

CONCORD EDUCATION UPDATE



CCGS Newsletter – June 11, 2025

In this issue, we address the recent **Town Meeting** and share some highlights from **the last two School Committee meetings**. We also cover the May 22 **FinCom meeting** where it was disclosed that \$6M was “uncovered”, still on the books from 2024, unspent. And...**tonight** is the Ribbon Cutting for the Ellen Garrison Building at CMS, at 5PM! Happy summer and congrats to all our recent graduates! -CCGS

Town Meeting June 2: Article 13: CCHS Amenities Building PASSED

We voted yes, along with 72% at town meeting, because Concord is a town that believes in DEI and the unheated, rented, unlit porta-potties at CCHS have **violated the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)** for over a decade. This year, costs came down and Concord’s share is \$1.4M (\$400K+ from Carlisle). The SC unsuccessfully sought to use CPC funding and the use of free cash to avoid taxpayer impact. BALLOT VOTE NEXT: There will be town-wide ballot vote **August 19** that also needs to pass. Please mark your calendars.

Our Take: Great news. Long overdue. We are pleased both the FinCom and SB were in-support. Perhaps the CPC and the town can pay off this debt, as it seems there is funding available (see below).

Town Meeting June 3: Articles 10, 11, 12: 2026 School Funding Articles PASSED

Our Take: Both at-guideline school spending articles were recommended for affirmative action by the SB and FinCom and both passed easily. The capital article also passed. The cooperation and lack of acrimony between the Town and the Schools was notable and commendable. Dr. Hunter did an excellent job presenting and answered many good questions from the TM audience.

Town “Uncovers” Nearly \$6M Unspent, Still on 2024 Books

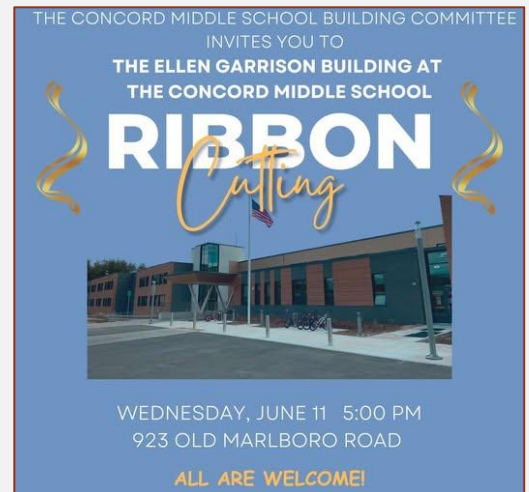
At the May 22 FinCom meeting, town CFO Anthony Ansaldi disclosed ([please watch](#)) that a firm hired to close out the Town’s 2024 books **uncovered nearly \$6M**, including \$3.4M in “unallocated” money approved to be spent but never was. This total amount of “found and unspent” money represents over 10% of the 2024 budget and has been moved to “free cash”.

Our Take: In a town facing a fiscal “crunch”, this seems like this should be bigger news than it is. Seemingly, this money was requested as “needed” at the 2023 Town Meeting by the town (and approved by voters) and then never spent. Why are we borrowing (Amenities Building) and burdening taxpayers with “excess” funds available? Again, [please watch](#).

Final SC Meeting: Accolades May 20

At the May 20 SC meeting, the room was packed and speakers thanked the three members rolling off the SC for their volunteer service to the town. **Alexa Anderson, Cynthia Rainy** and **Julie Viola** (Carlisle) are all ending their terms.

Our Take: SC members are elected volunteers and work incredibly hard for our town and our schools/students. Please watch the video of the moving thank-you section of the SC meeting [here](#).



New K-5 Reading Curriculum Selected and Adopted

May 16: From Superintendent. Hunter: "[EL Education](#) was the clear front-runner in a final rank-ordered selection process and an internally developed ELA rubric. Committee members representing all three elementary schools and district leadership spent significant time reviewing the programs to ensure the program was the best fit for Concord...The District will host a webinar in September, providing K–5 families an opportunity to learn more about EL Education and our two-year implementation process."

Our Take: This has been a contentious issue, as not all students learn to read the same way and special education advocates have been critical of the process and timeline. We hope that this new curriculum is a step in the right direction.

New K-8 Cell Phone (+ Smart Watch) Policy Adopted

At the May 20th SC meeting, a new K-8 (CPS) policy on cell phones was adopted by unanimous vote. Smart watches were added. The prohibition of cell phone use was already in-place via the handbook, but was not formalized as policy. Now it is. A plan for CCHS is forthcoming and will take more time to hash out and adopt. Meanwhile, MA State policy (law) is taking shape and Rep Simon Cataldo is supporting this effort. [Read more here.](#)

Our Take: Many private schools have successful bell-to-bell bans. We are supportive of this policy.

New Thoreau Playground Approved By SC, Hits Fundraising Goal

From the Thoreau's Playground website, "On Wednesday, April 30th, Thoreau's Backyard playground project was officially approved by the Concord Public School Committee! This means we are moving into the next exciting phase of this project, so we can prepare to build a new playground in just a few short months."

Our Take: We are pleased the administration and SC collaborated with concerned caregivers regarding inclusiveness and ADA compliance and worked with the various parties involved so that that the now-approved design takes this into account.

UPCOMING EDUCATION-RELATED EVENTS:

TONIGHT: Wednesday June 11: RIBBON CUTTING AND OPEN HOUSE: We are excited for the 5:00 PM event at the Ellen Garrison Building at CMS and hope to see you there!

GET INVOLVED!

Here are some things you can do to involve yourself and learn about the issues that impact our schools/town:

- **Attend an upcoming School Committee Meeting.** By being there in-person or by Zoom, you can learn about the issues and "sense" the energy in the room. Check the agenda and schedule [here](#).
- **Join our mailing list.** Our goal is to inform and educate on issues related to education in Concord. Please pass this on to involved parents and Concordians you know and [join our mailing list here](#).
- **Mark August 19, 2025 on your calendar:** Town ballot vote to approve the CCHS Amenities Building.