

Carlisle School Committee

Minutes

Friday, May 8, 2020

8:30-9:45 a.m.

Remote Meeting Via Zoom

Present Via Zoom – School Committee: Christine Lear - Chair, David Model, Eva Mostoufi, Sara Wilson, Shannon Lavery.

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

Meeting Documents:

Minutes of May 1, 2020		
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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/321756655>

Meeting ID: 321 756 655

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

Chair Christine Lear called the meeting to order at 8:31 a.m. Ms. Lear announced that the meeting is being recorded. Ms. Lear read the following statement:

Teacher Appreciation Week could not come at a more appropriate time. While we don’t need an extreme situation to recognize that our children’s teachers are extraordinary, it is fortuitous that we can highlight the incredible efforts of the Carlisle faculty and staff as they are certainly in their finest hour.

Our schools have been amazing in their transition from exceptional, traditional schooling to providing our children with thoughtful, resourceful, quality distance learning. As one parent noted, it is like the faculty are building a plane as they fly it! Using established and new technologies, our children are provided with opportunities to learn and engage with one another and with faculty on a day to day basis. Ultimately, learning the lessons at hand and to be resilient in situations without established norms.

They do all of this while taking care of their own families. On behalf of the entire town and school community, the Carlisle School Committee would like to express our sincere appreciation for all that the faculty and staff do for our children, our families and our town.

II. Review/Approve Minutes

Ms. Wilson moved to approve the minutes of May 1, 2020; Ms. Mostoufi seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The following votes were taken in roll call: Lear, aye; Lavery, aye; Model, aye; Mostoufi, aye; Wilson aye.

III. Information/Discussion Items

- A. Update on School Closure. Mr. O’Shea began by referencing the car parade that took place last Friday. For more than two hours, the faculty and staff drove in a parade through the streets of Carlisle, escorted by police and fire trucks. Teachers saw families, children, and residents; it was a joyful occasion. Mr. O’Shea thanked all who participated in and planned the parade including Kate Reid, Chief Fisher, Chief Sorrows, and Linda Vanaria. Mr. O’Shea gave a special shout out to Principal Mehler, for wearing the husky costume and lifting everyone’s spirits. Mr. O’Shea continued with the update. The remote learning program is continuing through June 22. Mr. O’Shea is proud of all of the work our faculty and staff are doing on programming and instruction. The School continues to plan for the closing of the year. Currently teachers are packing up student materials. Lauren Sawyer, the School Nurse, will get in touch with parents about picking up medications. Mr. O’Shea met with the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) this week about short, intermediate and long term goals. Dr. Mehler has been working with the 8th grade graduation committee. Custodians are working on projects around the school. The solar canopy project is continuing. Mr. O’Shea is assembling a task force on back to school planning. There is also planning well underway for the traditional summer school, servicing students with special needs. If we are not allowed back into school in the summer, we are exploring how we provide remote learning for these students. Mr. O’Shea is looking at potential costs for these practices, and looking at ideas we will have to explore moving forward. The Town has concerns about state revenue, and FinCom has asked the School to explore a 5% reduction in its budget.
- B. Kindergarten and Pre-K Fees and Vote. Mr. O’Shea recapped the discussion at the previous meeting about the School practice of collecting fees in Kindergarten and Pre-K to offset teacher salaries. During the closure, the School continues to pay teachers and teachers are providing services to students. It is believed that the School should retain these funds to sustain these programs. Mr. Model made a motion to keep the fee structure in place; Ms. Mostoufi seconded the motion. The following votes were taken in roll call: Lear, aye; Lavery, aye; Model, aye; Mostoufi, aye; Wilson, aye.
- C. Student Opportunity Act Presentation and Vote. Mr. O’Shea reported that this year, the State Legislature passed a law called the Student Opportunity Act (SOA) to increase chapter 70 funds to towns in Massachusetts. Under this legislation, the Town of Carlisle will receive approximately \$50,000. Mr. O’Shea gathered information from the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education’s office and the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents, sharing that schools can present a plan that identifies ongoing programs to the State to receive funding. Evidence based program examples identified by the DESE include enhanced core instruction and targeted student supports. Mr. O’Shea shared that Tier II supports in grades 1-8 in literacy and math, the research-based literacy program Foundations, and the development of an enhanced summer program are all in place in Carlisle and qualify for SOA funding. Mr. Model moved that the Carlisle School Committee accept the Student Opportunity Plan as

presented; Ms. Mostoufi seconded the motion. The following votes were taken in roll call: Lear, aye; Lavery, aye; Model, aye; Mostoufi, aye; Wilson, aye.

- D. Superintendent Evaluation. Mr. O’Shea presented an overview of his goals for this year. He cited the Student Learning goal that encompassed developing a “Portrait of a Graduate;” identifying skills and qualities that CPS graduates should possess to navigate the changing world. His District Planning goal was to create an updated shared vision for the School. To help achieve these goals, Mr. O’Shea created the Visioning Committee. This committee of approximately 24 members met frequently throughout the year and made significant progress on developing a Portrait of a Graduate and identifying a shared vision of the school. Drafts of these documents will be available soon. Mr. O’Shea then shared his Professional Practice goal that encompassed a shared vision of excellence among the Leadership Team, evidenced by consistency in observation and feedback and adherence to the Educator Evaluation process. Prior to the closure, the Instructional Leadership Team was on schedule with the evaluation process. As of March 13, certain deadlines could no longer be met. Mr. O’Shea worked with the CTA to develop a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) on how to move forward with evaluations. The school is now in compliance with the educator evaluation system guidelines. For his District Improvement goals, Mr. O’Shea cited that there is a school-wide implementation of Universal Design for Learning (UDL), Dr. Sidell and Dr. Mehler have focused on Tier II supports, and the School is also giving additional assessments for students. Another part of this goal has been providing a year of support for Lori Bruce, the new Director of Student Support Services. In her first year, Ms. Bruce has reinvigorated the SEPAC group and has worked to make adjustments in Special Education documentation and practices while considering feedback from the WestEd report. Ms. Bruce continues to plan for next year to implement practices to best support students and families. Mr. O’Shea addressed the School Closure, noting the many processes that have been planned and implemented since the closure. Mr. O’Shea asked the members to read and consider the documentation and reach out to him with questions. Mr. O’Shea then shared the Superintendent Evaluation form. Discussion ensued about revising the form to reflect the unusual circumstances in this school year. Mr. Model supported a focus on the broader approach, noting it was important to document Mr. O’Shea’s reaction to the crisis, the implementation of remote learning in a new environment, and how to best plan for the future of the School. It was felt that inserting a section of School Closure under each of the standards (Instructional Leadership, Management and Operations, Family and Community Engagement, and Professional Culture) would provide a more meaningful evaluation. Ms. Mostoufi suggested a section to review Mr. O’Shea’s accomplishments during the closure, and also a section on what we should be looking forward to in the fall. She agreed that the existing form is restrictive, and there is not opportunity to do much reflective thinking. There will be a different set of challenges moving forward and she supports giving credit to Mr. O’Shea on many accomplishments including establishing the Visioning Committee, changes in Special Education, and UDL. Ms. Lear noted that any goals moving forward are for the 2020-2021 school year. Ms. Mostoufi said she sees the evaluation as documentation on what has worked and what we can do better, so it can guide School Committee goals and Mr. O’Shea’s goals. Ms. Lear asked for final discussion about the evaluation form. Mr. Model’s proposal is that we scrap the existing form and use Mr. O’Shea’s grid and evidence to write a narrative on each point. He

supported documenting how Mr. O'Shea progressed on his goals up to March 12, how he did since March 12, then asking what members feel has to be done on those goals moving forward. He supported more of a narrative evaluation and incorporating a grid with the standards. Mr. O'Shea agreed with members writing a narrative on the goals, but the State asks for a rating on the standards. Ms. Lavery supported writing a paragraph for each goal; Ms. Mostoufi supported this revised form as well. Ms. Mostoufi noted the evaluation is supposed to be a useful, working document. Mr. O'Shea will send out the revised template. The template will be returned to Ms. Anderson by May 22. The information will be compiled and shared at the meeting on May 29.

IV. Members'/Committee Reports as Needed.

FinCom: Mr. Model shared that the School has been tasked with responding to the FinCom request for what a 5% reduction in the budget would look like. Mr. Model and Ms. Lear asked that Committee members listen to the FinCom meeting on Monday at 7:00 pm when this reduction is discussed. Mr. Model shared that the FY20 budget is in good shape, but the budget for FY21 is uncertain. The Town is gathering data. One outcome is that the guideline budget will be adjusted. Or, the budget will not be adjusted but the School will be asked to spend one twelfth of the budget per month starting in FY21, and come to the Town if more funds are needed. There are many unknowns at this time.

CCRS: Mr. Model noted that the Region is having a meeting with the Concord Finance Committee on Tuesday. Concord is also concerned about a possible reduction in State aid.

Visioning: Ms. Lavery reported that the Visioning Committee has been meeting more frequently.

Drafts of documents should be available soon.

Master Planning: Ms. Mostoufi reported that this committee is working on background information to give to the steering committee.

V. Warrants

There were no warrants.

VI. Action Items

There were no action items.

VII. Public Comments

Carrie Patel asked a question from the parent community about Teacher Appreciation Week. In past years, the PTO has hosted a luncheon for faculty and staff. Parents have asked if they can send gifts to teachers to the school. Mr. O'Shea noted that it's a different situation right now, so he will talk with Ms. Patel to develop a process and a plan. Currently, Ms. Patel has asked parents to email teachers.

VIII. Adjourn Meeting

Mr. Model made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Ms. Mostoufi seconded the motion. The following votes were taken in Roll Call: Lear, aye; Lavery, aye; Model, aye; Mostoufi, aye; Wilson, aye. The public meeting was adjourned at 9:41 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Anderson
Assistant to the Superintendent