

**CHELMSFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
REGULAR MEETING  
June 1, 2021  
Meeting Minutes**

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

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

**Call to Order**

6:00 p.m.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Chair Opening Statement**

“Tonight’s meeting is being live-streamed by Chelmsford Telemedia and posted to the CPS website for interested community members to access and watch. In-person public participation will be taking place tonight in accordance with social distancing and safety protocols established by the Chelmsford School Committee Public Participation Guidelines. Anyone interested in speaking during the public input portion of the meeting would have notified the superintendent’s office by yesterday afternoon and would have been provided with the guidelines and assigned a time to attend the meeting to speak. If anyone watching this meeting live has questions or comments to share they are encouraged to email one of us during the meeting. We will read their comments or questions during our second public input session at the end of the meeting.”

**Consent Agenda**

**Mr. Moses motioned to approve the minutes of the regular school committee meeting dated May 18, 2021. Mr. Doherty seconded. Motion carries 5-0.**

**Good News**

Dr. Hirsch shared that this Thursday 64 students will be inducted into the National English Honor Society. All summer reading options and any required work for high school students for courses are now posted on the website. Additional summer options in the content areas will also be posted. Among the “in-person” events that have returned are: kindergarten in-person screening; modified field days; author visits; and remote student fun days at the schools. Tonight, will be the first senior class event at Kimball’s. Graduation will take place this Saturday!

Mr. Doherty shared that “Storyteller Joe” performed outdoors at CHIPS last week. The children were engaged, and the teachers gave rave reviews! The CHIPS PTO sponsored this event. Last week The Theatre Guild put on two one-act plays live at the PAC. “The students were fantastic!”

Dr. Lang shared that there will be an on-site vaccination clinic this Thursday at CHS. Anyone 12 or older may attend the clinic. The second vaccine dose will be administered on June 24<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Santos shared the annual fund-raising relay for CHS was held. Local causes will benefit from the money raised. The students had a “great time”!

## **Public Comments**

### **1. Chelmsford Action Climate Team**

Members of the Chelmsford Climate Action Team addressed The Committee. Tom Amiro, a founding member of the team, shared that they will be presenting a “citizen’s position article 28” at Town Meeting. This will be to acknowledge global warming and climate change are due to man-made greenhouse gases. The Commonwealth has mandated a reduction in emissions and to achieve net zero by 2050. Secondly, they would like a committee to be formed to do an assessment and create a plan. The Town of Natick has an excellent plan. Their website “chelmsfordclimate.org” provides additional information. A slide show articulating their mission is included in tonight’s agenda packet. Various Town groups are supporting the Team’s requests. They are hoping for the support of The School Committee as well.

### **2. ACT – Association of Chelmsford Theatre**

ACT members, Deborah Boles of 34 Old Stage Road and Cheyenne Sobian of 21 Judith Road, came to the table to speak to The Committee. This not-for-profit, parent/alumni organization supports theatre arts at CHS. Their slide show is included in tonight’s agenda packet. Cheyenne is an alumnus of CHS, who praises the theatre program and is currently employed in the entertainment industry. The CHS Theatre Guild has been a recipient of numerous awards from the Massachusetts Educational Theatre Guild, Inc. Fundraising helps to support theatre at CHS and Parker’s Drama Club. They also provide senior gifts and, starting next year, scholarships. Parent volunteer involvement is necessary and appreciated. CHS members assist the two middle schools with their productions. Mrs. Lauren Cochran, who has led the Guild for many years, is considering retirement at the end of the 2021/2022 school year. The hope is that The Committee will support hiring a trained theater person to replace her.

## **New Business**

### **1. Announcement of South Row Principal: Ms. Theresa Gilbert**

Dr. Lang introduced Ms. Gilbert and invited her to the table. She is coming from an elementary school in Salisbury where she served as the assistant principal. She is thrilled to be joining South Row and will officially begin on July 1<sup>st</sup>. The Committee welcomed her warmly.

### **2. Presentation – Spotlight on the Departments: Technology**

Bill Silver joined the meeting (in-person!) and elaborated on his slide show, which is part of tonight’s agenda packet. He began his presentation with profound appreciation for his entire staff and how hard they worked dedicating themselves to the service of the school community during this extremely challenging year in education. He spoke of the highlights of this school year which included: Clear Touch Panels in all classrooms; expanded bandwidth; outdoor wireless access points; security upgrades; Chromebooks for staff members (both teachers and paraprofessionals); and continuation of the 1:1 program for incoming 5<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> graders, as well as Chromebook carts for each elementary classroom by the fall. Professional development was provided throughout the year daily by the Integration Specialists. The Business Department courses at CHS are now dual-enrollment. CHS TV course and clubs worked

hard to keep the community informed and facilitated The Student council Leaderships Conference. Through Dr. Sweeney's leadership Project Lead the Way (PLTW) received awards and grants to help fund the 2021/22 training and curriculum. Through this project students begin computer science work and digital literacy in kindergarten. New courses will be offered in robotics, computer science and engineering. For the 2021/22 schoolyear: there will be updates in security at all elementary school; new document cameras for every teacher; new labs for fine arts/video productions; and a grant to increase awareness of cyber security threats. Please view his entire presentation (including the "Fun Facts" slide) by watching tonight's meeting on Chelmsford Telemedia You/Tube. He closed by requesting The Committee authorize the realignment of certain positions. These changes would not have an effect on the FY2021/22 budget as presented previously.

**Mr. Moses moved to approve the ICTS Assistant Data Position and the ICTS Cyber Security and Network Operation Specialist Position as presented. Mr. Doherty seconded. Motion carries 5-0.**

**3. MSBA Vote: Vote to authorize the Superintendent to submit to the Massachusetts School Building Authority a Statement of Interest (SOI) for Chelmsford High School**

**Mr. Moses moved that: Having convened in an open meeting on Tuesday June 1, 2021, prior to the closing date, the School Committee of Chelmsford, in accordance with its charter, by-laws, and ordinances, has voted to authorize the Superintendent to submit to the Massachusetts School Building Authority the Statement of Interest Form dated June 1, 2021 for Chelmsford High School located at 200 Richardson Road which describes and explains the following deficiencies and the priority category(s) for which an application may be submitted to the Massachusetts School Building Authority in the future, including the elimination of existing severe overcrowding; prevention of severe overcrowding expected to result from increased enrollments; replacement, renovation or modernization of school facility systems, such as roofs, windows, boilers, heating and ventilation systems, to increase energy conservation and decrease energy related costs in a school facility; and replacement of or addition to obsolete buildings in order to provide for a full range of programs consistent with state and approved local requirements; and hereby further specifically acknowledges that by submitting this Statement of Interest Form, the Massachusetts School Building Authority in no way guarantees the acceptance or the approval of an application, the awarding of a grant or any other funding commitment from the Massachusetts School Building Authority, or commits the City/Town/Regional School District to filing an application for funding with the Massachusetts School Building Authority. Mr. Doherty seconded. A roll call vote was held. Motion carries 5-0.**

**4. Recognition of LGBTQIA+ Pride Month – June 2021**

Dr. Hirsch shared a memorandum in tonight's agenda packet encouraging recognition as this June as pride month for LGBTQIA+. This endorsement will be in collaboration with The Select Board. The proclamation was read by The Chair. Dr. Whittlesey has prepared background information about this including activities for teachers which are age appropriate.

**Mr. Moses moved to recommend that The School Committee vote and sign the proclamation at their regular meeting of June 1, 2021, to proclaim and recognize June 2021 as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer, and Asexual (LGBTIQIA+) Pride Month in the Chelmsford Public Schools. Mr. Doherty seconded. Motion carries 5-0.**

**5. Student Enrollment Update: Incoming Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Students**

Dr. Lang shared a memorandum in tonight's packet addressing the enrollment and updated figures for The Committee in an attached spread sheet. He has met with the principals from Byam and Center Schools, which typically see increases in enrollment by the time school reopens. A decision was made for

those two schools to have five kindergarten classes for the upcoming school year. The Committee will need to approve funding for these additional positions once hiring has taken place.

#### **6. Discussion on School Committee Summer Workshops**

The chair included a listing of summer workshops being offered by MASC in tonight's packet. Dr. Hirsch shared that EDCO will also be offering workshops this summer addressing diversity. Dr. Lang will also check on workshops on "rebounding from COVID".

#### **7. Academic Summer Programs**

Dr. Hirsch surveyed teachers to determine their availability to teach during this summer. Additionally, student data has been accessed to determine which students and grade levels will benefit by the summer offerings. Right now, the focus is on ELA and mathematics for extended learning. There will also be programs for SPED students. Information will be sent to each tier of students for programs running from July 12th through August 5th. Participation will be optional. Credit recovery will be required for 7th and 8th graders and high school students.

#### **8. Vote to Approve FY2022 Non-Affiliated Staff Salary Increases**

**Mr. Moses motioned to approve the FY2022 non-affiliated staff salary increases as presented. Mr. Doherty seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 9-0.**

#### **9. FY2021 Recommended Budget Transfers**

No action required tonight.

#### **10. 2020/21 Retirement Celebrations**

Dr. Hirsch included a memorandum in tonight's packet providing information on the retirement celebrations to be held this spring at the individual schools. In October the district along with the teachers' union will be hosting a celebration to honor all the retirees from 2020 and 2021.

#### **11. Valley Collaborative Spring 2021 Newsletter**

Dr. Lang included this newsletter in tonight's packet. Chelmsford has several students who participate in the program at Valley Collaborative as an out-of-district placement.

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

**Mr. Moses "joyfully" motions to approve the conference and field trip request for 2022 and 2023. Mr. Doherty seconded. Motion carries 5-0.**

#### **Liaisons**

The Chair shared that The Chelmsford Council of Schools met and presented the scholarship award winners. Scholarships are awarded based on letters written by students about a staff member who had a positive impact on them. Center School PTO will meet tomorrow night.

**Action/New Items**

Ms. Newcomb would like to discuss future proclamations to support a culture of inclusiveness,

The next regular meeting will be on June 15<sup>th</sup>. Town Meeting will be held on June 17<sup>th</sup> at The Senior Center at 7:45 p.m.

Ms. Santos would like a report on SEL and the guidance Department transitioning to the new school year.

**Public Comments**

None.

**Adjournment (7:51)**

**Mr. Moses motioned to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Doherty seconded. Motion carries 5-0.**

*Respectfully submitted,  
Sharon Giglio, Recording Secretary*