

**CHELMSFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
November 19, 2024
Meeting Minutes**

Members Present: Mr. Dennis King (Chair), Ms. Maria Santos (Vice Chair), Ms. Diana Lebeaux (Secretary), Ms. Susan Mackinnon and Mr. John Moses who arrived at 6:29 p.m.

Also present: Dr. Jay Lang (Superintendent) and Dr. Linda Hirsch (Assistant Superintendent) and Ms. Joanna Johnson-Collins (Director of Business & Finance).

Call to Order

Mr. King 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 Policy. 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.”

CHS Student Representative Announcements

Patrick stated that “Spirit Week” at CHS will kick off this Thursday with “pajama day and ending on Wednesday November 27th with the “pep rally”. The CHS Theatre Guild will present *Beauty and the Beast* this Thursday, Friday and Saturday at the PAC. The CHS Homecoming Dance will be held on Tuesday and is open to all grades. Also, on Tuesday the CHS “Powder Puff” football game will take place at the Simonian Stadium starting at 2:30 p.m.

Lana added that Thursday at 9:30 a.m. will be the signing day for athletes to sign up for D1, D2 and D3 levels of play. This will take place in the CHS gym. On Friday the CHS South Asian Student Association will host an event in the cafeteria. The Class of 2027 will hold a “lights” contest between the houses. Judging will be held the week of December 15th with winners being announced on December 20th. The kickoff will happen on December 15th with free cookies and hot chocolate and dinner from “Heavenly Hot Dogs”. Contestants need to sign up in advance and pay a \$20 entrance fee.

Good News

Dr. Hirsch shared that 18 CHS students were chosen to participate in The Massachusetts Music Educator Association's auditions for the Northeast Senior District Music Ensembles! Several students also secured their “First Chair” for their musical instrument positions!

Public Comments

None

New Business

1. Spotlight on the Schools: South Row Elementary School

Terri Gilbert, Principal, Jayson Ramalho, Assistant Principal, joined the meeting with special education teacher, Allison Hevey and fourth grade teacher Amanda Kellerman to discuss how the “Push In” model is working at their school. Looking at students, staff and data the model is expanding each year at South Row. These teachers work together with the support of a para-educator for one hour each day of reading and one hour each day of math. Several of the students with IEPs were previously in “pull out” classes but are now able to be integrated into this model. The slide show they included in tonight’s agenda packet provides background for the benefits of the model and well as “barriers”. Along with their presentation tonight it also provides details on how the program runs daily. Amanda described how Allison (the special educator) pushes into Amanda’s fourth grade class and supports both SPED and GEN ED students. Allison spoke of the many benefits of this model for all the students involved. It also helps fourth graders to become familiar with working with multiple teachers which will be the model for them next year in middle school. Amanda added that Allison’s presence in the classroom enables her to observe students not only during academic times but also non-academic times. No one is pulled out of the classroom. Both reading and math are done in small group rotations within the classroom with both teachers alternating which groups they teach. Later in the day they may work on phonics or individualized lessons. Data is monitored and shows the benefits of this model. One of the barriers to this mode, among others, is the huge time commitment for the co-teachers and finding common planning time. Mr. Ramalho added that the “sense of belonging” in this classroom is good for students and staff as well. The Committee responded positively to tonight’s presentation and appreciated the panel’s answers to their direct questions. To fully appreciate it, please watch it in its entirety on Chelmsford Telemedia/YouTube.

2. FY2025 School Facility Work Order Summary: 1st Quarter (July – September 2024)

DPW Director Christine Clancy joined the meeting to share news on the first quarter work orders. 431 work orders were completed or generated during the first quarter with an 83% completion rate. Her slides in tonight’s agenda packet provide details broken down by both location and trade. It was a busy summer! The software will be upgraded soon to “Brightly Solutions” with staff training being held in January and ushering in the new software in the spring. She will report back to The Committee in January. Ms. Clancy stated that all systems have been checked and are operational for the upcoming cold weather! Dr. Lang thanked the DPW department for all the “excellent” work for the schools!

3. 2024/25 School Improvement Plan

Dr. Hirsch shared that tonight’s agenda packet contains the 2024/25 School Improvement Plans for all Chelmsford Public Schools. The plans are required each year by DESE. The plans are generated by each School Council, comprised of teachers, administrators, parents and a community member. The plan includes goals and action steps to align with the District’s Strategic Plan. There are many similarities in goals amongst schools at each of the levels, however the data differs. Some schools need to achieve higher growth than others depending on their iReady data.

4. Overview of Curriculum Adoption Process

Dr. Hirsch presented tonight the process of adopting a new curriculum. She reviewed the five stages of curriculum adoption: needs assessment; review of curriculum products; pilot implementation; evaluation and feedback; and final adoption. Assessing needs involves current student demographics and the learning needs. Curriculum must be aligned with state standards. Gaps need to be filled when curriculum products are no longer supported by the vendor/publisher. Administration reviews vendor presentations making sure the standards and assessment needs will be met and carefully review materials for any existence of bias or ignoring facts that must be included. Piloting involves testing the effectiveness in classrooms and includes gen-ed teachers, sped teachers and administrators. Visiting other districts already using the curriculum is valuable, Collaboration of pilot teachers and feedback from teachers and admin must be done to determine what is working and what is not. Final surveys as well as classroom observation are part of the feedback. Final adoption involves looking at all pilot data, aligning with district goals and what funding sources are available. The final decision is then communicated to teaching staff. Most importantly a multi-year PD must be in place. In her slides included in tonight's agenda packet is a link "k-12 Curriculum materials" for the district. Dr. Hirsch keeps a timeline of what subject areas are next for new adoption. Concerning literacy there must be "evidence-based practices". *Ed Reports* and *CURATE* are both sources that review programs and rate curriculum using rubrics. Sometimes two products are adopted simultaneously because together they fully meet curricula needs but do not separately (Fountas and Pinnell is used with Foundations in Chelmsford for reading). Dr. Hirsch answered questions from members of The Committee. To fully appreciate Dr. Hirsch's entire presentation this evening, please view it on Chelmsford Telemedia YouTube.

5. Net School Spending Agreement – MA DESE EOYR Indirect Cost Allocation

Dr. Lang has included a memorandum and the agreement with The Town of Chelmsford for the net school spending. This details the municipal expenditure from The Town for The Chelmsford Public Schools. This agreement will be in effect from FY2025 - FY2028.

Ms. Santos moved to approve the Net School Spending Agreement Massachusetts DESE EOYR Indirect Cost Allocation for FY 2025 to FY 2028 as presented. Ms. Mackinnon seconded. Motion carries 5-0.

6. Personnel Report: October 2024

No action required.

7. Quarterly Reports on Valley Collaborative Business – FY2025 First Quarter

Ms. Santos moved to accept the quarterly report from the Valley Collaborative for FY2025 first quarter. Ms. Lebeaux seconded. Motion carries 5-0.

Reports

1. Liaison Reports

Ms. Lebeaux attended the McCarthy/Parker PTO meeting. Parker's pizza and pumpkin event was successful. In December they will walk to CHS for musical performances. McCarthy students had a positive experience at a Leadership Conference at SNHU.

Ms. Santos attended Center's PTO meeting and enjoyed the update on enrichment grade by grade. Book clubs start in the school library. The focus for all is on "showing kindness". December 9th -13th their "Winter Gift Room" will be open.

Ms. Mackinnon spent a full day today working on a mission and vision statement for the Town's Strategic Planning Committee. "Education ranked high in what The Town is doing well!" Tomorrow the staff for the town will meet to decide on goals and action steps for The Strategic Plan. Also, she attended the CHIPS PTO meeting last night. They raised over \$900 at Open House through a bake sale and raffles, and the money will purchase new age-appropriate educational toys for their students. Lots of enrichment programs as always! They are hoping to have music in December presented by the middle schools and CHS.

The Chair met with the Capital Committee last week. In December decisions will be made about which projects to adopt.

Action/New Items

Ms. Lebeaux would like to hear the district's reaction to the Educator Diversity Act newly passed by the State legislature. She would also like to discuss shifts to MCAS which will be in effect due to the recent ballot issue.

Adjournment: 8:00 p.m.

Ms. Santos motioned to adjourn. Ms. Lebeaux seconded. Motion carries 5-0.

*Respectfully submitted,
Sharon Giglio,
Recording Secretary*