

SCHOOL BOARD NEWS

September 16, 2019

Welcome back!! Two weeks into the 2019 - 2020 school year and there's already a lot to report! Though it was a beautiful summer, exciting work continued on a variety of fronts.

To begin with, the June 11th voter approval of the FY20 School Board Budget (THANK YOU!!) enabled the immediate commencement of the Needs Assessment Facilities Study by Colby Company & Engineers and Scott Simons Architects. Individuals from both firms held a series of three stakeholder meetings with staff from all three schools prior to the summer break. In addition, a public stakeholder meeting was held on August 6th at Town Hall. Information gathered from these sessions will be incorporated in the facilities study and ultimately help guide the direction and scope of possible school renovations.

Coinciding with the launch of the Needs Assessment Facilities Study, the Maine Department of Education announced over the summer that they are accepting applications to receive funding for school renovation projects through the School Revolving Renovation Fund (SRRF). Approximately \$25 million in loans are being earmarked. A portion of the loans awarded will be considered grants and therefore be forgiven. The remainder of the loans will be paid off in either 5 or 10 years at 0% interest. Schools that submit proper documentation for projects such as, "indoor air quality improvement, structural roof repair, hazardous material abatement or removal, ADA compliance upgrades, and other health, safety and compliance renovations" will receive "Priority One" consideration. "Priority Two" projects may include projects addressing structural and/or water & septic issues. "The maximum loan amount is limited to \$1 million per school building, per priority, in any five-year period."

In the case of Cape Elizabeth School Department, CEHS could potentially receive a maximum of \$2 million and PCES & CEMS (considered one building) could potentially receive another \$2 million. Furthermore, based on Cape Elizabeth's historically low funding, 30% of any loans received through SRRF would be forgiven. While there is no guarantee that Cape Elizabeth will be selected to receive loans from this fund, every effort to substantiate the district's needs is being made in order to submit a well

documented application by the September 30th deadline. Many thanks are owed to Dr. Wolfrom, Marcia Weeks (the new CESD Business Manager), and the team at Colby Company and Scott Simons for following through on this opportunity and committing the extra effort required to apply for this loan. The awarding of loans will be announced February 1st of 2020.

In the meantime, it is time to begin seeking committee members for a Building Committee following the release of the final Needs Assessment Facilities Study from Colby Company on October 17th. This new committee will be made up of students, parents, community members, Town Councilors, School Board members, CESD administrators and staff. Committee members will be selected based on availability to attend future meetings and ability to provide a varied representation of school and community members. Please contact School Board Chair, [Susana Measelle Hubbs](#), by Tuesday, October 15th if you are interested in participating in this next phase of improving our schools.

Meanwhile, also included in the FY20 budget are funds allocated to updating the CESD website. After interviewing four different website developers, the firm Apptegy was selected for its emphasis on marketing the district through a comprehensive and easy-to-navigate web platform and a proprietary mobile app. New features will include synchronized calendars across all three schools and athletics; direct access to documents and information; and increased navigation abilities. Beta testing is slated to begin in the next few weeks and a live launch of the new website and app by mid November. As we get closer to the go-live date, opportunities to learn about the many features and upgrades will be made available to all.

On Tuesday, September 10th, the School Board convened for the Regular Business Meeting. Department heads provided updates on summer progress, new hires, and enrollment numbers. Perry Schwarz, Director of Facilities and Transportation, shared that most of the work slated for the summer has been completed. This includes the construction of two administrative offices at Middle School and Phase-1 roof repair of the 1930's portion of the CEMS building. The installment of a new generator was delayed due to the fact it's altering of the school's sitemap requires approval from the town Planning Board. The expectation is that the generator can be installed ahead of winter storms. Lastly, the new Pond Cove playground is nearing completion and will hold a Ribbon Cutting and Dedication Celebration on Saturday, September 28th at 2:00PM. Everyone is welcome to attend and share in the success of the Pond Cove Playground Committee's enormous effort to make this possible!

Del Peavey, Director of Special Services, shared that 46 students were served during the summer through the department's Extended School Year (ESY) program. Furthermore, Mr. Peavey happily announced that unlike the norm throughout the state of Maine, all staff members from the department of Special Services returned over the summer.

Perhaps the biggest piece of news at the meeting came in the form of increased enrollment at Cape Elizabeth Middle School and Cape Elizabeth High School. CEMS Principal Troy Eastman reported that 22 new and unanticipated students enrolled over the summer. CEHS Principal Jeff Shedd explained that while they anticipated a decrease of approximately 25 students this year, they have in fact maintained the same number because of an influx of new students enrolled over the summer. Pond Cove Elementary School, anticipating a drop, also saw an enrollment increase over the summer which has kept total enrollment numbers relatively steady. School Board member, Hope Straw, asked that principals remain cognizant of class size policies given the upward trend in enrollment.

Cathy Stankard, Director of Teaching & Learning, also shared with the School Board the general outline for Professional Development (PD) across all three schools for the 2019-2020 school year. Ms. Stankard spent significant time last year meeting with teachers at CEHS to see what areas of PD they would most like to address. As a result, many of the PD themes are being generated directly by the teachers. The complete PD Schedule will be posted on the school department website in the near future.

As always, recordings of all School Board Regular Business Meetings are available at the [CETV website](#) and [CESD website](#).

Lastly, on September 11th, the Finance Sub-Committee met to provide financial updates for both the CESD and the Town. The committee is made up: Town Manager, Matt Sturgis; Town Council Chair, Jamie Garvin; Town Council Finance Chair, Chris Straw; Town Finance Director, John Quartararo; CESD Superintendent, Donna Wolfrom; School Board Chair, Susana Measelle Hubbs; School Board Finance Chair, Elizabeth Scifres; and School Business Manager, Marcia Weeks. Stemming from the joint workshops initiated in the Fall of 2018 between the School Board and Town Council, the Finance Sub-Committee was formed with the intention of establishing an ongoing, open and mutually beneficial exchange of information.

FUTURE DATES:

- Tuesday, September 24th, School Board Retreat, 11:30AM - 2:450 PM, Purpoodock Club, Cape Elizabeth.
- Tuesday, September 24th, School Board Policy Committee, 3:00PM - 4:00PM, Jordan Conference Room, Town Hall.
- Tuesday, September 24th, School Board Workshop on “Strategic Planning Goals,” 6:30PM - 8:30PM, CEHS Library.
- Tuesday, October 8th, School Board Regular Business Meeting, 6:30PM - 8:30PM, Town Hall Chambers.

- Tuesday, October 22nd, School Board Workshop “Needs Assessment Facilities Study Report,” 6:30PM - 8:30PM, CEHS Library