

**Carlisle School Committee**

Minutes

Tuesday, October 6, 2020

7:00 p.m.

Carlisle School Community Room  
and Zoom Remote Access

Present– School Committee: Christine Lear - Chair, Amanda Comperchio, Jack Huntress  
Present – School Committee via Zoom: Eva Mostoufi, Sara Wilson  
Present– School Administration: James O’Shea, Superintendent  
Present – School Administration via Zoom: Matt Mehler, Middle School Principal; Dennet Sidell, Elementary Principal; Anne Mahan, Business Manager; Nancy Anderson, Assistant to the Superintendent.

In order to adhere to social distancing guidelines, 5 members of the public were allowed access to this meeting in the Community Room at the Carlisle School. Per Governor Baker’s order suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A sec. 20, members of the public who could not access this meeting in the Community Room were able to access it via live stream at:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88687559758?pwd=Vm1uL1BoaGszVStrWVpqS3hLWlhNdz09>

Meeting ID: 886 8755 9758

Passcode: bYec9u

Public comments were posted via the chat box. Questions/Comments were read and answered by the School Committee via live stream.

**I. Call to Order**

Ms. Lear called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. and stated that the meeting was being recorded.

**II. Review/Approve Minutes**

- A. Meeting of September 30, 2020. Ms. Comperchio made a motion to approve the minutes of September 23, 2020; Mr. Huntress seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The following votes were taken in roll call: Comperchio, aye; Huntress, aye; Lear, aye; Mostoufi, aye; Wilson, aye.

**III. Information/Discussion Items**

- A. State and Local COVID Dashboard. Mr. O’Shea reviewed the established decision frameworks for changing instructional models at the School. There have been no cases in the school population in the past 14 days. Approximately 30 COVID tests have been taken by the school population with all negative results to date. There have been 23 cases of COVID in the Carlisle Community since the onset of the pandemic. The positivity rate in Massachusetts is 0.87%. Carlisle remains in the gray area.
- B. School Reopening. Mr. O’Shea reported that the School is in week two of Phase 2, where cohorts attend in a hybrid schedule for full days. Lunch and recess continue to go well. There has been a focus on cleaning and disinfecting bathrooms. This takes place

mid-day and in the evening, with wipe-downs of high touch surfaces along with traditional cleaning. We are short-handed in the facilities department and have posted an ad for another part time custodian. Phase 3 starts October 19, with a 4 ½ days a week full in-person program. We posted for a 5<sup>th</sup> grade social studies teacher, and continue to look at 7<sup>th</sup> grade classroom spaces to meet the goal of 6 feet distancing. There is a proposal for the CSC to bring back elementary students starting on October 13 for full time in person instruction. The proposal does not include middle school students because space challenges are still being addressed. It was noted that middle school students receive remote instruction on days they are not in school. Mr. O'Shea said such a change requires a CSC vote. Mr. O'Shea discussed the challenges of Phase 4, on December 9, when the Family Choice Remote (FCR) students can choose to return to school. He said that we have had a couple of students change from in-person instruction to FCR. The Social Justice Community Book Group meets Wednesday at 7:00 p.m. The next CSC meeting is Wednesday, October 14 at 7:00 p.m. Cross-Country and Field Hockey have started at the School. There was a Flu vaccination clinic for faculty and staff today. The School is working with the Town to ensure our finances and reimbursements are coordinated. Mr. O'Shea has a meeting with the Board of Selectmen to coordinate long-term maintenance and procurement functions among the Town departments and the School. He gave a shout-out to the custodians and maintenance teams for all of the work they have done and continue to do. We are in the process of scheduling the Special Education Subcommittee meetings which will be held monthly on Fridays. Even though the FY22 Town Budget is delayed, Mr. O'Shea will hold initial budget planning meetings in the next couple of weeks. Ms. Lear asked for discussion about the early full time in person return to school for elementary students. Ms. Comperchio said it makes sense for younger kids to return to school full time next week. Mr. O'Shea added that some people believe we should stick with the already established plan, but he didn't want to dismiss the concerns about kids being out of school for too long. The School wants to bring kids back to a safe and clean environment. Mr. Huntress added that he has kids in both schools, and he knows that middle school students are able to do more at home. He believes we have to do what's best to address the situation at hand, and voiced support of the plan because kids would be in a better place for learning. Ms. Wilson also thinks it's a good idea, she likes introducing elementary first and bringing in middle school later, it's a nice modification. She asked Mr. O'Shea if he knows of other schools that are in full time in person instruction. Mr. O'Shea answered that he met with superintendents last week, some had schools with full in person instruction, some had half day every day instruction, and they have had lots of success in bringing elementary students into school. He agreed that the sooner we can do it, the better it is for our kids. Ms. Mostoufi added that when we started the conversation about hybrid models, the goal was to make sure things ran as smoothly as possible, with procedures and expectations in place. She likes starting elementary first. She feels it gives a little breathing room to adjust to the change and to learn from the experience. She commended the teachers and staff for teaching kids in this difficult environment. She asked what the number of students would rise to if families chose to have their kids return to school. Jim said families are not allowed to move their children from FCR to in-person now, but they can on December 9. However, if students are in person now, it is easy to transition to FCR. Ms. Lear is very excited about getting the kids back to school. She added that the move for elementary students to return first is great; it

is hard to learn remotely when students are younger. Mr. Huntress agreed that there is a lot of logic to the move.

- C. School Committee Goal Setting. Mr. O'Shea shared a document that contained last year's Superintendent and School Committee goals, the 2017-2020 Carlisle Public Schools' District Objectives, the current Vision and Mission and Portrait of a Graduate, and the draft Superintendent Goals for 2020-2021. The District Objectives were discussed, and included many specifics under the main objectives of: 1. Provide a Rich, Rigorous and Relevant Curriculum; 2. Build a Community of Respect in a Safe and Healthy Learning Environment; and 3. Ensure Equity and Excellence in Learning. Mr. O'Shea then read the CPS Mission and Vision:

*Carlisle Public Schools cultivate balanced learners who can stand confidently with one foot in the field and the other in the future.*

*We create a nurturing and individualized experience for our students and highly value personal relationships. We prioritize social-emotional and physical health. We include a project-based approach to help students develop their knowledge, skills, and interests. We provide multiple ways for students to demonstrate understanding and mastery, de-emphasizing state standardized assessments. Students engage in the classroom and in the community, with educators, local experts, and Carlisle's natural resources to understand how their studies can be applied to civic life to help solve local and global problems. We break down barriers between traditional subjects and create opportunities for students to develop their understanding of the world and extend their perspective and thinking beyond our town borders.*

Mr. O'Shea then read the Portrait of a Graduate, which is a document that states what qualities Carlisle students aim to possess when they graduate from 8<sup>th</sup> grade. It states:

***A CPS GRADUATE IS:***

- *A resilient and adaptable **lifelong learner** who is empowered to pursue their interests.*
- *A self-aware and **reflective individual** who takes responsibility for their actions, outcomes and learning.*
- *A caring, kind and engaged **global citizen** who works to forward identified goals.\**
- *A creative and competent **problem solver**, appreciative of diverse thinking.*
- *An **independent thinker**, willing to question the status quo and weigh the evidence.*
- *An **effective communicator & collaborator** who can work with diverse teams, listen and articulate thoughts and ideas persuasively.*

*\*Current goals are aligned with UN Sustainable Development goals.*

Mr. O'Shea noted that this the new foundational document on which the School will build goals and plans. Mr. O'Shea then shared his draft Superintendent goals. They center on the work of making the new Vision and Mission a reality for Carlisle students. He also wants to ensure that student experience is the best it can be in the current climate. He is examining the curriculum and culture and wants to collaborate with educators and Carlisle citizens to address inherent systemic racism, and work to provide students with an educational experience that is actively antiracist and bias free.

Ms. Lear opened the discussion about CSC goals. Ms. Mostoufi shared that CCRSD has also just started talking about goals. A major theme is how the School responds to the pandemic. Ms. Wilson presented an overarching goal; provide the students with a safe and successful education experience that addresses health issues and educational equity. Mr. Huntress noted that nobody knows what the next 6-8 months will look like, but voiced support for orienting goals around COVID. It's also important to have competency in remote learning and technology. He would like to end this year with a documented plan so the incredible efforts people went through this year are in place if the School ever had to respond to a similar situation in the future. Ms. Wilson asked what are the things we have learned that we can incorporate into our regular practices. Ms. Mostoufi said that the situation generated innovation in the classroom and showed faculty and staff were quick to respond to challenges. She sees the importance of making sure all students feel included and are provided an equitable education. Ms. Lear would like to see the CSC explore bringing children from other towns into Carlisle; look at our population and make it more diverse, and give other kids opportunities. Mr. O'Shea talked about joining with other towns to service kids in other towns. Ms. Lear advocates forming a task force and exploring this idea. Ms. Mostoufi said that the School has already started implementing some of the ideas, getting kids connected to seniors as an example, but there may be other opportunities for learning that we could explore. Mr. O'Shea added that people who are involved in visioning and strategic planning take ideas and focus on them right away. He believes we can utilize the Carlisle Community to make other practices happen. He believes the more we can reflect on the vision, mission and portrait of a graduate and the themes, the better the educational experience will be for students. The work of the visioning committee supports our faculty and staff, who have been working on these themes. Mr. Huntress wants to propose goals that are attainable. There are many opportunities to align with the district goals, but he wondered how to align CPS with the Region and the expectation of incoming students to CCHS. Ms. Wilson said CCRSD is also currently looking at that topic. The Region met with Dorothy Presser from MASC, and asked how other regional districts communicate between school committees. People want to ensure there is equity among incoming 9<sup>th</sup> graders. At the region there is a push to have greater communication and alignment among FinComs, the Boston community, the select boards, and making sure everyone is informed. Last year there was a push for Carlisle families to have equity; they had previously been required to go to Concord to get information about CCHS. This year, CCHS brought the presentation to Carlisle. Ms. Mostoufi said this was great success for Carlisle families. If our families are well informed; it helps with the transition process. Ms. Wilson said the key is communication. Carlisle wants to maintain our own culture and autonomy, but

there is value in being informed. Mr. O'Shea cited other alignment with Concord, through the Rivers and Revolutions program at CCHS. The teachers from that program presented activities to Concord and Carlisle students and faculty. Ms. Wilson said we are moving in parallel directions but sometimes in different ways. She added that budget planning, the superintendent evaluation and communication are usual goal topics. Ms. Wilson said the CSC could provide leadership to push forward the vision while providing a safe environment; with equity in education. Ms. Lear said the pandemic was an equalizer because everything was new for all students; there were equal opportunities to learn and grow. Ms. Lear said the CSC had four goals last year. Ms. Comperchio said innovation could be tied into the goals. Mr. Huntress said goals should be SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-based). Last year Laurie Hunter used SMART goals. Ms. Comperchio said members have a lot of great ideas. Ms. Wilson reminded everyone that the Superintendent evaluation is from June to June, and Mr. O'Shea should be sure to include the many things he has accomplished and directed since June in the COVID environment. Mr. O'Shea will change the language in his goals to include this information. Ms. Lear asked the members to review the school documentation on district objectives, mission, vision, portrait of a graduate and the draft of the Superintendent goals. She kept notes and will send CSC draft goals to Ms. Anderson, who will send them to the members.

#### **IV. Members'/Committee Reports as Needed**

Special Ed Subcommittee: Ms. Comperchio said this group will start meeting on Fridays.

Highland Building Task Force: Ms. Lear said this group has not met yet.

BOH: Ms. Lear said this group is currently meeting about Halloween and will send information as soon as possible.

#### **V. Warrants**

A. Payroll Warrant #2021; \$396,066.22

B. Accounts Payable Warrant #2221; \$108,350.29

#### **VI. Action Item**

Ms. Comperchio made a motion to waive the usual practice of discussing an issue at one meeting and voting on it at the next; Mr. Huntress seconded the motion. The following votes were taken in Roll Call: Comperchio, aye; Huntress, aye; Lear, aye; Mostoufi, aye; Wilson, aye. Mr. Huntress made a motion to move the start date for elementary students to be full time in person to October 13, 2020; Ms. Comperchio seconded the motion. Ms. Mostoufi thanked everyone for their efforts. The following votes were taken in Roll Call: Comperchio, aye; Huntress, aye; Lear, aye; Mostoufi, aye; Wilson, aye.

#### **VII. Public Comments**

Cynthia Sorn, Rutland Street, wanted clarification that Kindergarten through Grade 4 students will return full time next week and Wednesday would be a half day. Mr. O'Shea confirmed that was correct and added that Wednesday, October 14 will be a half day for elementary, and middle school will be remote. She asked if the teachers feel ready for this change. Mr. O'Shea said many teachers in elementary support this change. Mr. Huntress said that he continues to talk to school committee members in other towns, where there are a lot of resources and intelligent

people. However, many problems exist in those towns and in the state, and he is very thankful to be in Carlisle and work so well together with the School and the CSC. He thanked everyone for working so hard.

**VIII. Adjourn Meeting**

Ms. Comperchio made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Mr. Huntress seconded the motion. The following votes were taken in Roll Call: Comperchio, aye; Huntress, aye; Lear, aye; Mostoufi, aye; Wilson, aye. The public meeting was adjourned at 8:39 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Nancy Anderson".

Nancy Anderson  
Assistant to the Superintendent