

# COUNCIL OF CHELMSFORD SCHOOLS

Chelmsford High School • McCarthy Middle School • Parker Middle School • Chelmsford Integrated Preschool  
Byam Elementary School • Center Elementary School • Harrington Elementary School • South Row Elementary School

Minutes of January 20, 2021 meeting

GoToMeeting online 7:03 pm; adjourned 9:29pm

**1. Welcome:** Emily Dilworth, Co-President

**2. Minutes:** Hana Barker, Secretary. Motion to pass October minutes  
1st: Laura Wilkinson; 2nd: Johanna Shaw; passed

**3. Treasurer's Report:** Betsy Hebert, Treasurer  
1st: Hana Barker; 2nd: Jamie Outland Brown; passed

**4. Superintendent's Report:** Jay Lang

- school year going better than anticipated
- staff is going above and beyond
- parents/families had the choice – remote or hybrid
- fewer complaints than usual
- trying to maximize in-person time with A/B Cohorts
- hope is, with vaccine for staff and pool testing, to expand in-person (perhaps half to full? or alternating Wednesdays)
- sanitation has cleaning down now, doesn't require as much time
- FY 2021-22 budgeting starting; in good shape
- added tutoring and intervention staffing – in good shape
- aiming for level service budget for next year, and hope to utilize State and Federal (one-time) funds in targeted fashion for extras
- no financial issues anticipated; other Districts looking at reductions
- Ginger question: 1:1 computer initiative...? Jay: spent significant \$ on technology and we're officially in "year 2" of the rollout (5, 6, 9, 10). Plan will continue for sustainability. All existing devices, carts, etc. were broken down and deployed. Have pre-purchased new ones to re-stock carts and provide a cart per classroom at elementary. And next year is the final 5/9th deployment using School Choice funds. Important to stay on cycle to be able to support and maintain.
- all classrooms got ClearTouch (and that is putting us off cycle for maintenance); will need sustainability plan
- typically get good support from Paul Cohen and TM Reps; we got about \$1.6M for capital projects, and that support is needed...everyone is encouraged to consider running for TM Reps – CoCS could promote?

GINGER will check PTO / open seats

**5. School Committee Report:** Dennis King

- lots of discussions around learning models, covid, enrollment, effect of covid on students (iReady testing, students seem ok)
- pool testing potential
- working with town on capital plan (Jeff Doherty rep); security upgrades, door hardware, outside lift at Parker, kitchen at Westlands and SR (if approved at town meeting) will get done this summer
- budget coming up next SC meeting
- MCAS total moving target with DESE shifting position
- technology update: chromebooks and interactive screens
- CHS Pathways Program among reports from different schools
- winter sports just started up
- K registration starting @ PAC

**6. Principals Report:** Steve Murray

- all the Principals have been re-examining schedules to look forward to what expanding the school day might look like
- with lunches? and without lunches for safety
- CHS winter sports season has started –telemedia is doing a GREAT

job trying to broadcast events, with students – Pete Pedulla and Tom Petersen

- really missing musicals, performances, kids in hallways, etc.

**7. CPS Nurse Report:** not coming

Jay – can answer any questions? Nurses have been phenomenal doing contact tracing, working with BOH

- reviewing protocol – Chelmsford District dashboard vs. town dashboard...broken down by school to be transparent
- possibly we have too much information out there now...town dashboard shows ALL the cases; and some students go to Nashoba, Innovation, parochial schools, etc.
- DESE reports globally on all public school cases – so all the dashboards don't necessarily line up
- so if a student tests positive, any positive case is reported to Chelmsford BOH. If its a student in our District, Peggy Gump is notified and then she takes the lead to do contact tracing. BOH does the contact tracing for non-Chelmsford students who test positive.
- Peggy: is the student hybrid or remote? Contact email spells it all out as to when to get tested, when it's ok to return to the classroom
- feedback from staff and parents... too many emails!
- SC meeting, decided to only send general communication if there's a student who was physically in attendance; and to continue sending communication for quarantine info (so if student was not in school, etc. no notification).
- Peggy gets notified, goes through look back period, determines who needs to be quarantined...elementary school quarantines put entire Cohorts out...she coordinates testing dates, re-entry dates, etc.
- haven't seen evidence of more communicable variants yet...ranging from 0-3/5 cases, so the numbers are pretty low
- our definition of close contact is very conservative; haven't transmitted in school yet
- kids are doing very well, even in CHIPs! 125 staff; 500 kids... no one has come up positive
- more family transmission now than before; families reminded to quarantine while awaiting test results
- nearly 90% staff interested in vaccine
- Beth question: snack – elementary/middle school, is lunch a staffing issue? Middle school child has snack whenever he wants... eating is not the issue, it's staffing and cross contamination possibility. Utilizing all lunch and recess aides as extra staff to monitor hallways, safety, bathroom, some are 2nd adult in classroom to support teachers...so additional staff (which are very hard to find) are needed for lunch. Very difficult time hiring paras, lunch, and recess aides. Many of those positions are parents...with kids online, they cannot work in schools while kids are at home. Second issue to work around is cross contamination. Cohorts at elementary and middle... so gathering groups in the cafeteria for lunch... they'd all be considered contacts. So using common space for dining (requiring fewer staff) but could cause larger quarantines. To dine in classrooms, don't have the people resources to do that.

**8. Community Read-In Report:** Ginger Skoog

- Really nothing going on until there's more in-person gatherings
- has been meeting with Susan Mackinnon...perhaps something simple read-a-thon... something in the spirit of the Read-In

### 9. Photography Report: Jamie Outland Brown

- Parent survey done; 787 respondents (26% of packages sold last year)
- about 1/3 respondents from all levels
- will refer to survey when we review vendors
- Jamie is still working with O'Connors to iron out current issues; wrong packages, wrong background; CHS paper orders never got processed although checks cashed; elementary issue coding got note pads instead of digital
- O'Connors has been plagued with short staffing...lots of issues
- most folks pretty understanding; USPS issues did not help...
- Jamie has been in contact weekly; daily, trying to solve the issues
- still working
- try for one rep from each PTO?
- Jamie has three vendors right now
- aim for 3rd week of February for presentation times
- Jennifer del Solar for CHIPS
- Hana for CHS
- Erica Thornton for Center
- O'Connor's opening new processing plant this spring
- current commission 20% or \$18K whichever is higher

#### Laura food update:

- sent out schedule and didn't hear back
- Treasurer put out paypal page to collect money
  - Byam got about \$300 in donations
  - Table of Plenty very thankful

#### CHIPS: Jennifer del Solar

- sandwich board from PTO to help keep people updated
- came into play in a holiday basket raffle virtually...earned 2x as usual! (with half the student body!)
- loved being part of Battle of the Boos
- open house went well; working with Mr. Hoyt to do 2nd open house to get new students into the building and/or virtual; Russ is leaving at the end of the month
- sock drive - Feb 8 - March 12; socks being donated to Wish Project

#### Center: Erica Thornton

- Taste of Chelmsford; is being re-imagined
- raffle calendar for month of March
- Bingo coming up; 1st virtual event; hard to get volunteers Feb 5
- Staff appreciation: some of that happening, with an eye on the budget so staff feels appreciated on half days; parent donations
- Playground needs updating

#### Byam: Laura Wilkinson

- Battle of Boos; also contributed to ToP
- teacher appreciation - hard to get volunteers, easier to get donations. Worked with KJs to take orders
- will continue to try and do things like that; highly recommend KJs
- Jo Holliday they try to reinforce reading and support a family fun weekend / online book fair / family event
- Bingo using virtual Band Bingo night with music kids and Brick-House fundraiser

#### South Row:

- Johanna Shaw Halloween decoration event; winners; prizes, Cafe12 and ThreeTrolls prizes
- raffle of 1-day park hopper tickets (\$1500)
- spirit wear sale (\$1K) (about half of expected) and online sales... will try doing batch ordering through the year
- upcoming book fair; game night perhaps online bingo or a book theme as it will be completely virtual
- no movie nights; got permission to do 1 outdoor movie...logistics

didn't work out. Will try again in spring but need permission

- Meadow Farms in April for playground mulch
- in talks with illustrator and comic author for a virtual visit...BIL
- trying to keep teacher appreciation lunch... outdoors? use local restaurant with prepackaged order... usually have theme, goodie bags, etc.

Harrington: No update

McCarthy: we continue to do a small staff appreciation event each month, we have a few events we are hoping to do with the kids in the spring pending restrictions. We will hold a book fair in February (online, not in person).

Parker: Cheryl

- Parker meets for the first time since November, tomorrow.
- gift card fundraiser • spirit wear online with Center Sports • dining for dollars • coffee at KJs

CHS: grab and go; food collection for Table of Plenty

Emily: we're all trying

Ginger: Scholarship time

Jessica LaMonde - guidance at Nashoba Valley Tech remind CHS seniors to apply for Scholarships

Meeting adjourned 8:33pm

1st: Jamie Outland Brown; 2nd Erica Thornton