

JOINT SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Concord-Carlisle School Committee
Concord School Committee
Zoom Meeting
March 2, 2021

Present: Sara Wilson, Chair, CCSC
Heather Bout, Vice Chair, CCSC; CSC
Courtland Booth, Chair, CSC; CCSC
Cynthia Rainey, Vice Chair, CSC; CCSC
Eva Mostoufi, CCSC
Alexa Anderson, CSC; CCSC
Fatima Mezdad, 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 & ROLL CALL

Ms. Wilson called the CCSC meeting to order at 5:01 PM, noting that it was being recorded, and Mr. Booth then called the CSC meeting to order. Roll call attendance was taken: Anderson, aye; Booth, aye; Bout, aye; Mezdad, aye; Mostoufi, aye; Rainey, aye; Wilson, aye.

A. Executive Session. A motion was made Mr. Booth, for CSC and CCSC, seconded by Ms. Bout, for CSC and CCSC, that the Concord School Committee and Concord-Carlisle Regional School Committees would 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, regarding termination of the EDCO Collaborative and the case L.Y. v. Kester Kreuger, CCTV, Inc., Town of Concord, and Concord-Carlisle Regional School District, 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 6:00 PM. The motion passed by roll call: Anderson, aye; Booth, aye; Bout, aye; Mezdad, aye; Mostoufi, aye; Rainey, aye; Wilson, aye.

Ms. Wilson called the CCSC back to order at 6:01 PM and Mr. Booth then called the CSC back to order.

CCHS student reps, Linda Xu and Amy Tedeschi provided an update from CCHS. Ms. Xu stated that it is almost the one year anniversary of when the schools shut down, congratulating everyone on their hard work. She stated that the fall 2 athletic season has started. Ms. Tedeschi stated that the radio play just opened up, noting that it would be aired live on the radio in April.

Mr. Booth noted that CCHS student Julia Zipoli started “Caring for the Frontlines” to show appreciation for the frontline workers in Concord and Carlisle, noting that she raised \$6,500. Mr. Booth then read an excerpt from a letter from Ms. Zipoli, thanking all CCHS employees for their essential work throughout the pandemic and stating that there would be a food truck on March 18th at CCHS to offer thanks to employees.

Regarding the expansion of in-person learning time, Dr. Hunter stated that the work is active and ongoing, stating that the elementary students will stay in-person all day beginning the first week in April. She stated that the district is complying with the Governor’s order announced the prior week. She stated that the middle and high schools are more complex, but the goal is to expand as much as possible, noting that she can outline the status at next week’s SC meeting. She encouraged parents to complete the survey that was sent out earlier in the day. Dr. Hunter thanked everyone for their efforts in getting kids back in-person.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

1. Kristin Piper, 30 Oak Road, Concord, MA. Ms. Piper stated that she filled out the survey, but noted she forgot to mention that her sophomore was able to complete the CPS course, giving kudos to CCHS for making this happen. She

stated that she is in support of more in-person time for the middle and high school, noting the challenge for students to learn over Zoom. She noted her concern for kids returning in-person and still using Zoom, urging the district to ensure that educators are present in-person with the students.

2. Kerry Anne Stone, Wright Road, Concord, MA. Ms. Stone stated the importance of in-person learning for the youth, noting that she is both a parent and pediatrician. She stated that she is encouraged to see discussion of returning to in-person learning, but noted her concern that it was not a priority topic before now.

3. Todd Benjamin. Mr. Benjamin stated that he presented a petition demanding return to in-person learning by March 15th to School Committee members and Dr. Hunter earlier in the day, noting the petition's comments on how remote instruction has been harming the kids. He stated that he is still confused at why lunch and afternoon specials are holding up elementary school students to returning by March 15th. He urged the SC to prioritize getting the kids to school by March 15th, asking to understand more fully why this isn't possible.

4. John Madden, 1394 Main Street, Concord, MA. Mr. Madden stated that he appreciates everything being done to get the kids back in the classroom, noting that there were over 400 parents that signed the petition Mr. Benjamin referenced.

5. Kara and Mae Dyer, 949 Main Street, Concord, MA. Ms. Dyer and her daughter Mae, 6th grade student at CMS, noted their support in bringing students and teachers back in-person.

III. READING OF THE MINUTES

A motion was made by Mr. Booth, for CSC and CCSC, seconded by Ms. Rainey, for CSC and CCSC, to approve the Joint meeting minutes from 2/2/21 and the Executive Session minutes from 11/10/20, 11/17/20, 12/1/20 and 12/15/20. The motion was approved by roll call: Anderson, aye (for both); Booth, aye (for both); Bout, aye (for both); Mezdad, aye (for both); Mostoufi, aye; Rainey, aye (for both); Wilson, aye.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

A. 2021-2022 School Calendar. Dr. Hunter stated that the half days at the high schools are now included in the calendar, noting that there would be collaborative professional development on these days. She stated that the first day of preschool is also noted on the calendar.

B. CCRSD FY22 Superintendent's Recommended Budget. Mr. Stanton stated that the Concord Finance Committee increased its guideline amount, noting that the current assessment is \$979,216 and FINCOM guideline is \$931,231, for a difference of \$47,985 (\$62,061 due to the assessment formula). He then reviewed options for meeting the guideline, including reducing the high school graduation line and reducing special education non-public tuitions due to prepayment options. Ms. Rainey asked that the detail on the hardware replacement plan cycle be provided in the budget book and questioned the escalations in in the software budget lines. Dr. Hunter stated that there is more discussion to have on the software, noting that the software piece is now managed at the district level. Ms. Anderson questioned why the district was keeping all of the software added due of COVID and Dr. Hunter stated that the challenge in presenting the list at this point is that the district is still in the process of reviewing the software, noting that list should continue to be paired down. She stated that the fact that the software list is large does not indicate that the district is planning to keep kids on screens all day in school post COVID. Mr. Booth stated that he was able to meet with Mr. Stanton and Mr. Rhames to further understand some budget items, urging other members to reach out to them should they have any questions.

C. Second Reading School Committee Policies: File JFABB – Admission of Exchange Students. Ms. Mezdad stated that the Policy Subcommittee members had a split vote on this policy, reviewing the proposed change in the policy of presentation to the Superintendent's Office instead of the School Committee. Ms. Mezdad stated that she felt changing the policy would erode the authority of the School Committee. Ms. Anderson noted what Ms. Presser, MASC Advisor, brought to their attention – that if the School Committee has final approval and a student is not able to enter the program, the School Committee would have to arbitrate. Ms. Anderson noted the difference in the School Committee approving staff child requests, since those can be multiyear enrollments versus the short-term enrollments of exchange students. Ms. Mostoufi stated that the policy is being cleaned up to reflect what is currently happening in practice, noting that the role of the SC is not being removed from the whole process. Dr. Hunter stated that the update was intended to mirror what was happening logistically, noting that the SC would retain the authority to accept exchange students. Ms. Rainey

noted that she would like to change the word “fluent” in the policy and have the policy specify what grades the exchange student program applies. The SC discussed the wording around proficiency or fluency with the English language and the role of the SC in approving incoming exchange students, comparing to current practice with staff children approvals. After discussion, the SC agreed that the Policy Subcommittee would take the policy back to the subcommittee for further discussion.

V. ACTION ITEMS

A. Vote to Approve 2021-2022 School Calendar. A motion was made by Ms. Bout, for both CSC and CCSC, seconded by Mr. Booth, for both CSC and CCSC, to approve the 2021-2022 School Calendar, as presented. The motion was approved by roll call: Anderson, aye (for both); Booth, aye (for both); Bout, aye (for both); Mezdad, aye (for both); Mostoufi, aye; Rainey, aye (for both); Wilson, aye.

VI. ADJOURNMENT – CCSC

A motion to adjourn the CCSC meeting was made by Ms. Bout, seconded by Ms. Rainey. The motion was approved by roll call: Anderson, Booth, aye; Bout, aye; Mezdad, aye; Mostoufi, aye; Rainey, aye; Wilson, aye, and the CCSC meeting adjourned at 7:37 PM.

VII. DISCUSSION

A. CMS Building Project Update. Ms. Bout stated that the CMS Building Committee has been holding listening sessions with the community, noting that the committee would love to hear feedback from the SC. Mr. Booth introduced Ian Parks from Hill International and Kristen Olsen and Peter Poinelli from SMMA. Regarding communications, Ms. Bout stated that the CMSBC is holding public forums and listening sessions throughout the community, noting the great feedback they are receiving. She stated that the committee is also working on a public survey, a new website, and reporting information/feedback back out to the community. Ms. Bout stated that the CMSBC is trying to determine potential community use needs and a target budget range. Mr. Booth stated that the Design Subcommittee would be bringing forward the space summary to the CMBSC, noting different aspects of the summary. Regarding sustainability, Mr. Booth stated that the Sustainability Subcommittee is onboard with Article 51, translating into the building being an all-electric, net zero ready school. Dr. Hunter noted that the building would comply with sustainability regulations and standards in MA, which were recently updated. Mr. Martini from Hill International reviewed the role of Hill International as Owner’s Project Manager, noting that the project is on schedule. Kristen Olsen, SMMA, introduced herself and Mr. Poinelli, and reviewed SMMA’s role in the design process.

Ms. Rainey noted her concern of the \$100 million cost, questioning where the square foot cost came from. Ms. Olsen stated that it was based on middle school projects and in-house projects, noting that it was a range. Mr. Parks noted that they are constantly looking at estimates, stating that he expects to find by schematic design that the numbers are accurate. Ms. Anderson asked how long the schematic phase usually takes and Ms. Olsen stated that it normally lasts 6 months. Ms. Mezdad encouraged CMSBC to stay within the \$100 million range, noting the current situation of families struggling to pay bills. Ms. Rainey questioned the intention of the alternate physical education space and Dr. Hunter stated that it would serve as a space that kids could have alternate activities to physical education, noting that OT/PT would also use the space. She stated that extra curriculars in the afternoon would also use this space. Ms. Rainey encouraged the use of outdoor physical education opportunities.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

A. CPS FY22 Superintendent’s Recommended Budget. Mr. Stanton stated that there is currently a \$117,337 difference in the FY22 Superintendent’s Recommended Budget and the Concord Finance Committee guideline. He reviewed recommendations on reaching the guideline, including reducing a vacant CMS Spanish teacher position from 1.0 FTE to .6 FTE and reducing special education non-public tuitions. Ms. Rainey asked how the hardware was going to be repurposed after 1:1 and asked if the district is finding economies of scale versus having departments purchase software on their own. Dr. Hunter stated that after the K5 students return, they will not be bringing the laptops home and agreed with Ms. Rainey on finding economies of scale. Mr. Stanton stated that they continue vetting the software and the district will be bidding out less for software going forward.

IX. EXECUTIVE SESSION

A. Executive Session. A motion was made by Ms. Bout, seconded by Ms. Anderson, 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 not return to Open Session. The motion passed by roll call: Anderson, aye; Booth, aye; Bout, aye; Mezdad, aye; Rainey, aye, and Open Session ended at 8:35 PM.

X. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn Executive Session was made by Ms. Bout, seconded by Ms. Rainey. The motion passed by roll call: Anderson, aye; Booth, aye; Bout, aye; Mezdad, aye; Rainey, aye, and the CCSC meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Erin E. Higgins

Approved: 4.13.21

Abbreviations:

CCHS	Concord-Carlisle High School
CCRS	Concord-Carlisle Regional School District
CCSC	Concord-Carlisle Regional District School Committee
CCTA	Concord-Carlisle Teachers' Association
CDC	Center for Disease Control and Prevention
CMS	Concord Middle School
CMSBC	Concord Middle School Building Committee
CPS	Concord Public Schools
CSC	Concord School Committee
DESE	Department of Elementary & Secondary Education
DPH	Department of Public Health
E&D	Excess and Deficiency
MASS	Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents
OPEB	Other Post Employment Benefits
PD	Professional Development
SC	School Committee