

Concord-Carlisle Regional School Committee
Louis Salemy, Chair
Peter Fischelis, Vice-Chair
Bill Fink
Pamela Gannon
Fabian Fondriest
Maureen Spada
Jerry Wedge

We are grateful to the citizens of Concord for their strong support of the students of Concord-Carlisle High School (CCHS). The Concord community clearly values education and as a result of this emphasis, CCHS consistently ranks as one of the top public high schools in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

The Concord-Carlisle Regional District School Committee is comprised of the five members of the Concord School Committee with the addition of two members from Carlisle. This year, we welcomed Maureen Spada of Concord and Bill Fink of Carlisle to the committee, and Fabian Fondriest was re-elected to a second term. Jan McGinn retired after six years of serving on the school committee, her last year as chair of the regional school committee. We appreciate her dedication and accomplishments on behalf of the students of Concord, Carlisle, and Boston during her tenure. Louis Salemy of Carlisle assumed the chairmanship of the regional school committee, with Peter Fischelis of Concord as vice-chair.

The Concord-Carlisle Regional School District (CCRS) serves 1221 students in grades 9-12 from Concord, Carlisle, and Boston (through the METCO program). Enrollment at CCHS has remained relatively consistent since 2002, with an average of 1238 students per year. In addition, 13 students of ages 14-22 participate in the life skills program at CCHS and the region supports 37 students who attend out-of-district placements.

Concord-Carlisle students achieve at high levels. Our students place at the top of the state in standardized test scores and in academic competitions such as the Science Olympiad. Our students place at the top of the nation in SAT and AP exam scores. In addition to the excellent core academic program, our elective courses allow students to participate in and excel at such endeavors as music, theater, visual arts, and athletics. Our band programs have won gold and silver medals at the MICCA state concert festivals and our student musicians have performed in the all-state ensemble. CCHS students have won state and national awards in the visual arts, such as the Boston Globe Scholastic Art Award and the Congressional Art Award. Our sports teams have won league or state championships in cross country, golf, soccer, volleyball, alpine skiing, basketball, cross country skiing, fencing, ice hockey, indoor track, softball, lacrosse, and tennis.

We want to recognize the exemplary leadership of our administrators and the exceptional faculty and staff who make CCHS a vibrant and active learning community. Our faculty is exceptionally well-educated: 86% have at least a master's degree and 8% have a Ph.D. Our employee retention rate is 97.7% compared with a state average of 80%. Our teachers also dedicate their time to coordinate extra-curricular activities, coach athletic teams, and mentor students. Our administrators and faculty work hard to secure any available grant funding that would positively impact student learning. CCRSD and the Concord-Carlisle Teachers' Association will be a pilot site for studying teacher evaluation and supervision at a high-performing school using funding from the U.S. Department of Education for the Massachusetts Race to the Top initiative.

We believe that a well-rounded high school education includes opportunities for developing character and values through service to others. In 2010, CCHS students performed over 10,000 hours of community service in Concord and surrounding areas. CCHS was among the first public high schools in the United States to institute a community service requirement of 40 hours for graduation, but most students do many more hours of service. Open Table, Gaining Ground, Concord Council on Aging, Emerson Hospital, Concord Public Library, and Concord Children's Center are just a few of the local organizations served by

our students. A CCHS parent group, 2Volunteer (2volunteeronline.org), facilitates connections between the needs of the community and individual students.

The goal of the school committee and school administration is to develop responsible, sustainable school budgets while maintaining the high quality of our educational program. None of the CCRSD budgets since 2007 have required a Proposition 2½ override and all have been within the Concord Finance Committee's guideline recommendations. For 2010-2012, the school committee approved a 3.8% budget increase, which is within the levy limit and meets the finance committee's guidelines. The region must begin to address the OPEB (Other Post Employment Benefits) liability required by all municipalities and regional school districts in Massachusetts. A contribution to this liability is an important factor in a favorable bond rating when borrowing for a high school building project.

The proposed increase for the CCRSD 2011-2012 operating budget, without taking into consideration the OPEB contribution, is 2.7%. Two major factors have helped us control escalation of the regional budget. The school administration has been able to lower special education costs by developing in-house programs that decrease expensive out-of-district placements. In addition, the school committee worked long and hard to negotiate a reasonable and sustainable contract with the Concord-Carlisle Teachers' Association. In acknowledgement of the difficult economic times, the high school teachers agreed to a modest cost-of-living adjustment of 0.75%. There are many program improvements that we would implement if we had additional funds, such as a theater elective, dance elective, TV production elective, and intramural sports programs. However, in the interest of designing a conservative budget we have focused on core curriculum areas and skills that are important for the success of our students in further education.

The school committee is very grateful for generous donations from local non-profit organizations, the CCHS Parents Association, the Concord-Carlisle Community Chest, and individuals in both Concord and Carlisle. The Concord Education Fund has awarded grants that support the Environmental Field Studies Group, a new club that studies the Blanding's turtle and the local environment, and the CCHS advisory program, a new program to enhance the relationships and emotional support for students at CCHS. The Education Fund has also contributed significantly to projects to install Xirus wireless hubs, install and equip the digital recording studio, and support initiatives in science and technology. These funds allow us to enhance and expand the educational experiences of our students.

The assessment and planning for the future of the CCHS facility has been a major focus of the school committee in 2010. Concord and Carlisle citizens funded a CCHS facilities master plan that was completed in March 2010. The master plan committee conducted an assessment of the facility, reviewed educational specifications, solicited community input, and developed design approaches. At the 2010 Town Meetings, both Concord and Carlisle citizens overwhelmingly voted to appropriate funding to proceed to a feasibility study/schematic design for CCHS. In September, the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) voted to approve CCHS for a significant renovation/addition project. The CCHS Building Committee (www.cchsbuilding.org) is comprised of representatives from Concord and Carlisle, school committee members, and school administrators. The committee is co-chaired by Jerry Wedge of Concord and Karla Johnson of Carlisle.

We recognize that any building plan for CCHS presents a significant future expense for the citizens of Concord and Carlisle. During these challenging years of economic turmoil, the regional school committee and school administration have made a concerted effort to develop budgets that meet the needs of our students, yet are respectful of the financial pressures on taxpayers. We believe that the citizens of Concord and Carlisle are proud of the strong program and reputation of Concord-Carlisle High School. We urge citizens to be informed and to participate in discussions regarding the CCHS building project and other school issues. School committee meetings and CCHS building committee meetings are open to the public, and we encourage your attendance and participation.