Cohasset Public Schools

Empower Students to Improve Communities

COHASSET SCHOOL COMMITTEE MINUTES
Wednesday, October 2, 2024
6:00 PM

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

Virtual
Zoom *(chat enabled)*
https://zoom.us/j/93210720844
ID: 932 1072 0844 / Password: 461964
Dial In: +1 929 205 6099

Televised
Streamed Live on Cohasset 143TV

Facebook Cohasset Live Streaming
(watch/listen only)

In Attendance:

Craig MacLellan, Chair
Lance Dial, Vice Chair
Ted Carr, Secretary
Jennifer Lesky
Tori Hanna
Susan Owen, Director of Finance and Operations
Dr. Leslie Scollins, Assistant Superintendent
Mrs. Sarah Shannon, Superintendent

All School Committee Meetings Are Recorded.

AGENDA

Call to Order
Chairman MacLellan called to order the regularly scheduled meeting for the Cohasset School Committee for Wednesday, October 2, 2024 at 6:01 PM. Members of the school committee and those attending rise and stand and pledge allegiance to the flag. Members of the school committee who are present are asked by the Chair to please indicate so with **Roll Call: Mr. Carr-Present; Mr. Dial–Present; Ms. Hanna - Present; Ms. Lesky-Present; Mr. MacLellan–Present.**

Opening Remarks
The Chair would like to remind everyone that tonight's meeting is being broadcast on Cohasset 143 TV. It is also being Streamed on Cohasset Live Streaming via Facebook. For anyone who participates virtually, folks can log onto Zoom for the meeting using the pass code on top of the agenda and they welcome any questions utilizing the Q&A feature on Zoom for folks who can't be here in person.

Another reminder for everyone who is watching, the next item on the agenda is public comment reserved for any concerns, thoughts, questions, or comments that are not related to items already on the agenda. If folks have a thought or something to share relative to an agenda item, simply wait until the meeting arrives to that point on the agenda to do so, they'd be happy to hear from you. Otherwise, if there is something not related to anything on the agenda, please take a moment to utilize the Q&A feature to type a question or a comment into the field via Zoom and a member of the school committee will address it at an appropriate time.

Public Comment
There are no public comments.

Invited Guests

- **Voting Awareness for Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) Project**
  (Mr. Tom Hickey, Superintendent of the South Shore Regional Vocational Technical High School)

Superintendent, Mr. Tom Hickey of South Shore Regional Vocational Technical High School provided handouts to members on the School Committee members to review to which Superintendent Hickey will give an overview of where the South Shore Regional Vocational Technical High School are, and perhaps for some in the Cohasset community to know who they are. One of the documents is the SS Technical High School MSBA building project that provides an overview of what their future might look like that can be found on their school website at sstechproject.com. The other document is a series of PowerPoint slides about Cohasset's history with the SS Technical High School with some recent enrollment history and two topics. One being the potential for a future building project and another topic at the risk of confusing matters is something the South Shore Technical High School is bringing to a Special Town meeting which is a tweet to their regional agreement on how they apportion debt. When debt gets assessed to the 9 towns, the assets are fixed at the start time when borrowing and this will change if approved by the 9 communities to move to a 4-year average with their enrollment changes.

Cohasset is one of the 6 towns that formed the South Shore Regional Vocational Technical High School, and the 2nd oldest school in Massachusetts that was charted in 1960 and doors opened in 1962. Superintendent Hickey has been fortunate to be at the South Shore Technical High School for 30 years where he started as a teacher and has served in his role there as Superintendent for the past 14 years. Superintendent Hickey says he comes as a bit of a bias where the SS Technical High School does a good job and if they don't, folks can certainly direct any concerns to him. The South Shore Technical High School has been very fortunate to have Cohasset Public Schools as a partner all these years even though the number of students enrolled from Cohasset Public Schools might be small. It doesn't take away the fact that the Cohasset community finds Vocational Education to be valuable and Cohasset's 2nd Public High School where it's a variable path for where it's the right fit.

The South Shore Technical High School has tried for 6 years to get invited into the MSBA Building Project since applying in 2015. In 2021 the SS Technical High School was finally able to get invited in from the MSBA. Fast forward to the present day they have a project team who designed the best value project for the region for the next 50 years. Superintendent Tom Hickey wanted to do something new to build a 900 - student school building on the ball field behind their school on Route 123 on Webster Street in Hanover, MA. This school would address all the deficiencies they have in a school that has a 1960 vintage where everything is small, systems are in decline and done the best they can. The SS Technical High School has a waiting list of 75-100 students from within their district. They just brought in the Town of Marshfield that makes them the 9th community to which Superintendent Hickey says was a good move. The Town of Marshfield had no access to Vocational Education and Marshfield is a town that can cost share with the cost of the SS Technical High School MSBA Building Project.

The South Shore Regional Vocational Technical High School offers 12 vocational majors and many traditional majors such as automotive, carpentry, metal fabrication, welding, etc. They've added newer programs in the last 15 years with computer technology and expanded their design and visual communications several years ago and open to horticulture landscape construction. If SS Technical High School gets this new building, they'll be able to offer a plumbing program and a veterinary science program with more vocational educational options for students in terms of geography both of which have such a strong labor market demand.

Invited Guests

- **Voting Awareness for Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) Project**
  (Mr. Tom Hickey, Superintendent of the South Shore Regional Vocational Technical High School)

Superintendent Tom Hickey states the only other question that might come up in the early phases of this project will be if this is approved, how will the SS Technical High School know what to forecast for a potential new school.

The process in the early phase is to go directly to the voters and a school committee which is a single individual appointed by each town to the school committee who opted to go to a Special District Election. This will take place on Saturday, January 25, 2025 for all 9 Towns to be invited to have registered voters go to the polls in their respective towns and vote "Yay" or "Nay" to support the MSBA Project or not. With a "Yay" vote in the aggregate if that prevails 50 percent plus one the project is considered approved. What makes this election unique unlike a municipal election is the question of how a community funds the project at the direction of the community. Most communities are going to host the election, see if it passes, and then go ask their voters how they want to fund their share of the debt (Probably a debt exclusion in most communities.) Most of the mechanics are tied to the Spring Election Ballot and the unique part is the approval in January, 2025 that will trigger the next steps.

Superintendent Tom Hickey says one of the things that SS Technical High School will be doing at the end of this month after the MSBA Board meeting on October 30, 2024 is to push out more finite precise numbers and some ideas of how they're going to borrow. Superintendent Hickey has been doing his own calculations and contacting Unibank. The SS Technical High School is looking at borrowing a short term for at least 3-4 years and the full borrowing would roll out in the fiscal year 2030. The message from the communities is clear they love us, value us, and they do a great job, but boy they have a big, haunted list of other capital things going on, so could they please keep that in mind. The answer is absolutely yes. By doing the interest only on borrowing early it will assist communities as they have to feather this project in with other competing demands that might be on the horizon.

Right now, Cohasset's enrollment share is about 1 ½ percent of their district. The MSBA will likely officially approve this project that will cost $276 million dollars with $111 million dollars of grant money with $165 million dollars to be part of the cost at the local level. When Superintendent Hickey goes to the Department of Revenue Tax Impact Calculator, he's looking at perhaps a high watermark for Cohasset for being somewhere between $45-$60 dollars a year for the average assessed home. That figure is based on current enrollment and enrollment would fluctuate on that regional agreement Superintendent Hickey just talked about.

The last 20 years, Cohasset's enrollment has been anywhere from ½ percent to 2%. This is why the Cohasset School Committee has invited Superintendent Hickey to allow him to raise awareness in a community that may be above the fold in terms of Capital matters, because every dollar matters. Superintendent Tom Hickey appreciates the school committee for allowing him the platform to be able to bring this up tonight. He also notes it's going to be on the SS Technical High School to return to Cohasset in multiple formats to explain this in more detail.

The Chair would like to remind everyone this is very early on, it is merely preliminaries of informational sharing that Superintendent Hickey was kind enough to be here and express before the school committee.

Vice Chair, Lance Dial thanks Superintendent Mr. Hickey for coming, the information helpful. He's a huge fan of vocational schools, it's the way for the future. How does that regional agreement work with the January, 2025 vote and if that passes, are all towns bound to fund.

Superintendent Updates

• 2024 National Blue-Ribbon Schools Program (Mrs. Sarah Shannon)

Superintendent, Mrs. Sarah Shannon would like to start this evening with some celebrations and to really celebrate Cohasset High School tonight with an announcement that has been made and with a new announcement to share which isn't on the agenda because it came to her later this afternoon.

Congratulations to Cohasset High School for being a National Blue-Ribbon Award-Winning School that received a really nice award sent from the Congressional District of Massachusetts. Cohasset High School is the only high school in the entire state of Massachusetts to be awarded as the 2024 National Blue Ribbon School. Cohasset High School was recognized by the Secretary of Education at the National level for being a high school that has been exemplary in closing the achievement gap. This is something for all to be very proud of and it's something that really needs to be celebrated among staff and students in achieving that type of distinction. This is a very prestigious award, not many are given and they're very proud of Cohasset High School.

In addition, the district found out today through the College Board Cohasset High School has been again named as a "Platinum School" for AP results. In order to earn a platinum status, it's when enough students experience an AP course before graduation. If 50% of the class take an AP exam and earn 3 or above, or if enough students take 5 or more AP tests before graduation. Cohasset High School has 82% students who've experienced at least 1 AP exam before they graduate with 74% students who've earned 3 or better on AP scores to potentially receive college credit and that potential is dependent on the School or University that determine what gets credit and what doesn't. The platinum criteria for receiving a score of 3 or better is 50%, and Cohasset High School is at 74% for students who received 3 or higher on AP scores. This is really amazing what CHS students are accomplishing in the amount of AP courses that are offered at Cohasset High School with the size and the amount of students who are taking AP exams and doing so well is a credit again to the teachers and to students. Principal Scott shared this out a little bit today, and Cohasset Public Schools will make some official notice on this very soon. Congratulations Cohasset High School!

• Anxious Generation (Mrs. Sarah Shannon)

Thank you to Buttonwoods Books & Toys for their welcome to a community conversation about the "Anxious Generation" book. They had an amazing attendance at that event attended by staff, attended by families not just from Cohasset, but other communities as well as students. There was a really strong panel that included their own CHS English Teacher, Mr. McCabe and student, Ella Lynch. This was an interesting evening with quite a bit learned about the impact that both cell phones and social media specifically in this shift in society that plays in children's hands. As a district coming out of that conversation are several things and they're still continuing to come up with what this full plan will look like. At the high school level, Principal Scott has put out a request to students and parents to be on a committee to look at what cell phone usage will look like and what the future policy around cell phones will be at the high school level, and he has a really great response to that request and he's actually taking on more people than what he originally thought. This will be an ongoing conversation and would expect at some point in this current school year that a committee will be coming to this school committee to make recommendations for shifts to a new school policy to how cell phones are used at the high school.

There's been some conversations at leadership meetings about how each school is approaching these conversations both in terms of what does play look like within the school day and how they're using technology in general. Elementary schools are easier because it's really not a place for cell phones or watches. The Middle School has "Away for the Day," and they'll continue to reinforce those rules to explain and talk to kids about it, because it's really important.

Superintendent Updates

- **Anxious Generation (Mrs. Sarah Shannon)**

Superintendent, Mrs. Sarah Shannon put out in her newsletter a district wide challenge to play no matter how old they are, and this month's challenge is to get out there and hop, skip, jump rope, to do something they haven't done since being a kid, to keep conversations going and keep it forefront of people's minds because it is really important as Jonathan Haight says in his book, it is a community wide effort. It's not just as a school, it's not just parents, and it's not just students, it has to come with all of them working together. The schools will continue to talk about it and hope families will keep talking about it, and they'll hear more about it as the year goes on.

- **Safe Harbor – Screenagers (Mrs. Sarah Shannon)**

Thank you to Safe Harbor because they're supporting these efforts in this work. At the request brought forward by Ron Ford the Chair of the Wellness Department who is funding 3 different versions of "Screenagers" in a video. They starred as "Screenagers" in one movie that was really geared towards cell phone usage that has now evolved so now there are 3 movies. The first movie is "Growing up in the Digital Age" which is for later elementary students that will be part of their health curriculum at lower grade levels. Then there's "Screenagers Under the Influence" which addresses facing drugs and alcohol in the digital age. This will be part of the 7th grade Wellness curriculum and for 9th grade Wellness curriculum they'll be using Screenagers in the next chapter which is "Mental Health in the Digital Age." All of this is connected to cell phone usage and what kids are seeing online and how it impacts them through the decisions they make in their everyday life. So grateful to Safe Harbor for supporting those efforts and keeping those conversations going in that way.

- **District Goals (Mrs. Sarah Shannon)**

In August they held their Leadership Retreat and as a leadership team they came together to do a lot of things, and one of those things was to think about the district's goals for the year and what they'll be working towards. This is an interesting year because they've completed their strategic plan that ended at the end of June of last year. They'll be engaging in a new strategic plan process in the Spring, 2025 with Superintendent, Mrs. Sarah Shannon being brand new. This is a bit of a gap year and Mrs. Shannon says she's calling it a bridge year, a year that takes them from the end of one strategic plan to a new strategic plan. Superintendent, Mrs. Shannon feels very fortunate before Superintendent Patrick Sullivan left had worked with the leadership team to think about the current strategic plan ends and here are the things that need to continue and wrap up before starting a new strategic plan. They want to make sure they're not introducing something brand new before they start the new strategic plan. All of that aligned really well with what Superintendent, Mrs. Shannon was thinking as she came into the district. They've worked together as a leadership team to prioritize those items in the Spring and decided what to work on for goals for this year. These goals also include some of Superintendent, Mrs. Shannon's personal goals as the new Superintendent. These draft goals were shared with the entire staff on Opening Day as well. This was important for them to know that they're going to continue the work that has been ongoing, and it's been good strong work. It's clearly doing what it's meant to do, achieving high levels of success for students. It gave them an opportunity to finish some of the things that are multi-year goals they had that needed to be done.

There are 6 goals in total with the first goal being student learning goal for the district. This is around their Multi-Tiered System of Supports and to folks at home who might hear this, this refers to MTSS. It's how to identify students who need additional support and what interventions a student may need and require and how to implement those interventions using data to determine if those interventions are working or not. What students may need to either be done differently or if they sort of graduate out of MTSS because the intervention worked.

Superintendent Updates

- **District Goals (Mrs. Sarah Shannon)**

The first goal for this coming year is to really identify and ensure they have a consistent process across all grade levels PreK-12 to create an opportunity, a way to communicate to families what that entire MTSS process is. Families hear MTSS and some don't necessarily know what that means so they want to be really clear and transparent with families on what it is and what's happening when their children begin to be in the MTSS process and how parents are involved in that process and what type of communications are going back and forth while their student may be engaged in the MTSS process. The goal this year will be to align all MTSS systems and provide documentation that outlines those consistent processes and share with families.

The second goal is really Mrs. Shannon's goal as a new Superintendent where she'll be participating in the New Superintendent Induction Program that Maureen Lacroix who is Superintendent Mrs. Shannon's coach who was here at the last meeting. It's a series of classes that Superintendent Mrs. Shannon will be attending with other new Superintendents across the state. It includes her entry plan and includes the findings that she'll share with the school committee in the Spring, 2025. Superintendent Mrs. Shannon also included the educational visioning process for Cohasset Public Schools engaging as part of the CMHS Feasibility Study and the strategic planning process they'll be doing in the Spring, 2025. All of that combined will lead to the next step in where they are as Cohasset Public Schools.

The third goal is something the district has been hearing for a few years now which is the Maps curriculum, creating or adopting, and implementing benchmark assessments that's been an ongoing effort. The goal is to complete that work by the end of this school year. Dr. Scollins and Rock Roberts have been leading that work and all the teachers have been using a lot of Professional Development time to complete that work and will continue to do that this year so at the end of this year all that documentation will be complete and will be able to start sharing it publicly by next Summer. Families will have overviews of what is happening at each grade level or within content areas as their children move through the different schools in the Cohasset School District.

The fourth goal is to continue to address social, emotional wellness among all students. Last year with the generosity of the Wellness Program started to do some restorative justice training for staff and in their case, it is really around community building and building the foundation with respect and empathy among all the students. There is training for a Restorative Justice leadership team that started last year and are continuing to train staff this year in tier I as Restorative Justice practices. Start to build an implementation plan to roll out community building circles at the secondary grade level. Starting a community circle with all staff and will continue to do this on October 11th and a full day in March, 2025. It's about bringing the staff together in small community circles across the whole district. They're learning who they are and what they believe in becoming a community of educators rather than just independent schools. This is what they want students to do because when they all know each other, and they all understand they have commonalities where they may have differences of opinion but can respect each other's differences of opinion and have those conversations together where they have a really strong school district where they can learn and grow and build social emotional capacity to get along with one another. That work is happening over the course of this year as well with the intention towards the end of the year in the Spring they'll also be mapping Restorative Justice practices to the Responsive classroom curriculum at the elementary level. They're very much aligned to the Responsive classroom curriculum that is actually done in a circle that is really building those SEL competencies as this will be a nice alignment.

Superintendent Updates

- **District Goals (Mrs. Sarah Shannon)**

The fifth goal is around resources and it's really important as a district assessing and analyzing all resources including staffing, budget, transportation, class size, time on learning, technology, etc. to engage fully in the strategic planning process in the Spring and forecast future budget needs which is going to be really important as they move forward in tough economic times so they know exactly what they have and how to move forward from there. Continue to provide the same level of service to students and to grow at the same time. Both of those are really important. They've already started some of this work and will continue to do this work over the course of the year and of course part of this is their Feasibility Study for the schools.

The sixth goal is to continue to focus on communication and engagement to do some learning here around how they can better engage families and all families in different ways. The one-way communication is all the school's newsletters that are sent out but how can they engage families on different levels that is really important because they're seeing that with these conversations around cell phones and social media and all children require all of their effort and attention and how can they get better at that as a district. As they learn how to do this better, they'll also continue to think about planning and executing new family engagement opportunities at different levels in different schools this year that hasn't existed because they want to be continuing all of those conversations and engaging all families in different ways.

Mr. Carr thanks Superintendent Mrs. Shannon for her presentation, it was nicely put together.

Mr. Dial says the financial goals will definitely be very important for this coming school year.

Ms. Hanna has a question about the Blue-Ribbon communications and she's curious how they powered getting that out widespread to the whole community. This is a huge opportunity just in the sense they've talked about it the past where they have a lot of students that go off to private schools whether it's an assumption about the school or whether it's about the facility. This is a great opportunity especially as they go in the facility planning where they should be shouting out loud from there especially since CHS is the only high school in Massachusetts to receive this award is huge and it's also educating the community of what it means to be in Cohasset High School. Ms. Hanna came from a school in Maryland where this same thing happened, where they ended up putting a permanent icon outside of the school building and she recently went there and has a picture of this. It still was there and looked good when it was dated obviously back in the day. The point is to have this seen around the school so people that aren't in the school can actually see it. A vinyl banner can get old and destroyed, nothing permanent, something that is multi year.

Superintendent, Mrs. Shannon, says they've shared it in the school's newsletters and the Cohasset Anchor did an article on this as well. They've received some logos for things that come out of this for this district for people to see routinely. They want to know how to get that to families that aren't part of the district other than the Anchor. Superintendent, Mrs. Shannon has asked Chris Senior who volunteered his PR Department and does great work. Mr. Senior does 5 things for folks that know about Cohasset for the week and Mrs. Shannon can ask Mr. Senior to put that up because that would get to everybody as well, but she's open to other suggestions on how to reach out to families that aren't already part of the district.

Superintendent Updates

• District Goals (Mrs. Sarah Shannon)

Chairman MacLellan states once they get the imaging it may be worthwhile to explore what the final banners might look like and put those in either in the gymnasium or in the main stairwell at CHS where everyone pretty much goes by there. Also, outside where they had a banner to "Congratulate the Class of 2020" during the pandemic when it was kind of an off year in terms of graduation would be a good place to put there too. Ms. Hanna brought up a good point and something like that would probably be a fairly short-cost way to advertise to everyone. Even for people that don't necessarily live in this town that drive by because this is a big accomplishment! Chairman MacLellan will work with Ms. Hanna and Superintendent Mrs. Shannon to figure out, it's really a good idea.

Ms. Lesky appreciates the presentation from start to finish. Her question is about the Platinum status and what AP classes they're offering, and where can that information be found. Is it a course book because maybe families consider private schools when they're making an informal decision on what is being offered at the high school level. In particular what are those AP classes and also how many of these AP classes are offered by the district and how many kids are taking their own initiative through other avenues and making that a highlight too. If there's a very robust curriculum and robust offerings that should be something that is put forward to the general public. It's also important that people outside of Cohasset see Cohasset as a great district that helps people in Cohasset believe they're in a good school district. Whatever those metrics are that makes their schools special and put them front facing in some type of brochure.

Teaching and Learning

• Academic Initiatives (Dr. Leslie Scollins)

MCAS scores have been released by the state and the accountability reports are out there and they've received students reports. Families can expect those results by the end of October, and they'll be posting in ASPEN, they will not be going through USPS mail. They'll be sending out information on the school website when that happens. The staff is now getting that information and they're doing the data analysis so the teachers will have this information to talk to families about it. They also look at benchmark assessments they have and look at what's going on for students around trends and patterns, curriculum pieces and check for students who are meeting expectations and what they'll do for them on that. Next Friday, October 11th is a full Professional Development Day for the staff and there is no school for the students. They'll be working on benchmark assessments, in particular for grades 6-12, the whole district is working on those.

Ms. Lesky asks should parents from the district expect to hear there are some concerns about their child's performance knowing that MCAS is only one measure plus some of those other early assessments they may have already done. If there are trends that are concerning will parents expect to be contacted by the school.

Dr. Scollins says it depends on the student's age and what information families will receive whether it's MTSS or other concerns students may be having from reading specialist at the elementary level. At the Middle School level, they'll be getting all their fall assessments, and everything will be published in ASPEN, it's one place for everything.

Budget, Resources and Governance

• Budget and Finance

➢ Budget Update (Mrs. Susan Owen)

The voted school budget for FY25 is $23,909,407 plus a separate one-time allotment of $342,399 to cover the Special Education shortage. This is a total of $24,251,806 available to spend for FY25. As of August 31, 2024, they have expanded $1,353,957 and they have encumbered $2,493,664. Expenses are proceeding as projected.

Budget, Resources and Governance

- **Budget and Finance**

➢ **Budget Update (Mrs. Susan Owen)**

The Business Office as well as the Finance & Operations Department will need to encumber the entire payroll in order to ensure they have funds to cover payroll through the end of the year so it will give a clear idea when they need to freeze budgets. The only salaries paid were during the months of July and August to Administrators, Central Office, Staff, Office, Secretaries, Custodiams, Summer School Employees, IT Staff.

Teachers, Paraprofessionals, Cafeteria Staff, Bus Drivers, and all other school employees' salaries begin in September. Monitoring each and every account and freezing them as they become zeroed out, and the only override would be approved by the Superintendent. They're very conscious this year on a very tight budget. Requisitions for the purchase of supplies and materials are currently being entered and will show as encumbered in the budget report once the purchase orders have been processed.

School	Budget	Expended	Encumbrances	Balance	% Used	FTE
Osgood	$4,514,368	$104,767	$222,156	$4,187,475	7.24%	52.10
Deer Hill	$4,380,032	$121,384	$148,784	$4,109,865	6.16%	46.40
Middle	$4,218,395	$ 85,034	$ 22,659	$4,110,702	2.55%	46.00
High School	$7,241,994	$353,783	$423,940	$6,464,272	10.73%	66.80

Circuit Breaker funding received in FY24 was $1,177,034. Due to budget shortfalls and unanticipated expenditures, the district needed to utilize $1,078,643 leaving a balance of $98,391 to be carried over into FY25. Circuit Breaker is a state program providing school districts with reimbursement for some of the costs incurred for providing "free and appropriate education" to students with special needs.

Capital Outlay Funds for FY25 - $435,070

School Bus Lease	$ 90,000
Electric School Bus Lease	$ 7,000
Furniture Replacement – Student & Staff (Deer Hill Cycle)	$ 35,000
Replacement of Aging Chromebooks (540–3-Year Lease $143,000)	$ 51,337
Replace Smart Projectors/Panels in All Rooms (CHS)	$225,483
Deer Hill Chromebooks	$ 26,250
TOTAL	**$435,070**

Capital Outlay Stabilization Fund for FY25 - $450,000

Middle/High School Fire Alarm Study	$150,000
Deer Hill Completion of Retiling Floors	$300,000
TOTAL	**$450,000**

The Food Service Department had a very successful 2023-2024 school year with many upgrades and enhancements including a new pizza oven. It is reported they have far exceeded the record for how many meals they are serving per day, which is over 500.

A review of transportation is ongoing as their ridership has increased. They had over 80 students register the first week of school. If anyone has specific question, please contact Mrs. Owen prior to the meeting so that she can be prepared to fully answer questions or concerns at (781) 383-0611.

Budget, Resources and Governance

- **Budget and Finance**

➢ **Transportation Report (Mrs. Susan Owen)**

Currently, eleven (11) full-time, licensed school bus drivers and currently lease eight (8) 2024 Integrated Coach diesel school buses. Own one (1) 2014 Blue Bird school bus that is currently out of service, and lease one (1) Electric school bus. The eight (8) leased diesel school buses have the capacity to leave town for sports and field trips, the Electric school bus does not. If a bus is out of service for more than a week, they'll need to double up on bus routes, which is something they try to prevent.

The maximum seating capacity is 77 passengers on a standard school bus and consists of three (3) students per seat which is only feasible at the elementary level.

Future considerations looking at routes and staffing assessments. Potential budget requests to increase line-item total. This year they're looking for potential budget requests for additional buses and/or vans which times have changed, and things have increased to cover basic transportation needs. Looking at fee structure for FY25-FY26. The only way to generate revenue is to raise fees.

Mr. Carr says this is broad and they obviously need to dig in, it's challenging.

Mr. Dial appreciates Mrs. Owen report and comments it's a phenomenal presentation, and very well organized. The last budget cycle there was a Capital request for next year to have vans that could save money that eliminates $8,000 in bills would pay for a van. From now until they start talking about the budget Mr. Dial asks Mrs. Owen if she can get that analysis together to support that budget request. If those $15,000 of expenses could be saved by having these two (2) vans the pitch the school committee should give to Town. This has been an upheld battle, and the recommended approach is to reassess the budget. This is too big of a gap that will require more contributions to the schools from the Town and need to have a strong case to the budget where they're committing to everything to minimize that.

Superintendent, Mrs. Shannon says the schools will be asking parents to actually sign up their children for the bus prior to the registration deadline. They build the budget with routes for the number of students who register for the bus and when 80 registrations come in the week before school starts changes everything! That is something that families will hear a lot from the schools if their child is going to ride the bus to please pre-register on time or a late registration fee will be applied.

Ms. Hanna asks how actuals compare to registers given to riders that ride the bus this time of year. Might have to rethink this and get creative where some students live within a one-mile radius of the school and there must be a way to get them to school.

Ms. Lesky was struck by the need to be less reactive in situations and be more proactive with the data gathered put forwarded is really a good start. Will there be a possible surge of riders in the winter and how will that be managed whether or not Now there's a restructuring of fees and how can they make the schools more accessible to walkers, bike riders and how to encourage to lessen the stress of bus units for a long term approach and really paying attention to the data that will really serve them well in terms of budgeting because it is concerning. Ms. Lesky's thought would be contracting a charter bus for the afternoons that would be less expensive and flip that and say, "they're using their own buses for sports" and "going to hire a charter bus for a bus route."

Budget, Resources and Governance

- **Budget and Finance**

➢ **Transportation Report (Mrs. Susan Owen)**

Mr. MacLellan asks if Mrs. Owen can get some quotes together on figures from different companies and how many vendors there are and asks if it would be less money to do a route for one (1) hour opposed to a sporting event that would be at least three (3) hours. Whether it's an hourly rate or flat rate and let Superintendent Mrs. Shannon know the discoveries would be very helpful.

From the Chair's perspective the school committee is going to at some time in the near future have a joint meeting with the Select Board and may have a need for a critical discussion about how the Town is going to better fund the school department because he feels it's going to get worse. Last year was the worst budget year he's seen since serving on the school committee. Seeing these figures in red is a critical problem, it's like a red alert, and this is just one of them! This is adversely going to impact operations if they don't get this done.

- **Gift: Middle and High School Learning Commons Donation for 2024-2025 Academic Year from the Parent School Organization (PSO)****

Mrs. Owen says last year the Cohasset PSO came forward with a percentage from a proposal of $50,000 to be broken down over several years. In 2023-2024 academic year the PSO presented $20,000 in the Spring from this gift to the schools and the PSO are giving the school's 2024-2025 academic year $10,000 that will be applied each academic year until it reaches $50,000. The donation the school received was put towards refurbishing the entire library at CMHS.

A motion was made by Mr. Dial to accept what was articulated by Mrs. Owen, Director of Finance and Operations moments ago, seconded by Ms. Hanna.

Aye-All

School Facilities

- **Building Update**

➢ **Cohasset Middle and High School Feasibility Study (Mrs. Sarah Shannon)**

There's been a lot of action since last meeting where they had a team of folks who went on some site visits to visit some schools actually in Portland, Maine to do a little bit of teaching and learning there in addition to their learning spaces they visited the Gates Middle School in Scituate and the Abington Middle School in Abington and the Dearborn Stem Academy in downtown Boston. They all looked at it with regard to space and with regard to best practices for teaching and learning. It gave them all a good sense of what types of things are possible in terms of a facility, and in terms of what they see as a student learning experience. The task at hand now is to come back as a district to think about what they want here in Cohasset. They actually had another team do a walk-through Cohasset Middle and High School to see teaching and learning in action and see some of their spaces that exist currently. They also had AI3 there for two (2) nights during the Middle High School Open House Nights where they did community events and community forums. AI3 brought in large maps that lay on the floor where people could walk upon that gave an aerial shot of the Middle High School building facility and all the surrounding land. The folks who joined them came in with suggestions and asked questions and gave their thoughts. Mrs. Shannon says they really tried to make a point this was study to learn on what is possible and this study is helping them figure out what the answer is for this facility.

School Facilities

- **Building Update**

➢ **Cohasset Middle and High School Feasibility Study (Mrs. Sarah Shannon)**

Starting this Monday, October 7th from 8:30-11:30 AM they're going to kick off their three-part visioning workshop to help create that educational vision that will be the heart of what any new facility could potentially look like in the district. They're bringing in a lot of people together that are administrators, teachers, students, families, and folks from different committee's and organizations in Town. In total they expect about 50 people in the room that will be hosted by AI3 and their consultant MLP to lead that work. This is where they start to really think about in full to put words together that become a building. They'll meet again from 8:30-11:30 AM on Tuesday's this month in October. After those meetings are done, they'll be more to share. At some point in the near future, it would actually be beneficial to bring this to a school committee meeting to do a special short report on where they stand with the feasibility study.

The other thing for folks in the community that are watching, once they get to this next phase, they will have another community session so that people can come to be updated and to give input. The school's task is to really keep people as informed as possible along the way. The dates for this will be communicated out so people can plan sooner than later.

Mr. Dial says he's been hearing a lot of very good stuff from folks but the one thing that people kept asking are they going to build a new building. Mr. Dial just wants to clarify are they just focusing on a brand-new facility or are they still considering a renovation potentially the existing facility and are they looking at all options on the table.

Mrs. Shannon says the Feasibility Study has to look at all options, nothing has been decided at this point. They want the Feasibility Study to look at all options even if they were in the MSBA process; they make them look at all options as well. They can't move forward with the MSBA unless they've exhausted all of the options to determine what the best right option is, they have no predetermined decision at this point.

Ms. Hanna says having AI3 come in to go through that exercise is a great experience. They should try to engage Deer Hill and Osgood School families with the AI3 project given the fact that's the population that will actually be in the building.

The Chair states a lot of the elements of a new building would be geared towards the community at large usage. Also, another important element is realizing the economic scale in terms of other facilities where they don't need to build in the town if they have a school that encompasses all these considerations. To Ms. Hanna's PR point if she ever feels there's an event that would capture an audience that's particularly valuable to please communicate that with Superintendent, Mrs. Shannon and she'll turn that over to AI3 who will absolutely come out and conduct a similar presentation for that. A portion of the value of having this Feasibility Study is to start the discussion so everyone in the community can start to manage expectations around the community on what is happening and is this going to happen, is it on the horizon. There's a lot of infrastructural changes that are proposed around the Town.

Community Relations / Communication

- **Reports from School Committee Sub-Committees and Liaisons**

Nothing to report.

School Committee Governance

- **Topics Not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair**

There were no topics not reasonably anticipated by the Chair.

School Committee Governance

• Approval of Minutes**

There are five (5) sets of minutes that need to be approved which will get the school committee meeting minutes up to date. The Chair thanks Mr. Carr and Ms. Bock for helping them with this.

A motion was made by Mr. Carr to approve the June 26, 2024 meeting minutes as presented by the Secretary of the Cohasset School Committee, seconded by Mr. Dial.
Aye – All
Motion carries, meeting minutes for the June 26, 2024 are approved by virtue of a unanimous vote.

A motion was made by Mr. Dial to approve the July 10, 2024 meeting minutes as presented by the Secretary of the Cohasset School Committee, seconded by Mr. Carr.
Aye – All
Motion carries, meeting minutes for the July 10, 2024 are approved by virtue of a unanimous vote.

A motion was made by Ms. Lesky to approve the August 21, 2024 meeting minutes as presented by the Secretary of the Cohasset School Committee, seconded by Ms. Hanna.
4 Aye – 1 Abstain
Motion carries, meeting minutes for the August 21, 2024 are approved by virtue of a vote of 4 members with 1 abstained for having not been present at the meeting.

A motion was made by Mr. Dial to approve the September 4, 2024 meeting minutes as presented by the Secretary of the Cohasset School Committee, seconded by Ms. Lesky.
Aye – All
Motion carries, meeting minutes for the September 4, 2024 are approved by virtue of a unanimous vote.

A motion was made by Mr. Carr to approve the September 18, 2024 meeting minutes as presented by the Secretary of the Cohasset School Committee, seconded by Ms. Hanna.
4 Aye - 1 Abstain
Motion carries, meeting minutes for the September 18, 2024 are approved by virtue of a vote of 4 members with 1 abstained for having not been present at the meeting.

School Committee Governance

• Future Agenda Items

The Chair would like to suggest they start brainstorming about fundraising within the school community. When Mr. Kearney was on the school committee, he had an interesting idea for a section on the school website to be dedicated to specific items schools need. The school committee just received a very generous donation from the PSO, and one particular donation item stands out which is the new scoreboard out on the field, which was a large ticket item, but someone privately donated the funds for the school committee to do that. The Chair notes this for a future agenda item relative on how to fundraise for things the school's need.

• Executive Session[1] #3 – To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining**

The Chair states there is a reason to move into Executive Session for reason #3 Section 21(a) [1] Chapter 30A G.L. for strategy related to collective bargaining. The school committee does not intend to reconvene in open session and will adjourn the October 2, 2024 school committee meeting straight from Executive Session.

School Committee Governance

- **Executive Session[1]** #3 – To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining**

A motion was made by Mr. Dial to move into Executive Session #3 to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining, seconded by Ms. Lesky. Roll Call Vote: Mr. Carr-Aye; Mr. Dial-Aye; Ms. Hanna-Aye; Ms. Lesky-Aye; Mr. MacLellan-Aye.

Adjourn**
The regular meeting of the Cohasset School Committee adjourned at 7:53 PM.

****Requires Committee Vote / Action**

[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.

Respectfully submitted,
by Kathy Bock
October 10, 2024