

Present: Sara Wilson, Chair, CCSC
Heather Bout, Vice Chair, CCSC; CSC
Courtland Booth, Chair, CSC; CCSC
Cynthia Rainey, Vice Chair, CSC; CCSC
Eva Mostoufi, CCSC
Alexa Anderson, CSC; CCSC
Fatima Mezdad, CSC; CCSC

Present from Administration: Dr. Laurie Hunter, Superintendent of Schools, CPS & CCRSD
Jared Stanton, Director of Finance & Operations, CPS & CCRSD

I. CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL

Ms. Wilson called the CCSC meeting to order at 5:01 PM and Mr. Booth then called the CSC meeting to order. Roll call attendance was taken: Anderson, aye; Booth, aye; Bout, aye; Mezdad, aye; Rainey, aye; Wilson, aye.

A. Executive Session. A motion was made by Ms. Bout, for CSC and CCSC, seconded by Ms. Rainey, for CSC and CCSC, that the Concord School Committee and Concord-Carlisle Regional School Committee would enter into Executive Session under Purpose 3 of the Open Meeting Law: To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body, and return to Open Session at 6:00 PM. The motion passed by roll call: Anderson, aye (for both); Booth, aye (for both); Bout, aye (for both); Mezdad, aye (for both); Rainey, aye (for both); Wilson, aye; Mostoufi, aye.

Ms. Wilson called the CCSC back to order at 6:00 PM and Mr. Booth then called the CSC back to order.

Mr. Booth assured the public and committee members that the conversations being held will lead to planning that will result in clarity around what the future will look like in the schools. He noted that safety is at the top of the priority list, but that resuming in person teaching and learning is a goal.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

1. Linda Escobedo, Concord Select Board. Ms. Escobedo stated that the Select Board is happy that the CMSBC chairs joined the recent chairs meeting, noting how helpful the communication is. She stated that the Select Board was happy to entertain the George Washington Duggan plaque, noting that they approved the plaque to be placed in front of the existing Civil War memorial. Ms. Escobedo also stated that the Select Board has made a commitment to continue exploring inclusion of the name on the full civil war memorial.

2. Todd Benjamin. Mr. Benjamin stated that he has been shocked that getting the kids back to school has not been a topic of discussion at school committee meetings. He asked what it would take to get the kids back to school now, noting the low rates of COVID and the pooled testing opportunities. He stated that the ultraconservative approach is damaging to the kids.

3. John Madden. Dr. Madden shared his professional background and stated that his questions from the last meeting were not answered, noting that he would now be making a statement and appeal. He noted the decreasing levels of COVID-19 in Massachusetts, but stated that schools show no signs of returning to normal any time soon. He stated that students K-8 have low risk and stated that other states with higher rates are back to school. He noted that Governor Baker requested the return to traditional classroom teaching and stated that the children's' needs are being set aside for the teachers' concerns. He appealed to the SC to allow the kids to return to the classroom.

4. Ellen O'Donnell, 298 Holden Wood Road, Concord, MA. Dr. O'Donnell stated that schools are at low risk for transmission, noting that the risk benefit analysis is shifting. She stated that the kids overall mental health and well-being is declining, noting that hospitalizations and mental health referrals are dramatically up this year. She stated that the risks for kids being out of school are growing and the risks for being in school are decreasing. She noted that Concord has been a model for other districts and would like Concord to continue to set the example by returning kids to in person fulltime.

5. Kate Connelly, 25 Orchard Road, Concord, MA. Ms. Connelly noted the ramifications of academic and social emotional effects of not having the students in person that she sees in her professional clinical setting. She asked the SC to look at the data and consider getting the kids back to school as soon as possible.

6. Carolyn Mowat, 111 Silver Hill Road, Concord, MA. Ms. Mowat stated that the level of frustration of parents has hit its limit. She stated that the children should be back in school full time with every precaution in place, but noted that this should not wait until September of 2021. She urged the district to use the spring as a pilot to get the kids back in school.

7. Allison Flynn, 281 Monson Road, Concord, MA. Ms. Flynn stated that she hopes that the preschool is part of the conversation on getting the children back to school full time.

8. Bob Lonadier, 72 Finnegan Way, Concord, MA. Mr. Lonadier stated that he would like to advocate for CCHS, noting the importance of the high school students returning full time in person. He asked to get a better understanding of the scientific underpinnings of adherence to the 6-foot rule based on recent evidence, more information on the in-school transmissions, how many-pooled teacher tests were conducted in January and February, how many individual positive tests were found, and how many teachers have received the vaccine to date.

9. Marianne Marr, 45 Bruce Road, Concord, MA. Ms. Marr stated that her kids are living their best life and are very happy with the current situation, noting that she is also happy with the way things are going. She noted that everything is getting safer with each week, but that it is not fair to ask teachers to go back without the opportunity to be vaccinated.

III. READING OF THE MINUTES

A motion was made by Mr. Booth, for CSC and CCSC, seconded by Ms. Rainey, for CSC and CCSC, to approve the meeting minutes of 1/12/21, 1/26/21, and 2/21/21, as edited. Ms. Bout noted the edit to the 1/12/21 minutes on Tia Mancuso's name correction. The motion passed by roll call: Anderson, aye (for both); Booth, aye (for both); Bout, aye (for both); Mezdad, aye (for both); Mostoufi, aye; Rainey, aye (for both); Wilson, aye.

IV. CHAIRS & LIASIONS REPORT AND STUDENT UPDATE

CCHS student reps, Linda Xu and Amy Tedeschi, provided an update from CCHS. Ms. Xu stated that the students appreciated the recent time off over February vacation. She noted that there was a racial incident at CCHS prior to the break, noting that it is crucial for students to be held accountable for intolerable actions, but noted that teachers and other faculty members should be held accountable as well, providing several examples. Ms. Tedeschi stated that teachers encourage discussing any topic, but then seem tone deaf during discussions by not filtering out homophobic and racist comments. Ms. Xu stated that the Intersections Club at CCHS helps children to learn and be exposed to culturally diverse cultures, applauding their work.

Mr. Booth stated that the CMSBC Design Subcommittee will be meeting this week to look at space and Ms. Bout noted that there is also a public forum the following night, February 24th, at 7:00 PM via Zoom, encouraging community members to join. She noted that the CMSBC would be going over the space summary and education plan. She stated that there will also be a Communications Subcommittee meeting on Thursday, February 25th at 12:00 PM via Zoom and the next full CMSBC meeting will be March 4th at 7:30 AM via Zoom.

Ms. Mostoufi stated that SEPAC would be holding a meeting for parents whose children have IEPs on Thursday from 7:00-8:00 PM and are planning a parent coffee. She stated that SEPAC held a parents rights workshop and are planning for teacher recognition awards. Ms. Mostoufi stated that the Concord and Carlisle Adult Education Advisory Board met

on Friday and they continue to have a healthy budget due to the collaboration with other towns. She stated that Drivers Education had 35 students, ISMCC had 250 students register for music classes, and they are planning on a talk series for FY22.

V. CORRESPONDENCE

Ms. Wilson stated that CCSC received correspondence on opportunities for furthering the reopening. Mr. Booth stated that CSC is receiving similar correspondence for expanding in school time and correspondence on the satisfaction with cautions currently in place. He stated that CSC received a letter from Communities Organized Against Racism recommending attention through HR and Personnel to the diversity, inclusion and equity goals in the district.

VI. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Dr. Hunter stated that high-level academics have been maintained throughout the year, noting that a substantial in-person summer program is being planned for the month of July at the elementary level. Regarding asymptomatic COVID testing, Dr. Hunter stated that the District began testing the staff, noting that about 750 staff were tested over a 3-week period with one positive pool, noting that the students will begin testing this week, thanking the school nurses. Dr. Hunter stated that the state is funding this testing through the end of March. Regarding professional development, Dr. Hunter stated that staff survey feedback results were positive and supportive, noting that a similar structure would be proposed for next year. Regarding equity and cultural competency, Dr. Hunter stated that she shared the roundtable's feedback with the MASS group, noting the valuable conversations. She stated that she attended the National Superintendent's Conference as well, noting the importance of hearing common struggles and the commitment of the same topics nationally in the midst of COVID. Dr. Hunter stated that the CMS Building Committee continues to meet and engage with community groups.

VII. DISCUSSION

A. FY22 CCRSD Superintendent's Recommended Budget. Mr. Stanton shared the FY22 CCRSD budget presentation, reviewing timeline, budget assumptions (including students back in district full-time), and the zero-based budget process. He stated that the recommended budget is \$35,781,033, noting that this is 2.35% more than the FY21 approved budget, reviewing the budget by 1000 function. Mr. Stanton reviewed \$1,403,741 in budget drivers, including teacher salaries, CARES Act offset, software/hardware, retirement pension, nurse salaries, maintenance/custodial salaries, buses, support staff salaries, CASE transportation and contract services. He then reviewed \$648,693 in cost savings in special education tuitions, debt, insurance, charter/school choice, assistant/tutor salaries, and curriculum/textbooks. Mr. Stanton reviewed FY22 requested FTE's, grant/revolving account salary/expenses offset, special education tuitions, excess & deficiency projections, early retirement incentive savings, OPEB, transportation fleet overview, health insurance costs, debt service, CARES Act expenditures, and general fund revenue estimates, and assessments.

Ms. Anderson questioned why the software line would remain if the hope is to return to in-person learning and why it wasn't being accounted for in the CARES Act line. Mr. Stanton stated that some of the software was used prior to COVID and has been incorporated into online learning, also noting that many of the textbooks are now digital. Ms. Anderson also asked about the additional nurse and Dr. Hunter stated that they have not been meeting the recommended guideline from the state pre-COVID, noting the need for a permanent position at the high school also due to new model with the lead nurse role.

Ms. Mezdad suggested assessing how much technology is helping the students learn, noting her concern with the level of distraction it is causing, especially with special needs students. Dr. Hunter stated that these are big picture items that would need to be reviewed. Ms. Rainey asked to continue the budget discussion at the next meeting, also requesting a summary of hardware and software. Ms. Bout noted how helpful the presentation is to understanding the line item budget, questioning the increase in substitute and supplies and materials lines. Mr. Stanton stated that the substitute line is going up at CPS due to the different locations. Ms. Bout noted that OPEB recommendations have changed and stated that the district is way ahead of other districts and Mr. Stanton noted that the district has the highest OPEB account of any region in the state. Ms. Bout noted the change in Charter numbers and Mr. Stanton stated the revenue piece went down, but charter expense is decreasing from what was budgeted. Dr. Hunter asked the SC to send any additional questions they may have to Mr. Stanton this week. Ms. Mezdad questioned the return on investment with the early retirement incentive if the cost of insurance for retirees is so high. Dr. Hunter noted that the district is paying for insurance while the employees are active as well and Mr. Stanton stated that the savings is over many years past the initial 3 years of savings shown.

Christine Reynolds, Concord FINCOM. Ms. Reynolds asked about surplus for FY21 and Mr. Stanton stated that he believes there will be a surplus, but that he does think it may go into the capital surplus or tuition prepaays.

Ms. Mostoufi quested the FTE slide and asked Mr. Stanton to expand, questioning if additional services will be provided if students need it. Mr. Stanton noted the contingency funds that would help pay for costs that are unbudgeted.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

A. CCRSD Capital Plan. Dr. Hunter stated that the SC needs to determine if there are any warrant articles to be proposed for town meeting. Ms. Rainey asked for a full inventory of work that is needed on the campus, noting the drainage issue. Mr. Stanton stated that the drainage for the infield is going out to bid next week. Ms. Rainey asked about the shed and Dr. Hunter stated that there is no way to manage it with the impervious surface limitations.

Ms. Bout stated that she doesn't feel the district should be moving a warrant article during the current COVID environment, but noted the importance of all of the projects. Mr. Booth agreed. Mr. Stanton stated that he felt they could revisit using the stabilization fund for these projects at some point.

B. Second Reading School Committee Policies: JFABB – Admission of Exchange Students, JIH – Searches and Interrogations, JII – Student Complaints and Grievances. Ms. Mezdad asked if JFABB and JII could be brought back to the Policy Subcommittee because she did not feel they were given the discussion they warranted. A motion was made by Mr. Booth, for CSC and CCSC, seconded by Ms. Bout, for CSC and CCSC, to postpone the second reading of policies JFABB and JII until the next meeting. The motion passed by roll call: Anderson, aye (for both); Booth, aye (for both); Bout, aye (for both); Mezdad, aye (for both); Mostoufi, aye; Rainey, aye (for both); Wilson, aye. Ms. Mezdad stated that JIH was not changed and the policy subcommittee recommends it to be approved with a new approval date. Ms. Rainey asked if there was MA general law associated with this policy and Dr. Hunter stated that the subcommittee would revisit this as well. The SC agreed that all three policies would be brought back to the subcommittee for review.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

A. First Reading 2021-2022 School Calendar. Dr. Hunter shared the 2021-22 draft calendar, reviewing the first days of school, conference and professional days. She noted that Wednesdays would now be the early release days in elementary and middle school. She suggested proposing two snow days and then going virtual if DESE allows for the remaining snow days. Dr. Hunter stated that they are still working on the high school 4 half days. Mr. Booth questioned if the Columbus Day holiday topic had been discussed with the town and the Chairs agreed to forward the letters from the CMS students to both towns to request a conversation, noting that he was in favor of the proposal of changing the holiday to Indigenous People's Day. School Committee members voiced their support in approaching the Select Boards to have the conversation.

X. ACTION ITEMS

A. Vote to Terminate EDCO Collaborative as of June 30, 2022. A motion was made by Mr. Booth, for CSC and CCSC, seconded by Ms. Rainey, for CSC and CCSC, to terminate the EDCO Collaborative as of June 30, 2022. The motion passed by roll call: Anderson, aye (for both); Booth, aye (for both); Bout, aye (for both); Mezdad, aye (for both); Mostoufi, aye; Rainey, aye (for both); Wilson, aye.

XI. ADJOURNMENT – CCSC

A motion to adjourn the CCSC meeting was made by Ms. Bout, seconded by Ms. Anderson. The motion passed by roll call: Anderson, aye; Booth, aye; Bout, aye; Mezdad, aye; Mostoufi, aye; Rainey, aye, Wilson, aye, and the CCSC meeting adjourned at 8:40 PM.

XII. DISCUSSION

A. FY22 CPS Superintendent's Recommended Budget. Mr. Stanton shared his budget presentation, reviewing: timeline, budget assumptions including Pre-K through grade 5 students in district full time and no hybrid at CMS, zero-based budget process, and requested budget of \$41,805,761 by 1000 function. Mr. Stanton reviewed budget drivers, including: teacher salaries, substitute salaries, software/hardware, professional development, contract services, vehicles, custodial/maintenance salaries, utilities, middle school student activities, nurses salaries and field trips. He then reviewed budget savings, including: special education tuitions, CASE transportation, assistant/tutor salaries and sick leave/early retirement. Mr. Stanton reviewed the requested FTE's, special education tuitions, early retirement

incentive savings, and transportation. Mr. Stanton reviewed the requested budgets for the preschool, Alcott, Thoreau, Willard, CMS and district wide sites. He then shared a CARES Act budget update.

Ms. Rainey noted her concern with parents managing younger children’s Mac books, asking if the district has control of the usage on devices. Dr. Hunter stated that there are controls, but that are limited with the at home usage, noting that Peter Kelly, IT Director, could come to a future meeting to share information on the controls currently in place. Ms. Anderson confirmed that the plan is not to have kids bring laptops home in the fall and Dr. Hunter confirmed that that was correct. Ms. Mezdad stated that she disagreed that parents should be in charge of controls while the laptops are at home.

B. CPS Capital Plan. Mr. Stanton shared the \$900,000 CPS Capital Plan, reviewing the ERU replacement at Alcott with FY21 capital; ERU replacement at Thoreau next summer; tiling and carpet replacement; integrated playground; CMS building unknown projects. Regarding the rooftop units, Mr. Stanton stated that the district was approved for the Green Communities grant, noting that the grant does not cover the engineering. Mr. Stanton stated that the Ripley building has some paving and parking work to be done as well, noting that he is working with the town to get it at a lower cost. Mr. Stanton stated that there is a snow scraper for the roof of the buses included in the Capital Plan for FY24, but noted that if there were a surplus in coming years, he would recommend funding this since the staff is currently removing the snow manually.

XIII. ACTION ITEMS

A. Vote to Accept Donation from Alliance Energy, LLC. A motion was made by Mr. Booth, seconded by Ms. Rainey, to accept a \$1,000 donation from Alliance Energy, LLC. to the Willard Elementary School. The motion passed with gratitude by roll call: Anderson, aye; Booth, aye; Bout, aye; Mezdad, aye; Rainey, aye.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn the CSC meeting was made by Ms. Rainey, seconded by Ms. Bout. The motion passed by roll call: Anderson, aye; Booth, aye; Bout, aye; Mezdad, aye; Rainey, aye, and the CCSC meeting adjourned at 9:43 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Erin E. Higgins

Approved: 3.30.21

Abbreviations:

CCHS	Concord-Carlisle High School
CCRSD	Concord-Carlisle Regional School District
CCSC	Concord-Carlisle Regional District School Committee
CCTA	Concord-Carlisle Teachers’ Association
CDC	Center for Disease Control and Prevention
CMS	Concord Middle School
CMSBC	Concord Middle School Building Committee
CPS	Concord Public Schools
CSC	Concord School Committee
DESE	Department of Elementary & Secondary Education
DPH	Department of Public Health
E&D	Excess and Deficiency
ERU	Energy Recovery Unit
IMSCC	Instrumental Music School of Carlisle and Concord
MASS	Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents
OPEB	Other Post Employment Benefits
PD	Professional Development
SC	School Committee