

JOINT SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

October 27, 2009

Highlights from the School Committee – attended by Anne Irza-Leggat

As a joint meeting this focused mostly on the high school (CCHS)

The Library

Librarian, Robin Cicchetti was recognized for the work she has done with her staff as they learn more refined search techniques and other ways to utilize technology. Additionally, the new layout of the library allows for both quiet individual study and student groups working together.

District Sportsmanship Awards

Barry Haley, Athletic Director, has been awarded the 2009 MIAA (Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association) District A Sportsmanship Award and the prize will be presented at Gillette Stadium, November 20. These awards are presently annually at the MIAA Sportsmanship Summit to one school in each of the eight athletic districts within the MIAA structure. District sportsmanship awards are chosen by the athletic directors from the member schools in each district. This is a great tribute to the coaching staff and the players.

Virtual High School

Virtual High School is an on-line learning program that serves 1000s of kids around the US and the world. Counseling Department Chair, Brad McGrath, and Math Teacher, Peter Atlas gave a presentation about how it is being used at CCHS. Peter is currently teaching a Virtual High School class of AP level BC Calculus. He has 26 students from the US, Viet Nam, and Nicaragua. This allows as many CCHS students to sign up for classes that range from poetry and AP English, to pre-veterinary medicine (among many others). Currently ~17 CCHS students are taking advantage of this opportunity. There is a wide cross-section of the student body using the program and by and large they are flourishing.

The program allows kids to take classes that are not available at CCHS, it is a way for students with physical or emotional issues that prevent them from attending school physically to take classes, and it exposes students to a way of learning (on-line learning) that is certain to be useful to them in the future.

As this is the first year the program is still being evaluated. Students' grades from these classes do not factor in to their over-all GPA (similar to summer school classes). Diana Rigby commented that her hope is that in 5 years all students will have had some experience with on-line learning.

Concord-Carlisle Youth Baseball Scoreboard at Ripley

Concord-Carlisle Youth Baseball was seeking support from the school committee to solicit advertising sponsors for the scoreboard, which would help offset its maintenance costs. The preference was for one sponsor annually.

Budget

The Budget was discussed including Concord's Finance Committee thoughts and a representative from the Carlisle Finance Committee who wanted to see whether there is any place that money can be saved. The budget is already running extremely lean and most of it is contractually committed so there is not a lot (if any) room for further cutting without affecting the quality of the educational program.

MCAS

Kathy Codianne & Principal, Peter Badalament presented 10th Grade MCAS results at CCHS.

Students did very well. 96% were Advanced or Proficient in English Language Arts. 88% were Advanced or Proficient in Math and there was significant improvement in the number of students considered "Advanced."

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) is an assessment of the school (and individual groups within the school). Because CCHS does so well it is a challenge to improve every year. This year SPED did not meet the AYP goals and the school is focusing on what the specific problems could be, including the test situations and other factors.

Efforts to close any technology gap students may experience is being addressed through a program that refurbishes computers no longer being used at CCHS and getting them to students who needs them.

Students who scored at the "Needs Improvement" level in 10th grade now have to take math in both 11th and 12th grade.

There were almost no failing students (no more than 3) and in the case of the students who had failed they passed the retest. No one has been denied graduation at CCHS as a result of the MCAS.

Parent Survey

Results were very positive with parents pleased to be asked their opinion and eager to find ways (which some shared) to interact with the school more. All points are being considered by the administration to see where attention should be paid.

General points were

- Program is positive and adequately rigorous in all five subjects and sports
- Amount of homework is about 2-3 hours a night

- Students are well prepared for college and career by CCHS
- Some felt that the English curriculum in the 9th and 10th grade should be more rigorous and that more AP level courses should be offered
- While people recognized the building is OLD the facilities comments were largely positive though the level of cleanliness in the bathrooms was an issue – and this is being addressed.

2009 Technology Conference

Diana Rigby was scheduled to attend and a CCHS Math teacher was presenting at the MassCUE (Massachusetts Computer Using Educators) and Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents (M.A.S.S.) joint Technology Conference 2009 at the end of October.