

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, and Mr. Booth then called the CSC meeting to order. Ms. Wilson noted that the meeting was being recorded. 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 Ms. Bout, for CSC and CCSC, seconded by Mr. Booth, for CSC and CCSC, that the Concord School Committee and Concord-Carlisle Regional School Committee 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 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 (for both); Booth, aye (for both); Bout, aye (for both); Mezdad, aye (for both); Mostoufi, aye; Rainey, aye (for both); Wilson, aye.

The meeting was called back into session at 6:03 PM, and Ms. Wilson noted that it was being recorded.

PUBLIC HEARING ON SCHOOL CHOICE

A. Public Hearing. A motion was made by Ms. Bout, for CSC and CCSC, seconded by Mr. Booth, for CSC and CCSC, to open the Public Hearing on School Choice. The motion passed 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, and the public hearing opened at 6:04 PM.

Public Comment.
None

A motion was made by Ms. Bout, for CSC and CCSC, seconded by Mr. Booth, for CSC and CCSC, to close the public hearing. The motion passed by roll call: Anderson, aye (for both); Booth, aye (for both); Bout, aye (for both); Mezdad, aye (for both); Mostoufi, aye; Wilson, aye; Rainey, aye (for both), and the public hearing closed at 6:05 PM.

B. Vote on School Choice for the 2021-22 School Year. A motion was made by Mr. Booth, for CSC and CCSC, seconded by Ms. Bout, for CSC and CCSC, to not participate in School Choice for the school year 2021-2022. Dr. Hunter noted that the primary reason is space and secondarily, the lack of an adequate transportation system for kids to access. Ms. Mezdad shared her experience in participating as a student in School Choice, noting that she is in favor of the district participating in School Choice. She noted that families that participate in school choice understand that transportation is not provided by the districts. Dr. Hunter stated that not all families that participate in school choice have the ability to drive students and there is not an adequate public infrastructure. She stated that regarding space, some schools are at top capacity limits, noting that once districts do not have available classrooms, they typically do not offer School

Choice. Dr. Hunter noted that the districts that she has seen thrive in school choice either had enrollment issues or fiscal issues and made School Choice a mainstay in how they were operating. Ms. Mostoufi also noted that School Choice does not offer diversity in the student body. The motion passed by roll call: Anderson, aye (for both); Booth, aye (for both); Bout, aye (for both); Mezdad, nay (for both); Mostoufi, aye; Rainey, aye (for both), Wilson, aye.

STUDENT UPDATE

CCHS Reps, Amy Tedeschi and Linda Xu, shared an update from CCHS. Ms. Tedeschi noted the recent racism against Asian Americans, stating that it is important for the town and school to acknowledge. Ms. Xu shared her personal experiences of racism and how she was not viewed as an “American” at different times in her life. She stated that all of the hate and prejudice within each person is leading to deaths. Ms. Xu stated that racism is not just a recent issue and recommended that everyone reevaluate himself or herself. Ms. Wilson thanked Ms. Tedeschi and Ms. Xu for their honesty and eloquence, thanking them for bringing forward this topic. Ms. Bout also thanked them for entrusting the SC with their words. Ms. Mostoufi stated that the students were very courageous and that their words were very powerful. Mr. Booth stated that the SC rejects the idea that people should be classified and de-humanized in the way Ms. Xu stated, noting how fortunate the SC has been to have them representing CCHS.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

1. Todd Benjamin. Mr. Benjamin congratulated Mr. Booth in his reelection and noted that there was no discussion of the public budget hearing or school choice hearing in previous meetings. He stated that there is no update in the agenda on getting the high school students back to school. Mr. Benjamin asked what was being done about the educational deficit that the kids are experiencing, recommending that this be a consistent agenda item.

III. CHAIRS & LIASIONS REPORT

Ms. Anderson stated that she and Ms. Mostoufi met with SEPAC, noting that SEPAC is holding its teacher appreciation awards. She stated that they discussed the equity leadership structure, the CMS building project and the Ed Plan, noting that Dr. Hunter and Director of Student Services, Ruth Grube, would be following up with SEPAC on April 12th.

Mr. Booth stated that several SC members attended the Concord Finance Committee meeting on Thursday. He stated that the Concord Select Board met the previous day, noting that Indigenous People’s Day was on their consent agenda and was approved. He stated that the Design Subcommittee of the CMSBC had a meeting scheduled for earlier in the day, but it was cancelled.

Ms. Bout stated that the next middle school project community forum was the following evening at 7:00 PM and noted that the town-wide survey on the project is open.

Mr. Booth stated that next Tuesday, April 6th at 7:00 PM, there will be a conversation hosted by the school leadership team and School Committee on the equity leadership structure. Ms. Mezdad urged members of the community that cannot attend to send an email to the SC with any issues, concerns or questions that they would like addressed.

IV. READING OF THE MINUTES

A. Open Session 2/9/21 and 2/23/21. A motion was made by Ms. Bout, for CSC and CCSC, seconded by Mr. Booth, for CSC and CCSC, to accept the minutes from 2/9/21 and 2/23/21. The motion passed 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.

V. CORRESPONDENCE

Ms. Wilson stated that the CCSC received correspondence on leveled literacy, the special education budget, and one from a student regarding a scout badge project. Mr. Booth stated that the CSC received correspondence around: the health implications of reopening, the size of the auditorium at the middle school, the current budget estimate for the new middle school, athletic facilities at the new middle school, American Sign Language, services provided by EDCO, performing arts space at the middle school, several in regards to leveled literacy and curriculum and an invite to create a short video to be included in a Patriots Day greeting from the Town of Concord.

VI. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Hunter shared her report, highlighting that: there will be a district-wide protocol captured in May, stakeholders have been surveyed for return to school, elementary students will return full time on Monday, all elementary requests for bus transportation have been granted, the elementary schools are working on schedules, coverage and supervision, specialist teachers will remain remote for the remainder of the year, the district will be having a dialogue with SEPAC on programs and services, the state was in to review tiered focus monitoring and initial feedback was very positive, there will be more data available on the STARS assessments and interventions in May, transportation is preparing for middle and high school student return to in-person, about 95% of students will be returning to in-person learning, staff have been added in terms of supervision for lunch and specials at the elementary school and desks have been added at CMS, there have been 171 cases of COVID, more quarantines are expected with the decrease of 6 feet distance, staff are receiving vaccines, pooled testing is going smoothly, the state will be paying for the program through the remainder of the year, there is great state-wide work on anti-racism within school districts, math leveling conversations are occurring at CMS and CCHS, there has been success in recruiting candidates of color, and the building project work is ongoing and there is positive community feedback.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

A. CCRSD FY21 Variance Report. Mr. Stanton stated that, in a normal year, the business office is usually in closeout mode at this time. He stated that the management of the COVID related grants have taken up much of the time of the business office. He stated that, as of March 26, the current unencumbered balance is \$2,391,964. He then reviewed the priorities of maintaining 5% E&D and maximizing the circuit breaker revolving account. Mr. Stanton stated that he believes the CCRSD budget will be in surplus, sharing possible ideas: pre-paying special education tuitions, pre-paying for the computer replacement cycle, purchasing electric buses, pre-paying OPEB, purchasing a snow bus sweep for Knox Trail, funding the capital stabilization account for future capital project and reducing FY22 assessments.

B. CARES and Stabilization Fund Updates. Mr. Stanton shared an update on CARES Act costs incurred, noting that as of March 22, 2021, there is a total of \$1.3 million district wide in eligible COVID costs. He stated that the district is hopeful to bring the emergency relief money into FY22 and beyond. Mr. Booth thanked Mr. Rhames and Mr. Stanton for all of their work managing the grants.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

A. First Reading School Committee Policies. File: JJ – Co-Curricular and Extracurricular Activities, File: JJA – Student Organizations, File: JJE – Student Fundraising Activities, File: JJF – Student Activity Accounts, File: JJG – Contests for Students, File: JJIB – Interscholastic Athletics. Ms. Mezdad stated that there were no changes made to Files JJ, JJA or JJE. She stated that she would like to bring File JJF back to the Policy Subcommittee for further discussion. She reviewed the changes made to File JJG, including approval by the principal instead of administrator. Regarding File JJIB, Ms. Mezdad stated that the subcommittee added cross references to the policy. Ms. Rainey asked that File JJE – Student Fundraising Activities be brought back to the subcommittee for review under the umbrella of fundraising and student activity fees. Regarding File JJIB – Interscholastic Athletics, Mr. Booth questioned the section on school committee approval and Ms. Rainey questioned the section on scheduling away games. After discussion, the SC agreed that all of the policies would be brought back to the subcommittee for further discussion.

B. FY21 End of Year Update. *Included in Variance Report earlier in the meeting.*

IX. ACTION ITEMS

A. Vote to Accept Donation to CCHS for COVID Testing. A motion was made by Ms. Bout, seconded by Ms. Anderson, to accept a donation in the amount of \$600 for COVID testing at CCHS, with thanks. The motion was approved by roll call: Anderson, aye; Booth, aye; Bout, aye; Mezdad, aye; Mostoufi, aye; Rainey, aye; Wilson, aye.

X. ADJOURNMENT - CCSC

A motion to adjourn the CCSC meeting was made by Ms. Bout, seconded by Ms. Rainey. The motion passed by roll call: Anderson, aye; Booth, aye; Bout, aye; Mezdad, aye; Mostoufi, aye; Rainey, aye, and Wilson, aye, and the CCSC meeting adjourned at 8:19 PM.

XI. OLD BUSINESS

A. CPS FY21 Variance Report. Mr. Stanton reviewed the CPS FY21 Variance Report, stating that the unencumbered balance is \$2,107,070. He noted the negative in fixed assets, stating that this is due to the entire amount for leases being encumbered. He stated that the fixed assets function would come in good standing once the encumbrance is liquidated to the actual amount. Mr. Stanton stated that the budget is in good standing, noting that he will be able to project the ending balance in early May. He reviewed potential uses for surplus money, including prepaying special education tuitions, prepaying EDCO, purchasing a snow bus sweep for Knox Trail and purchasing laptops. Ms. Rainey suggested having more thorough conversations with the Concord Select Board and Concord Finance Committee regarding the EDCO situation.

B. Middle School Building Project. Mr. Booth stated that there is a discussion pending on the construction method, noting that this is likely to happen at the next CMSBC meeting. Ms. Bout stated that the CMS building project town-wide survey is currently underway. She stated that the project is at a pivotal point in seeing what direction the community wants the project to go – either sticking to the education plan or being more of a community resource. Ms. Bout stated that the survey is open until April 5th and noted that the community forum is the following evening. Mr. Booth noted his concern that the survey will lead to unfortunate outcomes, noting that the charge of the building committee was to build a school, not a community school. He noted his concern for asking people what they want after a design has already been developed. He stated that his primary goal is to see that the middle school is not jeopardized as a middle school. Ms. Bout agreed with Mr. Booth on not wanting to jeopardize the project and stated that the priority is fulfilling the educational plan. She stated that the survey is critical in collecting information on what the community wants the building to be. Ms. Rainey stated that she does not understand why the committee has not had a full presentation on construction methods before making a decision, noting that the high school project used Construction Manager at Risk with great success. After discussion, Ms. Bout stated that she would bring the feedback in favor of CMS at Risk from the SC to the CMSBC. Ms. Rainey asked that she emphasize the safety concern. She noted that the community was asked to weigh in on the gym and auditorium but not outdoor spaces and Ms. Bout stated that the outdoors is more a high-level concept, noting that they would be hearing more from the designers on this. Ms. Mezdad noted her concern with the survey, noting that she does not want it to take place of a referendum.

XII. ACTION ITEMS

A. Vote to Approve CPS Capital Plan. A motion was made by Ms. Bout, seconded by Ms. Rainey, to approve the CPS capital plan as presented. The motion was approved by roll call: Anderson, aye; Booth, aye; Bout, aye; Mezdad, aye; Rainey, aye.

XIII. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Bout, seconded by Ms. Rainey. The motion was approved by roll call: Anderson, aye; Booth, aye; Bout, aye; Mezdad, aye; Rainey, aye, and the CSC meeting adjourned at 9:16 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Erin E. Higgins

Approved: 5.11.21

Abbreviations:

- CCHS Concord-Carlisle High School
- CCRSB 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