

**CHELMSFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
December 7, 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

1. **Approval of the minutes of the regular school committee meeting of November 16, 2021**
2. **Approval of the minutes of the school committee workshop meeting of November 23, 2021**

Mr. Moses motioned to approve the regular school committee meeting minutes of November 16, 2021, and to approve the minutes for the school committee workshop on November 23, 2021, as presented. Mr. Doherty seconded. Motion carries 5-0.

CHS Student Representative Announcements

Katrina shared that students are half-way through term 2. Winter sports are starting, including basketball, hockey, swim, wrestling, indoor track, gymnastics and ski team. The combined winter concert by the band, chorus and orchestra will be on December 15th at 7:00 p.m. in The PAC. The All-Town Wind Ensemble will perform on December 22nd at 7:00 p.m. in The PAC. The acapella groups The Crescendos and The Thursdays performed at the annual tree lighting ceremony this past week. A bake sale fund raiser was held at that event.

Sarah announced that therapy dogs came to CHS where excited students were able to meet with them in the Career Center. The Mindfulness Matters Club organized this event. The dogs will be returning several times this school year.

Holiday cards are being collected by students Brook Stacy and Megan Arpino for patients who will be hospitalized during the holidays. All CHS students may participate by making cards. The National Honor Society is holding a "towel drive" for families in need. The Student Council is collecting "Toys for Tots" through tomorrow. The Career and College Readiness Center will host a representative from the Greater Lowell Workforce Board every other week. Their goal is to connect students with jobs that are a best fit and to assist with resources needed for job applicants. This program will be explained during Plus block this Thursday.

Good News

Mr. Moses shared that the Christmas trees are up and "look great"!

Public Comments

Mr. Mason Brunnick, Development Manager, of Trammel Crowe Residential spoke about the development agreement before the Chelmsford Select Board pertaining to the proposed housing on the former University of Massachusetts Lowell West Campus site. He referenced discussions to mitigate concerns with educations/schools and the sum of \$ 60,000 that has been set aside in the draft development agreement for education/school purposes. Dr. Lang responded that the topic will be discussed later in the agenda.

New Business

1. Discussion on the Proposed Redevelopment of 255 Princeton Street (formerly the UMASS West Campus) and its Potential Impact on Schools

Dr. Lang shared that the School Committee and administration was invited to attend a recent Chelmsford Select Board meeting as the topic of a development agreement was before the Chelmsford Select Board pertaining to proposed housing on the former University of Massachusetts Lowell West Campus site. The Committee is concerned with the impact of new students from the proposed housing development on the current K-12 schools in Chelmsford. The most pressing concern is at the elementary level where the proposed development would feed the Harrington Elementary School which is at capacity. The Select Board has asked the school department to quantity anticipated costs associated with the redevelopment of the West Campus site to be considered for inclusion in the development agreement. Dr. Lang spoke with firms that conduct enrollment projections and redistricting studies to ascertain the costs associated with such studies as potential costs to request be included in the development agreement. A budget for these two studies to be conducted is estimated at \$ 60,000.

Committee members agreed that \$ 60,000 is a good budget figure to request the Select Board include in the development agreement for costs associated with a new student enrollment projection and redistricting plan. What is difficult to anticipate without additional students from the housing development enrolled in the Chelmsford Public Schools (CPS) are other potential costs for additional transportation, staffing, etc. associated with the proposed development. Committee members discussed and requested an additional sum of money be set aside for other potential costs while students begin enrolling in CPS before the increased annual costs can be factored into supplemental annual operating budgets funded by the town (through increased property taxes derived from the proposed housing development). Ultimately, the Select Board enters into the development agreement with the developer, the Committee is communicating concerns and requests for consideration from the school department.

2. Tri-Board Budgetary Meeting: Monday December 13, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.

Dr. Lang advised The Committee to attend the meeting on Monday. The meeting starts at 6:00 p.m. and not 7:00 p.m. as indicated in tonight's agenda. It will conclude with an Executive Session.

3. Final October 1, 2021, Student Enrollment Report & Updated NESDEC Enrollment Projection

The data is included in tonight's packet for each school. Dr. Lang stated these numbers do not vary much from the draft that was submitted to The State. The numbers of high school students have declined some, but there is an increase at the elementary level, which will trickle up to the middle schools. This information will be helpful in applying for new building projects with MSBA.

4. 2021 – 2022 School Improvement Plans

The detailed individual school improvement plans for the current school year are included in tonight's agenda packet. Dr. Hirsch will be happy to answer any questions from The Committee. The elementary schools work collaboratively as do the two middle schools. This work has already been in process since schools opened in September.

5. Discussion on Middle School Honor Roll Designation

Dr. Parks, principal of Parker Middle School, and Mr. McPhee, principal of McCarthy, came to tonight's meeting to share information and background on honor rolls at the middle schools. Mr. McPhee shared that several years ago the designation shifted from all "A's" for high honor roll to a GPA system. Averages of 90% and above were "high honor roll" and 80% "honor roll". Courses that meet five days per week are weighted more heavily than those that meet just once weekly. At both middle school the honor roll lists are posted in the school lobby. Students who met the honor roll criteria will have that information posted clearly on their report cards for their families. The grades reflect the curriculum standards as well behaviors (based on three criteria). Parents were advised of this at the beginning of this school year. To fully appreciate this presentation and The Committee's discussions, one should view tonight's meeting on Chelmsford Telemedia You/Tube.

6. Department and School Presentation Schedule: Spring 2022

The presentation schedule is included in tonight's agenda packet. The academic departments will team up with the schools for relevant shared presentations.

7. Proposed 2022/23 School Calendar

Dr. Lang included the proposed school calendar for 2022/23 in tonight's packet.

Mr. Moses motioned to approve the Chelmsford Public Schools 2022 to 2023 academic calendar. Mr. Doherty seconded. Motion carries 5-0.

8. Proposed FY2023 Budget Calendar

Dr. Lang would like to move The Committee meeting scheduled for February 15th, to February 8, 2022. Dr. Lang cannot attend the February 15th meeting and would like to have two budget meetings in February. The Committee supported this change.

Mr. Moses motioned to move the February 15, 2022, School Committee meeting to February 8, 2022. Mr. Doherty seconded. Motion carries 5-0.

9. Approval of Out-of-State Field Trips

Mr. Moses motioned to approve the field trips as presented. Mr. Doherty seconded. Motion carries 5-0.

Liaison Reports

Mr. Doherty shared that The Boosters' Club met last Thursday and are continuing to work with sports teams in need of financial assistance. The Alumni Association met and applications for the scholarships can be found on the website. Seniors applications need to be completed by January 7, 2022. Alumni applications need to be completed by January 21, 2022.

Ms. Santos shared that the Harrington PTO met via zoom. They had good participation for their "Color Run". They will be hosting a winter store with Byam on Saturday, December 11th, from 9 – 2:00 p.m. Items are priced between \$1.00 and \$7.00. They will be providing fleece jackets for their staff. Their "Tabletop Math" will begin soon. Many of their parents have volunteered to help with the fourth-grade events this year.

The Chair attended a CHIPS meeting last night which was an open house for current students where pizza was served. The Chelmsford Fire Dept. will be at their program Friday to an enrichment. Many events are lined up for the next three months. Currently they are sponsoring an online fund raiser of holiday baskets. They plan to hold an open house for new students in January or February.

Public Comments

Melissa McDonald, of Six Colonial Terrace, has questions concerning iReady. She would like to see more transparency for the teachers and families with regard to the iReady rubrics. She has questions about the amount of time her sixth grader is expected to log on to iReady and to do at home ELA assignments each week. Screen time is concerning to her. She would like to see her children spend more time interacting with their peers and teachers. Currently, iReady consumes time that is going to increase in the next school year, from her understanding. She would like there to be feedback from students and teachers on iReady.

Adjournment (7:53 p.m.)

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

*Respectfully submitted,
Sharon Giglio, Recording Secretary*