

**CONCORD-CARLISLE SCHOOL COMMITTEE
CONCORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE
CLIMATE AND CULTURE WORKING GROUP MEETING MINUTES**

September 16, 2026

Present: Brian Waterson, Chair CCSC
Sandeep Pisharody, Chair CSC
Michelle MacDougall
Michael Williams

Present from Administration: Dr. Laurie Hunter, Superintendent of Schools
Andrew Nyamekye, Director of DEIB

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Waterson called the meeting to order at 4:02 PM. Roll call was taken: MacDougall, present; Pisharody, present; Waterson, present; and Williams, present.

II. CLIMATE AND CULTURE FRAMEWORK

A. Discuss and incorporate School Committee Feedback. Mr. Waterson stated that the biggest take away he had from the recent SC meeting was being mindful of weaving in student voice.

Mr. Nyamekye spoke on the narrative that the district was trying to message the staff, faculty, and broader community – that data sources should not be looked at in isolation. He stated that all of the data sources impact the overall student experience and that the consultant that they decide to move forward with will help refine the narrative.

Mr. Nyamekye shared a slide deck of an overview of data sources and when they would be available, as well as various indicators of success. Mr. Pisharody questioned how the district would capture increased confidence in reporting incidents as noted in indicators of success. Mr. Nyamekye stated that they could look at the frequency in which students are reporting, as well as talk with students. Dr. Hunter noted that the information from the surveys could also provide data as well and Mr. Williams noted that they could look for trends in the data they receive. He questioned if they should build in an option for instituting changes prior to the end of the year if they see trends in a direction that aren't favored and Mr. Waterson and Mr. Pisharody agreed that they could institute changes they felt could impact the trend.

B. Review options for professional development to support this work and make recommendation. Mr. Waterson updated the SC on the four people who were identified as possible options to provide professional development. He stated that Carlos Hoyt and Jim Tull were not interested in doing work with the SC on this initiative, noting that Mr. Tull recommended two books: *Difficult Conversations – How to Discuss What Matters Most* and *Getting to Yes*. He stated that Dr. Donna Hicks currently has a very busy schedule, so they set a follow up meeting mid-October. He recommended working with her later in the year if the intention is to hit the ground running in October/November. He stated that Dr. Darnisa

Amante-Jackson, who is already working with the district, submitted a proposal and is available to come in October. He noted that she would be interested in doing a 90-minute training with the full SC. Mr. Pisharody was in favor of Dr. Amante-Jackson, stating that it would be an added bonus for the SC to have the same frame of reference that the schools and teachers use. He also noted the fact that she would be available in October.

Mr. Williams shared his concern that professional development for the SC to help face issues that crop up during the year that hinder the ability to work as a cohesive unit was not included in Dr. Amante-Jackson's framework. Mr. Waterson stated that working and debating as a school committee was not just limited to climate and culture, but any topic that comes up. He stated that it could be two different opportunities: climate and culture and conflict resolution/ leading with dignity as aspects. Mr. Williams stated that, at least for this issue, they need to be hand in hand.

Ms. MacDougall asked about the possibility of holding a session in the fall and also one in the spring and Mr. Waterson stated that he was unsure of the SC PD budget. Ms. MacDougall suggested having Dr. Amante-Jackson revise her proposal and add a 10-minute segment on what Mr. Williams was suggesting in order to ensure equitable conversations amongst the SC. Mr. Pisharody liked Ms. MacDougall's idea, noting that if it wasn't possible, he would still prefer to get the training done now. Mr. Nyamekye stated that he was confident she would be able to facilitate that for the SC, noting that he would share with her the feedback from this meeting, including the revision of the contract/scope of work.

C. Prepare for September 23 School Committee meeting. Mr. Waterson stated that the 9/23/26 SC meeting would be joint and held at CMS. He stated that he would add the framework to the slides that Mr. Nyamekye put together as well as a slide with key points, with the expectation that the SC would vote on the framework. Mr. Williams suggested adding a slide incorporating everything into the framework and flesh it out with Mr. Nyamekye's work.

III. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Pisharody made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Williams seconded. The motion was approved by roll call: MacDougall, aye; Pisharody, aye; Waterson, aye, and Williams, aye. The meeting adjourned at 4:46 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Erin Higgins

Approved: October 7, 2026