

**CHELMSFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
December 19, 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) and Dr. Linda Hirsch (Assistant Superintendent) and Ms. Joanna Johnson (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 December 5, 2023

Mr. King motioned to approve the minutes from our meeting on December 5, 2023. Mr. Moses seconded. Motion carries 5-0.

CHS Student Representative Announcements

Lana shared that the All Town Wind Ensemble is performing at the PAC this evening. Students in grades six through twelve will be participating. On December 13th the CHS Winter Concert was held at the PAC. Performers included: percussion; treble choir; concert choir as well as the band and orchestra ensembles. The National Honor Society is selling hand-crafted ornaments at all lunches. This past weekend the CHS Speech and Debate Team placed seventh at the annual Holly Tournament in Natick.

Good News

Dr. Hirsch stated that Byam Elementary School is on the same academic calendar as the rest of the district. All are looking forward to vacation week! Ms. Mackinnon shared that cards were received from Community Teamwork.

Public Comments

None

New Business

1. Presentation: Strategic Plan Steering Committee – Equity

Dr. Lang shared that tonight's presentation by the Strategic Plan Steering Committee is the third one of this year. Tonight's focus is on "Equity" with Amy Reese, Director of Student Services, and Amy Matson, Assistant Director of Student Services, spoke on the work that the equity subgroup has been doing. Ms. Santos is also a member of this sub-committee. The focus has been on the achievement gap: between general education students and students on IEPs and between general education students and economically disadvantaged students. Four initiatives have been identified for this school year. The first initiative is to "define and refine the role of a paraeducator". The second one is to identify the supports for students for high quality education in "the least restrictive environment". The third is to research strategies to support economically disadvantaged students. Finally, it is to implement Math/ELA benchmark assessments using iReady in K-8 to identify improvement areas for SWD (students with disabilities). In the slide show included in tonight's agenda packet for each of these initiatives there is a matrix detailing: status; major activities; timeline; progress; barriers and next steps. Their presentation may be viewed by watching tonight's meeting on Chelmsford Telemedia YouTube.

2. MSBA Invitation to Eligibility Period: Parker Middle School

Dr. Lang shared the fantastic news that the application to the MSBA (Massachusetts School Building Authority) was successful and Chelmsford has been invited into the eligibility period! A copy of the award letter is included in tonight's agenda packet. The window of time begins April 1st and will end next December. Information on benchmarks and deliverables is also included in the packet. Dr. Lang explained the process going forward to The Committee, at length. The newest school building in Chelmsford is CHS which is heading for 50 years of age. School enrollments keep increasing and there are currently 22 modular classrooms in the district, including eleven at Parker alone.

3. Recommended FY2024 Budget Transfer

Ms. Johnson-Collins included a memorandum in tonight's agenda packet providing details of a budget transfer request.

Mr. King motioned that the School Committee approve the FY 2024 local operating budget transfer for \$23,200 from the account noted to the local capital land and buildings account as presented. Mr. Moses seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 5-0.

4. Proposed 2024/25 School Year Calendar

Dr. Lang shared the proposed school calendar for the 2024/25 school year in tonight's packet. Notably the calendar includes two full weeks of vacation at the end of December and beginning of January!

Mr. King motioned to approve the 2024/25 school year calendar as presented. Mr. Moses seconded. Motion carries 5-0.

5. FY2025 Capital Plan Update

Included in tonight's agenda packet is an email from John Souza, Finance Director/Treasurer Town of Chelmsford, and an addendum detailing the projects which have been selected for capital improvements for FY25. Not approved were the CHS art rooms renovation and the McCarthy tennis court project, which is a recreation project from which the whole Town will benefit. Dr. Lang hopes that one-time money may help to support these. The McCarthy tennis court project may need to be redefined as a school project only, versus a town-wide project. This will be subject to further conversations. No action is required now.

6. Proposed FY2025 Budget Calendar

Dr. Lang included a memorandum providing dates for the upcoming budget.

Mr. King motioned to approve the 2025 budget calendar as presented. Mr. Moses seconded. Motion carries 5-0.

7. Personnel Report: November 2023

No action required.

Public Comments

none

Reports

1. Liaison Reports

Ms. Santos shared that many were unable to attend the last Wellness Committee meeting, but they meet often to plan for the Wellness Fair which will take place on March 6, 2024.

Ms. Mackinnon attended Harrington's PTO meeting on December 6th. This is Celebrate Harrington Week with fun planned for each day! In May they will celebrate senior citizens. On January 19th, they will tape Mr. A. to the wall!

Mr. King added that The Alumni Association met this month and have revamped their scholarship website to make it more "user-friendly". There are QR codes posted around CHS to make access easier for students.

2. Action/ New Items

Mr. King wants to be sure an application is made for South Row's roof project through MSBA's Accelerated Repair Program.

Adjournment (7:39 p.m.)

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

***Respectfully submitted,
Sharon Giglio,
Recording Secretary***