that students are not under undue stress for taking days off. She noted that between the attendance data and the policy for accommodations for religious and cultural observances, she feels the only fair option is to go with this recommended calendar, noting how many groups have looked at the data and recommended this calendar. Mr. Johnston thanked everyone for all of the work on the calendar and stated that he is still thinking about it, noting that he feels the accommodations policy will help ensure students stress level is not increased. Mr. Grom also thanked Dr. Hunter and all parties involved in the process, noting what a positive process it has been. He stated that the decision will be difficult for him and will be guided by absenteeism, for both teachers and students, and what the overall educational impact would be. Ms. Bout stated that this is not an easy choice and they are trying to decide what is best for the students. She thanked everyone who has shared his or her opinions and been involved in the process. Ms. McMorrow noted that this is the most difficult and challenging issue in her 6 years as a school committee member. Mr. Conti thanked those who attended the forum, noting that he appreciates their comments.

## **V. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

1. Dean Banfield, 73 Walden Terrace, Concord, MA. Mr. Banfield, 73 Walden Terrace, Concord, MA. Mr. Banfield stated that he was a member of the Finance Committee and that he was speaking at the behest of his Chair. He stated that the Board of Health will be presenting on the sale of marijuana and that the Finance Committee has not taken a stance on this. He noted that if there are retail marijuana sales allowed in town, that the town could levy on top of the 3% sales tax, an additional local 3%. He noted that the Finance Committee felt as though it would be a shortcoming if there were an outright ban, but does not take a position on the topic.

*Ms. Boynton left the meeting via Skype.*

2. James Richardson, 52 Balls Hill Road, Concord, MA. Mr. Richardson stated that he has children at the high school, middle school and elementary school. He noted the cell tower proposal and asked the SC to get feedback from the community prior to issuing the RFP. He stated that residents do not feel comfortable with the cell tower due to health risks to the children. He noted that cell towers are a town issue and should not be up to the SC to decide.

3. Alisha Boyajian, 33 Stow Street, Concord, MA. Ms. Boyajian stated she has 2 children at Alcott. She stated that she would be opposed to placing a cell tower on campus, unless it could adhere to the Town bylaws. She noted that the bylaw is in place to protect the citizens. She stated that Verizon said that they would provide a radio frequency emission analysis demonstrating compliance with FCC Regulations, but noted that the regulations haven't been updated since 1996. She stated that there is a growing body of evidence to warrant caution in placing a cell tower and urged the SC to take their time in deciding upon this. Ms. Boyajian also recommended brainstorming other solutions if this is a revenue issue.

4. Sheldon Hines, 74 The Valley Road, Concord, MA. Mr. Hines stated that cell towers send microwave radiation 360 degrees around the tower, noting that they would be aimed directly at the high school if placed there. He noted that it would expose students, teachers, neighbors, administrators and visitors to far more microwave radiation than they would receive from other facilities in Concord. He stated that placing a tower at the high school would be contrary to the intent of the bylaw, noting that there are several alternative sites a tower could be placed. He asked what it would say to the students in terms of obeying the law if a cell tower was placed at the high school.

## **VI. READING OF THE MINUTES**

A. Open Session – Jt. Meeting – 11/28/17, 12/12/17. A motion was made by Mr. Johnston, seconded by Ms. Bout, to approve the joint meeting minutes of 11/28/17. The motion was unanimously approved. A motion was made by

Mr. Johnston, seconded by Ms. Bout, to approve the joint meeting minutes from 12/12/17. The motion was unanimously approved.

## **VII. CHAIRS & LIASONS REPORT**

Mr. Grom stated that the Campus Advisory Committee conducted an informative site walk on December 19<sup>th</sup> and thanked Facilities Manager Brian Schlegel for leading the walk. He noted that the Campus Advisory Committee meeting scheduled for today was postponed until Thursday, January 18<sup>th</sup>. He stated that the public info meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 24<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM at the CCHS Learning Commons for any suggestions to the campus, noting that the primary focus will be the landfill.

Mr. Johnston stated that the Long Range Planning Committee has recommended that Dr. Hunter, with up to 3 members of the SC, sit down with the Long Range Planning Committee to talk about schools and the planning process. He noted that no meeting date has been scheduled yet. Mr. Johnston stated that there is a meeting Thursday for the Benchmarking Committee.

Ms. Bout shared a schedule of possible dates for community coffees regarding the budget topic created by Ms. Boynton, with meetings beginning March 7<sup>th</sup>. The SC discussed starting the coffees earlier than March 7<sup>th</sup> and agreed upon January 31<sup>st</sup> as a tentative date, from 7:00 – 8:30 PM at Ripley.

## **VIII. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

Dr. Hunter stated that they had to clarify a few details on the administrator incentive package, such as aligning the eligibility dates with their July 1<sup>st</sup> start dates, noting that 4 administrators would be eligible for the package. She stated that they would have the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting with the consultant and leadership team regarding Strategic Planning on January 30<sup>th</sup>. She noted the great response from the identified stakeholders for the planning team. Dr. Hunter stated that she has resolved the band room access issue at CCHS, so the students now have access on weekends and vacation weeks. She stated that she was notified that CCHS would be participating in a field test for the next generation grade 10 MCAS. Dr. Hunter stated that she attended many major events across the schools. She stated that Dr. Jerry Goldberg would be hosting training on January 30<sup>th</sup> for CMS and CCHS as to Response to Intervention. She stated that Alcott's 5<sup>th</sup> grade has began visiting the temporary STEAM lab, noting their energy and enthusiasm. Dr. Hunter stated that last week's snowstorm and frigid temperatures were challenging due to the reliability of the 8 or 9 aging buses. She thanked the custodial, bus and maintenance staff for all of their extensive work. Mr. Flaherty thanked the Town Manager and The Light Plant for allowing CCRSD to place 4 buses in the CMLP, allowing the buses to be kept at a better temperature. Mr. Conti noted that the students taking the MCAS field test would also have to take the regular MCAS exams as well.

## **IX. CORRESPONDENCE**

Mr. Conti stated he received: 1 email regarding the cell tower, 2 emails about the calendar, 1 email about the high school exam schedule and 1 email regarding later start time.

## **X. REPORTS FOR DISCUSSION**

A. Board of Health – Retail Marijuana. Dr. Deborah Green, as well as 2 other members of the Concord Board of Health, spoke regarding retail marijuana to ask the School Committees' support on their warrant article to ban retail marijuana sales in Concord. Dr. Green stated that marijuana is a problem for residents and adolescents in Concord. She stated that Concord voted in favor of Ballot question 4, but stressed that this was only by 8/10 of 1%. She stated that the Board of Health sees 3 main reasons to opt out of non-medical marijuana establishments: 1) there are significant public health risks and costs 2) significant risks to adolescents and 3) it's not consistent with the healthy initiative for the town of Concord. She noted that the legislation has outpaced medical literature. Dr. Green stated that many of these public health risks have been demonstrated in states that have legalized retail marijuana. She stated that the risks of marijuana usage are much worse and more concerning in adolescents, noting that the risk for addiction is double in adolescents as it is in adults. She noted that there are trends showing increased depression, increased anxiety and increased psychosis in adolescents. Dr. Green stated that, based on the data in the YRBS, marijuana use by school age children has increased yearly since 2007 and that 25% of Concord children surveyed indicated that they used marijuana. She stated that if retail marijuana were allowed, it would normalize the use of the drug and decrease the public perception of risk. She stated that the Board of Health is putting forth a warrant article and is asking for the School Committee's support. Board of Health member Mark Haddad stated that the literature is very compelling about the facts on brain development on anyone age 25 and under. He noted that if this is normalized,

they could expect an increased usage of marijuana. Dr. Green stated that the Concord Board of Health is available as a resource for the SC.

Ms. McMorrow requested written materials regarding retail marijuana and Dr. Green noted several studies regarding adolescents that she would forward to the SC. Mr. Conti recommended the book, *The Teenage Brain* by Frances Jensen. A Board of Health Member noted that towns are automatically opted in, so if a town wants to opt of allowing non medical marijuana establishments, 2 votes need to be taken: one at Town Meeting and a ballot vote. She also noted that it is not just retail sales, it could include marijuana cafe's, bars, restaurants and yoga studios. Dr. Green stated that the products could be packaged like candy that small children and pets can ingest. The SC thanked the Board of Health for coming to the meeting and agreed to further discuss their request for support of their warrant article at a subsequent meeting.

B. Cell Tower (Verizon). Mr. Conti stated that they met with representatives from Verizon to gather information about placing a cell tower at CCHS. He noted that after listening to the representatives and hearing feedback from the citizens, he feels it's a bigger issue than he would like to tackle at this point. Ms. Bout stated that, due to the budget challenges, she had originally felt that they should look into the cell towers as a possible revenue stream. She stated that given all of the information, there are 3 reasons she feels to not move forward: the revenue stream is not as much as they had first thought, there are other possible sites where the cell tower could be placed and citizens are strongly against placing a cell tower at the high school. Mr. Johnston stated that he feels it's a quagmire that he feels they do not need to get into. Ms. Bout noted that there is no compelling reason to move forward. Dr. Hunter noted that she would communicate with Verizon on the SC's behalf.

## **XI. NEW BUSINESS**

### **A. First Reading – School Committee Policies**

- File IHAM – Health Education
- File IHAM-R – Health Education Procedures
- File IHAMA – Parental Notification Relative to Human Sexuality Education
- File IHB – Special Instructional Programs and Accommodations
- File IHBAA – Observations of Special Education Programs
- File IHBD – Compensatory Education (Title I)
- File IHBEA – English Language Learners
- File IHBF – Homebound Instruction
- File IHBG – Home Schooling
- File IHBA – Programs for Students with Disabilities
- File IIB – Class Size

Dr. Hunter reviewed each policy, noting the small changes that were made.

## **XII. OLD BUSINESS**

A. FY19 Budget. Dr. Hunter stated that they have received 5 retirement incentives from CPS and 1 from CCHS. She stated that she would be bringing individuals' names and specific programs that will be impacted from the budget cuts at the meeting on January 23<sup>rd</sup>. Mr. Conti questioned how much was already cut in the 1<sup>st</sup> round and Dr. Hunter stated it was \$910,000 at CPS and \$775,000 at CCHS. Dr. Hunter noted that the 2<sup>nd</sup> round being discussed totals \$592,000 at CPS and \$1.2 million at CCHS. Mr. Flaherty pointed out that the town will be spending more on unemployment costs for CPS, and that CCRSD will have to cut deeper to pay the regional unemployment costs. He noted that employees that are potentially effected will be able to apply and collect unemployment, even if they don't lose a days pay. Dr. Hunter also noted that they are struggling with retaining people whose jobs may be impacted as well as struggling with programs that may be impacted, such as summer school. Ms. Bout stated that she would like to continue the discussions with the Finance Committee and asked for the SC's backing in continuing to talk to them. The SC agreed to continue discussions but not to accept further budget cuts. Mr. Johnston stated that he is not prepared to change programming without indication from the community by vote that that's the approach to take. Mr. Conti noted that he is still not comfortable with the 1<sup>st</sup> rounds of cuts and Dr. Hunter stated that no one is settled on the 1<sup>st</sup> rounds of cuts, noting that staff is still providing her with feedback with their discomfort. Mr. Conti stated that he feels they

need to advocate for excellence until they hear otherwise from the citizens. Mr. Grom questioned if there was any positive surprise that could happen within the next 2-3 months and Mr. Flaherty stated that he doesn't think so, largely in part to the fact that the state is pulling back on circuit breaker money. Dr. Hunter reminded the SC that further reductions to the 1<sup>st</sup> round of cuts were made at CPS of \$175k on top of the \$910k, for a total of \$1.05 million and \$250k at CCHS, for a total of \$1 million at CCHS. Dr. Hunter noted that she sees long-term ways reorganize and to make things more efficient.

### **XIII. ACTION ITEMS**

A. Vote to accept donation from Lueders Environmental, Inc. A motion was made by Mr. Conti, seconded by Mr. Grom, to accept the \$150 donation and publicly thank Mr. Michael Lueders. The motion was unanimously approved, with thanks to Mr. Michael Lueders.

Ms. Bout stated that she is planning to run again for school committee.

### **XIV. ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made by Ms. Bout, for CSC, seconded by Mr. Grom, to adjourn the meeting. A motion was made by Mr. Johnston, for CCSC, seconded by Mr. Grom to adjourn the meeting. The motions were unanimously approved and the meeting adjourned at 9:14 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Erin E. Higgins

Approved: 1/23/18

#### Abbreviations:

ACLU	American Civil Liberties Union
CASE	Cooperative Association for Special Education
CSC	Concord School Committee
CCSC	Concord-Carlisle Regional District School Committee
CMLP	Concord Municipal Light Plant
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