

**CHELMSFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
REGULAR MEETING  
March 11, 2025  
Meeting Minutes**

**Members Present:** Mr. Dennis King (Chair), Ms. Maria Santos (Vice Chair), Ms. Diana Lebeaux (Secretary), Ms. Susan Mackinnon and Mr. John Moses.

**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 6:03 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 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.”

**CONSENT AGENDA**

1. **Approval of the minutes of the regular school committee meeting of February 25, 2025**

**Mr. Moses motioned to approve the regular school committee meeting minutes of February 25, 2025. Ms. Lebeaux seconded. Motion carries 4-0. Ms. Santos was out of the room during this vote.**

**CHS Student Representative Announcements**

Lana said that the Class of 2026 elections took place last week. Congratulations to the four winners! There were seven finalists at the Career Development Conference with several moving on to the International Career Conference and three who will attend the ICDC Leadership Academy! This week the “House Olympics” is being held where Hawthorne, Emerson and Whittier battle for most school spirit.

Patrick added that this week is also CHS Spirit Week. Tomorrow is an early release day. Registration for spring sports are taking place until March 13<sup>th</sup>. Winter sports are completed with congratulations to all coaches and teams. The “Shamrock Shuffle Dance” will be held on Friday March 14<sup>th</sup>. The CHS Math Team took first place at the UMASS Lowell Mathematics Challenge!

## **Good News**

Dr. Hirsch shared that Parker Middle School will be putting on their play, *The Wizard of Oz*, this coming weekend.

Mr. King added that congratulations go to Thomas Brown, of the CHS Wrestling Team who won his third New England title to go with his fourth All State title, fourth Divisional Title and the Sectionalist title! He is one of the “most successful wrestlers in Massachusetts history!”

## **Public Comments**

None

## **New Business**

### **1. Spotlight on the Departments: Fine & Performing Arts (K-12)**

Dr. Lang welcomed Dr. Christina Whittlesey, Department Coordinator for Fine & Performing Arts, to the meeting to provide a spotlight on her department. She is honored to present in March because it is both “National Youth Art Month” and “Music in our Schools Month”. She started by saying the rigorous curriculum of her department is aligned with State Standards. In 2019 DESE introduced a new arts frameworks which are anchored by the State Artistic Practice Standards. These allow k-12 students to achieve “artistic literacy”. This approach successfully prepares students for college, careers and civic participation. Students present original works and also respond to the works of others. Additionally, increased collaboration for art teachers K to 12 is happening. Dr. Whittlesey (and on behalf of the CHS art teachers) enthusiastically thanked all involved for the renovations which updated the CHS art rooms! Currently, hundreds of pieces of student art work are on display at the Chelmsford Public Library as part of “Youth Art Month”! Also 64 Chelmsford Public Schools artists have work seen at the “Massachusetts Art Educators Association Exhibit”. The following CHS students: Arnav Gandhe; Karen Khela and Melanie Lалlos have had works accepted for the UMASS Lowell’s Fourth Annual High School Exhibition! Additionally, The Studio Three students are participating in the “Memory Project” again this year. They create portraits for children around the world who have faced substantial challenges such as neglect, abuse, loss of parents, violence, war and extreme poverty”. The portraits this year were done for students in Malawi and being sent to the children there for them to keep. This year’s CHS musical, *Beauty and the Beast*, was entered into the TAMY Awards. The results will be posted in the spring. The Theatre Guild won several awards in the preliminary round and will advance to the semi-finals. Each March and April many music students participate in music festivals. This year eight grade 4-6 will participate in the Massachusetts Music Educators Association’s (MMEA) All State Treble Choir! Seven CHS students will participate in the MMEA’S All State Ensembles at Symphony Hall in Boston. Ryan Blaine will represent Chelmsford at the National Association of Music Educators All Eastern Festival in Connecticut in April. The “thriving A Capella program at CHS and middle schools” is proud that “The Thursdays” and “The Crescendos” placed first and second at The International Championship of High School Acapella quarterfinals and will advance to the semi-final round. Congratulations to all of these successful artists who have shown dedication to their craft! To view this entire presentation and to enjoy tonight’s wonderful performance by The Thursdays, please view this on Chelmsford Telemedia/You/Tube!

### **2. Vote on School Choice Program: 2025/26 School Year**

Dr. Lang included a memorandum in tonight’s agenda packet and spoke about the continuing “School Choice Program” which allows students from other districts and attend public school in Chelmsford. Each year 40 or 50 of these students come to school here and there is a revenue offset of \$5,000 per student.

This money helps to fund the 1:1 computer initiative. Usually, the students will attend CHS and join the school as freshmen and continue at CHS through graduation. We are looking to admitting ten freshmen for the next school year. If more than ten apply a lottery is held to determine admission.

**Ms. Santos motioned to accept ten additional students at Chelmsford High School in grade nine under The Commonwealth of Massachusetts School Choice Program bringing the total School Choice participation in the Chelmsford Public Schools to 40 enrolled students during the 2025/26 school year. Mr. Moses seconded. Motion carries 5-0.**

### **3. Approval of Field Trip & Travel Requests**

**Ms. Santos motioned to approve the four high school field trips and travel requests as presented. Mr. Moses seconded. Motion carries 5-0.**

## **Reports**

### **1. Liaison Reports**

Ms. Lebeaux attended the South Row PTO meeting. They have a committee looking into how to use the \$20,000 sweepstakes windfall they are receiving. Global Field Day was held in February. When they had their recent ALICE Drill they were able to use new security updates which worked well. Over 100 students participated in the Science Fair in February! A "Multi-Cultural Festival" will be held on April 5<sup>th</sup>.

Ms. Mackinnon shared that the CHIPS PTO is very busy with enrichment programs! Their "Spirit Day" will be April 8<sup>th</sup>. They collected 629 pairs of socks for their Community Service Project! They have upcoming story and music enrichment programs. Harrington PTO held a "Multi-Cultural Night". They will host a STEAM Fair on April 15<sup>th</sup>, in collaboration with UMASS Lowell. There will be a pasta dinner held in April. Today they had a visit from New House Wildlife Rescue with a beaver and groundhog in attendance! The Chelmsford Friends of Music is looking for help with the bottle and can drives which are held monthly on the second Saturday. May 10<sup>th</sup> a middle school talent show will be held in collaboration with The Chelmsford Center for the Arts. Scholarships are available for music camps or college with applications available on their website.

Ms. Santos added that the CHS PTO shared that everything is on track for the After-Prom Program. Pickle Ball will host a tournament on May 3<sup>rd</sup>. The PTO held a "Thanks a Brunch" event for CHS Staff! Center School's Science Fair will be held tomorrow evening. The Chelmsford Council of Schools stated that the Katie Greer presentation was well received!

### **Action New Items**

Mr. Moses requests updates on federal executive orders that have an impact on education. He is hoping updates come from DESE or The State Attorney General or other sources. Dr. Lang responded that we get legal alerts from our law firms. The Massachusetts Attorney General's office also updates us and provides guidance along with DESE. Many of the educators' associations also provide updates. Ms. Johnson-Collins also keeps current on federal funding and changes that may occur. She will present the third quarter projection soon which will include federal Title I and IDEA grant funding.

Ms. Lebeaux would like an update on the OPM for the Parker School project. Dr. Lang said that four firms will be interviewed on March 19<sup>th</sup>. A recommendation will be made to the larger building committee in April. May 12<sup>th</sup> the MSBA will offer approval.

The Town's Strategic Plan will be presented to the Select Board.

Due to a request The Chair announced there will be a debate for candidates hosted by the Chelmsford Democratic Committee on March 19<sup>th</sup> at the Police Department from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

**Public Comments**

None

**Adjournment: 6:53 p.m.**

**Ms. Santos motioned to adjourn. Mr. Moses seconded. Motion carries 5-0.**

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