

Cohasset Public Schools

143 Pond Street

Cohasset, MA 02025

Empower Students to Improve Communities

REGULAR MEETING OF THE COHASSET SCHOOL COMMITTEE

School Committee Minutes

Wednesday, December 6, 2023

6:00 PM

Learning Commons

Cohasset Middle/High School

Virtual Meeting - Cohasset 143TV/Zoom/Facebook

In Attendance:

Ted Carr, Secretary

Lance Dial, Chair

Craig MacLellan, Vice Chair

Jennifer Lesky

Also, In Attendance:

Principal Lisa Farrell, Joseph Osgood School

Jennifer McPhillips, Ms. Caitlin Carabba,

Ms. Ripley, and 1st grade Students, Joseph Osgood School

Grace Shaunessy, CHS - SSAC Liaison

Principal John Mills, Cohasset Middle School

Bob Erlandsen, CMS 8th grade - Washington, D.C. Adventure

Rock Roberts, D.E.C - Cohasset Public Schools

Sue Owen, Director of Finance & Operations

Dr. Leslie Scollins, Assistant Superintendent

Dr. Patrick Sullivan, Superintendent

All school committee meetings are recorded.

AGENDA

Call to Order – Chairman Dial welcomes everyone to the Wednesday, December 6, 2023 regular meeting of the Cohasset School Committee and called the meeting to order at 6:00 P.M. The Chair states Mr. Carr and Mr. Kearney will be late for the meeting and will be here in due course.

Roll Call: Ms. Lesky-Present; Vice Chair MacLellan-Present; Chairman Dial-Present. Therefore, 3 of the 5 school committee members who are present have a quorum and can proceed with school committee business.

Opening Remarks– Chairman Dial notes for the good to the order, there are two agenda items that members of this school committee will not be addressing in today’s meeting. One is an agenda item for a Special Education update and the other is an Executive Session, in which both agenda items will move for a later meeting.

Public Comment – N/A

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Invited Guests

Joseph Osgood School Spotlight on Learning: Rise and Shine with our Osgood Friends.

(Ms. Lisa Farrell, Ms. Ripley, Ms. Jennifer McPhillips, Ms. Caitlin Carabba, and Students)

Principal Lisa Farrell would like to take this moment to thank the families for interrupting their evening to be here tonight to have all of our Joseph Osgood friends here. *Mikey, Russ, Peyton, Harper, Conrad, Paxton, Avery, Elijah, Grace, and Mattie* are 1st grade students from Joseph Osgood School to demonstrate a sampling of what their morning circle of Rise and Shine looks like along with Ms. Ripley, Ms. McPhillips, Ms. Carabba, and Principal Farrell.

Principal Farrell says she's very fortunate working at the Joseph Osgood School where it feels like her 2nd home, there are plenty of reasons why, but the most important reason is working with the students and excellent faculty. On November 30th the JOS had a social emotional family night series where family members attended, and December 1st had their 1st meeting "Muffins with Ms. Farrell." Several family members attended both events and talked about social emotional components, the language they use, and resources families can use when making connections with their child about their behaviors and emotions at JOS. They also talked about tools that students can use at school to help them feel comfortable and complete their schoolwork.

Principal Farrell would like to thank the CEF for always supporting and looking for ways to help support students at JOS. Last year, Ms. Curtin, Mr. Vinton and Principal Farrell wrote a grant for a comfy, cozy corner in their classrooms at JOS and it's a great place for students to go. They also talked about the size of emotions, size of problems, and how to work with both. Principal Farrell says they received excellent feedback from families on how JOS could help support families a little bit more.

Ms. Ripley explains their morning routine at JOS where all the teachers greet students every morning as students come up the stairs. All teachers make sure to say hello to each and every student and they ask students to choose the way they would like to say hello back to the teachers. Various forms could be a heart hand, it might be a wave, it may be the peace sign, or jazz hands as we introduce them to our community as soon as they arrive at the Joseph Osgood School.

Principal Farrell says they use different vocabulary at JOS to help students understand how big their problem is. Examples would be spilling water while in the cafeteria, and she asks students if that is a big problem or a little problem. Students respond that this would be a little problem. Another example would be if they're outside at recess and fall and scrape their knee, and rip their pants, would that be a little bit of a bigger problem, especially if they don't feel good. Small problems have small solutions.

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(Ms. Lisa Farrell, Ms. Ripley, Ms. Jennifer McPhillips, Ms. Caitlin Carabba, and Students)**

Dr. Sullivan notes as a district we really focus on the social, emotional castle competencies and we just saw a lot of them at play here with our Spotlight on Learning. The five castle competencies are self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, responsible decision making, and relationship building. It's really nice to see the way we go about it in our PreK-5th grade students in their classrooms. Dr. Sullivan is really proud of the work done at JOS, all teachers have all been trained in it, it's a powerful tool to settle a class and get students ready for the day.

Invited Guests

Superintendent Student Advisory Council (SSAC) Liaison Report (Grace Shaunessy)

Grace is a Junior at Cohasset High School, and her 1st time addressing her report as Liaison of the Superintendent Student Advisory Council (SSAC) to members of the school committee. Grace is involved in a few clubs after school and participates in the Medical Club and the Art Magazine Club. Grace mentions that not many students know about the Medical Club because it didn't exist until this year and Grace wanted to let other peers know and hoping more freshman and sophomores participate for more voice input. Mr. Savage, a biology teacher at CHS got suture kits for his classroom so students can learn how to practice that, which Grace says she's very interested in doing. Grace says she was surprised at the number of people that wanted to join the Art Magazine Club. It's really welcoming, and everybody gets to put something in the magazine if they want and that's been great.

There's also a Green Team that just applied to the Green Ribbon, a program from the U.S. Department of Education that recognizes schools that help reduce environmental impacts. Grace says they're on track to receive the Green Ribbon. There are new utensils in the CHS cafeteria now and they're supposed to be compostable with less plastic in them, also a lot sturdier. There's a composite site outside the CHS cafeteria making sure food waste is sorted and everybody is doing it, there's no excuse now.

There's also a new Comic Club that Ms. Anthony runs that also started this year and it's pretty popular. A lot of students enjoy it, it's just a nice extra thing to have again. There are so many clubs offered here at CHS. We had a Club Fair one month ago which really made it known what clubs exist, there's something for everybody.

Dr. Sullivan is glad Grace mentioned all the club offers because he'll be showing the activity participation rates in these clubs later on in the meeting.

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Grace reports that the Fall sports teams advanced to the playoffs, they all played really hard, and had a great time. Students are excited for the Winter Sports and Grace sees more interest from a lot more students joining the Ski Team. Practices for the Ski Team are held on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and every other Saturday. They use the fitness center facility downstairs a lot for practicing too. The CHS Thanksgiving Football game was really fought hard, it was very interesting, unfortunately we lost, however it was a good football game!

The play, "For Rent" just opened and Grace says it was great and thought it was awesome! The play was so well run, and she was shocked by the amount of talent her peers had, they were all great, and very realistic.

Cohasset High School has a Holiday Tour coming up for the younger schools. Grace says that was her favorite part of the school day when she attended Deer Hill and the Osgood School, and she hopes it will be for them too! The CHS band and chorus go to the younger schools to play and sing for them, and everybody seems to enjoy it. Ms. Moriarty is great, it's always an organized event because she's very organized, and she makes it fun for everyone, which is great, Grace says.

Dr. Sullivan says that's great to hear of that memory Grace had when she was in elementary school, it's great to see her giving back.

Lastly, Grace wants to talk about "Powder Puff" which is something that she has been looking forward to since she was a freshman, and Grace was fortunate to play this year. A lot of kids were worried that a select few would get to play, but everybody rotated out and everybody got a chance to play! The Football team was actually really nice teaching all the rules because a lot of us didn't know what to do, but it was fun, and the Seniors won!

The Chair notes for the good of the order, Mr. Carr arrived at 6:07 p.m. and has contributed to our quorum.

Mr. Carr thanks Grace for doing this, it's great. and glad to have her. This is the way the school committee learns what's going on around here, it was an excellent report.

Ms. Lesky just wants to comment on Grace's word choice. She loved how Grace described all the school sports as playing hard and having fun. That's one of the most important things for people to do.

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Ms. Lesky loved how Grace put both of those ideas together, perseverance, grit, working towards something, dedication, but also keeping a lightness of spirit and a sense of joy about everything. It really strikes Ms. Lesky how she described Fall Sports because it gives us all a window into the environment in the schools, thank you.

Mr. MacLellan says it's great that Grace mentioned the Green Team because Mr. Kearney and himself were talking about this. Mr. MacLellan asks Grace where the composting site is located.

Grace says everything's set up in a way where everything is aligned. There are two composting containers in the front hallway. There's a small bin with a plastic bag around it where we put all the compost and that goes behind the school building where everything is like our recycling bins.

Mr. MacLellan asks Grace if she thinks the Green Team would be interested in thinking of just some ideas, concepts for making that composite site look a little nicer, an area where all the bins are covered. These are open barrels with things in them that look unsightly a little bit. Mr. Kearney and himself thought it would be nice to have a quasi-permanent thing with wooden frames that things go in that can be easily removed. Mr. MacLellan was hoping the Green Team could come up with some solutions for that, or does the Green Team feel like that is necessary.

Grace says she would be glad to bring that up to the Green Team. She's sure that someone is willing to get the ball rolling on that. It is a nice idea because it would motivate people to do it more because, like Mr. MacLellan said, it does look unsightly and gross.

The Chair notes, as Mr. Carr stated, this is the school committee's way of getting a really close look at what the student experience is. The Chair really appreciates all the updates and Grace's engagement and willingness to come here to do this and she did a great job, thank you. If there is anything that the school committee can do, or the school, or the students, or any issues that wasn't thought of yet, those are the things that we're particularly interested in where we can help students to have a good and better educational experience here.

Grace says everything seems to be going smoothly, so whatever the school committee is doing, they're doing it well.

Invited Guests

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

Ms. Sanges is a French Language teacher at Cohasset Middle School and is here tonight to propose an approval from the school committee for a three-day school field trip to Quebec City, Canada for proposed dates on May 9, 10, 11, 2024.

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

Ms. Sanges says they always excited for this trip for the 8th grade students because it gives them the opportunity to see another country and see other cultures just to compare the United States with the Canadian differences in the different culture as well as work on their practicing their French language that they've been doing since 6th grade. This is the capstone of a big thing they look forward to at the end of middle school. It's a short trip, only 3 days and a nice trip for middle school students. Quebec City is very small, it's very charming, and it's great for 8th graders.

Ms. Sanges updated the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks with conversations that students will be having, and the comparisons that Ms. Sanges mentioned are lifelong learning standards. Students will attend a Cabane & Sucre and learn about collecting and processing maple sugar with traditional music and dancing.

We had a wonderful trip last year with the Scituate group and we're thinking also of not only the cost, but the environmental impact of the big, huge motorcoach for only the 15 students Ms. Sanges says that signed up for the trip so far. She usually has 15 -18 eight grade French students so they're still in the planning stages for this trip.

Ms. Sanges will coordinate the trip and will also chaperone that will include Mr. Mills, Mr. Grassman a French language teacher at CHS. They have a few volunteers, a few teachers said they'd love to go. If they go as a small group, the cost would be more than \$1,000. If they go with Scituate, the cost would be between \$700-\$900 per student. They'll travel with Jumpstreet Tours and have, for several years now, a great experience with them. Transportation from Cohasset to Quebec will be by Eagle Motorcoach. Students will stay at the Hotel Plaza or Hotel Concord. If students stay at Hotel Concord, they'll be able to walk from there to and from different activities. They're always together, they're always walking together, and they're always in a big group.

They'll have a Jumpstreet Tour Guide that stays with them for the three days and Jumpstreet has a contract with a security guard that stays on the floor from 11:00 PM – 6:00 AM. They all stay on the same floor in the hotel. Ms. Sanges says students who are under 18 years of age don't need passports since they're travelling by land. They'll need their school I.D., and a certified copy of their birth certificate. Passports are only needed for adults.

Mr. Carr is very much in favor of this trip.

Ms. Lesky thanks Ms. Sanges for taking the time to do all this planning for this trip for 8th grade students.

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

Mr. MacLellan thanks Ms. Sanges for being willing to go above and beyond teaching in the classroom. It's an amazing opportunity for the kids to travel to other places. We're very lucky to have Ms. Sanges and would like to thank her for everything she does.

Chairman Dial echoes the comments made by the school committee. These are priceless opportunities for our kids and very much appreciates Ms. Sanges willingness to do it.

Motion made by Vice Chair, MacLellan for approval for the 8th grade Middle School Trip to Quebec City as presented at the December 6, 2023 school committee meeting, seconded by Mr. Carr.

Aye – All

Invited Guests

**Cohasset Middle School Washington D.C. Adventure
(Mr. John Mills and Mr. Bob Erlandsen)****

The Chair states Mr. Bob Erlandsen is here to re-propose the Puerto Rico trip to Washington, D.C. and also thanks him for his flexibility and his tenacity in getting this done and working for our kids. Chairman Dial really appreciates the fact that he was willing to take feedback and make some adjustments that we'll hear about today. Just for the record, the chair wanted to note how this school committee really appreciates the work that he put in.

Mr. Erlandsen is here to propose a Cohasset Middle School Trip to Washington, D.C. with 35 middle school students who've signed up and that brings down the cost to \$1,350 per student. They plan on going to Philadelphia as well to see a sector of Independence Hall, The Constitution Museum, and the Liberty Bell. Mr. Erlandsen is hoping for June 20–23, 2024 for this trip. As of right now they have 5 chaperones and possibly Mr. John Mills will come along because they're looking forward to a possible 8th grade trip in the future.

Mr. Carr comments that this is a great trip!

Ms. Lesky thanks Mr. Erlandsen for this revision and the time that it took. Also, thank you, this is an amazing trip, it's almost like a history trail.

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**Cohasset Middle School Washington D.C. Adventure
(Mr. John Mills and Mr. Bob Erlandsen)****

Vice Chair, MacLellan says this is an amazing educational tour. A lot of people don't get to Gettysburg and it's incredible. Seeing the monuments at night is going to be so awesome. Mr. MacLellan is so appreciative that Mr. Erlandsen is bringing this to the school committee and the cost, this is what he loves about this district. It's about our Superintendents, about our faculty who are always so responsive to our community. It's a small, close-knit community and there are a lot of demands and Mr. Erlandsen is super responsive to them and this just shows that these kids are going to benefit from this.

Chairman Dial once again underscores his thanks to Mr. Erlandsen's flexibility and his responsiveness to this, and thanks him for coordinating this, it's a fantastic trip! The Chair suggests a book called "The Killer Angels" he once read when he was in 8th grade. It's about a really deep dive into the Battle of Gettysburg. The book is also written in a historical fiction way where it's all true, but it's written in real time, an excellent book. The Chair highly suggests this book for the 8th graders to read who are going on this trip.

Motion by Vice Chair, MacLellan to approve the Cohasset Middle School Washington, D.C. Adventure as presented to the school committee, seconded by Ms. Lesky.

Aye – All

School Updates

School News (Dr. Patrick Sullivan)

We had our school musical, "Rent" which opened on November 30, 2023-December 2, 2023, and it was very successful as Grace mentioned. This was a wonderful presentation and Dr. Sullivan would like to thank *Ms. Sharon Stam*, Ms. Moriarty and the whole Arts Department who were involved in it, and the whole community for supporting our students, a wonderful production, a showcase of many of our talented kids here. December 7th is our "CMS Winter Concert." Chorus starts at 6:00 PM - Band at 7:30 PM.

Mr. Carr would like to mention which may be unknown to others. There were 27 members from the faculty and staff of the schools that were up on-stage singing and dancing in the "Rent" musical over a three-night period that was really well done, and they gave up their time, it was pretty impressive!

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School Updates

School News (Dr. Patrick Sullivan)

Dr. Sullivan and Dr. Scollins attended a lovely National Honor Society presentation last evening, December 5th. This was fantastic as always where we inducted many students in. It was wonderful to see the students walk across the stage to receive their awards. They spoke about the Pillars of the National Honor Society. Congratulations to the students and their families, this was a wonderful presentation, and some excellent speeches by Mr. McCabe and Principal Scott as well as Charlie Lankow, our Liaison of the SSAC, as well as Mr. Kearney's kids both of whom did a wonderful job.

We had an 8th grade Sustainability Showcase, and their projects were very authentic, and research based that happens in their research classes. Dr. Sullivan loves the fact that students have to speak to an expert and solve a problem. This is really the type of learning that we're moving into in a deeper way in the next strategic plan, and Dr. Sullivan is very proud of them.

"Circus Smirkus" is a staple at Deer Hill, we've had different circus companies, "Circus Smirkus" has been with us for at least two years now. They do a tremendous job working with 5th graders in their PE classes all week. It's great to see how much students learned in one week's time.

Principal Mills had his Compass Awards today. Every single school is doing something as part of their goals to acknowledge students for not just academics, but for character, growth mindset, and all those important things that drive us as a society. On the back of each student's certificate is a write-up by the nominating teacher, so all these students were nominated by a staff member, and they wrote the reason why, and that means a lot to them. It was really a nice ceremony that Mr. Roberts and Dr. Sullivan both attended.

The Deer Hill School continues to have their *O'SO GOOD* phone call, Empowered Student Award. Dr. Sullivan reminds folks, their vision is to "Empower Students to Improve Communities," and it's nice to see that everybody is doing this.

The Susan B. McNamara Innovation Center is not quite done yet, but it's very close. We do have more work being done for our Food Services, students at the Deer Hill had a Food Service initiative and they did "SWOT", an acronym for (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats), things to make sure they avoid regarding Food Services, and this is happening at Deer Hill. We're getting a younger student's perspective since we already have some older student's perspective.

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Dr. Sullivan wants to give a shout out to their custodians who do such a great job getting their schools ready. We had snow this morning and they did a great job getting the walkways clear and they do a great job every time.

Today, Dr. Sullivan was the officiant at a wedding between Q and U at the Osgood School. Q and U cannot be separated, and it was really a fun moment. Students made hats and wore them with words that begin with QU, such as queens, question mark, quarterback, it was really fun.

Activity Participation Rates Update (Dr. Patrick Sullivan)

The Chair states that Mr. Kearney requested this as an agenda item, and he asks members of the school committee to table this agenda item when Mr. Kearney is here.

Motion by Vice Chair MacLellan, to move the Activity Participation Rates Update further down on the agenda, seconded by Mr. Carr.

AYE-ALL

Teaching and Learning

Academic Initiatives / Updates (Dr. Leslie Scollins)

MCAS Action Plan (Dr. Leslie Scollins and Mr. Rock Roberts)

Dr. Scollins says she gives Mr. Rock Roberts, the new Director of Data, Evaluation, & Curriculum, a lot of credit, he did so much, and really did an amazing job putting this all together. We did well this year with our MCAS, we feel like the plan we put in place last year was thorough and allowed us to really drill down and be specific about what we wanted to achieve and how we wanted our students to improve. Our growth was good, it was strong, and just a reminder of some of those key pieces, we're lucky to have 2 schools here out of 66 schools that were recognized by the state for having high achievement and strong growth.

The goal is to obviously get our students not only to where they were pre-pandemic, but also increase no matter how well our students do, we always want them to do better. That's a constant making sure we're doing what we need to do for our students. They took all of the focus areas and put them all in a slide presentation. There are 50 slides broken down by content area, grade levels that have all the components that they had last year, which is the district data-based action plan, school based on MCAS item analysis and all the things they did. This will be highlighted in Dr. Sullivan's newsletter so families can have access to this through the school website.

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Teaching and Learning

Academic Initiatives / Updates (Dr. Leslie Scollins)

MCAS Focus Areas 2023-2024 (Dr. Leslie Scollins and Mr. Rock Roberts)

District Data-Based Action Plan (Approach to Utilizing MCAS Data)

The specific focus areas for 2023-2024 are the MCAS anchor standards for grade specific standards where item analysis indicated Cohasset students are not meeting high academic standards. The anchor standards are the overarching standards in a subject area and grade specific standards are the elements that comprise each anchor standard for each grade level. Last year, we broke it down and went through all of them and looked at where we were compared to the state where we wanted to be. We looked at what that anchor standard was that gives teachers, principals, departments a guide of the work we do and an outline of where we're going that goes all the way through. Dr. Scollins and Mr. Rock Roberts focused on two of the areas they wanted to highlight, one is writing across the district, and also Middle School Math.

Chairman Dial says the school committee and community might like to know what our findings are from this, where our focus areas are, and areas of improvement are as we move forward and make sure we're not taking our foot off the gas because there's always areas for improvement.

Dr. Scollins would like to highlight what the school committee helped support the school administration get to where they are. Obviously, MCAS is just one data point, but they look at a lot of other pieces of data and all these things contributed to the growth of our students and their achievements. We have Rock Roberts, our new Director of Data, Curriculum, and Evaluation for grades K-12 and he's been so helpful and valuable. We have a Middle School Math teacher to help make sure we have smaller class sizes, that's extremely helpful. We added .5 Math Specialists at the Osgood and Deer Hill School, and a Math/Computer Science teacher at Cohasset High School. This allowed us to have these positions and Dr. Scollins says the administration really appreciates it, and thanks the school committee so much because not all districts are able to do that and get that support.

Professional Development and teacher training continues partnership with the Teaching and Learning Alliance (TLA), to implement a comprehensive Reading approach including Professional Development for Reading Specialists for early literacy. Also, the implementation of an Open SciEd class for grades 5-8 has been really helpful. One of the things MCAS does is makes students think and share their learning in ways that are more authentic in the questions asked. It's really about problem solving, an inquiry-based approach. Dr. Scollins says the reality is we actually don't know the questions that they'll be asked on the MCAS. We're teaching students to be problem solvers so when they leave us in 12th grade, they'll understand how to break things apart and to figure out how to get a solution.

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MCAS Focus Areas 2023-2024 (Dr. Leslie Scollins and Mr. Rock Roberts)

District Data-Based Action Plan (Approach to Utilizing MCAS Data)

Dr. Scollins say they're in phase 2 with their math curriculum review process, in particular the implementation of Illustrative Math for grades 6-8 and really thinking about all those critical thinking, problems solving, and writing with purpose, having those opportunities for our students.

Rock Roberts talks about some of the strengths implemented for a successful 2023 MCAS action plan was really key when he came into this position. Having data dialogues with staff that was put into a systematic process that made it a lot easier to get into the conversations to really start looking at where our opportunities can grow. Our math curriculum is moving to this idea of productive struggle and growth mindset when we're approaching data in our district, we're very much in that same mode, how do we grow. Just by having the systematic approach to data, what we're seeing in the midst of creating a data rich culture in Cohasset Public Schools. We're not only looking at the data when MCAS comes out, we're looking at other data sources and how they work together, we're tracking it. It seems almost every month we're taking another step further, such as what else are we adding to ASPEN. How are we going to track this. How are we going to track student participation in extracurricular activities. How much data do we want to get so we get a full picture through it. It's a whole student picture in a whole district picture.

The biggest growth is in writing, because while we're doing much better than the State, that percentage of possible points can run anywhere from 30% to 77%, so there's a wide range, but there's a lot of points there. Writing is an essential skill, so spending time in writing where we know it's got a benefit whereas it's kind of isolating certain questions on an exam where there might only be one question in that domain or on that standard.

We're focusing on all types of writing, narrative, persuasive, informative. Working across grade levels and content area to identify common language, rubrics, and tools to guide writing instruction at the secondary level. Focus on higher level thinking questions, synthesize, analyze, evaluate, numbers of operations-fractions and numbers and algebraic thinking in elementary school.

At the middle school level, we're focusing on ratios and proportional relationships, expressions in equations, statistics and probability, and geometry. Review high school courses sequencing to ensure coverage of geometry concept. We'll continue to focus on interventions and the support for high needs students, that's our real big focus of what we're doing at the middle school level.

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MCAS Focus Areas 2023-2024 (Dr. Leslie Scollins and Mr. Rock Roberts)

District Data-Based Action Plan (Approach to Utilizing MCAS Data)

In terms of the actions taking place for grades 3-5 in writing there using MCAS with writing prompts and rubrics. Teachers are using common writing prompts administered throughout the year and using exemplars. Teachers are also using “Glow and Grow” in the classrooms so teachers score the essays, and they look at their common strengths and some weaknesses students are having. Then they use that to inform the next round of essays using it in small groups. They work with individual students around identifying needs in writing. The average MCAS is 9 hours in all subjects and the equation at the elementary is required to have 900 hours of instruction. We really want students to synthesize what they’re reading. We want students to take that information and compare it with another piece of literature and apply it.

What we’ll see in writing rubric for grades 3-5 is there’s a lot more work to be done on the conventions, students are just learning a lot of these things. There’s a lot more points in conventions at the elementary level than the secondary level. As students move through the district that percentage of possible points, they can earn in convention actually tends to grow every year, they move up as they get stronger in that.

Special Education Update (Mrs. Barbara Cerwonka)

Data Sharing on Individualized Education Plan (IEP) Meetings and Parent Surveys

Basic Rights Presentation

In District Programming and Out of District Programming

(Mrs. Barbara Cerwonka, and Ms. Susan Owen)

Chairman Dial notes the outset is Ms. Cerwonka could not be here for this meeting. The school committee will divert this agenda item Special Education update with her absence.

Teaching and Learning

Preliminary Discussion of Elementary Digital Citizenship Curriculum

Vice Chair MacLellan states this is an important issue because it’s constituent with family concerns that was raised in connection with specific instances, but it’s a larger overarching issue that we should embrace, it involves areas within education. There’s a sentiment out there among people thinking at what point does this crossover into the family realm and is it the schools and is it their purview to educate in all facets of life. The problem is we’re trying to empower students to improve communities.

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Teaching and Learning

Preliminary Discussion of Elementary Digital Citizenship Curriculum

Mr. Dial pointed out earlier a very relevant issue with electronic communication and digital communication. Our kids are getting exposed to that at a much earlier age than any of us were, than any of our teachers were, and as we all know there's a lot of digital communication that can be as public as a postcard, and it can be as permanent as a stone engraving. Once it's put out there, it can be out there for a long time. The other thing is with the social emotional issues that occur in school when we were younger, we would go home, and we would be out of that arena. Now, they can never escape it!

Vice Chair MacLellan says it's incumbent upon us to start designing something more formal at the elementary level whether it starts in 5th or the 4th grade, and the Deer Hill School would be appropriate. We need to get community input and put this out for preliminary discussions because we want to get that ball rolling and sort of announce what Mr. MacLellan's personal perspective was getting that community feedback to explain this first to the school administration formally. It would be a real press to student safety issue, this communication can cause self-harm, it can cause harm to others, and it can cause reputation damage for a long time. Mr. MacLellan feels it's incumbent upon us as a school committee to incorporate this into our curriculum formally.

Chairman Dials states the plan for this is for the school committee to have this on a next meeting agenda item to have wholesome discussions of what we can do there. The Chair shares the concern from what he is seeing as a parent. The age in which kids now have cellphones has gone from college to high school to the middle school and we're aware that 5th graders, 4th graders now have access to these devices which they're great in the sense that give access to, and this gets to one of Dr. Sullivan's points. Knowing the facts because we have this omniscience in our hands is not as important as knowing what to do with that and the Chair is glad this district recognizes that. There's also a downside to this stuff and it's incumbent upon us as a school committee as Vice Chair MacLellan just noted to ensure that we are underscoring the potential downside to the people who are getting access to these devices earlier and earlier.

Superintendent Patrick Sullivan mentions there's an educational component and there's a lot of community conversations, remember we serve the community, we talk about what's best for our kids. There are communities that are outlawing cellphones and smartphones in schools. Boston Public Schools for instance have what's called "Yolo Bags" where students put their cellphones in this.

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Dr. Sullivan is sure there is a gain to this system, but this is their rule putting cellphones in a “Yolo Bag” it’s sealed up and put in a particular location where students don’t have any access to cellphones. They’re not doing things on their cellphones that they shouldn’t be doing while they’re studying. That is a community discussion and that’s something the school administration can decide on and talk about as a community. That there is a component as well, there’s education for our kids, and there’s education for our families. Once we teach about one thing, it changes, so it has to be constant because the apps change, and everything is changing. There’s that conversation about what do we want as a community and how do we want to approach this in our schools. Dr. Sullivan is very willing and excited to hear that the school committee wants to talk about this because this is important.

The Chair states we’ll leave this for a bit for our next meeting for next time, he definitely wanted to get this out there.

Vice Chair, MacLellan asks the administration if they could think conceptually about what that might look like at the elementary level. We’re here today talking about it loosely, so we’ll be able to have more discussions about it where people can comment if they’re listening to this. We need that community insight to develop an optimal product, and again he asks the administration to just think this consent fully about the areas for opportunities for growth in whatever they have in their slide presentation, so we can talk about this next time.

Ms. Lesky says she 100% agrees, the health and the safety of our students is paramount, but there’s also that academic honesty issue and ethics around the use of technology and that is getting more and more complicated. It’s not just being a good citizen, but also being a thoughtful and ethical user of technology.

Budget, Resources and Governance

Budget and Finance

School Capital Planning (Ms. Susan Owen)

The Chair notes the school committee received some materials associated with this agenda item for our School Capital Planning. Before he turns this over to Ms. Owen, the chair wanted to ground the discussion for this school committee because what they have is a draft of their Capital list. At this point, the Chair asks Ms. Owen if she’s looking for feedback from the school committee or is this just a report out to the school committee. The Chair just wants to make sure they can contextualize this presentation before they jump into the details.

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Budget, Resources and Governance

Budget and Finance

School Capital Planning (Ms. Susan Owen, Director of Finance & Operations)

Ms. Owen says this is just information, and just wanted to put this draft of the Capital Planning on the table. She met with other members of the Budget Sub-Committee to collaborate to prioritize and decide what should be on the Capital list. Ms. Owen says this is just a read out for the school committee for their input and discussion, they're not seeking approval on anything. Some items on the Capital list are similarities from year to year. Still continuing repairs to roads and sidewalks at the Middle/High School as well as roads and sidewalks between the Deer Hill and the Osgood Schools. We're hoping the Stabilization Fund could pick up some of the big-ticket items finishing all these roads and extending the sidewalks to Pond Street. Mr. Rotondi, our Athletic Director requested a new alumni fence with the new track and turf we have out there, it's not a secure fence. They had a fence company come out and they're waiting for a quote on whether it would be a 4-foot fence all the way around, or what happens if it's a 6-foot fence that is needed, as of right now there's no gate on it, and we need it to be secure. There were two thoughts about our bleachers, one was to replace the bleachers we have, or upgrade. There's not a really good place for our visiting teams. It's all the way across the side of field and they have to walk all the way around to get there or walk across the field. At some point Ms. Owen says they'll need to have more in-depth conversations of what will be going towards Capital and the School Stabilization Fund.

<u>DRAFT – FY25 Capital List</u>	<u>Sum of 2025</u>
1. Bus Lease (8 Diesel Buses)	\$ 150,000
2. Electric Bus Lease	\$ 25,000
3. Replacement of Aging Chromebooks (540-3 yr. lease \$143,000)	\$ 52,000
4. Replace All Projectors with Interactive Presentation Equipment CHS	\$ 254,908
5. Middle School Enhanced Audio in Classrooms (Lightspeed Podcast)	\$ 40,000
6. Finish Retiling All Classrooms at Deer Hill School	\$ 300,000
7. Replacement Furniture – Students & Staff Deer Hill School	\$ 35,000
8. Add Chromebooks at Deer Hill Elementary School (100)	\$ 80,000
9. Middle/High School Indoor Signage in Classrooms/Hallways	\$ 50,000
10. (2) New Athletic 15 Passenger Vans – 48 Month Lease	\$ 31,946
11. Fire Alarms – Middle/High School	\$ 100,000
12. Parking lot for our school buses (Deer Hill)	\$ 250,000
13. Resurface Asphalt Road & Sidewalk between Deer Hill and Osgood School	\$ 120,000
14. Resurface Asphalt Road from Pond Street (Middle/High School)	\$ 100,000
15. Replace Sidewalk/Curbing Entry Road to Middle/High School	\$ 250,000
16. Extend Sidewalk to Pond Street Middle/High School	\$ 50,000
17. Alumni Field Fence	\$ 200,000
18. Alumni Field Bleachers	\$ 100,000
Grand Total	\$ 2,188,854

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Budget, Resources and Governance

Budget and Finance

School Capital Planning (Ms. Susan Owen, Director of Finance & Operations)

Mr. Carr serves on the Budget Sub-Committee, and they did some research on what to do about the fence out there. Some of these numbers on the Capital list may be higher than they estimate to be. The Town has plans for the infrastructure of the roads, the curbs and all that. The Town does this twice a year all around. The school committee need a master plan about how to continue to improve that kind of infrastructure, everybody feels it is. This was an appropriate item for the committee and the Select Board to do. The Select Board is going through some master planning to process for their meeting next week. This is very important; this just continues the process of having robust discussions as they get into the budget stuff and how they'll handle all this stuff.

Also, Mr. Carr would like to mention the first year they're in the Stabilization Fund, they also want to be very cognizant not to stand up to the total limit. It's a real gift to the schools and they want to be respectful of that. This is a solid and well thought out, first cut of the things that they felt at the Sub-Committee meeting that were important and they would love everyone's input on it. They just want to make sure they stay ahead.

The Chair notes he agreed with the delineation here on seeing the assets on this list. The two things that are not on the list here should be longer-term planning. Two of the big reasons this school committee told the Town about the Stabilization Fund is if we knew we've got massive Capital expenses such as for roofs and new windows. Mr. Carr mentioned earlier that we're not spending this all to which the Chair agrees with that approach, but we don't want to lose sight of the fact that these are significant items like these fences that may occur and some of these other potential expenditures like alumni bleachers and paving seems like a lot of money for those. As far as the input, thinking how we're including the roofs and the windows as part of our overall Stabilization Funding plan is very important.

Mr. Carr says some years ago there was a discussion about solar panels on the roofs, but those roofs weren't old enough, so it was a bigger constable to do. Our roofs are old enough now and one of the things we talked about was engaging alternative energy to see if they could help us with the grants. Basically, we could lower our energy costs and get a new roof incorporated with the present one. We were looking at all options, but absolutely and most importantly we have to replace the roofs. The age of the roof here especially is now at the age where we could highly likely enter into a contract with the developer where we could get a new roof incorporated in the cost of the development in the rates that are paid by people, or we can offset our rate because we would be the first off taker of the energy, and it could be an energy cost savings to us.

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Budget and Finance

School Capital Planning (Ms. Susan Owen, Director of Finance & Operations)

We have an opportunity to get a new roof, these programs do exist today from our preliminary research, so the age is appropriate, and this is something we'd love to get on the agenda in the future. This is something that can happen quicker than you would think to get these things scheduled.

Chairman Dial can support this all the better, but he doesn't want to crowd out how the roof is our mission and critical for delivering our academics. Some of these other things like the fire alarms he absolutely 100% supports, that's a no brainer! If we're looking at a world of limited means as much as we want to be self-sufficient, we could do some cost analysis for the school bus parking lot there. The point of the Stabilization Fund was that we wouldn't have it override and we would be able to self-use this to finance these projects as they come up.

Dr. Sullivan says the needs here feel like we made a claim, we need these needs, and he thinks we should do that. He doesn't feel like this is a situation where we put money away for a rainy day to get a more robust approach to a roof when that is very conjectural and also has a lot to do with the MSBA.

Vice Chair, MacLellan asks if they involved the School Facilities Committee's input. They need to be very much involved in our decisions about this preliminary list.

Chairman Dial says sitting in this seat on the long-term planning committee where we've talked about a lot of stuff that came from the Town. We should be looking at the Stabilization Fund funding \$1.5 million dollars is temporary. They stated in all public discourse and in internal discussions the Select Board is able to reduce it is not so they can take money away from schools to stated reasons if we solve the problems that we have. For example, a new building, then we no longer need \$1.5 million dollars of the Stabilization Fund. We have a building that doesn't need a high level of maintenance. This is not something that we should assume will be the assumption in the request at the Select Board and as presented was this would be maintained at a steady state unless it is no longer needed at which point it can be reduced. It can also be increased by 2%, and it's a Select Board decision. It doesn't have to be dependent on the fact that we've solved all the problems, they could still do it, but we still have to take this to a Town meeting.

Budget, Resources and Governance

Food Service – Mr. MacLellan attended the Superintendent's Student Advisory Council with Superintendent Patrick Sullivan for a Food Service Sub-Committee meeting where all the students brainstormed what possible improvements could be made to our Food Service.

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Food Service - Students from all different grades were there and Mr. MacLellan says that unanimously the number one thing students had done was a SWOT analysis and the strengths were first, and every kid said the friendliness of the staff was #1. They all said that all around, and it was pretty cool. That is an absolute testament to our Food Service staff and Mr. MacLellan just wanted to mention this publicly because it was pretty cool! They should be very proud of themselves. We met with *Venicio Cordone* our new Food Services Director and we talked to him without students present what our expectations were and impressed upon him that we need vast improvement in our elementary schools and obviously discussed middle high school opportunities as well. It's very clear Mr. Cordone is very ambitious and passionate about this. He's going to deliver impressive and new products to the district. He's already taking strides and much more receptive being met with additional resources and what he'll be able to do with those for us, so stay tuned. It's the next small step in Food Services improvement here in Cohasset in our fight to create the best Food Services Division in all of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Transportation – N/A

Community Relations / Communication

Reports from School Committee Sub-Committees and Liaisons

Mr. Carr says he has a report in the area of Community Relations. Sometime ago, we approved a Spring Service Trip with an outside non-profit world service. We recently learned that they are recommending changing the location of that Service Trip due to the political nature of what's happening in Guatemala with the election of their president. This just came out today and it came out from the Board of Directors recommending going to Panama which is a very stable place and have been working in that community in Panama since 2018. It probably would be worthwhile to have them back here soon.

School Committee Governance

Topics Not Reasonably Anticipate by the Chair – None

Approval of Minutes**

Motion made by Vice Chair, MacLellan to approve two sets of minutes, October 4, 2023 and October 18, 2023 as presented to this school committee with the correct version being the separate loose 1st page to the October 4, 2023 minutes attached to the school committee's packet, seconded by Ms. Lesky.

Aye - All

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School Committee Governance

Future Agenda Items – Update on writing skills curriculum with a Spotlight on Learning with writing projects students are engaged in that involves all grade levels, district wide; Tabled Activity Participation Rates and Special Education updates for later meeting, as well In District Programming and Out of District Programming; The Spring Service Trip to Panama; Executive Session¹: #3. To discuss strategy with respect to litigation has been adjourned or tabled until another school committee meeting.

Motion made by Vice Chair MacLellan to adjourn the December 6, 2023 School Committee Meeting, seconded by Ms. Lesky.

Aye – All

**Requires Committee Vote / Action

Materials Used for School Committee Meeting

Spotlight on Learning:Principal Lisa Farrell, Ms. Ripley, Ms. Jennifer McPhillips, Ms. Caitlin Carabba – JOS School

Rise and Shine, JOS 1st grade Students

8th Grade-3 Day Field Trip to Quebec City, Canada.....Kathleen Sanges, CMS French Teacher
Cohasset Middle School Washington, D.C. Adventure.....Bob Erlandsen and Principal John Mills, CMS

Cohasset Public Schools MCAS Action Plan	Dr. Leslie Scollins, Assistant Superintendent
2023 MCAS Headlines	Rock Roberts, Director of Curriculum & Evaluation
Outline of MCAS Focus Areas 2023-2024	
District Data-Based Action Plan 2023 and 2024	
Strengths, Opportunities, Writing Rubric for Grades 3-5,	
Writing for Grades 6-8, Essay Rubric for Grades 6-8,	
Writing Rubric for Grade 10, High School Writing,	
Sample Model Essay, Middle School Math	

DRAFT FY25 Capital ListMs. Susan Owen, Director of Finance & Operations

The Regular Meeting of the Cohasset School Committee held on December 6, 2023 adjourned at 8:52 P.M.

Submitted on 12-15-2023
By Kathleen Bock