

Carlisle School Committee

Minutes

Wednesday, July 29, 2020

8:30 a.m.

Remote Meeting Via Zoom

Present Via Zoom – School Committee: Christine Lear - Chair, Amanda Comperchio, Jack Huntress, Eva Mostoufi, Sara Wilson.

Present Via Zoom – School Administration: James O’Shea, Superintendent; Matt Mehler, Middle School Principal; Lori Bruce, Director of Student Support Services; Nancy Anderson, Assistant to the Superintendent.

Meeting Documents:

Minutes of July 22, 2020	2020-2021 School Calendar	
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Note: Per Governor Baker’s order suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A sec. 20, the public was not allowed to physically access this School Committee meeting. Members of the Public were able to access this meeting via live stream at:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84082652998?pwd=d0x0clBiMlVucE5wTVBZRnBrdkp3Zz09>

Meeting ID: 840 8265 2998

Passcode: 3k?8vZ

Public comments were posted via the chat box. Questions/Comments were read and answered by the School Committee via live stream.

I. Call to Order

Christine Lear called the meeting to order at 8:31 a.m. Ms. Lear stated that the meeting was being recorded.

II. Review/Approve Minutes. Ms. Mostoufi made a motion to approve the minutes of July 22, 2020; Ms. Wilson seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The following votes were taken in roll call: Comperchio, aye; Huntress, aye; Lear, aye; Mostoufi, aye; Wilson, aye.

III. Information/Discussion Items

- A. School Reopening Update. Mr. O’Shea shared that family and faculty forums to discuss reopening plans were held on July 23. On July 27, the Back to School Task Force (BTSTF) Communications group shared executive summaries of the data from surveys that were sent to families and faculty/staff. Some of the data from families included the following: There was a good distribution of family respondents across grades. As a whole, families were not very impacted by COVID, they did have concern about learning gaps for their children, and there was concern about the social/emotional

wellness of children. 87% of families responded that they would send their children to school for an in-person or hybrid model, and 50% were certain of this decision. For transportation, more than half plan to drive their children and 28% said their children would ride the bus. It was noted that the regulations of one child per seat, equating to 20 students per bus, could likely be met for our student population. For food service, 8% indicated their children would participate in the lunch program, 32% may participate; it depends on the menu. When asked which hybrid model works best, the 2 days in-person/3 days remote model was preferred. Mr. O'Shea noted that this is the planned hybrid model for Carlisle. Volunteers have also stepped forward as it was noted the School will need more supervision for any in-person instructional model. For the faculty survey, responses indicated that some people were deeply impacted by COVID. When asked how comfortable faculty is coming back to school, it was split 50-50, with half feeling not comfortable/not very comfortable and half feeling comfortable/very comfortable. 25% of faculty had a condition with increased risk for COVID and some preferred not to answer. 31% had someone in their household with an increased risk. The faculty also said that they preferred the hybrid model with 2 days in-person and 3 days remote. 46% of faculty have kids in grades PK-12 that could impact their return to school plan.

- B. Drafts of School Reopening Plans. Mr. O'Shea said that by July 31, all Districts must submit their preliminary reopening plans to the State. By August 10, Districts must submit their final plans and communicate them to the Community. A preview of the reopening plans was presented. The **In-Person Model** with risk-reduction measures in place, included 4.5 days of in-person instruction per week, with an Early Release on Wednesdays for teacher planning. Per the DESE guidelines, there would be a minimum 3 feet distance between student desks, modified schedules and transitions, and more time for cleaning, handwashing and sanitizing. The **Hybrid Model** would have students split into two balanced groups, with group A attending Monday/Thursday and group B attending Tuesday/Friday. Wednesday morning would be all remote learning and Wednesday afternoon would be for teacher planning. It was noted that when students were not in school, they would be working at home on assignments. This model allows for 6 feet physical distancing. This model would also include modified schedules and transitions, and more time for cleaning, handwashing and sanitizing. In the **Full Remote** model, there would be full time teaching and learning from home. Attendance would be taken, there will be assignments, grading, and moving forward with state standards. There would be a focus on daily synchronous and asynchronous instruction. For Elementary, this would mean class meetings via Zoom, 2 academic Zoom sessions/day, lessons shared with parents, and additional activities posted on See Saw. Specials (P.E., Music, Library, World Language, Art) would also have Zoom lessons. For Middle School, the homeroom teachers will conduct daily Zoom advisory meetings. The middle school content area teachers would each meet with groups four days a week for a 30-45 minute lesson. Health and other specials would meet at least once a week through Zoom. For the remote plan for families that choose remote learning and not Homeschool, we are looking for guidance on offering a remote learning model. Mr. O'Shea then addressed the Risk Reduction plan. All staff and all students in grades 2-8 will be required to wear masks, and PK-grade 1 students will be encouraged to wear masks as well. There will be no visitors allowed in school Safety barriers will be in

offices. There will be limited contact among faculty and students. For transportation, masks will be required on the bus, with one child per seat, windows open weather-permitting and increased cleaning and sanitizing. For lunch and snack, there will be 6 feet distancing, the cafeteria will be used on a limited basis, and there will be prepared and packaged meals offered from the cafeteria. For Staff protection, there will be comprehensive training for staff at the start of the year, and there will be district provided PPE. For the plan to respond to COVID-19 scenarios in school, the School will follow the state guidelines. Anyone who has any symptom should stay home. The School is working with the BOH to get a testing protocol in place. Guidelines will be posted on the website. On Thursday, July 30, at the Faculty meeting, Carlisle Public Health Nurse Tricia McGean will present and discuss COVID-19 in the community. We are planning for a classroom walkthrough (where classrooms in different grade levels are set up with proper distancing) on Monday, August 3 starting at 2 p.m. for the School Committee, Board of Health and the BTSTF. Ongoing challenges are the broad concern for the health and safety of staff and students, levels of anxiety, concerns for students who aren't receiving in-person instruction, the increasing national numbers of COVID cases, the ability to acquire all necessary materials for reopening, and the discussion of the 3 feet/6 feet distancing. Supports include that Massachusetts has embraced the use of precautions and COVID numbers are good, Carlisle numbers are good, we are planning three models to provide flexibility and will be able to respond to changing situations, we have a collaborative approach that includes discussions with teachers, parents, community members, town departments and other districts, and the DESE has reduced the mandated number of school days from 180 to 170 for 2020-2021. Decision making includes making sure that the plans follow DESE guidelines and will the workload for teachers be doable with the new challenges. Do plans support the social and emotional well-being of students, faculty and staff? Mr. O'Shea will make a recommendation on what plan the School adopts, and the School Committee will make a determination on the model for 2020-2021.

- C. School Calendar Discussion. The initial start day for 2020-2021 was September 2. Additional time is needed at the start of the year for training on safety protocols, student training, curricular planning and instructional adjustments. It is proposed that we move the start of school to September 10 for grades 1-8 and September 11 for PK-K. This provides for 5 days of training and preparation and leaves us with an additional 5 days to use throughout the year.

Ms. Lear thanked everyone for their hard work to come up with great plans. Mr. Huntress added that he and Ms. Comperchio have been on calls with many School Committees, and it is evident that Carlisle is head and shoulders above the rest. Many School Committees have not been part of this discussion process. Everything Mr. Huntress and Ms. Comperchio heard reinforced the time and effort that has been put into developing these plans. Ms. Lear added that we are a thoughtful community and we want to do this right. Addressing the 3 feet and 6 feet discussion, Mr. O'Shea said that the State provided guidance; and Carlisle will aim for 6 feet distancing but a 3 feet minimum would be established. He added that he has had conversations with the Carlisle Health Agent who is aligned with State Guidelines. Ms. Wilson clarified that it would be a 3 feet minimum distance if we are in person and a 6 feet if we are in the hybrid model. Mr. O'Shea confirmed that was correct because class sizes would be cut in half in the hybrid model. He reminded people that there is a walk

through planned for Monday where people can see classrooms in Kindergarten, grade 2, grade 5, and grade 6 set up with distancing and actual class sizes. Mr. O'Shea was asked to set up a 3rd grade class as well since those rooms are smaller. Ms. Mostoufi asked about the distance for the teachers from the students. Mr. O'Shea answered that this will be a challenge for everyone, since spaces are going to shrink and grow. People will maintain the distance if possible. There may not be an ability to maintain the 3 feet distance during an instructional period. Hopefully teachers will adapt and feel comfortable interacting with students with PPE in place. He acknowledged that it is difficult for adults who have dedicated their careers to working with kids and helping kids; it will be something to experience and learn and improve upon. Ms. Mostoufi felt that the anxiety will decrease when people understand protocols. Mr. O'Shea added that school is dynamic; in order for day to day learning to take place, people will have to develop procedures to create safety. Ms. Lear added that this is a global situation, and people have found ways to work to stay safe. She thinks about the creativity of her child's teachers over the years, and has full confidence that teachers will find a way to help kids manage this situation; help them understand their feelings, safety and attitude wise; she felt our faculty will nail this. Ms. Vanaria was recognized and appreciates that thought, but added that the faculty remains worried about the 3 and 6 feet distance. Ms. Lear appreciates the concern and does not want anyone to be unsafe. Ms. Wilson said it's important to have a clear standard, to provide a level of comfort to families and staff. The aim is to create structure and predictability. We can't predict the fluidity of bodies, but if we can create a structure where parents and students and teachers will all be comfortable, and accommodate the least comfortable person. Ms. Comperchio asked for clarification on 3-6 feet; Mr. O'Shea said 3 feet is the baseline for instruction in classrooms. Mr. O'Shea addressed the School's ability to respond to the most cautious person's desires, and was not sure the school could be run in person that way; that is why there is a remote learning plan as well. Mr. O'Shea reiterated that 87% of families said they wanted their kids back in school but he didn't have the breakdown of in-person or hybrid. He asked people to attend the walkthrough to see the classrooms in person. Ms. Lear asked if faculty would be on the tour; it was answered that in there is representation of faculty on the BTSTF. After the tours, we can have a further informed decision next Wednesday. Ms. Mostoufi shared that Concord is not letting their families change their minds about sending and not sending students to school because of planning busses and classrooms; she asked if that was something we are considering implementing as well. Mr. O'Shea answered that we have not had that discussion internally; if we are in-person and people's comfort levels are growing, it will inform our decisions moving forward. We will establish timeframes for families changing their minds. Mr. O'Shea said that Ms. McGean's presentation to faculty will help people understand more about our local process. Our ability to address people who are symptomatic is key. Once we identify it, our ability to quarantine and respond is most important. The BOH told us we will not be a testing site in Carlisle. However, there are sites within 30 minutes to give us an accurate test. Results have to go to the State, the BOH and the School. We will get a quick turnaround on testing. Mr. Huntress said that there has been some confusion about instructional access; in a 4 ½ day in in person model versus a hybrid teachers where teachers only instruct one group for 2 days. There is a significant amount of decreased directed learning for students in the hybrid model and that has to be clear to parents. What are the measurable risks versus the social, emotional and academics for students; this has to be well

understood by the community at large. Ms. Mostoufi sat through the Region's plan; the Region acknowledged that elementary students are more difficult to teach remotely and require supervision and guidance. Concord is returning Elementary 5 days a week for ½ day every day, then Concord Recreation is providing opportunities for feeding kids and supervising kids in the afternoon. Ms. Comperchio asked how detailed the draft will be on the hybrid model, what the day will look like for students and what students are going to be required to do for a passing grade. Mr. O'Shea answered that families would know what days their student is in school and the expectations for in-person learning. In Middle School, core subjects will be addressed in person. Since the instructional time will be two days in person and a morning remote session every week, there will be some adjustment to the curriculum on what is being taught. If there is a remote model, will be more robust. Mr. Huntress said that this conversation is important, and his assessment is that hybrid offers the least amount of continuous learning for students; it may be worth evaluating the stack rank of what we are offering students. Mr. O'Shea added that if we are remote, we have full instruction. In hybrid, we are reducing instruction by half. Mr. Model was recognized. He expressed his opinion that people were undercounting the social emotional value of students coming into school and having face to face contact with teachers. His stack was hybrid first, then in-person then remote. While remote is academically good, the social emotional piece is not. Mr. Model added that the School Committee should hold a joint meeting with the BOH. Ms. Lear said that this would happen. Mr. Model asked if we would consider temporarily relaxing the in-person approval process to allow teachers' kids to come to Carlisle Schools during this time. Mr. O'Shea said that is a discussion for the Committee. Mr. Model said that Concord is advocating Monday/Tuesday and Thursday/Friday split for the hybrid model; then they can do a deep clean before the other group of students arrive. He did like the approach of not grouping students alphabetically. It might be something to consider especially if high schoolers are expected to watch younger siblings. Mr. Model added that this was a good survey question. Mr. Model asked if Carlisle goes to a remote model, given the needs of special education students, would you consider having that group of students come into School? Ms. Bruce was recognized and agreed that special education students don't learn well remotely. She added that we don't need to bring all of them into school; we do have some ideas, but we need to think about how to best educate our children that aren't in person. Carrie Patel was recognized and asked to clarify something said earlier by Ms. Mostoufi. For CCHS, parents that have decided to go remote have to stay remote until December. If a child goes into school and then decides to go remote, parents can decide that at any time. Mr. O'Shea wants to make sure families are not making plans to travel if we start school later, so we are confident about their continued good health. Mr. O'Shea added that there will be more calendar conversations. Ms. Lear added that the Policy Subcommittee has cancelled its meeting for tomorrow will have it after August 10th. School Committee meetings have to start meeting in person. This time slot works and Zoom can also be used so large groups can continue to attend. We will meet next Wednesday then plan for the rest of August. Ms. Mostoufi wished to address COVID policies.

IV: Subcommittee Reports

Ms. Mostoufi shared that CCHS has released its reopening plans, CCHS is online. Conversations and planning continues, it is ever evolving. During one meeting, there was a

student representative who became tearful about how the students need to be able to return to some sort of normalcy and see their friends. There was also concern about returning alphabetically. Emotional needs are real. Mr. Huntress added that he had a conversation with Dr. Mehler about the importance of having a student voice as part of the Carlisle School Committee. Dr. Mehler shared that other School Committees have this in place; Carlisle is unique in that it is a K-8 school. He was envisioning this going through the student government so students could learn about the process. He supported that it is worth exploring. Mr. Huntress agreed that it's a good practice.

VI. Action Items

There were no action items.

VII. Public Comments

Comments were addressed earlier in the meeting.

VIII. Adjourn Meeting

Ms. Wilson made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Ms. Comperchio seconded the motion. The following votes were taken in Roll Call: Comperchio, aye; Huntress, aye; Lear, aye; Mostoufi, aye; Wilson, aye. The public meeting was adjourned at 10:20 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Nancy Anderson".

Nancy Anderson
Assistant to the Superintendent