

**CONCORD-CARLISLE SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**Joint School Committee**  
**January 3, 2008**  
**6:00 PM**  
**Ripley**

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**Minutes**

**PRESENT:**

Mr. Michael Fitzgerald, Chair CCRSD  
Mr. Peter Fischelis, Chair CPS  
Ms. Jan McGinn,  
Ms. Rebecca Shannon  
Mr. Jerry Wedge  
Mr. Fabian Fondriest  
Mr. Chad Koski

**Administration:**

Ms. Brenda Finn, Superintendent  
Ms. Diana Rigby, Asst. Superintendent  
Mr. John Flaherty, Finance

**Other:**

Mr. James Hardy, MASC

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Fitzgerald for the CCRSD and Mr. Fischelis for CPS at 6:00.

**DISCUSSION:**

CCHS 990 Hours Proposals.

Mr. Fitzgerald shared the most recent proposals by the CCHS teacher committee working on how best to arrive at the mandatory 990 hours of student learning. There had been several parameters which needed to be met by any proposal – the students and teachers requested that there be no less than a 5 minute passing time between classes; the bus schedule required that the dismissal time be no later than 2:08. Neither proposal submitted by the teacher committee met the criteria – one had a 4 minute passing time; the second had a 2:14 dismissal time. Mr. Fitzgerald stated that he and the principal saw no other way to arrive at the required hours without either purchasing additional buses or having an earlier start time. Ms. Shannon mentioned that an earlier start time of 7:19 would not be acceptable to parents who have been eager to push start times later, not earlier.

Mr. Flaherty stated that the cost of additional buses would be in the magnitude of 1.25 million dollars – this includes the purchase of additional buses and the hiring of additional drivers.

Mr. Fondriest stated that he sees the addition of buses as the only practical solution to the problem and that this should be a consideration for next year's budget.

Mr. Fondriest asked if the State would allow us to move incrementally into the 990 hours, and asked how many hours we were currently deficient.

Ms. Rigby stated that the State would not allow an incremental approach, that the auditing would take place this February and we were currently 16 minutes a day, or 55 hours a year, short. Implementation would need to go into effect by start of the '08 school year.

Ms. McGinn stated that she saw no other short term solution than to start school at 7:19 (the current start time is 7:35). The 7:19 start time eliminates homeroom. Lunch times cannot be shortened because they are used as class periods. There is no other time to cut into.

Mr. Fitzgerald stated that he and Ms. McGinn would speak with the CCTA president and see if there were additional proposals from the teachers.

The members of the School Committee all expressed their opinion that the early start time is not desirable and that there needs to be a better long term solution.

#### **ACTION ITEMS:**

Mr. Wedge moved, with a second by Ms. McGinn, to approve the CCHS Supplemental Special Education Appropriation in the Amount of \$300,000 for the FY09 Warrant. The vote was unanimous.

Mr. Wedge moved, with a second by Mr. Fondriest, to approve the amended FY'09 debt service in the amount of \$1,241,530. The vote was unanimous.

#### **DISCUSSION:**

Mr. Fitzgerald introduced Jim Hardy from MASC and asked him to map out the different approaches the committee could take in their search for a new superintendent. Ms. Finn will retire as superintendent as of August 31, 2008.

Mr. Hardy stated that there were two approaches – to have an internal search, or to conduct a full search. The internal search is the least time consuming (approximately 6-8 weeks); the external search usually is a 6-9 month process and is also very expensive. He stated that the timing of our search for an external candidate would not be optimal because most search processes take place beginning in the fall and wrap up around mid-February. We would not be looking at a very competitive field. There are currently 12 districts already in the process of looking for supers. If the committee wanted to hire a candidate before the end of the school year, an internal search would be recommended especially if there is the potential of an internal candidate coming forward. Either hiring or

eliminating the internal candidate is something he would also recommend since when one conducts an external search and it is known that there is a viable internal candidate; often external candidates are reluctant to apply.

Mr. Hardy said that 75% of superintendents in Massachusetts had only 3 year tenures in their current positions and that there has been tremendous turn over in the area.

Mr. Fondriest asked how difficult it is to hire an interim.

Mr. Hardy said that interims were not a problem to hire on short notice.

Mr. Fischelis asked what the committee felt was the downside to having an internal search first.

Ms. McGinn stated that because an internal search would only have a very limited number of candidates, perhaps only one, she felt it would be more difficult to judge the candidates' qualities. Comparison always adds to the picture.

Ms. Shannon suggested that it would be appropriate to first conduct an internal search if there is a likelihood of an internal candidate(s) coming forward. To have that candidate(s) hanging for 6 to 9 months may cause unnecessary anxiety and we may lose that candidate(s) to another system before having a chance to judge their candidacy. It would be better to either hire or eliminate the internal candidates first.

Mr. Fischelis agreed stating that our timeline is not advantageous for conducting an external search and that the possibility of an interim provides the cushion should an internal candidate not be successful.

Mr. Hardy stated that for an internal search, MASC could assist without cost. They could conduct site visits to the schools and to other relevant offices to arrive at the professional criteria that the community felt important and necessary to the superintendent position.

The committee suggested that in addition to school personnel and parents, that interviews be done with the Concord & Carlisle Town Managers, Finance Directors and Chairs of BOS and FinCom, and with the Concord Police and Fire Chiefs,

The committee agreed to go forward with an internal search, with the option of hiring an interim while conducting a full external search should that become necessary.

Mr. Hardy suggested that the application contain a Cover Letter, Personal Statement, Resume, and Three References.

Ms. Finn stated that Ms. McCausland was familiar with the internal search process and would know the format for an internal posting.

Ms. McGinn and Mr. Fondriest volunteered to look at the superintendent's current contract and speak with legal counsel about updating.

Ms. Finn said she would look at her current job description and make recommendations for an update.

Mr. Fitzgerald and Mr. Fischelis said they would be the contacts for MASC and the applicants.

**ADJURNMENT**

On A MOTION from Mr. Wedge and seconded by Mr. Fischelis the meeting was adjourned by unanimous vote at 8:00.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Shannon

APPROVED: 1/22/08