CARLISLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS www.carlisle.k12.ma.us
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CARLISLE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2025
6:00 PM
COMMUNITY ROOM, ROBBINS BUILDING
AND REMOTE ZOOM ACCESS

Present – School Committee: Lynette Kelleher, Scott Jamison, James Steele, Brian Waterson, Sharon Whitt
Present – School Administration: James O'Shea, Superintendent; Val Gransewicz, Director of Student Support Services; Mary O'Regan, Assistant to the Superintendent
Present via Zoom – School Administration: Dennet Sidell, Elementary Principal

Pursuant to Governor Healey's approved legislation, H. 62, a bill extending authorizations for all local boards, commissions, and committees to hold public meetings remotely or in a hybrid format Extended Timeline, amending Section 30A of Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2021, most recently amended by Section 40 of Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023, and replacing the current expiration date of "March 31, 2025" with "June 30, 2027." Therefore, this meeting of the Carlisle School Committee is being conducted via remote participation in order to ensure public access to the deliberations of the Carlisle School Committee. Members of the public can access the meeting via live stream at:
Topic: CSC Meeting 11-12-25
Time: Nov 12, 2025 06:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)
Join Zoom Meeting
https://carlisle-k12-ma-us.zoom.us/j/84313444324?pwd=gsVTEYbpN9dfVyOwE3J0HOenG7ndNS.1
Meeting ID: 843 1344 4324
Passcode: 507420

I. Call to Order
School Committee Chair Waterson called the School Committee meeting to order at 6:03 PM and announced the meeting was being recorded. He also informed attendees that all votes will be held until the next meeting due to an issue with the timing of the agenda posting. The next Carlisle School Committee meeting will be a remote meeting held on Friday, November 14th at 3:00 PM.

II. Public Comments - Brooke Mackintosh, 303 Russell Street, Carlisle, MA

III. Consent Agenda
Vote on the consent agenda was held until the next School Committee meeting.

IV. Information/Discussion Items -
A. Student Update - There was no student update.
B. Superintendent Update - Mr. O'Shea reported that the field hockey and cross-country seasons have concluded. The Carlisle Cross Country Invitational at Great Brook Farm was successful. Preseason volleyball activities are underway with Ms. Buchanan. The Student Council is coordinating a food donation initiative. Band and Chorus are currently running their annual fruit sale and their winter concert is coming up soon. Recent events such as Trunk-or-Treat and the Halloween Parade were completed successfully. Grade 8 transition activities to CCHS have begun, including the setup of Aspen accounts. The Youth Risk Behavior Survey preparation is underway. A Washington, D.C. parent meeting is scheduled for tomorrow for grade 8 parents. Budget and financing topics will be

addressed later in the meeting. Panorama surveys will be distributed to students soon. Recent water testing identified E. coli in the well; however, all internal building water tested clean. A communication went out to the school community and water testing will continue. The School Committee has begun to plan for Strategic Planning work. Calendar Committee and Policy Subcommittee meetings are ongoing. DEICAC and administration continue to meet monthly. The Student Opportunity Act update is in progress, focusing on narrowing the achievement gap between the overall student body and students receiving special education services. Representatives from Carlisle attended a Concord Against Antisemitism meeting. Middle School professional development in October focused on staff responses to exit interview feedback and Tier 2 interventions while elementary staff participated in parent conferences. Appreciation was expressed to CEF for supporting Makerspace creation and programming. Preparations for the French/Spanish trip continue, including work with chaperones. Facilities is exploring bringing in a contractor to backfill cleaning services due to vacant custodial positions. All contracted workers would undergo required background checks.

C. Introduction of Interim Assistant Principal - Mr. O'Shea introduced Dr. Deborah Bookis. Dr. Bookis provided a brief statement outlining her background and expressed enthusiasm for joining the Carlisle community. She highlighted the importance of a team-based approach in her work. Her official start date is the Wednesday prior to Thanksgiving. She noted that her initial focus will be on gaining background knowledge and getting to know teachers and students. Her early priorities will include building relationships within the community and then reviewing the current MTSS structure. It was noted that having an additional administrator in the building will be beneficial.

D. CEF/PTO Faculty and Staff Grants - Katie Vachon from the PTO provided an overview of this year's grant process, highlighting what was different from prior years as PTO and CEF worked collaboratively. She reviewed the list of grant proposals that were being submitted for approval. Ms. Vachon also explained how the PTO raises funds to support these grants and noted that fundraising levels are currently slightly lower than anticipated. Efforts to increase participation will continue throughout the year. Appreciation was expressed to both the PTO and CEF for their support. A vote to accept the PTO grants is scheduled for the 11/14 School Committee meeting.

E. Special Education Update - Ms. Gransewicz shared that while she is still getting to know the district, she has learned and observed a lot in her first four and a half months in the district. She reviewed the key points from her presentation, noting that her primary goal is to gain a deep understanding of the community's culture. Significant time has been spent conducting data analyses to identify trends and needs. She plans to present additional findings to Superintendent O'Shea in January, followed by a full presentation to the School Committee in the spring. Budget considerations were discussed, with an emphasis that student needs remain the primary driver in budget decisions. Ms. Gransewicz also shared early feedback and noted areas for improvement that will help guide her next steps.

F. Student Academic Performance Data Presentation - Superintendent O'Shea reviewed Middle School MCAS and STAR data. He presented longitudinal MCAS data, examining scores for each class over multiple years. It was noted that identifying a specific target group under the Student Opportunity Act (SOA) is challenging due to Carlisle's small student population. A review of the past three years of data showed that the achievement gap has not changed significantly. A question of how efforts to close the gap align with the district's mission statement, which emphasizes a broader educational experience

rather than a focus on standardized testing, was raised. STAR assessment data was also presented. It was noted that STAR results provide one data point that helps identify students who may need additional support, but it reflects only a single moment in time. There was a suggestion to identify other districts that have been successful in closing achievement gaps and consider whether Carlisle could adopt similar strategies. Mr. O'Shea will follow up with DESE to see if they can provide names of districts to contact. Dr. Sidell reviewed the supports available in the Elementary school. He shared Elementary MCAS data. It was noted that smaller class sizes provide a greater opportunity for small group instruction and support.

G. FY27 Budget Presentation - Mr. O'Shea reviewed the budget presentation linked to the agenda and noted that this year's format differs from past years as information is organized using DESE account codes. He highlighted the increasing demand for preschool special education services. To meet student ratios, the district may need to expand to two preschool classrooms. Assistive technology needs have increased significantly over the past several years. The challenges in forecasting Out-of-District (OOD) placements was discussed. Andy Paquette from TMS provided an overview of Circuit Breaker funding. The preliminary FY27 budget reflected a significant increase so work was done to develop a level-service budget. Mr. O'Shea outlined potential reductions that may be needed in efforts to target a 4% increase in the FY27 budget. Some options included eliminating club and activity stipends, reducing the number of paraprofessionals, and potential reductions in staff FTE. It was mentioned that the FY26 budget relied on revolving funds that are no longer available, and the town was alerted that this would impact the FY27 budget request. Enrollment projections for FY27 were reviewed. Aron D'Elia from the Finance Committee discussed opportunities for the town and district to collaborate creatively on solutions. Select Board member Scott Triola reported that the Select Board is working to be proactive to make adjustments so they do not have to consider a possible override. Committee members acknowledged that enrollment can shift quickly and unpredictably impacting the budget. A public hearing on the budget will take place at the December meeting.

H. FY27 and FY28 Fees - Mr. Waterson reviewed the fees that the Committee voted on in March 2025 including the FY27 fees for Preschool tuition, Kindergarten tuition, and Transportation. Committee members revisited the fees approved in March alongside the proposed fees presented in October. After further discussion, it was agreed to move forward with an across the board 4% annual increase in fees. A vote on FY28 Preschool tuition, Kindergarten tuition, and Transportation fees, as well as FY27 and FY28 Athletic fees, is scheduled for the 11/14/25 School Committee meeting.

I. Diment Park Expansion - Jessie Pecatore from the Recreation Commission reviewed the presentation linked to the agenda and discussed the proposal to adjust and slightly expand the design footprint of the park. The park area is town-owned property for which the school has oversight. The approval process would follow a path similar to the recent Banta Davis Dog Park project. The intention is not to make major changes to the park, but rather to incorporate portions of currently unused space. The goal of this presentation was to ensure the School Committee was aware of the project before the design phase begins. No vote was requested at this meeting. The School Committee requested periodic updates as the project moves forward.

J. Update on Plaza - Mr. Waterson followed-up on the discussion from previous meetings regarding replacing a portion of hardtop on the plaza with turf. The Castle Playground

Committee was seeking guidance from the School Committee regarding whether to continue to pursue the turf option. The goal is to complete work on the plaza portion of the project in summer 2026. Members of the School Committee voiced safety and maintenance concerns as well as the need for community feedback if the Playground Committee were to move forward with the turf option. Following further discussion, School Committee members indicated they did not support the turf option. Mr. Waterson will bring the Committee's feedback back to the Playground Committee.

K. School Committee Goals 25-26 - The Committee reviewed the current goal tracking document. Various committee members have been assigned as a point of contact for each goal. Ms. Kelleher and Mr. Jamison agreed to take responsibility for items related to Communication Goals and Story of the School. The Committee reviewed all goals and noted that certain items will need to be addressed sooner rather than later to maintain progress.

L. Upcoming School Committee Schedule - The December 2025 meeting is being moved to Tuesday, December 9th and the February 2026 may potentially need to be moved but that will be addressed at a future meeting.

V. Communications/Correspondence - The committee received three emails since the last meeting. One regarding the South Asian Student Society Diwali Event at CCHS, one regarding a civil rights complaint, and a request for interactive whiteboards for special education staff.

VI. Members'/Committee Reports as Needed

A. Policy Subcommittee - The Subcommittee continues to meet and review policies.

B. SESC - The SESC continues to meet with SEPAC to identify areas to strengthen.

C. Municipal Facilities Committee (MFC) - The Brick Building has several projects underway but continues to be fully functional during the work. Elevator work in various town buildings will begin soon.

D. Regional Committee - The Regional Committee is having discussion regarding a Capital Plan for CCHS. Antisemitism work continues and funds have been received to support this work through a grant.

VII. Action Items

Votes for Action Items were held for the next School Committee meeting.

VIII. Public Comments - Almudena Pacheco-Garcia, 91 Carleton Road, Carlisle, MA

IX. Adjournment to Executive Session pursuant to MGL Chapter 30A, Section 21(a) with no intent to return to Open Session: (Purpose 2) To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel (Administrators)
A motion to adjourn to Executive Session pursuant to MGL Chapter 30A, Section 21(a) with no intent to return to Open Session: (Purpose 2) To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel (Administrators) was made by Mr. Steele and seconded by Mr. Jamison.
The motion passed unanimously and the meeting adjourned to Executive Session at 9:12 PM.
Roll Call Vote: Kelleher, aye; Jamison, aye; Steele, aye; Waterson, aye; Whitt, aye.

Respectfully Submitted
Mary O'Regan
Assistant to the Superintendent
November 12, 2025

List of Documents Viewed and/or Reviewed:
CEF/PTO Faculty and Staff Grants
Special Education Update
Student Academic Performance Data Presentation: Elementary, Middle School
FY27 Budget Presentation
FY27 and FY28 Fees
Diment Park Expansion
Update on Plaza
School Committee Goals 25-26