

**Carlisle School Committee**

Minutes

Wednesday, October 16, 2019

Carlisle School Community Room, Carlisle Schools, 83 School Street, Carlisle, MA 01741  
7:00 PM

Present – School Committee: Christine Lear - Chair, David Model, Eva Mostoufi (remotely via telephone,) Sara Wilson, Shannon May Lavery.

Present – School Administration: James O’Shea, Superintendent; Matt Mehler, Principal; Lori Bruce, Director of Student Support Services; Susan Pray, Business Manager; Nancy Anderson, Assistant to the Superintendent.

Meeting Documents:

CSC Minutes from September 11, 2019	Energy Task Force Update	FY21 School Budget Proposal
WestEd Special Education Review	Discard List	Carlisle Public Schools District Objectives and Superintendent Goals
School Committee Goals	Youth Risk Behavior Survey	

**I. Call to Order**

Chair Christine Lear called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm. Ms. Lear announced that the meeting is being recorded. Ms. Mostoufi joined the meeting by telephone.

**II. Public Comment Period**

Ms. Lear welcomed everyone to the meeting, and asked if any members of the public had comments. There were no comments.

**III. Review/Approve Minutes**

Mr. Model made a motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of September 11, 2019; Ms. Lavery seconded the motion. All members present voted in favor of approving the minutes, with minor edits. At the meeting on November 13, 2019, the Committee voted again in roll call to approve these minutes. Ms. Lavery made a motion to accept the minutes of September 11, 2019; Ms. Mostoufi seconded the motion. The following votes were taken in roll call: Model, aye; Wilson, aye; Lear, aye; Mostoufi, aye; Lavery, aye.

**IV. Information/Discussion Items**

- A. Student Presentations: Project Based Learning. Dr. Mehler introduced 8<sup>th</sup> graders Elizabeth Lear and Charlotte Haeffner, who presented on the Cardboard Arcade Challenge. Dr. Mehler provided some background on this project-based learning

endeavor. The ideas for it originated in the book Launch. The framework for this project aligns with District goals; it involved collaboration, and resulted in students creating an intellectual challenge that was student centered. Charlotte Haeffner added that students created projects based off of Caine's arcade. Games were created during flex blocks. Eighth grade students interviewed younger students in different classrooms to get their input as the games were designed for each grade level. All games were built out of recycled materials. Eighth grade students could be game makers, prize makers, and event makers. Students used the 3D printer to make toy prizes. One student wrote a letter to Mosquito to help publicize the event. Games included air hockey which was powered by a hair dryer running beneath the surface. Eighth grade students set up, manned different shifts, and cleaned up. Dr. Mehler thanked all teachers for allowing the 8<sup>th</sup> graders to come to their classrooms to gather feedback and share ideas, as well as the 8<sup>th</sup> grade teaching team for supporting this endeavor. Dr. Mehler was pleasantly surprised at the great turnout for a Friday event from 3-7 p.m. There were lines at the games. Scott Triola, Hart Farm Road, commented that this was one of the most impressive student events he has seen. The room was packed with kids having a good time and it raised money. It was a tremendous example of how to use Flex blocks in the new Middle School schedule.

- B. Carlisle Education Foundation: Update on Performing Arts Studio Project. Susie Shaw, 105 Captain Wilson Lane, presented. Ms. Shaw gave a brief history of the Performing Arts Studio project, summarizing that the CEF came to School Committee last fall to fund a project that would convert the "mistake room" to a dedicated space for band. In coordination with the architect, TBA, the bids which were received were both extremely high. Sara Wilson added that the CEF and the School had researched the feasibility of the CEF gifting a fully renovated room to the town, which would allow the CEF to pursue the bids on their own. This approach was vetted through the Massachusetts Inspector General's Office and the District's counsel, and it was confirmed that the CEF can legally donate a renovated room to Carlisle Public Schools. Ms. Wilson is on both CSC and CEF, and she will step aside from her role on CEF during this project. Today Ms. Shaw is asking permission to donate a fully finished room to CPS. Ms. Lear commended Ms. Wilson on doing so much to protect the interests of the school and the CEF. She added that all stipulations laid out by the Inspector General's Office and district counsel would be adhered to. It was also noted that anyone involved in the project needs to go through the usual CORI process, and work within all frameworks of working in the school. Ms. Shaw assured that this would happen and noted that the plans are the same, just the execution is different. The school cannot donate any resources to the project. Mr. Model thanked the CEF for a creative approach to this project. It was added that people who specialize in municipal projects view this \$300,000 project as a small project. The project is targeted to start in February and take 6-8 weeks to complete. Contractors will adhere to the specifications and materials needed. Mr. Model moved to waive the usual practice of deliberating on a matter at one meeting and voting on the matter at the next meeting; Ms. Lavery seconded the motion. The following votes were taken by roll call: Lear, aye; Wilson, aye; Model, aye; Lavery, aye; Mostoufi, aye. Mr. Model moved to approve the CEF project as outlined as a gift to the school; Ms. Lavery seconded the motion. The following votes were taken by roll call: Lear, aye; Wilson, aye; Model, aye; Lavery, aye; Mostoufi, aye.

- C. Solar Project Update. Jonathan DeKock presented an update. The Planning Board met two weeks ago and approved the Ameresco solar canopy project for the school parking lot. The diagram from Ameresco involved removal of trees that would shade the canopies. The Planning Board allocated funds to improve drainage and replace larger trees with lower growing ones. The Building Commissioner said the location of the 4 to 5 pieces of electrical equipment had to be moved to the space between the parking lot and the bus area, due to the 40 foot setback rule. Mr. DeKock wanted to confirm that the new location is acceptable to the CSC, and added the Committee can ask for a rendering of the diagram of the new site design. Mr. DeKock gave an update on the Charging Stations. He has received multiple quotes. Eversource will not assign a contractor until an installer has been chosen. The CSC has to confirm use of the installer. Once a contractor is chosen, the timeline will be created. Mr. DeKock added that the Green Community requires that the stations are publicly accessible. In addition, it was confirmed that with either vendor, rates can be set differently for school staff and the public. Mr. Model expressed concern about loss of parking spaces but it was confirmed that parking spaces will not be lost. The new location for the charging station is at the end of the existing parking lot facing the tennis courts. Ms. Lavery prefers the new location, and was appreciative of the details in the report. Mr. DeKock confirmed that there would be no cost to the school because the Energy Task Force and Green Communities grants will fund this project. Going with Voltrek and Chargepoint is a better deal right now. Ms. Lavery moved that the School Committee moved forward with the car charging station project and select option 1, providing the Energy Task Force will fund the remainder of project; Mr. Model seconded the motion. The following votes were taken by roll call: Lear, aye; Wilson, aye; Model, aye; Lavery, aye; Mostoufi, aye.
- D. Budget Presentation. Jim O'Shea started by acknowledging that a good deal of time and energy went into developing the budget by principals, teachers, the administrative team, Scott Triola, FinCom liaison, and Barney Arnold from the Select Board, and he thanked all of those contributors for their work. Budget Goals include maintaining the multi-tiered system of support for students, maintaining optimal class sizes, and developing a budget aligned with School Committee goals and Town guidelines. The proposed budget is \$11,896,160; a 2.91% increase. Current enrollment was noted to be 609 students, which is at the top of what the school estimated for enrollment. Last year we had 34 sections general classroom sections in grades PreK-8, with a total of 69.2 FTEs. This year we have 68 FTEs, which includes teachers, special educators and specialists. Looking at next year we have a projected enrollment of 594-612 students, we are hoping to maintain 34 classroom sections, and have a total FTEs of 69. The School will present the Budget to the FinCom on October 28. There was a brief discussion of the practice of prepaying for some out of district tuitions, and the need for the district to have contingency funds available. This discussion would continue with the FinCom. It was noted that here were a variety of expenses that were not in the budget but arose during the year. In next year's budget, there are 2 placeholders for OOD placements. Mr. O'Shea highlighted the work the School Committee was doing with the FinCom and Board of Selectmen to assure transparency on how funds are being allocated. Ms. Mostoufi asked for clarification on special education transportation and whether or not we were able to budget for those costs precisely. Mr. O'Shea explained that the actual costs of CASE transportation would not be known until the start of the year. Ms. Mostoufi voiced a

preference that newly hired incoming teachers not be hired at the top of the scale, and that we should look for new hires to possess the skills and experience to teach students with a variety of abilities. Ms. Mostoufi explained that ideally the school would look for someone with special education background to bring some of those skills to a general ed classroom, to help all students access the curriculum. Mr. O'Shea also explained the District Comparison, which was included in the budget presentation PowerPoint. It was noted that Carlisle per pupil costs were in the middle of the comparison towns as are Administration and Instructional Leadership. Carlisle did have the largest percentage of their budget going to direct service to students. Mr. Model commended the good work by the team, and added that out of an almost \$12,000,000 budget, we have little control over much of it. This budget meets the three goals. Included also were long term capital needs such as technology replacement, fire alarm system upgrades, and tractor replacement.

- E. West Ed Presentation. Mr. O'Shea presented an overview of the WestEd review of Carlisle's Special Education programming. Mr. O'Shea explained that the study was a result of multiple conversations during last year, including the planning to bring on board a new director of Student Support Services. It was noted that Concord and CCHS had done a similar review with WestEd, and recommended the company. The methodology for the review included analyzing the continuum of services, quality of programs and service delivery models, assessing if provided services are effective in meeting IEP goals, noting if there a multi-tiered system of support in place for academic and social emotional needs of students, and seeing if skills gaps are closing for students receiving special education services. Included in the presentation and published in the report were the questions WestEd representatives asked to gather information. In its research WestEd reviewed documents, including IEPs, interviewed and observed staff, and assembled focus groups. Information gathered from focus groups is included in the report. Mr. O'Shea presented this report to staff last week, and one outcome he shared from that presentation was that staff felt uncomfortable about the specific focus groups' information being shared in the published report, as they felt in a small school community their anonymity might not be maintained. Focus group feedback composes 17 pages of a 93 page document. Mr. O'Shea felt it would not hinder anyone's understanding of the report if those focus group sections were omitted from the published report as all the relevant information would have been incorporated into the recommendations. Mr. O'Shea then shared a summarized version of the WestEd recommendations. Areas of concern included the current service delivery model, allocation and scheduling of staff, specialized instruction, use of time and use of data. Areas of strength included collaboration. Results in the Continuum of Services area highlighted that work with students in the Learning Center was more focused on class assignments. In Finance, it was noted that the Special Education Teacher to student with disability ratios are low compared with other Districts, and the paraprofessional to student ratios are significantly higher than average. In Student Results it was noted that students with disabilities are outperforming the rest of the state on standardized assessments. In Professional Development it was noted that teachers seek follow up training and coaching on Universal Design for Learning (UDL). Recommendations included: consider special education service delivery based on skill levels across grades, better define the role of paraprofessional, move consult meetings to increase student to

teacher contact time, strengthen UDL practices, provide training on writing IEPs and in multi-tiered supports, identify and purchase a universal screener and progress monitoring tool. Immediate next steps include working with Lori Bruce to identify areas for initial work and establishing long term goals.

- F. Special Ed Presentation. Lori Bruce, the Director of Student Support Services, shared a PowerPoint presentation (attached.) Since she arrived on July 1, 2019, Ms. Bruce has collected data on IEPs. She is establishing a plan of priorities and is analyzing current practices including the following: who is teaching students, how/what are they teaching, and how do staff communicate what they are teaching. She cited many positives about Special Education in Carlisle, including a skilled staff, a school community that values each other, a true sense of collaboration, support for paraprofessionals, and a great special education and general education rapport. Areas for discussion include: roles of the Speech and Language Pathologists (SLPs), co-teaching models, implementation of a gradual progression of support with more support at younger grades, small groups as students get older, and working toward students in a general ed classroom with supports. She is also looking at how paraprofessionals are supported and utilized, and supports the idea that there should be fewer one-on-one paraprofessionals. Professional Development (PD) is teacher driven, but administrators have to look at the bigger picture of making sure we are training staff in a wide variety of areas. Ms. Bruce stated that the school has a strong foundation, the students are making effective progress, and are engaged. She noted that students are working on executive functioning skills as a result of the new middle school schedule. She believes there could be increased use of technology in special education which could help with communication. Ms. Bruce scheduled an IEP training for her staff in September. She is reviewing every IEP, following legal guidelines, with the goal that IEPs will be consistent by the end of the year. She wants to make sure progress reports are data driven. For example, if an IEP states a student is meeting a goal 60% of the time, the document has to explain what meeting the goal looks like. She encourages her staff to have informal meetings and phone calls with parents. Her goals for the 2019-2020 school year include communicating that challenges are exciting rather than threatening, and creating IEPs that are comprehensive, data driven, consistent and equitable. The staff has been open and grateful for her help and insight. She encourages staff placement that supports strengths; she believes some staff with certain strengths should teach across grade levels. Ms. Bruce has plans to expand the Summer Program from three to five weeks. She sees the importance in investing in individuals, both staff and students, so that they can succeed as part of a larger group. Mr. Model voiced disappointment with administration and its unwillingness to address recommendations head on. He acknowledged that a lot of money is spent on Special Education, and the school received a lot of data through the process of the WestEd Special Education review. He feels there should be an embracing of the data that is being provided; otherwise the school is doing our community a disservice. Mr. O'Shea stated that he and Ms. Bruce both feel the report has identified known areas on which to work, and that the district is looking to move forward in addressing these recommendations in a collaborative way with the faculty. Mr. Model expressed his position that the report should be published as there are issues to deal with right now. Ms. Bruce spoke about work she has done to date; she is analyzing how students are learning, met with students, attended consults, and analyzed IEPs. Ms. Bruce reinforced that change doesn't happen

without recognizing what you do well and building upon it. Mr. Model wished the special education presentation had been available prior to the meeting, along with Ms. Bruce's analysis of what she is doing in the Special Education department. Mr. Model would like to see that the major areas in Special Education that needed improvement were identified; he did not feel that was clear in the presentation. Mr. Model, noting he had two children that were on Individualized Educational Plans (IEPs), stated that we don't do special education well here; Ms. Bruce disagreed; Mr. Model said that we could do better. Ms. Mostoufi added that she has great appreciation for what the school does for the large student body in special education; the focus on inclusion, and the fact that kids feel good about coming to school regardless of a disability. She wanted to know if there is a way to include more of the parent voice to help the school be more strategic on using resources. Ms. Bruce shared that SEPAC will put out a parent survey and how parents can be more involved; she might establish a focus group. Ms. Mostoufi asked if teachers could be directed to professional development so they could learn ways to help students get the resources they need in the classroom. Ms. Bruce said that there has already been Universal Design for Learning training for teachers, there was a training for paraprofessionals and there is another training this coming Tuesday. Certain pieces of professional development are already happening. Ms. Bruce will work with Special Educators and Administration on visioning for the Special Education department. Ms. Wilson asked if Carlisle would talk with Concord about what its WestEd report said and what Concord did as a result of the report findings. Ms. Bruce stated that she and Mr. O'Shea met with the Concord Superintendent and the Concord Director of Student Services and they will follow up again. In summary, Ms. Lear asked what do we do from here. Mr. Model advocated that the Committee should think about this for a month and come back next month to discuss it again, because Special Education is one of the Committee goals. Mr. Model stated that the special educators are outstanding, but he doesn't want the school to just continue to do more of what we're doing. Ms. Mostoufi commented that Carlisle is very cutting edge, and this is a unique opportunity to work together to help create even better programming. We have great teachers and administration and the school is wonderful for our kids. Ms. Wilson asked if we should look at families that leave Carlisle and analyze why? Mr. O'Shea will look into this and report back to the Committee. Mr. O'Shea asked to extract the 18 pages on the report that identified staff comments. Mr. Model felt that was acceptable; he wanted the substance of the report published. Mr. Model added that he appreciates that certain things are already being done in Special Education. Ms. Sorn, Rutland Road, asked Ms. Bruce when the next program review of Special Education was scheduled; it is in 2021.

- G. Discard List. Sue Pray explained that Scott Heffner, Network Manager, submitted this list, which includes devices such as iPads that don't support upgrades. There is a need to dispose of items for storage reasons. Last year a parent, Ms. Rosca, donated some of our discarded equipment. Ms. Lavery asked how this list compares to our normal purge. Ms. Pray answered that it is roughly the same discard every year. There are less and less computers discarded as they get incorporated into MCAS carts. Mr. Model moved that the School Committee waive the usual practice of discussing an issue at one meeting and voting on it at the next; Ms. Lavery seconded the motion. The following votes were taken by roll call: Lear, aye; Wilson, aye; Model, aye; Lavery, aye; Mostoufi, aye. Ms. Lavery moved to approve the Discard List; Ms. Wilson seconded the motion. The

following votes were taken by roll call: Lear, aye; Wilson, aye; Model, aye; Lavery, aye; Mostoufi, aye.

- H. Superintendent Goals. Mr. O'Shea summarized that the district objectives were reviewed and discussed at the September meeting. He has modified the section under Objective 3, Tiered Supports, to include Tier III. After feedback from the CSC, Mr. O'Shea also made changes to his goals to reflect the need to manage grade level fluctuations and support the new Director of Student Services.
- I. School Committee Goals. It was noted that the Vision and Innovation goals are more detailed. Mr. O'Shea reported that there were a number of community members in his Visioning meetings. It was thought that the visioning goal could be sharpened. A School Committee meeting will be scheduled to discuss visioning, at which members will reflect on questions, and come to a consensus on what they would like to see as outcomes. There will be a meeting of the School Committee to discuss visioning on Wednesday, October 30 at 7:30 a.m.
- J. Liaisons: Master Planning Steering Committee, Municipal Facilities, Community Center, EDCO Board Member and Advisory Member. This discussion was deferred to the October 30 meeting.
- K. Youth Risk Behavior Survey. This discussion was deferred to the October 30 meeting.
- L. Special Education Counsel. This discussion took place in Action Items.

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

There were no communications circulated.

#### **VI. Superintendent's Report**

This discussion was deferred.

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

This discussion was deferred.

#### **VIII. Warrants**

- A. Payroll Warrant #1820; \$384,420.34
- B. Accounts Payable Warrant #2020; \$127,726.32
- C. Accounts Payable Warrant #2320; \$69,078.06  
Additional Warrants added after agenda was posted:
- D. Accounts Payable Warrant #2620; \$52,351.35
- E. Payroll Warrant #2120; \$389,292.18
- F. Payroll Warrant #2520; \$394,439.76

#### **IX. Action Items**

- A. Vote Special Education Counsel. Mr. O'Shea reported that on September 26, 2019, Lori Bruce, Ms. Lear and Mr. O'Shea met with attorney Mary Ellen Sowyrda from Murphy, Hesse, Toomey and Lehane. The firm had sent a legal services proposal to the School. The school administration recommends hiring Ms. Sowyrda. Mr. Model moved that the

Committee appoint Mary Ellen Sowyrta as the Special Education Counsel for the Carlisle School District; Ms. Lavery seconded the motion. The following votes were taken in roll call: Lear, aye; Wilson, aye; Model, aye; Lavery, aye; Mostoufi, aye. The motion passed.

- B. Vote on EDCO Board Member and Advisory Member.** Mr. O'Shea explained that Carlisle is a member of EDCO collaborative, and each member district can appoint a voting Board member and an advisory member to the committee. Mr. O'Shea is willing to serve in both roles. Ms. Wilson moved that we appoint Jim O'Shea as the Board Member and Advisory Member to EDCO; Ms. Lavery seconded the motion. The following votes were taken in roll call: Lear, aye; Wilson, aye; Model, aye; Lavery, aye; Mostoufi, aye.

## **X. Citizens' Comments**

Carrie Patel, Tophet Road asked how the students who saw the Math Specialist last year are getting their math instruction this year. Mr. O'Shea answered that students that need math support will receive it. Last year we had the Math Specialist and a tutor servicing students. This year we have a tutor giving tier II math support to students. He confirmed that there was not a specific group receiving services, rather ongoing assessments and services are provided as needed. Cynthia Sorn, Rutland Street, asked when will WestEd report be released. Mr. O'Shea answered that it would likely be released on Friday.

## **XI. Adjourn Meeting**

Mr. Model moved to adjourn the meeting then withdrew his motion Ms. Lavery made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Ms. Wilson seconded the motion. The following votes were taken by roll call: Lear, aye; Wilson, aye; Model, aye; Lavery, aye; Mostoufi, aye.

The public meeting was adjourned at 10:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Nancy Anderson  
Assistant to the Superintendent

# Special Education at Carlisle Public Schools



## Question?

What in the West Ed  
Report resonates with  
our experience?

## How did West Ed assess our effectiveness?

### West Ed Review

- Continuum of Services
- Professional Development
- Multi-Tiered Support
- Finance
- Student Results/Outcomes

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## Personal Outlook

### Essential Questions

- Where should we put our energy?
  - Who is teaching?
  - How/What are we teaching?
  - How do we communicate what we are teaching?

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# Who is Teaching?

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## Who is Teaching?

### POSITIVES:

- ◆ Experienced and talented staff
- ◆ Community that values each other
- ◆ Leaders willing to train newer staff
- ◆ Paraprofessionals who are supported
- ◆ Positive rapport between special and general education

### AREAS FOR DISCUSSION:

- ◆ Role of the SLPs
- ◆ Co-Teaching Model
- ◆ How Paraprofessionals are supported and utilized
- ◆ Professional Development

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# How and What are we Teaching?

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## How and what are we teaching?

**What are we doing right and how can we build upon that positive foundation?**

- ◆ Effective progress
- ◆ Student engagement
- ◆ Executive Functioning
- ◆ Wrap around support
- ◆ Specialized Instruction
- ◆ Groupings both in and out of the classroom
- ◆ Markers for curriculum choices
- ◆ Increased use of technology

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## How do we communicate what we do!

9



## How can we increase communication?

**IEPs/Progress Notes**

**Email**

**Informal Meetings**

**Phone calls**

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## Goals for 19-20 school year!

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In a growth mindset, challenges are exciting rather than threatening. So rather than thinking, oh, I'm going to reveal my weaknesses, you say, wow, here's a chance to grow. -Carol Dweck



## Moving Forward

### District Goals:

- ◆ Provide a Rich, Rigorous and Relevant Curriculum
- ◆ Build a Community of Respect and Inclusion in a Safe and Healthy Learning Environment
- ◆ Ensure Equity and Excellence in Learning

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## Our To-Do List:

- ◆ IEPs that are comprehensive, driven by data, consistent and equitable
- ◆ Staff placement that supports strengths not willingness
- ◆ Summer Program
- ◆ Investing in individuals so that they can succeed as part of a larger group

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# Thanks!

## Any questions?

You can reach me at [lbruce@carlisle.k12.ma.us](mailto:lbruce@carlisle.k12.ma.us)

