

Town of Canton  
Canton School Committee Minutes of the Meeting of May 27, 2021  
Remote Meeting Zoom Webinar

- A. **Call to Order** The meeting of the School Committee is called to order at 6:18 pm by Chair Merenda. Roll Call 4-0. Motion to move into Executive Session made by Nichola Gallagher. Second by Chuck Rae.

Kristian Merenda	yea
Maureen Moran	absent
Nichola Gallagher	yea
Chuck Rae	yes
Kendall O'Halloran	yea

Also Remotely Present:

Jennifer Fischer-Mueller, Superintendent  
Derek Folan, Assistant Superintendent  
Barry Nectow, School Business Administrator  
Colleen Hutchinson, Recording Secretary  
Debbie Rooney, Director of Teaching and Learning  
Julie Shore, Director of Technology and Digital Learning  
Dianna Mullen, Director of Student Services  
Michelle Gobbi, Business Analyst  
Anisha Cherukuri, Student Member  
Cindy Bonner, Canton Public Health Nurse  
Lauren Pushard, Nurse Leader  
Donna Kilday, Prek-2 Coordinator  
David Brauningner, Principal, Hansen School  
Michael Green, Interim Principal, Luce School  
Emily DiDonna, Principal, JFK

- B. **Open Session** Started at 7:02 pm
- C. **Student Member Report** Chair Merenda, and Committee members thanked all student members for their contributions and commitment to the Committee this school year and wished them well in their future endeavors.

- D. **Superintendent's Report**  
**Superintendent Highlights**

Vaccination Clinic: In collaboration with the Town Department of Public Health, Canton police and fire, and Dr. Muse, CPS hosted a vaccine clinic in the Rodman gym on May 26 for students ages 12-22. The clinic was open to students attending CPS, Blue Hills Regional Technical School, St. John's School, as well as the parents/guardians of students who have not yet received the first dose of the vaccine. The second dose vaccine clinic will be held on June 16 at the Rodman Gymnasium.

Honor Thy Teacher: Request to support the Canton Alliance for Public Education (CAPE) by contributing to their *Honor Thy Teacher* campaign. Proceeds go toward funding annual grants for Canton Public School teachers. These grants provide the seed money for innovative enrichment programs that are not part of the annual school budget.

CAPT and CAPE Volunteers Needed: The success of our district's CAPTs and CAPE rests on the effectiveness of parent volunteers. These organizations are in danger of not continuing this work due to the lack of parent-volunteer support. Superintendent Fischer-Mueller encouraged attendance.

ESSER Grant: A portion of the ESSER grant, which was awarded to CPS in March 2021 in the amount of \$10,000, was dedicated to funding programs to support the social emotional needs of students. As a result, the District has collaborated with the YMCA to provide structured supports during recess at all three elementary schools, three days/week. Additional funds will be used to support a therapeutic garden at the high school.

### Updates

CHS Principal Finalists: Following a rigorous interview process, CPS has identified three finalists for the CHS Principal position. To maximize stakeholder involvement and get feedback on our three finalists. There was a 9:00 a.m. community forum for each candidate during their respective finalist day Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, and one afternoon forum for each finalist on Wednesday afternoon at 4:00 p.m., 5:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.

Early Release Days: Superintendent Fischer-Mueller shared that the primary function of Wednesday afternoon is collaboration. Research supports collaboration between teachers in both general education and special education as a means to improve student outcomes by affording staff the time to meet to share ideas, conduct meetings and refine the impacts of their instructional practices. Research shows that effective collaboration improves student and staff performance. Superintendent Fischer-Mueller shared examples of research. Listed below are some examples of work being done at our schools during early release Wednesdays that supports student achievement and ensures a collaborative school climate.

### PreK

- Final review of student literacy data
- Review end of year SIP
- Kindergarten screening meetings
- Curriculum planning
- Collaboration with preschool teachers and kindergarten teachers
- Reviewing the needs of the students for next year
- Year in review-evaluate curriculum units and make adjustments as needed
- Create class lists for 2021-2022

### Elementary Schools

- End of year assessment data gathering and review
- Growing best practices in Readers Workshop PD (grades 3-5)
- Meetings and discussions about structure and caseloads for school year 2021-2022
- Grade level team check-ins about summer program referrals, finalize referral lists

- Compilation of new student information by class for receiving teachers and class placement
- Kindergarten screening meetings
- Grade level team meetings to review student data and complete student profile sheets in preparation for creating classrooms for 2021-2022
- Grade level collaboration to create preliminary class placement for 2021-2022
- Grade level collaboration to finalize class placement

### GMS

- Review and discuss individual student concerns
- Collaborate on the creation of end of the year activities
- Plan remaining community block lessons
- Develop effective interdisciplinary topics
- Coordinate curriculum and lessons
- Plan for next year

### Indicators of Excellence

CAASA Webinar: Wednesday, May 19, CAASA sponsored the Teens and Tech webinar hosted by Clinical Director Jon Mattleman. There were over 100 families registered for this virtual event. The presentation focused on teens and technology, the impact of mental health and coping in positive ways.

Scholastic Honors Night: On Tuesday, May 18, 77 seniors were honored at the annual Canton High School Scholastic Honors Night. The evening provides distinction to students who have demonstrated outstanding creativity, scholarship, leadership and citizenship. Thank you to Principal Turcotte and Marsha Armando for their outstanding work in planning this event, and Ms. Nichola Gallagher for attending on behalf of the School Committee.

Scholarship Night: A total of 86 CHS Seniors were awarded \$208,300 in scholarship money from 72 local organizations. Congratulations to these very deserving members of the 2021 senior class and thank you to our scholarship donors for their generosity. A special thank you to Ms. Meredith Chamberland and Ms. Anne Murray for their efforts in coordinating this memorable event, and to Ms. Kendall O'Halloran for attending on behalf of the School Committee.

World Language Recognition Night: A total of 110 students in grades 7-12 were honored on May 20 during World Language Recognition Night. Thank you to Ms. Heidi Olson and the World Language staff for their work in supporting students on their path to language proficiency. Congratulations to all honorees, and a very special congratulations to Senior Ms. Camila Cruz who earned her Seal of Biliteracy in both Spanish and French. Thank you, also to Ms. Kristian Merenda for attending on behalf of the School Committee.

Project Lead the Way: During the 2019-2020 school year, Katie Healey, CHS Engineering teacher, applied for and received a grant from STEM Mass Ed to start a Project Lead The

Way (PLTW) course pathway at CHS. Due to the pandemic, our timeline and use of this grant money has been delayed into the 2021-22 school year. At this time, we have had 27 students registered to take the PLTW Engineering course and 27 students signed up to take the PLTW Computer Science Principles course next year. Teachers Katie Healey and Sean Hulseman have also registered for summer PD sessions that are slated to begin on June 21 to help them learn the curriculum and instruction of these courses.

Once our teachers are fully trained, we will be using grant money to begin to purchase the supplies needed to run the courses effectively. The process for rehabbing the metal and wood shop spaces into a more contemporary Innovation Lab as a part of this grant has begun. The grant will allow for a large amount of equipment to be purchased to better outfit this space for the work done in both the PLTW courses and other engineering and design courses offered at CHS. We are continuing to look for additional grants and funding sources, including CAPE grants to continue to rehab and convert these spaces into an appropriate innovative and design space.

Art Student Citations: Monday, May 24th, Senator Timilty visited Canton High School to present citations to the following students to honor them for their involvement in the state-wide Youth Art Month "Art Connects Us" exhibit. Congratulations to all students and thank you to Ms. Patricia Palmer and her all Visual Arts staff for their dedication expertise, and thank you to Ms. Kristian Merenda for attending on behalf of the School Committee.

Laura Miranda (grade 12)	Zoe Bonilla Carranza (grade 12)
Trisha Bhattacharya (grade 11)	Elise Kleinbauer (grade 12)
Jessica Hart (grade 12)	Madison Rousseau (grade 12)
Kiara Cerruti (grade 11)	Skyler Lam (grade 12)
Alvaro Cezon Gimenez (grade 10)	Megan Walter (grade 11)
Natalie Nguyen (grade 12)	Kaitlyn Sullivan (grade 12)

CHS Robotics: The CHS robotics teams recently completed their competitive season. The newer team, the Canton Gearhounds (FTC team #11723) was made up of all students new to robotics this year. They won the design award during the MA State Remote Qualifier Competition ending May 1.

Canton's veteran team, the Canton Robodogs (FTC #6040) earned the THINK Award at the same qualifier ending May 1 and as a result advanced to the State Championship. The THINK award is given to the team that best reflects the journey the team took as they experienced the engineering design process during the build season.

### **Important Dates and Events**

May 31	No School, Memorial Day
June 4	CHS Graduation, 6:00 pm, CHS Memorial Field (Rain date: Saturday, June 5 or Sunday, June 6. The decision about the timing of the rain date will be made no later than noon on Thursday, June 3.)
June 11	GMS Virtual Performance, links and tickets for the performance are forthcoming
June 21	Early Release, Last Day of School Grades PreK-11

#### E. New Business

1. School Nurse Appointment: Dr. Fischer-Mueller and Ms. Lauren Pushard introduced Ms. Cindy Bonner and recommended her for appointment as the Dean S. Luce School Nurse. Nurse June Warren is retiring as the Luce school nurse after 21 years of service.

**Motion to approve Ms. Cindy Bonner to the position of School Nurse at the Dean S. Luce School:** Nichola Gallagher

**Second:** Chuck Rae

**Roll Call Vote:** 4-0

Kristian Merenda      yea

Nichola Gallagher      yea

Chuck Rae              yea

Kendall O'Halloran      yea

2. PreK and Elementary School Improvement Plans (SIPs) Review: Principals presented their year end SIPs for review. All plans are aligned with the strategic framework. School council members from all schools were acknowledged and thanked.

Ms. Donna Kilday shared school demographics, student learning outcomes in math and literacy, and student learning outcomes in social emotional learning. Additionally, PreK student experiences were shared i.e. kindness celebrations, story hours, spirit days and schoolwide diversity and community celebrations. A summary of progress towards the 2020-2021 school priorities includes strong gains in the development of key early literacy skills, increased student awareness in respecting differences in race and culture utilizing the social science and history standards, and significant progress toward the priority of analyzing the social emotional needs of students and the effectiveness of our current programming.

Elementary principals shared information about their school demographics, school experiences and community survey results. Some Hansen school experiences included a focus on connections and all students (continuum and RLP) feeling an authentic sense of belonging, activities included: Great Kindness Challenge, celebrating our diversity and backgrounds through texts/read-alouds, art, and research, grade level T-Shirt design challenge, virtual whole school sing-a-longs, daily classroom morning meetings and/or closing connections, and more.

JFK school experiences included: classroom as community, innovative and experiential learning, celebrating diversity and various grade level experiences.

Mr. Green shared that the Luce school survey will be going out on June 6. He also shared Luce school experiences that included: students created letters of gratitude for local Veterans, students in 3rd-5th grade engaged in a virtual school musical, daily principal morning messages for hybrid, in-school and RLP students Top Secret Science Kits K-5, virtual SHINE assemblies and We Thinker's program that focuses on Social and Emotional Learning and more.

Each school SIP contained important action steps for the three elementary schools and their progress related to achieving academic excellence and ensuring equity, transforming teaching and learning and cultivating school climate and culture.

The complete SIP for each school can be found on the website, under the School Committee tab/Meeting Materials.

3. Policy EBCFA: Mr. Folan, Chair Merenda and Ms. O'Halloran presented policy EBCFA, Face Coverings, for review. Masks are currently not required for outdoor recess. Governor Baker and DESE guidelines state that masks are still required for indoor activities. These proposed policy changes align with these state guidelines. The proposed policy also states that *The School Committee intends to revisit this policy on June 10, 2021 to consider any DESE or state guidance updates that would impact summer programming.* Chair Merenda explained that legal counsel informed her that the School Committee does not have the discretion to eliminate the mask requirement inside school buildings until the Governor/DESE has done so.

Mr. Rae reaffirmed his opposition to the face covering requirement. Mr. Rae said he would like to move to rescind the policy on July 1, 2021, or sooner, if the MA DESE guidelines changed prior to then. Members suggested changing the wording in the proposed policy from consider to align *any DESE or state guidance updates....* Other considerations and factors considered are the current CTA MOA and local BOH feedback. Superintendent Fischer-Mueller shared that the DESE Commissioner stated that what the mask policy is at the end of the school year will likely carry over to the summer programming regulations.

**Motion to approve policy EBCFA as amended:** Chuck Rae

**Second:** Nichola Gallagher

**Roll Call Vote:** 4-0

Kristian Merenda      yea

Nichola Gallagher      yea

Chuck Rae      yea

Kendall O'Halloran      yea

4. Cabot Fund: Mr. Nectow presented the Cabot Fund recipients for review and approval. The Cabot Fund promotes healthy outdoor life. Ms. Gobbi shared applicants' requests, their plans for the use of funds and the CPS recommendations for fund allocations. Mr. Nectow shared previous year's awards.

**Motion to approve the Cabot Fund grant recipients as presented:** Nichola Gallagher

**Second:** Chuck Rae

**Roll Call Vote:** 4-0

Kristian Merenda      yea

Nichola Gallagher      yea

Chuck Rae                    yea  
Kendall O'Halloran    yea

5. Vanpool Contract: Mr. Nectow presented the Vanpool transportation contract for a vote of approval. Vanpool is the primary vendor for OOD transportation. The recommendation was to sign a three year contract with Vanpool with a 4% rate increase in year one, and a 2% increase in years 2 and 3. Ms. Gallagher proposed, given the school budget this year, that we ask for flexibility in the increase rate. Mr. Nectow will make that request to Vanpool.

**Motion to approve the Vanpool contract as written with the flexibility to alter the years the increase is built in:** Nichola Gallagher

**Second:** Chuck Rae

**Roll Call Vote:** 4-0

Kristian Merenda        yea  
Nichola Gallagher       yea  
Chuck Rae                   yea  
Kendall O'Halloran    yea

- F. **Business Managers Report** Mr. Nectow provided another bus registration update. 5/30, bus registration ends. There is a late fee of \$50 up until 6/18. After 6/18 no guarantee for the bus, families will be put on a waiting list and informed by October 1 of availability. He also shared that ESSER stands for Elementary and Secondary Emergency Relief.

- G. **Public Comment**    None

H. **Routine Matters**

1. Approve Executive Minutes dated April 29, 2021

**Move:** Nichola Gallagher

**Second:** Chuck Rae

**Roll Call Vote:** 4-0

Kristian Merenda        yea  
Nichola Gallagher       yea  
Chuck Rae                   yea  
Kendall O'Halloran    yea

2. Approve Minutes dated May 13, 2021 HOLD

3. Approve Executive Minutes dated May 13, 2021

**Move:** Nichola Gallagher

**Second:** Chuck Rae

**Roll Call Vote:** 4-0

Kristian Merenda        yea  
Nichola Gallagher       yea  
Chuck Rae                   yea  
Kendall O'Halloran    yea

4. Ms. Gallagher will sign the May 28, 2021 tomorrow.

I. **Sub-Committee Reports**

1. CCPC - Kendall O'Halloran - Luce slide approved at ATM
2. BRC - Chuck Rae - JFK Concession shack passed will go to BRC soon
3. Wellness- Chuck Rae - nothing new to report
4. Finance - Maureen Moran/Nichola Gallagher -nothing new to report
5. Policy - Kristian Merenda/Kendall O'Halloran – nothing new to report

6. PRHC – Nichola Gallagher - Juneteenth event upcoming and will be open to the public and free
7. CDEI - Nichola Gallagher - same as above
8. Master Planning Committee - Kristian Merenda - next meeting June 3

J. **Other Business** Topics not reasonably anticipated 48 hours in advance of the meeting. Mr. Merenda shared that the School Committee will be placing upcoming ads in the Citizen for the Arts and graduates.

K. **Future Business** The next School Committee Meeting will be held Thursday, June 10, 2021, at 7:00 pm.

L. **Adjournment** Nichola Gallagher motioned to close the Open Session at 10:23 pm. Chuck Rae seconded. It was voted by a roll call vote 4-0.

Nichola Gallagher	yea
Kristian Merenda	yea
Chuck Rae	yea
Kendall O'Halloran	yea

Documents used during the meeting:

1. Superintendent's Report, May 27, 2021
2. Cindy Bonner Resume
3. PreK SIP Slide Deck
4. Elementary SIP Slide Deck
5. End of Year School Improvement Plans: PreK, Hansen, Luce, JFK
6. Policy EBCFA - CPS version and revised version
7. Cabot Fund Will Excerpt
8. Cabot Fund FY21
9. Vanpool Contract Memo 5-20-21