

JOINT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Concord School Committee  
Concord-Carlisle School

Committee

Ripley Building  
Concord, MA  
November 23, 2004  
7:00 PM

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### Minutes

PRESENT:

Mr. Patrick Sinnott, Chair, CCSC  
Ms. Rebecca Shannon, Chair,

CSC

Ms. Betsy Bilodeau  
Ms. Jan McGinn  
Mr. Jerry Wedge

PRESENT FROM ADMINISTRATION:

Dr. Brenda Finn, Superintendent  
Mr. John Flaherty  
Ms. Diana Rigby

ABSENT:

Mr. David Dockterman

#### I CALL TO ORDER AND GREETING

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Sinnott for CCSC and by Ms. Shannon for CSC at 7:07 p.m.

Mr. Sinnott asked the Student Advisory Council if they had items they wished to discuss.

Matt Briggs stated an issue at school is the lack of art programs offered at the high school. Photography has a four-year program; other courses only offer one program. If you want to study more on a subject, you take the class again.

Thomas Schnitzer called attention to the boy's locker room. The lockers and locks are broken, the showers are dirty, and many stalls do not have doors. Mr. Dulong stated funding was made available to install new lockers and to make improvements to the lower gym.

Eugene Han stated the bathrooms in the high school usually don't have soap.

Mr. Fitzgerald asked how things were going at the high school. Mr. Briggs stated the first quarter just ended, report cards were distributed last Friday. The spirit assembly is tomorrow

Mr. Schnitzer stated the cross-country team went to the state championships. The boys finished 3<sup>rd</sup> and the girls finished 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Mr. Fitzgerald asked what clubs the students belonged to. Mr. Han is the sports editor for the Voice. Mr. Briggs belongs to the history reading group.

## II READING OF THE MINUTES

### Open Session

A MOTION was made by Mr. Fitzgerald and seconded by Ms. Bilodeau for CCSC and a MOTION was made by Ms. Bilodeau and seconded by Mr. Wedge for CSC to accept the minutes from the Joint School Committee meeting held September 28, 2004. Ms. Bilodeau made a change to page 5. The secretary noted the change and the MOTION was unanimously approved.

A MOTION was made by Mr. Fitzgerald and seconded by Ms. McGinn for CCSC and a MOTION was made by Mr. Wedge and seconded by Ms. Bilodeau for CSC to accept the minutes from the Joint School Committee meeting held October 26, 2004. A change was made to page 1 and the MOTION was voted:

Aye: Bilodeau, Fitzgerald, McGinn, Shannon, Wedge

Abstain: Sinnott

A MOTION was made by Mr. Wedge and seconded by Ms. Bilodeau for CSC to accept the minutes from the Concord School Committee meeting held October 12, 2004. The MOTION was unanimously approved.

A MOTION was made by Ms. McGinn and seconded by Ms. Bilodeau for CSC to accept the minutes from the Concord School Committee meeting held November 9, 2004. The MOTION was unanimously approved.

## III CORRESPONDENCE

Ms. Shannon received correspondence from the Town Manager regarding submittals for the finance report are due January 3, 2005. Ms. Bilodeau stated the chairs write the reports; they can refer back to previous year's reports.

Ms. Shannon stated the Thoreau groundbreaking ceremony at Prairie Street is being held November 24.

Mr. Wedge stated the CC Pools topping off is scheduled for Monday, November 29, 2004 at 9:30.

Dr. Finn stated the Annual Human Rights breakfast is being held December 6, at 7:30 a.m. at Trinity Congregational Church.

#### IV RECOGNITIONS

##### A. Concord Education Fund Spelling Bee

Dr. Finn stated it was a great night, many people were there. It was an impressive demonstration of so many people in the community showing their support for the Concord Ed. Fund.

Ms. Bilodeau recognized the High School Chorus and the work they did with the students visiting from Florida.

#### V REPORTS AND ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION

##### A. CC Pools: Changes in Agreement

Dr. Finn stated Walter McCabe was going to be here if there was an agreement. The written piece should be ready next week. The deadline has been extended 60 days. The selectman board will look at it Monday. They will make the recommendation to move forward. Mr. Wedge asked if we vote on it in December, does this complicate things for CC Pools. Henry Dane, CC Pools, stated if this does not come back before the board until December 14, it will cause a problem. It was decided to call a special meeting November 30 at 5:30 p.m.

##### B. School Improvement Plan

Mr. Dulong presented an overview of the MCAS results. Mr. Dulong stated 94% students scored proficient/advanced in ELA, 86% scored proficient/advanced in math. The law stated that by 2014, all students need to score proficient or above. He stated compared to the state we scored very favorably. The ELA and math program are moving in the direction we want to see. Some changes made to the curriculum are we eliminated the ½ year Algebra programs. Students need to have Algebra and Geometry in order to pass the test. In terms of special education students, in math there were more needs improvement students on the lower end, we continue to look at that and analyze.

The School Improvement Plan is not based on MCAS scores. The School Advisory Council select areas they want to highlight and be informed about. The goals reflect the SAC interests in the process of rebuilding CCHS. The Student Handbook is being looked at, taken apart and put back together again. Another goal is to find more ways to recognize student achievement. Another goal is to have more communication between departments; this has been heard through the faculty.

Mr. Dulong also distributed budgetary implications regarding the high school. The drama department is currently an after-school project. There is much more to it and we would like to see it become an academic entity. There are also too few art and music classes. We have more students than we had 2 years ago and have never increased the number of FTEs in art/music, nor have we decreased the art requirements for graduation.

Mr. Dulong stated a law was going into effect regulating the amount of gym class time for all students. This is an enrollment driven increase we will need to be aware of.

C. High School Feasibility Study: RFP and timeline for study

Mr. Wedge stated the RFP was advertised and we had a good response. 27 firms requested the RFP, 16 participated in the walk through. Mr. Sinnott asked what the next step was. Mr. Wedge stated proposals are due 12/7, interviews will begin. By 12/22 there will be a recommendation made to the School Committee. They will begin 1/18 with a final report submitted by June 2005.

Mr. Wedge stated we may decide to have a special meeting in January or make the first meeting that month a Joint meeting.

D. FY06 Finance Committee Preliminary Budget Guidelines

Mr. Flaherty stated we are seeing a positive turn of events this year. A 5.4% increase for CPS would accommodate all requests. We are currently at 4.4% and most items are met with this. For CCRSD, the ratio is down for Concord to 71.46 from 71.49. This represents a \$40K increase to Carlisle. Carlisle has matched Concord's non over-ride levy limit.

E. Proposed Warrant Articles

Dr. Finn stated the warrant articles have been submitted with XXXX for dollar amounts. We have until 1/3/05 to get the language and dollar amounts in.

Mr. Flaherty stated there is a supplemental assessment placeholder for the high school. Ms. Bilodeau stated last year we attempted to do that with the high school. She would shy away from putting that out there for the high school.

Mr. Flaherty stated there is a placeholder for Willard infrastructure, in the event we don't move design funds for Willard. Mr. Sinnott stated it makes sense to do it either this fiscal year or next. Dr. Finn expressed concern about conversations in town. We have not articulated other than capital improvements within the town managers budget. A copy of the capital improvement budget for the next 5 years was distributed last spring.

Mr. Wedge stated we don't have the necessary information yet. We should keep the placeholder. If Willard doesn't move forward, we need to do renovations to keep equity of the schools. Dr. Finn stated the School Committee can put this on the warrant; a town group can also put it on the warrant. Let's see if the town wants to support it.

A MOTION was made by Mr. Fitzgerald and seconded by Ms. Shannon for CCSC to approve the Warrant Articles on the school budgets and the CCHS improvements. The MOTION was unanimously approved.

A MOTION was made by Ms. Bilodeau and seconded by Mr. Wedge for CSC to approve all Warrant Articles except the Willard Infrastructure Appropriation. The MOTION was unanimously approved.

## VI ACTION ITEMS

### A. Vote to approve School Improvement Plan for CCHS

A MOTION was made by Ms. Bilodeau and seconded by Mr. Fitzgerald for CCHS to approve the School Improvement Plan for CCHS as presented. The MOTION was unanimously approved.

### B. Vote to approve changes in CC Pools Agreement

To be voted at a later date.

### C. Vote to approve composition of CCHS building committee

Dr. Finn stated this is a work in progress and is not yet complete. We still need a town official and a School Committee member. WE have a good representation of the town, and a balance between 2 towns.

Ms. McGinn asked if there was a conflict of interest with regard to the construction representatives. Mr. Flaherty will look into it.

A MOTION was made by Mr. Fitzgerald and seconded by Ms. Bilodeau for CCSC to approve the members to date of the CCHS Feasibility Study Committee pending confirmation of conflict of interest by John Flaherty. The MOTION was unanimously approved.

## VII OLD BUSINESS

Ms. Shannon stated she responded to the Long-Range Planning Committee's draft from October. Mr. Wedge stated the Finance Committee would like to incorporate responses into the draft.

A MOTION was made by Mr. Wedge and seconded by Mr. Fitzgerald for CCSC and a MOTION was made by Ms. Bilodeau and seconded by Mr. Wedge for CSC to approve the School Committee's response to the Long-Range Planning Committee. The MOTION was unanimously approved.

Mr. Wedge stated the Thoreau building project was on time and on budget.

## VIII SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

### A. Coordination Meeting on Saturday, December 4

The meeting starts at 8:30 at the Town House and is usually over by 11 a.m.

B. Initial Impressions of the NEASC Visiting Committee

Mr. Dulong shared some highlights. It was a positive experience. The committee was very respectful; the remarks were brief and right on. They stated we have a high quality program and students and warned us not to get complacent. They had safety concerns regarding the building and we anticipated that. They also offered constructive comments regarding policies and procedures.

Ms. Bilodeau thanked Mr. Dulong and the teachers for what must have been a huge amount of work.

IX CITIZENS' COMMENTS

Mark Russell Prior, of the audience, stated with regard to the Long Range Plan, the comments should be included in the body of the report. He also stated the free cash was about \$500K, is now closer to \$300K. This is something to be aware of. He also thanked Dr. Finn and Mr. Flaherty for their work during the guideline process. Things are better but not really good yet.

X ADJOURNMENT

A MOTION was made by Mr. Fitzgerald and seconded by Mr. Wedge for CCSC and a MOTION was made by Ms. Bilodeau and seconded by Ms. McGinn to adjourn the Concord-Carlisle Joint School Committee meeting at 9:40 p.m. The MOTION was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Laura O'Sullivan  
APPROVED: 12/14/04