

CHELMSFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE
All Members Attended Remotely by Logging on to
GoToMeeting.com
May 5, 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). Also, in attendance are the CHS student representatives, Katrina and Sudeep.

Call to Order

6:02 p.m.

Chair Opening Statement

The meeting is taking place using GoToMeeting.com electronic platform. All are attending the meeting remotely. The meeting is being televised and recorded by Chelmsford Telemedia. Community members are encouraged to watch and submit comments via email to Dr. Lang or Mr. King. The comments will be read during the "Public Comments" portions of the meeting agenda.

Consent Agenda

1. **Approval of the minutes of the regular school committee meeting of April 22, 2020**

Mr. Moses motioned to approve the regular school committee meeting minutes from April 22, 2020. Ms. Newcomb seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 5-0.

CHS Student Representative Announcements

Katrina shared that remote learning is very positive at CHS. All seem to be well-adjusted. Google teams are meeting weekly and teachers are helpful with office hours.

Sudeep stated that, although remote learning was different in the beginning, it has become a daily routine. The teachers' office hours are beneficial, and teachers are responding quickly to emails sent during their office hours.

Good News

Dr. Lang shared that everyone has been very supportive and appreciative of staff. They are especially appreciated during this Teacher Appreciation Week! He shared a video put together by the elementary administration, staff and students honoring many of our essential workers during this pandemic. The complete video may be viewed by watching tonight's meeting on Chelmsford Telemedia.

Public Comments

Ms. Newcomb and Ms. Santos received emails regarding graduation and other questions concerning the Class of 2020. The Chair stated that these inquiries will be addressed by Dr. Lang during his update on the status of the closure of schools.

New Business

1. Update on the Status of the Chelmsford Public Schools Closure

Dr. Lang shared that more flexibility has been added to the elementary schools' schedules to allow for more SEL. Wednesdays are a day dedicated to SEL, catching up and digging deeper into ongoing studies as well as a day when no new assignments are given at the elementary level. Dr. Lang and each school continue to provide weekly newsletters. The principals will be setting up schedules to be shared with staff and parents for the staff to go into the schools over the next two weeks, keeping in mind social distancing. Staff will be allowed to gather materials they will be needing and pack up what will not be needed until school reopens. Cleaning crews will start deeper cleaning after Memorial Day weekend. Additionally, principals will be scheduling times for students to go back to school to pick up personal items. Middle and high school students will be able to go to their lockers. Elementary teachers will pack up their students' belongings and bring them to a central location in the school so materials may be picked up with the fewest number of family members entering the buildings. Information on these schedules will be found in the weekly newsletters to the parents.

Concerning seniors, their last day for classes will be May 22nd. The week after Memorial Day will provide seniors with time to finish and turn in assignments, papers and projects. There will not be traditional final exams. Graduation will not be held on June 5, 2020. As of now, Saturday, June 27th is the anticipated date of graduation. It is unclear whether the ceremony will be virtual or in-person. A decision will be made later in May based on guidance provided by the Governor. A lot of thought and planning is going toward making the best possible memories for the seniors. Officially, the earliest day that seniors may get out of school is May 29th. Ms. Santos expressed hope that when large groups can once again gather, a special celebration may be held for the seniors to share. Class advisors and students would be able to plan and use money generated by the students.

Dr. Lang reported that the food service program is going well, and workers are rotating to cover the needs at the CHS kitchen. Ms. Johnson-Collins added that about 60 families are receiving meals. As of the last week in April 250 meals were being served each day. Dr. Lang and Ms. Santos are grateful to the food service workers who are providing meals with kindness! Ms. Newcomb also thanked "The Table of Plenty" and Principal Asselin from Harrington for their help in providing boxes of food for families to have during the weekends. Dr. Lang said that donations of non-perishable foods may be brought to Harrington School between 9:00 and noon on Wednesdays.

2. Vote to Approve Substitute Nurse Rate Increases – 2020/21 School Year

Mr. Moses motioned to adjust the daily rate for substitute school nurses from \$130 to \$150 per day beginning with the 2020/21 school year. Ms. Newcomb seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 5-0.

3. FY2019 MA DESE End-of-Year Audit Report

The Town contracts with Powers and Sullivan each year for their audits and they audit the school department as well. Dr. Lang thanks Ms. Johnson-Collins and her staff for doing such a good job. Once again, as in years past, the audit was free of financial findings or recommendations for improvement.

Mr. Moses motioned to accept the 2019 financial audit as presented. Ms. Newcomb seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 5-0.

4. FY2020 Financial Projection

Ms. Johnson-Collins reviewed the memo included in tonight's agenda packet with The Committee. A surplus is projected. Potential savings on transportation due to the closing of schools is not included in tonight's memo. That information will be brought forward during the next few meetings. The projection over all is quite favorable. In response to a question from Ms. Santos, Dr. Lang stated that at the next meeting discussions will be held on how to spend money remaining in the 2020 budget while looking ahead to potential needs for 2021. Money allocated in the 2020 budget may not be spent for services which will not be performed until the 2021 year. Payment for transportation costs will also be discussed. These decisions will be made by the individual districts. Some districts have been paying them nothing. Some as little as 40% of the usual charge, while others pay up to 80%. There are very few bus companies available even now, so it would be a real issue if they were to go out of business due to the closing of schools during this pandemic.

5. Recommended FY2020 Budget Transfers

Mr. Moses motioned to approve the FY2020 budget transfers of the Chelmsford Public Schools as presented. Ms. Newcomb seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 5-0.

6. Discussion on FY2021 Budget Process

Dr. Lang is still waiting to receive information from the Commissioner of Education. He should know more after that about what stimulus funds the district would be receiving. The meeting of the Town's TRI Board has not yet been set. Nor, have the guidelines been set on how Town Meeting will be conducted this year.

7. Update: Elementary Literacy Program Adoption

Dr. Hirsch included a detailed memo about the new program adoption and shared the highlights during tonight's meeting. Starting in January two reading programs were piloted in fourth grade classes at the elementary schools: *Into Reading* published by HMH and *Fountas & Pinnell Classroom*, published by Heinemann. Twelve teachers and two special educators were involved in the pilot. Both programs proved to be very good. In the end Fountas and Pinnell Classroom was chosen by Dr. Hirsch and Ms. Rogers as the best one for our district for grades K through four. This program was recommended 100% by the teachers involved in the pilot. If you have time to watch Dr. Hirsch's presentation at tonight's meeting on Chelmsford Telemedia You/Tube you will see and hear her excitement about this program as she talks about its many facets. Early in the next school year the publishing company will be providing professional development for the teaching staff as part of this acquisition. Additionally, Dr. Hirsch is looking at the coaching component which would allow real time classroom coaching by the publisher. No action is required tonight.

8. Update: Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment Guide

Dr. Hirsch has updated this guide. She has included the guide in tonight's agenda packet for everyone to see. This guide includes: a district organizational chart; detailed information about the curriculum team; contact information for the team; details about the Massachusetts Tiered System of Support (MTSS) and information about the curriculum programs and resources, including digital learning tools. This guide may be accessed on the District's website.

9. Approval of School Committee Meeting Schedule – 2020/21 School Year.

Mr. Moses motioned to approve the 2020/21 School Committee calendar as presented. Ms. Newcomb seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 5-0.

10. School Committee Policy Updates

Mr. King motioned to acknowledge the Chelmsford Public Schools Restraint Prevention and Behavior Support Procedures as presented. Mr. Moses seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 5-0.

Action/New Items

Mr. Moses shared that the changes to the elementary schedule have been well received.

The Chair will work with Dr. Lang on creating a resolution for The Committee to send to the state legislators requesting increased federal funding for grades K through 12.

Public Comments

None

Adjournment

Mr. Moses motioned to adjourn tonight's meeting at 7:54 p.m. Ms. Newcomb seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 5-0.

*Respectfully submitted,
Sharon Giglio*