



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

REGULAR MEETING OF THE COHASSET SCHOOL COMMITTEE

All School Committee Meetings Are Recorded

In-Person

Wednesday, November 16, 2022

6:45 PM

Learning Commons
Cohasset Middle and High School
143 Pond Street
Cohasset, MA 02025

Virtual

Streamed Live on Cohasset 143TV

Zoom (*chat enabled*)

<https://zoom.us/j/93210720844>

ID: 932 1072 0844 / Password: 461964

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Facebook (*watch/listen only*)

Cohasset Live Streaming

In Attendance:

Ted Carr, Secretary
Lance Dial, Chair
Craig MacLellan
Lydia St. Onge

Also In Attendance:

Mrs. Barbara Cerwonka, Director of Student Services
Susan Owen, Director of Finance & Operations
Leslie Scollins, Assistant Superintendent
Patrick Sullivan, Superintendent

AGENDA

Call to Order, Roll Call:

- **Executive Session¹: #3. Collective Bargaining: Teachers**

Chairman Dial welcomes everyone for coming to the November 16, 2022, regular meeting of the Cohasset School Committee. The Chair has already called to order and went into Executive Session¹ for reason #3 on Collective Bargaining: Teachers. They were encountering software updates as they turned on the electronic streaming that changed some steps and pathways to get there and appreciates everyone's patience. **Roll Call: Ted Carr-Present; Lydia St. Onge-Present; Craig MacLellan-Present; Chairman Lance Dial-Present.**

Pledge of Allegiance, Opening Remarks

Public Comment - None

Invited Guests

- Cohasset Middle School Spotlight on Learning: The Pond Street Press “CMS School Newspaper” (Ms. Donna Melia and students)

We have students who are currently working at the Pond Street Studio Press, some are in high school who formally worked at the Pond Street Press. Principal John Mills is here along with Ms. Melia to tell us all about their exciting school news! Principal Mills says that every school should have a cultured school of their own school and have a good sense of itself that should reflect a positive and happy place. One of the gifts that the Pond Street Press provides to the school not only that its student run and is led based on student voice, but it's their energy. They really hold a mirror up to Cohasset Middle School with each issue and they remind us of what's going on in the school and what matters from big events to small ones. It seems after each issue Principal Mills feels this is something to put in a time capsule because it could be opened in 20 years and people would know exactly what it's like to be at Cohasset Middle School and this all comes from our students.

Ms. Melia thanks the school committee for having them and for funding them. Our first year was a pilot program funded by the CEF in 2018 with the last 3 years it's been a school funded program. We produce five (5) newspapers a year and they are distributed to all the students, their families, and all the staff. At any given time, we may have 8 to 20 students working that don't have to come to meetings, some students just submit articles or editorials they would like to add to the newspaper. When we founded the newspaper, our intent was to provide an opportunity for student voice with a real audience for students who are interested in writing opportunities for a real audience about matters that were important to them. Also, our students are learning how to address issues that is appropriate and respectful and how to approach people in our school administration and on the school committee. One of Ms. Melia students, Gabby took AI3 an architecture firm for a tour around the school and interviewed them with the right sources and correct spelling of people's names, all the things that a journalist does. All Ms. Melia students have been simply amazing! Gabby Madden is in 8th grade who is shouldering most of the writing this year and is also the editor. Gabby has written a lot of articles and Ms. Melia was excited that the school board allowed Gabby to come along when they toured the building with the architecture firm, AI3 to go over the future of a new school building. Gabby is an amazing writer and probably will have a future as a writer. Brody is a 6th grader who has an interest in photography. Brody has a camera affixed to a drone and takes as many photos as he can, and he doesn't get to share them that much, other than to the Pond Street Press Newspaper. Sari has been writing for the Pond Street Press for 3 years now. Sari Reyes is now in 8th grade and has been writing for the school newspaper since 6th and 7th grade and she's an important link to the outside organizations. Sari writes a lot about the Recreation Center, Safe Harbors, and other things that are happening around the town that she likes to include so that everybody knows what's going on in our community. Last year Nora Khan and Campbell wrote several editorials about the importance to them or the student body that were really thought provoking. Nora felt that the Pond Street Press was an excellent opportunity to speak about diversity and inclusion in our environment because obviously it's important for us to learn and become educated on that. This brought a lot of people together and this gave the opportunity to communicate how they felt in general about it and it was a great overall experience for all.

Invited Guests

- Cohasset Middle School Spotlight on Learning: The Pond Street Press “CMS School Newspaper” (Ms. Donna Melia and students)

Superintendent Patrick Sullivan states that the MSBA was really impressed to have Gabby there it was nice for them to see that she was involved.

Mr. Carr has read Gabby’s writing reports and has seen Brody’s pictures that are all excellent! He hopes they all stick with it, it’s nicely read and framed, and they all do excellent work.

Mrs. St. Onge asks how does a student get involved with the Pond Street Press? Do you have to actively work with other peer members and how does all that process work? Gabby says anyone who wants to come in and write an article, we’re open minded to other student’s selections.

Anyone can submit an article even if they don’t come to the meeting, we call it freelancing. We don’t have a lot of students who come to the meetings because of their other commitments. Students can write an editorial and submit their student voice even if they can’t come in person to the meetings.

Mr. MacLellan notes that it takes a certain level of courage to publish their thoughts to their fellow students and that they should all be commended for that. It’s not easy to put oneself out there and be able to write on something that is interesting or take photographs, but either one of those forms of expression are open to critiques by someone else or maybe have a different opinion, especially on the editorial pieces. That’s a unique challenge and that type of learning experience should make them all proud of themselves. It’s such a young age and taking advantage of the opportunity and not pushing back from natural reluctance to express themselves. Mr. MacLellan says it was great to have Gabby join us with the architectural firm with our walk and tour of a new school building.

Invited Guests

- Cohasset Middle School Quebec City Field Trip** (Ms. Kathleen Sanges)

Ms. Sanges is planning a Quebec City 8th grade field school trip for May 2023. This will be a trip from a Thursday to a Saturday, May 11th to May 13th. This cultural excursion will give students a chance to practice their French learning in class and visit one of the historically old rich cities in North America. There are 12 students who show interest, and we are looking to go with the Scituate middle school as well. Ms. Sanges is in communication with French language teachers at the Scituate middle school and we’re looking to combine this trip to keep cost down. In the past we’ve had an exchange French program with Cohasset and Scituate High Schools. The cost of the trip is around \$700.00, but with the combined trip with the Scituate Middle School, it will keep the cost down, maybe a little less.

Ms. Sanges included the Massachusetts curriculum framework for world languages and the standards that this trip does to fulfill a lot of the standards under communication, linguistics, and lifelong learning.

Invited Guests

- Cohasset Middle School Quebec City Field Trip** (Ms. Kathleen Sanges)

The ratio of our chaperones will be 1 to 10 students which will include Ms. Sanges, and Scituate teachers. In the past they have used Jump Street Tours which is a great company and very reputable and Scituate will jump on board with our tour group. There will be a guide who will stay with us 24/7 and Ms. Sanges feels very comfortable with Jump Street Tours from her past school trip experiences. They'll travel by a Motor Coach Bus with lots of room for this tour. They'll stay at either the Concord or the Plaza Hotel, they're not sure yet because they're still negotiating the cost for that. There will be a guide who stays on the floor from 11 PM to 6 AM in the hotel that we've always had from past tours. We're on the same floor, in the same wing, and we separate the boys from the girls with our chaperones.

Some of the activities that are included on the trip is a museum tour on the history of Quebec. Tour of the City bell, a walking tour of the fortified city and waterfalls, a ferry across the St. Lawrence River and a fun cultural experience with the Quebec Heritage Site which is the maple sugar shack where students learn the processing of sugar with traditional dances, songs, and food. Science is also part of the targeted language, and the kids will be busy on the 3 days in Quebec City. For the academic expectations from the students, they have to research the sites to visit as well as to keep a journal with them. They'll write their language skills on what they did for the day and what they saw. When they return to school, they'll report this out from their journals and be asked what the best restaurant or critique on a restaurant was.

Mr. Carr loves these educational opportunities, this sounds wonderful. He knows this takes time from the teachers schedules and he thanks Ms. Sanges for doing this.

Mrs. St. Onge asks how many students are expected to go from Scituate? Principal Mills says Scituate is sort of in the same boat as Cohasset, probably 24 students with 2 Scituate teachers with an administrator to chaperone as well. We should have a total of 36 students which is perfect for the Motor Coach Bus.

Mr. MacLellan is as always concerned about the security when students are off campus. As long as students are always monitored by chaperones and the tour guide and genders are separated which is always a concern with these school trips and it was all clearly stated by Ms. Sanges and Principal Mills.

Mr. Dial thanks Ms. Sanges for doing this, these are huge opportunities for our kids that make memories last a lifetime and they learn a lot as well. One question, do all the students immerse speaking French all the time? Ms. Sanges states that the tour guide with Jump Street Tours will go back and forth speaking French and English with the students.

Motion made by Mr. MacLellan to approve the Cohasset Middle School for the Quebec City School Field Trip as presented by Ms. Sanges and Principal Mills, seconded by Mr. Carr.

All-Aye

School Updates

- School News (Dr. Patrick Sullivan)

Superintendent Patrick Sullivan professes that our girls' soccer team won 3-1. They beat Hampshire and they're on to the State Championship! Congratulations to the girls' soccer team and Coach *Beale* on this wonderful news! We have Tess Barrett who is a sophomore here at Cohasset High School and she has been named as player of the year for division 4 amongst the top players in the entire State. Coach *Beale* for division 4 has been named coach of the year and has a higher honor bestowed upon her in terms of coaches of the year. Dr. Sullivan will share this out in his next newsletter.

Our boys' soccer defeated Nantucket and Abington, they were down 2 to 0 against Abington with 3 minutes left. They stopped the time on the scoreboard so they could be kept on the field with Cohasset coming back to score 2 goals that ran into overtime. This was an amazing game, but they fell short by 1 goal to South Hadley the top ranked team in the state in the quarterfinals. It was a great season and everything to be proud of.

The same for our girl's field hockey team, they all were on fire throughout the entire season. They defeated Hampshire, Sutton and Case and scored a goal in the final 8 seconds against Manchester Essex to bring it to overtime and they lost by 1 goal, which was a penalty shootout. They should feel very proud of their accomplishments along with their coaches.

Our high school football defeated Drury and Clinton and will play Friday night, November 18th at 5:30 p.m. at the Burlington High School against St. Bernard's in the State semifinals. Their hope is to return to the Super Bowl which will be played at Gillette Stadium again this year!

Our girls' and boys' cross country with Ronan Kearney, Lizzie Blanchard and Maggie Brizney earned titles with the South Shore League All Stars, with Maggie as voted SS League MVP! Strong performances by the boys' and girls' cross-country teams competed in Division 3 states and they all did very well.

We celebrated Veteran's Day, and we had many activities happening within our schools. The Deer Hill School made wonderful posters with a contest from our 5th grade students writing an essay regarding Veteran's Day and what they're thankful for in terms of our Veteran's. The winners of the contest which were all girl's read their essays at the town festivities on Veteran's Day. Congratulations to the girls, we're very proud of them and we're proud of all our students that took part in this contest and our teachers for supporting this for our Veterans.

We had a wonderful lunch event at the Osgood School that was **O SO GOOD!** Principal Farrell in conjunction with our strategic plan has created a program to honor some students for being wonderful citizens and showing leadership in their own ways at a very young age. What Principal Farrell has instituted is what is called an **O SO GOOD** with students who had the opportunity to call their families at home and have discussions on what they did! Dr. Sullivan would like to thank the teachers too who nominate the students.

School Updates

- School News (Dr. Patrick Sullivan)

Karrine Rollins who is an 8th grade student at Cohasset Middle School was appointed by Principal Mills and others as our Project 351 Ambassador. Project 351 is a project that was developed some years ago to bring a leadership representative from the 8th grade from all our 351 middle schools in the Commonwealth. During the Martin Luther King Day weekend, they come together with other civic leaders and do some great philanthropic work that they bring back to Cohasset. We'll look to support Karrine in whatever she chooses to endeavor in. Congratulations Karrine!

We had Nicole Balaschi and SRO Greg Taylor attend the freshman class of 2026 monthly meeting. They discussed community wellness and safety issues the past couple of weeks that was great to see, there were some good questions raised there.

We had our Superintendent's Student Advisory Council meeting (SSAC), whom Dr. Sullivan has got to know all of them well now. We had some lively discussions that we're going to bring back to this school committee at some point.

Neil Nichols our geography artist, who's an incredible artist presented to our 4th grade student's stories that are so educational about the entire world which was captivating. Thank you to our PSO for bringing him to us.

Today is National ESP Day for our educational sports professionals. We thank them for their support, they do great work every day.

Our field turf goes down tomorrow. The contractors cleared out all the materials and hauled it away and the process starts for putting it down.

Finally, we have our National Honor Society tomorrow evening to introduce new students. This is going to be a big event.

Chairman Dial thanks Dr. Sullivan for these great updates on what's going on in the schools and reminds us why we are here.

Teaching and Learning

- MCAS Update
 - Special Education Update (Mrs. Barbara Cerwonka)

Mrs. Barbara Cerwonka, Director of Student Services has updates in terms of data points about what's going on in the world of special education. During the month of October 2022, starting with our elementary level, we had five (5) annual review meetings, three (3) localization meetings which is when students move into town who are already on IEP's. We had seven (7) annual review meetings at our secondary school level and one (1) out of district meeting for a total of sixteen (16) annual review meetings. In terms of re-evaluation meetings, we had one (1) that came up at the elementary and three (3) at our secondary school level for a total of four (4) re-evaluation meetings that included testing and everything else that is measured with a re-evaluation.

Teaching and Learning

- MCAS Update
 - Special Education Update (Mrs. Barbara Cerwonka)

There were seven (7) initial evaluation meetings at the elementary and one (1) at the secondary grade level for a total of eight (8) initial evaluation meetings. At the elementary grade level, we had one (1) that came through our MTSS referral source for an initial evaluation meeting and five (5) came from parent referrals where two (2) students qualified. At our secondary level, we had one (1) initial evaluation meeting that came directly out of MTSS. There was one (1) independent evaluation meeting at the elementary grade level and one (1) that was out of district for a total of two (2) independent evaluation meetings. At the end of October 2022, student services, special education department had a total of thirty (30) meetings.

One of Student Services goals and strategic plans is focusing on increasing communication and collaboration with families. Last year Mrs. Cerwonka instituted a feedback form for families whenever IEPs are sent home. They took a very hard look at that feedback for this year and there were twenty-five (25) different question sections to it that was rather long. We looked at the recurring themes where we really needed to focus on and wanted to get our feedback that coalesced a bit into a one (1) page ten (10) question document for this year. This will be going out in a much friendlier way that is just one (1) page for parents to fill out. This is the same basic strongly agree, strongly disagree choices which gives parents the opportunity to share out. The names of the chairperson in elementary and/or secondary level and the names they should choose will come to student services with their signature pages on the IEP. We received a lot of good information from the other form, but it was time for it to evolve, and we're very excited to do this. This will also be presented at our SEPAC meeting this coming Monday.

Another thing that student services will be adding to their website very soon is the IEP process guide. It has not been updated since 2018, and the student services team chairs worked very hard on this the past year and a half. It was voted through our legal council and approved and that will be going up on their website, replacing the old one with some updates from Aspen as well. This will also be embedded in their forms for teachers to go into and access some of those links bringing them straight to DESE and/or Aspen.

Mrs. Cerwonka would like to talk about special education students and MCAS. The reporting out on MCAS can be a little bit confusing because of all the wide variety of data points and subsets on who can report out. It's important to look at students who are on IEP's versus high needs students because that is a big category and other students can fall into that category. It's important to have that understanding and looking at MCAS in terms of the different data points that are being measured and shared with grade percentiles versus questions to that. There's such a vast wealth of information in there and Mrs. Cerwonka appreciates everyone's interest on the deep dive that she and Dr. Scollins partnered on in terms of getting into data and analyzing the data working as a district using that data in ways that makes sense and drive us forward as a district to benefit our students. Students who are on IEP's we recognize there are already some areas of weakness that we're trying to address through the IEP and the strategies in the specialized instruction the students receive.

Teaching and Learning

- MCAS Update
 - Special Education Update (Mrs. Barbara Cerwonka)

The MCAS is an important data point, it is one data point, and this really should be emphasized. There is such a wide variety of data points for students who are on an IEP. All students who are also in general education, whether it be at the Osgood School, using dibbles and move up through the i-Ready, MCAS and so forth. Students on IEP's, all the initial evaluation meeting data points and all the re-evaluation meeting data points are important too. Part of it is that current level of participation and performance in class can be compared and measured with their peers, and that's a very important data point also. We have to look at a good balance of all those data points when we're diving into the data and looking at what does it truly tell us about students and compare all those data points to each other to make sure we're getting a picture of the whole student. Certainly, MCAS scores is an important one and we want to pay careful attention to it at every grade level and make sure that we understand that score and the variety of potential reasons that might be behind obtaining that score. It's also very important to have that short period year to year and watch student growth through it, but also the long view and recognize that students who are passing MCAS is a graduation requirement. We have a 100% rate in terms of student who are on IEP's and passing MCAS and being able to graduate at this point, which is something that we're very proud of. As students move through their school years and increase their skills both through the specialized instruction and get on IEP's and through that participation as much as they can in classroom experiences to get that content knowledge and that practice with their peers in general education and some push and pull out of services of specialized instruction to strengthen will improve their test taking skills as they go through the years. Hopefully their MCAS scores do improve as they go along towards graduation. The focus of special education is not so much on the MCAS score as is on their instruction. Their access to that education and making effective progress in their education and certainly the MCAS score is one data point that we want to use whether it be to compare it to other data points and get a clear picture of the child. We may get an alert sometimes to look deeper and look at either the IEP process or the MTSS in helping us understand the needs of that child might have and that is one that student services take seriously to look at, but not all by itself.

Melissa McDonough from 306 Fair Oaks Lane says she thought Mrs. Cerwonka was going to follow up from the November 2, 2022, school committee meeting where there were discussions about doing a deep dive on those students that had very, very low growth percentages and what we were going to do specifically. There was a lot of talk about what that would look at and what plans would develop. Ms. McDonough thought this school committee meeting today was going to be a district approach, but it doesn't sound like we're there yet? Ms. McDonough asks when are we going to do that? What is the plan to look at for the students? What is the timeline and how is the school committee or the administration going to hold those responsible for elevating those scores?

Teaching and Learning

- MCAS Update
 - On-going work with staff and students utilizing the MCAS data (Dr. Leslie Scollins)

Dr. Leslie Scollins says some of it is individualized and on a particular issue so we wouldn't necessarily have a broad plan around student growth because it's very specific to students. Those plans would be individual with parents and students. Overall, some of the things that we're doing at the elementary level, the Deer Hill School in particular, we're looking at the student's MCAS scores and we take that, and we look at the other data to create plans for those students. It could be with the reading or math specialists that they've already been identified prior to, or it could be that the end results gives us a red flag to say "okay, their not making progress within that," and they move to the MTSS process into the self-study that could be assumed their on an IEP because they may have a learning disability in reading and that is where they have been concentrated, but their MCAS scores are showing us that isn't where they should be. They're going to go through that MTSS process where the students need are. This has been happening before we see their MCAS scores, because we look at students in the spring and we look at what their needs are, so we're prepared for them in the fall. When our new assessments come in this happens so the schools can meet.

Dr. Sullivan says it would be good to just outline some scores that didn't concern us and how we approach this from a holistic sense based on trends. On a particular individual student sense based on those who are partially needing less.

Ms. McDonough says there are concerned parents here today, but what about the parents that don't follow these meetings? How are they being alerted that they have a low-risk student that needs something? She would like to see the implementation, or the effectiveness of it.

Dr. Sullivan says that's a great question, and Dr. Scollins can talk more about the fact that we are looking at all these students at the MTSS level. We're looking at it and connecting it with other data points and how we're going about doing that. Some examples of what we're doing with a narrative essay which clearly, we had some scores that we weren't happy with and how we'll approach that in terms of how people know this. Obviously if there are individual needs that require MTSS intervention, parents will receive communication regarding that. Mrs. Cerwonka is looking at MCAS as a data point in conjunction with what is on a student's IEP and what kind of services are happening. Perhaps, something could be jumping out and needs to be more there could determine this on an IEP. If that data point matched with other data points, we're always open for conversations about any data point, particularly MCAS as it relates to students who are achieving and not achieving. We're doing a lot of work with our staff to make sure that they understand what they need to do based on the data. We're providing that professional development and there's a lot of layers to this and we've been updating that, if not all of it in Dr. Sullivan's newsletter and other ways. We can talk on how we're targeting data points in MCAS.

Teaching and Learning

- MCAS Update
 - On-going work with staff and students utilizing the MCAS data (Dr. Leslie Scollins)

Dr. Scollins states we've been breaking down the MCAS with other schools and departments to look at specifically what standards we have done well in and replicate this. Also, we're looking at where we are falling short when it comes to just an item analysis and looking for that. We're working with reading, math, and science specialists to look at those trends for students in grades 3-10 to see what's happening. They're working behind the scenes to look and calculate all of that so that we can look for those trends and patterns. Overall, when we're looking at our education for our students what areas do we need to target on. Trends and patterns happen over time, this is something we want to keep monitoring. For the writing piece, that has been across the state, which was really challenging. The Deer Hill School looked into what exactly was happening with that, so they changed their prompts for their writing assessment this year to address that. Students in the 3rd grade level were required to finish a story and a lot of times they just analyzed it, even if they didn't understand it. Now, they're working on those narrative pieces and really targeting on what they were seeing in the MCAS that they didn't get. The 3rd, 4th and 5th grade running prompt right now was adjusted to address that so they can work with the student's growth on those writing pieces. As we dive into the data with the departments, we will learn more about that. In addition, the department of education just sent out their training modules for MCAS and one of them is a webinar on writing and what the expectations are. A bunch of us are jumping on that to see what they're saying, so that we're clear on what those expectations are, and that will directly impact our instruction to that. Finally, we have small group instruction happening at our middle school with a reading and a math specialist and they use the MCAS data to help put students into those areas and into those support groups.

Mrs. St. Onge has a related follow up to her understanding on what Dr. Scollins was saying. Along the vein of communication and making sure that we've very clear about what's happening this year. To Mrs. St. Onge this feels a lot like when we're talking about having interventionists for our kids and then we really push to have communication sent out to say, "no, your child is not on the MTSS process," but your child is going to be working with a math or reading specialists. As a mom, a school committee member, and teacher, Mrs. St. Onge feels this is an area that would make her feel more comfortable to receiving a report at home that says, "we see that your child is not meeting their needs in this area, or partially meeting in that area and that is a concern to us, and we are going to start intervention in this way." Beginning with benchmarks and MCAS are showing us that together that there's an area of concern where we could report out over communication, and specifically mentioning it may be because your student is not adjusting to iReady or dibbles, but also the MCAS score is starting to show a pattern here. Mrs. St. Onge just wants some acknowledgement beyond the state report that says, "we see this, and we are using this to do a small group during MCAS, or the math, reading specialists is going to do this." So often when Mrs. St. Onge looks at the data on students with whom she works in reading with, every single person who didn't meet it makes sense because we are working our tails off in reading and they're not quite there yet and we're going to continue to work on it.

Teaching and Learning

- MCAS Update
 - On-going work with staff and students utilizing the MCAS data (Dr. Leslie Scollins)

Mrs. St. Onge says it would be helpful language in that communication that says, “your child is going to be working with the reading specialist, not only because of what we’re seeing in school, but also this other data point.” That would be part of a helpful communication that makes parents feel like it’s being noticed, and they see this being noticed, but also want this in writing to acknowledge it. This would demonstrate responsiveness on part of the district.

Mr. MacLellan comments that MCAS is a critical evaluation tool to the average parent. Even with the parents that are present today who are highly qualified. The average parent is well versed in education issues, but parents like Mr. MacLellan and if he did not serve on this school committee, he would be looking at MCAS like a critical data point like receiving another assessment of material. It almost seems like its school specific and it’s part of their curriculum and they’re working my student up to MCAS which it’s statewide, a very highly published, and publicized evaluation tool. So, if your student is under performing and you are very, very concerned, it’s not something that is necessarily expected. To what Mrs. St. Onge just brought up, it would be great if it is acknowledged by the district so they’re looking at it and they’re simultaneously receiving a letter sent home saying, “we’re on this, we see this, no need to worry because we’re on it, and we’re working with your student, and we’ll follow up on this in a certain amount of time.” Mr. MacLellan hopes this answered Ms. McDonough’s question. This just might put us on a higher level than other districts and he would like to see that in our district, being a step better than others.

Mrs. St. Onge just feels proactive towards the communication piece because we are a small district, and yet this could be achievable. She has seen a shift this year with intervention communication, and we talked a lot about this. We should be able to make that happen and a lot of times we have issues where people don’t know where to go, should they go to the superintendent, or come to a school committee meeting? If we could address this to people earlier and proactively and open a line of communication with a foster teacher, principal, interventionist and not have people sit at home and stoop on it. When we’re not hearing from people, it doesn’t mean we’re not worried, it just means they don’t know what to say, or if they should say something.

Dr. Patrick Sullivan points out that MCAS is very much an examination to show how a district is doing with the standards. What are we hitting on, what are we not hitting on. We’re addressing it that way, but we’re also looking at an individually, every single student that is partially meeting or less. We are addressing this through our MTSS system and we’re looking to see the correlating data points with those students. Many of them are receiving help and getting the help they need, but the question is, if this is what we’ve been assessing, and there’s an outlier, or if there’s a child who has an individual educational program and those things are being addressed and it’s very much in line with that, it’s being addressed! If there’s an outlier, are we addressing that outlier data point with communication.

Teaching and Learning

- MCAS Update
 - On-going work with staff and students utilizing the MCAS data (Dr. Leslie Scollins)

This is what Dr. Sullivan is hearing because all the rest of it would say that we're clearly doing this through MTSS. Those students who are struggling on data points are getting, parents are receiving communication via letters, phone calls. We're also making sure that we're communicating with those who are on non MTSS with letters a lot because of Mrs. St. Onge's work in these meetings that we're doing that better and as Mrs. St. Onge said, we're identifying and communicating better in that way, then comes along the MCAS data. All these things are happening. The MCAS is a correlated data point, and that information goes into our letters and into our interventions. The question is, and what we seem to be hitting is a score point here, is you do have an outlier where the MCAS is just sitting out there. We've discussed this, we had discussions as a leadership team about how we're going to address those. In 10th grade there are plans that are set for students. There are forms we use to try to help students who didn't succeed, there's a plan that we have to face off and those students have to repeat, although we don't have a lot of those in Cohasset, so they repeat tests. We don't have that requirement below 10th grade. We create plans for students who are struggling and we're using multiple data points, MCAS is one of them. So again, MCAS we're addressing it as we're supposed to, trends and patterns, instruction in the classroom, professional development which we've been highlighting that for a long time. Individually, how are we addressing and how we communicate to families whose child did not succeed on MCAS, and Dr. Sullivan would say we are, because we're helping students in these other ways. If it's a unique data point, are we communicating? Dr. Sullivan would probably say maybe we can! That is something that I can see, but in terms of what Ms. McDonough is asking for, Dr. Sullivan says we're doing it, he's just trying to outline what we're doing and to support a little bit of what Dr. Scollins and Mrs. Cerwonka are saying.

Dr. Leslie Scollins says as a parent, how can we do it better? What would Ms. McDonough like to hear, is our question?

Ms. McDonough reiterates you say all these letters are going home and all of this is happening, and she thinks that's the case. She never received a phone call, and her daughter is scored as low growth and she's on an IEP and she's in this math intervention group that is not on the MTSS system. The math interventionist group focuses on pre-teaching, not on the MCAS results. Ms. McDonough has a meeting with Mrs. Cerwonka this coming Monday to talk about this, we don't have to talk specifically about her case. Ms. McDonough knows there are 62 students in 5th grade some are partially meeting or not meeting, less than 30 of those students are at high risk, that's over 30 students in the 5th grade who are on both ELA and math. So, are you telling Ms. McDonough those other 30 students are in MTSS?

Dr. Leslie Scollins states that's one data point, it doesn't mean necessarily that they're all in a small group because if we're seeing such a large group that's partially meeting or not meeting, we have to look at the core instruction on why that's happening, and if so, that's being addressed also. It's not just because it's a small group of instruction, but we're looking at all the teaching learning that is happening.

Teaching and Learning

- MCAS Update
 - On-going work with staff and students utilizing the MCAS data (Dr. Leslie Scollins)

Overall, things that are happening with our instruction based on not just the MCAS because we probably have some data that we could support on what we're looking at. We have so many other assessments that we're looking at, so we are targeting that in our core instruction. On top of that teachers are always pulling small group instruction within their classroom based on what they see and what their assessments tell them, that's been constantly happening. This becomes part of their daily instruction, and it is happening. There are intervention groups happening at our middle school and students don't necessarily have to be in a child's study for that. They look at data and they put students in that core for proactive reasons because the student is showing that they need support in that area. There is pre-teaching, but there is also individualized instruction that happens along with that.

Chairman Dial addresses he thought we were going to take this conversation towards a slightly different direction and maybe this is what Ms. McDonough was getting to as well. We talked about the MCAS results at our last meeting with 4% of our 5th grade class were meeting, or exceeding expectations. If someone told him, "Hey Lance, your house is on fire, what are you going to do?" Mr. Dial states, well he needs to get water to put it out! That would be his action plan, he wouldn't say, we need to look at the fire in a different way! Is it smoldering? Is the fire more on this side of the house? What Mr. Dial wanted to hear was some specific action items on what we are going to do about 5th grade?

Dr. Sullivan comments it's his mistake, he didn't communicate and didn't realize that's what the Chair wanted. Dr. Sullivan thought we were answering more generally on a follow up from Ms. McDonough's question about how we are approaching our students who are in a special education category and how we're approaching them and how we're looking at the data that we're seeing on MCAS and how we are gathering that data for those students. Dr. Sullivan also thought we would find some ways on how we're approaching this in a trend and didn't know that we were looking at the specific data points for every single assessment because of the action steps mentioned in this conversation.

Dr. Scollins notes we need some clarification exactly on what Ms. McDonough is asking.

Mr. Dial says that Dr. Scollins had a slide presentation with lots of different things, but what didn't bring to life for him as a consumer is, we've got this problem here with 4% configured in 5th grade and here's how we're going to address this issue. We talked a lot about generic themes and we're doing more professional development working with our teaching and we're focusing on each other. These are all great efforts, and it's not being reflected. Also, on the communication piece where people aren't receiving letters to their homes and not seeing results from here and the community. To what Dr. Scollins is saying, we looked at grade 5 with 4% so here's something that we're doing with that class because this is a data point and what are we doing to address it, or what do we consider doing and then projecting it!

Teaching and Learning

- Academic Initiatives / Updates (Dr. Leslie Scollins)
 - On-going work with staff and students utilizing the MCAS data

To Mr. Dial it feels like there's a gap where we haven't responded to and that's what the school committee was talking about at our last meeting. We need to see some concrete examples especially in the special education scenarios on what things we need to reexamine. We're looking for some specific direction and examples of what the district's reaction is on some of this stuff. To put a framework on it we're looking for where we need to improve, and we need to as a school committee find ways we see as milestones and goals that we can hold accountable so the district knows that we can show we're progressing or we're not progressing. We should understand why and what we need to do to ruminate. Without giving us some metrics or key performance indicators, there's no way we can go back to the community and say, "we've got it, here are the 5 things we did," and we can't! It's like going back and saying, "the test is one data point and we're looking at it holistically and we're doing a review." That's great and Mr. Dial trusts the school administration that they're doing the right thing, but it's hard for parents to internalize that without receiving that key performance indicator, in some way for us to be accountable and that we're moving forward.

Mr. MacLellan says in order to provide those you may very well need more time than what we've been given so far. Perhaps, there may be a meeting in the spring semester where teachers present the specific needs on the writing prompt in MCAS? Mr. MacLellan is very concerned about our district's MCAS scores. It's one data point, but it's an important one. It's an important one to the average parent like himself so we need to communicate that concern effectively which we're starting to do. We've identified areas where we can improve there and then we need to create an action plan and publish that action plan to families.

Dr. Sullivan points out that we need to create a format of the action plan that we are presenting actions. At our last meeting, Dr. Scollins presented a whole series of actions that we're doing. Perhaps its more granular to the standards, and we can do that. We need to dive deeper to get more specific with the interventions that we're performing for our students. Keeping in mind that MCAS is a data point, it refers to the standards, and it is set to try and get districts to look at our instruction holistically, it's not set to create individual plans for individual students alone. There are other data points we use to create those plans and Dr. Sullivan wants to be really clear with that. To what Dr. Sullivan is hearing and seeing are analogies about fires, is there's a disconnect between the work we're doing on the floor to what folks are hearing us tell what we're doing on the floor. Dr. Sullivan would suggest that maybe he should listen better when talked to next time and he'll specifically take ownership of this and work with Mrs. Cerwonka in student services and Dr. Scollins to create a presentation that shows specifically where we're falling short in the standards, and what we're doing on each of those to address that on the floor. We can do that, that's easy because we're doing it. The individual student conundrum is that we're also looking at individual students through MTSS who are partially meeting or less, and we're looking at what are we doing for the students right now. The way we're doing that is we're looking at other data points that show that this student is falling short in the same areas that MCAS is telling us they're falling short in and are we addressing that?

Teaching and Learning

- Academic Initiatives / Updates (Dr. Leslie Scollins)
 - On-going work with staff and students utilizing the MCAS data

Dr. Sullivan says if we are then, perhaps that's exactly what we're addressing right now is that the problem is there and we're addressing it. There are students who are doing well in everything else but didn't do so well on their MCAS and that's not a huge number of students, and are we addressing those students? Probably not as explicitly as a parent might want based on what Ms. McDonough expressed at this meeting today and Dr. Sullivan gets that. We're looking at it and we're certainly looking at that data point as something serious. We need to look at the MCAS data points in conjunction with other data points to what it's telling us and a lot of other districts that we have some work to do in our core instruction, and we're doing that. We'll be more granular with a presentation to the school committee.

Mrs. St. Onge comments this is more of a communication issue than an MCAS issue and that we should let the other people here in the audience offer ideas because that's what we asked for.

Alice Bryant from 44 Wood Road comments that she received the MCAS scores at home and promptly tucked them away because she didn't really care about them until she logged on at the last school committee meeting and she pulled out the MCAS results and there were some things that were talked about that were obviously concerning. Ms. Bryant is a parent to a 5th grade student and a 6th grade student, and they both go to the same school. There was something that worked well last year with 5th graders, and she has heard this from a lot of parents was the in-house conference and the teacher said multiplication tables. None of the 5th grade students knew multiplication tables and suddenly parents knew this, and they started practicing this stuff at home with their child. There are parents in this community who want to get involved but have no idea what 6th graders are missing and don't know where to start. If we partnered like we did last year with the 5th graders to have them learn about multiplication tables, then we would know at home the different pockets that we as parents can work with our child on.

Elizabeth Frasier from 27 Windy Hill Road comments there are many, many students who have been on IEPs for many years in this district who continue to struggle. Between these students and their peers have a loss of confidence from having never passed the MCAS. This is very scary because it leads to social emotional loss and perhaps the solution is to change the elementary school curriculum. This is the core problem that needs to be seriously addressed.

Megan Barry from 11 Tad Lane comments as a parent of a now 6th grader and when her child was in the class in 5th grade received their test results, Ms. Barry can attest that they never had a normal year at the Deer Hill School. Their 3rd grade was cut short, their 4th grade was mostly remote and then the classes were split apart in March for spacing distances. Then in 5th grade the teacher left mid-year and the entire 6th grade who are in special education or not could use some academic help on the ELA side.

Teaching and Learning

- Academic Initiatives / Updates (Dr. Leslie Scollins)
 - On-going work with staff and students utilizing the MCAS data

Dr. Scollins says yes, absolutely those things did happen! The department of education talked a lot about this, not just specifically about Cohasset, but across the entire state. The state wanted to know what we we're seeing and what we we're going to do, and it took us some time to build it all back. There was a period of time where students had learning losses because we were in a pandemic! That is absolutely true, and we're working towards that.

Alice Bryant from 44 Wood Road would like to piggyback to Ms. Barry's comment that there is something unique to Cohasset. If we look at the number of kids in that grade particularly who are meeting or exceeding have consequences. This 6th grade is in real trouble and when they get to 10th grade, they have to pass MCAS and how are we going to get them there?

Dr. Leslie Scollins points out on a data point she gathered around the 2022 Cohasset Public Schools MCAS Data for secondary school. Dr. Scollins pulled data off from grade 10 in the districts profile page rather than the high school page, its slightly different because the district page has "out of district." Cohasset has out of district scores on there, so she went to Cohasset's page and grabbed that data and placed it on the wrong spot and she apologizes for that. Another mishap was grade 3-8 where Dr. Scollins grabbed information off the Deer Hill School site giving the scores for those 3 grades and looking at the middle school the information says grades 3 through 8, it gives a score for just the 6th, 7th and 8th grade. Dr. Scollins grabbed the data from the district instead.

Mrs. St. Onge would like to follow up from what we've heard from the audience today. It makes sense to establish a time liner and action item saying, "yes, we are going to communicate to the community of the standards where we fell short on, and here's what parents can target at home." From a South Shore Math Council perspective, it's a given fact that fluency is a problem across the board, across towns and across socioeconomic levels. In addition, sub-conduction, multiplication, division all of them, we work with them, we all do as much as we can. What are some other standards can we be targeting such as fractions which is almost always an issue. What can we be targeting on a good family friendly scale? Assuming we are not all math teachers or teachers. Communicating this out in a user-friendly way would be a good step.

Mrs. St. Onge asks Mrs. Cerwonka is the family satisfaction survey she sends out to families with their students IEP, only on paper? Could this be in a Google form?

Mrs. Cerwonka says the parents/guardians signature page is returned to student services, it gives it more anonymity than if it were a Google form for some of these.

Mrs. St. Onge comments it might be helpful if this survey could be sent electronically to family's email addresses and if Student Services might consider doing this, since it is 2022!

Budget, Resources and Governance

- Budget and Finance (Ms. Susan Owen)
 - **Capital**

The FY23 October Finance Report – School Budget (general fund). As of October 31, 2022, the School Department has expended \$5,269,169 out of the \$22,345,352 budget awarded (32.07%). We have encumbered supplies and materials on purchase orders in the amount of \$1,897,544. There is a remaining balance of \$15,178,639 which will be expended by salary accounts and any other school department needs that cannot be anticipated or have not yet been entered on a purchase order. Ms. Owen states there is no area of concerns in this area.

Our SPED tuitions were budgeted at \$1,149,811 and are currently encumbered on purchase orders. Last month SPED tuitions were right on target. Unfortunately, this month we are now showing a **-\$67,112** deficit due to a transfer from a collaborative to a private school.

<u>School</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Expended</u>	<u>Encumbrances</u>	<u>Balance</u>	<u>% Used</u>	<u>FTE</u>
Osgood	\$3,807,659	\$ 889,723	\$148,548	\$2,769,388	27.26%	47.10
DeerHill	\$4,124,544	\$ 854,749	\$126,476	\$3,143,319	23.78%	45.73
Middle	\$3,878,477	\$ 826,394	\$ 42,683	\$3,009,400	22.40%	47.0
High	\$6,759,931	\$1,508,728	\$385,267	\$4,865,937	32.0 %	67.21

Our Circuit Breaker funding received in FY22 was \$701,856. This amount was carried over in its entirety into FY23 as part of the budget. This amount was based on a 75% reimbursement rate.

Circuit Breaker funding expected to receive in FY23 will be in the amount of \$627,110 to be rolled over into FY24 as part of the budget. Since October, Susan Owen will update the following month, it’s a significant increase to \$627,110 which is good. Also, at a 75% reimbursement rate.

The Circuit Breaker is a state program providing school districts with reimbursement for some of the costs incurred for providing “free and appropriate education” to students with special needs.

<u>Capital Outlay Funds for FY23-\$484,500</u>	
\$ 90,000	School Bus Lease – completed
\$ 75,000	Middle/High School Paging Zones – completed
\$ 35,000	Furniture Replacement – student & staff (DeerHill cycle) – in progress
\$ 52,000	Replacement of aging Chromebooks (540-3 year lease \$143,000) – completed
\$100,000	Retiled some classrooms at the DeerHill School – completed
\$ 60,000	Field Lights – completed
\$ 12,500	Locker Mechanisms for the Middle School – completed
\$ 20,000	Installed AC/Heater split for the Middle School Health Clinic – completed
\$ 40,000	Created hallway at Middle School to access bathroom in Room 223 – completed
\$484,500	TOTAL

Budget, Resources and Governance

- Budget and Finance (Ms. Susan Owen)
 - **Capital**

Susan Owen shows a rough draft ledger report of the Capital Funds for FY24 - \$1,876,121. These are carried year to year, and as of right now, we're at \$1,876,121. Ms. Owen will go over the items in more detail towards the end of her budget and finance report.

We have an ESSER III grant from last year which is just about expended. We have our school improvement grants in special education for Title 11A, with a total of \$1,185,449 and \$679,845 remaining for our grants in our FY23 balance. Our FY23 grants funds are used to employ approximately 12.3 additional staff.

There are no areas of concern with our revolving accounts. We continue to bring in revenue in most of our accounts. There is an area of concern which is our school use of facilities which is already a deficit and is still growing. (\$11,547). Another account we found to be very high was our school's lunch, which is down to \$283,543, the good part of that is the whole new serving line we have upstairs by the kitchen. These accounts cover the salaries for approximately 25.50 personnel whose jobs relate to the account from which they are paid.

- **Transportation** - We are in the process of completing a new four (4) year lease for eight (8) new school buses as our current lease will expire on 06/30/23. The current lease is for eight (8) school buses in the amount of \$139,002 over the course of four (4) years. The new lease will be for the same number of buses (new ones) and the same length of time in the amount of \$151,331. We are still working out the details before signing. The eight (8) new school buses do not include the one (1) electric school bus, the electric bus would make a total of nine (9) school buses.

Mr. Carr states that the Alternative Energy Committee connected us with the vendor of the electric school bus, and asks if anybody responded? Ms. Owen say yes, she spoke with the vendor this past Monday.

Megan Barry from 11 Tad Lane comments thank you so much for the GPS bus finder application. Seeing the bus on the map has been a game changer especially with the inconsistent cluster. She has not previously set up the GPS finder because it was not up and running, it is a very helpful tool on the app. Thank you to everyone who helped get this app up and running.

Susan Owen's reports are shown in materials G-1 on the school committee agenda, as well as the rough draft she created for Capital Funds for FY24.

Capital gives us \$90,000 and the school absorbs the rest. Mrs. St. Onge says let's be audacious and ask them for more!

Budget, Resources and Governance

- Budget and Finance (Ms. Susan Owen)
 - **Capital**

Mr. MacLellan suggests that the school committee write down the 17 items shown on Ms. Owen's Capital Funds report for FY24 and rank the items to prioritize 1st before sending. For the sake of time, we can submit our list to Susan Owen so we're not deliberating. Ms. Owen can look for the common themes and prioritize them in accordance with the school committee as best as she can. We need to post the sub-committee budget meeting so we're not stridulating opinions from the ranking of every single item.

The Chair and Dr. Sullivan met with the town representative and the Recreation Department. They want to manage and coordinate fees to make sure that we're able to maximize the use of all facilities within the town for students while they're playing other town sports. As Ms. Owen is looking into reinstalling seasonal fees if she could make sure we coordinate that because there is some practice of having a seasonal fee to reserve a field for an entire period and it goes unused from time to time. Mr. Dial feels this is the most economic way to do it and it's worth just spending a little more brain matter on making sure we've got the optimal fee structure, so we get the optimal work out of it.

Ms. Owen received a request from Vince Thornton, President of Cohasset Youth Softball Association who is looking for some assistance with the cost for a new scoreboard on the softball field. The school uses it, that's where our softball team plays. He is asking for us to replace the scoreboard and the cost is estimated to be \$11,040 thousand dollars and he is looking for the school to pay for half of this. Ms. Owen says we should in good faith show effort to help support some of the fields that aren't necessarily on our school grounds, but we do use it.

Mr. Carr knows that the field is owned by the town. There's an independent management organization, and private gift things that our population of kids use. Sometimes the community also needs our help and there has always been a strong tradition of the schools when we can and what we can, and we do, and we step in and help. Our kids are using these fields and being able to keep up with our tradition of supporting our town holistically makes sense for us to do. We have a mechanism to a thoughtful way for us to do this through the revolving fund, so we thought that this was a good idea to entertain a vote, if we needed to.

Motion made by Mr. MacLellan to approve one-third of the cost sharing with the town towards the cost of a new scoreboard on the softball field, seconded by Mrs. St. Onge.

All-Aye

- **Food Service** – The Middle and High School new serving lines and accessories will be delivered on December 23, 2022. The installation will happen that day and then facilities will come to complete all the electrical and additional set up. The new kitchen will be up and running with their new snack room after the December break.
- Report from School Facilities Committee – None

Community Relations / Communication

- Reports from School Committee Sub-Committees and Liaisons

Mrs. St. Onge reports that at the Deer Hill School Council recently met and they as a council met with Alicia Gittens-Carl and talked about how the Deer Hill School community could basically reach out and make sure that families in our METCO program are feeling more part of the community, and how we can make sure that we bridge the gap between school and nighttime activities. We did some brainstorming about how to make some changes effective this school year, just to make sure our students and families can access everything that is being offered whether it's during the school day or in the evening. It was nice to do some collaboration with them.

Mr. Carr states the select board seems to be on track with everything, there's no significant issues that affect us. The select board does understand the engineers we're interested in.

School Committee Governance

- Topics Not Reasonable Anticipated by the Chair

Ms. Owen addresses that we received a donation that needs to be accepted by a vote from the school committee. The donator would like to stay anonymous. We received a donation of eight (8) floatable tables for our Stem lab which is great because they now have worktables that can be adjusted to go up and down.

Motion made by Mr. Carr to accept gift for the Stem lab at the Middle School, seconded by Mr. MacLellan.

All – Aye

- Approval of Minutes** - None
- Future Agenda Items
We talked about some follow ups on MCAS, and we'll have a timeline earlier on this.
Mr. MacLellan would like to follow up next semester on how things have been progressing with response to issues surrounding MCAS analytics on what they're going to do.

Kristen Davis from 219 Sawyer Street asks if the Boosters can help with the scoreboard, a separate fundraising initiative to help with the rest of the cost for our area of business would love to help our youth softball sports, just a thought, and thank you.

Motion made by Mr. MacLellan to adjourn the November 16th, 2022, school committee meeting, seconded by Mrs. St. Onge.

All – Aye

Meeting adjourned at 9:16 PM

**Requires School Committee Vote / Action
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