CARLISLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS www.carlisle.k12.ma.us
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CARLISLE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 14, 2026
6:00 PM
COMMUNITY ROOM, ROBBINS BUILDING
AND REMOTE ZOOM ACCESS

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

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 1-14-26
Time: Jan 14, 2026 06:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)
Join Zoom Meeting
https://carlisle-k12-ma-us.zoom.us/j/82438567504?pwd=loAjPkdgkPmaxKO14aH9YpUYoZD42k.1
Meeting ID: 824 3856 7504
Passcode: 651348

I. Call to Order

School Committee Chair Waterson called the School Committee meeting to order at 6:02 PM and announced the meeting was being recorded.

In follow-up to the recent announcement of Mr. O'Shea's retirement in June 2026, Mr. Waterson thanked him for his decade of service to the community. Other members of the School Committee thanked Mr. O'Shea for putting student needs first and creating such a welcoming environment in the Carlisle School.

II. Public Comments -

Katie Rupprecht, Carlisle Public School Psychologist
Karli Mason, 901 Concord Street, Carlisle
Devin McGrath, 523 Bedford Road, Carlisle

III. Consent Agenda

A. CSC Meeting Minutes 12.9.25
B. Warrants
   a. Accounts Payable Warrant 26SE12;$142,426.89
   b. Accounts Payable Warrant 26SE13;$62,272.57
   c. Payroll Warrant 26PR12; $459,524.64
   d. Payroll Warrant 26PR13; $434,427.19

Motion to approve the Consent Agenda was made by Mr. Jamison and seconded by Mr. Steele. The motion passed unanimously.
Vote: Jamison, aye; Kelleher, aye; Steele, aye; Waterson, aye; Whitt, aye

IV. Information/Discussion Items -

A. Student Update - Ms. Svatek reported that the *Matilda Jr.* production put on by the Drama Club was a hit. Students enjoyed having two full weeks off during winter break. The girls basketball team is currently undefeated. The 4th and 5th Band concert and the chorus Collage Concert both went well. A representative from CCHS is coming to speak about extra curricula opportunities at the high school. Also, the class section process for next year is kicking off for 8th grade students.

B. Superintendent Update - Mr. O'Shea spoke enthusiastically about the Drama Club's production of *Matilda Jr.* and offered special recognition to Music Teacher Erin Lane for the Collage Concert, which he described as a fabulous event. He reported that work is ongoing for the 2025 Annual Town Report. Strategic Planning is underway, with the first committee meeting scheduled for January 22. Community members are still encouraged to participate, particularly by completing the SWOT survey. The district experienced its first two-hour delay of the school year last week, and a follow-up meeting was held to streamline communication procedures related to weather delays and closures. Mr. O'Shea noted that a meeting with the Town Finance Committee is scheduled for tomorrow to review the FY27 budget. Staff continue work on the Student Opportunity Act (SOA), including determining which data points will be used in the plan. He also announced that Kai Shaw has been selected as the Carlisle Project 351 ambassador. Transition planning for Grade 8 students moving to high school has begun. The Multicultural Festival is scheduled for Wednesday, February 4, an early release day, with the cafeteria open to the community after dismissal for the potluck luncheon. Finally, he shared that the School Committee building tour will take place next week and that classroom visits for School Committee members are being planned.

C. Strategic Planning - It was originally anticipated that the Committee would debrief the first Strategic Planning meeting at this time however, that session was rescheduled due to the facilitator's illness and will now take place on January 22. The Strategic Planning Committee currently has strong parent representation but would benefit from additional participation from community members and staff. To date, only 45 responses to the SWOT survey have been received, and School Committee members encouraged broader participation to ensure robust community input. It was noted that increased involvement will strengthen the overall planning process. Mr. Waterson emphasized the importance of getting out and listening to the community. Members also asked if students would have a voice in the process, and it was suggested that a student-focused SWOT survey be created and that 7th and 8th grade students be invited to participate in Strategic Planning Committee meetings.

D. Preschool Program Options - Ms. Gransewicz reviewed the slides attached to the agenda and reported that, since August 2025, the district has received multiple parent requests for evaluations as well as several referrals from Early Intervention. She highlighted the summary page of the presentation and described the expanded opportunities that two full day preschool classrooms would provide for students. There was discussion regarding the number of students with needs who can be appropriately placed in a classroom and an overview of the differences between preschool students requiring a full-day program and those receiving walk-in services. Members asked how the district ensures it is serving as many students as possible while balancing the number of preschool classroom sections. It

was noted that the likelihood of needing a second preschool classroom for the upcoming school year is high, though this carries budgetary implications. A suggestion was made to consider increasing preschool fees, as the district has historically undercharged. The possibility of out-placing preschool students to neighboring districts with available space was discussed, along with offering two-day, three-day, or four-day programs options. Also, the potential return to a half-day model supplemented with afternoon programming was reviewed. The School Committee indicated a desire to decide at this meeting on the number of preschool classroom sections for the 2026-2027 school year so the district and families may begin planning for next year. Mr. O'Shea reviewed the costs associated with operating two full day preschool classrooms and discussed the option of using FY27 fee income to help offset expenses, acknowledging that this is not considered best practice. Members were asked whether they would be open to revisiting the preschool fees previously set for FY27. It was clarified that the vote at this meeting would determine whether funding for two preschool classroom sections would be included in the FY27 budget, and that further research on preschool fees could be conducted for consideration at a future School Committee meeting.

E. FY27 Budget Update - The December budget presentation reflected a requested increase of 4.66% over the FY26 budget. With the addition of a second full-day preschool classroom, the projected increase would rise to 5.28%. It is expected that the Finance Committee will express a desire to see the overall budget increase reduced. There has been a suggestion to remove the out-of-district contingency placeholder currently included in the budget, which could lower the increase. It was noted that the upcoming meeting with the Finance Committee is informational in nature. If the district is asked to further reduce the FY27 budget increase, any resulting cuts would most likely impact student services and the student experience. School Committee members indicated their support for the budget scenario that included two full-day preschool classrooms and emphasized the importance of keeping student needs at the forefront of decisions.
F. Highland Building Recommendations - The Select Board asked the School Committee to provide recommendations regarding potential uses of the Highland Building. A small working group has been exploring various possibilities. From a school perspective, there is currently no pressing need or use for the building. This would not preclude the Town or a Town Department from utilizing the space. The Historical Society expressed interest in seeking funding to conduct a study on the costs associated with renovating the Highland Building. It was noted that, while the district does experience space challenges, the Highland Building would not address those needs. One potential recommendation discussed was the removal of the building in order to repurpose the land. Select Board member Scott Triola was recognized by Mr. Waterson and he encouraged the School Committee to share its perspective on whether the school could make beneficial use of the land without the building. The School Committee plans to vote on a recommendation at the next meeting and invited community members to submit feedback regarding the Highland Building prior to that meeting.
G. School Committee Goals 25-26 - The Committee reviewed the goal tracking document as well as progress and activities associated with each goal. There was brief discussion regarding the creation of a School Committee Membership Binder, as well as the supports and resources available through MASC Field Representatives.
H. School Committee Meeting Schedule - Mr. Waterson reported that the originally scheduled February 4th meeting conflicts with the Regional District School Committee meeting. The Committee agreed to move the February Carlisle School Committee meeting to

Wednesday, February 11th at 6:00 PM. It was also noted that an interim meeting will be scheduled for Wednesday, January 28th at 1:00 PM.

V. Communications/Correspondence - The committee received twelve emails since the last meeting. Eight regarding the preschool program, two related to Concord Carlisle Against Antisemitism Steering Committee and the DEICAC, one from the MIAA with waiver information, and an invitation to an event surrounding free speech at CCHS.

VI. Members'/Committee Reports as Needed

A. Policy Subcommittee - The Subcommittee has approximately ten policies to review prior to bringing a list of policy recommendations to the full School Committee.
B. Communication Subcommittee - Following research and discussion, the subcommittee and staff are planning a review of available platforms in hopes to streamline communications with families.
C. SESC - The SESC continues to meet with SEPAC with a focus on the Student Opportunity Act.
D. Regional Committee - The budget is currently the main focus. The Regional Committee is meeting with Carlisle Finance Committee on Thursday, January 15th. Work is ongoing for the Carlisle CPA application for the Amenities Building. A cell phone policy is being discussed for the high school. Mr. Waterson and Ms. Kelleher went on a tour of Minuteman Regional Vocational Technical High School arranged by the Regional District. The superintendent of Minuteman High School stated that for the 25-26 school year they did enroll some students from non-member districts and that they supported Carlisle students applying for the upcoming year. There was discussion of how CPS could work with 8th grade students between now and the application deadline to provide information about this opportunity. Mr. O'Shea will reach out to Minuteman High School.

VII. Action Items

A. Vote to approve the FY27 Budget
A motion to approve FY27 Budget of $14,457,864 as presented was made by Mr. Steele and seconded by Mr. Jamison. The motion passed unanimously.
Vote: Jamison, aye; Kelleher, aye; Steele, aye; Waterson, aye; Whitt, aye
B. Vote to approve the 2026-2027 School Calendar
A motion to approve the 2026-2027 School Calendar was made by Mr. Steele and seconded by Mr. Jamison. The motion passed unanimously.
Vote: Jamison, aye; Kelleher, aye; Steele, aye; Waterson, aye; Whitt, aye

VIII. Public Comments - There were no public comments.

IX. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Mr. Jamison and seconded by Mr. Steele. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 8:29 PM.
Vote: Kelleher, aye; Jamison, aye; Steele, aye; Waterson, aye; Whitt, aye.

Respectfully Submitted
Mary O'Regan
Assistant to the Superintendent
January 14, 2026

List of Documents Viewed and/or Reviewed:
CSC Meeting Minutes 12.9.25
Accounts Payable Warrant 26SE12;$142,426.89
Accounts Payable Warrant 26SE13;$62,272.57
Payroll Warrant 26PR12; $459,524.64
Payroll Warrant 26PR13; $434,427.19
Preschool Program Options
FY27 Budget Update
Draft 2026-2027 CPS School Calendar