

MANCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION**Regular Meeting
February 11, 2015**

Bowers Elementary School Library

PRESENT: Crockett, Cruz, Hagenow, Leon, Pattacini, Pazda, Scappaticci, Stafford, Thames

ALSO PRESENT: Superintendent of Schools Geary, Assistant to the Superintendent for Finance & Management Brooks, Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Personnel Services Matfess, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum Radikas

ABSENT:

A. OPENING

A.1. & 2. Meeting Called to Order

Chairperson Pattacini called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m. He explained that this was the first of the alternating location meetings, which will be held once a month in various elementary schools. All in attendance participated in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, which was held by a Bower's student, led by Mr. Pattacini.

A.3. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

APPROVED – Minutes Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of January 28, 2015. Secretary Scappaticci moved and Mr. Crockett seconded the motion.

9/0 – Voted in favor.

A.4. Approval of Minutes of Budget Workshop

APPROVED – Minutes of Budget Workshop Meeting of the Board of Education of February 4, 2015. Secretary Scappaticci moved and Mr. Leon seconded the motion.

9/0 – Voted in favor.

B. CONSENT CALENDAR

Mr. Geary presented four items on the Consent Calendar for Board approval.

B.1. Personnel Information

Details had already been provided to the Board members with their agenda.

B.2. Establish an appropriation for the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving for FY 14-15 Trimester 3 and 4-week Boot Camp and first trimester of FY 15-16 grant in the amount of \$50,000

B.3. Ratification of Tutor Contract – Manchester Tutor Association, Local 6545 AFT, AFL-CIO

B.4. Transfer of Funds

Details had already been provided to the Board members in their agenda folders.

- Transfer from System-wide Language Arts Dues & Fees account to System-wide Language Arts Professional Development account in the amount of \$2,000
- Transfer from System-wide Math Professional Development account to System-wide Math Instructional Supplies & Materials account in the amount of \$3,000

The Chairman called for a motion.

Secretary Scappaticci moved to strike Item 3 from the Consent Calendar, as that item is not yet ready to come before the Board this evening. Mr. Leon seconded the motion.

9/0 – Voted in favor.

Secretary Scappaticci moved and Mr. Crockett seconded the recommendation to adopt the Consent Calendar as amended.

9/0 - Voted in favor.

C. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Tom Stringfellow, 183 Hillstown Road, felt it was a good turnout tonight. He was glad to see Black History Month displays in the Bower's library. Mr. Stringfellow recently saw the movie *Selma*, which is about the right to vote. He pointed out articles in several publications, including *National Geographic Kids* about Martin Luther King, Jr. and President's Day, which is next Monday. Mr. Stringfellow pointed out that next month is Women's History Month and the children should know the story of Amelia Earhart. Regarding college bound students, the reference book *If the U Fits* was

recommended regarding advise on finding the right college and interviewing. Mr. Stringfellow spoke about the planetarium in a neighboring magnet school in Glastonbury. Last, Mr. Stringfellow recommended the *Everything Parent's Guide to Teenage Addiction*.

D. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT – PART I

D.1. Bowers School Improvement Plan

Mr. Geary stated we are excited to be here at Bowers for this Board meeting. Before we hear about Bowers School Improvement Plan, Mr. Geary and Mr. Pattacini wanted to recognize several students who are on the Robotics Club at Bowers with certificates. Mr. Geary pointed out that STEM is critical to our Nation's future.

Dr. Ruggiero, Principal of Bowers, stated she was thrilled to be asked to host this meeting. She presented a power point which was supplemented by students, teachers, coaches, a social worker and even a parent speaking. The theme at Bowers is Creativity, Courage, Collaboration and Excellence.

Mr. Thames thanked everyone for their presentation and thought it was absolutely wonderful, and clearly a lot of work went into it.

Ms. Pazda agreed with the parent who stated Bowers is an awesome school! She thought this was a phenomenal presentation and Dr. Ruggiero set the bar high for the other schools.

**A short recess was called to allow the students and families to depart.
8:06 p.m.**

Back in session 8:16 p.m.

Representatives from Bowers PTA also spoke about the various activities they raise funds for, including field trips, family nights, ice-cream socials, and multi-cultural events. They also touched on the time capsule which was recently opened and plans for a new one to go back in the wall to be opened in the year 2039.

D.2. Family Resource Centers

Mr. Geary noted there are five full-time Family Resource Centers in the Title 1 schools and recently non-title schools opened part-time Family Resource Centers. He introduced the Director of the Family Recourse Centers, Ms. Latasha Turnquest. Ms. Turnquest presented data gathered on the full time FRCs as of December 31, 2014. This information is available on the website and outlines the enrollment, attendance, enrichment components, and resources involved in the FRCs.

Ms. Turnquest reviewed there are five components of the Family Recourse Center:

- Family Engagement
- Outreach
- Playgroups
- Positive Youth Development
- Resource & Referral

Some of the next steps Ms. Turnquest envisions:

- Grocery tours – virtual tours that show how to cook inexpensive and healthy meals and will include a \$5 ShopRite coupon
- Face the Need – students submitting artwork regarding poverty and hunger
- 5th grade leadership conference initiated by Rhonda Philbert, our Equity Coordinator, at Manchester High School around team-building and literacy in April
- 1-2-3 Magic discipline, partnering with ECHN Family Development Center
- Partnership with Adult Ed with GED or ELL classes being offered

Ms. Pazda noted that this level of support for our families is important for the ultimate goal of student success. She wondered how families are targeted and what hours the FRC runs. Ms. Turnquest noted mostly the schedule is 8-4, however the schedule can be flexed if there are evening events. One way to engage families is that she is attending some SAT meetings and in the Fall they will dig deeper into how to reach out to more families.

Mr. Thames feels they have been doing a great job of tracking statistics. He thinks there is a need to make an effort to outreach to those families who are not engaged. He wondered if referrals are made to families for services such as food stamps and energy assistance. Ms. Turnquest noted there have been referrals made for mental health services and social workers do help with accessing basic needs. She also pointed out that Verplanck, Robertson, and Washington recently started a weekend snack bag partnering with Manchester Area Conference of Churches for students to take home on Fridays. Mr. Thames suggested utilizing 2-1-1 and Ms. Turnquest acknowledged she is familiar with them.

Mr. Leon thanked Ms. Turnquest for her presentation and the incredible job being done. The statistics are amazing and Mr. Leon feels it shows outreach is necessary in our community and the community needs to understand that in the future if this is not funded under the Alliance Grant it will still need to be funded.

Ms. Turnquest noted she is also working on getting out surveys for all the programs to gain feedback from the participants.

Mr. Leon wondered if some of the people being reached by the FRC are families that were previously not very active with the school. Dr. Ruggiero stated she does feel they are reaching families that had not previously participated in activities.

Mr. Stafford was impressed and looks forward to hearing more in the future. Ms. Turnquest volunteered to come back in the spring with data from the part-time Family Resource Centers that just opened recently.

Ms. Cruz was also impressed with the good, hard work clearly evident. She asked about the referral process and follow-up. Ms. Turnquest reviewed they assess the need of a parent contacting them, or a teacher pointing out a child with no coat, or worn shoes, and the need is addressed or referred to an appropriate professional. Ms. Cruz also asked if there was any thought regarding an initiative for fatherhood engagement. Ms. Turnquest stated there was and they are partnering with the Family Development Center around this.

Ms. Cruz wondered about the five home visits conducted and who goes on those. Ms. Turnquest stated that was a special circumstance with one of the FRC coordinators having a previous relationship with a family. She went on to state that the Family Development Center already conducts home visits, and have several programs around home visits, and they will not be trying to duplicate those efforts. Mr. Geary added that our social workers do conduct home visits when necessary.

Mr. Pattacini congratulated Ms. Turnquest on the hard work and looks forward to an updated report in the future.

E. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

F. NEW BUSINESS

F.1. Action on Recommended Board of Education 2015/2016 Budget

Mr. Pattacini noted that at the last budget workshop the Board seemed confident in the budget and he asked for a motion.

Secretary Scappaticci moved for the Board to adopt the recommended Board of Education 2015/2016 Budget. It was clarified via friendly amendment that the FY 2015/2016 budget amount is \$109,147,246. Mr. Crockett seconded the motion.

Mr. Leon thanked the administration and feels it is a thoughtful, well-developed, collaborative budget and that this is money well spent on talented people and he supports the budget.

Ms. Pazda thanked Superintendent Geary and his staff for a comprehensive, thorough and thoughtful budget that was easy to understand and reflects effective and strategic instructional practice and accountability for results. Ms. Pazda feels this budget supports the achievement of all students, regardless of what school they attend or what neighborhood they live in. She thanked the public for supporting the school referendum and recognized the tax burden that has been incurred, to improve the buildings. She wants everyone to remember that rigorous curriculum is important and children are the heart and soul of this process. There is no quick fix regarding closing the achievement gap, but this budget supports a trajectory that trends us toward success for all of our children as it supports teachers, administrators, and staff. We are on our way to changing the perception and reality of Manchester Public Schools. Ms. Pazda supports the budget.

Mr. Pattacini stated this multi-faceted and unprecedented budget focuses on student centered outcomes. All the precedents being made in this budget are made with a focus on student achievement and improved outcomes for all students. This Board heard from the community regarding the conditions of our buildings and he was happy to see an increase in our maintenance account in this budget. Mr. Pattacini feels this cost effective budget is one of the lowest increases in recent years with an administration committed to ensure efficient use of grant funds. He supports the budget.

The vote was called.

9/0 – Voted in favor.

G. COMMITTEE REPORTS

None.

H. PUBLIC COMMENTS (Limited to items on tonight's agenda)

Mr. Tom Stringfellow, 183 Hillstown Road, supports the three items on the Consent Calendar. He felt the Bowers presentation by students and staff was good. He noted he is the product of public schools. Mr. Stringfellow felt the report from Ms. Turnquest was good and he is glad to hear about plans to outreach to fathers. He wishes more of his recommendations would be listened to. He supports the budget, which was clear and concise. He hopes for a better year under Mr. Geary.

I. COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Leon thanked Dr. Ruggiero for hosting this evening.

Ms. Cruz asked if we can come back again.

Mr. Pattacini noted this was a risk, trying something new, and that vision is permeating our district. It is exciting to see people taking risks.

J. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

K. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Pattacini called for a motion to adjourn.

Secretary Scappaticci moved and **Mr. Leon** seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting.

/0 - Voted in favor.

Adjournment 9:08p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jason Scappaticci
Board Secretary