

CHELMSFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE
All Members Attended Remotely by Logging on to
GoToMeeting.com
April 13, 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. Attendance taken by roll call.

Also present: Dr. Jay Lang (Superintendent), Dr. Linda Hirsch (Assistant Superintendent) and Ms. Joanna Johnson-Collins (Director of Business and Finance)

Call to Order

6:03 p.m.

Chair Opening Statement

This meeting is taking place using the “GoToMeeting” electronic platform. It is being televised and recorded by Chelmsford Telemedia. Community members are encouraged to submit comments/questions to The School Committee or Superintendent Lang during the meeting by email.

Public Comments

Ms. Santos received an email concerning driver’s education classes. Ms. Newcomb did as well. The Chair received an email requesting that April vacation not be cancelled. The writer expressed hope that, if we do go back to school, the students and staff would have an additional week of actual in-school instruction. Hana Barker questioned that if schools reopened what would happen if some parents kept their children home due to health issues. The Chair stated that this question could be addressed at a future meeting.

New Business

1. Discussion and Decision on the Status of April School Vacation Week

Dr. Lang has sent a memorandum to The Committee and has also posted the memo online for the community to see. Prior to last Tuesday’s meeting the Teachers’ Union shared with Dr. Lang that 85% of their members preferred to continue with the momentum of online learning and would want to see April vacation cancelled. An online survey was sent on April 8, 2020, to the families of our students. Over 2,600 responses were received and 2,028 voted to cancel the April vacation week. About 15% or 403 responded in favor of keeping the vacation week. Monday, April 20th is a holiday so school will not be in session that day. Based on responses, Dr. Lang recommends that The Committee vote to officially cancel and work through the scheduled April school vacation week. This would mean that the last scheduled day for students will be Tuesday, June 16, 2020. Given that some families may already have commitments during April vacation week, Dr. Lang asks that staff be flexible and make accommodations where requested, keeping communications open as they have been since schools were closed.

Mr. Moses motioned to cancel April’s school vacation week and work through the week, therefore, the last scheduled day for students will be Tuesday, June 16, 2020. Ms. Newcomb seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 5-0.

Action/New Items

The next regular meeting will be held on Tuesday, April 21, 2020. Concerns should be sent to Committee members and Superintendent Lang. Dr. Lang hopes to have additional information from Governor Baker by the meeting on Tuesday. Mr. King and Ms. Newcomb will compose a letter to the teachers thanking them for all their work.

Public Comments

None

Adjournment

Mr. Moses motioned to adjourn tonight's meeting at 6:23. Ms. Newcomb seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 5-0.

*Respectfully submitted,
Sharon Giglio*