

JOINT SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Concord-Carlisle School Committee  
Concord School Committee  
Ripley Building  
March 10, 2020

Present: Wallace Johnston, Chair, CCSC; CSC  
David Model, Vice Chair, CCSC  
Heather Bout, Chair, CSC; CCSC  
Courtland Booth, Vice Chair, CSC; CCSC  
Cynthia Rainey, CSC, CCSC  
Eva Mostoufi, CCSC

Absent: Yuval Erlich, CSC, CCSC

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

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The CCSC meeting was called to order by Mr. Johnston at 5:47 PM and the CSC meeting was then called to order to Ms. Bout.

A. Executive Session: A motion was made Mr. Booth, for both CCSC and CSC, seconded by Ms. Rainey, for both CCSC and CSC, for The Concord School Committee and Concord-Carlisle Regional School Committee to enter into Executive Session under Purpose 2 of the Open Meeting Law: To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel and 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 6:30 PM. The motion passed by roll call: Mostoufi, aye; Rainey, aye (for both); Booth, aye (for both); Bout, aye (for both); Johnston, aye (for both); Model, aye.

Mr. Johnston called the CCSC meeting back to order at 6:32 PM, noting it was being recorded, and Ms. Bout then called the CSC meeting back to order.

**II. PUBLIC COMMENT**

1. Linda Nieman, 59 Mallard Drive, Concord MA. Ms. Nieman stated that she was with Mothers Out Front, an organization focused on the swift and equitable transition to renewable energy for a livable climate for the children. Ms. Nieman stated that climate change needs to be woven into all decisions made within communities, noting that Mothers Out Front has been working with Dr. Hunter to obtain information on the barriers on green routes to school and baseline numbers for vehicle traffic at CCHS. Ms. Nieman shared results on the data results from the parent survey and traffic data: most traffic occurs during the week (with the bulk occurring during Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays), vast majority of those driving to school are speeding, 425 parents responding to survey, many students drive to school due to the need to find a way home, late bus underutilized or too long, schedule incompatible with the timing of after school activities, students can't ride the bus when they have large bags, students feel unsafe cycling and walking to school, and late bus drop-offs not near kids' homes. Ms. Nieman noted that 175 respondents indicated that they were willing to be contacted, indicating a desire to contribute to the process. She also shared suggestions to lower the barriers to riding the bus: building a shed to house large bags, more efficient late bus routes, more frequent late bus, gps and tracker for late buses. She stated that, based on these results, Mothers Out Front does not support a cart blanche parking lot expansion, noting that the goal should be to reduce the cars at CCHS.

2. Laura Davis, 330 Garfield Rd., Concord, MA. Ms. Davis stated that she was also with Mothers Out Front, noting that she is a liaison for the Climate Action Advisory Board. She stated that parking was brought up at a recent Climate Action Advisory Board meeting, noting the opportunity for collaboration across the town. She stated that the schools

don't shoulder this alone, noting the many resources available within the town and town government. She noted the aggressive emission reduction goals of Concord, noting that the schools are only a piece of the puzzle.

**III. READING OF THE MINUTES**

A. Open Session – Jt. Meeting 2/14/20. A motion was made by Mr. Booth, seconded by Mr. Model, to accept the 2-14-20 Joint meeting minutes. The motion was unanimously approved.

**IV. CHAIRS & LIAISONS REPORT**

Mr. Booth noted the passing of Phil Benincasa, former principal of Ripley and Alcott schools, after a long and courageous battle with pancreatic cancer. He noted Mr. Benincasa's serious intent with all that was happening in and around schools, noting his joy of life, sense of humor, laugh and commitment to kids. Mr. Booth expressed the SC's sympathies to Mr. Benincasa's family.

Dr. Hunter stated that Administration has been immersed in Coronavirus concerns, noting that she is working intimately with the Concord Board of Health, MA Department of Public Health, Governor's Office, and DESE. She noted that it's a very evolving situation and that there are no current cases in Concord or Carlisle. She stated that the schools have been doing a more in-depth cleaning than usual. She stated that she has been sending out messages to the community and staff, keeping them updated on the coronavirus. Dr. Hunter stated that, under the Governor's directive, she's cancelled all international and domestic travel. She noted that Administration is having significant conversations with the travel agents, ensuring students receive as much money back as possible. Dr. Hunter stated that there is also a lot of communication with individual families and staff who need guidance. She stated that teachers are sharing age appropriate facts with children and giving them opportunities to ask questions and share anxieties. Dr. Hunter stated that the guidance being given is for schools to remain open until there is community spread. She noted that the Commissioner has relaxed the 180 day school day requirement and as of March 1<sup>st</sup>, is not counting student attendance. Dr. Hunter noted the great support of Concord Board of Health's leadership, noting the great team effort. Mr. Booth stated that the Town of Concord will be responding to community questions collectively in a few days. Dr. Hunter stated, to date, the only large event that's been canceled is the senior citizen lunch, noting that the Board of Health is reviewing individual events with her. Ms. Bout thanked Dr. Hunter for everything she's doing.

CCHS Student Rep Linda Xu and Amy Tedeschi reported that the first unified track and field will be happening in the spring. Ms. Xu commended Dr. Hunter for how she's handling the coronavirus concerns. She also stated, based on the earlier public comment about reducing the carbon footprint, students could be encouraged to carpool and secure preferred, less expensive spots. Ms. Tedeschi stated that students are nervous about what will happen should the schools shut down, wondering what events would be cancelled. Ms. Tedeschi questioned trip refunds and Dr. Hunter stated that the District is working with vendors to ensure families get back as much money as possible.

**V. CORRESPONDENCE**

Ms. Bout stated that she received several emails regarding facility use fees, asking the District to not charge fees for nonprofit organizations and to eliminate the practice of charging for custodian time for nonprofits if the custodian was already scheduled to work. Ms. Bout stated that she also received an email with information and an opinion on the use of technology in the schools.

**VI. REPORTS FOR DISCUSSION**

A. CCRSD Warrant Article. Dr. Hunter shared a presentation on parking at CCHS, stating that the article is requesting funds in the amount of \$848,410 for the design and construction of a 104 space parking lot on the CCHS campus, sharing a visual of where the lot would be placed on campus. Dr. Hunter reviewed the history of parking issues at CCHS that began after the new building was constructed in 2015, the actions that have been taken to overcome the parking deficit, and the impacts of reduced parking on students, staff, families and administration. Dr. Hunter stated that the District is trying to determine the best way to combine parking goals and sustainability goals, noting that it is continuing to partner with community groups. Dr. Hunter reviewed the steps taken by the SC to consider options for the CCHS campus since 2015. Dr. Hunter stated that the article was brought to the 2019 Town Meeting, coupled with the ring road reconstruction, noting that it failed by 12 votes. She stated that Gale Associates'

study proposed a location and size of a lot of 104 spaces, 4 electric charging stations and lighting, for an estimated cost of \$848,410. She stated that a parking lot would not impede future development of a track and field on the remediated landfill site and would not impede future development of an amenities building.

Mr. Stanton stated that Concord's share of the \$848,410 would be \$88,776 and Carlisle's share would be \$27,881. He stated that, based on the median tax bill, it would be approximately \$12.29 increase for Concord and \$15.05 increase for Carlisle, per year.

## **VII. ACTION ITEMS**

A. Vote to Accept Donation of Bike Racks to CCHS. A motion was made by Ms. Bout, seconded by Ms. Rainey, to accept the donation of two bike racks from the Umbrella Arts Center. The motion was unanimously approved.

B. Vote to Reapprove FY21 Adopted Budget. Mr. Stanton stated that the budget needs to be re-voted because E&D has been certified at 4%, noting nothing has changed in the budget. A motion was made by Ms. Bout, seconded by Mr. Model, to revote the FY21 adopted budget in the amount of \$34,444,885. The motion was unanimously approved.

C. Vote to Approve Borrowing Language regarding CCRSD Warrant Article. Mr. Stanton stated that, by law, this needs to be voted at least 7 days before Town Meeting to authorize the borrowing. A motion was made by Ms. Bout, seconded by Ms. Rainey, that for the purpose of paying the costs of design and construction of a parking lot on the District's campus, including the payment of all other costs incidental and related thereto, there be and hereby is authorized, under and pursuant to Chapter 71, Section 16(d), of the General Laws and the District Agreement, as amended, the incurring of debt on the full faith and credit of the District by the issuance and sale at one time or from time to time of bonds or notes in an aggregate principal amount of \$848,410. Any premium received by the District upon the sale of any bonds or notes approved by this vote, less any such premium applied to the payment of the costs of issuance of such bonds or notes, may be applied to the payment of costs approved by this vote in accordance with Chapter 44, Section 20 of the General Laws, thereby reducing the amount authorized to be borrowed to pay such costs by a like amount, and That within seven (7) days from the date on which this vote is adopted the Secretary be and hereby is instructed to notify the Board of Selectmen of each of the member towns of this District as to the amount and general purposes of the debt herein authorized, as required by Chapter 71, Section 16(d), of the General Laws, and by the District Agreement. The motion was unanimously approved.

D. Vote to Not Move CCRSD Warrant Article to Build a Parking Lot. A motion was made by Mr. Booth, seconded by Ms. Bout, to withdraw the warrant article for the construction of an additional parking lot at CCHS, for both communities. Mr. Model stated that he feels the SC isn't doing enough to solve the parking problem in a more creative way. Mr. Booth noted his concern that the SC has not done its due diligence preparing to bring this forward to two town meetings. Dr. Hunter clarified that the juniors have not been invited to the lottery for the last 3 years and stated that, in terms of enforcement, kids are given the opportunity to move their cars during morning announcements, noting that cars are not just automatically towed. The SC discussed students parking on Laurel Street and surrounding streets. Mr. Johnston stated that the District has made efforts over the years to address the parking situation and noted that even if students were to ride share, it would not cover 83 spaces. He stated that there have been 83 kids parking off campus and that the SC should move the article. He reminded the SC that this failed by 3 votes last year. Ms. Mostoufi stated that moving forward with the article doesn't mean that the SC stops working on all of the other solutions and sustainability options. Dr. Hunter noted that the District is trying to not sever relationships with families over parking while also trying to enforce parking. Ms. Bout stated that there have been significant efforts in the past 3 years and stated that the SC needs to acknowledge the time and effort that has gone into this. She noted that these efforts alone will not provide the parking needed and Ms. Rainey stated that they don't know this. Ms. Mostoufi stated that the kids are thinking about sustainability and the SC needs to give them credit.

Mr. Booth stated that the SC needs to determine if the parking issue is at the same level as it was in years past and questioned relying on Mothers Out Front to collect data. Dr. Hunter clarified that Mothers Out Front offered to help the District with the surveys, noting that it was meant to be collaborative problem solving. Ms. Bout stated that it's not up to the District or SC to change the behavior of families and that the District needs to provide a safe environment for the kids who want to park.

Dr. Hunter asked the SC to table the vote since there were only 6 members present and many varied opinions, noting her concern in having a split committee go out into the community. Mr. Booth stated that the SC isn't ready to go to town meeting, noting that they need to compile the data to include number predictions. Mr. Johnston asked if there was anything that could happen between now and town meeting that would change anyone's minds. Ms. Rainey stated that she agreed with Mr. Booth, noting her concerns with the article. Mr. Johnston stated that there will always be concerns with the article.

Mr. Booth withdrew his motion, stating that he will look into specifics and implementation efforts, along with other viable ideas.

E. Vote to Approve 2020-2021 Calendar Updates. A motion was made by Ms. Rainey, for both CSC and CCSC, seconded by Mr. Booth, for both CSC and CCSC, to approve the School Calendar 2020-2021 update to include: Monday, August 31, 2020 No School Kindergarten and Monday, March 15, 2021 Early Release CCHS. Dr. Hunter noted that the kindergarten teachers recommended having Monday the 31<sup>st</sup> be a visiting day for kindergarten. The motion was unanimously approved.

### **VIII. Adjournment**

A motion was made by Mr. Booth, seconded by Ms. Rainey, to adjourn the meeting. The motion was unanimously approved and the CCSC meeting adjourned at 8:03 PM.

## **CONCORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE REMAINS IN SESSION**

### **IX. Reports for Discussion**

A. CPS Spanish Updates. Iolanda Volpe, Mentor and Curriculum Support for the Spanish program at the elementary level, shared an update on the Spanish program. Ms. Volpe stated that the program has been in place for 3 years and then reviewed the standards alignments, as well as the effects of learning a language on the brain. Ms. Volpe stated that the program is proficiency based, which enables the children to use the language for real communication, and interpersonal listening and speaking. She stated the District purchased curriculum for the program, but the teachers are now also revising and tweaking the curriculum. Ms. Volpe shared videos of students speaking and signing in Spanish. Ms. Volpe stated that the program has 3 curricula, noting that it is working on the kindergarten curriculum, which is focused on acquired language.

Ms. Bout thanked Ms. Volpe and noted that she likes that the program is making the curriculum its own, and not just using the canned curriculum. Ms. Volpe reviewed the curriculum differences at each grade level and how the teachers collaborated to create the curriculum.

B. CPS Civics Education Update. Bob Fardy, Social Studies Curriculum Specialist, shared an overview of the Civics curriculum at CPS. He stated that the K-5 social studies curriculum is aligned to national and state standards. Mr. Fardy stated that, through Civics education, the district attempts to educate, inform and inspire students on what it's like to be a good citizen, noting that community is the common thread throughout the curriculum. Mr. Fardy noted that the 2018 change to the frameworks included an increased emphasis on civics at all grade levels. Mr. Fardy reviewed lessons and topics discussed at each grade level, noting the theme of community running through all grade levels.

Robbie Robbins, Social Studies Dept. Chair at CMS, noted the new frameworks from 2018. He stated that civics is integrated throughout lessons and units throughout the year, noting that critical thinking is a big developmental step for middle school students. Mr. Robbins reviewed the curriculum for grades 6-8, also noting the theme of community. He stated that the entire 8<sup>th</sup> grade year is civics based, noting that the students have connected with many groups in town, including the Concord Museum and The League of Women Voters. He also stated that the students also participate in the Civics Bee and that students go to Washington, DC at the end of the year. He stated that a speaker from the Civil Rights Dept. of Justice will be attending classes next week. He noted that the state passed a law requiring that students complete a civics project in 8<sup>th</sup> grade, as well as high school, which will be implemented next year. He stated that students will need to make a civics connection for the project.

Mr. Booth questioned how kids are informed on current events and Mr. Robbins stated that the teachers stress digital literacy at the middle school level and help teach kids where to find objective, safe and academic resources. Mr. Fardy stated that they teach kids to be critical consumers of information and look at alternative points of view. Mr. Robbins stated that the job of the teachers is to model proper discourse and proper academic behavior. Ms. Bout noted how helpful the presentation was to see how civics is woven into the curriculum.

C. CMS Building Project Update. Ms. Bout stated that the design teams have been working with the leadership team of the Building Committee to put some numbers behind what they're looking at. She stated that the CMSBC is narrowing down 5 design concepts that were presented at the forum on February 27<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Bout stated that the CMSBC would be sharing out a summary of feedback from the forum at the next CMSBC meeting on March 26<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 AM at Ripley.

**X. Ongoing Business**

A. FY21 Budget. Dr. Hunter stated that nothing has changed and that here is still a delta with the Concord Finance Committee, noting that the numbers are always being reviewed. She stated that there is no recommendation to close the delta that wouldn't have an impact on staffing, instructional materials or contingencies. Ms. Bout stated that there is a public hearing at the Town House on Monday, March 16<sup>th</sup>.

**XI. Action Items**

A. Vote to Approve Tree and Bench Donation to Alcott School. A motion was made by Mr. Booth, seconded by Ms. Rainey, to accept the donation of a tree and bench to the Alcott School. The motion was unanimously approved.

**XII. Adjournment**

A motion was made by Ms. Rainey, seconded by Mr. Booth, to adjourn the CSC meeting. The motion was unanimously approved and the CSC meeting adjourned at 9:23 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Erin E. Higgins

Approved: 4.16.20

Abbreviations:

CCHS	Concord-Carlisle High School
CCRS	Concord-Carlisle Regional School District
CCSC	Concord-Carlisle Regional District School Committee
CCTA	Concord-Carlisle Teachers' Association
CMS	Concord Middle School
CMSBC	Concord Middle School Building Committee
CPS	Concord Public Schools
CSC	Concord School Committee
SC	School Committee