

**CHELMSFORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
REGULAR MEETING  
April 14, 2026  
Meeting Minutes**

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

**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 March 24, 2026**

**Ms. Santos moved to approve the minutes of the regular school committee of March 24, 2026. Ms. Lebeaux seconded. Motion carries 5-0.**

**2. Approval of the minutes of the regular school committee meeting of March 31, 2026**

**Ms. Santos moved to approve the minutes of the school committee meeting which was a workshop on AI of March 31, 2026. Ms. Lebeaux seconded. Motion carries 5-0.**

**CHS STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Patrick shared that The Spring Craft Fair was held on April 12<sup>th</sup> at McCarthy Middle School with proceeds for the Class of 2027 in an amount over \$5,000! Student Council elections were held yesterday with “run-off” elections today. Congratulations to Ananya Bharti who won for president and Deana Jackson for winning treasurer! Elections for vice-president and secretary were split 50:50 in the runoff election. Congratulations to Julia Perez and Eilis Dowd who will be “co vice-presidents” and Roman Porzio and Joan Vi Patel who won for “co secretaries”! Today a “Junior Career Breakfast” was held for junior students to meet with “workers and jobs that they were interested in”. Students got information and a” sense of day-to-day life in their job”.

Richie proudly added that nine students from The Chelmsford DECA Club will be competing at the international level in Atlanta on April 25<sup>th</sup> through April 28<sup>th</sup> to represent CHS against “the best in the world”! The group ACA-pocalypse performed shows on Friday and Saturday and were very successful! The Cotillion for juniors will be held on Saturday, May 9<sup>th</sup>, with a masquerade theme. April vacation starts next week!

## **GOOD NEWS**

Dr. Hirsch congratulated Ms. Mackinnon and Mr. King on their re-election for another three-year term on The Chelmsford School Committee!

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Jen Johnson of Robin Hill Road came to the table to ask that The Committee continue with their mission as “a high functioning governing body whose primary charge is to ensure accountability, to sustain continuous improvements in teaching and learning.” She stated that long-term data in academic achievement in grades 3 through 8 suggests that “strategic change” is needed in ELA and math. She would like to see long term overarching goals for long term academic excellence. Her comments in entirety may be viewed on Chelmsford Telemedia You/Tube.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **1. Reorganization of School Committee**

Dr. Lang announced that since this is first meeting after the recent election The Committee is charged with selecting a new slate of officers. Nominations, close of nominations and roll call votes will follow. When the new chair is elected that person will take control of the meeting from Dr. Lang

#### **a. Election of School Committee Chair**

Mr. King nominated Maria Santos to be Chair. Ms. Mackinnon seconded. No further nominations were made so a roll call vote was taken. The vote was 5-0. Mr. King handed the gavel over to Ms. Santos who then began her new role as Committee Chair. She thanked everyone for voting for her and thanked Mr. King for all his years of service as “Chair”!

#### **b. Election of School Committee Vice Chair**

Mr. King nominated Susan Mackinnon to be Vice-Chair. Ms. Lebeaux seconded. No further nominations were made so a roll call vote was taken. The vote was 5-0.

#### **c. Election of School Committee Secretary**

Mr. King nominated Diana Lebeaux as secretary. Ms. Santos seconded. No further nominations were made so a roll call vote was taken. The vote was 5-0.

Applause for the newly elected!

## **2. Open Comment: Parker Middle School Building Project – Grade Level Options**

Dr. Lang said that later tonight grade-level configurations will be discussed as well as steps moving forward with MSBA. No public comments.

## **3. Spotlight on the Schools: Chelmsford High School**

Principal, Steve Murray, came to the table to talk about items on the CHS School Improvement Plan. He began by focusing on The Innovation Pathways Program which is growing rapidly! Students are provided with advance courses with “in-depth career field exploration; industry recognized credential and internships with collaborating partners”. This helps students with knowledge of potential careers before they graduate and go on to college or the work force.

The CHS Dual Enrollment program allows students to earn college credits through Merrimack Community College while they are still in high school. Their academic skills are enhanced because they have access to college libraries, labs and other resources. The credits are low cost, and credits may be transferred to college through the “Statewide Mass. Transfer Program” thus saving money for families. Dual enrollment courses are offered in 31 subject areas. For many students this can mean a semester of college already completed by their CHS graduation, Associate degree pathways are also available.

Massachusetts has moved from “A Vision of a Graduate” to “A Vision of a Learner” which should soon become a State mandate. This will lead to future-ready skills; success assurance (for academic and functional life); a strategic roadmap and empowered leadership. In January and February CHS students collaborated to determine that learning is knowledge & application; growth & understanding; value & importance and experiment & engagement. Students’ perspective on “what learning IS NOT” include memorization without understanding; passive or dishonest activity; not necessarily enjoyable or easy and more than grades or busy work. After receiving the students’ input, meetings were held with the staff and asked them to contemplate careers which do not currently exist but will be in 25 years! The staff determined that what will be needed in the future is the ability to think critically; appropriately use AI/technology; identify fact from fiction; communicate effectively; collaborate; persevere; and be empathic. Beginning in May teachers will “Identify and Magnify Powerful Moments of Learning”. Also, in May students “Identify Powerful Moments of Learning from a class or lesson”.

Social Emotional Learning at CHS supports student transition & growth (including “youscience” for sophomores and juniors); scheduled SEL time; climate and engagement issues and data from post-secondary experiences. Principal Murray thanks Shannon Bischoff, Director of Guidance and SEL, for her work with this. To fully appreciate this information-filled presentation, please watch tonight’s meeting on Chelmsford Telemedia You/Tube.

## **4. Parker Middle School Building Project: Education Program Review - Review and approve the updated educational program document prepared for the MSBA PSR submission for the Parker Middle School Project.**

Dr. Lang stated that two critical votes will take place tonight and thanked Left Field and AI3 for being at the meeting. Also, this Thursday there will be another meeting of The Parker School Building Committee where additional actions will be addressed.

The School Committee approved an updated education program which has been submitted to the MSBA. Questions from the MSBA have been responded to and placed in the plan.

**Ms. Mackinnon made a motion that The School Committee, based on its continued review of the educational program as developed through the Preliminary Design Program (PDP) submission to the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) and as refined for the preferred Schematic Report (PSR), authorizes Ai3 Architects and Left Field, on behalf of the School District, to submit the PSR educational program to the MSBA for review and consideration. Ms. Lebeaux seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 5-0.**

5. **Parker Middle School Building Project: Grade Reconfiguration Review - Review the proposed grade reconfiguration option (from 5–6 to 4–6) for the Parker Middle School Project and approve the draft certification required for the MSBA PSR submission.**

Dr. Lang shared that all three grade consideration proposals were reviewed with The Committee choosing the “grade 4, 5 and 6 option”.

**Ms. Mackinnon made a motion that The School Committee, based on current and projected enrollment growth, districtwide facility capacity constraints, overcrowding at the elementary level, reliance on modular classrooms, and the District’s objective of maximizing the long-term districtwide benefit of the MSBA-supported Parker Middle School Project, recommends that the School Building Committee give strong consideration to a grade 4-6 configuration as the Preferred Schematic Report (PSR) option for submission to the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA); and further authorizes the Chair and the Superintendent to execute the required Grade Reconfiguration and Districting Approval Certification in connection with the PSR submission, contingent upon the School Building Committee’s formal vote selecting a preferred schematic option that reflects a grade 4-6 configuration for submission to the MSBA. Ms. Lebeaux seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carries 5-0.**

#### **6. 2026/27 School Year – Kindergarten Registration Dates**

Ms. Johnson-Collins included a memorandum in tonight’s agenda packet providing information for kindergarten registration. The next one will take place on April 30<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 a.m. through 6:00 p.m. at Central Office. Appointments need to be made. She advises people not to wait until August!

#### **7. 2026/27 School Committee Meeting Schedule**

Dr. Lang included a “draft” of School Committee meeting dates for the 2026/27 school year in tonight’s packet. After discussion it was decided to change the July meeting to July 28<sup>th</sup>. Also, September 1<sup>st</sup> is a primary election day, so the September meetings will take place on September 8<sup>th</sup> and the 22<sup>nd</sup>. Dr. Lang will provide the updated schedule in the packet for the next regular meeting.

**Ms. Mackinnon moved to approve the 2026/27 School Committee meeting schedule as presented and amended. Mr. Moses seconded. Motion carries 5-0.**

## **8. 2026/27 School Committee Liaison Assignments**

Dr. Lang included this year's liaison assignments for members to review. Ms. Santos would like to add to this "The Strategic Plan" and "an AI Policy Committee". Before the next meeting Committee members should let The Chair know which assignments you would like for the 2026/27 school year.

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

**Ms. Mackinnon moved to approve the Chelmsford High School DECA students' trip to the DECA International Career Development Conference in Atlanta, Georgia from April 24<sup>th</sup> through the 29<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Moses seconded. Motion carries 5-0.**

**Ms. Mackinnon moved to approve the Community Education Summer Quest field trip to Canobie Lake Park in Salem, New Hampshire on July 9<sup>th</sup>, July 23<sup>rd</sup> and August 5, 2026. . Mr. Moses seconded. Motion carries 5-0.**

**Ms. Mackinnon moved to approve the Community Education Summerfest field trip to Canobie Lake Park in Salem, New Hampshire on August 5, 2026. Mr. Moses seconded. Motion carries 5-0.**

**Ms. Mackinnon moved to approve the Community Education Summer Quest field trip to Chunky's Cinema in Manchester, New Hampshire on August 3, 2026. Mr. Moses seconded. Motion carries 5-0.**

## **REPORTS**

### **1. Liaison Reports**

Ms. Lebeaux attended the Parker/McCarthy PTO meeting on April 9<sup>th</sup>. Parker was pleased with the MICA ensembles from Chelmsford who all received gold in their recent competitions! MCAS has gone well at both schools. The "Parker Fun Run" will happen on May 17<sup>th</sup>. On June 4<sup>th</sup> the second annual "We are Parker" event will be held. McCarthy staff had positive reviews for their recent PD. Their "restorative practices" and "I Decide" initiatives have gone well. On May 2<sup>nd</sup> McCarthy and Center will hold a fundraiser by receiving household and electronic waste. Staff appreciation events are being planned. Ms. Lebeaux also attended the South Row PTO meeting and spoke of the upcoming end of year ceremony for their 4<sup>th</sup> graders. Their "Multicultural" event was a success.

Ms. Mackinnon attended the Harrington PTO meeting on April 8<sup>th</sup>. Their recent STEAM Fair went well, which was done in partnership with the UMASS Lowell Chemistry Department. May 3<sup>rd</sup> is their next skate night with an ice cream social and Arts Celebration to be held on May 28<sup>th</sup>. "Tape Mr. A. to the Wall" will happen on April 30! SEPAC is back up and running.

At CHIPS there are many upcoming exciting enrichments! They also have a full slate of PTO officers for next year. Showcase Cinema will be donating popcorn for the upcoming popcorn bar. The goats are coming on May 28<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Moses will travel to Washington, D.C. for "3<sup>rd</sup> District Day" with Laurie Trahan. He will report back to The Committee.

## **ACTION/NEW ITEMS**

Ms. Mackinnon looks forward to The Policy Subcommittee reviewing policies by June.

The CHS student representatives enjoyed being included for “Day on the Hill”.

Mr. King reminded The Committee that Town Meeting will take place on April 27<sup>th</sup>.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

Alexia Plokhii of 7 Clear Street came to the table. Several months ago, she spoke of the potential dangers of educational technology/AI and returned tonight to provide more updates. She says this is becoming a topic of national conversation. Some districts allow families to opt out of ed tech for their children. She cited recent decisions globally and cited several publications. She asserts movement has been made to diminish screen time and resume more use of pen and paper in daily learning. She asked The District to form a “sub-committee to study the risks and benefits of ed/tech in Chelmsford schools and to provide an opt out policy for families who choose old school pen and paper over devices”. Her comments in entirety may be viewed on Chelmsford Telemedia You/Tube.

**ADJOURNMENT at 7:27 p.m.**

**Ms. Mackinnon moved to adjourn. Mr. Moses seconded. Motion carries 5-0.**

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Sharon Giglio, Recording Secretary*