

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

**Cohasset School Committee Meeting**

**School Committee Minutes**

Wednesday, September 20, 2023

6:30 PM

Learning Commons

Cohasset Middle/High School

Virtual Meeting - Cohasset 143TV/Zoom/Facebook

**In Attendance:**

Ted Carr, Secretary

Paul Kearney

Jennifer Lesky

Craig MacLellan, Vice Chair

**Also, In Attendance:**

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:** The Vice Chair, Craig MacLellan welcomes everyone and called to order the Wednesday, September 20, 2023 meeting of the Cohasset School Committee at 6:31 p.m. Mr. Kearney is not here yet, Mr. MacLellan was told he'll be a bit late. Mr. Dial is absent travelling on business. Mr. MacLellan asks members of the school committee who are present, please indicate so in **Roll Call**: Mr. Carr –Present; Ms. Lesky –Present; Vice Chair, Mr. MacLellan –Present; Mr. Kearney –Present.

**Opening Remarks:** Mr. MacLellan reminds everyone the next section on the agenda is for Public Comment that is reserved for points of discussions, questions, or comments that are not related to something already on the agenda. If there is something to comment on that is on the agenda, just wait until we arrive at that point in this meeting. For anyone who is watching this meeting from home this would be the time to make any comments, concerns, or questions which can be utilized in the Q&A feature on Zoom and one of our Administrators who monitors this will note Public Comment for the record.

**Public Comment:** N/A

*Vice Chair; MacLellan notes for the record that Mr. Kearney arrived at 6:32 p.m. and gives him credit for full attendance today.*

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## **School Updates:**

• **School News (Dr. Patrick Sullivan)** – The past 2 weeks have been very successful operationally and things are moving very smoothly. We had a wonderful Open House last evening at Joseph Osgood Elementary School. It was amazing to see such happy kids and families and all our staff are wonderful. Dr. Sullivan is so proud to show off the amazing teachers we have and also Principal Farrell, who always does an incredible job! Families who came and saw the school for the first time are hopefully impressed with the school as Dr. Sullivan is! The Osgood school is beautifully designed and it's a joy to see the kids and teachers interacting every day there. We have more exciting Open House's this week and the following week with both Dr. Scollins and Dr. Sullivan who are excited to see families to greet there. These Open Houses are great showcases for all our schools, and we'll have more curriculum opportunities as we go at every level to really dive into the curriculum.

- |                               |                               |         |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|---------|
| • Osgood Elementary School    | Tuesday, September 19, 2023   | 6:00 PM |
| • Deer Hill Elementary School | Thursday September 21, 2023   | 6:00 PM |
| • Cohasset High School        | Wednesday, September 27, 2023 | 6:00 PM |
| • Cohasset Middle School      | Thursday, September 28, 2023  | 6:00 PM |

As many may know, MCAS has gone public in a kind of an overarching sense and Dr. Sullivan is really proud to say that our results are very positive and are moving in a very positive direction. As we looked at our data it was nice to know our accountability meets our targets so every school in every school district gets a set of targets that they're supposed to achieve. We were ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> in progress as a school district in the whole State towards those targets. There was one Charter School that had 100% meeting or exceeding those targets, we're at 99%, we ran the fastest and the furthest from our individual starting line. We also had a couple of our schools who made distinction since Dr. Sullivan has been here and everything is looking good and we're really proud to present that data knowing that we're not where we want to be yet, but everyone will be really proud of our progress. If families feel like progress for their student isn't going well in any way, please reach out to teachers and/or principals, we're always here to support your child.

We have a couple of exciting events that will be happening. On Saturday, September 30<sup>th</sup> 7-10 PM with our amazing Cohasset Education Foundation (CEF) for their 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Fall Festival at the Paragon Boardwalk in Hull, tickets are \$100 each and this will go to some amazing benefits for the schools with innovative learning in our facilities. Our Learning Commons at Deer Hill is the most recent achievement which Dr. Sullivan can't wait to have put in place and hoping this will be at the beginning of next month. On Wednesday, September 27<sup>th</sup>, we have a rescheduled Safe Harbors Candlelight Vigil 6:45-7:45 PM at the Town Commons. Our sports teams continue to have great success at all levels, and we'll have some more substance updates about their progress at the next school committee meeting.

Mr. Kearney would like to comment on how well our custodians really take pride in the schools, and the new furniture up in the Skippers Café for the Seniors looks unbelievable! Really nice job whoever choose the furniture there.

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## **School Updates:**

• **School News (Dr. Patrick Sullivan)** – Dr. Sullivan notes that the redesigning of the Skippers Café all comes from student voice in this, we now have new furniture for more collaborative space. Hats off to Principal Scott and his Student Advisory at the High School who put this all together. Also, Ms. Owen and her team who worked with facilities and custodians to make our school grounds and courtyards show pride, and it's starting to show more and more at our facilities. This is a lot of credit from this school committee for advocating for the staffing we needed to make this happen.

## **Teaching and Learning:**

• **Academic Initiatives / Updates (Dr. Leslie Scollins)** – **Good News!** Dr. Leslie Scollins shares a couple of nice accolades that we have. U.S. World News Report ranked Cohasset High School #21 in the State.

The 2023 MCAS accountability is we saw progress towards our improvement targets at Deer Hill, Middle and High School and altogether we were 99% meeting or exceeding targets and we were #2 in the State, and that's a district accomplishment! Cohasset High School and Deer Hill School are schools of recognition, with the 66 schools in Massachusetts that were recognized, and we have two of them! It's either achievement and/or growth, we know that we have a nice little strip on each school for school recognition.

Dr. Patrick Sullivan expresses since he's been here in the district, he's never seen this achievement before, this is great news!

Dr. Leslie Scollins says they're creating curriculum maps and guides that's part of Rock Roberts, our Director of Data Evaluation, and Data Curriculum Evaluation. Mr. Roberts is really spearheading this alongside Dr. Scollins. They're creating a committee made up of district building leaders, department chairs, reading and math specialists, classroom and special education teachers and special education specialists to come together to create curriculum maps and guides. The curriculum maps will be front facing, we'll do an overview of what the expectations are for families to understand, an overview of what happens in a year in the content areas at each grade level. We'll build those guides out for our teacher's resources. We have our first meeting on October 12, 2023 with some interest amongst several teachers from all the grades and all the schools who volunteered. We're going to take everybody offsite to the Light Housekeeper to do this because we need a nice, big collaborative space for us to work in. The reason why we need to do this is because we need to align curriculum vertically and horizontally. We want information for our families and our community to see what we're doing, and this will help us look at our curriculum, assessments, and learning opportunities that will be aligned with the standards. This will be a foundation for us to move to more authentic learning assessments, and a base for our curriculum review cycle.

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### **Teaching and Learning:**

• **Academic Initiatives / Updates (Dr. Leslie Scollins)** – Dr. Leslie Scollins received a grant for our History Department along with Principal Sullivan at Deer Hill from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). This grant supports our Strategic Plan and will be for grades 5-7 that will vertically align History and Social Studies for grades 5-6 to focus on culturally responsive and inclusive education. There will be collaboration with Scituate and Hingham Public Schools this year, and Cohasset will be working with Hingham the following year. They'll also be working with Tufts University in which DESE contracted with them to be the research team that will evaluate the program to better understand how the curriculum works and how to better support students and educators using this program.

### **INVESTIGATING HISTORY**

This is a DESE approved program for Investigating History, and we're really excited about this. The units that are going to be covered are for grades 5: Early Colonization and the Growth of Colonies; Grades 6: Human Origins; and grades 7: Central and South Asia. Each of these grades are going to work together next week and over the course of the next couple of months those units will be implemented. A letter will be going out to the families by next week, so they have an overview of what is going on with this program and that they understand that we're working with Tufts University as well. We'll be sending out surveys for feedback from families, which is not part of the grant process, but we'll provide this to families, they'll want to know.

Vice Chairman MacLellan asks Dr. Scollins if there was any structural programming of elements to the Investigating History curriculum that could point out what makes this so different? Are students presenting their findings in certain groups, or to teachers, or is there a group submission where everyone is able to learn from everyone else's efforts?

Dr. Leslie Scollins reiterates that this obviously is very much driven to the standards, but it's really put in the hands of the students, where they were asked questions, and not necessarily given the answers. They're given questions and they're given resources in order to make some of their work make connection to what's happened in history. Students are given more than what the story is, it's more about investigating, and really diving in and making some of their own selection about what we basically read and wrote about on Paul Revere. We're making them be thinkers and keep them moving so they're learning history, but at the same time not from just one point of view. It also has a lot of collaboration with a bit of writing and drawing in there too. There are all sorts of ways for students to show their learning. It also allows for debate and discourse for what they want.

Ms. Lesky asks if there will be any release of primary sources for students inside the textbook.

Dr. Scollins says this will all be open with pre-printed materials because it's easier, but even that it's very minimal. They don't want work sheets in students' hands, it's not a workbook, it's nothing like that at all!

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**Teaching and Learning:**

**• Academic Initiatives / Updates (Dr. Leslie Scollins)**

**ILLUSTRATIVE MATH**

Illustrative Math is going well at the Middle School which was also a grant that was written and is a DESE approved mathematics program and lots of schools around the area are using it. This also supports our Strategic Plan and we're replacing outdated resources with a vertical curriculum alignment with Elementary Bridges Math. We've been doing Bridges for a couple of years, its very inquiry based, hands on, so there's a cluster of math in there, it's the same concept. This is being implemented to grades 6 through 8, just for students in that grade level. The accelerated program happens in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade and that will be implemented the following year. We do have accelerated that is happening, we're just not using a cluster of them. We thought it best to implement the program so that everyone gets the language and understands what it's all about. We're actually working with our Professional Development with Imagine Learning and we'll be consulting with Better Lessons to create accelerated pathways. They will have virtual meetings with individual teachers every other week throughout the year. We want to make sure that all the standards and obviously everything is being matched, we're looking at how we are delivering the instruction. We want to get the Middle School to a place where they have the language that will allow us to then move into the High School and do this all at once. We felt like those students in the High School hadn't even had Bridges, so their expectations would be bigger and would be more of a challenge for them. We do want to look at pedagogy to make sure that students are having more authentic learning with more hands-on experience.

A letter went home to families at the beginning of the school year to explain this, and there'll be more information at the Open House.

**ELEMENTARY LITERACY**

We have implemented Readers Workshop for year 1 at the Osgood School and Deer Hill is in year 2, and we're also in year 2 with Heggerty Phonemic Awareness for grades K-2 students. Then we have the implementation of the revised dyslexia guidelines from DESE so our Universal Screener DIBELS8 along with a variety of assessments including i-Ready Diagnostic that's partially with DESE. We're using the data from it, but really DIBELS8 is actually the Universal Screener that they've asked us to do.

Dr. Patrick Sullivan would also like to mention the implementation of Readers Workshop, although it's year 1 for students at the Osgood School, many teachers took part in this.

A family letter will be sent explaining the new guidelines and the process for grades K-3. Family reports will be sent out October 6<sup>th</sup> for i-Ready and DIBELS. Additional assessments for students who are significantly below grade level will happen once all our assessments are completed.

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**Teaching and Learning:**

**• Academic Initiatives / Updates (Dr. Leslie Scollins) - ELEMENTARY LITERACY**

Our initial Fall assessments are for any students who are significantly below grade level and will be notified of a plan within 30 days. One of the things that will be a little different is when kindergartner's walk through the door, they're not expected to know everything yet. Our job is to be teaching them, so we decided last year that we would make sure that we're really pushing in a reading specialist for the first couple of months to see if there is a need for OT Speech and Language. Our reading specialist are already in the classrooms because this is the student's first experience here and we'll triage in the classroom to make sure that they're getting really good core instruction and there will be small group instruction supporting students. We won't do any pull out of Kindergartner's until after the 2<sup>nd</sup> assessment window which will be in January, 2024 which makes sense. At that point if students are still not making the progress we want, then we'll be pulling students out, most kindergarten students will never, that's not the model that we're going to go with. We'll continue our partnership with TLA, Teaching and Learning Alliance for that embedded professional development which has been really successful.

Ms. Lesky asks if Readers Workshop and Heggerty are both taught fully as sort of distinct programs or are we merging the two (2). Ms. Lesky is mostly interested in whether or not Heggerty is being taught the way it's written as a full phonemics curriculum.

Mr. MacLellan comments we're in year 2 with the new ELA curriculum that we started to implement last year. We just began to implement a new approach to this last year!

Dr. Leslie Scollins says we added Heggerty Phonemic Awareness last year. We had Foundations that is already there, and Readers Workshop is where it's more around reading components, around comprehension, small group instruction, explicit instruction, mini lessons, and that is our approach to comprehensive literacy.

Mr. MacLellan asks if Dr. Scollins can clarify products that comprise the entirety of our elementary literacy programming. Obviously, there is Heggerty, Readers Workshop, and Foundations. What other elements are there too? Did the same things exist in both, or one or more non-exist for example at Deer Hill, or the Osgood School. Right now, what do we use for elements that are there that create our whole ELA curriculum at Osgood. All of this is super important to Mr. MacLellan, it cuts right to the heart of what we do. Is it possible to bullet point grades K-2 as well as grades 3-5 literacy programming.

Dr. Scollins says we have units of study which we use for grades K-2 to study since it's brand new to them. Then grades 3-5 are different because they have not been revised yet. We use Heggerty Phonemic Awareness for grades K-2. Readers Workshop are units of study and that is where there's many lessons and explicit skill development.

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#### **• Academic Initiatives / Updates (Dr. Leslie Scollins) - ELEMENTARY LITERACY**

Foundations are for grades 4 and 5 so if a student is in year 2 at Deer Hill, they don't have Heggerty Phonemic Awareness because that is only for grades K-2. There's word work for grades 4 and 5 that is syllable work, morphology, really learning how to take what they have learned in their earlier years, learning those rules around how to break out a word, understand words, and what the rules are so that they can continue to decode, Readers Workshop again is the same.

The reason why Vice Chair, MacLellan asks because of the level of controversy associated when we were rolling this out and one of the issues or concerns was something unique to Cohasset's approach that we're using a bunch of different tools, for example, we have a versatile quiver, so to speak in our ELA arsenal. Mr. MacLellan just wants to make sure that those elements like our multi-sensory approach, evidence-based learning, all of that instruction is present and reiterated in that programming and that we have ELA levels now, and it's vertically aligned with the students, so kids aren't getting confused as they're shifting from grade levels to now being presented in a different way. It's a creative approach and Mr. MacLellan has faith especially given some of the results that we've seen. We just want to make sure that we're monitoring this and make sure we're presenting that too as Mr. Roberts is getting his data together to present to the school committee and put this in a more condensed, intelligible format so we can review together to make sure we're going the right way.

### **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

On Friday, September 22<sup>nd</sup> we have a half day in the afternoon for our professional development day to focus on assessment data at each building. The Elementaries will have completed their assessments so they'll be looking at that data in Math and Reading making sure that they can dive into what the data is saying. It's not a huge dive, it's only for a very short period of time. We had some collaboration with Special Education working with ESP's and therapists looking at IEP's and making sure everybody is up to date on what they need to have as information and giving everyone a little bit of time to complete their Cohasset Public Schools Annual Mandatory Training which includes Special Education, Civil Rights, Harassment, Bullying, Mandated Reporter Training and Cyber Training. The Comprehensive Health Curriculum Frameworks were approved which is timely for us because we are in the process of our curriculum review cycle. We'll be very methodical with this and very transparent and open with families in terms of our plans for it and what we have to do because of the mandated curriculum.

Vice Chair, Mr. MacLellan is glad this development was brought up, there may be some elements in this that people find troubling or concerning if not totally informed about it. Maybe we can break it down with some of Dr. Scollins' academic initiative updates to what the components are at different levels so we can invite discussions about this at a meeting.

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**Teaching and Learning:**

• **Academic Initiatives / Updates (Dr. Leslie Scollins) - PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Also, Mr. MacLellan would like to commend our Administrators, our teachers, and staff members for what they have done to realize those MCAS results which will be summarized in further detail at a later meeting. It's one data point just like we said when we weren't happy with some of them and when we are happy with them, we'll say it's one data point, it's an important one, it's a well-known one, and it's a commonly understood one.

We give credit to our Administrators when we obviously dealt with this last year. We were unhappy with the MCAS results, and the district obviously responded to the families' concerns and the school committee's concerns. Thank you for what you do, there is a cluster of people that care who are doing a job and being responsive. We look forward to hearing about the full analysis of everything with the breakdown, those highlights were pretty spectacular. Mr. MacLellan just wanted this to be recognized because this is one very tangible piece of evidence that we're moving in the right direction. It's encouraging and our Administrators and entire staff should be congratulated for that in mind.

**Budget, Resources and Governance:**

• **Budget and Finance**

➤ **Monthly Update (Ms. Susan Owen)** – Ms. Owen reports the FY24 July-August finance report. The school budget is a little different this year. The voted school budget for FY24 is \$22,905,421. This represents an additional \$560,069 or a (2.51%) increase over FY23. As of August 31, 2023 we have expended \$976,190 and we have encumbered \$2,662,897. Our expenses are proceeding as projected. Our budget is sort of in three places right now.

Our original request by the School Department asked for an increase in the amount of \$1,152,257 (5.16%) which included \$300,000 for the absorption of full day kindergarten cost to parents and an increase to our supplies and materials budget in the amount of \$272,188. The Town agreed to fund both these amounts outside of our regular budget allocation as One-Time Funds. There are now two (2) separate accounts, one for full day kindergarten (\$300,000) and one for additional supplies and materials (\$272,188). We ended up getting what we needed and asked for, just in different pockets, and thanks to the Town for that.

The only salaries that were being paid over the summer, July, and August, were our Administrators, Central Office Staff, Office Secretaries, Custodians, Summer School Employees, and our IT Staff. Salaries begin in September for our Teachers, Paraprofessionals, Cafeteria Staff, School Bus Drivers, and all other school employees'. Right now, Ms. Owen says there are no areas of concern.

Requests for the purchase of supplies and materials are currently being entered and will be shown as encumbered in the budget report once the purchase order has been processed.



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## Budget, Resources and Governance:

### • Budget and Finance

#### ➤ Monthly Update (Ms. Susan Owen) - Individual Schools Budget

<u>School</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Expended</u>	<u>Encumbrances</u>	<u>Balance</u>	<u>% Used</u>	<u>FTE</u>
Osgood	\$3,993,308	\$116,304	\$218,080	\$3,658,924	8.37%	45.60
Deer Hill	\$4,071,421	\$112,237	\$159,770	\$3,799,414	6.68%	43.23
Middle	\$4,138,878	\$ 60,605	\$ 44,112	\$4,034,162	2.53%	46.0
High School	\$7,097,617	\$270,079	\$462,248	\$6,365,291	10.31%	65.90

The Circuit Breaker Funding received in FY23 was \$1,170,609. The Circuit Breaker Funding for FY24 has not yet been released by the State, they said sometime in September. The reimbursement rate has remained at 75% for several years. The Circuit Breaker is a state program providing school districts with reimbursement for some of the costs incurred for providing “Free and Appropriate Education” to students with special needs.

#### Circuit Breaker

<u>Year</u>	<u># of Students</u>	<u>% Reimbursement</u>	<u>Reimbursement Amount</u>
FY24			TBD
FY23	18	75%	\$1,170,609
FY22	18	75%	\$ 701,856
FY21	14	75%	\$ 648,533
FY20	19	75%	\$ 726,908
FY19	14	75%	\$ 592,920
FY18	13	75%	\$ 534,554
FY17	14	75%	\$ 446,704

#### FY24 Voted Capital List

	<u>APPROVED</u>
1) Bus Lease (2024-2027) (District) 8 Diesel	\$ 90,000
2) Replacement of Aging Chromebooks (540- 3 Yr. Lease)	\$ 52,000
3) Replace Smart Projectors/Panels in All Rooms (CMS)	\$ 155,161
4) Replace iPads at Deer Hill and Osgood School to include (253 iPads & cases, charging station)	\$ 93,960
5) Continue to replace furniture-Teacher/Students Deer Hill* adding a new grade 3 class.	\$ 35,000
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$ 426,121</b>

#### Grants

Some of our grants are similar to years past. Some grants have gone down, typically grants go up a bit each year. The School Improvement grant has gone down a little bit, it was \$19,492 last year, this year the amount is \$18,343. SPED IDEA grant has gone up from \$354,482 to \$367,028.

We have three (3) new grants that Dr. Leslie Scollins mentioned earlier.

Expanded High Quality Instruction Math: \$23,000.

Open Science Implementation at CMS: \$62,600.

Investigating History Implementation: \$26,900.

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**Budget, Resources and Governance:**

**• Budget and Finance**

➤ **Monthly Update (Ms. Susan Owen)** – Over the past few years, we’ve carried over some higher balances. This past year was very trying, lots of expenditures, lots of changes. We don’t have any Revolving funds with high balances at all, most are under \$100,000. Obviously, we’ll continue to bring in revenue, but we’ll also continue to have expenditure. The only one question is still in our School Facilities Revolving Account. We did raise the fee rate last year, so we’re hoping to see that number come down. School lunch is free, all districts are going through the same thing, they’re not being penalized for carrying over too much money because all meals, breakfast/lunch are free for all children. We purchased new furniture for upper and lower lobbies at CHS, round tables in elementary cafeterias.

Ms. Owen reports at this point in the school year, without the usual concerns such as utility costs and unforeseen tuition expenses, the budget is proceeding based on projections. Please contact Sue Owen with specific questions prior to meetings so that she can be fully prepared to answer questions or concerns. (781) 383-0611.

➤ **Annual Budget Development Process (Ms. Susan Owen)** – Every September Ms. Owen sends the prior year budget and budget workbooks to all department heads, administrators, and anyone that has a budget to manage, to see what needs will be for the upcoming year. Ms. Owen and the Leadership team meet with Dr. Sullivan to talk about positions and what we’re looking at or not, looking at whether it’s this year, or next year. The Leadership team meets every other week to discuss what direction we want to go and what our priorities are going to be. From the month of September through October, Dr. Sullivan, Dr. Scollins and Ms. Owen will meet with principals, department heads, and anyone who has a budget to manage to go over those budgets one on one. We see what everyone’s needs are and how we can meet these needs, or we collaborate on different ideas, or need to go a different direction. When we come up with a draft, we go to the Budget Sub-Committee, and then we bring it to the school committee. The school committee will also see this multiple, multiple times to have discussions about it. We meet with the Town to get their approval. It’s a fluid document that goes around and around the Town. Sometime in February or March, we want to know what it is they’re looking for, and then we start the discussion of the needs. We can get creative, which is what we did for this year. Right now, we’re closing out FY23, and we’re in FY24.

Dr. Sullivan notes from a school committee perspective after we go through our financing with the Facilities Committee, we bring forward to get approval from the school committee. We have a public hearing when we’re able to present our budget to get the school committee’s approval. Then that goes to the Select Board, the Advisory, then it goes forward to the Town, for a Town meeting. It’s a great collaborative process and we appreciate the back and forth from the community on these important items.

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**Budget, Resources and Governance:**

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➤ **Annual Budget Development Process (Ms. Susan Owen)** – Ms. Lesky asks is there a point in the process where you also look at redundancies, or things that can be eliminated from the budget because it's no longer a utility. It's not just creating a list, but also reviewing it.

Dr. Sullivan says we're doing that and that's one of the things we do, and we just did. There were some ideas we had that we were going to advocate for that have been covered by other positions or repurposing, like Mr. Rock Roberts for instance coming here to help our needs with the data curriculum and data evaluation.

➤ **Preliminary School Stabilization Priority List** – Vice Chairman MacLellan states this was approved by the Select Board, but now has to go through the Town for a Town meeting. This is very much a draft of priorities for projects that we'll be seeking funding from the "Special Purpose Stabilization Fund" that was advocated for by the School Facilities Committee, and the School Committee. We had discussed presenting this to the Select Board prior to the last Annual Town meeting. The Vice Chair says this was just a little late in the game for the Select Board to get it before the community. There were a lot of other Capital needs throughout the Town. The Select Board decided to hold off until the upcoming Special Town meeting which is going to be a very important Town meeting. It's going to focus on basically all kinds of Capital improvements and Capital related needs townwide. On that will be for the Town to consider what's called the "Special Purpose Stabilization Fund" which is a fund that the Select Board can appropriate fund to a certain extent. There is a ceiling cap on it, and the amount that the Select Board has unanimously supported presenting to the Town is \$1.5 million dollars, so the schools are then able to seek through certain channels. The appropriation also has to be the fund itself to be established by a community vote at a Town meeting. Any request for appropriations up from that fund of \$1.5 million dollars needs to also be approved by the community. The list Ms. Owen is going to present are draft priorities of requests, or items that needs to be addressed within the district that we will be turning to that fund for this regular repair and maintenance type of need so we're developing this in tandem with this new concept of the Special Purpose Stabilization Fund for the schools in an effort to keep more on top of our ongoing maintenance needs here in the district. In terms of ongoing operations, any major renovations or new projects are a completely different animal and that is not what we would be using the Special Purpose Stabilization Fund for, particularly in the lower numbers. Once the Special Purpose Stabilization Fund is established, it can be refilled every year up to that \$1.5 million dollar limit, or the Select Board can unilaterally decide that they're not going to make it, they can come down from that \$1.5 million dollar. It has to be approved every year so the Select Board can come down from that \$1.5 million dollar figure to say \$500,000. The Select Board can't increase it next year, they can only go down. It's a novel concept for the school district, it hasn't been done yet in Cohasset and it is a very fiscally responsible financial planning tool that we're trying to utilize here. The school district is just one department that they're looking to create other Special Purpose Stabilization Funds to process as well.

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**• Budget and Finance**

➤ **Preliminary School Stabilization Priority List** – Dr. Patrick Sullivan knows this was done with a lot of collaboration with our Facilities team, Nick Berardi Head of Facilities for the Town with his team who really worked and really focused on what they know is in need and we will bring this as well to the Finance Facilities Committee. Thank you, Jason, and of course Ms. Healey Dippold and Ms. Maher who presented last time. Dr. Sullivan was asked to show this to the school committee by the Chair, Lance Dial.

Blue	Basically, the projects listed are completed, or on a regular operation.
Red	1 <sup>st</sup> Priority
Yellow	2 <sup>nd</sup> Priority
Green	3 <sup>rd</sup> Priority

Ms. Owen says the School Facilities has stressed the fact that our fire alarm systems in this building definitely need to be upgraded.

Dr. Sullivan reiterates that doesn't mean it's not functioning properly, it's just that we know there's a timeline on this. Our Facility team is conscious that it's going to need to be updated. Also, the figures that Ms. Owen is presenting are the estimates we have. For instance, air conditioning, which of course is something that we all want, but without doing a full engineering study, we're kind of going off the estimate and that estimate could shift significantly as we move.

Dr. Patrick Sullivan seeks permission from Vice Chair, MacLellan for the Finance and Facilities Committee to have a look at this on Tuesday, September 26, 2023 before the public can view. The Chair asked us to present where we were with this and that's what we're doing. There are some items added to our Facilities list. For instance, it's not yet determined which pocket of money mentioned with some other Special Purpose Stabilization Funds that are at play here and what ground it's coming from, but the Administration felt this needed to be put on our list just to make the point that our grounds are very important too and do need to be considered in the mix for safety and security reasons. The \$1.5 million dollars is an incredibly generous amount, yet it's really not a lot when looking at the cost. For example, the vestibule at Osgood was upwards to \$200,000 and that's just one of those things. What it comes down to is an ongoing maintenance list there. The view is we need to make sure the building runs, we've been upgrading security as much as we can and we're doing a good job of it. Thank you to Ms. Owen for this.

Vice Chair, Mr. MacLellan, gives permission for Dr. Sullivan to present the Full Priority List to the Finance and Facilities Committee to give the public an idea of what is going on that Chairman Dial wanted to accomplish to let people know what we're doing, and what's coming down the pipe. We want folks to know who we've been collaborating with and working with to where we are with this.

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**Budget, Resources and Governance:**

- **Food Service** – Ms. Owen mentions we're down to two (2) staff in the cafeteria in this building. The Food Service department has since hired three (3) and is getting back to where they need to be.

Mr. MacLellan hasn't heard back about scheduling a meeting in October and he asks Ms. Owen to reach out to the Director of Food Service to let Mr. Kearney, Dr. Sullivan, and himself know when Food Services will be available to meet in October. Please inform Mr. MacLellan, Mr. Kearney, and Dr. Sullivan of the date by the end of this week. The school committee is looking for a Preliminary Plan for Improvements to the Elementary Food Offerings.

- **Transportation:** - We hired another school bus driver because we had one bus driver who gave two (2) weeks' notice. We have a plethora of school bus drivers. At present, we have an area for parking our school buses at night.

- **Report from School Facilities Committee** – Mr. MacLellan notes he is no longer on the School Facilities Committee, but he'll be sort of a liaison because he does have an update relative to some work they were doing. They sort of hit on one thing with the presentation that Ms. Owen just gave on the Special Purpose Stabilization Fund, which is major progress. Another element of major progress is the Select Board unanimously supporting the creation of a warrant item for a Town meeting for a feasibility study for future options for the Middle/High School of what that may be, the problem is no one knows right now. We have asked for figures for how much it would be. A condensed idea from the design professionals that conducted our existing conditions study at the schools. How much would it be to move a school, or a renovation and what would that look like? What elements would be included in that? How much is an environmental survey, geological and land survey, things that we're going to be able to repurpose to MSBA's feasibility study. There's a feasibility portion or element of the MSBA program, the core program, and if we are invited to that which there's no guarantee that we're invited to that. We'll apply to it every year, but it's a needs-based selection process and it's very competitive. We're looking to make some progress on our own here in Cohasset so that we're outfitted with information to the community so they can make informed decisions as we go along. We're not waiting for a train that may never arrive at the station. The Select Board unanimously approved that condensed feasibility study to place on the warrant for an upcoming **Special Town meeting on Monday, November 13, 2023 at 7:00 PM.**

Mr. Kearney would like to thank Craig for his leadership in this, it's wonderful! It's like you don't know what you know. The idea that we have is what we have here, we have, and what our schools need, the feasibility study is a huge, powerful tool. Where do we go from here. What do we do. This just answers a lot of questions and asks if we could let the community know about the November 13<sup>th</sup> Special Town Meeting to express how important this really is in Dr. Sullivan's weekly school newsletters.

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## **Budget, Resources and Governance:**

• **Report from School Facilities Committee** – Mr. Jason Earls and Mr. Craig MacLellan presented to the Select Board before the last Town meeting on this issue, which was sort of a continuation of that effort, thank you to our School Facilities Committee. They're going to look at different folks from those committees. There are some PR videos that they're going to push out to the public ahead of the Town meeting, so everyone has more of a comprehensive understanding of what we're talking about as we go in there and ask for a vote to consider these issues. Also, who is going to present these concepts to the Town at the Town meeting. Obviously, this is a community decision, it's going to be presented to the community and that is what the Select Board unanimously supported that we get these issues in front of the community and however the community feels are where this will end up, and we hope we have some support for that. Craig MacLellan asks folks within the school district family to please come and show your support for these very, very crucial items, more so to certainly promote this at the **Special Town Meeting to be held on Monday, November 13, 2023 7:00 PM.**

## **Community Relations / Communication:**

• **Reports from School Committee Sub-Committees and Liaisons** – Mr. Carr was very pleased to see the high school will be having a musical this Fall. They've selected the award-winning musical, "Rent" and the dates are towards the end of October, early November. This is something we wanted to bring back to the schools and we're very glad to see it here.

## **School Committee Governance:**

• **Topics Not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair** – None

• **Approval of Minutes\*\*** - Mr. Carr expresses how we should stay on top of the process of approving minutes. We have a meeting, and we create minutes. Thank you again to Kathy and Jennifer Souretis in Dr. Sullivan's office for the excellent work on these minutes, we're on top of them. Mr. Carr notes he's not certain these series of minutes were voted on and he wants to be compliant with the rules, so he brought back some older minutes to make sure that we do. This is a project where we're working with the Town Clerk who has also been wonderful to work with. Some school committee members may have seen these minutes and some minutes are before Jennifer Lesky joined us on the school committee. Some minutes are more current since Ms. Lesky has been with us. Mr. Carr notes we're just cleaning up the process from here. Once we approve these minutes, they'll go back to Jennifer Souretis who will work with the Town Clerk who will post these approved minutes onto the school website and to the Town Clerk website.

**Motion made by Mr. Kearney to approve four (4) sets of minutes for February 1, 2023; March 1, 2023; March 29, 2023; May 3, 2023, seconded by Mr. Carr.  
Mr. Kearney-Aye; Mr. Carr-Aye; Mr. MacLellan-Aye; Ms. Lesky-Abstain**

**Motion made by Mr. Kearney to approve four (4) sets of minutes for May 17, 2023; July 10, 2023; August 9, 2023; September 6, 2023, seconded by Mr. Carr.  
Aye-All**

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**School Committee Governance:**

• **Future Agenda Items:** Mr. Kearney would like to have Safe Harbors come to the schools and talk about teenage drinking. Hoping to educate the community and parents about this because Mr. Kearney hears that this is happening, it's happening here!

Mr. MacLellan would like to have a Spotlight on Learning on Investigating History, perhaps have some students or teachers present this new curriculum in History to the school committee.

Ms. Lesky would like to see some work of the data Mr. Rock Roberts has collected and has worked with so far.

Mr. Carr would like to invite some students and/or teachers that are putting on "Rent" Musical to talk about this here amongst the school committee, that would be very nice.

• **Adjourn\*\***

**Motion made by Ms. Lesky to adjourn the September 20, 2023 meeting of the Cohasset School Committee at 8:21 PM, seconded by Mr. Kearney.**

**Aye - All**

**\*\*Requires Committee Vote / Action**

The school committee meeting adjourned at 8:21 p.m.

**Documents used at the September 20, 2023 school committee meeting:**

Academic Initiatives / Updates – Dr. Leslie Scollins

Budget and Finance Monthly Update [Materials F-1] - Sue Owen

Budget and Finance Preliminary School Stabilization Priority List [Materials F-2] – Sue Owen

*Kindly Submitted, September 24, 2023*  
*By Kathy Bock*