

While long term transportation options were researched, the School Committees authorized the Administration to issue an RFP for a leased facility for repair of buses. During the summer, bus maintenance moved to a rented space in Billerica, and transportation management moved into office space at Ripley. In October, a leased facility in Acton was rented for parking of buses. These three components comprise an interim transportation solution.

The Citizens Transportation Committee (CTC) presented their findings to the School Committee in October. The CTC recommended keeping transportation at its current location on the CCHS campus. The CTC report is available on the Town web page [www.concordma.gov](http://www.concordma.gov). The Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) also presented their finding to the School Committee. The TAC worked with the Board of Selectmen, Town Manager and a range of Town Departments to research municipal properties in Concord. The TAC also looked at safety and level of service and found no inherent advantages or disadvantages between public and private transportations services. Rather, the district's management and oversight is the most important factor in maintaining a high level of service. After considering more than 20 different scenarios, the TAC chose the former Town landfill as the best option for locating a transportation depot. The School Committee unanimously approved a Feasibility Study of the former Town landfill to investigate the possibility of using it as a location for the bus depot.

Thank you to the many organizations and people in Concord who work with us on our great school system. We especially appreciate the Parent Teacher Groups, The Concord Education Fund, The Community Chest, and private donors who generously contribute in so many ways. We look forward to seeing residents at Town Meeting and at School Committee meetings. We hope you will visit our district web page ([www.concordpublicschools.net](http://www.concordpublicschools.net)) and stay in touch with us. We look ahead to 2013 with optimism and high expectations for ourselves, for our teachers, our Administration, and most of all, for our students.

## CITIZENS TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE (CTC)

Lisa Bergen, Chair  
Louise Haldeman, Clerk  
Mark Anderson  
Ray Bruttomesso  
Kate Damon  
Abe Fisher  
Mark Hanson

Article 4 of the Concord Special Town meeting on April 24, 2012 requested that the Town form a committee of citizens to investigate ways to retain the transportation department as part of the Concord School system rather than outsourcing it to a private company. Following passage of the article and as specified by it, four committee members were appointed by the Concord Town Moderator and three by the School Committee. Although Carlisle representation was originally desired, the Town of Carlisle declined to participate. Therefore, all members were Concord residents.

The CTC began meeting in May following the close of Town Meeting and continued until it issued its final report in October. The Committee initially met bi-weekly and more frequently as the work progressed. All members became very conversant with the working of the School Transportation Department and developed great respect for the manner in which the Department carries out its duties.

The Committee identified five major areas of research:

Safety- which involved a review of accident statistics, bus construction, law enforcement, driver training and, last but not least, student safety.

Social Factors- also called "Intangibles," which concerned how the public perceived the transportation department and how its members see themselves. How would out-sourcing affect the relationship.

Emergency Preparedness- An examination of the role the Transportation Department plays as part of Town Emergency response and how privatization might alter it.

Site Selection- A study of how much land and what facilities are necessary in order to establish an efficient working bus depot and where such a facility could be

located if not at its present site. The Committee looked primarily at land already belonging to the Town

Cost Analysis- A comparison of the costs of outsourcing as opposed to retaining the department. This involved a close examination of budget figures and comparative data from other school systems.

During the course of its brief but dynamic existence, the Committee held two public hearings and in October issued a final report and recommendations to the Town. The Committee learned that the Concord transportation depot which includes a maintenance facility, bus parking, and driver accommodations on one site is highly efficient and is considered a desirable model by many transportation managers. The Committee determined that having the drivers and maintenance people as direct employees of the school system greatly enhances the sense that the employees are valued members of the school community. The Committee also found that retaining our own department would be far less costly than outsourcing.

The Committee made the following recommendations:

- The School Committees commit to keeping School Transportation in-house for a minimum of five years.
- The best location for the School Transportation Department is its current location.
- Maintain the current level of service.
- Encourage bus ridership.

Whether the recommendations of the Committee will be considered is for the future to determine.

## CONCORD-CARLISLE REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE

Fabian Fondriest, Chair  
Louis Salemy, Vice-Chair  
Phil Benincasa  
Pamela Gannon  
Melissa McMorrow  
Jennifer Munn  
Maureen Spada

We are deeply saddened by the passing of former School Committee chair and member Jan McGinn. Jan was a leader committed to public education. Under her leadership in its early years, the Concord Education Fund grew from an idea to an organization that has granted over \$1.1 million to projects in our

schools. From there Jan moved on to School Committee, where she served for six years as an active leader on many initiatives. We are grateful for having known Jan and for her contributions to our community.

Our high school continues to benefit from the tireless commitment of educators, staff, parents, community members and students. Together we successfully pursued our mission of educating all students to become lifelong learners, creative thinkers, caring citizens, and responsible contributors in our global society.

Much of our work--and healthy debate--this year centered on our new high school building project. In 2011, the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) announced that it would grant \$28 million towards a new Concord-Carlisle high school and in the fall of 2011, Town Meeting overwhelming approved the \$92.5 million project, and that vote was confirmed with 84% support at the polls a week later. But as the design process moved forward, our project management was not as disciplined as it should have been. Though well-intended, too many costly features were added to the building design. As a result, the MSBA determined that our project had gotten out of compliance with our Project Funding Agreement, and suspended our funding in June.

The MSBA was correct in both its assessment and its action. As disappointing as the funding suspension was, our response to this setback was thorough and swift. The MSBA outlined numerous requirements that we would have to achieve for it to consider reinstating our funding. We made several changes in process and structure to meet these requirements, with the most important being that Stan Durlacher took over the leadership of the Building Committee. Over the next few months, Stan and the Building Committee, as well as the Administration and School Committee, worked diligently to meet all the MSBA's requirements and, in October, the MSBA announced that the project was back in compliance and our funding will be reinstated.

While we deserved the criticism we received for letting the project get out of compliance in the first place, it was inspiring to see our cooperative and successful response to this crisis. As with any complex building project, there are still issues to be resolved, including a long-term plan for transportation. We are confident that the same