

**CHELMSFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
REGULAR MEETING  
January 7, 2020  
Meeting Minutes**

**Members Present:** Mr. Dennis King (Chair), Mr. John Moses (Vice Chair), Ms. Maria Santos (Secretary), Mr. Jeffrey Doherty and Ms. Donna Newcomb.

**Also present:** Dr. Jay Lang (Superintendent) and Ms. Johnson-Collins (Director of Business and Finance).

**Call to Order**

6:00 p.m.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Chair Opening Statement**

The Chair welcomed all and stated that the meeting will be recorded and televised by Chelmsford Telemedia.

**Consent Agenda**

1. Approval of the minutes of the regular school committee meeting of December 3, 2019

**Mr. Moses motioned to approve the regular Committee minutes of December 3, 2019. Ms. Newcomb seconded. Motion carries 5-0.**

**CHS Student Representative Announcements**

Sudeep announced that a School Concert will be held on January 9<sup>th</sup> at the PAC, as well as a Chorus Fest on January 11<sup>th</sup> for grades four through twelve. On January 17, 2020, "In Tune" will perform at the PAC and money collected will be donated to charity. DECA Districts were held today and 19 CHS students qualified to go to "states".

Due to school snow days, Katrina shared that mid-year exams will take place on January 22<sup>nd</sup>, and applications for Senior Capstone will be accepted until the end of this week. At CHS a new speaker has been installed in the gym and the gym wall has been redone by the graduating class of 2019. Rehearsals are continuing for the children's play which will be performed at the end of January.

**Good News**

Mr. Doherty attended the CHS concert on December 11<sup>th</sup> which included wonderful performances by the symphony, treble choir and jazz band. He also attended the McCarthy winter concert on December 12<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Richardson's eclectic music choices included acapella through folk music. "A remarkable job!" Along with Mr. Battle, Mr. Doherty was pleased to judge today's DECA competition at CHS.

## Public Comments

None.

## New Business

### 1. Presentation: Spotlight on the Schools: Byam Elementary School

Principal Jason Fredette and Assistant Principal Betsy Dolan along with Byam students and staff shared the many ways that “Byam Inspires”. Ms. O’Donnell and four of her kindergarten students demonstrated the success of the Louie Loot Bags which go home weekly with students to support their emergent literacy skills. School mascot, Louie the Lion, also made a guest appearance! Ms. Babson and three of her fourth graders demonstrated a game from “Family Math Night”. This activity held once a month has provided a lot of excitement over math and math facts. After demonstrating a card game called “Salute” the students then taught the game to the Committee members who had differing degrees of results! The Byam School Association (parent group) provides enrichment programs. This year they invited a speed painter, Rob Surette, to the school. Second grade teacher Ms. Harris and her student, Carolyn, shared that his message of empathy and giving, inspired Carolyn to go home and create a picture of Mr. Surette which she sent along with a letter to him thanking him for his message that “giving is more than keeping”. He not only responded but has shared Carolyn’s drawing on his web site. Assistant Principal Dolan and nine fourth grade “PRIDE Ambassadors” talked about Byam’s three “R’s”: Respect; Ready; Responsible”. The Ambassadors are nominated by staff for continuing to do the right thing and be good role models while at the school. All students at Byam are eligible to receive a “ROAR” certificate which are displayed in the “Hall of Fame”. ROARS were distributed to the School Committee members by the Ambassadors. Staff “ROARS” are also given out in a weekly newsletter. Byam teacher Ms. Szablak was also recognized for her work with this group during the past two years. Finally, music teacher, Mr. Graber and six fourth grade ukulele players serenaded by playing *Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star* and then progressed to *There was an Old Woman of Skin and Bone*, which involved doing fret work. Their closing song involved using chords. Dr. Lang and Committee members praised the presentation, students, staff and parents. A picture was taken of the Committee with the students for the web site.

### 2. Presentation: Spotlight on the Departments – Social Studies Department

Stephanie Quinn, Department Coordinator for the History and Social Science Department, began this evening’s presentation with a slide of the CHS civics students at the State House in Boston, highlighting the opportunity the students had to spend a day there and interact with their representatives. The curriculum K through grade 12 includes: world history; culture; geography; economics; sociology and psychology and enlightens students on all aspects of “The Human Condition” by focusing on the new frameworks adopted in 2018, Grade three curriculum focuses on Massachusetts and Chelmsford. This includes working with The Chelmsford Historical Society and The Garrison House. Grade five now focuses on U. S. History and government and includes field trips to The Commonwealth Museum (state archives and an archeological dig) and The Freedom Trail. Starting next year eighth graders at both middle schools will move to a new full year focus on civics. A special project will focus on “how democracies evolve and persist”. Another Civics project will be required in eleventh grade. For more details on the civics projects, please view the slide show included in tonight’s packet and Ms. Quinn’s presentation on Chelmsford Telemedia/YouTube. This year’s eighth grade will focus on “trash” and how the town government and citizens provide solutions. Grade eleven students will pick topics on their own or with a small group. At CHS grades ten and eleven addresses U.S. History with a focus on the past 30 to 40 years and how that effects the present day with direct contact with community and state leaders. Much of the work is done in Google Documents. The middle school National Geography Bee Winners, Gavin Lambert and Alex Heater will have the possibility of moving on to the State Bee.

### **3. Update: Communications and Media Director**

Jodie Luksha, Director of Communications and Media, who joined the school district in September 2019, updated the Committee on what she has accomplished in her first few months in her newly created position in Chelmsford. She has learned what tools are available to her; visited all the schools; assessed the needs and requirements; and has established relationships with the Town and the media. She has been working on creating processes and strategies, executed day-to-day operations and continues to identify and resolve challenges. She submits press releases to the media to promote events in all schools. Much of her work has been updating all the websites, formatting organization and creating ease of use for all. During the summer of 2020 she will update the website template. Social media includes using Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Her full slide show is in tonight's agenda packet and her complete presentation may be viewed on Chelmsford Telemedia/YouTube.

### **4. Update: New Social Worker Position at Parker Middle School**

Laraine M. Wilson, K-12 Coordinator of Social Emotional Learning and Counseling Services provided an update on the social worker position new to Parker School this year. The position of social worker was added to Parker to help address students and families with basic needs such as housing and food, as well as to act as an addition to the staff already working in guidance, psychology, health and other areas. Ms. Julia Vogel, an experienced mental health professional, was hired and enhances the support system for Parker Middle School. She also collaborates with the social worker hired by the Town last year, in some situations. Additionally, she is creating a list of resources available to the community which will be shared in Google Drive.

### **5. FY21 Capital Planning Committee Recommendations to Town Meeting**

Dr. Lang's memorandum in tonight's packet details which capital improvements for the schools were approved by the Town's Capital Planning Committee to be brought forward to Town meeting in April. Dr. Lang is pleased with the projects that were approved and thanks Mr. Doherty for his work with the Town on these recommendations.

### **6. 2019 SOI Notification re: MSBA Core Program Application**

Dr. Lang shared that the Chelmsford High School SOI project submitted for 2019 will not be invited to the eligibility period. The School Committee will need to discuss future applications. The MBSA deadline for submissions is April 8, 2020.

### **7. 2019/20 School Improvement Plans**

In tonight's packet Dr. Lang has shared the School Improvement Plans for each of the Chelmsford Schools. The plans specific to each school will be uploaded to the appropriate websites in the next few days. The plans are created by building administrators and building leadership team members for each school year. By the summer the plans are reviewed to see what actions have been taken. These plans contribute to the District's long-term strategic plan. Committee members suggested looking at these plans in more detail at future meetings.

### **8. Multi-Year Strategic Plan – Discussion and Planning**

Dr. Lang shared notes from the forum of December 10, 2019, which includes feedback from those in attendance that evening. Staff surveys are currently taking place at each school. Data will be available by next week and will be shared with Committee members in an upcoming report. More discussion and planning will take place at future Committee meetings.

## **9. Update: Multi-Function School Activity Bus Usage**

In tonight's packet, Dr. Lang shared a memorandum and data on the MFSAB. It has been useful for sports teams, clubs and student activity groups and has saved a total of \$10,000 compared to the cost of using outside contractor's for transportation for these smaller groups.

## **10. Personnel Report: November 2019**

No action required.

## **11. Approval of Conference and Field Trip Requests**

**Mr. Moses motioned to approve the conference and field trip requests as presented. Ms. Newcomb seconded. Motion carries 5-0.**

## **Reports**

### **1. Liaison Reports**

Ms. Santos was pleased to attend the Byam and Harrington combined "Holiday Store" and to be a judge in the gingerbread house contest displayed at the public library. Ms. Newcomb shared that she will be attending PTO meetings during the upcoming week. The Chelmsford Friends of Music will have their bottle and can drive this Saturday and will hold a meeting on January 16, 2020. SEPAC will meet on January 23, 2020. Both Mr. Doherty and Mr. Moses have upcoming meetings this week.

## **Action/New Items**

### **1. Request for Reports & Updates**

Ms. Newcomb, considering the situation in today's world, would like to revisit the CPS policies on diversity and inclusion and reaffirm where the CPS stand in supporting all students. Ms. Santos was pleased with the communications/media presentation and would like to see the use of consistent language in our communications about the CPS policies on diversity. Ms. Newcomb would like to revisit the Comprehensive Facilities Plan. Mr. King asked that the next regular meeting be changed to January 28, 2020, to accommodate an executive session with the attorneys before the committee meeting. Mr. King also wanted members to volunteer on study committees concerning upcoming negotiations. Those interested will get back to him directly.

Ms. Santos would also like to see data included in the scheduled presentation on SEL. Mr. King would like to review the status of The Committee and Superintendent's goals during a meeting soon.

## **Public Comments**

None.

## **Adjournment (9:01 p.m.)**

**Mr. Moses motioned to adjourn. Ms. Newcomb seconded. Motion carries 5-0.**

**Tonight's meeting may be viewed in its entirety on Chelmsford Telemedia You Tube.**

*Respectfully submitted by Sharon Giglio*