

## **MANCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION**

### **Regular Meeting**

**March 13, 2017**

Verplanck

**PRESENT:** Caldwell, Conyers, Hagenow, Jacobsen, Leon, Pattacini, Stefanovicz, Thames

**ALSO PRESENT:** Superintendent of Schools Geary, Deputy Superintendent Curriculum & Special Services Radikas, Director of Finance & Management Clancy

**ABSENT:** Scappaticci

#### **A. OPENING**

##### **A.1. & 2. Meeting Called to Order**

**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. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting**

**APPROVED – Minutes Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of February 27, 2017. Acting Secretary Leon moved and Mr. seconded the motion.**

**8/0 – Voted in favor.**

#### **B. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

##### **B.1. Personnel & Finance Committee**

**Mr. Thames** reported the last meeting was held February 27, 2017 with the following people in attendance: Mr. Caldwell, Ms. Hagenow, Mr. Leon, Mr. Pattacini, Mr. Thames, Mr. Geary, Ms. Clancy, and Mr. Staye.

The 2017-17 Budget status report was distributed by Ms. Clancy. Ms. Clancy provided an overview of the report including expenditure projects through the rest of the year. She explained the budget has been frozen to address potential further reduction in municipal aid to the town, but the budget remains stable, though tight.

Ms. Clancy distributed a handout of the Governor's proposed 17-18 budget, which includes a reduction in ECS funding, a slight increase in the Adult Ed grant and allocation for a new special education grant. The proposal also includes a requirement for Town's and Boards of Education to contribute to teacher pension. Budgeting is difficult with the many unknowns in this proposal.

Ms. Clancy provided an update on the current bargaining unit contracts being negotiated. There are six contracts being negotiated. The Manchester School Nurse's contract expired June 30, 2016 and the remaining five contracts, Buildings & Grounds Supervisors, Food Service Employees, Hall Monitors, Paraprofessionals and Tutors, all expire June 30, 2017.

Ms. Clancy distributed a handout regarding the Transportation contract, which expires June 30, 2017. We are currently in a collaborative with Ellington, Somers and Vernon through the Capitol Region Education Council. A request for proposal went out February 22nd and a mandatory pre-proposal conference will be held March 3rd. Proposals are due March 17th. A list of 18 contractors that received the bid was reviewed.

Mr. Staye reviewed information with the Committee on an alternative to our annual auction process. Public Surplus is a web-based public surplus auction. There is no cost to the district.

There was a brief discussion of the Town Pension Board and it was recommended that Ms. Clancy attend those meetings.

The next Personnel & Finance Committee meeting will be held April 24th.

**C. CONSENT CALENDAR**

**Acting Secretary Leon moved to add the following as #6 on the Consent Calendar: BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education and Board of Directors hereby establish SMARTR2, whose charge it shall be to:**

- 1. Conduct a review of original proposal for Phase II and consider its appropriateness in the context of district-wide enrollment data, racial balance goals, and any other pertinent information or data which will inform cost effective capital investments to provide an appropriate and sustainable elementary school infrastructure for the next generation taking into account the initial plan as presented to the community in 2014;**
- 2. The membership, drawn where appropriate for members who served on the original SMARTR, shall consist of**
  - 2 Board of Education members chosen by the Board of Education**
  - 2 Board of Directors members chosen by the Board of Directors**
  - 1 member of the Building Committee to be recommended for Board of Directors approval**
  - 4 members of the public to be approved by the Majority and Minority Leaders of both bodies**
- 3. SMARTR2 shall report its findings and recommendations for Phase II to the Boards by December 31, 2017;**
- 4. The Committee shall have available for its use up to \$50,000 for engineering, architectural, demographic or other related work.**

**Ms. Hagenow seconded the motion to add this as #6 on the Consent Calendar.**

**DISCUSSION:**

**Mr. Leon** wondered whose budget the \$50,000 was coming from. Mr. Geary confirmed the Town budget would cover the \$50,000.

**8/0 - Voted in favor of amending the Consent Calendar**

**Mr. Geary** presented six items on the amended 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 Elementary Enrichment Instructional Supplies & Materials account to Elementary Enrichment Dues & Fees account in the amount of \$2,560
- Transfer from System-wide Plant Operations Other Purchased Services account to System-wide Plant Operations Contracted Services account in the amount of \$8,500
- Transfer from System-wide Plant Operations Repairs (\$2,000) and transfer from System-wide Plant Operations Rentals (\$7,000) to System-wide Plant Operations Custodial Supplies & Materials account for a total transfer of \$9,000
- Transfer from System-wide Medical Services Medical Supplies & Materials account to System-wide Medical Services Travel & Lodging account in the amount of \$1,249

**C.3. Approval of Manchester High School "Project Graduation" for FY 16/17 in the amount of \$1,000**

**C.4. Approval of the Manchester High School Graduation date for SY 16/17**

**C.5. Permission to apply for the FY17/18 General Improvements to Alliance Districts' School Building Grant Program in the amount of \$1,080,000**

**C.6. BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Education and Board of Directors hereby establish SMARTR2, whose charge it shall be to:**

**1. Conduct a review of original proposal for Phase II and consider its appropriateness in the context of district-wide enrollment data, racial balance goals, and any other pertinent information or data which will inform cost effective capital investments to provide an appropriate and sustainable elementary school infrastructure for the next generation taking into account the initial plan as presented to the community in 2014;**

**2. The membership, drawn where appropriate for members who served on the original SMARTR, shall consist of**

**2 Board of Education members chosen by the Board of Education**  
**2 Board of Directors members chosen by the Board of Directors**  
**1 member of the Building Committee to be recommended for Board of Directors approval**  
**4 members of the public to be approved by the Majority and Minority Leaders of both bodies**

**3. SMARTR2 shall report its findings and recommendations for Phase II to the Boards by December 31, 2017;**

**4. The Committee shall have available for its use up to \$50,000 for engineering, architectural, demographic or other related work.**

The Chairman called for a motion.

Acting Secretary Leon moved and Ms. Hagenow seconded the recommendation to adopt the amended Consent Calendar as outlined in tonight's agenda.

## **DISCUSSION:**

**Mr. Pattacini** asked Mr. Geary to review the list of items that would benefit from #5 funding. Mr. Geary provided a list and reviewed it. The list is available on the website.

**Ms. Jacobsen** wondered why four rooms at Highland Park need to have floor tiles replaced just 5 years after a renovation. Mr. Staye reviewed that in the original portion of the building there was a wood floor and the renovation used a floating floor over it. Over the last several years that floating floor proved incompatible with the cleaning methods used and there are large bumps now. Last winter testing was done to determine the type of floor needed and a solution was found for a different type of floating floor.

**The Chairman called the question.**

**8/0 - Voted in favor.**

## **D. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT**

**Nabila Hoor Un Ein** reviewed that CAPT testing is March 15th. The MHS musical *Godspell* is being performed this Thursday, Friday and Saturday, March 16-18. Tickets are \$7 for students and \$9 for adults. The National Honor Society is hosting a dance on March 17th. World Down Syndrome Day is March 21st and a crazy sock fundraiser will be held. Mr. MHS for the Junior and Senior classes will be on March 24th. Last, a College Planning Night for Juniors and their parents is on March 30th.

## **E. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

**Ms. Sandra Lok**, 54 Steeple Chase Drive, introduced Andy, one of the therapy dogs that works at Verplanck two days a week and throughout town over the last several years. The Board members all enjoyed saying hello to this valued member of the Manchester Public Schools.

## **F. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT – PART I**

### **F.1. Verplanck School Improvement Plan**

**Mr. Geary** noted we are excited to be here at Verplanck and introduced Nicolas Jones, Jr., Principal. Mr. Jones presented a PowerPoint along with members of

the Verplanck Community, including the Vice Principal, teachers, a parent and even students contributing.

**Mr. Thames** thanked everyone, especially the scholars, and is encouraged by their standard of excellence.

**Ms. Jacobsen** loved the presentation and scholars. She wondered how many classes participate in APTT. Mr. Jones reviewed that program is being piloted in grades 2 and 3 and about 60 parents have participated so far.

Ms. Jacobsen wondered how students who are on track are being further engaged. Ms. Johnston reviewed that small group instruction is not just for those students striving to reach grade level, but also for the teacher to deepen the level of understanding and extend the learning of students that are already on or above grade level.

**Ms. Stefanovicz** asked Ms. Nelson if she noticed a theme among students who came to class not ready to learn. Ms. Nelson noted that often a change in routine, such as a long weekend or other disruption, is usually evident. Once students feel they have had the opportunity to share whatever the issue is it becomes more manageable and students get ready to learn.

**Mr. Leon** asked if students are reporting a lower number on the scale of readiness to learn on a regular basis, does Ms. Nelson contact a parent. Ms. Nelson stated she would if it were a consistent pattern, but more often than not it is a 1-2 day issue that resolves after meeting with the student.

**Mr. Pattacini** is excited to hear about the APTT feedback. He thinks it is great for parents to be engaged in their child's learning. He also felt the proactive use of the restorative practice is exciting. Mr. Pattacini is interested to see the Verplanck Compact once it is final.

## **F.2. Update on Board of Education 2017-2018 Budget**

**Mr. Geary** reviewed that last Wednesday was the first meeting with the Board of Directors about the budget. They asked for answers to several questions, which were to be reviewed at tomorrow night's meeting. That meeting has now been rescheduled to March 28th due to the weather. Mr. Geary reviewed the questions and answers. He also outlined possible cuts to the budget for each million cut.

Mr. Geary reviewed that we have a comparable number of administrators to similar districts, though they are not all organized the same way, with some districts having Department Chairs who teach and also evaluate peers.

Mr. Geary noted we are proud of the number of students taking AP UCONN courses, noting we have the second most UCONN high school students in the state. We are working on increasing the number of black and latino students taking these courses.

**Ms. Jacobsen** noted that was a lot of information the Board of Directors asked for. She does not like the thought of losing so many teachers if the time comes to cut positions, and wondered if other positions could be considered instead. Mr. Pattacini noted that this is simply information the Board of Directors asked for, not the time to look at alternatives. We will have the opportunity to discuss that during Budget Workshops once the final budget numbers are given. Mr. Geary did point out that too many other employees would have to be cut to equal the number of administrators and certified staff as their pay rate is lower.

**Ms. Stefanovicz** never wants to see class size go over 22 students. Mr. Geary noted it would be unlikely to go over that number.

**Mr. Thames** thought it would be helpful to show a column where the total impact is shown, were possible, to clarify the numbers.



## **G. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

### **G.1. Policy Recommendation**

#### **a. Policy 4000 - Employment Checks**

**Acting Secretary Leon moved for the Board of Education to adopt Policy 4000 - Employment Checks. Ms. Hagenow seconded the motion.**

#### **DISCUSSION:**

**Mr. Conyers** asked Mr. Geary to review the timeline of when the first and second background check would be done. Mr. Geary reviewed the first check is instantaneous and the second check, which includes fingerprints, takes about 2-3 weeks to come back. Mr. Conyers wondered if an employee started work prior to that second check coming back, is it probational. Mr. Geary verified it is conditional on the background check coming back acceptable.

**The vote was called.**

**8/0 - Voted in favor.**

## **H. NEW BUSINESS**

### **H.1. Policy Recommendation/Revisions**

- a. Policy 4141 - Personnel - Reports of Suspected Abuse or Neglect of Children or Sexual Assault of Students by School Employees**
- b. Policy 5141.2 - Students - Child Sexual Abuse and Assault**
- c. Policy 5012 - Section 504/ADA Policy for Students**
- d. Policy 4012 - Section 504/ADA Policy for Employees**

**Mr. Geary** reviewed these policies were previously done with student and staff information together and the town attorney recommended splitting the policies into separate sections. He reviewed the changes made to the policies.

**Ms. Stefanovicz** was perplexed by some wording in Policy 4141 regarding school employees. She also questioned the fact that in Appendix B the definition of sexual abuse is omitted, though it is present in Appendix C. Mr. Geary clarified the policy applies both to situations reported by employees and if the abuse was perpetrated by the employee. He will ask for the language to be clarified.

**Mr. Leon** wondered if Board members should be included as the policy current requires all school employees to report incidents. Mr. Geary will look into that.

**Ms. Jacobsen** wondered if we should add the word alleged as we have done in other policies. Mr. Geary will inquire about that as well.

**Mr. Geary** reviewed that Policy 5012 and 4012 were previously one policy that was split and there were no substantive changes made.

**Mr. Pattacini** reviewed we will get answers to the questions on the first two policies and decide on when those policies would be voted on, but the second two policies will be on the next agenda for approval.

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

None.

**J. COMMUNICATIONS**

None.

**K. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS**

None.

**L. ADJOURNMENT**

**Mr. Pattacini called for a motion to adjourn.**

**Acting Secretary Leon moved and Ms. Jacobsen seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting.**

**8/0 - Voted in favor.**

**Adjournment 8:55 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Neal Leon  
Acting Board Secretary