

Town of Canton  
Canton School Committee Minutes of the Meeting of January 20, 2022  
Canton High School Distance Learning Lab

Members of the public were also able to view a live stream of the meeting via <http://cantoncommunitytv.org/>

- A. Call to Order: The meeting of the School Committee is called to order at 5:08 pm. Motion to go into Executive Session made by Nichola Gallagher to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining with Unit A and Unit E. Seconded by Maureen Moran. Chair Merenda declared that an Open Meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the body. It was voted by roll call 4-0.
- |                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| Kristian Merenda   | yea   |
| Nichola Gallagher  | yea   |
| Maureen Moran      | yea   |
| Kendall O’Halloran | yea   |
| Laura Arboleda     | yea (arrived remotely at 5:13 pm, arrived in person at 5:32 pm) |

- B. Open Session: Chair Merenda called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

Present are:

Kristian Merenda  
Nichola Gallagher  
Maureen Moran  
Kendall O’Halloran  
Laura Arboleda

Also Present:

Derek Folan, Interim Superintendent  
Stephen Marshall, Director of Finance and Operations  
Colleen Hutchinson, Recording Secretary  
Public  
Press  
Staff

- C. Student Member Report and Student Advisory Committee Introductions: Hannah Wang reported on the new CHS DECA chapter. The team made it to States. Hannah gave an update on her current CHS classes and college work.

Mr. Sperling introduced the newly elected, non-voting member of the School Committee and Student Advisory Committee member, Ms. Danica Seto, grade 10. Mr. Sperling shared some background information on Danica.

- D. Interim Superintendent’s Report:

**Highlights**

Professional Development (PD) Day: Friday, January 14 was an early release day for staff to participate in professional development activities. Interim Superintendent Folan shared PD activities that took place across the district.

**Events/Acknowledgements This Month**

Martin Luther King Jr. Day: Monday, January 17, 2022 we honor Dr. Martin Luther King for his courageous and important work and words around equality, equity and kindness. Leading up to the holiday, our staff integrated lessons around MLK and his impact on today.

**Updates**

PBL Showcase: On Wednesday and Friday of last week, our 6th grade students participated in a showcase to share their ideas about what an Ideal Middle School is as they answered the driving question: How can we, as a design team, create an environment that is more learner-centered.

**Champions of Excellence**

National English Honor Society: New members of the National English Honors Society were inducted on January 13, 2022. Thank you to CHS English Department Head Rebecca Ashley and the CHS staff for coordinating the ceremony and recognizing the high achievement and dedication of the students.

CHS Quiz Bowl: The CHS Quiz Bowl team, under the direction of Social Studies Teacher Joel Chamberlain, features students Alison Ye, Levana Le, Tiffany Cheung, and Hannah Wang. In early November, these CHS students participated in a Sunday virtual qualifying round against roughly 70 schools in Massachusetts. The Bulldogs finished in the top 16 scores and qualified for the spot in the televised Quiz Bowl Tournament.

JFK CAPT Event: Author and illustrator of the New York Times bestseller bat series and 2019 Caldecott Honor winning picture book *The Rough Patch*, Mr. Brian Lies, visited JFK students today. Thank you to the JFK CAPT for coordinating this event.

Luce Winter Concert: Congratulations to the Luce Chorus for a very successful winter concert. Thank you to Ms. Kidd and Ms. Joncas for preparing students.

**Important Dates and Events**

Jan. 28-29	Luce School Musical, CHS Auditorium, 7:00 pm
Feb. 3	School Committee Meeting, CHS DLL, 6:00 pm
Feb. 11	PreK-12 Early Release, Professional Development
Feb. 11-12	JFK Musical, CHS Auditorium, 7:00 pm
Feb. 17	School Committee Meeting, CHS DLL, 6:00 pm

E. Teaching and Learning Report: Ms. Shannon, Ms. Rooney and GMS Math Teacher, Ms. Cummings presented proposed GMS and CHS Math course updates. The goal of the course updates and Math Program Review is to provide more flexibility and options for students. Various course sequences were shared. All courses are aligned with grade-level standards, and all domains are taught, including in advanced courses. There will be new course options to accelerate learning for students in grades 9-11, and increased access to advanced courses in grade 12. There will be a redesign of current courses to address all standards. Information will be shared with site councils. Recorded information will be shared with families prior to course selection. Meetings with Student Services teams will take place to design additional supports. Student representative Seto shared her thoughts on the proposals. Members asked how the math pathway information would be communicated to current seventh-, eighth- and ninth-graders, including how these students could take advantage of the new pathway. Members also recommended multiple types of outreach to students and families, including teachers discussing the pathway in class, in addition to the recorded information.

F. Unfinished Business:

1. FY23 Budget Discussion: Mr. Marshall continued the discussion regarding the FY23 Budget. Mr. Marshall is going through the process of gathering job descriptions for proposed new positions that are in the budget per School Committee policy GCA and will share them next week. The Committee will be asked to vote at the next meeting. All budget documents can be found on the School Committee webpage under Meetings/Agendas/Minutes.

G. New Business:

1. District Calendar Task Force (DCTF) Update: Co-Chairs of the DCTF, Ms. Gallagher and Ms. Hung provided an update on the approach and activities of the Task Force. Topics considered during the initial stages of developing the District calendar are: scheduling, holidays, wellness, values and professional development. Task force members shared the values and priorities behind creating the calendar. Stakeholders' feedback will be the foundation for continued prioritization and development of the calendar. Ms. Moran recommended that membership of the DCTF be expanded to include current Canton High students, as well as a staff member from the ASFCME unit. A calendar recommendation will be brought forth at the 2nd meeting in March. Recommendations will be for both the school year 2022-2023 and 2023-2024.
2. COVID-19 Vaccination Rate Update and CPS Protocol Review: Mr. Folan shared that CHS is currently at approximately a 76% vaccination rate. Mr. Folan and Nurse Leader Pushard reviewed current CPS protocols which are directly in line with the DESE/DPH protocols, and were adopted by the Committee on 1/6/22. Protocols were reviewed with the BOH and the District Physician. One significant change to the protocols is if a student is unvaccinated, is a close contact, and chooses not to test, then the quarantine period is 7 days of quarantine, as opposed to 5 days, the individual can return on day 8. Staff and students receive clearance from the nurse or pediatrician prior to returning to school. There was a lengthy discussion about self-attestation, and how to best monitor symptoms of quarantined students and staff prior to providing clearance for return. Administrative staff will continue to discuss in an effort to improve the understanding of the communication flow and response, post diagnoses. The Committee encouraged families to participate in pool testing. All protocol documents can be found on the website under the School Committee tab - meeting/agendas/minutes and on the District homepage.

**Motion to approve the CPS Protocols for Responding to COVID 19, updated 1/14/22, as written:** Nichola Gallagher

**Seconded:** Laura Arboleda

**Vote:** 5-0

Mr. Folan shared the New Testing Option document which Gov. Baker, the Department of Public Health (DPH) and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) introduced. This option shifts away from the close contact tracing and calls for a focus on symptomatic testing and puts an At-Home Rapid Antigen Tests in the hands of all staff and students/families. The adoption of the new COVID Testing Option is highly recommended by DPH and DESE, and it is supported by the Canton Board of Health, the Nursing Team and Dr. Muse. Mr. Folan recommended that Canton Public Schools adopt the new COVID Testing Option, which starts the week of January 24 for staff and January 31 for students. Members stressed the importance of consistent communication pertaining to protocol changes and this new testing option to improve the coherency and consistency of information. Protocols would remain as written until all tests were received in the District.

**Motion to approve District's application to apply for the DESE New Testing Option:** Nichola Gallagher

**Seconded:** Laura Arboleda

**Vote:** 5-0

3. Policy Review: The Face Coverings policy (EBCFA) was presented for review and vote of approval. Minor changes were shared (i.e. dates). The draft policy is available for review on the School Committee webpage under meeting/agendas/minutes.

**Motion to approve policy EBCFA as written:** Nichola Gallagher

**Seconded:** Laura Arboleda

**Vote:** 5-0

4. Family Engagement Survey Results: Ms. Shannon shared the results of the Fall Family Engagement Survey. 751 families responded to the survey. Overall, the responses were very positive. Strengths, areas for growth, and next steps were shared. Survey questions centered around: overall experience, core values, safety, communication, teaching and learning, school culture and student well-being, technology and transportation.
5. Substitute Pay: Mr. Marshall presented a proposed adjustment to the substitute pay rate as of 1/24/22 from \$86 to \$95 for non-licensed substitute teachers and from \$94 to \$105 for licensed or previously licensed teachers. Also proposed was an increase on 9/1/22 from \$95-\$100 for non-licensed substitute teachers and from \$105-\$110 licensed or previously licensed teachers.

**Motion to approve the proposed adjustment to substitute pay:** Nichola Gallagher

**Seconded:** Maureen Moran

**Vote:** 5-0

6. Bus Driver Pay: Mr. Marshall presented a proposed adjustment to bus driver pay rates from \$27.74 to \$28.71 per hour.

**Motion to approve the proposed adjustment to bus driver pay:** Nichola Gallagher

**Seconded:** Maureen Moran

**Vote:** 5-0

H. Public Comment: None

- I. Director of Finance and Operations Report: Mr. Marshall discussed the Cole Harrington contract. In February of 2020, a contract was awarded. The contract has renewable terms. The Committee does not need to vote on renewable terms, only the original contract. The renewal agreement is due, Mr. Marshall will review it with Administration, then bring it to the Committee for review in the coming months.

J. Consent Agenda:

**Motion to approve the consent agenda outlined below:** Nichola Gallagher

**Seconded:** Maureen Moran

**The Consent Agenda passed unanimously:** 5-0

**The following items were included in the Consent Agenda:**

Regular Session Minutes: January 6, 2022, January 12, 2022 Workshop

Executive Session Minutes: January 12, 2022

Warrant: January 21, 2022

K. Sub-Committee, Task Force, and Liaison Post Updates:

- CCPC meeting Monday and last round of requests were reviewed at the last meeting
- CAPT leadership meeting was held yesterday. Mr. Folan reviewed the new testing options with them. CAPT spending/funding was also discussed in terms of how CPS can help offset some costs moving forward.

L. Other Business: None

- M. Future Business: Next School Committee meeting will be held Thursday, February 3, 2022, @ 6:00 pm in the Distance Learning Lab at CHS.

