

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

Members Present: Mr. Dennis King (Chair), Ms. Susan Mackinnon and Ms. Maria Santos. Mr. John Moses is not in attendance. Ms. Diana Lebeaux (Secretary) is attending the meeting through Zoom

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 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 24, 2026

Ms. Santos moved to approve the minutes of the regular school committee of February 24, 2026. Ms. Mackinnon seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 3-0.

2. Approval of the minutes of the regular school committee meeting of March 3, 2026

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

CHS STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Patrick shared that The Wellness Fair at CHS on March 6th was a success with many students attending. Winter Sports Awards took place last night in the PAC. Congratulations to all award winners and to the CHS Swim Team which won their fifth straight MVC Title! On March 19th Becky Savage spoke to students about her “525 Foundation” which educates about the dangers of opioids, by sharing her tragic story. Term 3 ends on April 4th.

Richie added that “House Olympics” were held the week of March 9th with Hawthorne House winning. Spring sports have begun. This Friday the Red Cross will hold a blood drive in the CHS gym. On April 12th the Craft Fair will take place at McCarthy Middle School. The Cotillion will be on May 9th.

GOOD NEWS

Dr. Hirsch announced that Byam Elementary School had “a very successful multicultural evening”! Ms. Mackinnon attended the Center Elementary School “STEAM Fair” and was asked to officiate. She enjoyed the exhibits and being back at the school where she taught. Also, she saw the Parker School production of *Mary Poppins* which was nicely done!

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

None

NEW BUSINESS

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

The Chair stated that at the recent public forum grade level configurations were discussed. At the next Regular School Committee meeting a final approval will need to be made of the “Ed Program” as well as a formal vote on grade configuration. Two nights later the Building Committee will do the same. Dr. Lang hopes to see a final “sign off” from the MSBA Board by late May or early June. From June through October formal cost estimating and a closer look at the space configuration will occur. Starting in October there will be more community input sessions.

2. Spotlight on the Departments: Health, Physical Education & Family Consumer Science

Kathryn Simes, Department Coordinator for Health, Physical Education and Family Consumer Science came to the table with two students, Misha and Fabiana, to share what is happening in her departments. She began by presenting on the new health and wellness course begun this school year called “Modern Topics in Health Sciences”. This may be taken by juniors or seniors. The course covers: Ethics and Professionalism; Infectious Disease and Epidemiology; Health and Disparities Policy; and Health Careers and Pathways. Misha shared that she liked best the ethics unit. They studied past work done in epidemiology and psychology and looked at it through the ethics lens. HIPPA was also explored. Fabiana also enjoyed the ethics unit which helped to “set the foundations for discussions” held during class with discussions of moral arguments in issues that are not always “black or white”.

Ms. Simes added that through the instructor, Mrs. Gonzales, students were also able to hear directly from a dozen health care workers covering the whole spectrum including education requirements for each career and what a day in the career looks like. Misha liked learning about the SANE nurses (who work in the ER with victims of sexual assault) and Trauma nurses. She liked hearing how they balanced their work with their own lives. Fabiana shared that these nurses treat patients who are “basically having the worst day of their lives”.

A Physician Assistant also offered to let students intern with her. One student will be interning at South Row School with their physical therapist. The students took a field trip to Middlesex Community College and participated in “hands-on activities” in a facility with “top-tier equipment”. Middlesex offers the only Dental Lab Technician Program in New England. Fabiana enjoyed seeing how new dental tools make their work easier. She plans to go into nursing and liked the “simulation lab” using robots who were like “live patients”. The day concluded with a panel discussion. Soon, Misha will intern at a pediatric dental office and plans a career in the dental field.

Ms. Simes closed by speaking of the Wellness Fair held on March 6th, which was a success despite weather challenges and a delayed opening time for school. There were almost 40 vendors, and she thanked Ms. Mackinnon and Ms. Santos for their participation in manning stations. The “Hobbies” table was new this year and a welcome addition. Ms. Mackinnon’s hula hoop presentation was very popular! The presentation was well-received by The Committee and others and may be viewed on Chelmsford Telemedia YouTube.

3. District Support and Resources for Immigrant Families

Dr. Lang included a memorandum in tonight’s agenda packet regarding supports and resources that the district has in place for immigrant families. School social workers and guidance counselors are available for questions and assistance to families in need. The memorandum has also been shared with all staff with FAQ documents. This is not a reaction to anything that has happened in the district but meant to provide resources and support for the community.

4. Approval of Contract: South Row Kitchen Exhaust Hood Installation

Ms. Johnson-Collins spoke to the memorandum included in tonight’s packet.

Ms. Santos moved to accept the base bid and award the contract for construction services for work at South Row Elementary School. The project includes installation of pre-purchased hood equipment with associated electrical and HVAC work as indicated in the contract documents to the following vendor: Marino Construction Inc., 24 Marshall Street, Lowell, MA 01851 for South Row Elementary School in the amount of \$48,333. Ms. Mackinnon seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 4-0.

5. Approval of Contract: Chelmsford High School Emergency Egress

Ms. Johnson-Collins spoke to the memorandum included in tonight’s packet which was recommended by a safety audit.

Ms. Santos moved to accept the base bid and award the contract for construction services for work at Chelmsford High School to the following: Marino Construction Inc., 24 Marshall Street, Lowell, MA 01851 for Chelmsford High School in the amount of \$94,375. The project includes installation of pre-purchased doors, new concrete egress stairs with metal railings and associated electrical work as indicated in the contract documents. Ms. Mackinnon seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 4-0.

6. FY2026 Budget Projection

Ms. Johnson-Collins included a memo updating the FY2026 budget projection. Many categories are favorable. Currently, she anticipates the \$75,650,000 budget she believes at the end of the fiscal year we will be \$3,055,000 favorable. She will soon recommend prepaying FY2027 tuitions.

7. FY2026 Recommended One-Time Budget Expenditures

Ms. Johnson-Collins included a memorandum in tonight's agenda packet with a list of one-time budget expenditures which total \$974,448. These were recommended by school administrators and department heads. Dr. Lang supports these requests.

Ms. Santos moved to vote to approve these FY2026 local operating budget transfers totaling \$974,448 for the Chelmsford Public Schools as presented. This budget transfer is shifting from ten (10) DESE categories that are favorable to eight (8) DESE categories where the items should be purchased as discussed. Ms. Mackinnon seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 4-0.

8. FY2026 Recommended Budget Transfers

Ms. Johnson-Collins included a memorandum tonight to approve the cost-of-living adjustment budget transfers for Central Administration staff approved by The Committee at the February 3, 2026 meeting.

Ms. Santos moved that the school committee vote to approve the FY2026 local operating budget transfer of \$15,379 from the salary reserve COLA account to the various labor accounts as presented. Ms. Mackinnon seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 4-0.

9. Personnel Report – February 2026

No action required.

10. Approval of Field Trip & Travel Requests

Ms. Santos moved to confirm the approval of the CHS field trip for the Thursdays Acappella Group to ICHSA Semifinals on March 15, 2026, to West Hartford, Connecticut. Ms. Mackinnon seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 4-0.

Ms. Santos moved to approve the CHS field trip for The Theatre Guild to the METG State Final Round of One-Act Festival on March 26th through March 28, 2026 in Boston, Massachusetts. Ms. Mackinnon seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 4-0.

Ms. Santos moved to approve McCarthy Middle School's field trip for interested eighth-grader French students for cultural enrichment May 1st through May 3, 2026, to Quebec City, Canada. Ms. Mackinnon seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 4-0.

REPORTS

1. Liaison Reports

Ms. Mackinnon shared that CHIPS PTO continues to share “great enrichment things”. Goats are coming to visit on May 28th! Their PTO needs three new people to step up for next year. Harrington is also looking for two more people for PTO next year. Harrington used the new notification system for the ALICE Drills successfully. A fund raiser called “Tape Mr. A to the Wall” will be held to fund the costs for the outgoing fourth-graders party!

Ms. Santos added she always enjoys attending the Center School PTO meetings. They do “great things for students, families and staff” like: BINGO; Taste of Chelmsford; and an upcoming Family Cultural Night. Recycle Day will be May 2nd with McCarthy. They had “an amazing STEM Fair” and are working on activities for the outgoing fourth graders. They are grateful that their cafeteria has been painted! Ms. Santos also thanked Teresa Evans for providing puzzles for the very successful Wellness Fair. The CHS PTO is working had on the After-Prom Project. A pickle ball tournament will be held on May 16th from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

ACTION/NEW ITEMS

Mr. King wanted to discuss if DESE funds to Title One would have an effect on our budget? Ms. Johnson-Collins said the status of this would be made known in the summer.

He would also like to see “The Integrated Revue” shared with The Committee. Dr. Lang will share the final report when it is received. The Day on The Hill will take place on March 30th.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

None.

ADJOURNMENT at 7:32 p.m.

Ms. Santos moved to adjourn. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Giglio, Recording Secretary