

JOINT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Concord-Carlisle School Committee
Concord School Committee
Conference Room 4 & Zoom
September 13, 2022

Present:

Tracey Marano, Chair, CCSC; CSC
Alexa Anderson, Chair, CSC; CCSC
Carrie Rankin, Vice Chair, CSC; CCSC
Courtland Booth, CSC; CCSC
Cynthia Rainey, CSC, CCSC
Sharon Whitt, Vice Chair, CCSC
Sara Wilson, CCSC
Domingos DaRosa, CCRSD METCO Rep
Ayesha Lawton, CPS METCO Rep

Present from Administration:

Dr. Laurie Hunter, Superintendent of Schools, CPS & CCRSD
Robert Conry, Asst. Superintendent of Finance & Operations, CPS & CCRSD
Kristen Herbert, Asst. Superintendent of Teaching & Learning, CPS & CCRSD

I. CALL TO ORDER - CSC

Ms. Anderson called the CSC meeting to order at 6:00 PM. All CSC members were present.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

III. DISCUSSION

A. Educational Plan CMS. Ms. Anderson shared an update on the CMS building project, stating that the current construction estimates are about \$5 million over the previously approved budget. She explained the value engineering process currently underway by the CMSBC to reduce the scope and budget of the project. She stated that the SC voted on the CMS Educational Plan on January 26, 2021, which outlined the educational programming and how the building space becomes part of the programming. Dr. Hunter noted that the Educational Plan was designed based on the team model. Ms. Anderson stated that the CMSBC does not want to make cuts that will adversely affect the Educational Plan. She reviewed the revisions previously made to the space summary recommendations, including removing the maker space and alternate PE space and revising the size of the gym and auditorium. Dr. Hunter noted that the Educational Plan did not call for a larger gym and auditorium, but that based on community input, the size was increased. Ms. Anderson shared some value engineering items that the CMSBC had already agreed upon, including reduced classroom sizes. Dr. Hunter noted that the scope of the building has not changed, but that the budget increase was due to the extraordinary economic times with inflation and supply chain issues.

Ms. Anderson stated that the question for the CSC is whether it is willing to loosen the reins in the event that the CMSBC implements reductions in the scope of the project that would affect the Educational Plan. She noted that the Finance Committee and Select Board are interested in the CSC's perspective because the Select Board might be charged with pursuing a Town Meeting warrant. Mr. Booth stated that it is regrettable that the inflation index given to the CMSBC was so far off, noting that he takes exception to the idea that the Educational Plan would need to be amended to satisfy the CMS building budget. He stated that the CMSBC has stayed far away from discussing the team commons. Dr. Hunter spoke to the class size and enrollment projections, noting that they are compensating for the potential of increased enrollment with smaller class sizes in smaller square footage classrooms with more teams. Mr. Booth stated that he feels the reason there is a significant budget problem is due to the nine teams model, which is leaving the CMSBC few opportunities to look at value engineering elsewhere. Ms. Rainey noted that, after the CMSBC's meeting on Thursday, a public forum may be helpful for the community to understand what is going on. She stated that the CSC already voted unanimously on the Educational Plan and she feels it should stand the way it is. *Mr. DaRosa arrived at the meeting.*

IV. ACTION ITEMS

A. Vote on CMS Educational Plan. A motion was made by Ms. Rankin, seconded by Ms. Marano, that the CSC reaffirm its support for the CMS Educational Plan, as written in January 2021, and therefore, not support any amendments to the building that would adversely affect the implementation of the Educational Plan. Mr. Booth stated that this is implying somebody wants to put the Educational Plan in jeopardy, noting that he doesn't want to reaffirm this because it implies that somebody thinks there might be something wrong with the Educational Plan. Ms. Anderson stated that the Finance Committee, Select Board and CMSBC have all discussed different paths forward, noting that the effects that these paths would have on the Educational Plan are often questioned. Ms. Anderson, Ms. Marano, Ms. Rainey and Ms. Rankin voted in favor of the motion. Ms. Rainey noted that she was reluctantly voting in favor and would have liked to have just reapproved the Educational Plan. Mr. Booth was opposed to the motion.

B. Vote to Approve CMS Handbook. Dr. Hunter stated that there were changes to dates and names. Ms. Rainey asked that the handbooks be fully reviewed in the spring because of outdated references to policies. A motion was made by Mr. Booth, seconded by Ms. Rainey, to approve the CMS Handbook. The motion passed unanimously.

V. CALL TO ORDER – CCSC

Ms. Marano called the CCSC meeting to order at 6:31 PM.

VI. CCHS STUDENT UPDATE

CCHS student reps, Zariah Alves, Harry Crowley and Felicity Zhang provided updates from CCHS. Harry stated that Student Senate has created an advisory group for students to come and voice concerns and Felicity noted the Senate's idea of creating a public forum where students can talk with the SC or administration regarding hot-button issues. Harry stated that they spoke about involving student voices more at SC meetings and Zariah stated that there is now a sense of normalcy and pre-COVID atmosphere at CCHS. Felicity stated that the fingerprint scanners have been working well for the upperclassmen. Harry stated that everyone is excited to see the return of trips, but students are concerned over the cost of trips. Zariah stated that the lunches have been improved, noting the increase in variety. Felicity stated that students have taken less of an issue with the new attendance policy this year. Zariah stated that there have been efforts to recruit a METCO representative for Student Senate and Harry stated that Senate met with CCHS Administration to establish regular meetings. The students shared upcoming events scheduled for CCHS.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENT

1. Kristen Hagerty, 95 Revolutionary Road, Concord MA. Regarding Strategic Planning, Ms. Hagerty asked when the results from the Strategic Planning process would be shared publicly, who will be (or was) invited to join the inclusive planning team and what was being done to seek and include more diverse voices in the planning process. She noted that she would like to see metrics that represent the concerns of students and parents, especially METCO families and other families of color. Regarding the CMS building project and enrollment, Ms. Hagerty encouraged the SC to understand and appreciate fact-based decisions based on historical data and reasonable projections.

VIII. READING OF THE MINUTES

A. Open Session – 8/23/22 and 8/23/22 Workshop. Mr. Rainey asked to hold on voting the workshop minutes until the next meeting and Ms. Wilson stated that not all of the takeaways were captured in these minutes. A motion was made by Ms. Rainey, seconded by Ms. Rankin, to approve the CCSC meeting minutes from the 8/23/22 meeting. The motion was unanimously approved.

IX. CORRESPONDENCE

Ms. Marano stated that she did not receive any CCSC correspondence. Ms. Anderson stated that CSC received 22 emails focused around support of the scope of the CMS building, requesting to let voters decide in Town Meeting.

X. CHAIRS, LIAISONS, AND SUPERINTENDENT REPORTS

Ms. Rainey stated that she is both the liaison to the PEG Access Advisory Committee as well as a member. She stated that the PEG Access Advisory Committee would be reviewing the Comcast franchise agreement with a firm that was awarded the contract through an RFP process.

Mr. Booth stated that the Concord Select Board met the previous night and stated that the CMSBC Chairs reported on value engineering to date, noting that there was discussion around the CMSBC bringing more than one path forward to citizens: minimal value engineering, back to budget, or a recommendation in the middle. Mr. Johnson from the Concord

Select Board confirmed that the Select Board would be discussing the need for a possible Special Town Meeting to vote on the CMS Building Project budget at its meeting on September 19th.

Ms. Wilson stated that building of the Carlisle castle playground started this past weekend, noting that all five Carlisle SC members attended, as well as many CCHS students. She noted that there would be another building weekend at the end of the month, with the grand opening on September 25th. Ms. Marano stated that she would send around the sign-up genius link if anyone would like to help build.

Dr. Hunter stated that there are reinvigorated efforts around security since COVID, noting that all of the teachers have participated in ALICE training at each school. She stated that the SRO's will be visiting classrooms and the middle and high school students would be trained as well. She noted that they are still discussing the best developmentally appropriate way to introduce it to the elementary school students. She stated that the updated Emergency Response Plan would be distributed hard copy to classrooms. She stated that the district is also looking into an app called "CrisisGo", noting that CCHS and Alcott would be prioritized due to cell service issues.

XI. DISCUSSION

A. CCHS Travel 2022-2023. Dr. Hunter noted that there were many travel discussions back in 2019, but that COVID restricted travel plans. She shared the list of current proposed trips: French Exchange in February, Italy in April, Iceland and London after school gets out, and a proposed New Zealand trip for 2024 and Denmark Exchange. Dr. Hunter noted that they have been working through the COVID piece, cancellation policies, the cost of the trips and the use of subsidies from the Sharon Young Scholarship Fund to help offset costs. Dr. Hunter noted that these trips were brought to the SC back in June with the intent of a First Reading, asking that they consider approving them for planning purposes. CCHS teachers, Rhonda Penaud, Florence Roussel-Ehrenthal, Caitlin Smith, Theresa Ruggiero, Melissa Carr, Madeleine Pooler, and Greg Coan noted their excitement for the trips and answered questions SC members had. Mr. Booth asked which trips were being brought for initial approval and Ms. Marano stated that, based on timing and planning purposes, she hoped all of these trips would be approved tonight, so that parents and students can make informed decisions.

B. School Committee and Superintendent Relations. Ms. Marano stated that there was nothing new to report on the SC and Superintendent relations.

C. School Committee Goals, Session 2. Ms. Anderson reviewed the Communication action steps on the goals document: developing new communication channels to share the business of the committee, increasing subscribers to the SC distribution list, reviewing other SC's actions and procedures to aggregate best practices, reviewing and finalizing protocols and practices and using facilitator Rob Evans to analyze the progress of the SC and make recommendations. Regarding identifying community groups to meet with, Ms. Wilson advised the SC to tread carefully on how this would work. Ms. Rainey stated that she would like these groups on the e mailing lists, invited to the coffees and included on a product that the SC produces to educate the Community, noting the group 2025. The SC agreed to update the goals to reflect an increase in outreach to community groups, including inviting them to the subscriber list. Mr. Booth questioned using facilitator Rob Evans, noting that they already have a communication consultant. Ms. Anderson stated that they already have a meeting scheduled with Rob in November to allow for feedback on their progress. Ms. Wilson noted the MASC goals session she attended, proposing that the goals be formatted in the way MASC recommended. Ms. Rainey suggested listing items under the section on reviewing other SC's actions, such as the SC external reports. Mr. DaRosa asked if the SC used social media and Ms. Marano stated that MASC advises against using social media, but that they could look further into possibly using it for some things. The SC discussed tracking the goal for increasing the subscriber list, agreeing to reach for 900 subscribers. Mr. DaRosa suggested using a QR code for people to use to subscribe.

The SC reviewed the budget goal and action steps. Ms. Rainey recommended adding an action step of a budget timeline, noting that it is usually provided by this time. She also suggested that members develop an understanding of the Finance guideline and budget process in each town. Mr. Booth noted that the SC also has the fiduciary goal.

D. School Committee Practices and Protocols. Ms. Anderson reviewed the protocols document, sharing feedback she received from members. She stated that she would incorporate all changes discussed and would bring the document back for approval. Ms. Anderson reviewed the practices document. Ms. Marano proposed starting meetings at 6:00 PM instead of 6:30 PM if that would work for everyone and Ms. Rainey stated that they would need to make sure this is well communicated to the community if the time is changed. Mr. Booth suggested waiting three meetings to change the start

time. The SC discussed public comment and having people share the topic of their comment prior to commenting. The SC agreed to take the public comment off the practices document and add it to the communications goal. Ms. Anderson stated that she would update the document for approval at the next meeting.

E. DEIB and Policy Meeting Schedules. Ms. Marano reviewed the DEIB, Policy and Strategic Planning meeting schedule. Ms. Lawton asked if students would be at the DEIB meetings, suggesting that it is important to hear their voices and Ms. Marano agreed that it would be helpful to hear from them at the meetings. Ms. Whitt asked if it was possible to add more meetings to the schedule and Ms. Marano stated that they could add more meetings if needed. Ms. Marano appointed Ms. Anderson, Mr. Booth, Ms. Marano, Ms. Rainey, Ms. Rankin, Ms. Whitt and Ms. Wilson to the Policy Subcommittee and Ms. Rankin as Chair.

F. Superintendent Goals. Dr. Hunter shared her goals, reviewing goals around Student Learning: Establishing district goals toward inclusion, research-based, and intense services and establishing a strategic leadership structure for an incoming permanent Director of Student Services; Implementing and monitoring MTSS system at all levels; and Prioritizing formal programs focused on student well-being. Dr. Hunter shared her Professional Practice goals: Developing and implementing communication strategies to inform community of strategic initiatives and objectives and positive events and activities; and Fostering a learning culture focused on student engagement and meeting the diverse needs of the students. Dr. Hunter shared her District Improvement Goals: Developing and implementing a budget process focused on district priorities and objectives; Furthering the work of the CMS Building Project through the remainder of design development and into construction while preparing for instructional use of a new school; and Leading the districts through a process to renew the 2018-2023 Strategic Plan.

G. Warrant Approvals and Signing. After discussion, the SC agreed that Ms. Rainey, Ms. Rankin, and Ms. Anderson would be warrant signers for CPS and Ms. Rainey, Ms. Rankin, Ms. Anderson and Ms. Whitt would be warrant signers for CCRSD.

H. Strategic Planning Process 2023-2028. Dr. Hunter stated that the current Strategic Plan was crafted in 2018 with a consultant, noting that the consultant is not available to work directly with the district this time but she would be available for consultation during the process. She stated that there was a planning team made up of 50 people, including representatives from all different groups in Concord, Carlisle and Boston. Dr. Hunter stated that the leadership team would do some drafting to get started and then the large group would take on the data analysis, noting that she is about to recruit for the larger group to begin visioning for the future. Dr. Hunter reviewed the timeline, stating that the themes would be synthesized between December and February, with objectives and initiatives being brought forward in March for public viewing. Dr. Hunter noted that the students, faculty and parents are also involved in the process. She stated that the previous SC rotated two members to participate in the sessions, with other members attending the meetings as observers.

I. Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations Update. Mr. Conry stated that he and Dr. Hunter are recommending an increase to short-term daily substitute pay from \$100 per day to \$130 per day, noting that there is a widespread issue of locating and attracting substitute teachers. He stated that the district completed the RFP process for electrification of Alcott's heating and cooling system, noting that five proposals were received and are currently being reviewed. Mr. Conry stated that there is a P-Card that is no longer used since the vendor service did not meet requirements, noting that they are currently reviewing the establishment of a new P-Card with TD Bank. He noted the specific language around the access road borrowing at CCHS in the upcoming action items that is required by bond counsel.

XII. ACTION ITEMS

A. Vote to Approve CCHS Travel 2022-2023. A motion was made by Ms. Rankin, seconded by Mr. Booth, to approve six overnight CCHS trips, as outlined (Ecuador trip removed from list), with the condition that a signed district liability waiver is received from all participants. The motion passed unanimously.

B. Vote to Approve CCHS Handbook. Dr. Hunter noted that dates and names were updated in the handbook. A motion was made by Mr. Booth, seconded by Ms. Rainey, to approve the CCHS Handbook. The motion passed unanimously.

C. Vote to Approve Policy Subcommittee. A motion was made by Mr. Booth, for both CSC and CCSC, seconded by Ms. Anderson, for both CSC and CCSC, to appoint the entire SC to the Policy Subcommittee and Ms. Rankin as Chair. The motion passed unanimously.

D. Vote to Appoint School Committee Warrant Signatories. A motion was made by Ms. Marano, for CSC, seconded by Ms. Rankin, for CSC, to appoint Ms. Rainey, Ms. Rankin and Ms. Anderson as warrant signers for CPS. The motion passed unanimously. A motion was made by Mr. Booth, for CCSC, seconded by Ms. Rainey, for CCSC, to appoint Ms. Rainey, Ms. Rankin, Ms. Anderson and Ms. Whitt as warrant signers for CCRSD. The motion passed unanimously.

E. Vote to Approve Increase to Daily Substitute Pay. A motion was made by Ms. Rankin, for both CSC and CCSC, seconded by Mr. Booth, for both CSC and CCSC, to vote to authorize district administration to increase the short term substitute teacher per diem rate to \$130 per day. The motion passed unanimously by both committees.

F. Vote to Approve CCHS Access Road Borrowing. A motion was made by Mr. Booth, seconded by Ms. Rankin, that for the purpose of paying the costs of reconstruction of the access road 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 \$853,665. 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 passed unanimously.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Rankin, seconded by Ms. Rainey. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 9:22 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Erin E. Higgins

Approved: 10.11.22

Abbreviations:

CCACE	Concord Carlisle Adult and Community Education
CCHS	Concord-Carlisle High School
CCRSD	Concord-Carlisle Regional School District
CCSC	Concord-Carlisle Regional District School Committee
CCTA	Concord-Carlisle Teachers' Association
CEF	Concord Education Fund
CMS	Concord Middle School
CMSBC	Concord Middle School Building Committee
CPS	Concord Public Schools
CSC	Concord School Committee
DEI	Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
MTSS	Multi-Tiered System of Supports
PD	Professional Development
RFP	Request for Proposal
SC	School Committee
SEPAC	Special Education Parent Advisory Council
SRO	School Resource Officer