



**Cohasset Public Schools**  
143 Pond Street  
Cohasset, MA 02025  
*Continuing the Commitment to Excellence*  
**Cohasset School Committee Meeting**

**School Committee Minutes**

Wednesday, 3/17/2021

6:00 p.m.

Zoom Video Call

Virtual Meeting – 143TV/Zoom/Facebook

**In Attendance:**

Craig MacLellan, Chairman  
Ashley Colleary  
Lydia St. Onge  
Ellen Maher  
Paul Kearney

**Also, in Attendance:**

Dr. Patrick Sullivan, Superintendent  
Dr. Leslie Scollins, Assistant Superintendent  
Susan Owen, Director of Finance & Operations  
Brian Scott, CHS Principal  
John Mills, CMS Principal  
Jake Squatrito, Student Representative

Chairman MacLellan called the meeting to order at 6:21 p.m. He stated the meeting is being held remotely under the Town's Declaration of Emergency. All votes will be taken by roll call vote. This meeting is being live streamed on Cohasset 143TV and Facebook. **Roll Call: Ashley Colleary - Present, Paul Kearney – Present as of 6:22 p.m., Ellen Maher - Present, Lydia St. Onge - Present, Craig MacLellan - Present.**

**Superintendent's report** – Elementary full in person continues to go well. Students and staff are adjusting and excitement is palpable.

Jake Squatrito, student representative update – student representatives emailed Dr. Sullivan to discuss full in person at CMS and CHS because they had many questions and concerns. Dr. Sullivan appreciate student voice and wants to make sure students feel supported and that their experience is safe and successful.

Dr. Sullivan presents Increase of In- Person Learning at Cohasset Middle School and Cohasset High School plan for full in person return. Recommending increase of I person learning grades 6 – 12 to five days a week beginning April 5, 2021 with a phasing approach for the high school lunch pending further operational exploration. Shares three phases of reentry, distancing options, covid data for CMS and CHS over time. Family and student survey data is shared. Majority respond that they will send their student to school if there is a return to full in person. Mr. Mills and Mr. Scott share school specific info and Dr. Sullivan shares full reentry timeline.

**Motion to go to community feedback before committee deliberates by Mrs. Colleary, seconded by Mrs. St. Onge. All – aye**

Community questions include – what about families who have to drop off at both CMS and CHS in the morning?

Appreciation for efforts to get kids back to school.



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If desks are three feet apart if one student tests positive are all other students in the class considered close contacts?

**Motion to continue committee deliberation on this point and revisit questions that would have been public comment to after the finance report by Mrs. Colleary, seconded by Mr. Kearney. All – Aye**

Dr. Sullivan will be seeking a final vote on this reentry plan on March 24.

Committee members deliberate.

**Motion to preliminarily approve the district's plan to return all middle school and high school students on a five-day basis to their respective buildings subject to the proposed plan by Mrs. Maher, seconded by Mrs. Colleary. 4 aye, Mr. Kearney not present.**

Dr. Sullivan's mid-cycle goal review. Goals and steps taken thus far are presented. Committee thanks Dr. Sullivan and makes comments about goals and progress thus far.

**Finance Update** – Mrs. Owen presents the monthly finance update providing year to date info about the budget noting that we are over in special ed tuitions and the fact that we had two unanticipated settlements. The hope is the end of year fund will absorb that.

Mr. Kearney asks about School Dude software that is used by school custodians to put in work order for facilities. Other committee members ask questions and deliberate.

Committee had discussed no renting of facilities in the past and now groups are asking about renting outside spaces now that restrictions are being lifted. Mrs. Maher noted that the vote restricting rentals was for the winter season only. Committee will deliberate and vote on the issue at the March 24 meeting.

Two METCO drivers have quit and bus driver position went out to bid. District would like to award bid to Local Motion who could start transporting by April 12 which would free up two of our busses. METCO grant will fund that transportation. 9 busses will transport inside Cohasset and 2 will transport to Boston.

#### **Public Comment –**

Jenna Jones Cunningham - First, I acknowledge my comment does not address an agenda item and the weight of this meeting and its comments should certainly be devoted to getting MS/HS back in school full-time. Having said that, my concern is very pressing. My family, as all kindergarten families in Cohasset this year, was charged full tuition (\$3500) for the hybrid instruction that continued through February. My child was in person 2 days most weeks and most will agree that remote instruction is not appropriate for kindergarteners. My husband and I have previously paid full-day kindergarten tuition for two older children in Cohasset with little hesitation. This year we had serious concerns with paying the full 3500\$, given the lack of instruction our child received. Earlier this month we received a notification that our daughter will no longer be able to attend kindergarten as of April 1st unless we pay kindergarten tuition in full. This is the last school committee meeting prior to that date and it feels like it needs to be noted. Many neighboring communities, such as Hingham, waived tuition in full this year. Cohasset reimbursed K families for the remote months last school year. A recent petition regarding the charge in full for full-day kindergarten tuition (\$3500) this school year 2020-2021 was distributed to many families



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of kindergarten students. The results of this petition after one day of distribution were sent to Mr. Craig MacLellan earlier this evening. While in its infancy, the document has accounted for input from the families of 22 full-day kindergarteners (approximately 23%); they have expressed notable concerns with this year's tuition, in light of the unique challenges the hybrid model presented for this age group, and respectfully request the school committee reconsider its decision and address the request for at least a partial refund. This is in the context of neighboring communities, such as Hingham, refunding deposits early on and waiving tuition in full.

Anna McNevin – supports Jenna Cunningham's comment

**School Committee Comments and Communication** – Updates for policy FB presented. Mrs. Maher suggest adding Cohasset bylaw as a legal reference.

**Motion to approve the policy FB as amended and proposed by the policy subcommittee by Mr. Kearney, seconded by Mrs. Maher. All – Aye**

Mrs. Colleary – celebrations being planned for Pride month, Juneteenth and Loving Day.

Mr. MacLellan – School Facilities Committee has appointees chosen by the school committee. The others will be appointed in the coming months.

Mrs. Maher – asked about statement of interest to MSBA on rooftop air handlers. Application has not been put up yet.

It is expected that our budget will be reviewed by select board soon.

**Approval of minutes** – September 16, 2020 meeting minutes presented.

**Motion to approve school committee meeting minutes for September 16, 2020 meeting by Mrs. Maher, seconded by Mrs. Colleary. Aye – 4, Mr. Kearney – absent**

Committee discusses request of Kindergarten families for reimbursement. Mr. Kearney suggest a subcommittee discussion to see what can be done. No motion is made to take action on a reimbursement.

**Motion to adjourn by Mrs. Colleary, seconded by Mrs. Maher. Aye – 4, Mr. Kearney – absent.**

Meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.