

CONCORD-CARLISLE REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE
Jan McGinn, Chair
Annual Town Report - 2009

The Concord-Carlisle Regional High School is continuing its focus on student learning and academic excellence throughout the 2009-2010 school year. The school committee, school administration, faculty and staff have worked hard to ensure that we meet our goals for improved student learning, strong budget support and management, and improved facilities, despite the dark economic climate that challenges both households, businesses, and municipalities,

The year was characterized by uncommon consistency in the composition of the School Committee and the high school administrative team - all seven members of the committee are working as a team for the second consecutive year, our superintendent and her team are in the second year of their tenure, and Mr. Badalament, high school principal, is in the third year of his work leading the Concord-Carlisle Regional High School.

The greatest challenge we have faced this past year has related to our operating budgets. The Commonwealth's deteriorating economy and attendant decline in tax receipts has resulted in the state cutting back on aid to school districts. We have seen a dramatic decline in aid, particularly for the Special Education "circuit breaker" reimbursement for expenditures the high school makes for students whose needs necessitate enrollment in private therapeutic and special education settings. The lower level of reimbursement was funded through reductions in staffing, materials and supplies, cuts in pay adjustments, as well as increases in parent contributions for athletic and extracurricular activities. Our school administrators are carefully and attentively monitoring budget performance: budget weekly, and we anticipate closing the year within budget.

Fiscally sound and solid communities like Concord and Carlisle have struggled to contain expenditures in order to limit and where possible avoid requests for a budget override. We did not seek an override for the current fiscal year, and at the time of this writing we do not anticipate making a request to Concord Town Meeting for FY 2011. While we are not introducing some programmatic offerings we believe would strengthen the educational experience for our students, we keep these goals in minds for a time when fiscal opportunities may be more favorable. At present we are grateful for the fine working relationship we have struck with the Finance Committees of Concord and Carlisle, and hope to continue to demonstrate a balanced sensitivity to the needs of students and those of taxpayers in the communities.

In April and May 2009 the Concord and Carlisle Town Meetings approved a \$750,000 debt exclusion for CCHS; votes at the polls thereafter confirmed the approval. In late June the School Committee appointed members to the Master Plan Committee and created a charge for the committee's scope of work. The committee began its work in July and has selected the Office of Michael Rosenfeld (OMR) to furnish the Architectural and Engineering services for the study. The Committee was uniformly impressed with the energy and thought the firm brought to its proposal. The Master Plan Committee expects to examine opportunities for a "transformative renovation" at CCHS and compare the costs of such work (which might be staged over many years) with the costs of constructing a new facility at CCHS. The Master Plan Committee meets twice monthly, and we will report on their progress over the coming months as the work of the committee unfolds.

In the meantime, the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) recently added Concord-Carlisle Regional High School to its list of schools with which MSBA will consider partnering on an extensive Repair project. The Regional School administration and school committee will continue to engage in a dialogue with the Authority, and supply whatever information necessary to move this funding evaluation ahead. MSBA has advised the Regional School Committee that we can continue working the Facilities Master Plan process ***without in any way jeopardizing*** potential Authority funding.

The School Committee remains deeply grateful to the many stakeholders in our educational program whose work and efforts makes its excellence possible. We are fortunate to have the continued financial support and creative energy of the Concord Education Fund to finance new initiatives brought forward by an energetic and committed faculty. Our parent organizations - whether parents associations, athletic booster groups, friends of performing arts, or a quiet cadre of workers in gardens, on trips, in offices - support our students and faculty with their gifts of time and talents.

We are particularly grateful to all whose work makes excellence in our high school possible. The school committee is especially grateful for the hard work and dedication of our administrators, our faculty and staff, secretaries, custodian and maintenance workers, bus drivers, and all others who work in our system. We thank you all for your many contributions in support of the children of Boston, Carlisle, and Concord

Respectfully submitted,

The Concord-Carlisle Regional School Committee:

Jan McGinn, Chair

Louis Salemy, Vice Chair

Peter Fischelis

Fabian Fondriest

Pamela Gannon

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