

Highlights from the School Committee Meeting – attended by Sharon Carroll

CPS and CCRSD Joint Meeting February 23, 2010

Solar Panel Project at Willard

The Town of Concord has been awarded the Energy Efficiency and Block Grant in the amount of \$150,000 for use in installing solar panels at the Willard School. An additional \$100,000 has been donated from the Sawyer Trust and \$50,000 has been contributed by Concord Municipal Light Plant to cover the cost of installation. Any energy savings will be reflected in Willard's energy bill. It is expected to go online in September 2010. A question was raised about the annual cost for maintenance. It was noted that these costs are unknown as this is new technology. CPS and the CMLP have entered into a "Memorandum of Agreement" regarding ongoing maintenance work.

Race to the Top Initiative

Concord is one of 256 districts in Massachusetts committed to participate in the MA. Race to the Top Initiatives. Massachusetts and 39 other states, plus The District of Columbia are awaiting to see who will be awarded funding in April. Fifteen states will get funding.

Recognitions

Robin Cicchetti and Carla Sechman both received the Golden Foundation Award for Excellence in Education. It is a regional award. CCHS has 2 of the 5 recipients.

Two CCHS students, Carolina Infante and Chenara Seepersad both received Posse Scholarships which will fund 4 years of college for each recipient.

Freshman and Sophomore English Program Review

The CCHS English Department chairperson, Rebecca Loprete along with Kathy Codianne and Peter Badalment presented a progress report on the curriculum review for the freshman and sophomore English program. The essential questions they asked of their program were a) are we meeting the needs of all students, b) what are the components of a guaranteed, viable program, and c) what is rigor? The process included a review of the current curriculum and a review of the curricula from other DCL schools. They are currently completing the work of curriculum mapping, which is a method for ensuring that the curriculum is consistent and coherent. In addition, they took a look at "rigor." Rigor does not mean "more work." Mr. Badalment quoted the definition of rigor according to Tony Wagner as being "explicit teaching and assessing of skills that are necessary for learning in school, the workplace and life." CCHS faculty members are working to define these skills in the form of the following outcomes:

- Global Citizenry
- Critical Thinking
- Independent and Passionate Learner
- Engaged
- Communication and Collaboration
- Foundational Skills

The progress to date for the Freshman English Program Review includes identifying common texts and projects, one major unit has been mapped and they have developed a common criteria for assessing analytical writing. The goal is to ensure that students cover the same material and have similar experiences across all sections of Freshman English.

New for next year, Freshman English will be reorganized into Honors and College Prep ability groups. The Honors sections will require students to be independent learners, advanced readers and confident writers. The College Prep sections will accommodate students who work better with teacher support who have good reading skills but may have writing skills that are still developing. Since this is new, the English Department acknowledges that assessing students for placement could be challenging and is working with Middle School faculty to communicate expectations. They anticipate that there may be a need to move students between levels if they find that they are not placed properly.

Budget Update

Budgets and Town Meeting Articles will be presented to the Concord Finance Committee on 2/24. It was noted that current budget levels will not require an override in Concord or Carlisle.

New Thoreau Principal

Diana Rigby announced that Kelly Clough has been hired as the new principal of the Thoreau school. The School Committee will officially welcome her at the March 9th meeting.

Spring Performance Report

The Administration and Janet Friedman are in the process of writing the Performance Report for Spring 2010. It will be published before Town Meeting. The theme is 21st Century Learning and Global Education.