

SCHOOLS

CONCORD SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Fabian Fondriest, Chair
 Pamela Gannon, Vice Chair
 Peter Fischelis
 Jan McGinn
 Jerry Wedge

Administration, staff and teachers had an outstanding 2009. In one of the most difficult economic environments any of us has faced, they maintained highest academic standards, expanded extra-curricular offerings, completed a new school building, and delivered a 0% increase budget that sustains the quality of our K-8 program.

Maintaining the highest academic standards requires a constant focus on student learning, as well as a willingness to ask how something that's already good can be even better. Whether measured by standardized tests, third-party assessments, or academic competitions, the Concord Public School (CPS) system consistently ranks as one of the best in the State. We can all take pride in our quality school system.

To strengthen student learning, it is critical to have our students become engaged learners—both inside and outside the classroom. Engaging students outside the classroom is particularly important in the middle school years. We want to respond to their broadening interests and also to give each student a chance to connect with others in middle school. CPS therefore continued to expand our extra-curricular offerings, and today, more than 65% of middle school students are involved in an extra-curricular activity.

We celebrated another 8th grade completing Middle

School. We can be confident that our K-8 program has prepared these students well for the academic rigor of our high school, and has made them eager to pursue the even broader range of extra-curricular programs offered at CCHS.

Completing the new Willard on time and under budget stands as a testament to our Town's commitment to sustaining an excellent school system. Many people across our community had a direct hand in this success, from the Concord citizens on the original building committee to the teachers incorporating instruction about the "green" construction process into their curriculum, and everyone in between. Our sincere thanks to all.

At the same time, we must maintain the functionality of our middle school buildings, since those buildings will likely not see any major renovations in the foreseeable future. We

are therefore making measured capital investments each year to keep the buildings in good condition. In 2009 we completed the replacement of all the windows in both buildings. This has already had a favorable impact on our heating costs.

Delivering a 0% increase budget for 2010-11 that sustains the quality of our K-8

program is especially gratifying to report. 2009 brought financial challenges that will likely affect our schools for several years. Fortunately, our administration had been taking steps well before 2009 to control expense growth. For example, we have pursued a strategy of developing more in-house Special Education programs to reduce our dependence on expensive out-sourced programs. This shift has meaningfully reduced the rate of growth of SPED expenses.

CONCORD PUBLIC SCHOOL ENROLLMENT - OCTOBER 1, 2009

Elementary grade level	K	1	2	3	4	5	TOTAL
Alcott	56	75	66	65	76	74	412
Thoreau	72	78	55	80	76	78	439
Willard	75	63	63	70	59	52	382
Total	203	216	184	215	211	204	1,233
Middle School Grade Level	6	7	8				TOTAL
Peabody	103	104	106				313
Sanborn	104	99	110				313
Total	207	203	216				626
METCO (included above) Non-Residents (included above)							
Alcott	26						
Thoreau	20						
Willard	20						
Middle School	42						
TOTAL	108						
Tuition Waived Students (included above)							29
TOTAL - CPS							1,838
Out of District Special Education Students							42
GRAND TOTAL CPS							1,901

CPS successfully negotiated a new three-year contract with the Concord Teachers Association. These negotiations took place while the economic news from the State was bouncing between bad and uncertain. Nonetheless, both sides worked through the issues in a productive manner over several months and reached agreement prior to the start of the school year.

Through this combination of skillful long-term expense planning, successful contract negotiations, and other actions, our administration has responded directly and effectively to the economic downturn: in the coming year, they will maintain our top-performing school system with no budget increase.

The School Committee appreciates the work, dedication, and skills of our administration, teachers, and staff, and we applaud them for their accomplishments. We are always grateful to all the residents of Concord for their commitment and active support of our schools. We also want to thank the Concord Education Fund for its significant contributions to enriching our students' experience. Together, we are all stewards of an excellent school system, and as good stewards do, we all strive to leave this school system even better than we found it. We made good progress on that in 2009.

CONCORD-CARLISLE REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Jan McGinn, Chair
 Louis Salemy, Vice Chair
 Peter Fischelis
 Fabian Fondriest
 Pamela Gannon
 Dale Ryder
 Jerry Wedge

The Concord-Carlisle Regional High School is continuing its focus on student learning and academic excellence throughout the school year. The School Committee, School administration, faculty and staff have worked hard to ensure that we meet our goals

for improved student learning, strong budget support and management, and improved facilities, despite the dark economic climate that challenges households, businesses, and municipalities.

The year was characterized by uncommon consistency in the composition of the School Committee and the high school administrative team— all seven members of the Committee are working as a team for the second consecutive year, our Superintendent and her team are in the second year of their tenure, and Mr. Badalament, High School Principal, is in the third year of his work leading the Concord-Carlisle Regional High School.

Resident Students	9	10	11	12	TOTAL
Concord	190	204	192	227	813
Carlisle	92	90	80	91	353
Non-Resident Students					
METCO	18	18	23	15	74
Tuition Waived	2	0	2	1	5
State Wards	0	0	0	0	0
Total Non-Resident	20	18	25	16	79
Total Enrollment at CCHS	302	312	297	334	1,245
Out of District Special Education Students					37
Grand Total - CCRSD					1,282

The greatest challenge we have faced this past year has related to our operating budgets. The Commonwealth's deteriorating economy and attendant decline in tax receipts has resulted in the State cutting back on aid to school districts. We have seen a dramatic decline in aid, particularly for the Special Education "circuit breaker" reimbursement for expenditures the high school makes for students whose needs necessitate enrollment in private therapeutic and special education settings. The lower level of reimbursement resulted in reductions in staffing, materials and supplies, cuts in pay adjustments, as well as increases in parent contributions for athletic and extracurricular activities. Our school administrators are carefully monitoring budget performance and anticipate closing the year within budget.

Concord and Carlisle have struggled to contain expenditures in order to limit, and where possible to avoid requests for a budget override. We did not seek an override for the current fiscal year, and at the time of this writing we do not anticipate making such a request to Concord Town Meeting for FY2011. While we are not introducing some programmatic offerings we believe would strengthen the educational experience for our students, we keep these goals in minds for a time when fiscal opportunities may be more favorable. At present we are grateful for the fine working relationship we have