

JOINT SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Concord-Carlisle School Committee
Concord School Committee
Zoom Meeting
December 15, 2020

Present: Sara Wilson, Chair, CCSC
Heather Bout, Vice Chair, CCSC; CSC
Courtland Booth, Chair, CSC; CCSC
Cynthia Rainey, Vice Chair, CSC; CCSC
Eva Mostoufi, CCSC
Alexa Anderson, CSC; CCSC
Fatima Mezdad, CSC; CCSC

Present from Administration: Dr. Laurie Hunter, Superintendent of Schools, CPS & CCRSD
Jared Stanton, Director of Finance & Operations, CPS & CCRSD

I. CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL

The CCSC meeting was called to order by Ms. Wilson at 5:03 PM. Mr. Booth then called the CSC meeting to order, noting that it was being recorded. Roll call attendance was taken: Anderson, aye; Booth, aye; Bout, aye; Mezdad, aye; Mostoufi, aye; Rainey, aye; Wilson, aye.

A. A. Executive Session – A motion was made by Ms. Bout, for both CSC and CCSC, seconded by Ms. Rainey, for both CSC and CCSC, and that the Concord School Committee and Concord-Carlisle Regional School Committee would enter into Executive Session under Purpose 2 of the Open Meeting Law: To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel and Purpose 3 of the Open Meeting Law: Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 30A, section 21(a)(3) to discuss strategy with respect to litigation in the case of L.Y. v. Kester Krueger, CCTV, Inc., Town of Concord and Concord-Carlisle School District, as an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigating position of the Committees as declared by the Chair, and return to Open Session at 5:30 PM. The motion was approved by roll call: Anderson, aye (for both); Booth aye (for both); Bout, aye (for both); Mezdad, aye (for both); Mostoufi, aye; Rainey, aye (for both); and Wilson, aye.

The committees returned to Open Session at 5:46 PM and Ms. Wilson noted that the meeting was being recorded.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

III. CHAIRS & LIAISONS REPORT

CCHS Student Rep, Amy Tedeschi, stated that CCHS held a socially distanced winter sports fair and spirit week. Student Rep, Linda Xu, stated that students are hopeful for winter sports based on the success of the fall sports programs. She stated that many clubs have been able to continue fundraising efforts. Ms. Tedeschi noted the upcoming snowstorm, asking what will happen if students lose power while participating remotely in classes. Dr. Hunter stated that if there are widespread outages, the district would have to return to a more traditional snow day.

Ms. Anderson stated that she received an email from Concord Together, a local initiative, to encourage people to shop locally, stating how grateful they were to work with the CCSHS students and were excited to partner with them the future.

Ms. Bout stated that the CMSBC is meeting again and working on a new schedule and Mr. Booth noted that the committee would be sharing this timetable with the community. Ms. Rainey suggested that the CMSBC communicate with the community as to where the project stands.

Regarding the Concord election, Ms. Rainey shared the following dates: caucus on January 25, 2021; papers turned in by February 4, 2021; election on March 25, 2021; warrant open February 27, 2021, closing on March 26, 2021.

Ms. Mezdad stated the first meeting of the Policy Subcommittee was held last week, noting that the next meeting has already been scheduled for January.

Mr. Booth stated that the Public Access Advisory Committee met, noting that the Education Director position at the studio is still pending and that the CCHS music and sports coverage is underway. Mr. Booth stated that METCO held its legacy celebration last Friday virtually and that he has had communications from other school committees regarding winter athletics.

IV. CORRESPONDENCE

Mr. Booth stated that the CSC received communications from the CMS 8th Grade Civics classes regarding the consideration of renaming Columbus Day to Indigenous People's Day.

Ms. Wilson noted that Trish McGean, Public Health Nurse, has been recognized as an "Everyday Hero" in the Boston Globe.

Ms. Bout noted how impressed she was with how the 8th graders laid out their arguments for or against renaming Columbus Day as Indigenous Peoples Day.

V. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Hunter stated that the second of three professional path afternoons was held on the December 2nd, and included topics on cultural competency and social emotional learning. She stated that there was a professional day on Friday, noting that not having all the professional days at the start of school is proving to be very good decision that has allowed teachers to plan and collaborate. She stated that there are selected students attending full time at CMS and CCHS in addition to the initial groups, noting that more staff have been trained in the program used in RTI. Dr. Hunter stated that the district has been setting up common approaches and structures for the elementary students in the morning if quarantined. Dr. Hunter stated that there was a successful COVID webinar held on December 3rd, noting almost 200 people were in attendance. She stated that the district has been sending families and staff to the testing site in Cambridge, noting that the feedback has been very positive with results in 24 hours or better. She stated that they need more materials on site for the CCHS testing to begin after the New Year. Dr. Hunter stated that she met with all of the nurses and principals to establish a plan for COVID related communication over the break. She stated that Mr. Stanton has been working with Central Office and building leaders on the preliminary budget. In terms of cultural competency, Dr. Hunter stated that there is a coffee with Boston families planned for this week, also noting that the Cultural Competency Committee met last week. Dr. Hunter stated that the CMS Building project has begun work again and that a timeline is being discussed.

VI. REPORTS FOR DISCUSSION

A. School Improvement Plans. Building principals introduced themselves: Naomi Krakow, Alcott; Angel Charles, Thoreau; Matt Lucey, Willard; Justin Cameron, CMS; Mike Mastrullo, CCHS, and Dr. Hunter noted that the elementary principals would be presenting together. Mr. Lucey reviewed the goal of Multiple Paths to Success, sharing examples of how the elementary schools are fostering student engagement, curriculum coverage and the growth of all students in the new learning environment, in-person, hybrid or remotely. Ms. Charles spoke to the goal of Well Being, reviewing protocols developed to ensure the physical safety and mental wellbeing of all students and staff. Regarding the goal of Inclusive Culture, Ms. Krakow spoke about how the elementary schools are working to ensure that all students feel valued, respected and welcomed, no matter what the learning environment. Regarding the goal of Innovative Environment, Ms. Krakow, Ms. Charles and Mr. Lucey spoke about how the elementary schools are rethinking and redesigning physical and educational spaces to accommodate the new demands of teaching and learning during a global pandemic. Ms. Herbert spoke about the Star 360 screener that is used in the elementary schools through high school level to help identify students who are struggling.

CMS Principal, Justin Cameron, shared the goals of Multiple Paths to Success, Well Being, Inclusive Culture and Innovative Environment. He noted: supporting teachers in the different modalities, identifying gaps from the school closure last spring and developing plans for filling the gaps, maintaining connections with students across classrooms,

participating in the district wide cultural competency committee, engaging in literature review, creating a Virtual Main Office and a CMS temporary website. Mr. Cameron noted the importance of communicating with families and students during the reopening through the Google site. Ms. Mezdad asked what Challenge Success looks like this year at CMS and Mr. Cameron stated that the work is embedded and has informed decisions made in the reopening. Ms. Bout asked about the transitioning of 6th graders into CMS and Mr. Cameron stated how important the reconfiguration has been, the importance of the 6th graders having their own space and advisory program. Ms. Rainey asked if the Help Desk was being used and Mr. Cameron stated that it was being well utilized.

Mike Mastrullo, CCHS Principal, reviewed the CCHS goals: Goal 1) Improving practices to ease student transitions from one school to another and one town to another; fully implementing best practices for a 9th grade education, and supporting students and staff of the 9th grade Academy; Goal 2) Implementing tiered levels of support to meet the academic and social/emotional/behavioral needs of all students; Goal 3) Collecting feedback from staff, students, and parents regarding their experiences during the 2020-2021 school year, analyzing and integrating information from their perspectives into our daily operations to maximize learning and enhance the experiences for all students, staff and parents; Goal 4) Creating a collaborative and inclusive culture at CCHS and the community that values diversity and recognizes the contributions and uniqueness of each person. Ms. Wilson asked about the supports at CCHS and Mr. Mastrullo stated that, because of COVID, they are unable to provide the resource of drop-in support. He stated that teachers are the front line of extra support, noting that CCHS has expanded the amount of students able to access support. Ms. Mezdad asked about Challenge Success and Mr. Mastrullo stated that many Challenge Success practices are embedded within what is done at CCHS. Ms. Mostoufi thanked Mr. Mastrullo and the CCHS teachers for supporting the students during this time.

A motion was made by Ms. Bout, for CSC and CCSC, seconded by Mr. Booth, for CSC and CCSC, to move Item VIII. A – Parent, Staff and Survey Results up in the meeting. The motion passed by roll call: Anderson, aye (for both); Booth, aye (for both); Bout, aye (for both); Mezdad, aye (for both); Mostoufi, aye; Rainey, aye (for both); Wilson, aye.

A. Parent, Staff and Student Survey Results. Ms. Herbert shared the results from the Parent, Staff and Student Survey. She stated that the survey was given in November to students in grades 5-12, parents and faculty, with over 2,000 responses, noting that she has never had such remarkable positive results on a survey. Ms. Herbert shared themes from the results: Over 90% of parents say that school is good, very good or excellent; Over 85% of students and faculty say that school is good, very good or excellent; parents are grateful for in person school; parents report their children are in better spirits; parents are grateful for sports and extracurricular; parents report more learning and accountability that the spring; children are grateful for in person school; students are happier now than in the spring; students like seeing their teachers in person; students feel safe in school and have adjusted to the structure and routine; students feel Zoom classes are more engaging than anticipated; faculty report students are happy to be back; faculty report that it's easier to build relationships with students in person; faculty report student compliance with safety protocols is good; faculty report Zoom classes have worked well and flexibility to go remote at a moment's notice is good; faculty expressed deep gratitude for custodial staff.

Ms. Hebert shared themes from parents' comments on what could be improved: more in person learning, CMS and CCHS students have too much homework, concern over deficits because of last year, need more communication about how individual children are doing and elementary students should not have specials on Wednesday afternoons. Ms. Herbert shared themes from students' comments on what could be improved: most think no improvements are necessary, students would like to see friends from other cohorts, students would like more in person school, traffic flow and social distancing needs to be enforced, it's hard to be on Zoom all day, it's harder to learn on remote days, students would like to have more fun activities with peers in classes, need more homework free weekends, late lunch at CMS on Wednesdays and alternating weeks at CCHS are confusing. Ms. Herbert shared themes from faculty comments: teachers are working very hard and appreciate the extra family time, traffic flow rules and social distancing need to be reinforced, some students are struggling to focus during virtual environments, curriculum expectations should be prioritized, and some technology issues come up from time to time.

B. Cultural Competency Strategic Plan. Dr. Hunter reviewed the draft document on the Inclusive Culture Action Plan, noting the benchmarks on professional development, curriculum, hiring and retention of diverse staff, student engagement, community engagement and partnerships, policy, teacher contractual and resources. The SC discussed the benchmarks and Mr. Booth asked about an equity audit. Dr. Hunter suggested putting a separate agenda item on

for January/February to hear from Ms. Herbert and Mr. Nyamekye on an equity audit and Ms. Rainey recommended budgeting for an audit. Dr. Hunter noted that the School Committee Goals reference professional development with Paula Martin. Ms. Bout noted how helpful it is to have the School Committee roles defined on the document.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

A. Early Retirement Incentive. Mr. Stanton reviewed and summarized the savings difference between offering a \$30,000 and \$40,000 early retirement incentive. Dr. Hunter noted that the deadline would be sometime in the middle of January. After discussion, the School Committee agreed that it made sense offer the Early Retirement Incentive to eligible employees with 15 years of service in the District.

A motion was made by Ms. Rainey, for CSC and CCSC, seconded by Mr. Booth, for CSC and CCSC, to support the Early Retirement Separation Incentive. The motion passed by roll call: Anderson, aye (for both); Booth, aye (for both); Bout, aye (for both); Mezdad, aye (for both); Rainey, aye (for both); Mostoufi, aye; Wilson, aye.

A motion was made by Ms. Rainey, for CSC and CCSC, seconded by Mr. Booth, for CSC and CCSC, to support a \$30,000 Retirement Incentive amount. Ms. Anderson, Ms. Bout, and Ms. Wilson voted against the motion and Mr. Booth, Ms. Rainey, Ms. Mezdad, Ms. Mostoufi were in favor. The motion passed.

VIII. ACTION ITEMS

A. Vote to Approve Superintendent's Contract Addendum A. A motion was made by Ms. Bout, seconded by Mr. Booth, to approve the Superintendent's Contract Addendum A, as reviewed in Executive Session. The motion passed by roll call: Anderson, aye (for both); Booth, aye (for both); Bout, aye (for both); Mezdad, aye (for both); Mostoufi, aye; Rainey, aye (for both); Wilson, aye.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Ms. Bout, for CSC and CCSC, seconded by Ms. Rainey, for CSC and CCSC, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed by roll call: Anderson, aye (for both); Booth, aye (for both); Bout, aye (for both); Mezdad, aye (for both); Mostoufi, aye; Rainey, aye (for both); Wilson, aye and the meeting adjourned at 9:04 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Erin E. Higgins

Approved: 1.12.21

Abbreviations:

CCHS	Concord-Carlisle High School
CCRS	Concord-Carlisle Regional School District
CCSC	Concord-Carlisle Regional District School Committee
CCTA	Concord-Carlisle Teachers' Association
CMS	Concord Middle School
CMSBC	Concord Middle School Building Committee
CPS	Concord Public Schools
CSC	Concord School Committee
DCL	Dual County League
DESE	Department of Elementary & Secondary Education
FTE	Full Time Employee
MASC	Massachusetts Association of School Committees
METCO	Metropolitan Council for Educational Opportunity
MMN	Minuteman Media Network
OPEB	Other Post-Employment Benefits
RTI	Response to Intervention
SC	School Committee

SEPAC

Special Education Parent Advisory Council