

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, noting that it was being recorded, and Mr. Booth then called the CSC meeting to order. Roll call attendance was taken: Anderson, aye; Booth, aye; Bout, aye; Mezdad, aye; Mostoufi, aye; Rainey, aye; Wilson, aye.

A. Executive Session. A motion was made 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 2 of the Open Meeting Law: To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel, and 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; Booth, aye; Bout, aye; Mezdad, aye; Mostoufi, aye; Rainey, aye; Wilson, aye.

Mr. Booth called the CSC back into session at 6:00 PM and Ms. Wilson called the CCSC back into session.

**PUBLIC HEARING CPS BUDGET FY22**

The Public Hearing on the CPS Budget FY22 opened at 6:01 PM. Mr. Stanton shared his budget presentation, reviewing timeline, assumptions (including Pre-K through Grade 5 students back in district full-time), and the zero-based process. He stated that the recommended FY22 budget is \$41,708,424, or a 2.28% increase from the FY21 approved budget, noting that it is at the Concord Finance Committee guideline. Mr. Stanton reviewed the budget by 1000 function, budget drivers, cost savings, requested FTE's, grant/revolving account salary offsets, special education tuitions, and an overview of the transportation fleet and FTE's. Mr. Stanton then reviewed budgets by location, including preschool, Alcott, Thoreau, Willard, CMS and District-Wide. He then provided an overview of CARES Act expenditures.

**Public Comment**

1. Todd Benjamin, Sudbury Road, Concord, MA. Mr. Benjamin questioned the \$149,703 for professional development and Mr. Stanton stated that this was the increase to professional development, noting that this line is being replenished to be more in-line with previous budgets. Mr. Benjamin questioned the 30 days of professional development at the elementary level, asking about the necessity and if the number was similar to other districts. Dr. Hunter stated that this is akin to like districts, noting that the elementary schools meet DESE requirements and the value of professional development for the staff.

A motion to close the CPS Public Hearing FY22 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 public hearing closed at 6:35 PM.

## **PUBLIC HEARING CCRSD BUDGET FY22**

The public hearing on the CCRSD Budget FY22 opened at 6:37 PM. Mr. Stanton shared his CCRSD Budget FY22 presentation, reviewing timeline, assumptions (including students grades 9-12 back in district full-time), and the zero-based process. He stated that the FY22 Superintendent's Recommended budget is \$35,759,375, or a 2.29% increase over the FY21 approved budget, noting that this was at the Concord Finance Committee guideline. Mr. Stanton reviewed the budget by 1000 function, budget drivers and cost savings by expense type, requested FTE's, grant/revolving account salary/expenses offset, special education tuitions, excess and deficiency projections, early retirement incentive savings, OPEB, transportation fleet and FTE's, health insurance costs, debt service, CARES Act expenditures, general fund revenue estimates, and assessments.

No public comments.

A motion was made by Ms. Bout, seconded by Mr. Booth, to close the Public Hearing on the CCRSD Budget FY22. The motion passed by roll call: Anderson, aye; Booth, aye; Bout, aye; Mezdad, aye; Mostoufi, aye; Rainey, aye; Wilson, aye, and the public hearing closed at 7:08 PM.

## **STUDENT UPDATE**

CCHS student reps, Amy Tedeschi and Linda Xu, provided an update from CCHS. Ms. Tedeschi stated that AP exams would be held after graduation, noting that seniors are unhappy about this. Mr. Mastrullo, CCHS Principal, stated that there is AP and MASC testing and a mandate to have students back, noting that this has created an issue. He stated that CCHS has moved the exams that were scheduled after graduation to before graduation. Ms. Xu stated that due to the style of learning being different, students are nervous that they may not be as prepared as pre-COVID. Regarding the AP exams, Mr. Mastrullo noted that scores are relative to other test takers.

## **II. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Dr. Hunter stated that K-5 would be returning to full-time, in person on April 5<sup>th</sup> and CMS would be returning April 26<sup>th</sup>, noting that these return dates are in compliance with the state mandate. She stated that the district is working as quickly as possible to return the high school students, noting that the goal is to get them all back in-person. She noted that the amount of effort and manpower into returning the students is substantial, all while running current models.

1. Rebecca Caira-Davila. Ms. Caira-Davila asked if there would still be a remote option once the kids return full time and Dr. Hunter stated that a remote option would be available for the rest of the school year.
2. Jeff Lloyd. Mr. Lloyd noted the seemingly low in-school transmission rates and questioned getting his children back in-person based on his health concerns. Dr. Hunter suggested reaching out to CCHS, noting that there has been a very low school transmission rate.

*(Additional comment made below during Chairs & Liaisons Report)*

## **III. CHAIRS & LIASIONS REPORT**

Ms. Bout stated that the CMSBC Communications Subcommittee met and is doing a lot of outreach via public forums and listening sessions throughout town, noting the incredible input. She stated that they are also working on a survey and new website to make sure the public has access and the ability to give input.

Mr. Booth stated that the Design Subcommittee of the CMSBC would be meeting March 16<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 AM and the full committee would meet on March 18<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 AM.

Public Comment:

1. Todd Benjamin. Mr. Benjamin stated that he is confused at why the elementary students have to wait until April to return to full time. He asked the district to explain the exact reasons why the students cannot return on March 15<sup>th</sup> and asked when the discussion of increasing learning time began, as well as why the district needs further guidance on returning the students.

Ms. Mostoufi stated that SEPAC would be holding a meeting on March 25<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Booth stated that the Concord Celebrations Committee has announced through MMN that Patriots Day will be held virtually this year, noting that the committee has invited the SC to create a small greetings tape.

#### **IV. CORRESPONDENCE**

Mr. Booth stated that the CSC did not receive any correspondence since the last meeting. Ms. Wilson stated that the CCSC received two communications regarding returning to in-person learning.

#### **V. DISCUSSION**

A. Expansion of In-Person Learning. Dr. Hunter shared the DESE mandates approved by the Board of Education on March 5, 2021: full return K-5 by April 5<sup>th</sup>, full return grades 6-8 by the end of April and high school return TBD, as well as the announcement of vaccines being available to teachers as of March 3<sup>rd</sup>. She shared enrollment numbers by school of remote and in-person students, noting that the schools will need to hear back from families on which plan they choose to move forward with K-8. Dr. Hunter shared the results of the parent surveys, noting how valuable the information is. She then shared the number of students participating in asymptomatic COVID testing, noting the importance of testing in stopping school spread.

The elementary principals, Naomi Krakow (Alcott), Angel Charles (Thoreau) and Matt Lucey (Willard) provided an overview of elementary return to full in-person. Mr. Lucey stated that the 6 foot distancing protocol, cohorting, mask breaks, remote academy would remain in place, noting that the return to in-person would be driven by safety. He stated that lunches would be outside as long as weather permits, noting that tents will be available. He stated that they do anticipate the need for additional staff and anticipate a reduction in screen time, allowing students to leave devices at school instead of bringing home. Dr. Hunter noted that if a class needs to be quarantined, the students would then need to bring devices home. Ms. Charles reviewed transportation and arrival/dismissal procedures, noting that they anticipate maintaining the protocols. She stated that they would be surveying parents to get feedback on the needs for transportation services. Ms. Krakow stated that there is a challenge around the lunch and recess schedule and that they are identifying additional staff to supervise the lunch blocks, noting that they are hoping to hire people who are known to the students already. She stated that they would also need supervision for the specialty blocks. Ms. Krakow stated that there would be a staff survey sent out as well as a parent survey to commit to in-person or remote.

CMS principal, Justin Cameron, provided an overview of the middle school's return to full time in-person on April 26<sup>th</sup>. He stated that they would be keeping the same bell schedule and would still be offering a fully remote option, noting that a survey would be sent out to families the next day. He noted that physical distancing may be brought to 3' and lunch will be outside in tents. Mr. Cameron thanked the SC and Dr. Hunter for keeping the student supervisors on staff, noting that the supervisors would be spread throughout the campus to help transition students. He shared the steps being taken to prepare the teachers for the students return to in-person learning, noting that there will be a new interface available to parents starting the next day to offer support in the reopening. He stated that there would also be webinars available for students and families as well. He stated that there would be a forum for remote parents and self-guided building tours for those families who are transitioning from all remote to all in-person. Dr. Hunter noted that there are limitations to some programs.

Mike Mastrullo, CCHS, provided an overview of the high school's return to in-person learning. He stated that they are hoping to begin events for seniors on Wednesdays prior to April break. He stated that they are studying spaces and available distances and possibly having fully remote learning options via Live Stream. Mr. Mastrullo noted that the most challenging aspect of the distancing is lunch. He stated that there will be outdoor spaces and tents available and noted that parking issues will arise again, as well as traffic issues. He stated that they currently do not have enough desks since they have been using them in other areas, so they are trying to procure more desks. He stated that they will continue to have student supervisors and noted that CCHS will be sending out surveys to staff, students and parents. He stated that he does not anticipate the bell schedule changing. He thanked everyone for their commitment and support, acknowledging the amount of effort going on at the end of the year in addition to bringing students back in-person. Dr. Hunter stated that the target date to return more kids at the high school is April 26<sup>th</sup>.

Dr. Hunter thanked the CTA and CCTA leadership, noting the team effort to do more for kids.

B. Equity Leadership Structure. Dr. Hunter noted that this is a first level of discussion on the equity leadership structure. She stated that the proposal is to consider creating a Director of Diversity, Equity and Engagement position,

noting that the position would focus extensively on cultural competency, anti-racism, and equity work. Ms. Hebert, Director of Teaching and Learning, reviewed why the district was creating this position, including: bringing a diversity, equity and anti-racist lens to every aspect of functioning, improving students' experience, providing support to the faculty and staff on cultivating an inclusive school culture, supporting administrators in decision making, being a resource for families and community members and being a liaison with outside groups and institutions on behalf of the school system. Dr. Hunter shared a visual representation of the position, noting that it would entail PreK through age 22, reviewing the curriculum and professional development, hiring and the student and community engagement aspects of the position. Regarding METCO, Dr. Hunter stated that they are proposing the addition of an academic liaison at CCHS, similar to the elementary and middle schools, who would report to the METCO Coordinator. Ms. Herbert noted that the METCO Coordinator position would focus a lot on the transition from Grade 5 to Grade 6 and Grade 8 to Grade 9. Dr. Hunter reviewed the budget increases over FY21 for the METCO Coordinator Position, METCO Academic Liaison and district (salary adjustment TBD, supplies, materials, activities, travel). Ms. Rainey suggested that community groups provide feedback with their thoughts on this structure. Ms. Bout noted her support of this proposed structure and Mr. Booth noted all of the thought that went into the proposed change. Ms. Mostoufi thanked the administration for its commitment to equity and inclusion.

## **VI. OLD BUSINESS**

A. CCRSD FY22 Budget. Ms. Rainey stated that she was not ready to vote on the budget, noting that she would like further budget cuts and Ms. Mezdad stated that she is also not comfortable voting, requesting more commitment to relying less on technology and getting information on what controls and restrictions are in place. Ms. Anderson echoed Ms. Mezdad's concerns with the software lines in the budget. Mr. Booth questioned how the technology changes in FY21 set the tone for FY22. Dr. Hunter stated that the district spent 6 months gathering the data in one place to be transparent, noting that it was still a work in progress and is an accumulated total. She stated that each department needs to have conversations on consolidating and/or continuing to use the technology, noting that this cannot be done in a week's time. She stated that they need to manage the COVID piece of it and make smart choices instead of just cutting to get to a number. Ms. Rainey suggested using some money coming from the government to cover software expenses for FY22. Ms. Herbert shared the process for adopting new curriculum and software in non-COVID times, noting that the district needs to review what pieces of software need to remain and which ones are redundant. She stated that the process would take time to complete, noting that the hope is to have the process completed over the next two months. Dr. Hunter stated that if one time federal money is used for any recurring costs for FY22, they would need to be reinstated in the operating budget for FY23.

Dr. Hunter noted her concern for cutting the budget without having the conversations with each department to review needs. Ms. Mezdad questioned if the IT department could add restrictions to devices and Dr. Hunter stated that she would like to bring a proposal and what that could look like, noting that communication to the community would need to be considered. Ms. Bout stated that she feels the process of weeding out the software is important, noting that there is still a pandemic with factors that need to be considered. Mr. Stanton cautioned the SC that Title 1 money might be going away in FY23, noting that they may need to make this up as well as software lines. Dr. Hunter stated that the software has allowed the district to be able to switch gears between in-person and remote instruction, noting her concern with possible school transmission in bringing kids back in-person in the spring.

Ms. Mezdad noted her discomfort with voting on the budget without restrictions to internet access in place on district devices, asking for a commitment from the district to review the issue. After further discussion, it was agreed that administration would explore if a decrease of 25% from the software lines was possible before the budget is voted on at the next meeting. Dr. Hunter stated that the district could commit to looking into technology in the big picture, including controls.

## **VII. ACTION ITEMS**

A. Vote to Approve FY22 CCRSD Budget. *Budget will be voted on at the next meeting.*

## **VIII. ADJOURNMENT - CCSC**

A motion to adjourn the CCSC meeting was made by Mr. Booth, seconded by Ms. Rainey. The motion passed by roll call: Anderson, aye; Booth, aye; Bout, aye; Mezdad, aye; Mostoufi, aye; Rainey, aye, and Wilson, aye, and the CCSC meeting adjourned at 9:56 PM.

**IX. OLD BUSINESS**

A. CPS FY22 Budget. Mr. Booth questioned why the 25% reduction was not discussed for K-5 and Dr. Hunter noted the benefits of some of the software programs introduced during COVID. Ms. Herbert noted that K-5 is back in school, noting that they need to create a virtual and in classroom environment in each subject for the middle and high schools. The SC agreed to request that Administration explore the possibility of reducing the software line by 25% for Grades 6-8.

**X. ACTION ITEMS**

A. Vote to Approve CPS FY22 Budget. *Budget will be voted on at the next meeting.*

**XI. ADJOURNMENT**

A motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Rainey, seconded by Ms. Bout. The motion was approved by roll call: Anderson, aye; Booth, aye; Bout, aye; Mezdad, aye; Rainey, aye, and the CSC meeting adjourned at 10:05 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Erin E. Higgins

Approved: 4.27.21

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
- MASS Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents
- OPEB Other Post Employment Benefits
- PD Professional Development
- SC School Committee