

MANCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION

Regular Meeting February 24, 2020 Lincoln

PRESENT: Gundersen, Heinrich, Hughes, Meggers, Pattacini, Patterson, Scappaticci

ALSO PRESENT: Superintendent of Schools Geary, Deputy Superintendent Curriculum & Special Services Radikas, Director of Finance & Management Clancy, Director of Human Resources Sone-Moyano

ABSENT: Stefanovicz, Thames

A. OPENING

A.1. & 2. Meeting Called to Order

Acting Chairperson Pattacini called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. All in attendance participated in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, led by Mr. Pattacini.

A.3. Secretary's Welcome

Mr. Heinrich stated that as Acting Secretary of the Board of Education, he wished to extend a warm welcome to everyone present and to the television viewers. He, along with the Board and the Superintendent, were pleased to be joined in celebrating the achievement, reviewing information, and discussing areas for growth, along with making policy decisions related to the effective operation of the Manchester Public Schools. Mr. Heinrich explained that this is a regular meeting of the Board and all items that will be discussed or voted on this evening have been posted, as required by state law.

Mr. Heinrich explained that as the Manchester Board of Education, they are here to set goals, listen to reports of the Superintendent, approve budgets, contracts, and personnel appointments, and to create policy for the district. They are not here to make management decisions or solve the problems of individuals.

Members of the public with individual concerns may contact the Superintendent directly. It was explained that meetings of the Board are open to the public, but are not meetings with individual members of the public. Therefore, comments from the audience will be confined to the time designated for the public to address the Board.

Last, Mr. Heinrich noted he is proud of this school system and appreciates the public for their interest in this evening's meeting and the Manchester Public Schools.

A.4. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

APPROVED – Minutes Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of February 10, 2020. Acting Secretary Heinrich moved and Mr. Scappaticci seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION:

Mr. Gundersen asked for a friendly amendment to the minutes, clarifying his statement regarding the budget.

6/0/1 – Voted in favor of the minutes with the friendly amendment.

B. COMMITTEE REPORTS

B.1. Curriculum & Instruction Committee

Mr. Scappaticci reviewed the last meeting was held February 10, 2020. In attendance were Mr. Gundersen, Mr. Meggers, Mr. Scappaticci, Ms. Stefanovicz, Dr. Radikas, Ms. Burns, Ms. Ghetia, Ms. Miner, Ms. Hayes, Ms. Lambert, Mr. Steffenson , Ms. Torres and Mr. Zappala.

The MHS staff provided an overview of several new course offerings, including Musical Theater, Manufacturing, UConn - Allied Health Professional, CNA/EMT certification, as well as several Extended Learning Credit Opportunities - Career Exploration Internship, Community Service and Independent Study. Shifts in course offerings and pathways allow students authentic, engaging learning

experiences, while simultaneously fulfilling graduation requirements and preparing students for post high school opportunities.

MHS E-Sports was discussed and the Committee was in support of adding the game Fortnite.

Committee members logged into Unit Planner to review the curriculum updates that have been made K-12. They discussed the updated policy for curriculum revision and the ongoing work that continues to occur across grade levels and content areas.

C. CONSENT CALENDAR

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

C.1. Personnel Action

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

C.2. Transfer of Funds

- Transfer from System-wide Plant Maintenance Capital Repair account in the amount of \$60,000 to System-wide Plant Maintenance Contracted Repairs account in the amount of \$30,000, to System-wide Plant Maintenance Grounds Beautification account in the amount of \$10,000, and to System-wide Plant Maintenance Contracted Services account in the amount of \$20,000.
- Transfer from System-wide Plant Operations Other Purchased Services account in the amount of \$4225 to System-wide Plant Operations Professional Development account in the amount of \$985.00, to System-wide Plant Operations Dues and Fees account in the amount of \$840.00, and to System-wide Plant Operations Contracted Services account in the amount of \$2,400.

C.3. Permission to apply for FY 19-20 for the Liberty Bank Foundation Grant

C.4. Establish an appropriation for FY 19-21 for the Title IV, Part A, Student Support and Academics Enrichment Grant, in the amount of \$109,555

The Chairman called for a motion.

Acting Secretary Heinrich moved and Mr. Scappaticci seconded the recommendation to accept the Consent Calendar as outlined in tonight's agenda.

7/0 - Voted in favor.

D. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

None.

E. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Genaro Gonzalez, III, 4 Pearl Street, noted that recently his daughter was kicked and punched at Illing. He asked his daughter if the police officer at the school helped her. She stated no, that the security guards did. Mr. Gonzalez feels the police won't be there until someone pulls a gun. Having officers in schools is a waste of money. With the savings found by not having officers in schools, Mr. Gonzalez suggested we could give some funding to teachers and employ even more security guards. He feels there are too many problems with officers in schools, noting the SRO that was removed from his position in the past. Mr. Gonzalez is very happy with the security staff at Illing, noting that they are invested and well trained. He does not want his children around cops, learning to become an informant and putting themselves in danger.

Mr. Tom Stringfellow, 183 Hillstown Road, noted that this is the last week of African American Month. He suggested a book by Dr. Andrew Delblanco entitled *War Before the War* about slaves. He suggested an article in *TIME's* March 2nd issue regarding Martin Luther King and noted he died for all Americans. Mr. Stringfellow heard about the movie *Seaburg* coming out with Kristin Stewart and he looks forward to this story about black politics. Mr. Stringfellow mentioned the anniversary of Iwo Jima and some articles in local papers about the topic. Last, he recommended the book, *Double V*.

F. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT – PART I

F.1. Winter Data Update

Mr. Geary gave an informative update on the data, comparing the winter data against the last several years. His presentation is available on the website.

Mr. Hughes thanked Mr. Geary for the informative presentation. Mr. Hughes noted a smaller gap in performance at the elementary level. Mr. Geary noted we are doing well in elementary, better than the state average. We have work to do in grades 5-8. There is a solid plan in place 7-8. In 5-6 we need to remember we moved kids around so each year should get better. Mr. Geary noted there is also good work happening at the high school, pointing out a drop in arrests from 120 in 2012 to 11 last year.

Mr. Scappaticci questioned the points attributed to enrolling in a post-secondary institution in an age where it is nationally recognized that not all students should be pushed to college. He wondered if work is being done to ask the state to change that number. Mr. Geary noted that it is a federal thing related to No Child Left Behind.

Mr. Scappaticci spoke about higher education originally being used to turn white men into Catholic priests. Later the GI bill brought more men and a few women into higher education. Women and black men were further encouraged through Title 19 and Affirmative Action. Mr. Scappaticci stated there are still not enough students of color pursuing higher education. It is a systematic problem. When you are worried about where you will live you are dealing with complex problems. Mr. Geary noted the Board's attorney had several legal concerns with the 50 in 5 proposal. We desire a diverse workforce, but it is difficult to achieve. Mr. Geary noted that Tom Mooney offered to work on the proposal for free. Mr. Scappaticci noted this is a national struggle and from Kindergarten we need to change the way we teach and learn.

Mr. Pattacini thanked Mr. Geary for the context of the report and for bringing it to life with examples. Mr. Pattacini inquired what the plan looks like for the middle school. Mr. Geary mentioned at Iling making clear the system and processes, clarifying electronic devices restrictions, empowering student voice,

helping staff connect deeply with students, stem electives and other curriculum work. We have high expectations for kids. At Bennet we have to remember this recently went from a one year school to two years and 5th graders are developmentally more like elementary students. We are looking at fewer transitions and movement, higher academic demand and connecting better with families.

Mr. Pattacini asked about Science. Mr. Geary noted the Next Generation Science Standards are only about 4 years old and it takes time for the state to adopt standards and then to unpack them and create new curriculum around them. This is the first year the district standards have aligned with the NGSS.

Mr. Pattacini thanked Mr. Geary and the staff and administration for their work. This is a complex, systemic problem that we are trying to solve all across America. He thanked Mr. Geary for the context regarding Manchester's struggle. Mr. Pattacini noted that when he first became involved in the Board of Education approximately 10 years ago the free/reduced lunch population in Manchester was about 30%. During that time the state was flat funding education. Many people do not realize that while some towns' populations remained stable, in Manchester we went from 30% f/r lunch to approximately 60% free/reduced lunch and continued with flat funding. Other towns like East Hartford and Meriden underwent the same type of situation. We need to make up for problems created at the state level and oversimplifying a problem does not solve that problem. We need to unpack the data and see where student needs are.

Regarding the 50 in 5 program, Mr. Pattacini can see why that is important when looking at the data. We cannot measure it, but it is proven that kids do better when they look like their teacher. We need to try new things. Mr. Pattacini is excited and grateful. We need a systemic approach and Mr. Geary is leading us in that direction. We want our students to recognize how they participate in society. Mr. Geary stated that he loves Manchester. If he did not believe in our district, he would take a job in another town and put his children in other schools. He would not put his children in a space they couldn't learn in. That said, we do have work to do, thoughtful, measured, full picture work.

Mr. Pattacini noted that at MHS there are opportunities there that do not exist in high schools throughout the state. We have a high number of AP offerings.

G. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

G.1. Policy Recommendations

Mr. Pattacini noted this is the second read of these policy changes and no questions were forwarded about them to the administration.

a. Policy 4304

Acting Secretary Heinrich moved to adopt Policy 4304 - Reports of Suspected Abuse or Neglect of Child (by Anyone) or Sexual Assault of Students by School Employees. Mr. Scappaticci seconded the motion.

7/0 - Voted in favor.

b. Policy 4118

Acting Secretary Heinrich moved to adopt Policy 4118 - Alcohol, Tobacco, and Drug Free Workplace. Mr. Scappaticci seconded the motion.

7/0 - Voted in favor.

c. Policy 4013

Acting Secretary Heinrich moved to adopt Policy 4013 - Sex Discrimination and Harassment in the Workplace. Mr. Scappaticci seconded the motion.

7/0 - Voted in favor.

d. Policy 4114

Acting Secretaryb Heinrich moved to adopt Policy 4114 - Non-Discrimination. Mr. Scappaticci seconded the motion.

7/0 - Voted in favor.

e. Policy 4000

Acting Secretary Heinrich moved to adopt Policy 4000 - Employment and Student Teacher Checks. Mr. Scappaticci seconded the motion.

7/0 - Voted in favor.

H. NEW BUSINESS

H.1. Policy Recommendations

Mr. Pattacini noted this was a first read for these three policies.

a. Policy 5144 - Student Discipline.

Mr. Geary noted this policy change was regarding new legislation around expulsion rules.

b. Policy 5118.1 - Homeless Students

Mr. Geary noted this policy change incorporates unaccompanied minors into the homeless definition and is also the result of a legislative change.

c. Policy 5005 - Food Allergies and/or Glycogen Storage Disease

Mr. Geary reviewed this change also was the result of new legislation.

Mr. Pattacini reviewed that if after careful examination of the policy changes board members had any questions, they should forward such to the administration so they can be answered at the next meeting. If there are no questions they will be voted on at the next meeting.

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

Mr. Tom Stringfellow, 183 Hillstown Road, supports the Consent Calendar, the unfinished business, along with the new business. Mr. Stringfellow mentioned the high cost of Epi-pens. He enjoyed the presentation by Mr. Geary. Mr. Stringfellow recommended an op-ed article in the *New York Times* about what students need to learn. In the *New Britain Herald* he suggested articles about the flu, heart health and obesity. Mr. Stringfellow mentioned it is Census time next month. He suggested an article on young women in technology in *Hartford* magazine as well as an article in the *Glastonbury Citizen* on applying for college scholarships.

J. COMMUNICATIONS

None.

K. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

March 9, 2020 - Keeney School Improvement Plan at Keeney Elementary

March 23, 2020 - Illing School Improvement Plan at Illing Middle School

April 6, 2020 - Martin School Improvement Plan at Martin Elementary

April 20, 2020 - Verplanck School Improvement Plan at Verplanck Elementary

L. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Pattacini called for a motion to adjourn.

Mr. Scappaticci moved and Ms. Patterson seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting.

7/0 - Voted in favor.

Adjournment 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Campfield Heinrich
Acting Board Secretary