

## School Committee Newsletter Notes

With the school year now well in to its second month, we hope both students and families have successfully launched the 2009/2010 academic year. The start of the school year at CCHS proved challenging for the entire school community. We greatly appreciate the leadership of Principal Badalament and his team, the support extended by faculty and staff, and the community of concern that students demonstrated toward one another in the difficult early days of the semester.

Willard School: We hope you have had a chance to visit the fabulous new Willard School. Thanks for the wonderful facility, which we expect to reshape elementary education, go far and wide. First and most important, the citizens of Concord who had the vision to support the new elementary school. Second, the team of volunteers, the Willard School Building Committee, who worked tirelessly over two years to bring this dream to fruition - on time and on budget! Third, to the faculty and staff who worked (up to the last minute) to have each room ready to welcome students. Finally to the Willard students who have thought long and hard about the many ways Green can be Greener as they prepare to occupy this bright, efficient, and inviting new space. The new building will be dedicated on Sunday November 1 - please plan to be part of these festivities.

Elementary School Wellness Policy: In order to promote health and wellness behaviors in schools that create healthy and safe environments for all students, the Administrative team has recommended a limit on the types of celebrations during the school day. Whereas in the past schools were recommended to limit celebrations that involve food, with the increase of food allergies, diabetes, and obesity among school children, this year schools will not be permitted to involve food in celebrations. Parents are asked to assist faculty and administrators in promoting healthy lifestyles by supporting non-food birthday and holiday celebrations at school. For further information, the Wellness Policy is posted [here](#) and the Procedures are posted [here](#).

CCHS Facilities Master Plan: On another facility matter, voters in Concord and Carlisle voted last spring to support a CCHS Facilities

Master Plan. 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 recently 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.

Superintendent's Teas: Last year Diana Rigby, Superintendent of the Concord and Concord-Carlisle Schools, introduced an informal monthly tea for community members interested in learning more about the schools or sharing their observations. Diana is a talented leader who brings many strengths to her work - but mind reading is not a skill in her repertoire. She has sought out the opinions of school stakeholders in a variety of means - surveys, community meetings, teas, and high visibility at a variety of school functions. If you have something on your mind, you will usually find the Superintendent and often a few members of the school committee at one of the school sites, usually on the first Friday of each month. We encourage anyone and everyone - parents, faculty, staff, students, neighbors - to stop by for tea, conversation, and time to share your thoughts on our schools. The schedule she has planned for this year follows - we encourage you to add one or more to your calendar.

Friday, November 6; 3:30-5:00; Alcott Library  
Friday, December 11; 3:30-5:00; Thoreau Library  
Friday, January 8; 3:30-5:00; Willard Library  
Friday, February 5; 2:45-4:00; Sanborn Library  
Friday, March 5; 2:45-4:00; Peabody Library  
Friday, April 9; 2:30-4:00; CCHS Library  
Friday, May 7; 3:30-5:00; Alcott Library  
Friday, June 4; 2:45-4:00; Sanborn Library

School Committee Business: November is a busy time on the School Committee calendar. We will hear reports on MCAS outcomes from last spring during our upcoming meetings. We will continue to work on budget preparations for FY 2011. We prepare these budgets in an environment where state revenues continue to plummet, and we anticipate declines both in state aid, regional transportation assistance, and the circuit breaker reimbursement for special education expenses. Our administrative team is posing extremely modest increases in budgets both at the K - 8 and the 9 - 12 levels. At this early stage in the process, we anticipate a 0% increase at K - 8 and a 5% increase at the high school. A long-anticipated shift in population toward Carlisle (meaning a greater percentage of the total high school enrollment is attributable to Carlisle residents) will mean a particularly burdensome increase for Carlisle taxpayers. We encourage interested parents and citizens to become familiar with our budget and to follow its development by way of public hearings early in 2010. We will advise readers of hearings as they are scheduled later in the year.

The School Committee meets twice each month – our schedule is posted on the [website](#) and we welcome the participation of interested Concord, Carlisle, and Boston families. Please feel free to attend any meeting, or contact us through the Chairs with any questions or concerns you may have. We welcome your input and involvement in our deliberations.

Sincerely, Jan McGinn, for the Concord and Concord-Carlisle School Committees