

Board of Education, Concord School District
Regular monthly meeting
November 7, 2016

Board members: Rusty Cofrin, Clint Cogswell, Tom Croteau, Nathan Fennessy, Barb Higgins, Alana Kimball, Jennifer Patterson, Maureen Redmond-Scura, Jim Richards, *student representatives* Rebecca Proulx and Esther Elonga

Administrators: *Superintendent* Terri Forsten, *Assistant Superintendent* Donna Palley, *Business Administrator* Jack Dunn, *Director of Human Resources* Larry Prince, *Director of Facilities* Matt Cashman

Agenda Item 1. Call to Order

Board President Clint Cogswell called the meeting to order at 6:57 p.m. and asked to modify the agenda to allow the Abbot-Downing students to make their presentation before the public comment.

Agenda Item 2. Approval of Agenda

The Board voted 9-0 to approve the agenda as modified – moving the presentation by Abbot-Downing students before public comment (motioned by Mr. Cogswell, seconded by Jim Richards).

Agenda Item 3. Presentation on composting by Abbot-Downing School students

First grade teacher Trish Boisvert introduced three first-grade students Peter, Emerson and Pyper, who described what composting is: turning dirt into soil, to grow vegetables into fruit. The students assisted Board members to create and build composting bins. The bins consisted of dirt, fruit and vegetable waste, worms and moisture. Board members were instructed to stir their compost with spoons provided, or their hands. The students described how composting will help the environment by keeping most organic materials out of landfills. The students emphasized that composting will help keep the world clean and healthy. Ms. Boisvert displayed photographs about her class' composting project. The Board thanked ADS staff and students for their presentation.

Agenda Item 4. Public Comment– agenda items only

There was no public comment.

Agenda Item 5. Recognitions

Brin Cowette, whose choral group participated in the Cantate High School Choral Festival in Keene on October 28, was recognized. Dr. Sandra Howard of Cantate complimented the choral group for its performance.

Board student representative Esther Elonga noted that during Anna-Marie DiPasquale's recent trip to Estonia, she and Estonian education officials were able to "skype" with two groups of over 20 students. As a result, Estonian education officials are thinking of adopting the term "New Estonians" in their classrooms and schools. They also liked the idea of new students visiting various classes and sharing their cultures and languages. The "Travel Around the World" project will happen in the next few weeks, when new students visit Geography and Culture classes and share their cultures and important facts about their countries. New CHS students will also appear on the new radio program "Word of Mouth" to talk about their own cultures and how diversity has improved classrooms. On November 10, the Hindu festival of Diwali, the celebration of light, will be hosted by the Be the Change Club.

Rebecca Proulx reported that the girls' volleyball team finished as the runner-up in the state championship. The ACT and SAT tests were held at CHS recently. The junior class sponsored an intramural volleyball game, where students and teachers had the opportunity to create teams and engage in friendly competition. A blood drive was recently held at CHS, and the school will soon start up the canned food drive contest. A Soup and Bowl event will take place during parent/teacher conferences, where parents can buy a bowl; money will go toward supporting the canned food drive.

Barb Higgins left the meeting.

Agenda Item 6. Approval of Board Minutes

Mr. Cogswell reviewed the minutes of the regular monthly meeting on October 3, the Public Hearing on October 26, and the Special Board meeting on October 26.

The Board voted 8-0 to approve the minutes of the regular monthly meeting on October 3 (moved by Maureen Redmond-Scura, seconded by Nathan Fennessy).

The Board voted 8-0 to approve the minutes of the Public Hearing on October 26 (moved by Ms. Redmond-Scura, seconded by Jennifer Patterson).

The Board voted 8-0 to approve the minutes of the Special Board meeting on October 26 (moved by Tom Croteau, seconded by Ms. Redmond-Scura).

Agenda Item 7. Personnel

Larry Prince presented several coach nominations.

Colin Brown, Indoor Track Head Coach, Concord High School, \$2,905, 75% of Step 3, Group 6, 9.5%. Colin shares this position with Hayden Daly. He replaces Allison Davis.

Hayden Daly, Indoor Track Head Coach, Concord High School, \$968, 25% of Step 3, Group 6, 9.5%. Hayden shares this position with Colin Brown. Hayden replaces Allison Davis.

Leah Hart, Nordic Ski Assistant Coach, Concord High School, \$2,650, Step 2, Group 9, 6.5%. Leah replaces Stuart Kremzner.

Bobby Strong, Girls A Basketball Coach, Rundlett Middle School, \$2,242.00, Step 2, Group 11, 5.5%. Bobby replaces Glenn Mathews.

The Board voted 8–0 to approve the coach nominations as presented (moved by Mr. Fennessy, seconded by Rusty Cofrin).

Agenda Item 8. Joint Instructional and Finance Committees

Ms. Patterson presented the report of the meeting on October 5, which focused on reviewing the findings of the Early Childhood Education steering committee. The administration presented five options for consideration to expand the district's early childhood programming, including the positive aspects and challenges of each option. She directed interested parties to review the excellent minutes of that meeting, which are posted on the district website (sau8.org). A number of community members provided testimony on early childhood education; the Board expressed appreciation for their participation.

Agenda Item 9. Joint Capital Facilities and Finance Committee

Mr. Cofrin presented the report of the joint committee meeting on October 12. The joint committee discussed the CRTC teacher training childcare facility, the required conversion to natural gas from steam with the closing of Concord Steam, bus replacement plan, technology, and the total bond itself. In 2012, the CRTC childcare facility was infested with termites and was closed. There is another building on the site which could also be considered for use. The joint committee discussed the elementary school iPad replacement and purchase of Chromebooks at the high school. The committee looked at transportation needs, and discussed the overall bond issue. Mr. Fennessy noted that his name was misspelled in the minutes of this meeting.

Agenda Item 10. Finance Committee

Mr. Croteau presented the report of the meetings on October 17 and October 26.

On October 17, the Committee reviewed recommendations from the FY16-17 budget. Business Administrator Jack Dunn reviewed the FY16 budget vs. actual expenditures, including trust fund deposits and withdrawals, and the unreserved fund balance. Committee members talked about the FY17 budget which had been voted on

preliminarily in March 2016. They discussed FY18 considerations regarding bond process and a list of items that will impact that budget.

The Committee discussed the overage in the supply line due to the Concord Steam issue. The District entered into a contract with Concord Steam for CHS, but that was never approved by the Public Utilities Commission (PUC), resulting in overage costs of \$340,000. Mr. Dunn discussed the additional \$495,975 in the unreserved fund balance, which is above and beyond the \$1.9 million needed for the budget, noting that without Board action, that money would be returned to the taxpayers. He explained that this amount is due to several “payment holidays,” which may not be available in future years. He also discussed the cost of Concord Steam for the four impacted schools (ADS, CMS, RMS and CHS) and discussed options for use of the \$495,975, noting that the Board needs to decide on Option #2 or Option #4. The real purpose of allocating this money is to decrease the percentage of increase in taxes, while still responsibly planning for this budget. Mr. Croteau noted that the recommendation of the Finance Committee is not binding to the Board, but is open to discussion.

On October 26, the Committee again discussed the options for the \$495,975 unreserved fund balance, and the bond. The administration had projected a .80% increase in property valuation, for a tax rate of \$15.18 per \$1,000, including both local and state education rates. The city property valuation was anticipated by the end of the month, now projected to be 2.24% inclusive, for an education tax rate \$14.96 per \$1,000, a 1.29% increase.

The Committee at that point recommended Option #2 – to deposit the \$495,000 into reserves (the budget stabilization fund), and increase appropriation by \$490,000 to cover steam heating costs. That recommendation was brought to the October 26 Special Board meeting, and approved. There was additional discussion about bus replacement costs, childcare facility renovation or replacement, New Hampshire retirement system rates, potential early childhood education programming, technology costs, and bonding.

Ms. Redmond-Scura noted that she was present at the October 17 meeting; the minutes will be corrected to reflect this.

Agenda Item 11. Instructional Committee

Ms. Patterson presented the report of the meeting on October 19. The committee heard from the science curriculum team regarding the “Next Generation Science Standards” (NGSS), including specific commentary from teachers about their experiences piloting some of the new materials. The Committee discussed how teachers can be supported in adopting these standards, and changes in how science is being taught at the middle school, which include science and engineering units at every level, as well as the traditional physical, life, earth and space sciences. The Committee heard a presentation about the new elementary school report card that has been developed over the past year, which will be rolled out at the end of the current semester.

She also presented the report of the meeting on October 26, which was another opportunity for the Committee to discuss the findings of the Steering Committee, hear more information about the makeup of the kindergarten population and the current Family Resource Centers, and learn that based on present enrollment projections, classroom capacity would allow expansion of developmental preschool programs in the spaces where they currently exist. Some additional funds or opportunities to work with community programs might emerge, that could support additional preschool programs. The Committee received the history of developmental preschool programming, and heard new information how to support the 45-minute teacher preparation time. One proposal was to have three nearly-full-time teachers who would move from building to building throughout the day to take those classes for the 45-minute period. The recommendation from the Committee was to direct the administration to include full-day kindergarten in budget planning, so it could be considered in the context of all the other required expenditures. The committee had a lengthy discussion about how to assist the administration to come up with one or more than one proposals, in the event full-day kindergarten is just too expensive. She noted the possibility of state support of full-day kindergarten.

The Board voted 8-0 to instruct the administration to include full-day kindergarten programming as part of the 2017-2018 budget proposal so that it could be considered in the context of all the other required expenditures (moved by Ms. Patterson, seconded by Mr. Fennessy).

Mr. Croteau reassured the community that the Board is watching every dollar as budget planning approaches, including Concord Steam and preschool costs, etc. Decisions are not being easily made, and do include a great deal of thought in every committee meeting.

Mr. Cogswell also noted that committee meetings are available for viewing on ConcordTV, and meeting minutes are posted on the district website (sau8.org).

Agenda Item 12. Communications and Policy Committee

Ms. Patterson presented the report of the meeting on October 24. She noted the five policies that were before the Board for a first reading, describing the decisions about language that was selected between the New Hampshire School Board Association (NHSBA) policies and current School Board policies:

Policy #101.1 Save Harmless Legislation;

Policy #110 Code of Ethics;

Policy #111 Philosophy of the Board of Education;

Policy #112 Publicity Releases; and

Policy #115 Filling a Vacancy on School Board.

Ms. Redmond-Scura noted that the NHSBA routinely reviews legislation for any effect on current policies, and that relying on NHSBA language and updates would ensure the Board's compliance with changing laws.

Agenda Item 13. Negotiations Committee

Committee chairperson Jim Richards noted that the Negotiations Committee met on October 26, at which two items were discussed. The first item was the PUC proposed settlement with Concord Steam, in which the District would seek to be included and which would ensure the District the contract rate of \$3.08 (per XXXXX) vs. the current tariff rate of \$37. The settlement will also allow the District to have a say regarding the settlements related to the final days of Concord Steam.

The Board voted 8-0 to approve the Concord Steam settlement agreement as proposed by the Public Utilities Commission (motioned by Mr. Richards, seconded by Mr. Fennessy).

Mr. Richards noted that the Negotiations Committee recommended that the Board approve a three-year contract with the Concord Administrators' Association (CAA) collective bargaining unit. Highlights of the agreement include:

- Base Salary:
 - Increase base from \$70,018 to \$75,225 (2016-2017)
 - Increase to \$76,730 (2017-2018)
 - Increase to \$78,264 (2018-2019)
 - *eliminates the \$5,500 Tax-Sheltered Annuity (TSA) for all*
 - Annual percentage increase to base: 2% per year
- Career Longevity: (*replaces sick day payout*)
 - 6-10 years: years of service in CAA x last year salary x .75%
 - 11+ years: years of service in CAA x last year of service salary x 1.6%
 - Any employee hired on/after 7/1/16 will receive Career Longevity Pay, *No payout for sick days*
 - Any employee hired prior to 7/1/16 will be grandfathered and eligible to retain sick day payout (with the exception of elementary principals)
 - Exception: calculation of sick day payout for BGS principal (grandfathered) will be based on a per diem rate using an index of 1.41
- Sick Days
 - Those not on Career Longevity Payout remain at unlimited sick day accrual – hired before 7/1/16
 - Administrators may accrue 20 sick days annually
 - For those hired after 7/1/12, sick days have no monetary value upon separation; maximum accrual is 150 sick days
- Elementary Principals/Director of Physical Education Index:
 - Elementary principals' index increased from 1.43 (year 1): 1.44 (year 2); 1.45 (year 3)

- Director of Physical Education, Health & Sport index increased from 1.32 to 1.33
- Health
 - CDHP – Year 1 (2016-2017): 100% (All employees)
 - CDHP – Year 2 (2017-2018): 90% (All employees)
 - CDHP – Year 3 (2018-2019): 90% (All employees)

Miscellaneous

- No sidebars in this agreement; removed TSA, unlimited sick days, and current separation pay model.

NOTE: CSD agrees to an effective date retroactive to July 1, 2016

The Board voted 8-0 to approve the contract for the Concord Administrators' Association (CAA) collective bargaining unit for 2016-2019 as presented (moved by Mr. Richards, seconded by Ms. Patterson).

Mr. Richards, Mr. Cogswell and Ms. Patterson thanked the members of the Negotiations Committee and negotiating team for their hard work.

Agenda Item 14. Other Business

Conversion project update

Matt Cashman noted that Liberty Utilities installed a gas main on October 24. Locations in each of the four buildings were found for permanent hot water storage; the goal is to have that ready by April 2017. On November 11, schematic design should be complete, which will help the District get ready for the mechanical work bid by mid-December. A meeting with City officials has been scheduled to review projected schedules.

Agenda Item 15. Proposed calendar of meetings

Superintendent Forsten discussed the proposed Board calendars for November and December.

Mr. Cashman noted that on November 29, the firms SLAM and HMFH will be interviewed for the educational specifications/architectural study of Rundlett Middle School, with a plan for the Capital Facilities Committee to recommend one of these architectural firms to the Board. Mr. Dunn noted that if the proposed \$12 million bond is increased, the 60-day period for reimbursement of expenses would have to be re-set.

Agenda Item 16. Public comment

Betty Hoadley, a Concord resident, spoke about the need for wider and more proactive outreach to the community regarding the various issues the School Board is contemplating.

She noted that, on the report of the October 5 meeting, if the School Board is going to make a big deal about the fact that 17 speakers spoke, it should make an equally big deal

that the District made an effort to send the notice to all parents of present school children. These parents would constitute 14%-15% of registered voters in the district, resulting in approximately 85% of taxpayers being excluded from that notice. The response therefore was neither balanced nor diversified. She noted that many older people are not well-versed in using websites and social media, and some of these people do not receive email. She said she appreciated Mr. Croteau's comments that the Board needs to reassure taxpayers that the Board is approaching these decisions carefully, but emphasized that the Board needs to do this in an open and equitable way.

Mrs. Hoadley noted that she had sent recommendations about public relations to the full Board this day to an email address and will send it out again if it has not been received by everyone. She noted that a number of ways to communicate to the public have worked effectively in the past; among them was Matt Cashman's ConcordTV show in which he talked about the elementary school consolidation project. The Board could also send a periodic letter to all households. She emphasized the Board does need a point person – one person to accept and disseminate mail, or email.

Mrs. Hoadley noted that policy review is a thankless task, and expressed her appreciation that the Board is addressing this. She noted that the Tax-Sheltered Annuity (TSA) elimination has been tried before during negotiations, and thanked the Board for achieving it this time. She said there is a built-in inequality about the \$5,000 TSA that she never accepted. She said if new courses are added, others need to be taken off, as these courses are costly. For example, the courses called "War and Peace" and "Geopolitics" are no longer being offered; Mrs. Hoadley feels it is important to keep course offerings up to date.

Mrs. Hoadley noted that it is important that the School Board adequately communicates its work to the public, as many taxpayers do not have the communication conduits which it has been using (website, School Messenger alerts, etc.). She asked the Board to think of all people in the city, not just parents of school-aged children.

Agenda Item 17. Adjournment

The Board voted 8-0 to adjourn (motioned by Ms. Redmond-Scura, seconded by Mr. Fennessy).

The Board adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tom Croteau, *Secretary*