

Town of Canton
Canton School Committee Minutes of the Meeting of April 16, 2020
Remote Meeting due to COVID-19 School Closure
Google Meet Streaming

- A. Call to Order: The meeting of the School Committee is called to order at 6:36 pm. Motion to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing strategy with respect to collective bargaining, Custodian/Maintenance Unit Grievance made by Maureen Moran. It was voted by roll call 4-0.

Reuki Schutt	yea
Nichola Gallagher	yea
Kristian Merenda	yea
Maureen Moran	yea

- B. Open Session: Vice-Chair Schutt called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm by roll call vote.

Remotely Present are:

Kristin Mirliani - Absent

Nichola Gallagher - yea

Reuki Schutt - yea

Maureen Moran - yea

Kristian Merenda - yea

Also Remotely Present:

Dr. Jennifer Fischer-Mueller, Superintendent

Barry Nectow, School Business Administrator

Colleen Hutchinson, Recording Secretary

Julie Shore, Director of Technology and Digital Learning

Debbie Rooney, Director of Teaching and Learning

Debra Bromfield, Director of Student Services

Michelle Gobbi, Business Analyst

- C. Public Comments/Questions: Vice-Chair Schutt read one public comment email.

1). If the committee is likely to determine that students will continue distant learning for the remainder of the school year, it would be helpful for the families to know this sooner rather than later. I would encourage the committee to have that discussion ASAP so that families can make appropriate plans.

Thanks.

Gail McWhorter

Vice-Chair Schutt explained that we are under orders by the Governor regarding the current school closure. We will continue to follow guidance from and work in conjunction with the Governor and DESE Commissioner with regard to further school closings.

D. Superintendent's Report:

COVID-19 Updates

On April 7, the negotiations subcommittee of the School Committee reached a new agreement with the CTA that ended Phase 1 of the school closures and launched us into Phase 2. This agreement will carry us through the remainder of the closure and the reopening of our schools.

The most significant shift of Phase 1 into Phase 2 is from *optional* learning opportunities for students to *expected* student engagement in remote learning experiences. Within this shift, we remain committed to staying connected to each and every child in the Canton Public Schools and doing everything we can to provide all students with what they need in a very different context - from food and devices to ongoing connections with school staff and peers, to learning and feedback that maintains and promotes student growth.

Also due to our schools being closed, April vacation is canceled and remote learning will continue through next week (Tuesday, April 21 through Friday, April 24, 2020). What is usually the first day of April vacation, Monday, April 20 is a state holiday - Patriots' Day; therefore, no remote learning and communication will be provided on that day. With this change, *the last day of school for the 2019-2020 school year will be Tuesday, June 23, 2020.*

MIT Ranks US States in Remote Learning Guidance: The [MIT overview of the report](#) provides some detail, while the full report may be found [here](#).

MCAS: After receiving waivers from the federal and state governments regarding the requirements for annual testing of student performance, Commissioner Riley canceled MCAS for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year across the grade levels. The Commissioner has not yet rendered a decision regarding competency determination for high school graduation. Administrators at Canton High School continue to work with students for whom this may be an issue.

Canton Community Television (CCTV) Zoom interview: On April 9 Tanya Willow of CCTV interviewed Superintendent Fischer-Mueller. Link [here](#).

Department Updates

Technology and Digital Learning: To date, close to 500 Chromebooks have been distributed to students and staff. The tech team is continuously updating the CPS Teacher Training and Resource Center. The team is actively working to support educators, families, and students. The staff holds drop-in sessions for questions and schedules and one to one meetings for anyone in need of support.

The Central Office team created a twice-weekly newsletter called the *CPS Bulldog Bulletin*. The Bulldog Bulletin's purpose is to collectively and effectively communicate with our staff to provide news and announcements, give resources, and to share the incredible work being done within Canton Public Schools.

Food Service: Wednesday, April 8, CPS began offering both breakfast and lunch pick up at Canton High School, from 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM and through van delivery to several locations. On Mondays, we provide 2 breakfast items and 2 lunch items for each student. On Wednesdays, we provide 3 breakfast items and 3 lunch items for each student. This affords

breakfast and lunch items Monday-Friday for all students participating in the program.

Teaching and Learning: Teachers are providing online and offline learning, as we are very aware of screen time, for a total amount of time that amounts to approximately half a regular school day (on average 3 hours). Ms. Rooney and Ms. Shore created and maintain a website that shares resources for teachers that can be helpful for student work, training videos to help teachers learn new technologies that support remote learning, and professional learning opportunities for all staff. The website will continue to be updated throughout the closure.

Student Services: Special Educators, 504 Coordinators, and English Language Teachers are creating Individualized Remote Learning Plans for students on IEPs requiring accommodations and/or modifications to their learning environment in order to access their educational opportunities. These plans are being developed for students attending Canton Public Schools, Collaboratives, or Private Special Education Schools. In addition, 504 Coordinators are reviewing accommodation plans and adjusting them to remote learning environments as needed and English Language Teachers have written a version of remote learning plans for students learning to speak English. All of these plans are being worked on collaboratively with parents.

Update on Hiring Processes for Administrators

Director of Student Services: The Interview Committee met online and agreed on candidates to move forward for me to consider as finalists. The finalists will be made public and the next steps in the process will be outlined at that time. Thank you to the members of the Interview Committee for their patience and perseverance and Ms. Rooney for her facilitation.

CHS Principal: The search was put on hold and we are now re-engaging in the process. The Interview Committee, made up of educators, building administrations, central office administrators, parents, School Committee Chair Kristin Mirliani, and students, will gather virtually and begin to review candidates to decide whom to interview.

JFK Principal: We will be checking in with the parents and staff members who indicated that they were interested in participating on the Interview Committee to confirm that they are still able to participate in a virtual interview process. Thank you to Ms. Nichola Gallagher for her offer to participate as the School Committee representative. Once we have the full Interview Committee established, we will proceed with screening applicants and setting up virtual interviews. As stated earlier, we are excited to re-engage in this process. I will keep you informed of the timeline.

E. New Business:

1. Ratify Vote: School Committee ratified the vote taken at the March 18, 2020 Emergency Meeting. At this meeting, the Committee offered final feedback on a letter to be sent to families from School Committee members which strongly encouraged social distancing and offered additional public health and social distancing resources.

Move to ratify vote taken on March 18, 2020: Nichola Gallagher

Second: Kristian Merenda

Roll Call Vote: 4-0

2. Ratify Vote: School Committee ratified the vote taken during the April 8, 2020, Executive Session meeting to revise the school calendar to reflect the cancelation of

April vacation. Also of mention is the last day of school is currently June 23, 2020.

Move to ratify vote taken on April 8, 2020, pertaining to the change in the 2019-2020 school calendar: Nichola Gallagher

Second: Kristian Merenda

Roll Call Vote: 4-0

3. TEC Collaborative Agreement: The TEC Board of Directors accepted Medway as a TEC Member District at its March 13th meeting. The TEC Agreement requires School Committee approval and a signature from the School Committee Chair to change the collaborative agreement.

Move to accept Medway as a TEC Member District: Maureen Moran

Second: Kristian Merenda

Roll Call Vote: 4-0

4. FY21 Residency Forms: Superintendent Fischer-Mueller presented the FY21 residency recertification letter and supporting document for a vote of approval. Letters will be sent to current 5th and 8th graders at the end of May. An informational letter will accompany the documents to inform parents of how to return the required documents in the event of an extended school closure.

Move to accept the FY21 Residency Forms and approve for distribution: Nichola Gallagher

Second: Kristian Merenda

Roll Call Vote: 4-0

5. Galvin Statement of Interest: Mr. Nectow presented the Galvin Statement of Interest (SOI) for a vote of approval. The SOI requires the School Committee vote and Board of Selectman vote. This is the third time CPS has submitted an SOI for a building renovation at the Galvin. Ms. Nichola Gallagher read the following:

Having convened in an open meeting on April 16, 2020, prior to the SOI submission closing date, the School Committee of the Town of Canton, in accordance with its charter, by-laws, and ordinances has voted to authorize the Superintendent to submit to the Massachusetts School Building Authority the Statement of Interest Form dated 4/16/2020 for the William H. Galvin Middle School which describes and explains the following deficiencies and the priority category(s) for which an application may be submitted to the Massachusetts School Building Authority in the future: Priority categories 2, 5 and 7 are consistent with the recently completed master plan and feasibility Study and addresses over-crowding, modernization of school facility systems and addresses an obsolete building in order to provide a full range of programs consistent with the district educational vision; and hereby further specifically acknowledges that by submitting this Statement of Interest Form, Massachusetts School Building Authority in no way guarantees the acceptance or the approval of an application, the awarding of a grant or any other funding commitment from the Massachusetts School Building Authority, or commits the City/Town/Regional School District to file an application for funding with the Massachusetts School Building Authority.

Move to accept the submission of a Statement of Interest for the William H. Galvin Middle School: Nichola Gallagher

Second: Maureen Moran

Roll Call Vote: 4-0

6. FY20 & FY21 Operating Budget Updates: Mr. Nectow reported that he developed a new FY20 budget forecast as a result of COVID-19. He explained that there will be savings in line items such as transportation, substitute pay, supplies, and overtime. However, there will be costs associated with food services, the loss of PreK tuition, driver education, the partial return of parking fees and bus passes, no building rental revenue, and money spent on technology and remote learning resources associated with COVID-19. The State sought a waiver from the Federal Government. Part of every meal we distribute will be refunded from the Federal Government. All of the above will be in play when looking at the end of the year budget.
7. FY21 Capital: Mr. Nectow will present a revised FY21 Capital budget for a vote of approval. CPS and other town departments have been asked to adjust their FY21 budget due to the impact COVID-19 will have on the Town's revenue. The Town may have reduced funding from the State, which then affects the Town budgets. To plan for this, the School Department was asked to consider a \$250k reduction. Mr. Nectow proposed taking \$150, out of the Capital Budget and \$100k from a stand-alone budget item that would have funded a new bus and new security cameras. CPS had the option to take the cuts from Operating and/or Capital. Mr. Nectow proposed Capital cuts only in addition to the one stand-alone item referenced above. The complete list of Capital cuts can be found on the School Committee webpage; Meetings/Agendas/ Reports, imbedded in the Agenda dated April 16, 2020, new business item #7.

Move to approve the adjustment to the FY21 Capital Budget:

Nichola Gallagher

Second: Kristian Merenda

Roll Call Vote: 4-0

8. Dr. Arthur Cabot Trust Fund: Ms. Michelle Gobbi reviewed the FY20 Cabot Fund applications and requests. The following is a breakdown of the fund distribution:

Brookwood Community Farm \$1,725

BSA Boy Scouts Troop #77 \$2,000

BSA Cub Scouts Pack 77 \$1,000

BSA Friends of Canton Scouting, Inc. \$2,500

Canton Little League & Girls Softball \$1,000

Canton Recreation-Pequitside Day Camp \$2,500

Canton Youth Basketball \$1,000

Canton Youth Hockey Assoc. \$1,000

CFA-Pop Warner-Football & Cheerleading \$2,200

Dean S. Luce CAPT Fun Run \$0.00 Event canceled due to school closure

Hansen CAPT Gaga Ball Pit \$0.00 - Can be included in the Operating Budget

Total = \$14,925

The Superintendent makes her recommendations on the following criteria: out-of-door, healthy, children of Canton served, could this be covered by the Town Budget.

Ms. Moran inquired about Boy Scout's funding of a campground in Orange, MA. Mr. Nectow confirmed that the Boy Scouts of Canton owns the property and many Canton Scout members access the property.

Move to accept the Cabot Fund recipients: Kristian Merenda

Second: Nichola Gallagher

Roll Call Vote: 4-0

9. Transportation Contract Amendments: Mr. Nectow presented transportation contract amendments for review and a vote of approval. Canton has 4 transportation vendor contracts that cover in town, special needs and out of town transportation. Guidance from DESE suggests that districts should negotiate with vendors. As a result, the following contract vendors submitted a rate reduction offer. CPS will continue to pay these vendors as long as we are closed. This keeps the vendors in business and saves the district money.

Connolly Bus: rate reduction about 46% off the existing rate, per day rate proposed is \$210.76 per bus.

Move to accept the Connolly bus contract reduction: Nichola Gallagher

Second: Kristian Merenda

Roll Call Vote: 4-0

Van Pool: rate reduction of 20 %. Agree not to pay more than 80% of the contract.

Move to accept Van Pool contract reduction: Nichola Gallagher

Second: Kristian Merenda

Roll Call Vote: 4-0

RAZ: rate reduction is a 45% discount. CPS pays 55% of the current contract.

Move to accept the RAZ bus contract reduction: Maureen Moran

Second: Kristian Merenda

Roll Call Vote: 4-0

YCN: Mr. Nectow is still working with this vendor. He expects it to be much like the RAZ rate reduction. Update at the next meeting.

If school resumes this year, the contracts will go back to the original amount agreed upon.

Vice-Chair Schutt asked about refunds for families this year. Mr. Nectow reported that his department is still looking into how refunds will be refunded. There will be refunds in some fashion, but the terms are still being worked out.

- F. Business Manager's Report: Mr. Nectow reported that bus applications for the 2020-2021 school year have been sent to all CPS families. There is no money due at this time. The fee schedule will likely be different from last year due to the COVID-19 school closure. Applications are due back by May 15. Any applications accepted after June 12 will not be guaranteed a seat on the bus. Mr. Nectow also announced that next week's foodservice pick up and drop off will be different due to the Patriots Day holiday on Monday. Next week, breakfast and lunch pick up and delivery will be Tuesday and Wednesday.

- G. Routine Matters:

Approve Minutes dated March 26, 2020

Move: Nichola Gallagher

Second: Kristian Merenda

Roll Call Vote: 4-0

Approve Executive Minutes dated March 26, 2020

Move: Nichola Gallagher

Second: Kristian Merenda

Roll Call Vote: 4-0

Approve Executive Meeting Minutes dated April 1, 2020

Move: Maureen Moran

Second: Nichola Gallagher

Roll Call Vote: 4-0

Approve Executive Meeting Minutes dated April 3, 2020

Move: Nichola Gallagher

Second: Kristian Merenda

Roll Call Vote: 4-0

Approve Executive Meeting Minutes dated April 8, 2020

Move: Nichola Gallagher

Second: Kristian Merenda

Roll Call Vote: 4-0

Maureen Moran reported that she signed the warrants dated April 3, 2020, April 10, 2020, and the Food Service Warrant dated April 17, 2020.

H. Sub-Committee Reports

1. CPC - Nichola Gallagher - Meeting next week.
2. BRC - Kristian Merenda - nothing new to report.
3. Wellness- Maureen Moran - Met yesterday. Received positive feedback on the technology support and navigation of remote learning. Students are doing research on the long term impact of the COVID-19 closure and how it relates to mental health wellbeing. Town officials expressed appreciation for the schools' help with messaging to the community and pulling together; working towards the same goals.
4. Finance - Reuki Schutt/Maureen Moran - nothing new to report.
5. Policy - Kristin Mirliani – nothing new to report.
6. PRHC – Nichola Gallagher - Construction project deemed nonessential so on hold. Residential construction is still ongoing.
7. Hoc Calendar Advisory - Maureen Moran - nothing new to report.

I. Future Business: Next School Committee Meeting will be held Thursday, April 30, 2020, using the Google remote platform.

J. Other Business: Reminder that Town Elections are postponed to June 16, 2020. Ms. Nichola Gallagher announced that Absentee Ballots are available at Town Hall. The Annual Town Meeting will begin on June 22, 2020.

K. Adjournment: Nichola Gallagher motioned to close Open Session at 8:31 pm. Kristian Merenda seconded. It was voted 4-0.

4 yeas 0 nays