

MANCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION

Regular Meeting

April 17, 2017

Washington Elementary School

PRESENT: Caldwell, Conyers, Hagenow, Jacobsen, Leon, Pattacini, Scappaticci, Thames

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

ABSENT: Stefanovicz

A. OPENING

A.1. & 2. Meeting Called to Order

Chairperson Pattacini called the meeting back to order at 7:01 p.m. from an earlier Executive Session. 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 March 13, 2017. Secretary Scappaticci moved and Mr. Leon seconded the motion.

8/0 – Voted in favor.

B. COMMITTEE REPORTS

B.1. Curriculum & Instruction Committee

Ms. Jacobsen reported that the last meeting was held March 27, 2017. In attendance were Peter Conyers, Susan Jacobsen, Melanie Stefanovicz, Jason Scappaticci, Amy Radikas, Diane Sheehan-Burns, Melissa Doherty, Pari Ghetia,

Karen Gray, Jill Krieger, Katelyn Miner, Sinthia Sone-Moyano, Mark Ruede, and Idelisa Torres. Several items were reviewed:

1. Program of Studies MHS: Jill Krieger, principal of MHS, Katelyn Miner, Mark Ruede, and Idelisa Torres shared an overview of Personalized Learning, Imagine College and Careers 9 and the academies at MHS. Changes in offerings based on student feedback were discussed. Spanish II is now being tied to Medical Careers, as well as certification as an EMT and CNA. Science, Technology, Engineering and Math Design is bringing aviation back and Performing Arts Communications will add costume design to Fashion Class – the costumes to be used for MHS productions.
2. Head Start Seats: Sinthia Sone-Moyano, principal of Manchester Preschool Center, shared that the Head Start Policy Council – the governing body of Head Start – has approved reducing the number of seats available for for September 2017. The number of students per class will be reduced from 18 to 15 students. The reduction will result in removing 27 slots from the current 162 slots. This recommendation has not been approved by the regional office. Many other Head Start programs are also reducing student slots so that the social/emotional needs of students can be better met.
3. Humanities Update: Diane Sheehan-Burns, Director of Humanities, reviewed the Grade 3 Walking Tour. Historical Society volunteers provide support to this long standing event. The Walking Tour is now part of a history unit called Silk City – Then and Now. Ms. Burns shared how a first grade teacher chose to further develop a unit on characters in reading/writing – Meeting Characters- complete with a café book review and discussion.
4. STEAM Update: Pari Ghetia, Director of STEAM, discussed next steps for Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) implementation in curriculum and how to thoughtfully implement these new standards highlighting inquiry. The Science Fair and Invention Convention were a huge success. Support was provided through STEM specialists, UConn STEM students and MELC. Robotics – first year in place after-school K-8. Math curriculum update – in house support to strengthen the math workshop model based on needs of each school – work connected to School Improvement Plans.
5. Language and Literature – Karen Gray, Supervisor of Student Development and Diane Sheehan-Burns, Director of Humanities – provided an overview of a new course for all students at Bennet. The course, Language and Literature, has

been developed to support the importance of cultivating intercultural understanding and responsible membership in local, national and global communities. The language and literature course develops skills in the areas of listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing & presenting, critical thinking and creativity.

C. CONSENT CALENDAR

Mr. Geary presented eight 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. Extension of Manchester Federation of Paraeducators Contract, Local #3175, AFT, CT, AFL-CIO, the period July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2017

C.3. Extension of the Manchester Tutor Association Contract, Local #6545, AFT, AFL-CIO, the period July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2017

C.4. Transfer of Funds

- Transfer from Bowers School Administration Postage account (\$200) and from Bowers School Administration Printing and Advertising account (\$100) to Bowers School Administration Office Supplies account for a total transfer in the amount of \$300

C.5. Establish a preliminary appropriation for FY 17-18 for the Manchester Head Start Training and Technical Assistance in the amount of \$7,656

C.6. Establish a preliminary appropriation for FY 17-18 for the Enfield Head Start Training and Technical Assistance in the amount of \$5,568.50

C.7. Establish a preliminary appropriation for the FY 17-18 for the Enfield Head Start in the amount of \$413,866.50

C.8. Ratification of Manchester School Nurses Association, CSEA, Local 2001 SEIU, for the period July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2019.

The Chairman called for a motion.

Secretary Scappaticci moved and Mr. Leon seconded the recommendation to adopt the Consent Calendar as outlined in Section C of tonight's agenda.

8/0 - Voted in favor.

D. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

Shania Stanton reported:

- Tuesday, April 18th- Author visit from Matthew Dicks (Memoirs of an Imaginary Friend)
- Friday, April 21st- Sadie Hawkins Dance
 - Sponsored by the Freshman Class
- Tuesday, April 25th- Sophomore fundraiser at Wooster Pizza
- April 28th- "Chasing the Dragon" assemblies
 - Assemblies are for underclassman
- Class Board elections for new candidates
 - April 18-20th
- May 5th, Junior Prom at Maneeley's in South Windsor
 - 7-11pm
 - Tickets are going on sale April 17th-28th
- Class of 2017 Elementary Graduation Walks
 - Sign up Sheet and Letters are being sent home to parents

E. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Tom Stringfellow, 183 Hillstown Road, reminded us that April 22nd is Earth Day. He pointed out an article in *Family Circle* magazine about Autism Awareness Month. All students are important. Mr. Stringfellow would like a presentation by psychologists or social workers. He suggested articles in the *Wall Street Journal* and the *Boston Globe*. Mr. Stringfellow thinks books are important and he suggested several, including

biographies of former President Obama, former First Lady Obama, and current President Trump.

F. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT – PART I

F.1. Washington School Improvement Plan

Mr. Geary introduced Dr. James Collin, Principal of Washington Elementary. Dr. Collin's presentation is available on the website for viewing.

Mr. Scappaticci was curious about the yoga happening at Washington. Dr. Collin explained that there is a yoga room backstage at Washington where classes meet. Ms. Patty Lavey runs the classes and they include a story, exercises, and songs and introduce mindful breathing and quiet walking. She also meets with smaller groups/students with behavioral issues. The students love the classes for the most part, though the older kids gave some push back and classes are held less frequently than the original twice a week. Some staff have even taken part. Mr. Scappaticci likes the idea and the possibility of rolling it out elsewhere. Dr. Collin felt one of the reasons that the staff was so receptive to the idea was that Patty Lavey is a retired Manchester teacher with 35 years of experience. That brought credibility to her program.

Mr. Thames asked what grades take part in social thinking. Dr. Collin reviewed that is a full school (K-5) program. Mr. Thames wondered if there was an impact on suspension numbers. Dr. Collin noted there was not a direct correlation. The reason for the drop in suspensions is a conscious choice as an administrator. Social thinking provides tools and resources. Mr. Thames wondered how these tools are used to impact homelife. Dr. Collin noted that is a challenge and we roll the program out through evening programs, newsletters and recognition assemblies.

Mr. Thames asked about APTT (Academic Parent Teacher Teams). Dr. Collin explained grades K and 1 rolled out this new type of parent conference this year, where parents meet as a group and are able to see their child's achievement in relation to the rest of the class and to state goals. Parents work with teachers to set goals and learn activities to do with their children at home.

Ms. Jacobsen loves the ideas being implemented at Washington.

Mr. Caldwell asked about the GROW cards given to children. Dr. Collin explained that all staff can hand out the GROW cards and the child's name and what inspired the card are written on the card, but the cards are accumulated as a class, not individually, so the entire class earns a reward eventually. Teachers are in charge of the goals and some include extra recess or watching a video when a certain number of cards are acquired by the whole class.

Mr. Pattacini asked about the new idea in literacy being implemented at Washington. Dr. Collin explained that it is an ambitious approach and is challenging but we are seeing progress. The traditional model, where a teacher teaches the class, alters lessons per student need and possibly calls in the reading consultant for help, ideas, to pull a child for extra help, etc., works when Tier 1 instruction reaches about 85% of the class and only about 15% struggle. In our school Tier 1 is adequate for only about 30% of the class so that approach does not work here. What we have started to try in a specific class where 9 out of 17 students need support is the reading consultant and literacy coach both push into the class so there are 3 certified teachers leading groups at the same time. We have recently kept on a long-term sub to provide a similar model in the Kindergarten classes as well. We are trying to schedule the reading consultant around this type of program and work with Central Office to find other ways to continue this.

Mr. Leon wondered what the kids do that are not struggling during this time. Dr. Collin explained they do their group work, as they would in a typical class, exactly as they would normally.

Mr. Pattacini has been to APTT at Washington as well as a GROW ceremony and is impressed. He thinks the culture in the building is amazing and appreciates the hard work of the staff and how excited and willing they are to try new things and change it up to get the kids reading by grade 3.

G. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

H. NEW BUSINESS

None.

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

Mr. Tom Stringfellow, 183 Hillstown Road, thought it was a good presentation and he is impressed with the parents being involved at Washington. Mr. Stringfellow suggested several books and articles including topics such as East Asia, how trauma, homelessness, domestic violence and illness affect learning, and modern life. Mr. Stringfellow wants to Board to listen to what he says and look at diversity. He thinks the school system is coming along. All students can learn and we should get along as citizens.

J. COMMUNICATIONS

None.

K. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

None.

L. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Pattacini called for a motion to adjourn.

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

8/0 - Voted in favor.

Adjournment 7:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jason Scappaticci
Board Secretary