

CHELMSFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE
All Members Attended Remotely by Logging on to
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June 16, 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). CHS Student Representatives Katrina and Sudeep.

Call to Order

6:00 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 June 2, 2020**

Mr. Moses motioned to approve the regular school committee meeting minutes of June 2, 2020. Ms. Newcomb seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 5-0.

CHS Student Representative Announcements

(This is the last meeting of the school year for these representatives.)

Sudeep shared that the school year was really good. He found remote learning to be way better than he expected. The school year is wrapping up!

Katrina said that she and Sudeep wished to thank The Committee for a great and successful year. They were honored to be at these meetings.

The Chair thanked them for being great student representatives who provided valuable input. Normally, The Committee would present the reps with gifts, but cannot due to the virtual meeting. Gifts will be presented later. The Committee wishes the students good luck and a great summer.

Good News

Dr. Hirsch shared that there have been lots of kickoffs for the end of this school year, including 4th grade, 8th grade and retirement "clap outs". There were also parades for the seniors. With people rallying together, the end of the year was much better than expected!

Mr. Doherty watched the virtual “move-up” day for CHS. The mentor group and 9th grade teachers answered questions which were sent to them by the eighth graders. This concluded with a virtual tour of CHS. He was pleased with how well done and positive it was.

Ms. Santos received email comments from parents of graduating seniors who so pleased with the way “senior week” was done.

Public Comments

The Chair received an email from Allie Barnes who is concerned about the stress for our students and teachers. She encourages training for teachers for this fall.

New Business

- 1. School Committee Reorganization**
 - a. Election of School Committee Chair**

Mr. Doherty nominated Dennis King to serve as Chair. Ms. Newcomb seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 5-0.

- b. Election of School Committee Vice Chair**

Mr. Moses nominated Donna Newcomb for Vice Chair. Ms. Santos seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 5-0.

- c. Election of School Committee Secretary**

Ms. Santos nominated Jeff Doherty for Secretary. Mr. Moses seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 5-0.

- 2. Update on the Status of the Schools**

Dr. Lang shared that today was the last official day of school for students. Tomorrow staff will work a half day and be finished. He thanked the staff, parents and community for a successful last one-third of this school year. It will be good for some “down time” with summer here. Dr. Lang is thankful to the school custodians and food service workers who prepared and served breakfast, lunch and dinner to Chelmsford Public School students and their families, as well as members of the community who were experiencing food insecurity. He also appreciated the partnership with The Table of Plenty, Mary Moriarty’s group, and the Harrington School’s help for helping with food for the weekends. The transportation company also helped with food delivery.

Regarding the fall reopening of school, guidelines are expected from The State Department of Education by the end of this week. Those guidelines will help the working groups for the schools to see what school reopening will look like for Chelmsford. Concerning summer school guidelines, The District is communicating directly with the families involved. Information for the working and focus groups will be solicited from staff and families for their input. All districts will be planning for three different scenarios: fully back to school; 100% remote learning; and a hybrid option where some of the students attend school part of the time and others do remote learning and those groups switch off periodically. The State will be determining between 80 and 85% of what models will be followed. The State will be updating the guidelines on an ongoing basis through August.

The federal "Cares Act" will reimburse The District for the adult meals that were served since March. This amounts to approximately \$70,000. We have also started to procure PPE for the district like masks and gowns. There may be FEMA relief funding for this. Work is ongoing to determine exactly what type of equipment will be required for the reopening of schools.

Finally, CHS graduation is scheduled for seniors the weekend of August 8th and 9th. Graduation will take place at the stadium. Protocols for the graduation are being worked on currently.

Ms. Newcomb has received emails from parents who are anxious about the status of schools beginning in September. Their concerns are what the school schedule will look like and what impact that will have on child care and the families' work schedules. Many have also expressed financial concerns and questions about transportation. They are also expressing concerns over helping students to review what they learned during remote learning and supports to help students "catch up".

Ms. Santos received similar emails. She also was asked if there would be assessment testing done at the beginning of school to see where the learning gaps lie. Dr. Hirsch shared that district-wide benchmark testing will be done at the beginning of the school year. Some parents have also volunteered to be part of the working groups and Ms. Santos has kept a list of them for contact purposes.

Dr. Lang shared that the remote learning survey will be open through next week. Findings will be presented to The Committee at the next meeting on July 7th. He hopes as plans progress on the reopening of schools, there will be the opportunities for community forums. Dr. Lang will be posting updates throughout the summer, so people are kept aware of the plans for September. Summer school will be starting out as remote. The State may allow some in-person services to be provided by August, depending on the status of COVID19.

3. Diversity and Equity Focus and Working Groups

Dr. Hirsch shared a detailed Power Point, entitled "Program Bias Evaluation, and spoke in depth of how curriculum materials are reviewed before the district adopts them to assure they are diverse culturally and linguistically and free from bias of any kind. Additional work will be done this summer by curriculum coordinators and teaching staff on curriculum. To full appreciate her presentation, you should view it on Chelmsford/Telemedia YouTube as recorded during tonight's meeting. The slide show is included in tonight's agenda packet for you to read.

Dr. Lang is looking forward to setting up working groups by the end of summer to address diversity and equity in our schools and holding conversations. The Council of Chelmsford Schools already has speakers on these topics scheduled for the upcoming school year.

4. Kindergarten Parent Survey Results

Dr. Lang surveyed the parents of incoming kindergarten students on the question of whether they would be sending their children to our schools this fall no matter what the program looks like. 75% said they would be sending their child, while another 25% had some concerns. Only two families are not sending their child to CPS kindergarten this coming school year. As of now, the plan is to have four kindergarten classes per elementary school.

5. Discussion on Student Transportation & Fees

Registration for bus transportation continues, but in response to concerns, the "Early Bird" discount time frame will be extended from July 1st until July 31st. Ms. Johnson-Collins said that during the first ten days of registration almost 570 signed up.

Ms. Newcomb motioned for the School Committee to adopt the fee structure noted for the 2020/2021 school year regarding the regular early, late and half-year registration rates. Mr. Moses seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 4-1, with Ms. Santos voting in the negative.

6. School Committee Approved FY2021 Budget – Revised

Included in tonight's agenda packet is the completely revised FY2021 budget. An addition is the adjustment of custodians' salaries by the recently approved contract.

Ms. Newcomb motioned that the School Committee vote to accept the summary budget line item totals listed in accordance with the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education function codes listed on page 16 of the budget document. Mr. Moses seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 5-0.

7. FY21 Non-Affiliated Rate/Salary Increases

Ms. Newcomb motioned that the School Committee vote to approve a 2% increase to the annual salary or hourly rate of pay to the non-affiliated employees effective July 1, 2020. Mr. Moses seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 5-0.

8. Recommended FY2020 Budget Transfers

Ms. Newcomb motioned that the School Committee vote to approve an FY2020 local operating budget transfer of \$93,800 from the Paraprofessional Salaries category to the Civics Activities and Community Service category as presented. Mr. Moses seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 5-0.

Ms. Newcomb motioned that the School Committee vote to approve FY2020 local operating budget transfers totaling \$165,000 from the accounts noted to the technology account "Chelmsford High School" as presented. Mr. Moses seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 5-0.

Dr. Lang is requesting the next transfer so that The District may help the elementary and middle schools purchase some of the "back to school" materials usually purchased by families for the beginning of school. Due to the pandemic and the uncertainty of what reopening schools will look like this year, class assignments and the accompanying materials lists will not be sent to students until later in the summer. This may lead to additional costs to families who will miss opportunities to purchase these materials earlier in the summer when the prices are reduced. This is planned to be a one-time purchase for The District due to the COVID19 pandemic.

Ms. Newcomb motioned that the School Committee vote to approve an FY2020 local operating budget transfer of \$100,000 from the classroom teachers' salary reserve COLA category and the paraprofessionals salary category to the general supplies category as presented. Mr. Moses seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 5-0.

9. 2020/21 Superintendent's Evaluation Process

Dr. Lang would like to present his "year in review" at the July 7, 2020, meeting (information will be sent to The Committee prior to that meeting) and that the evaluation document is compiled by The Committee by July 21st. On that date the evaluations will be submitted to Dr. Lang and Chair King. Mr. King will then compile a composite score and evaluation. This will then appear in the agenda packet for the meeting on

July 28, 2020. At that meeting the document will be read aloud to be entered into the record and voted on. A look forward to the 2021 school year will begin with August's meetings. No action required tonight.

10. Personnel Report – May 2020

No action required tonight.

11. School Committee Policy Updates

Ms. Newcomb motioned that the new sexual harassment policy file ACAB in compliance with the new Title IX regulations to replace the current file ACAB. Mr. Moses seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 5-0.

Ms. Newcomb motioned that The School Committee approve the recommended changes to the file GBK, Staff Grievance Policy. Mr. Moses seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 5-0.

Ms. Newcomb motioned that The School Committee approve the recommended changes and the renaming on file AC, Non-discrimination Policy and Grievance Procedures. Mr. Moses seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 5-0.

Ms. Newcomb motioned that The School Committee approve the recommended changes to the file ACE Non-discrimination on the Basis of Disability. Mr. Moses seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 5-0.

Ms. Newcomb motioned that The School Committee approve the recommended changes to the file ACA, Non-discrimination on the Basis of Sex Policy. Mr. Moses seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 5-0.

Reports

1. Liaison Reports

Ms. Newcomb attended the final South Row PTO meeting, the final Acapella meeting and the final meeting of the Friends of Chelmsford Music. There is some concern over what effect the return to school circumstances may have on some of their programs. They were also not able to conduct fund raisers that normally occur later in the school year due to the closure of schools.

Ms. Santos attended the final meeting of the McCarthy PTO. They discussed fundraising, 8th grade activities and the drive-by "good-bye" at the end of the school year. They are in good financial status.

The Chair shared that after sending the resolution approved at a previous meeting, he did hear from an aide to Laurie Trahan who said that Ms. Trahan is looking into what she can do to increase State funding to The District. The Chair will follow up with those who did not respond. Ms. Newcomb would like to invite the State reps to a Committee meeting in the fall.

Action/New Items

MASC resolutions on COVID19 and Racism

Let the Chair know if anyone wishes to change liaison assignments for next year.

The July 7, 2020, meeting will be held at Central Office abiding by all the State COVID guidelines.

Public Comments

Sarah Evans, a CHS junior, expressed her support for the upcoming work on diversity in the curriculum. She is curious about what actions will take place to assure that students receive an anti-racist and unbiased education in Chelmsford.

Adjournment

Ms. Newcomb motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:35 p.m. Ms. Moses seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 5-0.

*Respectfully submitted,
Sharon Giglio*