

**CHELMSFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
October 17, 2023
Meeting Minutes**

Members Present: Ms. Donna Newcomb (Chair), Mr. Dennis King (Vice Chair). Ms. Susan Mackinnon (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 & Finance)

Call to Order

Ms. Newcomb called the meeting to order at 6:00

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 this 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 October 3, 2023.**

Mr. King motioned to accept the minutes from the meeting on October 3, 2023. Mr. Moses seconded. Motion carries 5-0.

CHS Student Representative Announcements

Keya shared that colleges have been visiting CHS. Clubs and after school activities are in “full swing”. Late busses began running today. Picture retakes are scheduled for November 9th. Flu vaccines for students will be on October 18th.

Lana added that the Seniors Halloween Dance will take place on October 28th. The Unified Basketball team had their first win this season against North Andover. Studio Art 2 students created coloring books for adults. They help to reduce stress and anxiety and “improve focus and relaxation”. Each student designed two pages and chose the titles and cover designs. The books were distributed during Open House. Ms. Newcomb displayed them tonight.

Good News

Dr. Hirsch shared that tonight’s good news is in the audience and will be presenting in a few minutes.

Public Comments

None

New Business

1. Presentation: Strategic Plan Steering Committee – Academic Achievement

Dr. Hirsch introduced the members of The Academic Achievement sub group: Dr. Parks; Dr. Beyranevand; and Kelly Rogers. Academic Achievement is one of the five strategic planning priorities that are covered under the current district's Strategic Plan. The other four groups will be presenting at future meetings. After focusing on reading, the focus is shifting to mathematic following the processes used to improve reading programs. Reading and other subjects will continue to be supported while new math curriculum, pedagogy and supports will become an additional focus. Success will be measured by data percentiles on MCAS and meeting standards through i-Ready data. New math initiatives for this school year will involve: implementing a new math curriculum; using i-Ready benchmarks for K-8; continue improving use of the Panorama Dashboard; and reviewing school schedules to maximize learning time.

Dr. Beyranevand spoke of the new math curriculum initiative K-12. Programs and math curriculum have been evaluated over the prior school year and pilots have been implemented with input from all stakeholders. The Reveal Math Program was the chosen pilot to be introduced this current year. "Teacher Leaders" were fully trained. K-5 staff have been trained since the beginning of this school year. Teacher Leaders were given additional training at that time. January will bring more training for K-5 teachers and then end of the year will bring the opportunity for reflection and possible changes for the 2024/25 school year. Reflection and changes will be addressed next summer as well. Planning will be made for additional and ongoing professional development. Additional staff besides teachers will be trained. Some of the elementary schools and middle schools may benefit from an intervention program through Title 1.

Ms. Rogers spoke of the second initiative which involves i-Ready and having students who are working just below the benchmark get additional support beyond the instruction and support within the classroom or outside in small group instruction. Students are able to set their own learning goals through the use of i-Ready. Teachers will share the i-Ready data with the individual students to monitor growth. In the upcoming year the leadership team will be meeting with the i-Ready consultants for the fall, winter and spring testing windows. Parents are able to logon to their students i-Ready site and see a report that outlines exactly where the student is and how much growth they have seen over time. This also provides strategies to show parents how to work with their children. Finally, the administrative team will be involved with professional development around "standards mastery" which will provide additional information to teachers about what their students are learning.

Dr. Hirsch spoke of the third initiative which concerns creating one dashboard to provide one place for teachers to go to get all the information on each student. The platform "Panorama" allows teachers to see all the students in the class and principals can see all those in their school. It shows academic updates, behavior updates, and attendance updates. Dr. Hirsch says that Panorama is being widely used by teachers. At a future meeting Dr. Hirsch will demonstrate Panorama. This is the second year that Panorama data has been available. I-Ready is the tool box for math and ELA and is standards-based.

Dr. Parks then spoke about the fourth initiative which is to maximize student learning time, by looking at ways to adjust daily schedules. At McCarthy the goal for this year was to find a way to lower class sizes and give the students some choices and a voice within the schedule. They have created an extra block which is devoted to SEL on Mondays and several elective offerings during the other four days of the school week. For students who need extra support this block of time facilitates that without pulling students out of core blocks. This will be reviewed as the year unfolds and improvements will be made where a need is indicated. Dr. Parks also spoke of a middle school collaborative fund raiser called "Days of Awesomeness" which was a huge success for both schools!

This was a detailed presentation and can be fully appreciated by watching tonight's meeting on Chelmsford Telemedia YouTube.

2. FY2024 Budget Report: 1st Quarter Financials (July 1 – September 30, 2023)

Ms. Johnson-Collins shared a memorandum and the details of the first financial quarter for July through September 2023 in tonight's agenda packet. She "walked" The Committee through all of these details.

3. Recommended FY2024 Budget Transfers

Mr. King motioned to approve the FY2024 local operating budget transfer for \$134,862 for the salary reserve land change account to the various labor accounts as presented. Mr. Moses seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 5-0.

Mr. King motioned to approve the FY2024 local operating budget transfer for \$125,000 for the six accounts noted to the Local Capital Land Building account as presented. Mr. Moses seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 5-0.

Mr. King motioned to approve the FY2024 local operating budget transfer for \$3,107 from the one account noted to the Parker Middle School Music Supply account as presented. Mr. Moses seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 5-0.

4. Impact to Student Activity Accounts – Middle School Realignment

Ms. Johnson-Collins "walked" The Committee through her memorandum on how to best resolve these accounts. Much discussion took place. This is complex! Dr. Lang will get additional information on this matter and bring it up at a future meeting.

5. Personnel Report: September 2023

No action required.

Liaison Reports

Ms. Santos attended the Parker/McCarthy PTO meeting. "Days of Awesomeness" raised close to \$25,000 at each school! McCarthy (in collaboration with Center School) will hold its recycling day on November 4, 2023.

Ms. Mackinnon attended the Harrington PTO meeting. The awning has been installed over the entrance to the fourth-grade classrooms. They had to reschedule their color run event until June due to rain. Trunk or Treat will be held on October 29th. On Halloween they will sponsor "Costume for a Cause". Those who donate \$1 may wear their costumes that day.

Ms. Newcomb attended the 50th Annual Pumpkin Fair at South Row which was well-attended. Lots of pumpkins were sold at this PTO sponsored event.

Action/ New Items

None

Public Comments

none

Adjournment (7:46 p.m.)

Mr. King motioned to adjourn into Executive Session to discuss collective bargaining issues and not return to Regular Session. Mr. Moses seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 5-0.

*Respectfully submitted,
Sharon Giglio,
Recording Secretary*