



Cohasset Public Schools
143 Pond Street
Cohasset, MA 02025
Empower Students to Improve Communities
Cohasset School Committee Meeting

School Committee Minutes

Wednesday, November 3, 2021
Willcutt Commons
91 Sohier Street
Cohasset, MA 02025
Virtual Access via Zoom and Facebook
6:00 P.M.

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

Roll call: Chairman MacLellan called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

Ashley Colleary – Present, Lance Dial - Present, Paul Kearney- Present as of 6:10 p.m., Lydia St. Onge - Present, Craig MacLellan - Present

Public Comment - None

Superintendent's Report – Excited for spotlight on learning but first student advisory update

Student Advisor Update – Mercedes O'Neil – at the latest meeting of the superintendent advisory council – have split up into subcommittee of 3 and 4

Teaching and learning, SEL, communication and engagement, resources – will present on January 19

Homecoming was in the courtyard with a DJ – it was nice to be all together with the school. We didn't have to wear masks because it was outside. Had a really enjoyable time. Game was great – skippers won over Randolph. Pep rally during the day was fun outdoors.

Any major problems or concerns regarding anything? – because of the storm many students don't have access to Wi-Fi at home yet and teachers aren't all understanding that.

Spotlight on student learning – Deer Hill: Reading Multisyllabic Words

Mrs Chapman's 5th grade class with Mrs. Sarah MacDonald, reading specialist

Multisyllble routine – kids need a good strategy for breaking apart words

Routine – step 1 – identify the syllable type – say it and do hand gesture

Step 2 – read words using what we know about phonics



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Step 3 – big copy and close copy – underline the vowels – syllable type – vowel sounds – read syllable

One consonant in between vowels – split after the first vowel and get an open syllable

Use nonsense words so there is no context so there is no guessing.

Partner work and teacher listens and hear who is guessing and who is able to apply phonics

Practice with real words – apply routine to real words

Use this in 4th and 5th to carry on using phonics taught in Foundations

Storm Update - At school – press box at Alumni field destroyed. Play-off games will be happening – all can be hosted at home; Generator at CMS/CHS did not work – Hull was able to take food from freezer and fridge - housed food for three days; Osgood food was brought to Deer Hill

Cancelations are put on twitter first and then calls and emails go out.

Commissioner Riley will decide in November if remote learning will be an option on snow days this winter

Update on Vaccination Attestation and other pandemic related information - This week 4 extramural positive cases at CPS

Have put into place Test & Stay

Protocols were not followed in a certain situation so test and stay is being used currently

As we look at spacing – we need to reduce spacing as vaccination rates increase and we need to have a safety measure in school so kids can stay in school.

Attestation – will be share in Thursday report – worked with nurses and realized they were double counted because they work in CMS and CHS so now they are counted once as serving one building. Overall numbers for staff are the same. Originally one staff member had been missed and they are now included and two new cafeteria workers have been hired.

Pfizer vaccine has been approved at a lower dose for ages 5 – 11. Pediatricians will start doing clinics. We are looking at having a vaccine clinic in Cohasset.

Courtney Ness, 210 Lamberts Lane – do we know whether the cases are from vaccinated or unvaccinated students or staff. There have been 1 or 2 breakthrough cases.

Craig - Bob Ehrlandsen reported that 99% of staff are vaccinated.

Requirement of attestation includes bargaining obligation

Lance – was a clarified communication sent out? Dr. Sullivan sent out an email saying they could send an email. 4 communications have been sent.



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Winter sports – we will be able to move chairs from 2/3 of gym floor to 1/3. Which will allow space to play and bleachers – will allow for basketball and wrestling. Sue and Steve Rotondi have been working with town hoops. Desks will be moved. There is a plan in place.

Brief Overview of Capital Requests – Susan Owen – Facilities subcommittee met to make a preliminary list –

1. Cooling system for CMS/ CHSD
2. Middle high school paging zones
3. Replace furniture – student & staff
4. Replace cove base in gym entryway – 1st and 2nd floor (CHS)
5. Replacement of aging Chromebooks (540 – 3 yr lease \$143,100)
6. Safety automatic window shades for gymnasium Osgood
7. Retile classrooms at deer hill
8. Replace ceiling tiles at Osgood [a classroom at a time]
9. Field lights
10. New scoreboard for alumni field
11. Locker mechanisms for the middle school
12. Install A/C heater split for middle school health clinic (no window no air)
13. Create hallway at middle school to access bathroom in room 223
14. Minibus for athletics
15. Asphalt road from pond street needs to be resurfaced
16. Replace sidewalk and curbing on entry road to CMHS

Kristen Quinn, 218 Sohier Street – after Parkland Shooting – looked at Osgood School back windows with fear. Craig MacLellan encourages Mrs. Quinn to reach out to school leadership to discuss outside of open meeting.

Special Education Update – Barbara Cerwonka – Introductory MTSS letter was sent out by principals to all families for information and engagement.

IEP data for month of October:

Evaluations – 4 came through parents and 3 through MTSS – 6 found eligible, 1 found not eligible; 8 elementary reviews, 8 ms/ hs

Total number of meetings – 6 initial evaluations and 16 reviews

Lance – are you seeing any change in student seeking special services as a result of the pandemic and remote schooling? We have had a lot of requests in terms of initial evaluations and we are moving forward on those evaluations.

With every IEP a parent survey has been sent out. 83% were positive – 88% of those gave highest rating [strongly agree] teams and meetings are supportive and caring and communicated clearly throughout process

Negative feedback is taken very seriously and under considerations and use them to develop our process



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Social Emotional Wellness and Resource Compass point – BRYT since 2017 – this year membership expanded to a core level contract. Makes it possible to work more closely with the people from BRYT. There is direct clinical support to the program. Some of ESSER funds for .5 social worker position. Applicants are looking for full time. Commit an additional \$30,000- 40,000 to hire a full-time social worker. Allow us to move forward with building programming to keep kids in Cohasset instead of going out of district. Would enable a therapeutic program at the high school as soon as next year.

Mrs. Cerwonka – reached out to Dr. Sullivan and Mrs. Owen who both support the idea

Money can come from areas where we have savings from hiring. Some money can come from special education grants. ESSER will cover two years of .5 salary.

Cassie Muir, 40 Red Gate Lane – November is SEPAC awareness month and Zakim Bridge will be lit up yellow

Allison Bryant, Howe Road – How much are we paying for social emotional students who are going out of district? The rest of the staffing that is required to establish a therapeutic program already exists – teachers and ESPs – small reconfiguring and refocusing that will include a certified special ed. Teacher.

Motion to authorize the expenditure for an additional .5 to equal a full time Social Worker. Motion by Ashley Colleary, second by Paul Kearney. Roll call vote: Ashley Colleary – aye, Lance Dial – aye, Paul Kearney – aye, Lydia St. Onge – aye, Craig MacLellan – aye

School Committee Comments and Updates-

School Facilities committee did vote to initiate an RFP for an initial feasibility study for a school rebuilding/ remodeling in the district.

Also, taking steps to move forward with a statement of interest for MSPA school board authority core program. None of this is binding it is a preliminary step so we don't miss out on timing.

Ashley Colleary – Policy Committee met and we have revision for policies that we'd like to suggest and review for approval. Those will be ready at our 11/17 meeting.

Communications subcommittee is looking for a time to meet.

Weymouth SEPAC and other town organizations will be hosting "Say It, Hear It, Change It" Wednesday, November 17 6:30 – 8:00

Paul Kearney – MASC workshops tomorrow on Cape Cod – hybrid model; Thanks to Mrs. Owen for new shirts at MS cross country meet!

Approval of Minutes – Mr. Dial will abstain from vote.

11/4/2020 minutes – motion to approve – Paul Kearney, seconded Ashley Colleary. Aye – Craig MacLellan, Ashley Colleary, Paul Kearney, Lydia St. Onge

11/18/2020 minutes – motion to approve – Paul Kearney, seconded Ashley Colleary. Aye – Craig MacLellan, Ashley Colleary, Paul Kearney, Lydia St. Onge



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Motion to adjourn – Paul Kearney, second Lance Dial

Aye – All

Meeting Adjourned at 8:16 p.m.