



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

**School Committee Minutes**

Wednesday, 11/18/2020

Zoom Video Call

Virtual Meeting – 143TV/Zoom/Facebook

**In Attendance:**

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

**Also, in Attendance:**

Dr. Patrick Sullivan, Superintendent  
Dr. Leslie Scollins, Assistant Superintendent  
Susan Owen, Director of Finance & Operations

Chairman MacLellan called the meeting to order at 6:01p.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 Vote: Ashley Colleary-Present, Paul Kearney- Present, Ellen Maher-Present, Lydia St. Onge-Present, Craig MacLellan-Present.**

**Public Comment- Christopher Allen – Pleasant Street** – The superintendent has cancelled school with zero positive COVID data. Does this mean that a gathering of 11 people triggers school closing? Aren't all measures in place at the school for the purpose of this very situation? Dr. Sullivan's statement is replete with hypotheticals and conjecture. Is the school committee at all concerned with this? That zero data was taken account. Where is the data indicating that there is an increase risk from the events of Friday night? Do I understand that the Superintendent said that the real problem was the disobedience of the Governors order?

**Eileen Norton – 390 Beechwood Street** – I want to know if Cohasset Schools volunteered to be part of DESE's new testing program and if Dr. Sullivan could comment/explain that? Dr. Sullivan stated the Cohasset School District did not qualify for this grant. They didn't not participate during the first round but are looking to apply during the second round of the grant application process.

**Abigail Sullivan – 87 Pleasant Street** – Is there an update on the plan to send kids back on Wednesdays? I know the teachers are expressing concerns. I am curious to hear an update on the status of this plan from Dr. Sullivan, so families know what to expect. It will affect childcare and work schedules and it will be helpful to know the plan ASAP. Thank you! Dr. Sullivan stated that the December 9<sup>th</sup> is the anticipated date for students to return to in-person Wednesdays, early release days at the elementary level.

**Joe Donovan – Norfolk Road** – I hear the comment from many in this meeting "following the data" but none is given. I understand there was fear the first few months when we wanted to make sure hospitals could handle COVID. Ten months later and we are still not back to education at level kids deserve. The well being of our children on all levels needs to be addressed, not just fear of COVID. What is the data that says schools should not be open full-time. I would love to understand the data.

**Jessica DeLorenzo – 132 Chief Justice Cushing Highway** – What is the School Committees matrix or data they are using to determine more in person learning? How and when will you determine the next phase for in person learning?



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**Superintendent's Report-** Superintendent Dr. Sullivan made a statement regarding the closing of in-person learning for the Middle/High school until November 30<sup>th</sup> due to a party that was held in town with many unidentified students and families. He stated that this decision was made for safety reasons and was not made lightly.

**Strategic Plan Update-** Assistant Superintendent Dr. Scollins stated that a parent forum was held. There will be more forums held in a virtual format with surveys that will be conducted for receive parent and community feedback and participation. A Strategic Planning Committee is in the process of being created. Dr. Scollins updated the committee on the learning walks that have taken place at Osgood to look at student engagement and the learning environment. She thanked Principle Farrell and her staff. She also updates on the implementation of the new math program, Bridges, from the Math Learning Center. She gave a shout out to the Math Specialists for the deep learning that has been taking place. Dr. Scollins stated that the learning walks will continue as the year goes on.

**District Gymnasium Usage-** Finance and Operations Director, Susan Owen stated that there was a meeting held with Town Safety Officials and the Board of Health to discuss Winter sports and the use of school building for youth sports. During the meeting it was decided that due to safety reasons the district should not rent out school facilities to outside groups or programs. These facilities are currently being used for classroom space and mask breaks through out the school week. The School Committee had a lengthy discussion.

**Ken Balazs and Karen Cacciapuoti – 15 Ledgewood Farm Drive –** How can you consider renting gymnasium facilities out when the high school and middle school are closed because contact tracing was not possible after a party? I want children in school and together as much as possible – but to entertain this idea seems hypocritical and dangerous given Dr. Sullivan's tight walk with the teachers' union and recent school closings. Basketball leagues are even more tightly involved with the elementary school children and if they lose in person learning we will have committed an egregious error.

**Sean Casey – 100 Pleasant Street –** Will the school be allowing the Varsity and Junior Varsity Basketball Teams to play in the HS gym against other towns? Will parents from other towns be allowed to enter the building for those games? Dr. Sullivan stated that the guidance has not come out yet. This will be communicated as soon possible.

**Motion by Mrs. Colleary to decline rentals of Cohasset School Facilities to any non-school entities for the Winter Season, seconded by Mrs. Maher. Roll Call Vote: Ashley Colleary-Aye, Paul Kearney- Aye, Ellen Maher-Aye, Lydia St. Onge-Aye, Craig MacLellan-Aye.**

**Superintendent's Goals-** Superintendent Dr. Sullivan gave an overview of his goals for the 2020-2021 School Year. The goals are as follows:

**Goal #: 1 District Improvement Goal (Strategic Plan Goal 4):** *I will work with stakeholders to create a Road Map to Re-Entry document. I will implement the details of the Road Map, making needed data-based adjustments throughout the school year.*

**Goal #2: (Strategic Pan Goals 1,2,3,4, &5):** *I will collaborate with stakeholders to develop and present a Three-Year Strategic Plan for Cohasset Public Schools.*

**Goal #3 Student Learning Goal (Strategic Plan Goal 3&4):** *I will focus the district on identifying and closing student learning gaps that have resulted from the impact of the pandemic.*



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**Goal #4: Professional Practice Goal (Strategic Plan Goal 5):** *I will collaborate with District and Building leaders to create a cohesive instructional leadership team that continues to focus on building structures and practices regarding teaching and learning.*

**Goal #5: Professional Practice Goal (Strategic Plan goal 2):** *I will work with the new Director of technology and Digital Learning to improve our in-person and remote instruction and assessment.*

Dr. Sullivan stated that Thanksgiving schedule will be staying the same even though it will be a remote learning day. The Middle/High School will have a stop time of 11:15am and the Elementary Schools will have a 12:00pm stop time.

**Ken Balazs and Karen Cacciapuoti – 15 Ledgewood Farm Drive** – While addressing Dr. Sullivan's goals, we are curious as to what he is forecasting for discussions with the recent protesting teachers and MTA. Does he anticipate we will be implementing rotated in person learning on Wednesdays beginning in December as previously discussed and coordinated within the roadmap presented and addressed with MTA at the start of the school year?

**Finance-Monthly Budget Update-** Director of Finance and Operations Mrs. Susan Owen provided a brief overview of the school finances stating the 31% of the budget has been expended. She mentioned that this percentage is right on target with the average spending. These expenditures include Special Education Tuition and Transportation. Mrs. Owen also stated that some transportation costs have been renegotiated.

**School Committee Comments and Communication- Solar Update from AEC-** Mrs. St. Onge introduced Tanya Bodell of the Alternative Energy Committee to give a Solar update. Mrs. Bodell summarized the status of the Solar RFP process and recommended the best approach and sites. She discussed the next steps and the potential savings to the Town. Mrs. Bodell stated that parking canopies (car ports) are competitive and can deliver into the schools, offsetting electricity costs. The potential sites for these carports are the Deer Hill School, Osgood School, Cohasset High School, Paul Pratt Memorial Library, and the Town Parking Lot. She mentioned that there is other potential structure that can create value for the town which include leases, out-of-town-takes, allocate credits, and community solar. The committee had a lengthy discussion regarding placement of solar on school buildings and design.

**Goals-** Mrs. Maher stated that the committee should look at the content of Dr. Sullivan's goals and work towards some of the same objectives.

**New Schools Committee-** Chairman MacLellan stated that this committee is for school buildings and was a committee in Cohasset back in the 1970s. He stated that to date there have only been two applicants for this committee and he is asking for more community members to apply and participate in getting Cohasset new schools in the near future.

**Reports from Sub-Committee and Liaisons-** Mrs. Maher updated the committee on the walkthrough that was held yesterday. She stated that the Select Board Chair, members of the Advisory and Capital Budget committees were in attendance. The school principals gave very detailed and guided tours of each building, which was very informational. She mentioned getting on Capital Budget's agenda soon for a first overview. Mrs. St. Onge stated she attended a Deer Hill Council meeting. Chairman MacLellan thanked the Building Principals for their interest and commitment to the overall mission as a district.



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**Motion by Mr. Kearney to adjourn, seconded by Mrs. Colleary. Roll Call Vote: Ashley Colleary-Aye, Paul Kearney-Aye, Ellen Maher-Aye, Lydia St. Onge-Aye, Craig MacLellan-Aye.**

**The meeting adjourned at 8:11pm.**

**Documents Used virtually at this meeting:**

*Superintendents Goals*                      *C-1*

*Monthly Budget Update*                      *E-1*

*AEC Solar RFP Update*