

**CHELMSFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
December 6, 2022
Meeting Minutes**

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

6:05 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Opening Statement

“This 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 the Chelmsford School Committee Public Participation Guidelines. Anyone speaking tonight during the public input portion of the meeting has notified the superintendent’s office of their desire to speak and has been provided with these guidelines. Upon request written comments received no later than 12:00 p.m. on the day of this meeting will also be read and made part of the record of the meeting during the second public comment session.”

Consent Agenda

1. Approval of the minutes of the regular school committee meeting of November 15, 2022

Mr. Doherty moved that The School Committee approve the minutes of the regular School Committee meeting held on November 15, 2022. Mr. Moses seconded. Motion carries 5-0.

2. Approval of the minutes of the regular school committee meeting of November 21, 2022

Mr. Doherty moved that The Committee approve the minutes of the regular School Committee meeting held on November 21, 2022. Mr. Moses seconded. Motion carries 5-0.

CHS Students Representative Announcements

Keya shared that on November 17, 18 and 19th, CHS presented the musical *Legally Blonde* which was a huge success! She congratulated the cast, crew and students. The “Snowball Dance” scheduled for December 2nd, will take place at a later date. Several colleges recently visited CHS including: The Savannah College of Art and Design; Bridgewater State and Regis College.

Lana added that CHS had their “Pep Rally” in the gym before Thanksgiving which was a fun start to Thanksgiving break. The school was able to donate nearly 4,000 items to the Merrimac Valley Food Bank. This was run by the 2023 class officers and Boy Scout Troop 81. The Class of 2023 held a bake sale at the Chelmsford Commons tree lighting. All winter sports have begun! Tomorrow is an early release day for all students.

Good News

Dr. Hirsch shared that the Unified Basketball Team held a celebratory ceremony. Photos from this event will be included in this week’s newsletter. Ms. Newcomb added that several Committee members attended *Legally Blonde* and found it to be “an outstanding performance”! Mr. Doherty shared her enthusiasm for the musical. Dr. Hirsch stated that there will be many live musical performances during December. They may be viewed on Chelmsford Telemedia for those who are unable to attend. Mr. Doherty reminded all that tomorrow night there will be a parent event at CHS for parents of eighth graders.

Public Comments

None.

New Business

1. Spotlight on the Schools: Parker Middle School

Principal Jeff Parks and Parker Middle School students Maya Barry and Dom LaRosa joined the meeting this evening to provide an update on the current year at their school. Dr. Parks shared that this year is off to a good start and how pleased he is to have students and staff in attendance for what is promising to be a “return to normal” year. Events so far this year included a 5th and 6th Grade Social. A 7th and 8th grade dance will take place this Friday. Additionally, after school activities and clubs are being enjoyed along with school concerts! Field trips as well as family and staff events have fully resumed. Parker 7th graders also collected enough food to feed over 30 families for Thanksgiving and the whole school contributed to The Chelmsford Food Pantry. Thanks to school social worker, Julia Gannon, for spearheading the 7th grade collections!

Student collaborations in the classrooms have resumed. The 1:1 initiative is in its fourth year, but despite student access to their own Chromebooks there continues to be a nice balance between on-screen and in-person sharing. Parker is almost fully-staffed, but like most other schools are still needing to hire some paraprofessionals. In accordance with Parker’s Strategic Plan which provides for equity and academic equity for all students, a language-based program has started in grade five. Four additional staff members have been hired and have joined the special education team. A partnership with the New England Center for Children continues to provide special programs and is in its eighth year. Dr. Parks shared that the school is in its second year of a revised grading practice. Honor Roll is now focused strictly on academics. Middle school parent conferences were initiated this year with successful feedback. Prior to turning this presentation over to Maya and Dom, Principal Parks shared his belief in the importance of students having a voice in the school as well as active leadership opportunities.

Maya spoke first of the student P.R.I.D.E. representatives. This group is made up of 25 students from grades 7 and 8 who have been nominated by staff and has existed for 12 years. These students receive leadership training and organize and conduct events for the Parker community. Both Maya and Dom are

members. The students were included in a student leadership conference held at SNHU in November. They met with and collaborated with over 200 middle schoolers from New England. Photos are shared in the slide show accompanying tonight's presentation.

Maya next spoke of the Student Ambassadors program which began in 2020. The 32 students each represent their home rooms and are from grades 5-8. This is an elected position and focuses on monthly service projects for Parker. This month they are collecting blankets for cancer patients.

Dr. Parks spoke of ongoing work for the proposed middle school transition. The Transition Committee is comprised of McCarthy and Parker staff. Dom spoke of a survey which was sent to all 6th and 7th graders. They had a response of about 50% of students. The questions are shared in tonight's slide show. Students are looking forward to a tour of McCarthy and are hoping Ozzie will be able to visit them there! They are also looking forward to being reunited with their friends from elementary school. The presentation was well-received by The School Committee. More planning for the transition will take place after the December vacation.

2. Tri-Board Budgetary Meeting: Monday December 12, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.

Dr. Lang reminded The Committee of the meeting next week with the Tri-Board.

3. Proposed FY2024 Budget Calendar

Dr. Lang included a memorandum in tonight's packet suggesting a time line for the FY2024 Budget. He will present the budget at the February 7th meeting. The meeting on February 28, 2023, will be posted as a public hearing on the budget. If additional hearing opportunities are needed that will take place at the March 7th regular meeting. The Committee is fine with this schedule for the FY24 Budget.

4. Recommended FY2024 Budget Transfers

This transfer will support an update for the Harrington School teacher's lounge.

Mr. Doherty moved that The School Committee approve the FY2023 local operating budget transfer for the Chelmsford Public Schools as presented. Mr. Moses seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 5-0.

5. CHS Athletic Events – Ticketing Update

Included in tonight's agenda packet is a memorandum from Ms. Johnson-Collins providing details for the "Go Fan" ticketing platform (adopted by Chelmsford Public Schools in November 2021) which is being used for CHS athletic events. Dan Hart, Athletic Director, collaborated with Ms. Johnson-Collins to prepare this agenda item. Those who wish to attend athletic events can use "Go Fan" or click on the QR code at the venue gate which can be scanned on cell phones. Additionally, "Go Fan" provides a point-of-sale machine at the gate which accepts debit and credit cards. All proceeds are placed in the Athletic Revolving Fund to help with equipment purchases and coach stipends. The one-dollar fee "convenience fee" for "Go Fan" is included in the price of the ticket and is covered by The District. Tonight's packet also includes the fee schedule for tickets. Dr. Lang assured all that The District is providing necessary information for this process to go smoothly.

Liaison Reports

Ms. Santos attended the Harrington PTO meeting. They had a successful “Holiday Store” and have an upcoming “Special Person Dance”. She also attended the McCarthy PTO meeting and heard good feedback on The Middle School Transition Committee and the recent forum for families. The Parker and McCarthy PTO’s are planning to meet together soon.

Mr. King shared that CHIPS had a great turnout at their open house and collected over \$1,000 thanks to their basket raffle. They expressed appreciation to The District for helping to support staff appreciation events. SEPAC will hold a virtual meeting this Thursday. The link for this may be found on their Facebook page. Ms. Santos added that the Harrington and McCarthy PTOs also expressed thanks for support for teacher appreciation events.

Mr. Doherty attended the CHS PTO meeting. They are beginning to prepare for the “After Prom Breakfast” on May 30th.

Dr. Lang was pleased with the recent attendance at the webinar addressing the transition for the two middle schools. He will begin virtual office hours tomorrow for parents with questions on the transition. One will be held monthly. Staff meetings have already begun around logistics for realignment.

Action/New Items

The Policy Subcommittee will be sharing information at the first meeting in January. The Handbook will be presented then as well.

Ms. Newcomb would like to involve the state reps in the New Year! She would also like an update on E-Sports. Mr. Moses would like an update on the open space.

Public Comments

None

Adjournment (7:06 p.m.)

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

*Respectfully submitted,
Sharon Giglio, Recording Secretary*