

**CHELMSFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE
REGULAR MEETING
March 3, 2026
Meeting Minutes**

Members Present: Mr. Dennis King (Chair), Ms. Diana Lebeaux (Secretary), and Ms. Susan Mackinnon. Ms. Maria Santos will attend tonight's meeting on Zoom. Mr. John Moses is not in attendance.

Also present: Dr. Jay Lang (Superintendent) and Dr. Linda Hirsch (Assistant Superintendent). Ms. Joanna Johnson-Collins (Director of Business & Finance) is not present tonight.

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."

CHS STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Patrick shared that on February 11th high school students gathered in the PAC to watch CHS alumna, Chevonne Forgan, compete in the Olympic Luge Competition while the CHS band played the Olympic anthem! The Student Council hosted the "Loving Lunch" on February 13th. Students were able to attend concerts in The Learning Commons by the acapella groups and listen to many student bands. The Wellness Fair will be held on March 6th at CHS. Awards for winter sports will be given out on March 16th. ELA MCAS will be administered on March 24th and 25th, The National Honor Society induction ceremony will be held on March 12th. The Black Student Union is hosting a "Black History Spirit Week" this week. It was postponed from last week due to a snow day where school was not in session. Yesterday was "Black Out Monday" where students wore black clothing and "Culture Day" was held today. The Class of 2027 will host the Spring Fling Dance on March 13th, Class election speeches will be given tomorrow and Thursday.

GOOD NEWS

Ms. Mackinnon shared that this is “Community Read-In Week” (A.K.A. “Read Across America Week”) and many community members are enjoying reading to children in our schools!

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

None

NEW BUSINESS

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

Dr. Lang opened the meeting to comments on the project and reminded the public of the next Community Forum on March 19th. Grade level decisions will be looked at during March and April. The School Committee will vote on the final configuration in April, followed by a vote by the Parker Building Committee. The next submission to the MCBA will take place in April. Schematic design and cost estimations will be addressed during the rest of spring into the summer.

2. Spotlight on the Schools: Byam Elementary School

Byam Principal, Jason Fredette, and Assistant Principal, Betsy Dolan, came to the table with Byam students and staff for tonight’s presentation. The school is excited about this being the 250th birthday of the United States of America. Principal Fredette thanked Stephanie Quinn for bringing social studies and civic knowledge to the forefront at this time. Third grade curriculum focuses on Chelmsford. Ms. Dolan stated that grade three explores “Massachusetts, Home to Many Different People,” as students study state history, geography, and civics—examining Indigenous peoples, early settlers, the American Revolution, and local government—while building inquiry skills and civic understanding aligned to the Massachusetts History and Social Science Framework.” The students delve into what life was like in the early days by exploring “essential questions’ (included in tonight’s slides in the agenda packet). Ms. Jessica Kowalik, who teaches third grade at Byam, shared that her students learn about many aspects of Chelmsford including: town government; geography and history through completion of “The Chelmsford Scavenger Hunt”. Student, Charlie DeVito, spoke about this process and shared the poster he created by going all around Chelmsford with his Dad. Students go to visit: “The Old Chelmsford Garrison House” built in 1691; The Old North Bridge; Minuteman National Park as well as the Boston Tea Party Ship and museum. Student, Brayden Miles, spoke of visiting The Garrison House and the Boston Tea Party Museum and enjoyed “throwing tea into the Harbor just like the colonists did”! At the end of third grade students research a person from that time period and create a poster and decorate a “wooden spoon” to look like that person. Caroline Beauchesne who is now in 4th grade last year did a biography about Molly Pitcher. She wrote a report about her and made a wooden spoon to look like her. She shared that Molly took over in battle after her husband was wounded and made soup to feed the soldiers and brought them water in her pitcher, thus she was renamed Molly Pitcher. Ms. Kowalik also shared books that brought literature connections to this history and help students to understand what life was like during that time period. This delightful presentation may be viewed on Chelmsford Telemedia!

3. Vote on School Choice Program: 2026/27 School Year

Dr. Lang posted a memorandum in tonight's packet about this annual vote which is tied to a State Statute which (if chosen) will allow students from another district to attend school at the Chelmsford Public Schools. Primarily these are high school students. We will have 28 students remaining at CHS under this program next year. We prefer to accept ninth graders who will then be able to remain at CHS for all four years. We accept a total of 40 students each year.

Ms. Mackinnon moved to accept twelve (12) additional students at Chelmsford High School in Grade 9 under the Commonwealth of Massachusetts School Choice Program bringing the total School Choice participation in the Chelmsford Public Schools to forty (40) enrolled students during the 2026/27 school year. Ms. Lebeaux seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 4-0.

Dr. Lang added that the applications will be available on the district web site starting this week.

REPORTS

1. Liaison Reports

Ms. Lebeaux shared that the South Row PTO held a fund raiser for roller skating. Their STEM Fair had 100 student participants! They will begin student placements for the next school year soon. They will host a Book Fair from March 16th to the 20th, including a Family Night on March 18th. Also, they will have PD soon on the current writing program.

ACTION/NEW ITEMS

The Chair stated that the Parker Building Committee will meet on March 6th and will be followed by the Public Forum on March 19th. On March 31st The Committee will have an AI workshop.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

None.

ADJOURNMENT at 6:37 p.m.

Ms. Mackinnon motioned to adjourn. Ms. Lebeaux seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 4-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Giglio, Recording Secretary