

Concord School District
Board of Education
Regular monthly meeting
March 6, 2017

Board members present: Clint Cogswell, Barb Higgins, Alana Kimball, Jennifer Patterson, Maureen Redmond-Scura, Jim Richards, Pam Wicks; student representatives Esther Elonga and Rebecca Proulx

Board members absent: Tom Croteau, Nathan Fennessy

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 7:00 p.m.

Agenda Item 2. Approval of Agenda

The Board voted 7-0 to approve the agenda (motioned by Jennifer Patterson, seconded by Jim Richards).

Agenda Item 3. Presentation by Broken School (BGS) students

Principal Susan Lauze introduced members of the cast of the Kids in Action show, Willy Wonka, Jr., which will be staged on March 16, 17, 18. Cast members included Gavin Johnson, Andrew Hunton, Morgan Doherty, Franklyn Rosario Jr, Connor Anderson, Kylee Potter, Riley Toppin, David Wicks, Layla Mitchell and Ava Trento, who performed one number from the musical for the Board and audience.

Principal Lauze noted that each year, BGS focuses on common whole-school activities (teaching social skills like patience, compassion, self-control, assertion, etc.) at all-school meetings. This year they adopted the theme of the "Energy Bus," by John Gordon. Principal Lauze has been working with staff on the "Energy Bus" parable for adults. Members of the Energy Bus Delaney Duford, Erin Johnson, Gad Murwanashyaka, and Fabrice Nshuti presented a video about the Energy Bus on the school theme "be kind to each other," in which they interviewed teachers and students. Delaney and Erin presented a "Kindness Award" to Superintendent Forsten. Fabrice and Gad presented an appreciation to every member of the Board

Agenda Item 4. Public Comment– agenda items only

Concord resident Betty Hoadley presented a number of points about full-day kindergarten, referencing the February 22 Board Work Session. She noted that the issue of full-day kindergarten did not arise from the educational community – not teachers, nor a curriculum study committee, nor the administration, nor the Instructional Committee. The issue came primarily from spouses, friends, and campaign workers of residents who ran for state offices this past fall. It was in her opinion a blatant effort to get supporters for their platforms and get votes. She expressed hope the Board was not duped by specious arguments, noting that five-year-olds will not learn substantially more in half a day for one school year. She said that a child will mature in its own time and following its own developmental process. Mrs. Hoadley noted that, when one educator remarked that full-day kindergarten will bring “social justice,” either she did not know or did not care about the existing preschool and extended day kindergarten programs in the District which address that very issue. Another argument given was that young families would flee to other communities that offered full-day kindergarten; Mrs. Hoadley suggested that Bow or Hopkinton might not be better options, with the possibility of a \$12 million liability to Eversource over a contested and decreasing assessment of the Bow power plant over several years and one of the highest tax rates in the state, respectively. She noted that one young mother testified to the Board that her child said he was unhappy with half-day kindergarten “because he didn’t have enough of a chance to play.” Mrs. Hoadley said that these are among the special functions that families should cherish, and they do not need to be farmed out to professionally trained teachers who cost taxpayers as much as \$90,000 annually in salary and benefits; the home setting is superior for providing children with family time and family values. Mrs. Hoadley noted that the preponderance of the argumentation for full-day kindergarten at the self-selected, invitation-only meeting back in October was that half-day kindergarten was inconvenient and a cost to those present in particular, reflecting an entitlement mindset characterized by “I want full-day kindergarten for MY child because it is important to ME – and I want every other taxpayer in Concord to pay for it.” Mrs. Hoadley remarked that one valid concern expressed by a proponent of full-day kindergarten was about how all the academics could get completed, but she believes that administrators should make it clear to kindergarten teachers that they are trained to get children ready for reading, writing, listening, speaking and learning quantitative procedures – not to provide a full-day curriculum in a half day. Mrs. Hoadley noted that the Board spent from September 12 to early November 2016 discussing a full-day kindergarten program, five options and then a “Plan B” contingency plan. She said with all this, the Board never discussed *why* it wanted full-day kindergarten and what it wanted it to be. The Board did not develop or publish standards, substance, or reach consensus that full-day kindergarten was superior to the current model. The “Why” wasn’t addressed; only the “How” was addressed. Mrs. Hoadley said that if the Board ever did establish the “Why,” no research was presented to assure a sustained high level

of student achievement, nor standards for evaluating the program's success. She said the Board should take out a full- or half-page ad in the *Monitor*, for example, and tell the community *why* it feels full-day kindergarten is a critical need.

Mrs. Hoadley distributed and reviewed a worksheet on tax-exempt properties in Concord and showed how the \$1.11 option on the Board members' "dashboard" would create a new local education tax rate of \$14.15, up \$3.65 from the 2013 local tax rate of \$10.50. She said the Board is focusing only on the increase, not the total tax burden. She noted that fully 27.5% of Concord properties are tax-exempt.

Mrs. Hoadley presented a number of reasons for the Board to choose not to fund full-day kindergarten at this point in time: Don't cut in line before those waiting ahead (RMS); Don't cut the really needy (RMS' history of air quality and numerous other problems); Wait to find out about possible State of New Hampshire relief – building aid and targeted aid for kindergarten programs have yet to be determined; Wait to see what the real savings will be after the steam-to-gas conversion is complete; Consider that over 500 elementary students at four schools and in several grade levels will be affected and have significantly larger class sizes with the proposed re-positioning of five elementary teachers; Consider the enormous expense of implementing a full-day kindergarten program when research indicates certain subgroups will benefit, but the majority will achieve gains that dissipate by grade three, and consider Concord is already addressing the needs of those subgroups through preschool programming and an extended day for certain kindergarten students; Acknowledge that the Board has not come to consensus on WHY full-day kindergarten is necessary at this time. She noted that unnamed businessmen may indicate that "we really need full-day kindergarten," but their interest is in their pocketbooks and they offer no data to support their claims.

Mrs. Hoadley requested that the Board have a roll call vote on every budget vote taken, even if it is a vote on an interim budget, noting that the community deserves to know how each member of the Board votes. She invited Board members to contact her to discuss any of these issues.

Rebecca Proulx asked if Mrs. Hoadley did not support full-day kindergarten at all, to which Mrs. Hoadley replied that full-day kindergarten "just arrived on the scene" last year, and the timing to implement it is not right.

Board members thanked Mrs. Hoadley for her input.

Agenda Item 5. Recognitions

Student Board representative Esther Elonga noted that on February 13, CHS held an ELL Parent Night, during which parents toured CRTC, guidance, academic departments and different classes, and learned about academic credits. The week of February 20 was "Respect Week" at CHS, focusing on teen dating and sexual abuse and to increase the level of respect at CHS. On March 18, the *Be the Change* Club will host a Youth Leadership Summit. Keynote speaker Chastity Lord is chief external officer at

Achievement first and creator of the National Proofpoint Day, an annual movement that celebrates first-generation college students and graduates. Keynote speaker Ignatius McClellan is a Board member of Epilogos Charities. Concord senior Srilekha Nuli was named a National Merit Finalist, a very high honor.

Student Board representative Rebecca Proulx noted that Laila Ruffin was one of two finalists at the state *Poetry Out Loud* competition. She will go on to compete in Washington for a \$20,000 prize if she is the state winner. CHS senior George Tarwo is only the 4th Tide wrestler ever to be crowned New England Champion, in an 8-6 victory in Providence, Rhode Island.

She congratulated both the boys' and girls' ice hockey teams, which are continuing to the semifinals. Junior Planning Night will be held on March 7, at which students and families are offered sessions about college preparation and financial aid. Guidance staff will be available to meet with families.

Agenda Item 6. Approval of Board Minutes

Mr. Cogswell reviewed the minutes of the regular monthly meeting on February 6. Several corrections were noted.

The Board voted 7-0 to approve the minutes of the regular monthly meeting on February 6 as amended (moved by Ms. Patterson, seconded by Maureen Redmond-Scura).

Mr. Cogswell reviewed the minutes of the Budget Work Sessions on February 8, February 15 (special education services), and February 20 (on facilities), and the Special Board meeting on February 15. Several corrections were noted.

The Board voted 7-0 to approve the minutes of the Budget Work Session on February 8, the Special Board meeting on February 15, the Budget Work Session on February 15, and the Budget Work Session on February 20 as amended (moved by Ms. Patterson, seconded by Barb Higgins).

The Board then discussed the Budget Work session on February 22. Several corrections were noted. Ms. Patterson noted that the point of the February 22 meeting was not to have a vote, but to have a discussion. Mr. Cogswell noted the presentation that is posted on the website for the February 22 meeting and said it addressed the "why" of full-day kindergarten. Pam Wicks said she is representing voters in Concord (District C) who want full-day kindergarten, or she would not be a member of the Board. Ms. Patterson reminded the public that Board members make decisions by talking to one another with information that falls within their jurisdiction, during public meetings. She said she begins each meeting not necessarily knowing how she may vote. She also noted that it is important for members of the public to either come to the meetings or watch the televised recordings. She reminded the public that Public Hearings on the budget are scheduled for March 20 and March 22. Ms. Higgins said it was frustrating to her that

very few Concord taxpayers actually come to Board meetings to give their feedback; she encouraged people to do so. Mr. Richards noted that the February 22 meeting was lively, and that he felt that Board members attended with open minds, having listened to various input. He noted that, while a budget will be posted this week, it is not the final budget, and said he hoped there will be considerable input from the public. He noted that Board members have received a lot of public input through emails or privately. Ms. Redmond-Scura noted that Ms. Wicks has stated that she is on the Board on a platform of full-day kindergarten, but she has also stated that increased class sizes will affect her own family and have concerned some of her constituents. Mr. Cogswell noted that if one simply read the meeting minutes, one would not get a complete picture of the budget, but as meetings are televised and streamed online, he recommended the public take the time to view them.

The Board voted 7-0 to approve the minutes of the Budget Work Session on February 22 as amended (moved by Ms. Higgins, seconded by Ms. Patterson).

Agenda Item 7. Personnel

Larry Prince presented one leave of absence.

The Board voted 7-0 to approve the leave of absence (moved by Ms. Higgins, seconded by Ms. Patterson).

Larry Prince presented several coach nominations.

Ross St. Onge, Spring Track Supplemental Coach, Concord High School, \$1,223, Step 1, Group 13, 3.0%. Ross replaces Nicholas Zeras

Jessica Boezeman, Girls Spring Track Head Coach, Rundlett Middle School, \$2,446, Step 3, Group 11, 6.0%. Jessica replaces Erica Pac

The Board voted 7-0 to approve the coach nominations as presented (moved by Ms. Higgins, seconded by Mr. Richards).

Update on RMS Principal search

Superintendent Terri Forsten noted that the candidate field has narrowed considerably, and that the search committee will bring forward a name at an upcoming meeting very soon. Once the RMS Principal position is filled, search committees for the Assistant Principal and Special Education Director positions will start their work. She hopes that the Board will see nominations by early April.

Agenda Item 8. Communications and Policy Committee

Communications and Policy Committee chairperson Jennifer Patterson presented the report of the meeting on February 13.

She reviewed the committee's discussion about and changes to the eleven policies that were before the Board for a first reading: Policy #131 Regular School Board Meetings; Policy #131.1 Agenda – Administration and Publication; Policy #132 Agenda Preparation and Dissemination; Policy #134 Non-Public Sessions; Policy #135 Rules of Order; Policy #140 School Board Policies; Policy #140.1 School Superintendent Duties; Policy #140.2 Administrative Prerogative in the Absence of Policy; Policy #141 Policy Development/Revision; Policy #142 Exceptions to Policy; and Policy #143 Suspension of Policies Regarding Internal Board Operations.

Ms. Patterson reviewed the four policies before the Board for a second reading: Policy #121 Election of Officers; Policy #124 School Board Standing Committees; Policy #530 Wellness; and Policy #711 Student Transportation. There was no further discussion of these policies.

The Board voted 7-0 to adopt Policy #121 Elective Board Officers, as revised (moved by Ms. Patterson, seconded by Ms. Redmond-Scura).

The Board voted 7-0 to adopt Policy #124 School Board Standing Committees, as revised (moved by Ms. Patterson, seconded by Mr. Richards).

The Board voted 7-0 to adopt Policy #530 Student Wellness, as revised (moved by Ms. Patterson, seconded by Ms. Redmond-Scura).

The Board voted 7-0 to adopt Policy #711 Student Transportation Services, as revised (moved by Ms. Patterson, seconded by Ms. Redmond-Scura).

Agenda Item 9. Other Business

Update on steam conversion project

Matt Cashman noted that construction at Concord High School (CHS) has entered its second week. He noted that the steam line is 13-15 feet below the surface, in the location where the new boilers will be installed; a temporary access road onto site has been established; hot water heaters and boilers have been ordered for the four schools. Subcontractors have been touring schools and engaging in pre-planning. Every Wednesday morning a construction meeting at Central is held, to plan and forecast. Demolition will take place after school lets out in June.

Mr. Cashman noted that on Sunday at 3 p.m. Tom Sica and Steve Rothenberg called to inform him that several coils froze and ruptured on the air handler unit in the basement of the East building. Water started to run through the basement, affecting three classrooms with carpet and tile. Custodians Dan Gontarz and Wayne Roark and ServePro immediately began the work of cleaning up and drying out these spaces, which will continue until Wednesday. Several classrooms have been relocated and school has not been interrupted. He thanked the custodial staff for their hard work.

Superintendent Forsten noted that it was a teacher working on a Sunday who found this problem, and expressed appreciation for the staff who were working in the building.

Update on June calendar (last day of school)

Superintendent Forsten noted that the District now counts the number of instructional hours in an academic year, not days. Despite five snow days and four delayed openings this academic year, she said the District is still in a good place for instructional hours. She is determining with the Central Office team the last day of school.

Approval of bond sale

Business Administrator Jack Dunn noted that bond proceeds will be used for the steam conversion, technology upgrades, the CRTC childcare center renovation/ relocation, and buses. The bond sale occurred on March 1 and the District is supposed to be funded on March 14. In summary, Mr. Dunn noted that the District will receive \$11,360,000 that will be paid back, and \$726,812.25 that will be debt-free. The 20-year bond rate is 2.82%. There is a \$28,482 increase to the amount for next year's bond payment.

Ms. Higgins made the following motion:

Voted: that the sale of the \$11,360,000 General Obligation School Bonds of the District dated March 14, 2017 (the "Bonds"), to Roosevelt & Cross, Inc. at the price of \$12,086,812.25 and accrued interest is hereby approved and confirmed. The bonds shall be payable on March 1 of the years and in the principal amounts and bear interest at the respective rates, as follows:

Year	Amount	Interest Rate	Year	Amount	Interest Rate
2018	\$760,000	2.000%	2028	\$475,000	2.500%
2019	760,000	3.000	2029	475,000	2.750
2020	760,000	4.000	2030	475,000	3.000
2021	755,000	5.000	2031	475,000	3.000
2022	755,000	5.000	2032	475,000	3.000
2023	570,000	5.000	2033	475,000	3.000
2024	570,000	5.000	2034	470,000	3.125
2025	570,000	5.000	2035	470,000	3.250
2026	565,000	5.000	2036	470,000	3.250
2027	565,000	5.000	2037	470,000	3.250

Further Voted: that in connection with the marketing and sale of the Bonds, the preparation and distribution of a Notice of Sale and Preliminary Official Statement dated February 22, 2017, and a final Official Statement dated March 1, 2017 (the "Official Statement"), each in such form as may be approved by the District Treasurer, be and hereby are ratified, confirmed, approved and adopted.

Further Voted: that the Bonds shall be subject to redemption, at the option of the District, upon such terms and conditions as are set forth in the Official Statement.

Further Voted: that the District Treasurer and the Board of Education be, and hereby are, authorized to execute and deliver a continuing disclosure undertaking in compliance with SEC Rule 15c2-12 in such form as may be approved by bond counsel to the District, which undertaking shall be incorporated by reference in the Bonds for the benefit of the holders of the Bonds from time to time.

Further Voted: that all things heretofore done and all action heretofore taken by the School Board and its officers and agents in its authorization of the projects and their financing are hereby ratified, approved and confirmed.

Further Voted: that we authorize and direct the District Treasurer to establish post issuance federal tax compliance procedures in such form as the District Treasurer and bond counsel deem sufficient, or if such procedures are currently in place, to review and update said procedures, in order to monitor and maintain the tax-exempt status of the Bonds.

Further Voted: that each member of the School Board, the District Clerk and the District Treasurer be and hereby are, authorized to take any and all such actions, and execute and deliver such certificates, receipts or other documents as may be determined by them, or any of them, to be necessary or convenient to carry into effect the provisions of the foregoing votes.”

The Board voted 7-0 to approve the resolution as presented (moved by Ms. Higgins, seconded by Ms. Patterson).

Agenda Item 10. Proposed calendar of meetings

Superintendent Forsten discussed the proposed Board committee meetings for March and April.

Agenda Item 11. Public comment

There was no public comment.

Agenda Item 12. Adjournment

The Board voted 7-0 to adjourn (motioned by Ms. Higgins, seconded by Mr. Richards).

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Patterson, *Vice-President*