

Concord School District
Board of Education
Regular monthly meeting
March 5, 2018

Board members: Clint Cogswell, Tom Croteau, Chuck Crush, Nathan Fennessy, Jennifer Patterson, Liza Poinier, Maureen Redmond-Scura, Jim Richards, Pam Wicks; student representatives Logan Stevens and Helen Massah

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

Agenda Item 1. Call to Order

Board President Jennifer Patterson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Agenda Item 2. Approval of Agenda

The Board voted 9-0 to approve the agenda with one modification (adding a new item under Item 7. Personnel, to allow the hiring of administrators and teachers, subject to confirmation by the Board (motioned by Maureen Redmond-Scura, seconded by Clint Cogswell)).

Agenda Item 3. Presentations

Abbot-Downing School Principal Kathleen Riordan presented Peter Osiecki, a technology program assistant at ADS, who described the project he initiated this year with help from Concord Trust: to have students read books and write or record book reviews. He created a student book review website and developed an app using a Bluetooth Beacon device that sends a notification to a student's iPad about the "Destiny" book catalog and book reviews. They created a game using the character "Where's Waldo?" that teaches students about libraries. They also created a virtual reality downhill skiing experience with Olympic skier Bode Miller, and a "Winter Olympics Corner." His goal was to make the library more interactive. For Black History Month, students created an "augmented reality" experience with XP Reveal." He has been working with Lisa Marcoux at CHS to develop an app using the Bluetooth Beacons. Four students (Georgia, Carter, Garrett and Ryan) from Diane Serard's fifth grade class read their reviews of two books.

ConcordTV – Josh Hardy, station manager and Justin Scarelli, staff producer, spoke to the Board about its spring fundraiser and developments at ConcordTV. The fundraiser

is the third annual “Eggstravaganza” held March 16 to 18 at the Bektash Temple on the Heights. All monies raised will be dedicated to the equipment fund, especially the \$90,000 studio lighting upgrade project. He noted that ConcordTV has created a “podcast studio” at CHS, which will be available for audio-only recording and will be a great resource for community members who wish to create podcasts. Mr. Scarelli noted that the Youth Video Camps will be held again this summer, at which students write their own scripts, learn how to use the cameras, cast, and act (mostly elementary to middle-school-aged students). Recently taped programs on the YouTube channel include the play *Nora’s Lost*; CHS boys’ hockey; Be the Change Club; Poetry Out Loud, and others. Mr. Hardy noted that sports competitions are recorded entirely by volunteers. Mr. Croteau complimented ConcordTV regarding election debates, commercials and other community television initiatives.

Agenda Item 4. Public Comment– agenda items only

Concord resident Betty Hoadley spoke about the budget currently under discussion, as a proponent of Concord taxpayers, particularly the elderly. She discussed the impact of the District’s tax rate (the local education tax only) on local taxpayers.

She noted that the Board saw the proposed budget for the first time in January. The lower number came from a number of items that were eliminated last year. She said that the administration brought the budget to the Board and now the Board needs to do its job. She noted that in the area of “salary-driven benefits,” negotiations is not the end of necessities. The \$.39 tax increase could well change by the final budget vote in October; given this, the Board needs to further pare the budget in anticipation of collective bargaining agreements or other additional costs still to be determined. She suggested the Board continue to ask the Superintendent in what other ways the budget could be additionally cut. She expressed support for full-day kindergarten (FDK) implementation at this time, cautioning the Board not to increase the costs that have been laid out. She reminded the Board that it had not yet even made the case to the community for FDK, set standards, or established measures for its success, and suggested that this action was long overdue.

Agenda Item 5. Approval of Board Minutes

Ms. Patterson noted that Patrick Taylor has agreed to serve as the Deputy School Board Clerk for 2018.

The Board voted 9–0 to appoint Patrick Taylor as Deputy School Board Clerk for 2018 (moved by Mr. Cogswell, seconded by Mr. Fennessy).

Ms. Patterson briefly reviewed the minutes of the regular Board meeting on February 5 and the minutes of the February 12 Special Board meeting minutes, noting highlights of the ratified contract with Maintenance Transportation Association.

Ms. Patterson reviewed the minutes of the February 12 Budget work session on special education services and enrollment patterns (approximately 15% of the total District population), the ELL program, and BMS' recognition as a Distinguished Title I school. The Board discussed the demographics and costs of out-of-district placements, and Bill White contracted services within each elementary school.

Pam Wicks commented that the District's meeting minutes are exceptional and well above what the current RSA requires (referring to an article in the *Concord Monitor*).

Board Secretary Maureen Redmond-Scura reviewed the minutes of the February 19 Budget work session, at which technology, capital facilities and additional Student Services information was discussed.

Finance Committee Chair Tom Croteau reviewed the minutes of the February 21 Budget work session, at which enrollments, salaries and benefits were discussed. Current and projected classroom sizes were reviewed by grade, and it was noted that proposed staff numbers were based on this policy. Fixed costs in the budget were discussed, including NH Retirement System and healthcare insurance costs. The preliminary budget was posted later that evening. The proposed budget included a 2.9% increase on the local property tax. It was noted that the budget included a net gain of two teacher positions. FDK and money for facilities renovations were incorporated in this budget.

The Board voted 9-0 to approve the minutes of the February 5 regular Board meeting, February 12 Special Board meeting, and February 12, February 19 and February 21 Budget work sessions with minor corrections (moved by Ms. Redmond-Scura, seconded by Chuck Crush).

Agenda Item 6. Recognitions

Student Board representatives Logan Stevens and Helen Massah noted that Granite State Respect Week was held the week of Valentine's Day to raise awareness and help stop teen dating violence. Different clubs each hosted one day of that week; at the end of the week Congresswoman Annie Kuster spoke about her efforts on the national level. Helen noted that Winter Carnival included a "sticky wall," a basketball resistant dunk game, obstacle course, and a number of games. Other clubs sold and hosted games of their own. CHS ETS (Education Talent Search) attended a day conference in Connecticut, visited UConn and heard an inspiring speaker. CHS Hockey had a record of 18-2 and went to the semi-finals. Logan noted that he viewed the play *Nora's Lost* as part of his sociology course. *Les Miserables* will be put on in May by the CHS Drama Club. The *Poetry Out Loud* competition included nine CHS students – the champions were Emily Casco and Laila Ruffin. Forest McKenzie was awarded Player of the Year in cross-country running. The wrestling team ended their season at 17 – 1 and five wrestlers qualified for the regional competition in Rhode Island. The cheerleading team competed at Pinkerton High School and placed second. The Tri-M Music Honor

Society presented a Cabaret Night recently and will donate all profits to charity. Student Andrew Leonard was awarded 1st place in CHS' AP Economics course. Spring sign-ups were taking place into this week. CRTC Culinary Arts program will hold another Guest Chef on March 21.

Superintendent Forsten noted that a social media safety threat was made toward Concord High School last week. She thanked students and the community for its proactive reporting efforts. On March 14, students and administrators will work together for an on-campus walkout in recognition of the 17 students and staff murdered in Parkland, Florida on Valentine's Day.

The RMS Principal search is underway, with interviews scheduled for this week.

Superintendent Forsten asked whether, after the Board's review of Student Services, the administration should develop an RFP for behavior and autism services. Ms. Patterson and Mr. Crush suggested moving forward with this as long as it did not affect the budget process. Mr. Cogswell noted that while other businesses offer these services, the services currently offered are very complex. He suggested at minimum exploring whether other businesses were capable of handling this complex contract. Nathan Fennessy suggested using the RFP process, as it is a worthwhile exercise, but indicated he did not want the administration to expend significant resources on this. Superintendent Forsten indicated she would need to get started soon to implement summer programming or start in the fall. Tom Croteau suggested that, while this would be a lot of work, the administration should get other proposals to see how other firms react to Concord's special education needs. Jim Richards suggested that the current contract, worth \$1 million, has not been put out for bid in several years.

The Board voted 9-0 to approve the development of a RFP for outside educational services related to special education (moved by Mr. Crush, seconded by Mr. Cogswell).

Mr. Fennessy asked whether the administration knows the number of staff who will retire this year. Superintendent Forsten indicated that four planned retirements are known, and several others may well retire in June.

Agenda Item 7. Personnel

Larry Prince presented several teacher nominations.

Kyle Averill, Mathematics Teacher, Concord High School, \$20,713, 86 days at B-2, one year only. Kyle replaces Wendy Foster (86 days at M-14 = \$37,908) – resignation. Budgeted at \$37,908

Jane Andrew, Classroom Teacher, Broken Ground School, \$24,412, 68 days at M-9, one year only. Jane replaces Lindsey Foley (68 days at B-10 = \$23,793) – LOA. This is an extension of the November 6, 2017 nomination. Jane will continue in this position through the end of the 2017-2018 school year. Budgeted at \$23,793

Alexander Crosby, Classroom Teacher, Broken Ground School, \$6,817, 30 days at B-1, one year only. Alex replaces Lynn Warner (30 days at M+30-14 = \$13,633) – LOA. This is an extension of the September 5, 2017 confirmation. Alex will continue in this position through March 23, 2018. Budgeted at \$13,633

The Board voted 9–0 to approve the teacher hires, as presented (moved by Mr. Cogswell, seconded by Mr. Croteau).

Mr. Prince asked the Board for permission to hire administrators and teachers from March and August, as positions are currently being posted for open teaching jobs. The administration brings these hires to the Board each month for confirmation. Ms. Patterson asked what the advantage was to move this timeframe up. As the District will begin to offer contracts starting April 15, Ms. Patterson said that it seemed premature to grant permission to hire before contracts are offered to existing teachers.

Agenda Item 8. Negotiations Committee

Mr. Fennessy reported that the Committee met on February 5 to discuss items that were the subject of and approved at the February 12 Special Board meeting, and would meet again on March 12. Four contracts are still being discussed.

Agenda Item 9. Joint City Council/School Board Committee

Mr. Cogswell reported that the Committee met on February 23. They discussed the 2019 budget, including an update on the Board's posted budget, which includes full-day kindergarten, a 5% set-aside for future projects, a \$.31 increase on the tax rate, and continuing negotiations. City Manager Tom Aspell noted that the City's capital budget process has begun internally; he will submit the budget on May 11. The new community center will open in May 2018, with associated hiring. Negotiations are ongoing with the Fire Department and Police Department. Electricity costs are increasing 9%. Mr. Cashman provided an update on the middle school facility project, with grade-level configurations of 5 through 8 or 6 through 8, and building with or without a joint facility use with the Concord Family Y. The administration will discuss the impact of code and zoning rewrites (demographics, densities and trends could be impacted by micro-apartments, for example). There was ongoing discussion of road construction around Concord High School, including Westbourne Street parking that had been temporary. There will likely not be an accessible voting machine available for District elections for 2018; ten systems may need to be purchased for about \$20,000 for off-year elections. During the State voting, state-owned accessible voting machines are available. The City is working with the state to see if the state machines could be used in 2019. City Council priorities are determined every two years (in March) and are posted online. The turf field development (\$4 million) is scheduled for FY 2019. It was agreed that representatives of the School Board and the City Council meet every two months or so, as a community service. Mr. Aspell and Superintendent Forsten will plan

a tour of the Job Corps facility in Manchester with CHS Principal Tom Sica. Mr. Merwyn Bagan noted that the Concord Coach Association had been developing its collection of Abbot-Downing coaches with an interest in the “City Stable” building, located on the edge of the CHS parking lot right off Warren Street. The Board had started exploring whether to renovate the building for the preschool program. Those present discussed increased traffic and increased use of the parking lot on the weekend. The Abbot-Downing Historical Society holds monthly meetings in the evening. School groups would be welcome to come during the day and would come by bus so that there would not be daily parking.

The new committee, City and Community Relations, will meet on March 28.

Mr. Crush noted the positive cooperation between District administration and Concord Police Department regarding the recent threat made to Concord High School.

Agenda Item 10. Communications and Policy Committee

Chairperson Nathan Fennessy noted that the committee did not meet in February, but several policies were before the Board for a second reading:

Policy #124 School Board Standing Committees – the Joint City Council/School Board Committee name will change to City and Community Relations Committee.

Policy #414 Sexual Harassment – this policy would apply only to faculty and not students. Policy #521, which applies to students, would be reviewed at a future meeting. One change was made in two paragraphs: to add “or designee” to indicate that reports could be made not only to the Principal.

Policy #422 Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (new) – this policy would replace the current Policy #422.1

Policy #422.1 Health Insurance (recommended for deletion) – last updated in 1984.

Policy #422.3 Tax Sheltered Annuity Program Benefits (recommended for deletion) – last updated in 1984, this language is already in contracts.

Policy # 422.4 Worker’s Compensation (recommended for deletion) – last updated in 1966. The Committee will look at a different policy related to employee protection.

Policy #432/#537 Child Abuse or Neglect – this policy was changed to be consistent on reporting regulations.

The Board voted 9–0 to adopt Policies #124, #414, #422 and #432/#537, as revised, and to delete Policies #422.1, #422.3, and #422.4 (moved by Ms. Redmond-Scura, seconded by Mr. Croteau).

Agenda Item 12. Proposed calendar of meetings

Superintendent Forsten discussed the proposed Board calendars for March and April, highlighting the remaining budget work session dates and times. She mentioned the two public hearing sessions on the budget, and the Board vote on the 2018-19 budget on March 19.

Agenda Item 13. Public comment

There was no public comment.

Agenda Item 15. Adjournment

The Board voted 9-0 to adjourn (motioned by Mr. Fennessy, seconded by Mr. Richards).

The meeting was adjourned at 8:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Maureen Redmond-Scura, *Secretary*
Linden Jackett, *Recorder*