

Cohasset Public Schools

143 Pond Street

Cohasset, MA 02025

Empower Students to Improve Communities

Cohasset School Committee Meeting

School Committee Minutes

Wednesday, October 4, 2023

6:00 PM

Learning Commons

Cohasset Middle/High School

Virtual Meeting - Cohasset 143TV/Zoom/Facebook

In Attendance:

Ted Carr, Secretary

Lance Dial, Chair

Paul Kearney

Jennifer Lesky

Craig MacLellan, Vice Chair

Also, In Attendance:

Barbara Cerwonka, Director of Student Services

Susan Owen, Director of Finance & Operations

Dr. Leslie Scollins, Assistant Superintendent

Dr. Patrick Sullivan, Superintendent

All school committee meetings are recorded.

AGENDA

Call to Order - Lance Dial, Chair of the Cohasset School Committee welcomes everyone to the regular meeting of the Cohasset school committee for Wednesday, October 4, 2023, and called meeting to order promptly at 6:00 PM. This meeting is being held in-person at the Learning Commons at the Cohasset Middle High School and also virtual for those who want to attend via Facebook and Zoom. The Zoom feature allows live chats for comments and Facebook is watch and listen only. The Chair asks members who are present to indicate so in **Roll Call**: Mr. Kearney–Present; Mr. Carr–Present; Ms. Lesky–Present; Mr. MacLellan–Present; Mr. Dial–Present.

Opening Remarks - The Chair notes to folks at home who might be watching or listening that members of this school committee will likely have discussions on “Topics Not Reasonably Anticipated” within 48 hours to the meeting that is not reflected on the October 4, 2023 school committee meeting agenda. The Select Board held a meeting last night, October 3, 2023, and they requested that the Cohasset School Committee review and to vote on whether this supports a warrant article that would provide for a Capital Stabilization Fund for the schools in the amount of \$1.5 million annually, with a digital to increase 2 ½ percent each year. This has been a subject of discussion for quite a bit amongst the Town to include a Public Forum. The Select Board held a Public Forum on Monday, October 2, 2023 here at the Cohasset Middle High School, and the school committee felt there would be some questions raised. The Chair states that the idea of the School Special Purpose Stabilization Fund is not new, in fact it’s been discussed off and on for at least the bulk of this year. What is new, we’ll be discussing in the later part of this meeting is a vote on the specific language to the warrant which will be posted towards the end of the meeting when we arrive at that item on the agenda.

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Public Comment None

Invited Guests

Cohasset High School Spotlight on Learning – Commercial Design and Student Lobby Spaces (Ms. Sarah Anthony and Students)

Mr. Dial notes the students who are our invited guests had some sports activity scheduling conflicts and will not be here tonight. The Chair was told students have done a commendable job in Commercial Design and Student Lobby Spaces, that's an example of real authentic student learning and advocacy for others. The school committee will defer their presentation to another school committee meeting on November 15, 2023.

School Updates

School News (Dr. Patrick Sullivan) The first six weeks are so important when we start a new school year, and with the holiday in October it's sort of a touch base for everyone and reflection on where we are. We held a nice leadership meeting today and there's so much going on with the curriculum and academic learning sense that's so positive with a lot of momentum right now. Dr. Sullivan is really happy to say there's a lot of great learning happening here in the district.

Monday, October 9, 2023 is recognized as Indigenous People's Day for Cohasset Public Schools. Indigenous People's Day is actually recognized as a federal, state, or the local government level. Some states do recognize this day, in particular in our case it is recognized at our local level. Back in 2020, we did have a Proclamation which was a wonderful example of student agency and advocacy with a group of 4th grade students with Ms. Parrell who is our wonderful 4th grade teacher who led this called "Teaching from the Shore." These students brought to our attention the fact they felt that we should assert our ability as a school committee to look at the holiday that happens in the first couple weeks in October as Indigenous People's Day, and we did! This was very indicative of what our students will do, remember our vision is to "empower students to improve communities." That's exactly what these 4th grade students did, a very proud moment for Dr. Sullivan and for Deer Hill too.

We have a lot of academic recognition happening too! Boston Magazine came out with a list of top High Schools and Dr. Sullivan wanted to let people should know that in this particular year, they used not last year's MCAS results, but the year before that, so they didn't use our MCAS scores that we're getting accolades for. Those who looked at that and said "Jezz" Cohasset isn't as high as reported in the U.S. News Report, and folks should know that data in that report is not up to date. That's where we were in 2022 with the measure of MCAS for everyone. That list would have been much better if they had put our 2023 data from our MCAS scores in there.

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School Updates

School News (Dr. Patrick Sullivan) We have some more accolades going on with receiving platinum being the highest level to be recognized in terms of AP. What they look at is the number of students within a class who take AP classes, and the number of students who achieve a high 4 or 5 in AP classes. We're all platinum across the board in college culture, college credit, and college optimization categories. College culture is the percentage of students in the graduating class who took an AP exam at any point in high school regardless of score to avoid pressure on students and we received 87% in that. The College credit is the percentage of students in the graduating class who scored 3 or better on any AP exam while in high school to avoid pressure on students who take large numbers of AP classes, and our percentage came out to 77% which puts us at a very good rating. Although it doesn't look tremendously impressive in the College optimization chart, we received 23%. College optimization is defined as the percentage of students in the graduating class who took 5 or more AP exams in high school where at least one AP exam was taken in 9th or 10th grade. We're very proud of these distinctions and Dr. Sullivan would like to express his thanks to the students and the staff who prepared them, Principal Scott and his team, Dr. Leslie Scollins and anyone who worked hard for this achievement.

Mr. Dial would just like to point out an observation in regard to this, it's important for the community to know a lot of time was spent on this committee focusing on our students in the schools that have special needs and need more attention. Mr. Dial often hears from parents wondering if our schools also pay attention to and focus attention on students who are high achievers. This report shows us that our schools do have plenty of room for those students who are high achievers, so we have an objective quantitative proof here that our schools are encouraging those students to excel who are taking AP courses to challenge themselves. Our goal as a school committee is to expand all of our students and this shows that to those parents who are concerned whether their children are appropriately challenged, and we do have ways to challenge those students, and we're doing well.

Dr. Patrick Sullivan would like to thank the folks at CEF for raising \$32,000 for Cohasset Public Schools at the Fall Festival at Paragon Park in Hull. A mighty active silent auction went along with this that was very productive, and a wonderful event. The CEF makes generous contributions and Dr. Sullivan thanks everyone who contributed to this because it does go directly to teaching and learning, and our facilities in our schools, we're very thankful for that.

There was a poignant and successful candlelight vigil held by Safe Harbors on September 27, 2023 for alcohol and drug awareness. In future school committee meetings, we plan to have our youth ambassadors for Safe Harbors come here to talk about their focus amongst students on alcohol/drug awareness.

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School News (Dr. Patrick Sullivan)

Dr. Sullivan would like to give a shout out to Ms. *Noisse* who affectionately teamed the “Early Bird Club,” because some of her students come every so often to clean the school grounds before school starts. This is just a great example of some great kids making a difference, that’s the little thing that just shows us they have such pride in our schools, and this is really nice to see.

Ms. Crimmins will be hosting the Cohasset High School Service Trip to Guatemala tomorrow evening, Thursday, October 5, 2023 at 6:00 PM in Room 117 a wonderful service opportunity which will be happening later in the year. Any high school student interested can attend. Dr. Sullivan notes we’ll have that group come back and talk about this successful trip at a future school committee meeting.

Just a reminder to everyone there is no school for students on Friday, October 6, 2023 which is a full PD Day, Professional Day. No school on Monday, October 9, 2023 which of course we recognize as Indigenous People’s Day.

Mr. Dial is interested in some new curriculum throughout the schools with Illustrative Math being an example, also learning about the pilot program for Investigating History Geography. Just curious as to some point when we’ve kind of digested some of these and receive some information and feedback the Chair would like Dr. Scollins to come back to the school committee and talk about these things that we’ve piloted on what we’ve learned and what works, what doesn’t, just to get an idea of where we’re going with the curriculum.

Dr. Scollins says she would really love to do that, we want some of the teacher’s experiences with some feedback. With Investigating History we’re doing one unit, although Dr. Scollins was asked by some 5th grade teachers if it was possible, we could do two. This program is being piloted through DESE and a letter was sent out to all the families that we’re working with Tufts University also. We’ll be receiving feedback from them about what’s happening, and our teachers are going to give feedback to DESE around how this works and what’s the student/parent impact.

Teaching and Learning

Special Education Update (Mrs. Barbara Cerwonka)

➤ **Student Services Plans for Upcoming Year** – We’re at a point of one month into the new school year and at the last school committee meeting Mrs. Cerwonka talked about Student Services focus areas and plans for this year which is really centered around our goals and values which is access, equity, and inclusion. We’re providing this to all students in a wide variety of ways. In particular, we’re going to really focus on the new IEP rollout. This new IEP is coming out through DESE, the Department of Education, Special Education that we’re adopting formally for the next school year and in this school year we’ll be doing some training on that.

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➤ **Student Services Plans for Upcoming Year** - Mrs. Cerwonka wanted families to know hearing about the new IEP tends to put everybody a little bit on edge with nervousness around what is this going to look like. Mrs. Cerwonka says it's a document and later on this school year she'll share this document out to compare it to the old IEP so people can see the difference. This document really raises our practices and makes us look very thoughtful that is not in any way mechanized at all. The questions we asked about our students are considered to be the most important part of the document is a much more descriptive and understandable way for families that will engage families to help their children access their education.

Another focus for Student Services is on the Continuing Program Development. All of our programming, even our existing programs, we are constantly developing on that because we're always finding new and better ways to do business about improving our programs.

ACTIVE IEPS IN EACH SCHOOL			
<u>School</u>	<u>September 2023</u>	<u>January 2024</u>	<u>June 2024</u>
JOS	15.56%		
DH	18.69%		
CMS	19.24%		
CHS	12.47%		

CURRENT DISABILITY CATEGORY PERCENTAGES

Autism	8.14%
Communication	15.1%
Developmental Delay	13.33%
Emotional	4.07%
Health	23.70%
Intellectual	1.85%
SLD (Special Learning Disability)	24.81%
Multiple Disabilities	0.37%
Neurological	4.44%

These percentages aren't very far off or different than we were in June, 2023 and the disability categories haven't changed to any measures.

Ms. Lesky asks what about children who qualify for services under multiple disabilities, how are those accounted for in these numbers.

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➤ **Student Services Plans for Upcoming Year** - If students qualify under the category of multiple disabilities which is a very small category involving children who have very high needs. However, every child who qualifies for an IEP has a primary disability area, some students have a secondary disability area as well, but this breakdown is hinged on the primary disability area only.

Ms. Lesky asks if those percentages are included in the secondary disabilities area?

Mrs. Cerwonka says yes, in this current category, this is for primary disabilities only. Students could have a primary disability such as ADHD, but if that student has a secondary disability area, it's not reflected in this percentage.

Mr. Carr notices the percentage drops from middle school to high school and asks if that is indicative such as kids rolling off, or is it arbitrary?

Mrs. Cerwonda states it primarily indicative of the maturation of kids and their kind of opening independently which is what we want for all of our kids. It's to have that agency, the strategies, accommodations, self-awareness through self-advocacy to really be able to manage their learning themselves which is really nice when we do see it.

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

SEPTEMBER, 2023				
<u>Meeting Type</u>	<u>Elementary</u>	<u>Secondary</u>	<u>Out of District</u>	<u>Total Meetings</u>
Annual Review	5	6	0	11
Re-Evaluation	1 (Eligible)	0	1	2
Initial Evaluation	1 (Eligible)	1 (Eligible)	0	2
Initial Evaluation	MTSS: 1 Parent: 0	MTSS: Parent: 1		
Referral Source	CPS: 2 (not eligible) Non-CPS:	CPS: Non-CPS: 1		
Independent Evaluations		1		1
Total:				16 Meetings

➤ **Staff Training Updates** – Student Services conducted a school bus training with our school bus drivers and school bus monitors this Fall with information to ensure the safe transport of students with disabilities. Specific topics included were appropriate behavior management techniques; effective communication; understanding behaviors that may be related to specific disabilities. These topics don't simply apply to students with disabilities, they apply these practices to all students.

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➤ **Staff Training Updates** - This training was well received, and Mrs. Cerwonka says that Student Services will continue to do this on an annual basis. Another Staff Training will be held on October 17, 2023 with Mrs. Cerwonka along with team chairs to meet with DESE, the Department of Education, Secondary Education to train the trainer on the new IEP process and they'll bring this back to the district to work on all year with staff.

We have TLA, Teaching Learning Alliance meeting with our general educators and special educators in the area of reading. We expanded this into our PreK programming for this year. We actually have a PreK curriculum consortium on the South Shore. We have partnered with TLA, so it's not just us, this was put out too many South Shore school systems, and Plymouth will be partnering with Cohasset to share the costs.

TLA will be sharing the presentation with Student Services of the Fall Workshop Series, Winter Curriculum Cycle, and Spring Curriculum Cycle. We'll be really looking at inquiry based PreK curriculum units and doing a lot of specific work on that. Mrs. Cerwonka says it's wonderful to have another Town work with Student Services on this. They'll be able to see each other's practices and learn from each other, and from some of the experts who will be coming to do this Professional Development with us.

In addition to this, these workshop series are actually going to be shared out with the district and even with private Preschool programs, so that other programs can participate. There is a cost sharing between Plymouth and Cohasset, but in addition the funding that comes in for those will help phrase some of our costs with Plymouth and ourselves when we're looking at this, and we're really excited about it! We have a fairly small program, so anytime we can get teachers that were teachers, it makes for a better collaboration and a better product. TLA is doing a lot of work around Preschool. They wrote a lot of this curriculum work for Fort Worth, Texas which is massive. TLA also worked in Boston and there's a lot of programming that has occurred that is really best practices for PreK students.

➤ **Ongoing Consults for Staff/Programs**—As we continue to expand our co-teaching consultants work with Student Services and have annual contracts with them to come in and work with our teachers. They'll continue to do both with our new partnerships at the JOS, and also with our existing partnerships at CMS and CHS. We have social emotional clinical consultants with our staff. Student Services have done work already this year in terms of vertical alignment where we're having staff from CMS go down to DH school to look at some of the programs there and look at the ways that practices actually happen in that moment.

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➤ **Ongoing Consults for Staff/Programs** - They can take some of that knowledge back to students who are coming up and what's been working for them, and they'll be ready to incorporate that, and Student Services will continue to do different programs at different grade levels. This will encourage people to go out to other schools to take a look at some of the practices in the programs that other districts do. We'll have them observe some of our practices in our programs that will provide us a wealth of information and practical experience.

Mrs. Barbara Cerwonka met with SEPAC on September 28, 2023 and was fortunate to have a "Meet and Greet Coffee" session. We had a nice turnout of people who have never been to a SEPAC meeting before, that was very exciting. Our next SEPAC meeting is going to be held on October 12, 2023 at 11:00 AM and will be held live in-person, and virtual. For those who are unable to attend in-person but want to participate virtually they can do that as well.

Early Literacy in Cohasset

➤ **Dyslexia Screener Information** – As of 2022, Massachusetts requires literacy screening of all K-3 students using state approved screeners. Cohasset uses the following DESE approved screeners which are [K-3 DIBELS 8] and [K-3 i-Ready Reading Diagnostic.]

As we're looking in the screening mode there are obviously some things that we do for Prevention. We incorporate Heggerty, and we incorporate Foundations, we use these things often if we need to go into an intervention mode. The DIBELS 8 is a screener that is approved and Meets Expectations that we use for grades K-8. The skills assessed in grades K-2 are particularly in these areas and this comes with progress monitoring and sharing out to families. The i-Ready Diagnostic is also a screener, but it Partially Meets Expectations. Dr. Scollins says we use both because it doesn't cover everything that DESE would expect us to use, which DIBELS 8 does. They do line up nicely so that we can look at Phonological Awareness and look at those pieces to see what's going on with the student.

Mr. Dial asks how does a student get triggered for dyslexia, does everybody have to go through screeners?

Dr. Scollins says everybody gets screened. DIBELS 8, and the i-Ready Diagnostic are for grades K-5. When we're looking at dyslexia though, those two screeners fall in the guidelines for us to use our dyslexia screener for grades K-3, because that's where we'll find those students. If those students go significantly below grade level, our expectations, then we may have to do some additional assessments to determine if in fact they are at risk. If they're at risk, then that is going to trigger us on what's the next best step for those students.

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Special Education Update - Early Literacy in Cohasset (Mrs. Barbara Cerwonka)

➤ **Dyslexia Screener Information** – At the Kindergarten level, it's all in classroom for the first half of the year. Our Kindergarteners come from all different backgrounds, but we want to make sure we triage them in the classroom. This is their first experience in school, sometimes they may have had multiple experiences, we just don't know. We have a reading specialist for kindergarten, and they'll be doing some intervention work with all students to stay on top of that. We have an Occupational Therapist, a Psychological Therapist, Speech, and Language Therapist who may also be working with students who are on IEPs, but they're also working to keep eyes on all students. Parents will be notified if their child scores significantly below benchmarks and they'll be given an opportunity to see what the plan is and ask any questions. Those assessments happen within 30 (thirty) days. A letter will be going out tomorrow to families to know that the reports are available and will be accessible through ASPEN which we're really excited to be able to do that. Dr. Scollins reminds families to make sure they click on their child's name in ASPEN.

Mr. MacLellan has a couple of points he'd like to address to Dr. Scollins remarks. Regardless of the kindergarten assessment letter that went out, he just wants to note that we had conducted those assessments early. In an effort to be responsive to the district's request for that we found which happens when you're doing for the first time is that it may have been a little early aside for kindergarten in order to respond to the community needs. We may have to reevaluate whether we do this in the same timeline for next year. That being said that letter was sent to him through messaging that was left a little bit undesired, because it was read as though the results were because the child was given the assessment earlier than past years.

Academic Initiatives / Updates (Dr. Leslie Scollins)

➤ **Overview of MCAS Analysis and Presentation Schedule** – We have a new Director of Data Curriculum and Evaluation, Rock Roberts working with all staff to dive into MCAS. The principals at the schools did an overview and shared materials with their staff. On the ½ PD Day we had on September 22, 2023 we went to all the schools and grade level departments and asked what schedule fits for them. We'll be going to them in December, 2023 for 5th grade staff and share with them a big overview of MCAS. We'll be going to Deer Hill next week to work on planning time with grade levels and looking at the growth of students, but more importantly the curriculum because there's different reports that we generate. We'll be looking at how the MCAS Analysis is because they know how to do that because we're doing it all the time. As we're moving to that next level, we'll be looking at the impact on curriculum that will give us a deeper conversation to look at what areas that we have strength in and what areas that we know we need to work on.

We'll also be working with the middle school the week of October 23, 2023 to do a deep dive with the Math and Reading curriculum in the English Departments. Then we'll be working with the high school principals and department chairs in late October and early November.

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➤ **Overview of MCAS Analysis and Presentation Schedule** - November 1st will be the first MCAS Analysis. On December 6th we'll give the action plan as to what the outcomes are from all MCAS. We're happy with the overall of the MCAS data, and that doesn't mean that we're not looking forward to things that we need to work on and to include. One of the items focuses is again on writing and knows that Deer Hill is already working on how they're going to address that. The Middle School did a lot of work around this which was their focus on September 22, 2023. All the departments in particular the Social Studies department for grades 6-12, Mr. Willis has been doing a lot on how to make sure they're writing and integrating the writing practices because we really want students to be thinking about how to write really thoughtful and be able to express themselves in a written word. Our hope is that we'll be able to put the MCAS reports into ASPEN as well. The focus at the elementary level will be Readers Workshop and literacy. Across Middle School and High School, they'll be working in a content area where they're looking at some of our new programming such as Illustrative Math that has some training in the morning with some collaborative work.

The department chairs are working on whether it's some of the action plan items that we came up for Math and the Arts. We're working on the curriculum guide work that Rock Roberts is working on for the district. We have some more Professional Development with i-Ready Diagnostic for next week. Our new teachers are getting training for the new "My Path" which is the digital platform that we use for Math and Reading at the elementary level.

We had a Wellness Committee meeting today and we're looking for more community family members so for anyone interested out there please contact Dr. Scollins. Our next meeting is January 17, 2024 and we'll be doing self-study again and won't have to do this again for another 3 years.

Ms. Lesky loves that all these test reports are going within ASPEN and asks how long will these be archived in that system? This would be amazing if we could continually access that material.

Dr. Scollins says these reports could be a different process because they go under documents and progress reports are in their own workflow for lack of a better term, it's a whole different piece that goes in ASPEN.

Mr. Dial is interested in some new curriculum throughout the schools with Illustrative Math being an example, also learning about the pilot program for Investigating History. Some point when we've kind of digested some of these and received some information and feedback that Mr. Dial would like Dr. Scollins to come back to the school committee and talk about these things that we've piloted on what we've learned and what works, what doesn't, just to get an idea of where we're going with the curriculum.

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Academic Initiatives / Updates (Dr. Leslie Scollins)

➤ **Overview of MCAS Analysis and Presentation Schedule** - Dr. Scollins says she would really love to do that we want some of the teacher's experiences with some feedback. With Investigating History we're doing one unit, although Dr. Scollins was asked by some 5th grade teachers, if possible, we could do two. This program is being piloted through DESE and a letter was sent out to the families to let them know we're working with Tufts University also. We'll be receiving feedback from them about what's happening, and our teachers are going to give feedback to DESE around how this works and how this impacts students/parents.

Budget, Resources and Governance

Food Service – We're looking for a new Director for Food Services and Operations.

Transportation

➤ **School Bus Parking Project Update (Ms. Susan Owen)** – The Chair would like folks to know throughout the community that the parking of our school buses has been an issue. Lots of people have given this school committee feedback about Deer Hill with some concerns. The Chair addresses to members of the school committee that this is not a vote item we're doing. We're not moving forward with it this is just an update for the community. This is an update showing that we are moving forward on the issue of parking our school buses, they just don't go away, we still have to find a place to park them. We are trying responsibly to figure out what to do and this is one of the options that we have on the table. What we're doing here does not suggest that we have decided on anything, and the school committee is not being asked to approve anything. This is just an update for which direction we're going.

Ms. Owen shows a diagram from Merrill Engineering who put together a blueprint of locations where school buses can park overnight. The next step is to forward this diagram to the Conservation Commission to get their approval that is strictly on stormwater regulations, it has nothing to do with anything else other than stormwater. This was prematurely put on today's agenda, and we pulled it off the agenda so that we could have discussions here with the Conservation Commission. We want to at least move forward to the next step which would be having Merrill Engineering present this layout to the Cohasset Conservation Commission just to get the stormwater issue finalized.

We'll have a much more robust conversation at a future school committee meeting if the Chair desires. This is more of a socialization so folks know it's still in the works and there will be no surprises if they see it somewhere else in the community. Once this goes to the Conservation Commission, they'll notify others. We have multiple options that we're looking at to where we'll put a school bus parking lot, we really don't know which direction to go with this, until we come up with a more concrete plan.

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Budget, Resources and Governance

Transportation

➤ **School Bus Parking Project Update (Ms. Susan Owen)** – The Town of Cohasset has applied for and received a project review for stormwater management for a proposed parking lot at Deer Hill. This is a very fulsome report that talks about stormwater regulations, not anything else. At some point this will be presented to the Cohasset Conservation Commission. The school committee was given this to ask questions, again we're not voting on it, nor do we need to approve of this. If folks do see it shown at the Conservation Commission Department, it's just the continued process of the school committee evaluating what our options are. When the Conservation Committee looks at this stormwater plan and they say no, that we cannot do it, that's when this important information for us will be to figure out what our next steps are. The Chair says that's the key take away from this presentation.

Mr. Carr would like to mention especially for people watching/listening from home that Cohasset has one of the strongest stormwater Bylaws. We're a Town that is not dissimilar to a private owner so anybody that is trying to do something would have stormwater regulations review for certain criteria, and this is a well-formatted plan. The Town goes through this for many, many projects, this is just one of the possibilities for our stormwater Bylaws that work very, very well. The Conservation Commission knows this is a very normal process when the Town wants to think about projects, and this is generally the first step.

Mr. Dial recalls last year our transportation had lots of staffing issues for the school buses. Mr. Dial has heard nothing but positive things about transportation this year.

Dr. Sullivan says transportation is one of those things, it's a consumer service model we're trying to adjust and help keep our bus routes expedient and safe, it's a constant project. Overall, things with our transportation are going very well and we're definitely in a much more secure situation with bus drivers. We don't anticipate disruptions for bus routes, our sports routes are going fine. We have eight (8) beautiful new school buses that are running well. Local Motion our transportation for our METCO students is also going really well. We're expecting the electric bus to arrive here by December.

Community Relations / Communication

➤ **Potential Donation Page** – This was brought to our attention via our School Facilities Committee that would be a nice move to have a donation page on our school website. We did some research and looked at some other Towns in the area, even further out to see how they were setting that up. We don't have it on our website yet, but Ms. Owen shows a draft of what that may look like.

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Community Relations / Communication

➤ **Potential Donation Page (DRAFT)** - The Cohasset Public Schools are grateful for your donation to support learning and teaching. Tax-free contributions may be made in any amount, and may be specific to a particular school program, sport, or function, or may be given to the Cohasset Public Schools Foundation General Education Fund.

Please Note: Whether your donation is tax deductible can be determined by your tax preparation specialist or attorney. Donors are responsible for assessing the value of in-kind goods or services. All items donated are reviewed and formally accepted by the CPS School Committee. After donations have been accepted by the School Committee, a formal Thank you letter will be sent.

Mr. Carr says they did discuss this at a Sub-Committee meeting, they thought this was a great idea. This just allows us and does not in no way do anything to exchange the Cohasset Education Foundation work that they do, this just gives an avenue for people who want to donate that can. As a school committee we would have Dr. Sullivan write a thank you letter, and we would review that letter as a committee. This just gives us another tool for the toolbox for us to take these donations.

Mr. Dial says personally it's a great idea to remove any sort of friction for people deciding to give the schools money.

Mr. Kearney would like to thank the Administration for listening to us at these school committee meetings and getting it done. This is something he's been trying to promote for the last 5 years. To see this coming to fruition is exciting and just to know that someone is listening is not only productive, but also exciting! We're a society that wants to give and this is a way to give to specific destinations that people have passion for like score boards, uniforms for our sports teams, lights in the auditorium that need to be fixed. This gives people the chance to really make a difference and it's just wonderful to see and he would like to thank the Administration for advocating this.

Reports from School Committee Sub-Committees and Liaisons – Mr. Carr says while he was at a Sub-Committee meeting the prioritization list came up that we had in the prior year. We heard there was a new program about potentially receiving some grant money to repair or replace the roof here at the Middle/High School. Mr. Carr states he's happy to say that is in the works and that DESE which is a State Agency, and the Alternative Energy Committee here in Cohasset is a Public Agency are standing up to something called the "Green School Works Program." They have an application process timeline, and they'll communicate with Administrators rather soon. Mr. Carr is glad to see that the Town is already aware of it. Their consultant is working on this process already, this was just another great thing we talked about at the Sub-Committee meeting.

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Community Relations / Communication

Reports from School Committee Sub-Committees and Liaisons – Mr. Kearney is hoping to once again attend The Massachusetts School Association on November 8-10, 2023 held in Cape Cod. Mr. Kearney would like to attend these classes they'll have that refer to equity with exhibitors, and vendors, particularly with Food Services. There's also a class on Athletics on how to make sure that every kid plays and how it can affect kids' learning, social, and emotional. Mr. Kearney is hoping to register for this and invites anyone else to join him for this event.

School Committee Governance

• **Topics Not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair** – We have lots of Capital needs to discuss for our schools. In view of these needs, the Town of Cohasset has pushed forward with the assistance of the schools for what is called a School Special Purpose Stabilization Fund. This School Special Purpose Stabilization Fund will be in the amount of \$1.5 million annually. This will be the source of funding for Capital needs for the schools, it will be an addition to, and not a replacement of the current Capital Budget Process. The expectation is for the big-ticket items that we have needs for would be funded from this School Special Purpose Stabilization Fund, thereby taking off some pressure of the Town's main Capital Budget Process.

Last night at the Select Board meeting they approved the set-up of the language that will show on the warrant. This has been voted on by the Advisory Committee and Capital Budget and will also be noted by the school committee on the language on the warrant. This is an item that will require a school committee vote whether we vote to support this article or not in the warrant.

Article 11: School Special Purpose Stabilization Fund

To see if the Town will vote, pursuant to General Laws Chapter 40, Section 5B to create a Special Purpose Stabilization Fund for the repair and maintenance of schools to be known as the School Capital Stabilization Fund, and further, to see if the Town will vote to appropriate the sum of \$1.5 million to said School Capital Stabilization Fund, provided, however that no sums shall be expanded hereunder unless and until the Town has voted to assess an additional \$1.5 million in real estate and personal property taxes for said purpose pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 59, Section 21C of the Massachusetts General Laws (Proposition 2 ½), to take any other action relative thereto.

SELECT BOARD

INFORMATIONAL SUMMARY:

Motion made by Mr. MacLellan to indicate the school committee's support of Article 11: School Special Purpose Stabilization Fund as read in the record, seconded by Mr. Carr. Mr. Kearney-Aye; Mr. Carr-Aye; Ms. Lesky-Aye; Mr. MacLellan-Aye; Mr. Dial-Aye.

Select Board

Advisory Committee

Capital Budget

School Committee

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Article 11: School Special Purpose Stabilization Fund

School Committee Governance

• **Topics Not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair** - Mr. Kearney is very impressed and excited that the Town people put this together. It's a small start to what we really need. To be honest, it's really not a lot of money, but it's a start! Mr. Kearney appreciates the start, and it's totally necessary. As a member of this community, we should support this, and Mr. Kearney is grateful for people taking time in their busy lives to make this happen. Thank you.

Mr. Carr would like to comment on one of the things that Mr. Kearney just touched on. There's a number of topics that will be discussed at this Town meeting related that will be helpful to the schools. It's good for us to get the word out about this. People that go to Town meetings do hear what other groups vote on, and it's important if this school committee does vote on this, it will show on the warrant. Sometimes, our schedules won't allow it, and sometimes don't know how to vote on something that's being voted on, right before the meeting. This will be a very helpful tool for us to review, and we have. This has been talked about at our sub-committees, and this is a great opportunity with the Town as we're moving forward.

Ms. Lesky expresses she is also in full support for this, having been a former member of the School Facilities Committee, she appreciates the work of everyone putting this together. The laundry list of items needed to bring our school buildings up to a reasonable standard, letting parents know their children are being well cared for. All of those expenses will help us tackle those maintenance issues. Ms. Lesky will be in full support of this and hopes the Town will come out in full support for this community.

Mr. Dial's perspective is he's been involved with the Town and is in full support of this. The fact that this bill has already come and has been given, this is not a question of whether what we spend, instead this is a question of how we spend it responsibly and how we address it and not wait until this becomes acute in a crisis.

The Chair notes this second item will also be on the warrant that the Select Board has requested the school committee supports Article 12: School Environmental & Site Testing Analysis. This is an item that has been the front and foremost talked about with the school committee for a couple of years now, or since Mr. Dial has been on this school committee. We recognize that the Cohasset Middle School/High School building in particular is an aging building and is at the probable end of its life. It has some significant Capital needs that keep coming up, but more importantly from Mr. Dial's perspective is the Academic Psychological Techniques are beyond the capabilities of this building. The building is not laid out that supports modern teaching that Dr. Leslie Scollins talked about with new curriculum and new ways of teaching students. We are looking to see how we can best address these needs for our students.

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• **Topics Not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair** - One way to do that is to attest whether or not how to do a significant renovation or replacement of this building, this study would be in furthest of that. Just to front run on this concern is parallel and not a replacement of our application to the MSBA, the Massachusetts School Building Authority for financial assistance including a significant renovation or replacement project. This was stated at a Select Board meeting back in March, 2023 and is shining light on what our options are so that we know best how to distribute funds that we have and do this the best that we can in a responsible way.

Article 12: School Environmental & Site Testing Analysis

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds the sum of \$400,000 for the purpose of paying the cost of site evaluations for Cohasset Middle School/High School as well as the financial options and considerations for the repair, addition, renovation, or replacement of said building or to take any action relative thereto.

SELECT BOARD

INFORMATIONAL SUMMARY:

Motion by Mr. MacLellan for a resolution to express the school committee's support of Article 12: School Environmental & Site Testing Analysis and the expenditure of \$400,000 for that purpose, seconded by Mr. Kearney.

Mr. Kearney-Aye; Mr. Carr-Aye; Ms. Lesky-Aye; Mr. MacLellan-Aye; Mr. Dial-Aye.

**Select Board
Advisory Committee
Capital Budget
School Committee**

Mr. Kearney is in full support of this but would like to say he'd like to see \$400,000 be put towards the school itself. We definitely know that we need some kind of plan for the future, and this is a plan for the future to basically tell us what we have and what we can do with that, the questions and answers get answered. This is a proactive way to figure out what to do for the future and he thanks members that have worked on this.

Mr. Carr says this is a great idea! To put into perspective especially for those at home who might be watching hasn't handled financial issues at our Annual Town meetings that are held in the Spring. We see some of these items on here because the time is here, and the time is now here for this topic that has been heavily discussed and reviewed by the committee including the school committee. This is just the next step to toggle this pursuing to make sure we have the best schools we can deliver, and it just now happens to be the time.

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Article 12: School Environmental & Site Testing Analysis

School Committee Governance

• **Topics Not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair** -Ms. Lesky is also in favor of this expenditure, it's the right way to collect information so that the path screener can inform experts.

Mr. MacLellan has a point of inquiry first to ask, if the Chair mentioned the Board Select, Advisory Committee, Capital Budget had already voted on this?

Mr. Dial replies that he does not know if they all voted, he just knows they will be voting, and last night at the Select Board meeting they requested the school committee to vote on this to finalize for next week.

Mr. MacLellan says then he has a couple comments to make, one is and not to sound ungrateful or appreciative of the support here from other committees around Town, but he had these things addressed 2 years ago. Mr. MacLellan says he's really happy and very thankful for the current Select Board for their leadership and ownership on issues that need repairing town wide. They have a really good vision these days and he is very appreciative of that, especially as it relates to the schools. Mr. MacLellan would just like to note that he does get offensive about the schools not being collaborative in a timely manner when it comes to certain issues that involves the schools.

Mr. MacLellan would like to thank Select Board member Ellen Maher for having reached out with some potential language for what has now become Article 12: School Environmental & Site Testing Analysis with some collaboration on that. Mr. MacLellan says he has not personally seen anything related to the School Special Purpose Stabilization Fund. What Mr. MacLellan is trying to underscore here is when we have issues that are community at large questions that will be presented that have to do with the schools he just wants to make sure that the schools are involved from the outset. We're a primary stakeholder in that collaborative process, especially the chairperson on this school committee and our Superintendent of Cohasset Public Schools. This is Mr. MacLellan's segue into his next point which is these two items which are very important and advantageous items to our school district and realize the benefits for our students in the long term are the end product. This isn't even approved, it has to go to a Town meeting in a community question, goes to ballot, so we're not even finished yet! We're trying to put this into a Public Forum, but even at this point, this is a product of many hours from numerous stakeholders that were involved talking about these issues and want to make sure that they're recognized. From the School Facilities Committee, he noticed they were not asked to vote on this warrant, which he thought was because they had not yet been elected. Then, he realized there were two unelected boards on there and knows those committees are traditionally involved in warrant articles like this. It becomes superfluous, extra strenuous to put other committees on there.

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• **Topics Not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair** – Vice Chair, Mr. MacLellan says it's important to note that there are a group of people in the School Facilities Committee that are dedicating their personal time, attention, and intellectual energy to these Capital ideas and concepts and they gave rise to a lot of this as well. Jason Earls, who is the individual chair on that committee is sort of in flux right now because a couple of members from that committee have fallen off including Mr. Kearney, Ms. Lesky, and himself who previously served on it and Mr. MacLellan just wanted to recognize those people. Also, to recognize the district leadership, and most importantly our Superintendent of Cohasset Public Schools who has been a champion of issues like this for our school district. None of this would have happened if it weren't for Dr. Patrick Sullivan who has provided a level of leadership and partnership in this that has made this possible and has given energy at very early stages on this that has led us to this point which again isn't even the final stage, we're far from it. It warrants mentioning that Dr. Sullivan's vision for the schools is symptomatic or illustrative overall vision for the schools. It's just one element, but this is a big picture item and Dr. Sullivan has always been supportive of this school committee to find ways in which we might be able to thrust forward with these concepts and plans. Mr. MacLellan wants to thank Dr. Sullivan publicly and he plans to do so again if he can at the Town meeting because he wants to announce to everyone how important his leadership has been. This is not to diminish the contributions of other district leaders such as Dr. Scollins, Mrs. Cerwonka, and Ms. Owen.

Mr. Carr states it's very relevant to understand this is part of the bigger scheme of things but we have been asked to vote on this and this one specifically may not have a lot of information or not all the information we would need. We should reserve the right to reconsider if something else is going on that we're not aware of where Capital Budget, Advisory Committee, or the Select Board are not in favor of because they are the leads on getting the way we spend money in this Town. If there's something else that we don't know and not to our attention and we want to move the process along we'll be fine with this, but if there's something that we learn later that maybe somebody else got a bigger problem other than this that could be unrelated to the actual topic. We should just be able to have time before the meeting and we should be able to review it again if there's new information that we don't know.

Mr. Dial says Mr. Carr's comment is a great point that does raise the question of logistics that Mr. Dial is not equipped to answer which the warrant goes on a certain type of print and doesn't know if it can update that warrant. We'll get updated at the Town meeting. Mr. Dial has been involved in these discussions and there have been a lot of people moving very quickly to accomplish a lot.

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• **Topics Not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair** -This is one small piece of a much significantly larger proposal that will be at the Special Town meeting. There have been steps that have been taken that have moved without the schools but moved forward and have caught up. The indication that the Chair received from those other committees is there is broad support for this particular article.

Mr. Dial would like to pull what he calls a Mr. MacLellan and would like to thank Mr. MacLellan publicly for all the work that he has done over the past 2 years. He has been an unwavering champion for getting our School Facilities up to date, for getting attention to our Capital needs of our schools. These were issues that were at the forefront of the Town and Mr. Dial firmly believes that were if not for his fervent support for this, we would not have had this vote just now, and we would be years away from addressing any needs that we have, and from Mr. Dial's personal perspective as a Town person and an intellectual representative. Thank you.

Approval of Minutes** - None. However, Mr. Carr says they have caught up significantly and minutes from the September 20, 2023 school committee meeting will be ready for the school committee to review at our next meeting.

Future Agenda Items - Mr. Kearney would like to have Safe Harbors address the danger of teenage drinking. Also, Mr. Kearney would like to at least get Wellness days, some type of protocol for excused absences for students onto the agenda.

Mr. Carr would like to consider more collaborative ways with other committees. Periodically invite liaisons from the Select Board, Advisory Committee, Capital Budget whenever it meets the schedule to come to the school and we could have a 20-minute conversation with them to say, "here's what's on our plate, what's on your plate," to just have an open conversation on it.

Mr. Dial likes Mr. Carr's idea, and it's a great suggestion. We would like to dovetail it into what we've talked about on streamlining and getting ahead of our Capital Budget Planning that's an important component. Mr. Dial is cognizant of people's time, and we want to make sure that's a good use for someone's time.

Ms. Lesky expresses interest in seeing more writing and what the district is doing for this for grades K-12. She would love to know as a parent, also sort of what we should be seeing at home and what skills we can support our students so families can work with their students to support their education, particularly around growing them as writers.

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- **Executive Session¹: #3. To Discuss Strategy with Respect to Litigation:**

Motion made by Mr. MacLellan for the school committee to move into Executive Session¹: #3. To Discuss Strategy with Respect to Litigation and to adjourn both meetings at 7:34 PM, seconded by Mr. Carr.

Mr. Kearney-Aye; Mr. Carr-Aye; Ms. Lesky-Aye; Mr. MacLellan-Aye; Mr. Dial-Aye.

¹ Chapter 30A, Section 21(a) mandates that in order to go into Executive Session the Committee must:

1. Do so on a roll call vote.
2. State the purpose for executive session.
3. Indicate whether the body will reconvene in public session.

****Requires Committee Vote / Action**

The October 4, 2023 meeting of the Cohasset school committee adjourned at 7:34 PM.

Documents used at 10-04-2023 School Committee Meeting:

2023 AP School Honor Roll Progress Report..... Dr. Patrick Sullivan
PreK Curriculum Consortium..... Mrs. Barbara Cerwonka
Early Literacy in Cohasset..... Mrs. Barbara Cerwonka
DIBELS 8 & i-Ready Diagnostic Curriculum Associates.... Dr. Leslie Scollins
Family Assessment Report Letter Elementary Dr. Leslie Scollins
School Bus Parking Project Update..... Ms. Susan Owen [F-1 Materials]
Potential Donation Page Draft Ms. Susan Owen
Article 11: School Special Purpose Stabilization Fund..... Select Board
Article 12: School Environmental & Site Testing Analysis...Select Board

Respectfully Forwarded on October 8, 2023
Kathy Bock

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Article 11: School Special Purpose Stabilization Fund

To see if the Town will vote, pursuant to General Laws Chapter 40, Section 5B to create a Special Purpose Stabilization Fund for the repair and maintenance of schools to be known as the School Capital Stabilization Fund, and further, to see if the Town will vote to appropriate the sum of \$1.5 million to said School Capital Stabilization Fund, provided, however that no sums shall be expanded hereunder unless and until the Town has voted to assess an additional \$1.5 million in real estate and personal property taxes for said purpose pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 59, Section 21C of the Massachusetts General Laws (Proposition 2 ½), to take any other action relative thereto.

SELECT BOARD

INFORMATIONAL SUMMARY:

Motion made by Mr. MacLellan to indicate the school committee's support of Article 11: School Special Purpose Stabilization Fund as read in the record, seconded by Mr. Carr. Mr. Kearney-Aye; Mr. Carr-Aye; Ms. Lesky-Aye; Mr. MacLellan-Aye; Mr. Dial-Aye.

**Select Board
Advisory Committee
Capital Budget
School Committee**

Article 12: School Environmental & Site Testing Analysis

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate or transfer from available funds the sum of \$400,000 for the purpose of paying the cost of site evaluations for Cohasset Middle School/High School as well as the financial options and considerations for the repair, addition, renovation, or replacement of said building or to take any action relative thereto.

SELECT BOARD

INFORMATIONAL SUMMARY:

Motion by Mr. MacLellan for a resolution to express the school committee's support of Article 12: School Environmental & Site Testing Analysis and the expenditure of \$400,000 for that purpose, seconded by Mr. Kearney. Mr. Kearney-Aye; Mr. Carr-Aye; Ms. Lesky-Aye; Mr. MacLellan-Aye; Mr. Dial-Aye.

**Select Board
Advisory Committee
Capital Budget
School Committee**