



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

School Committee Minutes

Wednesday, October 20, 2021
Willcutt Commons
91 Sohier Street
Cohasset, MA 02025
Virtual Access via Zoom and Facebook
6:00 P.M.

In Attendance: Craig MacLellan, Chairman
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

Roll call: Chairman MacLellan called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Ashley Colleary – Not present, Lance Dial - Present, Paul Kearney- Present, Lydia St. Onge - Present, Craig MacLellan - Present

Public Comment:

Chris Kennedy, 31 Ledgewood Drive – 7- or 8-year member of the Cohasset Basketball Boosters Board. Looking for a status check as it is not on the agenda. Is there going to be a basketball program, practice space and space on the weekends for games.

Chairman MacLellan – Thank you for coming and participating in the process. Dr. Sullivan and Mrs. Owen have been working actively with that group to allow for a plan that may allow for some level of play. Dr. Sullivan is working with principals to looking at alternatives. Want to make sure we have a basketball program for all in school teams.

Osgood and Deer Hill count on that as their program on the weekends. Is there any way that half of the cafeteria can be made available? Willing to organize volunteers to help with the process of moving furniture.

Dr. Sullivan appreciates participation in the process and has some creative thoughts and wants to keep safety at the forefront. We can continue conversations this week. We will work out something.

Representatives who were here last week are actively involved in the ongoing conversation.

Superintendents Report :

News hot off the press. DESE had approved us dropping the mask mandates at the high school for vaccinated individuals. DESE has called back and because we are a Middle High School we are not allowed to drop masks for vaccinated high school students. We are being considered a whole school as a building.



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Student Advisor Update – Jenna Giglio – First of all, I am very excited to be here for my first in person update ever. This week at CHS is busy and exciting! It is homecoming week. It is spirit week and seniors have their themes and underclassman have their themes. Every morning the kids meet in the student lot and take pictures. Sports are really prominent – senior night for field hockey, girl’s soccer senior night, Friday is homecoming – dance in the evening and pep rally on the turf. Having a pep rally inside was what they wanted. They don’t care that they have to wear masks. They wanted it in the gym and are kind of disappointed that it’s outside.

SAC is doing great work including subcommittees surrounding the 4 compass points.

Chairman MacLellan – Jenna do you know if the girls teams are referred to as the lady skippers – Yes, on flyers and boosters and parents. But we see ourselves as Skippers. We all see ourselves as the same team. Chairman MacLellan - Qualifying the girls teams is unacceptable.

Spotlight on Student Learning: First grade students along with Mrs. McPhillips and Ms. Carabba

First Osgood kids to present to the School Committee!

“Firsties” have been learning about Orthographic Mapping, partnering with TLA and working with Foundations, learning how to sound memorize the irregular parts of trick words so we now call them heart words. We have our own way of practicing them and writing them in class. Every 10 that are done they go home for practice. The first 10 just went home!

“Echo me – elbows up – activate the power – tap it out – what’s the part you need to know by heart?”

Each child has a heart word on their headband and tells us tricky part of heart word.

They made a video to share both classes practicing heart words.

Mask Mandate Safety update – We had a detour in our timing and it is a fluid situation. In addition to what was presented on October 6, there is a graph of Town Confirmed Cases. Fluctuated between gray and green.

10 cases total in staff and students who have been diagnosed as COVID positive. No confirmed transmissions in schools. No quarantines resulting from in person contact with anyone at school, largely in part to our vaccination rates and spacing.

How many students and staff are quarantining in our district from week to week? All of these quarantines are from extra mural exposure.

83% of eligible population is fully vaccinated. 8% are particularly vaccinated.

According to town nurses the October 13 data has stayed the same

MIIS (Mass Immunization Information System): 86% student attestation

Staff attestation: 63%



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Total attestation 82% but that's only CHS and CMS has to be factored in. Many 6th graders are not currently eligible to be vaccinated. They will not be 12 until later in the year.

CMS/CHS is at 72% which means we need 76 more people to attest or be vaccinated to reach 80%

Deer Hill Staff Attestation:

Osgood Attestation: 52%

Bob Ehrlendsen, CTA Rep. – President of the CTA, has prepared remarks based on expectation of a vote tonight. A few critical concerns: DESE unvaccinated students are still required to wear masks in school but status is confidential. It is likely that students won't wear masks even if they aren't vaccinated.

Students in hallways are not 3 feet apart

Some classrooms struggle to keep desks 3 feet apart

Staff would like to put Test and Stay into place. DESE intends the program for in school contacts. MA Reps agree that program does need to be extended to out of school/ all student close contacts. SC may set additional policies to expand in school testing.

Only option for unvaccinated students is 7 days of quarantine.

We will put on parents a dilemma – stay at work and stay at home with a healthy-looking child.

Lance Dial – The way I understand it, because of our spacing requirements, test and stay, in its current form, does not apply to our current situation.

We are signed up for test and stay – it happened this week. Only available to students who have in school exposure. Right now we can't use it for extra mural quarantines. Every single kid deserves as much connection to school as possible.

CTA would like to encourage a testing program for extra mural quarantine close contacts.

2,200 schools are not using the testing for extra mural close contacts

We are preparing for cases that may come up.

The Test and Stay program has a huge flaw and CTA has contacted the state about expanding the program.

Attestation numbers seem very low on the part of the staff. One way to make sure students are safe is to make sure staff is vaccinated.

Many staff told nurses last spring and assumed it was being tracked. There was no deadline listed for staff. Superintendent sent an email saying that numbers are low and that will make it clear to the community.

Lance to BE – could he use his position to speak to staff to attest to vaccination



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Questions from the community:

Eddie Purell – I support the CTA, please support the Test and Stay program for our schools

Ellie Andrews – 131 Hull Street – if the student is on the MIIS list you do not have to send in their vaccine card.

Jessica DeLorenzo – what is the CMS rate? What is CHS? Needs to be reported as a whole building.

Approval for Middle School Quebec Trip: Ms. Kathleen Sanges - French Teacher – proposing 3 day trip to Quebec City, April 29 – May 1. (letter submitted)

Jump Street Tours – 34 students have expressed interested. Travel by motor coach and tour by motor coach and walking

Travel to Canada – requires proof of vaccination and PCR test up to 72 hours before entry to Canada.

Have up to 90 days prior to cancel trip at no cost.

CM – was chaperone ratio the same in the past?

At 34 an extra chaperone is added. Accommodations – how many students to a room? 4 students to. Room. Boys wing and girls wing and chaperone in the middle. Two chaperones to a room.

There is also a guard on the floor from 11PM to 6AM

Students under 18 need student ID and birth cert. and Mrs. Sanges will be collecting all documentation and medicine.

Motion to approve proposal for a three-day field trip to Quebec City Paul Kearney, seconded by Lance Dial.

All – aye

John Mills – Recognizing Kathy- she works continually throughout the year to make the three day trip happen.

Jen Miller – 11 River Road – other districts have already implemented no masks. How are they dealing with unvaccinated masking? It is disappointing to hear that students are being non-compliant.

MCAS Data Review – Dr. Scollins – Spring 2021 MCAS:

New this year: Extended timeline on assessment; Students randomly assigned to one test in each subject matter; Some kids were allowed to take the test remotely; Student Growth was used by using 2 – 3 year prior baseline for a grade level; Grade 11 took legacy test and that was the same

What parents saw was a more family friendly report – with graphics and explanations that made it easier to interpret

MCAS participation was high mid to high 90s. Only 10thgrade bio was under 90%



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Statewide there was a drop in scores in ELA, except in 10th grade which had more students pass than in the past.

Statewide there was a significant increase in PM and NM in math across the grades

The changes 2019 – 2021 – shows average scaled scores.

Cohasset: Did as well as or better than state avg. in every area.

Using MCAS data as one data point and also doing item analysis to identify standards that need to be targeted.

State is saying use this to inform your teaching practices and scaffold where the students need it.

Question: Elizabeth Frasier, 27 Windy Hill Road – Regarding Math, what of Dreambox? That was a huge part of the elementary remote curriculum. Are the students learning on Dreambox? Is there evidence that Dreambox is making a difference for students?

Bridges pinpointed where we need to work. Consultants from Bridges could specifically say what we needed to teach and what we could focus on in the future. Each concept is introduced, developed and then mastered over years.

Abigail Sullivan: Wow! Way to go Grade 1. This is an excellent example of teacher incorporating research and the science of teaching!

Elizabeth Frasier, 27 Windy Hill Road – I recently requested DIBELS data from elementary school and received pushback.

We are really looking to create a system that is very apparent about what we communicate and why we communicate it across the district.

Jenna Cunningham – Hill Street – Dreambox is a large part of 5th grade homework and students really doesn't like it. Should she be able to opt out of it.

Contact your teacher and discuss the issue in order to make accommodations that make it work for the family.

Craig MacLellan – Transparency issue – parents feel that information could be given and it's not.

Teachers always speak about it in conferences. Osgood was giving reports to people. Some parents feel like being armed with that information will make their conferences more valuable to have the data ahead of time.

Families are looking for a timeline about when that data might be available to families.

Doing an inventory about what assessment are being used and are there any overlaps. Where do we house the data and how do we communicate it to families.

Lance Dial – can there be a future agenda item about criteria and timing



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Elizabeth Frasier – MCAS is provided by the state and schools need to provide DIBELS and math data to families.

Kristen Quinn – Last year at conferences I was informed that walk to read were cancelled because of the use of specialist rooms and kids could meet with students of similar reading levels.

As we become more proficient, can we host a literacy night to inform families about changes?

Finance – FY22 September Finance Report:

Between the month of Aug and September there was a significant increase because staff is back.

Mrs. Owen presented a Snapshot of budget by school:

Budget – expended – encumbrances – balance % used

All custodial staff is taken out of CHS budget and not CMS budget

She also shared an update on the Capital Outlay fund including project updates and projects out to bid. The report included updates about Grants, Revolving account, Revenues, Food Service – meetings about improvements, gathering quotes for updated equipment in some of the schools, Adding staff to school lunch program

Paul Kearney – has anybody requested any shirts for the CMS Cross Country Team - Can we use student activities fund to get them?

School Committee Comments and reports :

School Facilities Committee – walkthrough yesterday – Paul Kearney appreciates that admin gets it and the learning curve and that our spaces are incongruent with best teaching practices.

Lance Dial – walk through with 3 members of school facilities committee at CMS and CHS. Looked at some of the issues our teachers are facing adapting the space to new pedagogical techniques – outdated power grid, inability to be flexible with AC, goal of this was to give that committee the initial read on what facilities are and feel that that was accomplished.

Lydia St. Onge – Updates about the AEC BRIC Grant

Approval of Minutes: October 6, 2021 revised minutes sent out

Motion to approve minutes by Paul Kearney, Seconded by Lydia St. Onge

Aye Craig MacLellan, Paul Kearney, Lydia St. Onge

Abstain – Lance Dial

Motion to Adjourn meeting by Lydia St. Onge, seconded by Paul Kearney

All – aye

Meeting adjourned at 8:56pm