

**CHELMSFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
REGULAR MEETING  
January 18, 2022  
Meeting Minutes**

**Members Present:** Mr. Dennis King (Chair), Mr. Jeff Doherty (Secretary), Mr. John Moses, 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 January 4, 2021**

**Ms. Newcomb moved that the School Committee approve the minutes from the meeting of January 4<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Doherty seconded. Motion carries 4-0 with Mr. Moses abstaining.**

**CHS Student Representative Announcements**

Katrina shared that term two ends on Friday. Only the semester classes will hold final exams this week. This month CHS launched its first free one-credit “College and Career Exploration Course” for all freshmen and sophomores. This is done in a partnership with Middlesex Community College. The course is fully online and self-paced. The guidance counselors at CHS are facilitating the course. More information will be presented at this meeting later tonight.

Sarah added that five seniors were selected to display their artwork at “The Hello There – Art Exhibit” from January 5<sup>th</sup> through the 30<sup>th</sup>. These CHS students are Meghan Haynes, William Lambert, Josie Lee, Avery Marr and Daniel Jeong. On January 27, 2022 a meeting will be held for parents of eighth-graders. CHS administrators and curriculum coordinators will meet with the parents. Following there will be a tour of the school guided by National Honor Society students. In-Tune has been postponed until February 11<sup>th</sup>, at 7:00 p.m. Sarah says, “It will be an amazing show!”.

## **Good News**

In school and back to work!

## **Public Comments**

None.

## **New Business**

### **1. Spotlight on the Schools: Chelmsford High School**

This month's meeting is shining the spotlight on CHS and some of the activities there. Principal Steve Murray introduced: John Morris, Science Curriculum Coordinator; Stephanie Quinn, Social Science Curriculum Coordinator and Alex Cunningham, Director of Career and College Readiness Center. Mr. Murray is excited about the one credit course opportunity presented tonight and is grateful to Mr. Morris and Ms. Quinn for the hard work they did to make this a reality. The slide show part of the presentation is included in tonight's agenda packet. The cost of the course is being paid by Middlesex Community College through a grant they received. The course helps instill good study habits, time management and organizational skills which provides a foundation for good academic success. There are also activities addressing careers and goals. The course is self-paced and completely online. Guidance counselors are involved in being available to students taking the course and Ms. Cunningham will run activities during "Pride Block" for students who desire additional support. The one-credit earned will be transferrable to colleges as a behavioral science credit.

Mr. Morris shared that this will offer support for the "Innovation Pathways" program offered at CHS to introduce students to industries like: business & finance; information technology; life sciences and advanced manufacturing and provide hands-on experiences. Applications will be due on February 14<sup>th</sup>. Community business partners are involved in this program and assist in helping students understand the relationship to their work in courses with careers in the local area. CHS provides supports for English Language learners and students with special needs to be successful in all the programs the school offers to students.

Ms. Quinn spoke about the "Dual Enrollment" program between CHS and Middlesex Community College. This year there are 367 students enrolled in 22 different courses. This number will increase with next week's registration for spring semester. These courses are offered to CHS students at a reduced tuition rate. Ms. Quinn also spoke of the "AP Capstone" program which teaches students research and presentation skills. Both our current CHS Students Reps are participants in this program. Participation begins in junior year and continues through senior year. Students are able to choose a research topic that follows their "passion". A list of the topics is available on the CHS web site. At this point our student reps spoke of their research projects to The Committee. To fully appreciate all the programs available to CHS students and to hear from our students in person about their projects (Bias in Mass Media and the Effects of Astrology on Teens), please go to Chelmsford Telemedia and view tonight's meeting.

Ms. Cunningham spoke about "The New Career and College Center" at CHS, which she has offered since her arrival at CHS in September. The center is increasingly being visited by students from freshman through senior years who seek support in planning for their futures. She offers workshops on: choosing a career; college choice; interview skills; resume writing and assistance in finding jobs locally and meeting with career advisors from local employers. She also spoke of the "Junior Job Shadow", "Career Breakfast" and the "Senior Internship Program". A DESE student internship is being offered for the first

time at Chelmsford schools for students interested in pursuing a career in education. They receive pay for these internships. Lastly, upgrades are being made to the Center in terms of donated furniture and a new presentation space which will be completed during February vacation. A reopening celebration will take place after the vacation. Comments and questions from The School Committee were welcome and addressed.

## **2. Dore & Whittier Architects: Districtwide Facilities Master Plan Options Discussion**

Dore & Whittier were not able to be at tonight's meeting. This discussion will take place at the next meeting on February 1, 2022.

## **3. 2022/23 School Year – Kindergarten Registration Dates**

Ms. Johnson-Collins announced that kindergarten registration is January 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> at Central Office, from 9:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. Appointments will be scheduled for the families for this process. A subsequent kindergarten registration will take place in April. All the information and a two-page flyer may be found on the district website. There is a waiver process for families who wish their five-year-old whose birthday is between September 1<sup>st</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> to be placed in first grade instead of kindergarten. Also, students who turn six between July 1<sup>st</sup> and August 31<sup>st</sup> may be enrolled in kindergarten instead of first grade.

## **4. FY2022 Financial Report – 2nd Quarter (October – December 2021)**

Ms. Johnson-Collins included the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter financial report in tonight's agenda packet which she reviewed for The Committee. The reports are "very favorable" over all.

## **5. American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding**

In the documents included in tonight's agenda packet, Dr. Lang has highlighted the school HVAC projects that have been tentatively committed to by the Select Board. Some projects are still under discussion or have been deferred. As these projects are completed they can be removed from the capital funding "watch list" for the district. The Chair thanked The Town and the Select Board for prioritizing the school projects.

## **6. Update on COVID-19 Pool Testing, Test & Stay Initiative, and Student Vaccination Status**

On the second regular monthly meeting, Dr. Lang provides the COVID updates as promised. His slides supporting the information are included in tonight's agenda packet. Highlights include the increased number of people vaccinated in The Town, especially for ages 5-11 and 12-15. "Pool testing" continues to be available to all students and staff who wish to participate. This data is updated to the district website weekly. The number of positive cases (post holidays) have been increasing recently as they have been throughout Massachusetts. This should diminish as case positivity does throughout The Commonwealth.

Regarding "Test and Stay" only includes non-vaccinated students. In December just under 1900 tests were administered with only 9 positive tests. This indicates small spread within the school community. The mask mandate indoors in school has been extended to at least February 28, 2022. More information on home COVID tests will be coming later this week.

## 7. Personnel Report – December 2021

No action required.

### Liaison Reports

Mr. Doherty shared that the Pep Band will be playing this Saturday at the hockey game against Billerica. The Boosters Club acted to support the Pep Band by buying them warmer hoodies to be worn in the Forum ice arena. On March 19<sup>th</sup> a St. Patrick's Day fundraiser will be held by the Boosters. They are also looking for additional volunteers for their finance committee.

Ms. Santos added that McCarthy will be doing sales of River Hawks tickets. The 7<sup>th</sup> grade event at Roller Kingdom has been postponed due to COVID numbers. Their theater production will be *Moana* in February. The EL Council has two liaisons who partner with teachers. An EL Council meeting will be held, but the date has not been determined. CHS parents are providing a "grab and go" tomorrow for the staff.

Ms. Newcomb shared that South Row's PTO has many upcoming activities planned through the rest of the year. The Chelmsford Council of Schools will meet tomorrow and the Friends of Music will meet on Thursday. Center School's PTO will meet Thursday.

### New Items

The Chair shared that the next regular meeting is February 1<sup>st</sup>, followed by a meeting on February 8<sup>th</sup>. The Budget will be presented on February 1, 2022. Ms. Santos requested an update on current class sizes.

### Public Comments

The Chair received an e-mail from a parent, Mr. Mark McGann, who does not like to see vaccinations being encouraged. He wrote, "I would like to ask the superintendent to stop promoting and recommending the vaccination for these children."

### Adjournment (7:48 p.m.)

**Mr. Moses motioned to adjourn at 7:48 p.m. Mr. Doherty seconded. Motion carries 5-0.**

*Respectfully submitted,  
Sharon Giglio, Recording Secretary*