

CONCORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

**Concord School Committee
February 25, 2026**

Present: Andrew Herchek, Chair CSC; CCSC
Tracey Marano, Chair CCSC
Sandeep Pisharody, CSC; CCSC
Carrie Rankin, Vice-Chair CSC; CCSC
Michael Williams, CSC; CCSC
Michele MacDougall, CSC METCO Representative

Present from Administration: Dr. Laurie Hunter, Superintendent of School, CPS & CCRSD
Robert Conry, Asst. Supt. of Finance & Operations, CPS & CCRSD
Shelly Chin, Interim Assistant Superintendent, CPS & CCRSD

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Herchek called the Concord School Committee to order at 6:00 PM. Roll was taken: Herchek, present; Marano, present; Pisharody, present; Rankin, present; and Williams, present.

II. RECOGNITIONS

Thoreau Elementary School Principal Justin Sparks introduced the Thoreau Student Council who were recognized for their kindness and connection initiative, which centered on creating and delivering 400 handmade Valentine's cards to local senior citizens. The fifth-grade Student Council members personally distributed the cards at a Council on Aging Jazz Brunch, a gesture that garnered coverage from local news stations. During the recognition, student speakers shared their commitment to empowering underrepresented voices and bridging generational gaps, emphasizing that true leadership stems from being a positive role model.

Ms. Marano moved and Mr. Williams seconded the motion to move the agenda item Public Comments up in the agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

Representative Carmine Gentile announced his nomination of committee member Michael Williams for the Black Excellence on the Hill Award. Mr. Williams will be honored at an upcoming event at the Massachusetts State House. Representative Gentile described Mr. Williams as a trailblazer with profound insight into the challenges facing students and faculty and commended his dedication to his Concord for All vision, a collaborative effort aimed at ensuring every student and family in the community has the resources they need to thrive. Mr. Williams expressed his gratitude to Representative Gentile and the community, stating he was humbled by the honor and remained dedicated to building an inclusive environment for all.

Charlie Parker, of Chestnut Street in Concord, addressed the ongoing solar project and requested clarification on whether CMLP has identified any remaining administrative or logistical hurdles, such as roof access or restricted installation hours, that could increase bidder costs. Mr. Parker emphasized the importance of ensuring a straightforward project by resolving outstanding school administration issues before the bidding process concludes.

Rod Rydell, 324 Main Street, Concord and a former high school biology teacher, introduced himself to the School Committee. Drawing on his long-standing history in the community, Mr. Rydell expressed his intention to attend future meetings to offer input and ask questions regarding relevant district matters.

IV. SUPERINTENDENT AND CHAIRS UPDATE

Dr. Hunter commended the tireless efforts of the maintenance, custodial, and building service crews, who worked over 24 consecutive hours to clear more than 18 inches of snow and ensure a safe return to school. She noted the critical cross-departmental coordination between the school district and the towns of Concord and Carlisle, for real-time safety updates and shared resources. Despite a successful reopening, there were pain points, such as the difficulty clearing sidewalks and coordinating METCO transportation routes through challenging areas.

Mr. Herchek shared an update on the Willard Elementary Principal search, noting a diverse advisory committee of teachers, parents, and administrators was formed. Following an initial screening of candidates, the committee recommended eight individuals to the next stage for a panel-style interview.

Ms. Lawton shared METCO is working with Boston to prioritize METCO bus stops for snow removal, noting that many METCO districts utilize the same stops. Efforts are also underway to increase parental participation and engagement within the Boston community to ensure families remain connected to district activities.

V. CONSENT AGENDA

A.	Warrants		
1.	CPS A/P		
	1075	2/12/26	\$555,372.96
	1079	2/17/26	\$55.85
	1080	2/17/26	\$326,844.27
2.	CPS Payroll		
	Pay Date	1/29/26	\$235,584.65
	Pay Date	1/29/26	\$2,343.02
	Pay Date	1/29/26	\$369,118.08

Ms. Marano moved and Ms. Rankin second the motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. The motion was approved by roll call: Herchek, aye; Marano, aye; Pisharody, aye; Rankin, aye; and Williams, aye.

VI. CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence.

VII. DISCUSSION

Ms. Marano moved and Ms. Rankin seconded the motion to move the CMS Solar Update up in the agenda. The motion passed unanimously.

A. CMS Solar Project Update - Jason Bulger, CMLP

Jason Bulger presented an update on the solar project, highlighting its transition into a more complex phase of financing and logistics. The CMLP is currently evaluating four distinct

procurement models, ranging from district ownership to third-party developer agreements, and has applied for a \$1.4 million Green School Works grant to mitigate rising costs. To ensure project simplicity and safety, the current focus is on rooftop solar, while more complicated energy storage and canopy components are deferred for further study. CMLP committed to providing a detailed comparison matrix the available options to maintain community transparency.

B. Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Committee Update

Jeff Collins and Shelly Karlin presented an update on the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail connector project. The project secured endorsements from several town committees as well as a \$40,000 grant from the Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail. This funding, combined with a \$10,000 commitment from the CMS PTG, covers the estimated \$50,000 required for pre-construction costs, including surveys and design work.

VIII. FY26 Quarter 2 Budget Transfers

Mr. Conry presented the FY26 Quarter 2 Budget Transfers noting the district is in stable financial health. The district had a \$69,906 adjustment for McKinney-Vento transportation reimbursements and a \$70,000 credit from the CASE Collaborative surplus, which reduced overall school service costs. Mr. Conry clarified that while special education grants and circuit breaker funds have been awarded, they will be applied once current encumbrances shift into actual expenses to avoid negative balances.

Ms. Marano moved and Mr. Pisharody seconded the motion to approve the FY26 Quarter 2 Budget Transfers as discussed. The motion was approved by roll call: Herchek, aye; Marano, aye; Pisharody, aye; Rankin, aye; and Williams, aye.

IX. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Ms. Marano moved and Mr. Williams seconded that the Concord School Committee enter into Executive session pursuant to M.G.L. c.30A, §21(a)(3) to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation with the Concord Teachers Association and a former teacher if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares, and not return to Open Session.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Herchek adjourned the meeting at 7:35 PM

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Gilmore

Approved: March 18, 2026

Abbreviations:

CCHS Concord-Carlisle High School

CCRSB Concord-Carlisle Regional School District

CCSC Concord-Carlisle Regional District School Committee

CCTA Concord-Carlisle Teachers' Association

CMS Concord Middle School

CMSBC Concord Middle School Building Committee

COAR Communities Organizing Against Racism
CPC Community Preservation Committee
CPS Concord Public Schools
CSC Concord School Committee
CTA Concord Teachers Association
DEIB Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging
DHCB Department of Housing and Community Development
ESSER Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund
FINCOM Finance Committee
LEAP Learning Executive and Academic Processes
MTSS Multi-Tiered System of Supports
PD Professional Development
SC School Committee
SEPAC Special Education Parent Advisory Council
WRAP Writing, Reading, and Academic Processes
YRBS Youth Risk Behavior Survey