

**CHELMSFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
August 9, 2021
Meeting Minutes**

Members Present: Mr. Dennis King (Chair), Mr. Jeff Doherty (Secretary), Ms. Donna Newcomb and Ms. Maria Santos. Mr. John Moses has not yet arrived.

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 Friday 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

1. **Approval of the minutes of the regular school committee meeting of July 20, 2021.**

Mr. Doherty motioned to approve the minutes from July 20th. Ms. Newcomb seconded. Motion carries 4-0.

Good News

Dr. Hirsch shared that school is starting soon!

Public Comments

None

New Business

1. FY2021 End-of-Year Budget Report – Final

Ms. Johnson-Collins included a memorandum in tonight's agenda packet which provides information for the FY2021 final budget report. This includes budget transfers approved at the July 20, 2021, meeting. She does not recommend any more budget transfers or journal entries tonight. The entire FY2021 budget was used leaving a \$0 balance.

2. 2020-21 Superintendent's Evaluation

Included in tonight's packet is the final summary of the Superintendent's Evaluation for the 2020-2021 school year. Comments by School Committee members are also included. Mr. King reviewed the document with The Committee. The ratings included "proficient" in two standards and "exemplary" in two others. Mr. King congratulated and thanked Dr. Lang for the "exceptional Job" during this past school year, leading the district through a difficult and different school year. Ms. Newcomb added that the district was one of five in The Commonwealth to be recognized by DESE for positive efforts throughout the school year. After 45 years of involvement with the Chelmsford School District, Mr. Doherty felt that the job done this year was "incredible" and thanked Dr. Lang for his leadership and the efforts of the students, staff and parents. He was grateful that, given COVID, the district was able to keep the schools open for the year. Ms. Santos appreciates that Dr. Lang excelled in leadership and communication this year. The upcoming school year will require a continuation of this excellence. Dr. Lang appreciated the comments and expressed gratitude to The School Committee and to all staff who gave 110% this year and worked so hard for the students.

Mr. Doherty motioned for The Committee to accept the evaluation of Dr. Jay Lang, Superintendent for the 2020/2021 school year. Ms. Newcomb seconded. Motion carries 4-0.

3. Restraint Prevention and Behavior Support Procedures – Revised

Amy Reese, Director of Student Support Services, joined the meeting, to update on the restraint policy which will remain, and procedures will be brought up-to-date to align with the current DESE regulations. DESE has already approved the draft included in tonight's agenda packet. The updates address training for staff (general and in-depth) and additional supports provided. Methods for engaging parents and guardians have also been added as well as alternatives to restraint. Links to the policy including updated procedures will be found on the district's website.

Ms. Newcomb motioned for The School Committee to accept the revisions to the section 9 training requirements and section 10 specific procedures that have been made to the restraint prevention and behavioral support procedures. Mr. Doherty seconded. A friendly amendment was added by Ms. Newcomb to acknowledge the receipt of these changes. Amendment seconded by Mr. Doherty. Motion carries 4-0.

4. 2021-22 School Committee Self Evaluation

Dr. Lang is suggesting a third party come in to facilitate a workshop for The Committee to complete this year's self-evaluation. This will include information and expectations learned during the pandemic and procedures for moving forward from the COVID crisis. The Committee will work on the evaluation prior to the next regular meeting.

5. RFP for Update to Facility Conditions and Districtwide Master Plan – Update

Ms. Johnson-Collins spoke of the search for a design services firm to assist with this. The proposals are due by August 12th. She hopes a contract will be prepared by August 26th. Completion of the report will be expected by February 2022. Dr. Lang will keep The Committee updated on this process. The cost will be covered by a grant with a maximum of \$75,000.

6. 2021-22 Student Transportation – Update

Ms. Johnson-Collins included a memorandum in tonight's packet with an update from August 6, 2021. 2,444 students have already registered to ride the school bus. There will be 29 busses making three runs each school day. K-6 over two miles is free, but registration is still required. Dr. Lang reported that student enrollment is back to full enrollment. Wearing masks on school busses is required by a federal regulation.

7. 2021-2022 Return-to-School Guidance and Planning

Dr. Lang has included a memorandum in tonight's packet which provides details and recommended changes starting with June 29, 2021. Return to school will be in-person with DESE not allowing remote learning options. Masking decisions are being made by each school district. Last year, following the MASC guidance, all CPS all students and staff wore masks inside the buildings. That is still the current policy on the record and applies to all regardless of vaccination status. This will be the requirement when school reopens. With full enrollment social distancing will not be possible. Dr. Lang will continue to update The Committee and is planning to put a "Frequently Asked Questions" link on the website for families.

8. 2021-22 Strategic Planning Process – Discussion

Dr. Lang stated there will be significant projects going on during this school year. The facilities update, and the strategic plan will be evolving. With regard to the strategic plan there may be third party firms who will come in to help with the process. At the meeting on September 7th, Dr. Lang will make a recommendation to contract with a group to assist with the strategic planning during the upcoming year. The cost will be covered by a federal grant. He sees this as a six-month process.

9. 2021-22 Diversity and Equity Professional Development Planning – Update

Dr. Hirsch provided an update on this PD for The Committee. The district has been working with a group called "Ideas Initiative for Developing Equity and Achievement". PD dates have already been set for the Committee, administrators and teaching staff. Courses will be offered to staff to assure sustainability going forward so PD may be facilitated by those within our district. The first workshop is set for next week.

10. FY2022 Recommended Budget Adjustment

(Mr. Moses arrived at the meeting at 7:36 p.m.)

Ms. Newcomb motioned for the funding be allocated from the FY2022 Employee Separation Costs fund category to the School Security fund category as outlined to provide for the costs associated with the wages of the additional secretarial position at Chelmsford High School to staff the new Entrance Vestibule. Seconded by Mr. Doherty. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 4-0 with Mr. Moses abstaining.

11. Permission to Post: CHS Career and College Readiness Facilitator

Dr. Lang shared that grant funding did come in for this position in the amount of \$30, 000 for this first year with the expectation for the same amount in the second and third years. The job description is included in tonight's agenda packet.

Ms. Newcomb motioned for The School Committee to approve the new position of College and Career Readiness Facilitator. Mr. Doherty seconded. Motion carries 5-0.

More Good News

Ms. Santos shared that Tom Peterson and the TV Club is offering a full week training for incoming CHS students which began today with a high participation level. Next week the Theatre Guild will also run a full week program on all facets of theater and production.

Public Comments

None

Adjournment (7:58 p.m.)

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

*Respectfully submitted,
Sharon Giglio, Recording Secretary*