

## MANCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION

### Regular Meeting

May 9, 2016

MHS Room 293

**PRESENT:** Hagenow, Jacobsen, Leon, Pattacini, Scappaticci, Stafford, Stefanovicz, Thames

**ALSO PRESENT:** Superintendent of Schools Geary, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum Radikas

**ABSENT:** Pazda, Brooks

#### A. OPENING

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

**Chairperson Pattacini** called the meeting back to order at 7:04 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

**ADOPTED – Minutes Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of April 18, 2016. Secretary Scappaticci moved and Mr. Leon seconded the motion.**

**7/0 – Voted in favor. (Mr. Stafford was not yet in attendance)**

##### A.4. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

**ADOPTED - Minutes of Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of April 25, 2016. Secretary Scappaticci moved and Mr. Leon seconded the motion.**

**6/0/1 – Voted in favor. (Mr. Stafford was not yet in attendance)**

**B. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

None.

**C. CONSENT CALENDAR**

**Mr. Geary** presented two 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. Establish an appropriation in the amount of \$22,000 for the Heisman Scholars-Achieving by Reading Program Grant for FY 15/16**

**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.**

**7/0 - Voted in favor.**

**D. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT**

**Shania Stanton** let us know the pep rally will be held on May 24th and they are trying to break a world record.

**Lori Fogg** noted the senior picnic will be May 20th, the senior prom is on May 21st and Graduation is June 15th.

**Mr. Leon** asked about the pep rally. Ms. Stanton reviewed there will be games and they are trying to break the world record for largest dessert party, so come have some ice-cream! The event is at 1:08 pm and is open to the public. They are trying to have over 1000 people attend. It will be held on the Football Field.

**E. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Ms. Geraldine Reyes, 61 Charles Drive, has a daughter in 3rd grade at Bowers who made it into the State Finals of the Invention Convention. She thought all the kids did an amazing job and it was a community effort for the adult leaders at Manchester Public Schools. Ms. Reyes feels the STEM program is amazing. She reviewed that of the 12 students that received awards at the State Finals, six of them were from Manchester! She is proud of our kids and likes that they are seeing science in a new light and she thanked the administration, especially Santosha Oliver.

Ms. Gorica Aduge, 81 Dennison Ridge Road, has a 5th grader at Highland Park and a 4 year old who will attend there soon. She is upset that cursive writing is no longer taught to our students. She works with immigrants in her job and they also are unable to write in cursive, which gives the impression of being uneducated. Ms. Aduge recognizes this is the digital age, however we still have to read and write cursive on occasion and she hopes we can meet in the middle and at least teach students to read cursive and write their names clearly.

Mr. Tom Stringfellow, 183 Hillstown Road, is a member of MHS class of 1974. He feels students now are more engaged, not like when he was young, feeling like a number. In the Manchester *Reminder* on Thursday there was an article about honoring the flag in school. The 240th anniversary of the 4th of July is coming up. As a black man, the flag means something to him, standing for civil rights. He honors the American flag and feels the confederate flag is a flag of treason. Mr. Stringfellow recommended the books *Bright Kids Who Can't Keep Up* and *Ten Things Employers Want You to Learn in College*. He wished good luck to Ms. Fogg in college, noting she was a very good student representative. He mentioned The Hispanic American Association of Colleges travel award program. Mr. Stringfellow spoke about the initiative in the White House to make community college more accessible. He attended the state Board of Education meeting last week which was inspiring.

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

### **F.1. Student Representative Recognition**

**Mr. Geary** reviewed that we have two student representatives and one is graduating this year. Mr. Geary noted Lori Fogg has been a participating

contributor to the Board in her time as a Student Representative. Mr. Geary shared Lori's counselor, Ms. Batista's, note about Lori. Lori is driven, dedicated and mature. Mr. Pattacini presented Ms. Fogg with a plaque thanking her for her dedicated service to the Board.

## **F.2. Introduction of new Student Representation**

**Mr. Geary** welcomed the new student representative, Nabila Hoor Un Ein. She will take over next school year, but may attend meetings before then.

**Mr. Scappaticci** welcomed Nabila and stated he is looking forward to working with her. To Lori he stated it had been a pleasure to know her and he thought she was a helpful addition to the Board. He wished her the best of luck and told Lori she has what it takes to one day be a full-fledged Board member.

**Mr. Pattacini** thanked Lori for her service and for reminding us of what was going on at the high school and what's important. He welcomed Nabila to the Board.

## **F.3. Manchester High School School Improvement Plan**

**Ms. Jill Krieger**, Principal of Manchester High School, presented a PowerPoint of the school improvement plan, which was supplemented by many staff members.

**Ms. Jacobsen** likes the direction the school is taking. She wondered if the information packet was available in multiple languages. Ms. Krieger noted she is working with Scott Ratchford's department, the Office of Family Engagement, on this. She feels we have been better about sending things home in Spanish and other languages, as well as providing interpreters at meetings.

Ms. Jacobsen wondered about Special Education opportunities for transitioning into high school. Mr. Josh Curzan is a special ed teacher in 9th grade. He reviewed that a member of the special education department attends PPTs at Illing for incoming students. He noted most special ed students are mainstreamed and co-taught and there is additional support in a resource class

students can take in lieu of a study hall to help support them. These students are taught skills to be independent learners and to learn self-advocacy.

Ms. Jacobsen asked about the graduation rate for Special Education students and the number of students that go on to college. Ms. Krieger noted it depends which part of special education is being looked at. Ms. Krieger noted some incoming freshman have already visited this year to start to acclimate to the building and there is also Unified Arts in the school as well. There are many programs available.

**Mr. Leon** wondered how the teachers are given feedback after the walk-throughs that happen at the school. It was confirmed that the walk-throughs are not tied to teacher evaluations. Each department filters the feedback to the group in different ways. Mr. Leon has been on the board for seven years and has seen the high school go through a lot. He can feel the enthusiasm of the staff and sees their enjoyment of their jobs.

Mr. Leon was surprised to learn recently that many colleges are moving to SAT optional and looking more at what courses a student chooses to take. Ms. Krieger notes they try to get every student to take college level or above courses and the guidance department works hard to be sure students are challenged.

**Mr. Thames** feels the small learning communities have been embraced and he thanks Ms. Krieger for implementing that. He wonders how academic outcomes are tracked and measured versus the previous school atmosphere. Ms. Krieger noted one school-wide goal was the reduction of the failure rate and she has seen a bump in the graduation rates. They look at what courses students are scheduled in for 9th grade and monitor data, trying to push students to take higher levels. Ms. Krieger reviewed various ways we are working with students to be sure they are working at their full potential and monitoring data.

Mr. Thames wondered how the academies are marketed to students and parents and make them excited about them. Ms. Krieger noted they have assemblies and workshops for freshmen about the different academies. To parents, these

are presented at 8th grade parents' nights for incoming freshmen. Last year a pilot course (Imagine College and Career 9 - ICC9) was offered to 60 freshmen. Now all freshmen take this Imagine College course, which includes visits to college campuses. One of the reasons this has been expanded to all freshman is feedback from older students who felt this would have been beneficial to them as they started high school. Mr. Thames noted it is critical to get students onto college campuses early to expose them.

Mr. Thames spoke about diversity, equity and inclusion. He couldn't help but notice there is no African American representative of the staff this evening. He knows the Superintendent is working hard to strengthen the diversity of the staff.

**Mr. Scappaticci** is a 1999 graduate of MHS. His son, William, is a senior and loves the class he takes that works with the preschoolers. It is the one time he is actually excited to talk about what happened in school.

This is the first Mr. Scappaticci has heard about ICC9 and thinks it is a spectacular idea. He personally hadn't seen a college campus until fall of his senior year. He confirmed these trips are at no cost to the students.

**Ms. Hagenow** feels the opportunities students are given seem endless. She probably would have been more excited about school had she been offered these opportunities. Ms. Hagenow feels we are fortunate to have such dedicated teachers to help encourage our students to succeed.

**Ms. Fogg** asked about students not involved in an academy or those that do not have an interest in any of the academy topics. Ms. Krieger noted that next year those students will be enrolled in the Global Studies academy and can tie into anything they are interested in.

**Ms. Stanton** loves MHS and her experience in the Medical Careers Academy.

**Ms. Stefanowicz** applauds the staff and is proud of their work, efforts, and planning. She is proud of where MHS is and the trajectory of where it is going.

**Mr. Pattacini** feels we are doing a better job today of serving the needs of our community. He feels the academies serve to make the large school feel smaller and makes it easier for students to make connections.

**F.4. Update on Search for Director of Finance & Management**

**Mr. Geary** reviewed interviews for the new Director of Finance & Management will be held May 25th. The search committee is made up of three Board members, administrators and Central Office staff.

**F.5. Update on Bullying Policy**

**Mr. Geary** reviewed the attorneys have approved the word alleged to be added to the policy. The revised policy will be reviewed at the next Policy Committee before coming back before the Board.

Mr. Geary noted there are several parents in the audience from the Parent See class, which is offered through the Office of Family & Community Partnership. It is a good opportunity for parents to gain knowledge and invest in their students.

**G. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**G.1. Policy Recommendation**

**Secretary Scappaticci moved for the Board to adopt Policy 6213 - Use of Therapy Dogs in School. Mr. Leon seconded the motion.**

**7/0 - Voted in favor.**

**H. NEW BUSINESS**

None.

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

Leah Praguski, 190 Stockade Rd., Glastonbury, attended the Parent See course. She felt amazing passion in tonight's presentation. She feels welcome packets would be helpful to those looking to move to Manchester. She would actually consider moving here from Glastonbury for the amazing high school.

**J. COMMUNICATIONS**

**Mr. Pattacini** reviewed the three Board members that will be on the Search Committee are Mr. Leon, Ms. Jacobsen, and Mr. Pattacini.

**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 8:46 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Jason Scappaticci  
Board Secretary