



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

School Committee Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, September 22, 2021
Cohasset Elder Affairs/Wilcutt Commons
91 Sohier Street
Cohasset, MA 02025
Virtual Access Available - Cohasset 143TV/Zoom/Facebook

In Attendance: Craig MacLellan, Chairman
Ashley Colleary
Lydia St. Onge
Lance Dial
Paul Kearney

Also, in Attendance: Dr. Patrick Sullivan, Superintendent
Dr. Leslie Scollins, Assistant Superintendent
Susan Owen, Director of Finance & Operations
William Elwell, Eagle Scout Candidate

Call to Order and Roll Call - Chairman MacLellan called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. This meeting is being conducted in person at Wilcutt Commons, but we expect to be moving to the Learning Commons at the Middle School and High School for our next meeting which is on October 6, 2021. We are in person and that means that you can come to the meetings if you would like to. These meetings are open to the public, just as they were before. However, this year and hopefully all future years, we are continuing the use of our virtual format as to allow people to participate remotely because we have received such great participation and we don't want to lose that.

In an effort to keep meetings to a manageable length, Chairman MacLellan has decided to implement a limit to the number of comments, whether they are public comments or comments regarding agenda topics, to 3 comments per family. This will be effective at the next School Committee Meeting on Wednesday, October 6.

Roll Call: Ashley Colleary-Present, Lance Dial-Present, Paul Kearney- Present, Lydia St. Onge-Present, Craig MacLellan-Present.

Public Comment - Neil Andrews, 171 Hull Street – Regarding gym use at the High School and the Deer Hill School. Travel Basketball players have been told to conduct trials outside due to the use of gyms at both schools for lunch. Once the season begins in the first week of November, we are not being given confirmation that we can use the gyms at all and potentially have to rent space at the Wolves Den in Pembroke for both practices and games at the cost of \$55 an hour. We understand there is a safety protocol meeting on October 6th, where this will be fully addressed. We want to ensure that gyms are available as we have to report them to families what the status is. Other towns are already being given kids space and we strongly feel we should as well.

Dr. Sullivan responds – he has been emailing with others about a similar concern. Right now, we are utilizing our gyms to keep our lunch spacing at 6 ft. We will revisit this on Oct. 6 If we keep the same format the breakdown and replacement of desks will not be a possibility.



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Paul Kearney responds – as a coach in the Cohasset Basketball League - Last year we didn't have a practice and other towns did and all games were lost, and it has had an adverse effect on the kids. It's a 40-minute drive to the wolf's den back and forth. The Deer Hill and CHS are the gyms being discussed. We will address the issue of gymnasiums on October 6.

Superintendents Report – We've are having a really nice week! Osgood Open House was on Tuesday, September 21. Osgood parents and their children were meeting teachers and doing a scavenger hunt. Tomorrow night, September 23, is Open House at Deer Hill. Next week are the Middle and High school open houses. It's nice to feel a little more normal with families interacting int the building.

Osgood Learning walks were this week. A Learning Walk is when the leadership team works with each building to walk through and give feedback to staff – what's working, wondering, student engagement, classroom environment, culturally responsive teaching, socially and culturally aware practices.

Today a message was sent out to the community to help prepare for October 6 to gather qualitative data. DR. Sullivan is hosting two coffees/ meetings. One will be in person on Friday in the community room adjacent to central office, 9:45 – 10:45 on September 24. The next will be a Zoom meeting, livestreamed on Facebook, Wednesday September 29 6:00 – 7:00pm. Leadership wants to listen and hear feedback and help iron out wrinkles. The meetings will also provide information to present to the committee.

Another message was sent out today to inform people that on Friday we have an early release day district wide for professional development.

Dr. Scollins updated the Committee on early release day plans: We will be doing the elementary and then doing this at the middle school and high school which is a review of our safety protocols that we do, in case of lockdown shelter and place, using our protocols, so that will be part of it. Everyone will have that. The elementary school and middle school [K-8] will be having some new professional development for a new assessment that we're using for reading and math. This is very exciting for us. This is the first year we are using it and we will meet as a staff and have the professional development team come in, which is actually all virtual. They will do this round, and then they're actually going to give us the professional development after we give the assessment, so that they teach us how to look at the data, what kind of reports we can use. That's going to be very helpful. At the high school, they are working in the content area and really looking at their curriculum because we are aligning our curriculum Pre-K through 12. We have made this a priority in our strategic plan. They have already begun some work earlier in the year, and they will continue to do that as well. Our special education staff will be meeting with the Director of Student Services, Barbara Cerwonka. Ms. Cerwonka will be going over their requirements, understandings of how their roles and responsibilities are with special education. MCAS released results today. Families will receive results at the beginning of October. This year there was only one day of testing for each subject. There will be a letter and info from the state that explains the differences. They did a really good job making it user friendly. The data is a little different than it has been in the past and that has been accounted for.

Superintendent Student Advisory Council met this week. It is made up mainly of high school and middle school students and will be bringing in Deer Hill students. The main goal is to increase student voice. Student are picked by building leaders to be representatives of their classmates. On October 6, all three School Committee liaisons will be joining the meeting and will update the Committee on things happening in the district and will be there for us to ask questions. Meetings typically happen on the second Tuesday of each month at 3pm. SAC members are: Jenna Giglio grade 12, Jake Squatrito grade 12, Mercedes O'Neil



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grade 11, Noah McDowell Grade 10, Grace Shaughnessy grade 10, Ella Lynch and Nathan Askjaer Grade 9 and Middle School representatives Emma Pearce, Jack Kearney.

Eagle Scout Project, William Elwell - CHS ninth grader who is eligible to be an Eagle scout is presenting his proposal for the construction of stairs and a railing on Bear Hill Path, a walking path that students use to walk to the back field at CHS. An Eagle Scout project must benefit the community. The project helps develop leadership skills. William plans to construct a railing and clear the Bear Hill Path because it will provide a safer walking route. People use it now BUT it gets slippery after rain and snow and branches and weeds make the path narrow and difficult to walk through. About 15 students regularly use the path. The path passes through water department, town property, school property. William will build steps and a railing. William has written permission from the water department. If the school committee approves it, he plans on getting a building permit from the town. Estimated cost of the project is \$2000.00.

Mrs. Colleary applauds efforts. This is a hard project. Paul Kearney gives the advice to stay covered and stay safe when clearing to avoid Poison Ivy!

William hopes to work with Troop 28 to do this together and others will earn service hours by helping to build this. He is hoping to build a wooden railing and his Eagle advisor is Mr. Teriyaki who is helping with design ideas.

Dr. Sullivan has thanked William and asked him to keep in touch with Sue Owen regarding progress.

Lance Dial very much appreciates William's care for our community and his attention to safety.

His diligence in his presentation is also to be noted.

Motion by Lydia St. Onge to approve the Eagle Scout Project, including \$2000 of funding, presented by Mr. William Elwell, seconded by Paul Kearney.

All – Aye

Disposal of Surplus Materials - (Dr. Patrick Sullivan) - Request from Jeff *Connor* on Disposal of Surplus Materials. Estimated value under \$5,000. Jeff *Connor* is our department chair for foreign languages. There are several textbooks listed here and everyone had a chance to review it. A portion of this is being donated to The Boston Latin School. We give permission to recycle the materials. We are making room for other electronic materials that are not necessarily in this format. It is a requirement that we get permission to dispose of anything. Chairman MacLellan would like to reiterate that anytime recommendations come forward as there has been, it's subject to obviously building department to review and have a discussion.

Motion by Lydia St. Onge to approve the disposal of surplus materials format, seconded by Lance Dial.

All-Aye

Reduced Kindergarten Tuition (Ms. Susan Owen) - Dr. Sullivan states we are revisiting this item that was on our last agenda that we didn't feel as a team we were prepared to deliberate on properly. It is a proposed reduction in Kindergarten tuition for this fiscal year we are in. Dr. Sullivan shares the memo from Susan Owen, Director of Finance Operations. Ms. Owen is recommending we reduce the FY22 Kindergarten Tuition from \$3,500 per student to \$3,300 per student for the FY22 school year. We have 130 students enrolled and recommend the tuition reduced by \$200 making the new Kindergarten Tuition \$3,300 for this school year. This was in the spirit of what the school committee wants us to do trying to reduce the costs for folks who want Kindergarten eventually getting to the point where they will be free for everyone step by step. Chairman MacLellan states that we weren't prepared



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to deliberate on this last time and two of us still aren't. We need to disclose if it impacts us. Chairman MacLellan has a kindergartener currently enrolled in a full time Kindergarten, so it would directly impact him. What he was required to do was fill out a conflict form and file it at the town hall. He did that and needs to publicly disclose it. Chairman MacLellan is publicly disclosing it. Two of our school committee members are also impacted, but they won't be voting on it tonight. We still have a quorum without them. The other two school committee members are not directly impacted by this and have no conflict. The other two school committee members can vote on this and take part in this to approve the reduction in full time Kindergarten Tuition to \$3,300. If you paid in full already, you will be receiving a \$200 check in the mail from the district at some point in time. As we have, we pledge to try and further to reduce that in the future years to the point where from the Kindergarten Tuition for full time students is ultimately eliminated in the Cohasset Public Schools. This will not be the case every year. This is what we were able to do this year. Maybe less next year and the years to come. We are doing what we can as far as what the Director of Finance and Operations recommends in terms of being fiscally responsible. We will continue to make fiscally responsible decisions as a team based on the budget and the situation of the budget to achieve.

Motion by Paul Kearney to approve the Reduction of Kindergarten Tuition FY22, seconded by Lydia St. Onge. Craig MacLellan – Aye, Paul Kearney-Aye, Lydia St. Onge-Aye.

That motion does pass by a majority vote and we approved the Reduction of FY22 Kindergarten Tuition.

Superintendent Goals – Dr. Sullivan notes that his was a nice process and want to thank Mr. Dial, Mr. Kearney and Mr. MacLellan for their assistance in the sub-committee group and for their help towards these goals. Just so that everybody knows this is a process that starts with self-reflection which happens in the Summer and then the self-assessment and goals which Superintendent Sullivan is presenting now. We will do a mid-cycle based on the approval. We will do a mid-cycle review of his goals and then of course the final evaluation, all done in public, which is part of the process. An end of year review will happen at the end of cycle will all be done publicly. Each goal includes key actions and benchmarks.

Indicators that lead to goals: fiscal indicators, safety indicators, cultural indicators, CPS strategic plan
Supposed to have at least 2 district improvement goals

Goal #1: District Improvement Goal (Strategic Compass Point 2: Social and Emotional Wellness):

Throughout the 2021-2022 school year, I will empower staff and students to embody equity, cultural responsiveness, inclusivity, empathy, and global citizenship through providing professional development, timely feedback in the area of culturally responsive teaching, through creating increased knowledge for students regarding diverse cultures and through increased inclusivity of the school environment.

Goal #2: District Improvement Goal (Compass Point 4: Communication and Engagement):

Throughout the 2021-2022 school year, I will cultivate an environment of open communication, engagement, and collaborative learning opportunities among school, home, existing collaborations with families and community, and through creating a plan for an implementing partnering opportunities.

Goal #3: Student Learning Goals (Compass Point 1: Teaching and Learning):

Throughout the 2021-2022 school year, I will focus the district on improving the quality of English Language Arts (ELA) and mathematics instruction K – 8, by offering professional development, which will positively impact student achievement in the areas of ELA and mathematics.

Goal #4: Professional Practice Goal (Compass Points 1 and 2):



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Throughout the 2021 -2022 school year, I will collaborate with district and building leaders to create cohesive Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS), which will better facilitate interventions of students in grade K – 12. [Goal will be shared by Dr. Scollins and Mrs. Cerwonka]

Goal #5: District Improvement Goals (Compass Point 3):

Throughout the 2021 – 2022 school year, I will collaborate with district and building leaders to maximize effective resource allocation in the areas of staffing, transportation, facilities, learning spaces, technology, and facilities systems. [Goal will be shared with Susan Owen]

Motion to approve superintendent's goals as presented with addition of most recent revisions by Mr. Kearney, Seconded by Mr. Dial

Aye - All

Finance – Monthly update – Susan Owen - school budget update for month of August. School has expended \$844,479 out of the \$21,684,432. \$250,000 in savings and 2 of 3 remaining positions have been filled. In terms of Sp.Ed. tuitions, it is too early in year to determine if the shortfall will continue. The district is using new transportation routing software and we are still in the process of receiving bus sign ups and requests. Most busses are at full capacity. This has lightened up school carpool drop offs and pick-ups. CPS is now using AESOP for attendance. The My School Bucks transition was very smooth and can now collect any fees and payments online.

Mrs. Owen shared updates about Capital Budget projects, informing the committee on the status of each project.

Capital. –

1.8 Million –

updates:

\$250,000 Deer Hill Air Handlers

\$75,000 Osgood Sprinklers Heads

\$500,000 Middle/High HVAC System

\$500,000 Turf Replacement

\$120,000 Track replacement

\$50,000 Wood shop dust collection

\$40,000 Door Fobs

\$120,000 Science Lab plumbing and upgrade

\$32,000 Pilot Technology

\$52,000 Chromebook Lease

\$90,000 School Bus Lease

Mrs. Owen also provided an update on grants awarded to the district including the information that 4 will not repeat because they were COVID funds from Government and Title I has been going down based on formula. There is less grant funding because COVID and pandemic grants have gone away.

Kindergarten tuition and bus payments for 2021- 2022 school year are partially made in spring so those show up in the account before school year starts.

Because everything is free for lunch, breakfast and snack we get full reimbursement on everything.

Utilities – it is early in the year. We are probably doing better than we thought because of savings on hiring.

High salaried professionals retired, and we brought in new teachers who are lower on the salary scale.

There is discussion about adding an every year line item for furniture so that every year money is set aside for furniture.



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Bus parking is on a month by month lease. Trailers are filled with furniture and they are parked in the same lot as the busses. \$3,500/ month during school year for parking.

School Committee and Communication

School Facilities Committee will be meeting virtually on September 28, 7:00 pm.

Policy Subcommittee Recommendations for Committee Consideration - replacing nondiscrimination clause and items in the language that needed to be made consistent with the nondiscrimination text.

Policies recommended for updating: AC, ACAC, GBA, GCF, JB, JBA, JJ

Motion by Lance Dial to accept the Revised Recommended Policy Revisions, seconded by Ashley Colleary.

Aye – all

Subcommittee Reports –

Mrs. Colleary attended Safe Harbor exhibit Spiraling Up, a wonderful event last week – poets who had work displayed at the Paul Pratt Library read their work.

Facilities and Finance discussed the school lunch program and MS/HS air conditioning – will request thoughts from school lunch lead on how to improve lunches. Mr. Dial learned in that meeting is there is a supply chain issue with food nationwide and some food is apparently hard to come by. That was the logistic part of that call. The other idea that we are going to think creatively on is after school snacks. A way that we provide our athletes and other people staying after school with some sort of fresh food they can snack on after school. We will soon be discussing HVAC issues and trying to find solutions for a new high school. We are going to look at three options. One is an implementation of window units in the schools which have its own problems with the way the window exists in the middle high school. That requires something for another solution. Another option is a split sort of process where we have some rooms conditioned and it's not, but they end up bouncing each other out. That one may actually be the most expensive and the third is a wholesale cooling function that uses the existing and hydraulic the heating to actually cooling. So, we will get estimates on that from the facilities and look at what those options are. Paul Kearney states they put these chilling, cooling blocks on the top of the roof and they chill the existing system to cool down. It seems to be the best way to do it. That was talked about. However, there was like a place where we are talking about hiring an engineer. There's a couple of problems there. One is are we going to spend money that we are going to work on the building? Are we going to do that? That is a consideration. Everything is if we are going to do this, how fast can we do it? One point is, do we ask for \$50,000 that's going to cost or maybe give us an estimate of the cost. Lance Dial states, the engineer is ready to come back to us with that based on some other problems. Lydia St. Onge states she is curious about the technology and would that be expensive to remove from the roof, then put them back if school roofs are replaced. Is this something that you don't want to spend right now? Lance Dial states the cooling towers and chillers sound fantastically expensive. No matter if we are putting them in or moving them or whatnot and there's a lot of ducting to be done. From a financial standpoint, it looks like a window



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unit is probably the best solution, however, that also comes with electrical issues. Each has to be powered by a totally dedicated outlet. Some places don't have an outlet by a window and the window doesn't fit. You can't place plywood in there, perhaps metal sheeting may work, it's not the most attractive solution. We will be exploring those ideas in the context of our future expansion where the school facilities committee can discuss and vote on it. Also, Mr. Dial wants to recognize one point that's at the community level. At the Deer Hill and Osgood Schools the children are being brought their meals by the staff to their desks which is an amazing effort. Just want to make sure that we are appreciative of the effort that the staff is doing there to make sure the kids are fed. Dr. Sullivan states it's an extra safety measure. We opened up the serving lines at the high school, we determined we are going to stay with our safety measures to feed the kid's meals that are here until further notice. Just would like everyone to know how serious we are taking it. Mr. Dial wants to express his appreciation for that and in the community as well. Superintendent evaluation subcommittee met - discussed the evaluation process throughout the district

PSO will be asked to present at a school committee meeting this fall. They are introducing initiatives that align with district and committee goals.

Motion by Lance Dial to Move Executive Session for reason #3, with respect to the bargaining strategy, seconded by Paul Kearney.

All - Aye

Move into executive session at 8:30 p.m.

Motion to adjourn open meeting by Ashley Colleary, seconded by Paul Kearney.

All - Aye

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Documents Used at the meeting:

Eagle Scout Project Presentation

Disposal of Surplus Materials

Reduced Kindergarten Tuition

Superintendents Goals

Monthly Update on Finance & Operations

Revised Recommended Policy Revisions