

**Carlisle School Committee**  
Minutes  
Wednesday, November 18, 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 School Principal; Lori Bruce, Director of Student Support Services; 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/83130775470?pwd=UGorQXNBVVNSK0tKTTIBU280dHlsdz09>

Meeting ID: 831 3077 5470

Passcode: 1A7k0.

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 7:03 p.m. and stated that the meeting was being recorded.

**II. Review/Approve Minutes**

- A. Meeting of November 4, 2020. Mr. Huntress made a motion to approve the minutes of November 4, 2020; Ms. Wilson seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The following votes were taken in roll call: Comperchio, aye; Huntress, aye; Lear, aye; Wilson, aye.

**III. Information/Discussion Items**

- A. State and Local COVID Dashboard. Mr. O’Shea reviewed the established decision framework on changing the School instructional model. It was noted that one case of COVID in School would trigger direct communication among DPH, BOH, DESE and the Superintendent. Over 100 COVID tests have been taken by the School community with all negative results. It was noted that there is little spread of the virus in the school community. Mr. O’Shea reviewed the dashboard data from November 12. The State test positivity rate is 2.29.
- B. School Update. Mr. O’Shea reported that members of the School community are quarantining due to close contacts with family and friends. He has asked the School

community to be vigilant about following the guidance. Mr. O'Shea reported that some schools are going remote after Thanksgiving for a couple of weeks up to the new year. The School has shared travel guidance with staff and families, and forms have been provided for people to indicate travel plans. The restricted state list continues to grow. It was noted that other districts that have had positive cases in School have not had to close the entire school or district. Carlisle has a plan to address positive cases should they arise. If people live in NH and work in MA, they are not subject to travel restrictions. On November 12, Governor Baker, Commissioner Riley and Secretary of Education Peyser visited CPS. They toured the school, stopped by classrooms and the Governor held a press avail. The leaders of the State recognized the hard work that Carlisle has put in to offer in-person instruction for students. There are concerns for when some FCR students return to School in December. With the additional students present, the School may have to modify the in-class physical distancing by 12-18 inches. Five feet of distancing may be necessary in some spaces. It was noted the School still has air purifiers, filters, daily health check-ins, increased cleaning and disinfecting, and plexiglass dividers in place. All of the precautions work together to allow in-person instruction. There will be a survey to the FCR families sent next week asking if students plan to return to School on December 9<sup>th</sup>. Data on these numbers will be presented at the December 2nd CSC meeting. It was noted that the School will strive to have the largest distance possible between students in classrooms. Ms. Mostoufi confirmed when the survey will be sent; Mr. O'Shea stated it will be sent out Monday with a return date of Friday. Mr. Huntress voiced appreciation for all of the work that has been done by Mr. O'Shea, the administrative team, faculty and staff. Ms. Lear added that parents are grateful. Ms. Mostoufi said she watched Charlie Baker's press conference; she was proud of the students, the School, the community, and the faculty. Carlisle in-person instruction shows how the community came together to listen to needs of families and balanced it with safety precautions. Budget planning has started. There was the annual meeting of Middlesex Superintendents and Police Chiefs hosted by District Attorney Marian Ryan. Fall athletics have ended. Thanks to all who made Cross Country and Field Hockey available for our students.

- C. Elementary Family Choice Remote Students' Return to School Plan: Dr. Sidell: Dr. Sidell said that he and Dr. Mehler meet weekly with grade level teams. The elementary teams discussed how to transition FCR students back to School in the best way. He noted that middle school has three trimesters and elementary school has two semesters. Elementary semester one doesn't end until late January. Dr. Sidell proposed a different timeline for elementary students to return to School; specifically that FCR students return after winter break. In this way, the students can say goodbye to their remote teacher. He added that January is a testing time for all kids and the returning students can test in person. Mr. Huntress asked if this proposal will be included in the survey to FCR families because families will have to plan. The change of date is not in the survey at the present time. Ms. Comperchio added that families might want to provide feedback on the change in return date for elementary students, especially if they have students in both elementary and middle school. Mr. Huntress asked if elementary students would have the option to return in December. Dr. Sidell said having two return dates would be difficult on many levels including that FCR and in-person teachers would have to collaborate on writing the report card for students. The transition would not be as smooth compared to a return in

January. Ms. Wilson asked if there would be another transition offered at the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> trimester for middle school and the answer was yes. She asked if there would there be a second point of reentry for elementary students in the spring. Dr. Sidell said there might be reasons for elementary students to return in the spring but plans have not yet been made for that. He added that the middle of the term for elementary students is in early April when conferences take place. Mr. O'Shea said the School will gather more information and make a decision on the return dates for students. Ms. Wilson added that Carlisle offers a robust remote program and also a full in-person program: families should be happy that the School offers the option to welcome some students back during the year. Mr. Huntress and Ms. Wilson said to do what's best for the school operationally and added a smooth transition is a logical way to proceed.

- D. Discussion about Metrics and Changing the Instructional Model. Mr. O'Shea said that public health professionals recommend not using hard metrics to determine in-person or remote status of schools. Should Carlisle use the metrics to inform discussions and make decisions on a case by case basis? Mr. O'Shea recommends we use the same established protocol for the State positivity rate as we do for the Town of Carlisle numbers. Ms. Mostoufi said the State is moving to look at the state positivity differently because people are not seeing spreads in schools. Mr. O'Shea said currently, if we hit 3% state positivity rate, we would go all remote. Through discussions about the Carlisle numbers, we have learned that increases in numbers may not impact CPS. We have also heard from the BOH and the public health nurse that this change makes sense. Ms. Lear said this procedure worked well when we hit 5 cases in Carlisle and that we should use our own logic and make school decisions with the professionals. Ms. Comperchio agreed that this approach makes sense. Mr. Huntress added that the framework was designed when we didn't have guidance. Ms. Mostoufi agreed that we should make local decisions. Ms. Wilson echoed the comments. We have public health supports, resources, information and options. She is comfortable not using the State metric to guide the School instruction mode. Ms. Lear asked for a motion to engage the health and school professionals if the state reaches a 3.0 positivity rate. Rob Misek asked to comment before the vote and was recognized. He asked what logic, data points and metrics will be used to inform the decision? Mr. O'Shea answered that when we discussed changing the metrics about the number of COVID cases in Carlisle, it didn't make sense to close school when cases in the community had no impact on our students. Through guidance with public health nurse and BOH, if we set hard metrics, we lose control over the decision making process. The State may reach a 3.2 positivity rate and we may have no new cases in Carlisle or no cases in our school, so does it make sense to close our doors? Other schools have had cases and isolated them while other students remained in school. Due to all of these factors, Mr. O'Shea doesn't believe the best decision is to stick with the one hard percentage we chose in August. Mr. Huntress added that we had no guidance in August; we decided we needed a framework, the number started at 5%, Susan Rask said let's be conservative and we settled on 3%. Mr. Misek asked if the School would consider the percentage combined with the School or Carlisle numbers. Mr. Huntress asked if Trish McGean could once again inform us if we should be concerned about reaching the threshold. Ms. Mostoufi added that Concord does not have a set number in their plan. Both towns have the benefit of working closely with public health officials in town. Kids came into school in Concord with COVID and it didn't spread because precautions are

working. Ms. Wilson said contact tracing and public health involvement has been strong; people are following guidelines and quarantining. She added that transmissions in Concord have been in homes or through sports. Ms. Comperchio sees a benefit to vote tonight on not shutting down our School when the State positivity rate hits 3%. Ms. Comperchio made a motion to call an emergency CSC meeting if the State of Massachusetts reaches a 3% positivity rate; Mr. Huntress seconded the motion. The following votes were taken in Roll Call: Comperchio, aye; Huntress, aye; Lear, aye; Mostoufi, aye; Wilson, aye.

- E. School Committee Goals. Mr. Huntress noted there were minor adjustments made to the CSC goals since the last meeting. There was added information about developing a plan for communication outreach with the Carlisle community. Ms. Comperchio made a motion to accept the CSC goals as presented; Mr. Huntress seconded the motion. The following votes were taken in Roll Call: Comperchio, aye; Huntress, aye; Lear, aye; Mostoufi, aye; Wilson, aye. Ms. Anderson will include the CSC goals in every packet.

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

Special Education Subcommittee: Ms. Comperchio said the next meeting of this committee will be on Friday and there is a joint meeting with SEPAC on Tuesday.

Budget: Mr. Huntress reported there was a meeting with the Town about the School budget. They discussed funding from the CARES act. Mr. O'Shea added that the Town heard from CCHS and Concord is looking for CARES act funding from Carlisle. The FinCom will start its budget process in January. Mr. O'Shea noted that the School will develop multiple budgets.

MASC Conference on November 7: Ms. Comperchio reported as the delegate representative from the CSC. She will forward information to members about the resolutions and other items that were discussed. Information about the conference is on the MASC website.

CCRS: Ms. Wilson reported that there was discussion about the resolutions, budget, goals, and policies. There were some student presentations including organizations in middle school and high school that address equity, diversity and cultural competency. She asked if there could be a meeting between middle schools in Concord and Carlisle through Zoom. Ms. Mostoufi added that they adopted a rubric for the Superintendent evaluation and are also discussing contracts.

Policy Subcommittee: Ms. Lear reported that this committee met yesterday and the next meeting is on December 1.

#### **V. Communications/Correspondence**

Ms. Lear acknowledged that members received an email from a parent advocating participation in the METCO program.

#### **VI. Warrants**

Ms. Mahan read the warrants:

- A. Payroll Warrant #2321; \$397,005.96
- B. Accounts Payable Warrant #2521; \$143,475.36
- C. Accounts Payable Warrant #2921; \$52,096.88
- D. Payroll Warrant #2721; \$388,907.82
- E. Accounts Payable Warrant #3221; \$54,817.27

#### **VII. Action Items**

Votes were taken earlier in this meeting.

### **VIII. Public Comments**

Carrie Patel asked about the MCAS resolution at the MASC meeting. Ms. Wilson explained that MASC advocates for certain things to happen in education but the opinion of the MASC does not necessarily change operational decisions from the State. Though MASC supported no MCAS testing for this school year, she also noted that some scholarships are tied to students taking the MCAS test. Cynthia Sorn asked Mr. O'Shea to explain what the "shared understanding for coming back from vacation" is. Mr. O'Shea explained that the travel form sent to faculty and staff said that if people are traveling to restricted states, they can take a 14 day quarantine or get tested before returning to MA. If people have a negative test, they do not have to quarantine. This is the state guidance. Mr. O'Shea noted that the forms were sent and he has not had any returned to date. If we get one or more forms, Lauren Sawyer will reach out to families and ask them to get tested a second time in the following 5-7 day range for the benefit of the School community. This is a change from the previously stated 14 day quarantine requirement for those returning from travel. It was noted that the best course of action is to limit exposure and don't travel at all.

### **IX. Adjourn Meeting**

Mr. Huntress made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Ms. Mostoufi 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. The public meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Nancy Anderson  
Assistant to the Superintendent

### List of Documents Viewed or Reviewed:

Draft Minutes of November 4, 2020

CSC Goals

Warrants

- Payroll Warrant #2321; \$397,005.96
- Accounts Payable Warrant #2521; \$143,475.36
- Accounts Payable Warrant #2921; \$52,096.88
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