

JOINT SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Concord – Carlisle School Committee
Concord School Committee
Ripley Building
November 27, 2018

Present: Johanna Boynton, Chair, CSC; CCSC
Wallace Johnston, Vice Chair, CSC; CCSC
Robert Grom, Chair, CCSC; CSC
Mary Storrs, Vice Chair, CCSC
Heather Bout, CSC; CCSC
Courtland Booth, CSC; CCSC
Christine Lear, CCSC

Present from Administration: Dr. Laurie Hunter, Superintendent of Schools, CPS & CCRSD
Jared Stanton, Director of Finance & Operations, CPS & CCRSD

I. CONCORD-CARLISLE SCHOOL COMMITTEE CALL TO ORDER

At 6:34PM, Ms. Boynton called the CSC to order. Mr. Grom then called the CCSC to order, noting that they were being recorded. Ms. Boynton called the Public Hearing on the Budget into order for CSC and Mr. Grom called the Public Hearing on the Budget for CCSC into order.

PUBLIC HEARING CPS AND CCRSD BUDGETS FY20

CPS - Mr. Stanton presented the CPS FY20 budget, stating that a zero based budget process was used to develop the FY20 budget, and noted that they were able to consolidate many lines of the budget. He stated that the FY20 CPS Superintendent's recommended budget was \$39,390,163, 2.99% higher than FY19 SC approved budget. Mr. Stanton reviewed budget drivers, noting that many were due to assigning lines to correct accounts. Drivers included: contract services, employee separation costs, aides' salaries, substitute costs, double step raise for teachers, supplies/materials, clerical salaries, maintenance and custodial increases. Mr. Stanton stated that they have identified cost savings of \$1.599 million, including: new legal services, savings in non-union personnel and support staff, special education tuitions, and circuit breaker carryover. He stated that the CPS budget contains 8 locations: preschool, district-wide kindergarten, district-wide elementary, Alcott, Thoreau, Willard, CMS and District wide. He reviewed expense categories by location, noting reasons for increases or decreases.

Mr. Booth asked if Mr. Stanton found any concerns when working on building the budget and Mr. Stanton stated that there was nothing concerning. Dr. Hunter stated that they are very highly regulated, so any gross issues would have been identified.

Public Comment: Bill Kemeza, 28 Davis Court, Concord, MA. Mr. Kemeza questioned if they are projecting out a 2-3 year budget. Mr. Stanton stated that they will be doing zero based every year and will not be seeing as much in savings going forward as they have this year. He also stated they he needs to see how this budget plays through before making any projections. Dr. Hunter stated that there is still a lot of organizational work going on, and that until they're complete, she would not like to project out.

Dr. Hunter stated that the preliminary guideline is 2.61%, noting that they are less than 1% apart going into discussions. Ms. Boynton stated that the SC has gone through the budget several times prior to this meeting, which is why they don't have questions tonight, and she thanked Mr. Stanton for all of his work, noting how clear and transparent it is.

CCRSD – Mr. Stanton reviewed the CCRSD budget, noting that several lines were consolidated due to the zero based budget process. He stated that the CCRSD Superintendent's recommended budget for FY20 is \$34,909,657 (including debt), a 3.44% increase from FY19's budget. He noted that the general fund is up 4.68%, but with debt it is up 3.44%. He reviewed the budget expense categories and budget drivers, including: contract services, employee separation costs, insurance costs, OPEB funding, athletic coaches salaries, support staff salaries, teacher salaries and

software/hardware, for a total of \$1.5 million. Mr. Stanton then reviewed \$522,000 in cost savings, including: decrease in debt, reduction in transportation salaries, tutoring line corrections and reductions in special education tuitions.

Mr. Stanton stated that they have fully funded the OPEB ARC in the FY20 budget, an increase of \$185,368 from FY19's funded amount. He stated that Moody's has given the district a AAA rating, with a negative outlook, a reflection of weakened reserve levels and elevated fixed costs. He noted that Moody's also stated that if the reserve levels weaken further or the fixed costs substantially increase, that it would put additional downward pressure on the rating. He also stated that Moody's noted that the district has one of the highest OPEB balances of any school district in the state, but that since reserves are low and E&D is continuing to be used as a revenue source, having a low E&D fund balance has more of a negative impact on the bond rating that is not overcome by having a high OPEB balance. Mr. Stanton stated, that as part of the FY19 budget development process, \$689,460 was reserved from FY18 and used to fund the FY19 budget. He noted that this amount was reclassified from E&D (unassigned) to assigned on the district balance sheet. He stated that the balance between both funds (unassigned and assigned) as of June 30, 2018 was \$1,629,460. He stated that the assigned balance of \$689,460 reverted back into E&D, noting that the July 1, 2018 unassigned E&D balance was \$1,629,460, 4.83% of the FY19 budget. Mr. Stanton stated that whatever amount is used for E&D to fund FY20, it will affect the FY19 E&D amount. Mr. Stanton shared Moody's chart on scorecard factors and weights that are analyzed to determine ratings, noting that debt has a much higher weight than OPEB.

Mr. Stanton stated that the total general fund revenue is \$3,634,494. He stated that, according to the 10/1/18 enrollment, Concord had 75.25% of the enrollment and Carlisle had 24.75%. He reviewed the recommended budget scenario (scenario 1) and Dr. Hunter noted that it includes aggressive funding the OPEB ARC (\$785,000), aggressive reduction in E&D revenue (\$350,000) and purchase of the laptops rather than leasing. Dr. Hunter noted that Carlisle was quite concerned with managing the 6.51% fund increase. Mr. Stanton reviewed the 2 other scenarios (both including full purchase of the laptops): 2) level fund OPEB (\$600,000) and level fund E&D (\$689,000) for an overall increase of 3.54% and 3) E&D at \$525,00 and OPEB at \$692,000 for an overall increase of 4.55%.

Public Comment: Dean Banfield, 73 Walden Terrace, Concord, MA. Mr. Banfield stated that he was a member of the Finance Committee and was Chair of the Finance Committee Guidelines Subcommittee and was speaking on behalf of both entities. He stated that they have been working on a general concept called sustainable rate of tax growth. He stated that they are anxious about the levy limit capacity and Concord's free cash, noting that they are facing rising tax rates that are not sustainable. He noted that the rising taxes are putting stress on families. He stated that they are trying to alert each of the budget committees in the community, noting that they may be facing a Prop 2 ½ override in the next 2 – 3 years. He stated that they are working on a planning tool to help the Town and the schools to provide guidance as to what is sustainable. He stated that the number would be included each year in a report to the schools in July.

Ms. Bout thanked Mr. Banfield and stated that she would like to have more discussion about this and Mr. Banfield stated that he was happy to talk further, but that this was their job and that they held a public hearing on this last year. Ms. Bout stated that she would love to have more engagement, if possible, and Mr. Banfield stated that he appealed the Chair of the region and was rebuffed. Ms. Bout stated that this was most likely due to timing. Mr. Grom recommended that they discuss this further at a future SC meeting.

At 8:04PM, a motion was made by Mr. Grom, for CSC, seconded by Ms. Bout, for CSC, to close the Public Hearing. A motion was made by Ms. Storrs, for CCSC, seconded by Ms. Bout, for CCSC, to close the Public Hearing. The motions were unanimously approved.

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Jenny Li, Student Senate representative, stated that the boys Varsity Cross Country team recently won the Division I State Championship and the girls Cross Country team was the runner up. She stated that the All States competition for boys and girls was held at Stanley Park this year. She stated that the girls Varsity Soccer Team remained undefeated for the majority of their season and the CC Football Team played their final game of the season on Thanksgiving against Bedford High School. She stated that the Varsity Co-ed Cheerleading team won DCLs on November 1st and competed at the state competition the following week. Jenny stated that the fall chorus concert happened on November 7th and noted that they are currently preparing for the winter concert. She stated that there would be a PRISM concert in

December as well. She stated that Music awards were given out, with multiple band, chorus and orchestra students being accepted into Districts. She stated that the school play is coming up, called Metamorphoses. Jenny noted that the annual Thanksgiving senior luncheon occurred and included over 40 student volunteers who set up and served food for senior citizens. She stated that CCHS had a very successful spirit week, corn hole tournament and annual powder puff football game. Jenny stated that student government is currently planning holiday activities, including the annual candy cane giveaway.

Ms. Storrs noted the PRISM concert on December 15th was not to be missed.

III. RECOGNITIONS

Dr. Hunter recognized all of the great events that happened at CCHS, and noted that she also attended Willard's All School meeting, the Turkey Trot at Thoreau and Alcott's event at which 8th graders read to younger students. She noted how lively and engaged the students at all of the schools are.

IV. READING OF THE MINUTES

A. Open Session – Joint Meeting – 11/13/18. Ms. Bout noted edits to the Reports for Discussion in the 11/13/18 minutes. A motion was made by Ms. Storrs, seconded by Mr. Booth, to approve the 11/13/18 minutes, as edited. The motion was unanimously approved.

V. CHAIRS & LIASONS REPORT

Ms. Bout stated that she attended the League of Woman Voters Education Committee meeting, noting that it was a great discussion. She stated that she received great feedback on the budget and how clear the process has been. She stated they would be hosting a "First Friday" event on January 4th at 9:15AM at the Fowler Library in West Concord, which is about educating the whole child. Ms. Bout also noted the great civics work the League is doing in Town.

Mr. Booth stated that there are 2 public television staff at CCHS, as well as some part timers. He stated that they are still working on enabling a live feed of SC meetings. He noted that the Public Information Officer of Concord has taken up part time residency at CCHS.

Mr. Grom stated that he attended Carlisle and Concord's FINCOM meetings, noting that a common theme was that the members were very happy about the increased transparency and clearness of the budget presentation.

VI. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Hunter stated that they are looking to put services in place for the students they've identified at CCHS through the academic screening. She stated that she attended the first meeting of the CMS special education team as they begin to review the results from the data. Dr. Hunter stated that the first meeting of the CTA Evaluation Committee is on November 28th and the 2nd meeting is December 12th. She stated that CMS has been asked to present at a conference sponsored by the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents titled "Social Emotional Learning: Advancing Cultural Proficiency". She stated that they are planning on replacing all of the staff ID badges and ensuring reliable walkie-talkie communication at all of the schools, noting that she met this morning with SRO Camilleri to review an updated emergency plan. She also noted that the CPS Capital plan included upgrades to security cameras at Thoreau, Willard and CMS. Dr. Hunter stated that she's been supporting CMS in major new approaches with reconfiguration and scheduling. She stated that she's been working with Apple for their support as educational consultants. Dr. Hunter stated that she and Mr. Stanton met with all of the bus drivers to talk on cultural competency during the month of December. She stated that she would be meeting with ConcordCAN on how the schools can effectively partner with them. Dr. Hunter also noted that she has the draft of the PEG Community Use Agreement and will bring it to the SC once the Towns are finished with the MOA between the 2 municipalities.

VII. CORRESPONDENCE

Dr. Hunter stated that they had a couple of emails regarding the agenda.

VIII. REPORTS FOR DISCUSSION

A. Campus Oversight Subcommittee Update. Dr. Hunter shared possible site layout options on the CCHS campus. Ms. Storrs noted her concern around timing and what they'll know by the time they need to make decisions for the warrant article. She noted that they are assuming they will get a 50% waiver on the bathrooms on the amenities

building. Dr. Hunter noted that they need designs to submit for the waiver. She also noted that Gale Associates would be at the December 11th SC meeting. Mr. Booth questioned if they could push for the impervious surface percentage number without a plan and Ms. Boynton stated that they would only give the percentage of what currently exists. Ms. Bout noted that the amenities building was mostly accounted for in the impervious surface number. Mr. Grom stated that the two priorities that seemed to arise at the last subcommittee meeting were paving and lighting and parking, noting that they should not preclude other things from happening. Ms. Storrs questioned exactly what they were requesting money for and Dr. Hunter stated that they normally ask for the design and funding in one sum amount. Mr. Grom noted that they didn't discuss the greenhouse or the outdoor classroom and asked Dr. Hunter and Mr. Stanton to let Gale Associates know. Mr. Grom asked Mr. Booth about the skate park and Mr. Booth stated that the skate park was gifted to the school system, noting that all of the units can be dissembled and are moveable.

IX. OLD BUSINESS

A. FY19 CCHS Campus Project Updates. Brian Schlegel stated that they are moving forward with the drainage project at the lower fields, but the storms have slowed it down a bit. He stated that they are also working on the curb cut for the handicap ramp for the nurses' area. He stated that engineer is updating the ductwork for the theatre spray booth and mixing valves for the lab drain.

B. Virtual School Days Update. Dr. Hunter stated that she appreciated the feedback on the virtual school days and that they are looking into creating universal assignments for the kids. She stated that she hopes to have a solid plan by either the December 11th or 18th SC meeting.

X. NEW BUSINESS

A. CCRSD FY19 Variance Report. Mr. Stanton reviewed the CCRSD FY19 Variance report, noting that they are within budget. He stated that everything he is aware of is encumbered. Dr. Hunter noted what a better place they are in this year than last year. Mr. Johnston questioned if there were specific things that weren't encumbered yet that would need to come out of the number and Mr. Stanton stated that utilities and substitutes haven't been encumbered yet.

B. CCHS Capital Plan. Mr. Stanton shared a draft of the 5-year capital plan for FY20-FY24, noting that they are still waiting on costs from Gale. Mr. Schlegel noted that as the CCHS building ages, they would be building on the capital plan. Ms. Storrs stated that once they begin to get cost estimates from Gale, that they need to decide what items should remain on the list and what items can be removed. Mr. Johnston questioned the cost listed for smoke detectors and Mr. Schlegel stated the cost would cover smoke detectors in all of the classrooms, design costs, programming issues and contingency. Ms. Storrs questioned why they would not create a warrant article for the smoke detectors since it was a safety issue. Ms. Bout agreed that it should be part of the warrant article discussion once they receive pricing for it.

C. CCRSD FY20 Warrant Articles. Dr. Hunter noted that the CCRSD FY20 Warrant Article document was a draft and also noted that the operating budget would be reflective of what the SC votes in December and that the placeholder numbers were the recommendation. She stated that they are working with the Town to ensure the language in the articles is correct. Dr. Hunter noted that she would have the language at the December 11th SC meeting.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Ms. Storrs, seconded by Ms. Boynton, to adjourn the meeting. The motion was unanimously approved and the CCRSD meeting adjourned at 9:07 PM.

CONCORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE TO STAY IN SESSION

XII. REPORTS FOR DISCUSSION

A. CPS FY19 Variance Reports. Mr. Stanton stated that everything he knows about is encumbered, noting that they were within budget.

B. CPS Capital Plan. Dr. Hunter stated that this was the most comprehensive capital plan that has been done over the years, noting that they tried to project all of the upcoming needs at the schools. She stated that they are trying to make the middle school the best learning environment as possible. Dr. Hunter noted that the capital amount given to the schools each year is \$900,000, so they used this number to build the capital plan. She also stated that the ERU

(Emergency Recovery Unit) work is included in the capital plan, but outside of the \$900,000, as well as the boilers at Ripley. She stated that they developed a Green Initiatives Group because these costs above the \$900,000 became high, noting that they would be exploring reimbursements and grants over the next year before asking for Town Meeting funding. Mr. Stanton and Mr. Schlegel reviewed the FY20 – FY24 capital needs at Alcott, Thoreau, Willard, Peabody, Sanborn, District Wide and Ripley. Dr. Hunter reviewed some of the capital needs at CMS that were driven by the reconfiguration. She noted that she hopes the new carpeting and painting throughout CMS and the new configuration will bring new life to CMS and make it feel like a good place to go to school everyday. Mr. Grom questioned if tile was an option over carpeting and Mr. Schlegel stated that there were students at the elementary level with hearing impairments that were moving to CMS and they wanted to continue to provide carpeting for those students; he also stated that carpeting was more cost effective over tile. Mr. Booth stated that the capital plan was a very good big picture and Ms. Bout noted the level of detail in the plan. Ms. Bout stated that for the coming year, they should focus available resources on the middle school to provide the best environment possible for the students and teachers.

C. CPS FY21-FY25 Green Initiatives. Dr. Hunter noted that the Green Initiatives for FY21-FY25 were \$4 million worth of items and they would continue to work on it. *Green Initiatives were discussed during the CPS Capital Plan.*

D. CPS FY20 Warrant Articles & CMS Facility Needs. Dr. Hunter stated that the recommended budget is the placeholder and they will discuss the number at the December 11th meeting. She stated that the 2nd Article was the feasibility budget, noting that she is awaiting the MSBA status update. She noted that if they are invited, they would put this forward. She stated that the Capital Budget is straight forward, noting it is \$900,000. Dr. Hunter stated that the 4th article is the rental revolving account and Mr. Stanton noted that DESE has notified them that they could create a revolving account.

Ms. Bout stated that if they are invited into the MSBA process, they are still 4-5 years out, and that the buildings need to be maintained during that time. She stated that if they were invited, the next steps would be to submit the warrant article, request funding for the feasibility study and submit a warrant article next year for the new building. Ms. Bout stated that if they're are not invited into the process this year, they need to decide next steps, noting that they cannot move forward with a feasibility study since the MSBA would only accept one that is completed under their watch. She stated that they could wait to submit again next year. She questioned at what point do they start discussing funding it alone, noting that they really need to think about the experience they are providing for the students. Dr. Hunter stated that there is great instruction happening at CMS, but that the current environment isn't conducive to how a middle school should be functioning. She noted that the reconfiguration will be an improvement, but noted that they have added an additional transition for the kids. She shared some of the challenges, frustrations and limitations for the staff working between both buildings. Dr. Hunter stated that she feels they should try to fund it through the Town if the MSBA doesn't invite them, noting that they should see what the appetite of the community is. She stated that this is the only middle school experience for these kids.

Ms. Boynton stated that they could hold coffees and forums over several months and Dr. Hunter stated that they need an active parent group interested in being part of the discussion fairly quickly. Mr. Johnston stated that they've been discussing a new middle school for a long time and that they should be moving forward this year, noting that putting together a compelling argument for doing this on their own is feasible. He stated that they need to commit to providing an argument for a new school within the next 2 months, noting that if he were a parent, he would think they were derelict of their duties if they don't move forward. He stated that he's whole-heartedly in favor of moving the article, regardless of the response from MSBA. The SC agreed upon the need of moving forward, regardless of the response from MSBA.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Ms. Bout, seconded by Mr. Grom, to adjourn the CSC meeting. The motion was unanimously approved and the meeting adjourned at 10:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Erin E. Higgins

Approved: 12/11/18

Abbreviations:

ACLU	American Civil Liberties Union
CASE	Cooperative Association for Special Education
CEF	Concord Education Fund
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
CCRS	Concord-Carlisle Regional School District
CCACE	Concord-Carlisle Adult & Community Education
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
EOYR	End of the Year
FAAC	Financial Audit Advisory Committee
FINCOM	Finance Committee
FCCPF	Friends of Concord Carlisle Playing Fields
GASB	Governmental Accounting Standards Firm
LLI	Leveled Literacy Intervention
MAAB	Massachusetts Architectural Access Board
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
NFPA	National Fire Protection Association
OPEB	Other Post-Employment Benefits
PEG	Public Education Government
RTI	Response to Intervention
SEPAC	Special Education Parent Advisory Council
SOI	Statement of Interest
SPED	Special Education
SRO	School Resource Officer
SWOT	Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities, Threats
YRBS	Youth Risk Behavior Survey