

**CHELMSFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
February 24, 2026
Meeting Minutes**

Members Present: Mr. Dennis King (Chair), Ms. Diana Lebeaux (Secretary), Ms. Susan Mackinnon, and Ms. Maria Santos. Mr. John Moses is not present tonight.

Also present: Dr. Jay Lang (Superintendent), 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 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 3, 2026

Ms. Santos moved to approve the regular school committee meeting minutes of February 3, 2026. Ms. Lebeaux seconded. Motion carries 4-0.

GOOD NEWS

Dr. Hirsch announced that her “good news” is in the audience in the form of the visiting UMASS Lowell TEA Fulbright Scholars! She is also looking forward to a return to school tomorrow after a vacation week and two snow days!

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

None

NEW BUSINESS

1. Open Comment: Parker Middle School Building Project – Grade Level Options

Dr. Lang said that the business meeting tonight will start with an opportunity for open comments on the Parker Middle School Building Project concerning grade level options. This will be an agenda item at each meeting during this ongoing project through the spring. Three locations for the school were originally on the table but the option that was chosen is on the current Parker site. Grade levels still being considered are: a new Parker grade 5 and 6 school; a school encompassing grades 4, 5 and 6; or a “mega middle school” with grades 5, 6, 7 and 8. These models have been presented at public forums (another will be held on March 19th at 7:00 at the Chelmsford Elks). For this evening’s meeting no one has registered to speak. In April a final vote will be taken on the grade level configuration in preparation for the MSBA submission in May 2026.

2. Recognition: UMASS Lowell Teaching Excellence and Achievement (TEA) Fulbright Scholars

Dr. Hirsch welcomed the 20 TEA Scholars to our meeting and included a memorandum about the program which Chelmsford has participated in this six-week global for 8 years. Six of these teachers collaborated and taught with Chelmsford teachers who volunteered, and two are present at tonight’s meeting, Madame Gadbois and Ms. Ferronetti from CHS. Dr. Matthew Beyranevand, from UMASS Lowell, who serves as the liaison to work with the teachers and Chelmsford High School to support the program came to the table to speak about the highlights and success of this program. Oluwabanke from Nigeria who teaches science and researches cures for breast cancer thanked Mr. Zopes from CHS for his “student-centered instruction” as well as “differentiation and inclusivity”. Zuzana from Slovakia teaches English and literature and enjoyed teaching with Madame Gadbois at CHS who she found to be engaging for her “curious” students”. She enjoyed talking with students and was impressed by our facilities. Next Haykanush from Armenia who teaches English as a second language and was pleased to partner with Ms. Ferronetti who she found to be a “bright and supportive teacher”. She was welcomed warmly in many classrooms and appreciated the “inclusivity and engagement” and the respectful, confident students. Saya from Iraq teaches high school biology and is a curriculum coordinator in an international school. Additionally, she is a “Senior Project Assistant” with the United Nations! Her experiences at CHS will enable her to return to her country and “contribute effectively” especially with regard to special education students. She is grateful to Ms. Kender who teaches at CHS who helped her with lab work and specifications for “lab work safety” in chemistry and physics. Neel from India is pleased to have co-taught at CHS with Mr. Acheson, who himself went to India in 2018 under this same program! He learned a lot about using technology and lab safety protocols. He was especially pleased with the counseling services available at CHS for students. Finally, Elly from Kenya shared that he enjoyed teaching in Chelmsford with Dr. Tanini and was pleased to do a Zoom Symposium with her for his students in Kenya. He will miss the CHS “Smartboards” when he returns to his chalk board in Kenya! A group picture was taken to celebrate this positive experience for all!

3. Spotlight on the Departments: Mathematics

Ms. Katherine Richard, Department Coordinator for Mathematics, joined the meeting to provide an update on mathematics in the Chelmsford Public Schools. Her Power Point presentation is included in tonight's agenda packet. Her focus is on "providing a coherent K–12 mathematics program that builds understanding, skills, and problem solving to prepare all students for future learning and life beyond school". She began by talking about REVEAL MATH for grades K to 5 which is in its third year. This year has included two PD days with elementary math teachers and one PD day for paraprofessionals. The most recent PD covered standards relating to "subtraction" with a focus on building conceptual understandings.

She next clarified the placement criteria for middle school 6th graders before they begin 7th grade math. She has replaced two prior assessments with the Iowa Algebra Aptitude Test (IAAT) which will be given in May. In determining 7th grade placement this IAAT assessment is combined with MCAS, iReady, grades, Continental Math League, student readiness and teacher recommendations. The three levels for 7th grade are: Honors; Accelerated and Grade-Level. Teachers will still have input into student placement and parents with concerns may reach out to teachers or directly to Ms. Richard. Families have been sent letters detailing the placement process. Ms. Richard and Dr. Hirsch answered Committee questions and clarified the placement process and stressed the importance of students talking about placement with their teachers.

Algebra 1 is taught to students in grade 9 as covered by the State Standards. Sophomores may choose to take Geometry and Algebra 2 concurrently. Three levels of Calculus are offered at CHS. This may be followed by Pre-Calculus as juniors. Some students continue on to AP Calculus. A new Financial Mathematics course for seniors is now offered at CHS which is "a bridge between math and essential life skills, focusing on a practical, mathematical approach to real-world choices." This will support the proposed State Literacy Initiative that is currently a draft. At CHS Pre-Calculus is now approved as a dual enrollment class through Middlesex Community College. This entire presentation may be viewed on Chelmsford Telemedia YouTube.

4. Presentation – DMGroup: Strategic Plan Mid-Year Update

Maggie Gallagher from the DMGroup came to the table to present the mid-year update for the Strategic Plan. Dr. Lang stated that we are in year four of the five-year plan. The entire Steering Committee meets every six to seven weeks and sub groups meet in between those times. The meetings focus on the "Initiatives" and "Action Steps" in order to track and report on progress. For the first priority area, Academic Achievement, mid-year assessments show that all initiatives are "on track" to meet the end of the year target goals. Regarding the "Equity Priority" we are on track to meet end-of-year goals with the exception of "3rd and 8th grade students based on iReady data" which are only one percentage point from meeting the mid-year target. Onboarding and continued training for paraprofessional support for this continues. This is the first year for SEL data being covered in Panorama and three of the four initiatives are on track. The Human Capital Priority shows all initiatives on track.

The Operations & Facilities Priority shows all initiatives on track as well! Heading into year five at the beginning of the next school year the planning should begin for the next Five-Year should begin with gathering needs assessment data. School Committee members and Dr. Lang shared positive comments about the collaboration with DMGroup with the Strategic Plan. "The relationship with DMGroup has been exceptional" added Dr. Lang and expressed thanks to both Maggie and Tess. He looks forward to continuing to work with DMGroup on the next Strategic Plan!

5. Approval of Non-Affiliated Employees Salary Schedule - Revised

Dr. Lang included a memorandum and spread sheet in tonight's agenda packet providing a revision of the Non-Affiliated Employees Salary schedule. This will correct a calculation error for steps two and three.

Ms. Santos moved to approve the Appendix B: Non-Affiliated Central Administration / Non-Licensed Staff salary schedule covering FY27 – FY29 as amended and presented. Ms. Lebeaux seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 4-0.

6. FY2027 Budget Hearing

The Chair announced that the budget will be viewed tonight page by page and any questions on each page will be answered at that time. Then each page will be voted on individually. At the end the bottom line or final number will be voted on. Dr. Lang added that the budget will then be presented at Town Meeting in April. The Chair shared that in a time when budgets everywhere are tight thanks go to Dr. Lang and Ms. Johnson-Collins and her department for allowing us to maintain services!

Ms. Santos moved to approve the budget for item number 1110 School Committee in the amount of \$34,960. Ms. Lebeaux seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 4-0.

Ms. Santo moved to approve the budget for item number 1210 Superintendent in the amount of \$519,413. Ms. Lebeaux seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 4-0.

Ms. Santos moved to approve the budget for item number 1220 Assistant Superintendent in the amount of \$299,958. Ms. Lebeaux seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 4-0.

Ms. Santos moved to approve the budget for item number 1230 District Wide in the amount of \$501,700. Ms. Lebeaux seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 4-0.

Ms. Santos moved to approve the budget for item number 1410 Business and Finance in the amount of \$570,159. Ms. Lebeaux seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 4-0.

Ms. Santos moved to approve the budget for item number 1420 Human Resources in the amount of \$376,572. Ms. Lebeaux seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 4-0.

Ms. Santos moved to approve the budget for item number 1430-1435 Legal Services and Settlements in the amount of \$93,000. Ms. Lebeaux seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 4-0.

Ms. Santos moved to approve the budget for item number 1450 Districtwide MIS in the amount of \$1,728,646. Ms. Lebeaux seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 4-0.

Ms. Santos moved to approve the budget for item number 2110 Curriculum Directors in the amount of \$1,518,744. Ms. Lebeaux seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 4-0.

Ms. Santos moved to approve the budget for item number 2110 Curriculum Directors – Special Education in the amount of \$1,126,961. Ms. Lebeaux seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 4-0.

Ms. Santos moved to approve the budget for item number 2210 School Leadership in the amount of \$3,414,530. Ms. Lebeaux seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 4-0.

Ms. Santos moved to approve the budget for item number 2300 – 2305 Classroom Teachers – Regular Education in the amount of \$27,871,859. Ms. Lebeaux seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 4-0.

Ms. Santos moved to approve the budget for item number 2310 Teacher Specialists – Regular Education in the amount of \$2,227,259. Ms. Lebeaux seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 4-0.

Ms. Santos moved to approve the budget for item number 2310 Teacher Specialists – Special Education in the amount of \$9,404,372. Ms. Lebeaux seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 4-0.

Ms. Santos moved to approve the budget for item number 2320 Medical/Therapeutic Services in the amount of \$607,087. Ms. Lebeaux seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 4-0.

Ms. Santos moved to approve the budget for item number 2325 Substitutes in the amount of \$811,000. Ms. Lebeaux seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 4-0.

Ms. Santos moved to approve the budget for item number 2330 Paraprofessionals in the amount of \$5,128,621. Ms. Lebeaux seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 4-0.

Ms. Santos moved to approve the budget for item number 2340 Library/Media Center in the amount of \$912,617. Ms. Lebeaux seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 4-0.

Ms. Santos moved to approve the budget for item number 2357 Professional Development in the amount of \$220,727. Ms. Lebeaux seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 4-0.

Ms. Santos moved to approve the budget for item number 2410 – 2415 Textbooks & Instructional Materials in the amount of \$494,550. Ms. Lebeaux seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 4-0.

Ms. Santos moved to approve the budget for item number 2420 Instructional Equipment in the amount of \$188,200. Ms. Lebeaux seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 4-0.

Ms. Santos moved to approve the budget for item number 2430 General Supplies in the amount of \$650,232. Ms. Lebeaux seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 4-0.

Ms. Santos moved to approve the budget for item number 2440 Other Instructional Services – Special Education in the amount of \$215,000. Ms. Lebeaux seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 4-0.

Ms. Santos moved to approve the budget for item number 2451 – 2455 Classroom Instructional Technology & Software in the amount of \$871,000. Ms. Lebeaux seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 4-0.

Ms. Santos moved to approve the budget for item 2710 – 2800 Guidance & Psychological Services in the amount of \$3,375,437 with the language as noted by Dr. Lang. Ms. Lebeaux seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 4-0.

Ms. Santos moved to approve the budget for item 3200 Medical & Health Services in the amount of \$1,054,243. Ms. Lebeaux seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 4-0.

Ms. Santos moved to approve the budget for item 3300 Transportation in the amount of \$5,691,534. Ms. Lebeaux seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 4-0.

Ms. Santos moved to approve the budget for item 3400 Food Services in the amount of \$25,000. Ms. Lebeaux seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 4-0.

Ms. Santos moved to approve the budget for item 3510 Athletic Department in the amount of \$935,492. Ms. Lebeaux seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 4-0.

Ms. Santos moved to approve the budget for item 3520 Other Student Activities in the amount of \$199,440. Ms. Lebeaux seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 4-0.

Ms. Santos moved to approve the budget for item 3600 School Security in the amount of \$311,626. Ms. Lebeaux seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 4-0.

Ms. Santos moved to approve the budget for item 4110 – 4210 – 4230 Custodial Services in the amount of \$2,231,475. Ms. Lebeaux seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 4-0.

Ms. Santos moved to approve the budget for item 4120 – 4130 Heating of Buildings & Utility Services in the amount of \$1,559,000. Ms. Lebeaux seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 4-0.

Ms. Santos moved to approve the budget for item 5150 Employee Separation Costs in the amount of \$125,511. Ms. Lebeaux seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 4-0.

Ms. Santos moved to approve the budget for item 9300 Tuitions in the amount of \$2,854,075. Ms. Lebeaux seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 4-0.

Ms. Santos moved that we approve the overall FY2027 budget in the amount of \$78,150,000. Ms. Lebeaux seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 4-0.

Dr. Lang added that this is a \$2.5 million increase over FY2026 or 3.2%. It will be presented Thursday evening to The Finance Committee and to Town Meeting in April. A copy of the budget will be posted later this week on the district's website.

7. Personnel Report – January 2026

No action required.

8. Approval of Field Trip & Travel Requests

Ms. Santos moved to approve the Chelmsford High School qualifying DECA students to the DECA State Conference March 12th through March 14, 2026, in Boston, Massachusetts. Ms. Lebeaux seconded. Motion carries 4-0.

REPORTS

1. Liaison Reports

Ms. Lebeaux attended the Parker/McCarthy PTO meeting on February 12th. Parker held a successful "Super Bowl Food Drive". PRIDE Week culminated in an ultimate volleyball game before vacation week. They reported a \$2,000 profit on their Winter Social. More socials will be held in the spring. McCarthy hit the one million mark for Project 300! The musical *Mean Girls* was a success. McCarthy has an upcoming dance. Scholarships may be applied for through April 10th. They look forward to more families joining the joint PTO.

Ms. Mackinnon went to the Harrington School PTO meeting. They will hold a calendar raffle fund raiser. They will have an "Artist-in Residence" for a week and will use student art to create a large wall mural featuring "Kindness and Inclusion". She also attended the CHIPS PTO meeting and they continue to fund multiple enrichment programs for their students like: Sugar Bus; Big Joe Story Time; Music Academy and Goldfish Swim School. They are grateful for funding provided for Staff Appreciation Days. "Square One Art" will be returning.

ACTION/NEW ITEMS

Ms. Santos announced that the Wellness Fair is coming on March 6th.

Mr. King shared that the Alumni Association met, and the scholarship application date has passed, and they are happy to have received 231 applications! They are revamping the application process for the CHS Hall of Fame. The Building Committee met last week. Options for where on the Parker land the building will go are being discussed. In April a formal vote will be taken on grade level configurations for the new school. "Day on the Hill" will be held on March 30th and four School Committee members will attend.

Ms. Santos would like to have a presentation on the roles of staff in the Library media Centers.

DESE's recent newsletter reminded school districts to review their policies on what to do if a student's parents have been detained by ICE. Dr. Lang said there are plans at all schools for this possibility. This Thursday Dr. Lang and others will participate in a workshop hosted by the Massachusetts District Attorney's Office. He will be sure to discuss this at a future regular meeting.

Ms. Santos moved to change the regularly scheduled School Committee meeting from the 17th of March to the 24th of March. Ms. Lebeaux seconded. Motion carries 3-0 with 1 abstention.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

None.

ADJOURNMENT at 8:48 p.m.

Ms. Santos moved to adjourn. Ms. Lebeaux seconded. Motion carries 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Giglio, Recording Secretary