



Cohasset Public Schools

143 Pond Street

Cohasset, MA 02025

Empower Students to Improve Communities

Cohasset School Committee Meeting

School Committee Minutes

Wednesday, March 2, 2022

Learning Commons

Cohasset Middle and High School

143 Pond Street

Cohasset, MA 02025

Virtual Access available via Zoom and Facebook

In Attendance:

Craig MacLellan, Chairman

Ashley Colleary

Lance Dial

Paul Kearney

Lydia St. Onge

Also, in Attendance:

Dr. Patrick Sullivan, Superintendent

Dr. Leslie Scollins, Assistant Superintendent

Susan Owen, Director of Finance & Operations

Barbara Cerwonka, Director of Student Services

John Mills, CMS Principal

Chrissy Thonet, Deer Hill Math Specialist

Call to Order and Roll Call - Chairman MacLellan called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Roll Call: Ashley Colleary - Present, Lance Dial - Present, Paul Kearney – Present as of 6:01PM, Lydia St. Onge - Present, Craig MacLellan - Present.

Chairman MacLellan reviewed the three comment per household maximum so that all participants in the meeting understand the expectations for participation in the meeting.

Public Comment - None

Superintendent's Report – Dr. Sullivan welcomed everyone back from February Break. It has been a wonderful reentry to school mainly because of all of the happy faces that we can see now that masks are optional. Spacing has been broken down and cafeterias and gymnasiums are back to being used for their intended purposes and classrooms are back to pre-pandemic arrangements.

Next meeting, Dr. Sullivan will be recommending a pre-Labor Day start. This has been brought up to the CTA and the full 2022 – 2023 calendar will be discussed at the next meeting.

Student Advisor Update – Mercedes O'Neil – We are back from February break. It's really nice being back in the cafeteria with the round tables back and to see the gym being open and used as a full gym again. On Friday, there will be a Blue and Yellow day to honor Ukraine and the conflict with Russia. There has been talk of the semi-formal with student government. The Volleyball team will be a new team at CHS. They have been volunteering to help lay down courts and will be picking them up this Sunday. Kids are being respectful with masks, wearing them when they should be when returning from vacations, etc. An intramural volleyball team will be running this spring and a JV team will begin next fall.



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Masking on buses - Dr. Sullivan – The CDC has removed the federal requirement for people to wear masks on public transportation. DESE followed up by determining that masking on buses will be a local decision to be voted upon by the School Committee.

Mrs. Colleary asked how the bus drivers feel about the decision. Sue Owen indicated that they are ready for masks to be optional.

Dr. Sullivan has recommended that all students bring a mask to school to have on them in case it is needed.

Motion to remove bus mask mandate by Mr. Dial, seconded by Mrs. Colleary.

All - Aye

Spotlight on student learning- Bridges Workplaces with Deer Hill Math Specialist Ms. Chrissy Thonet – Bridges in Mathematics has a comprehensive rigorous curriculum (unique blend of direct instruction, structured investigation and open exploration), emphasis on deep conceptual understanding (process v. answer), strong foundation for number sense and understanding why, not trick procedure, multiple ways to solve a problem.

Students are having really good conversations and debates, proving their point in a productive way. They are describing their thinking.

What does a Bridges classroom look like? – Problems and Investigations – Problem Strings – Workplaces – Number Corner

Workplaces are done for about 20 – 30 minutes about two days a week. This part of a lesson is engaging, hands on math exploration that reinforces skills. It is created to allow access to all but designed to push students to be flexible and strategic in their thinking. Students have repeated experiences during which they can experiment with math concepts.

Meaghan Barry, 11 Tad Lane – I think the Bridges is an excellent program but I often struggle to support my students when homework suggests using a certain strategy. It would be helpful to have a parent cheat sheet that could be used as a reference because we did not learn the same strategies.

Program of Studies for Cohasset Middle School - Mr. John Mills – The following substantive changes are being proposed for the 2022 – 2023 Program of Studies at the Cohasset Middle School:

1. Introduce new Literacy courses (pages 15 – 16) for all students as a tier two intervention with the CMS Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)
2. Created a Digital Literacy and Computer Science content section (beginning on page 30)
 - a. Include Grade 6 & Grade 7 Digital Literacy course which were previously listed with the science department
 - b. Introduce new Coding and Robotics course which is available to grade 7 and grade 8 students as a special course in lieu of taking Art
3. Remove Grade 8 Music course (due lack of interest -students prefer Chorus or Band)
4. Added the following language to school counseling supports listed on page 55
 - a. Lunch and utility groups
 - b. Classroom social – emotional learning and social skills lessons

Motion to approve the CMS 2022 – 2023 Program of Studies by Mr. Kearney, seconded by Mr. Dial.

All -aye



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Student Services Forum Planning – We are planning a Student Services Forum that we are hoping to have on May 18. This year, Mrs. Cerwonka has arranged for presenters at SEPAC meetings. Drs. Plumber and Buonatto came this month to speak about anxiety in this COVID world.

The goal is to take a compilation of these presentations and to share them with the community.

The other important piece is other areas of student services in addition to special education, MTSS, home hospital tutoring, etc. so that we can make it clear what each of these pieces is in that presentation.

We have engaged in an independent evaluation this year and our independent evaluator also would be interested in coming to the forum and speaking to the community.

Another piece of that is to reach out to families ahead of time in order to gather questions and establish themes so that presenter and administration may be able to prepare to speak to family concerns.

Mrs. Colleary wants to make sure that all incoming Kindergarten families are included in communication so that they may attend in advance of their child beginning school.

Mr. Dial suggests that the information can be presented as a kind of user manual for student services so that parents can understand the language, opportunities and pathways to best advocate for their child.

Gift - Ms. Susan Owen – The Annual Donation from the Clark Chatterton Memorial Fund/ South Shore Playhouse. Athletic Director Rotundi would like to use the \$2500.00 to continue to create and improve an athletic office for coaches and student athletes. The donation will go toward furniture and other materials.

Motion to accept gift by Mr. Kearney, seconded by Mrs. Colleary.

All – Aye

Dr. Scollins updated the committee regarding district Professional Development.

Special Education update – Mrs. Barbara Cerwonka – In February 2022 there were 29 total meetings. we had 2 initial evaluations that were determined as eligible, 4

Parent surveys are sent out with all IEPs. 89% of completed surveys were all in the positive categories. One survey indicated areas of improvement – participation in the process, understanding the process, vertical alignment. We look forward to clarifying many of these points and look forward to bring these topics to the forum in May.

Other things going on in Student Services this month – we are in a cycle of tiered focus monitoring. This monitors the implication of special education and civil rights requirements. This is a six-year cycle. We are in year 5 which means that last year was the self-assessment that occurs in year 4. We got a deferment because it was a COVID year and the district hired an independent evaluator. The report as just concluded and made available to us. Significant progress was noted in make social emotional learning available throughout the district. They looks at the PEAR wholistic student assessment and the MTSS process. Middle and High school staff have an understand of social emotional learning, commitment to the multitiered system of supports, responsive classroom, focus of SEL as the second of its strategic planning goal. Areas to grow – continue training with staff and continue training in areas that have been started. We were able to use ESSER funds in order to fund this evaluation. A second target area that has really risen to



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the forefront is having a language-based program and the middle and elementary. This requires a focus on reading. Seven dimensions consulting has been contacted to do an evaluation about a language-based learning and reading evaluation. That will be completed within this school year. Today was our onsite visit with DESE which happens in year 5 on the cycle. Prior to the visit, interview were conducted with various members of the school community. Within 60 days a report will be made available to us.

Cassie Muir, 40 Red Gate Lane – On the report you just presented, is there a breakdown of qualifying categories?

Last month, Mrs. Cerwonka updated each qualifying category and the percentages of each

Melissa McDonough, 306 Fair Oaks Lane - At the May 18 special education focus meeting will there be an opportunity to share case studies of family experiences

School Committee Comments and Communication-

Policy Recommendations – The policy subcommittee has worked with the Wellness Committee and in conjunction with DESE to do an internal review and to update our Wellness Policy. Some updates were a matter of recategorizing and some updates have been made in terms of programming pieces in particular around the nutrition guidelines. We had to clarify what a school day looked like. From midnight to 30 minutes after school you must only serve USDA smart snacks approved food and beverage. Evaluation section has been added.

Mr. Kearney would like the Wellness Committee to meet more frequently. Dr. Scollins suggested that adding subcommittee meetings maybe an addition that could be a way to add more meetings and target specific goals.

Motion to adopt the revised Wellness Policy, ADF, by Mrs. Colleary seconded by Mr. Dial.

All – Aye

Revisions to Public Health Emergency or Crisis, policy EBCFA

At the end of the third paragraph add – if any changing guidance occurs more than 48 hours in advance of a school committee meeting, the superintendent, in consultation with the school committee chair,

The discussed amended language will be updated by the policy committee and the school committee will vote to on policy updates on March 16.

School Facilities Committee –

Reports from Sub-Committee and Liaisons (Policy & Standards, Budget Finance, Special Ed. PAC, Legislative Liaison, Facilities/Capital Projects/Technology/AEC, Collective Bargaining, Security, Superintendent Evaluation –

Communications subcommittee continues to work with Mrs. Radden on ways to improve our web presence and reach out to the community.

March 8 6:30PM there will be a meeting hosted by Whitman Hansen Regional High School about Why The Mascot matters, this will be a zoom event.



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Finance and Facilities continues to meet on the standing agenda items and how to close the gap on what the schools meet and what the town is able to provide. The screens have arrived for our school and the solar lights have been installed outside. Mr. Kearney would like to have a student led clean-up day. The Tech department is needed to connect the screens so that they're connected to the internet and can display the intended messages.

Approval of Minutes – January 5, 2022

Motion to accept minutes by Mr. Dial, seconded by Mr. Kearney.

All - aye

Topics not reasonably anticipated by the Chairman 48 hours in advance of meeting - None

Executive Session - We need to move into executive session for the reasons stated which is number 3 to discuss strategy relative to collective bargaining negotiation.

Motion to adjourn Regular School Committee meeting by Mrs. St. Onge, seconded by Mr. Kearney.

All - Aye

The meeting adjourned at 8:43 PM