

## **MANCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION**

### **Regular Meeting**

**June 22, 2015**

Lincoln

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

**ALSO PRESENT:** Superintendent of Schools Geary, Assistant 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. 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 June 8, 2015. Secretary Scappaticci moved and Mr. Crockett seconded the motion.**

**9/0 – Voted in favor.**

**Secretary Scappaticci moved to add the “Superintendent’s Evaluation” to tonight’s agenda under New Business. Mr. Leon seconded the motion.**

**9/0 - Voted in favor.**

## **B. CONSENT CALENDAR**

**Mr. Geary** presented two 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 FY 14/15 for the MCC/Adult Education Transitional Strategies REACT II appropriation in the amount of \$223,823**

**The Chairman called for a motion.**

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

**9/0 - Voted in favor.**

## **C. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **C.1. Building & Sites Committee**

**Mr. Crockett** reported the last meeting was held June 4th at Highland Park Elementary School. In attendance were himself, Mr. Stafford, Ms. Pazda, Mr. Geary, Mr. Pierce, Mrs. Brooks, and Mr. Staye. Mr. Pierce gave a tour of the building, pointing out maintenance needs. The air conditioning system is currently off line and a new compressor will be installed June 8th under warranty.

The Bennet Academy Project is proceeding through the Design Development phase, which is currently on budget. The Building Committee is concerned that funds for the playscape may be needed for other items should the cost estimates change.

The process for Buildings & Grounds undertaking project work was reviewed by Mr. Staye. The need for a more robust system for identifying needed work, prioritizing and managing the approval and scheduling process, and recording completion was discussed. Buildings & Grounds believes it can develop this system internally and expects to have a basic structure in place in time for the November budget development period.

Individual projects planned at Illing, MHS, Bowers, Martin, and system-wide for the summer were discussed. The need to replace the asphalt at Illing was mentioned, which is likely to be an expensive project.

The Habitat at Waddell remains closed, and will likely be demolished as part of future building renovations, so returning it to operation is not considered wise at this time.

Last, the oil tank replacement project, including the Board of Education's contribution to funding that work, was discussed. At this point the project appears to be on schedule.

The next meeting is scheduled for August 20th at Bennet.

### **C.2. Curriculum & Instruction Committee**

**Ms. Pazda** reported the last meeting was held June 8th. In attendance were Ms. Hagenow, Ms. Pazda, Mr. Scappaticci, Mr. Stafford, Dr. Radikas, Mr. Geary, Ms. Sheehan-Burns, Dr. Oliver, and Mr. O'Leary. An overview of the new K-6 math program, enVision 2.0, was provided. The program will be introduced during the August 2015 professional development days. The next meeting is scheduled for September 14th at Buckley.

### **C.3. Personnel & Finance Committee**

**Mr. Leon** reported that the last meeting was held June 17th, with himself, Mr. Crockett, Ms. Hagenow, Mr. Geary, and Mrs. Brooks in attendance. Mr. Geary informed the Committee that he was recently notified by the State Department of Education that Alliance funding cannot be used for the two-week wrap-around

recreation program of the SAAM Program. The state has a more narrow focus on the definition of learning time than the District. The 2015-16 budget will need to assume the cost of this program.

The Committee reviewed Board Policy #1330, Community Use of School Facilities. Mr. Geary will bring recommended changes to the Policy Committee.

Mrs. Brooks provided the Committee with a copy of the Manchester Athletics Advertising Campaign flyer. For \$500, businesses will have the opportunity to advertise for one year on a 3' x 5' sign posted along the inside of the athletic football field and track.

Last, the Committee discussed the 2015-16 meeting dates. Mr. Geary will review the dates for all committees with Board leadership.

#### **D. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Bob Healy, 44 Robert Road, graduated from MHS in 1975 and has been a Physical Education teacher here for over 28 years. He has been the Department Chair for Health and Phys Ed for the past 8 years. He has coached many sports, softball, golf, and also including an after-school intramural basketball, which he has done for free. He has represented MHS on statewide basketball committees. He has a passion for coaching. He received great mentoring and guidance from his own coaches as a youth and strives to pass on those same life-time lessons to his own student athletes. He teaches his student athletes be respectful, be committed, play hard, be coachable, and represent the school in a positive way, both on and off the court. Though winning is more fun than losing, lessons can be learned from both. The best victories in coaching come long after high school when you see the kids who played for you become successful in life. Mr. Healy noted a number of those victories are here tonight and he thanks them for attending. He is disappointed that after 25 years of coaching boys varsity basketball, his contract was not renewed this year. Mr. Healy feels his evaluations were inaccurate and based on Policy 4150 he will appeal. He believes the Board of Education needs to review that policy. Mr. Healy pointed out that some coaches are evaluated yearly and some are not, and the inconsistencies need to be addressed. A number of areas need to be looked at more closely in the athletic

department. He has heard Mr. Geary speak about how we need to connect with the kids, and he agrees. In order to better connect with kids, it would be helpful to improve the interpersonal relationships and collaboration between some administrators and our teaching staff.

Christopher Garrahan, 66 Stephanie's Way, has been a certified high school coach for 30 years across five sports. He is a seasoned coach in five different sports, who has both won and lost. Mr. Garrahan wants us to know that Bob Healy is a good, seasoned, professional high school coach. It is different now to coach than it was 20 years ago. Mr. Garrahan pointed out that Bob believes coaching student athletes is more about developing the person than the athlete. Bob is positive, instructive, and support. His rapport with his team could be measured by their spirit and their smiles and Bob is a consistent advocate for student athletes. Mr. Healy has impeccable integrity with high standards. To dismiss him is shameful. Bob's service and dedication are remarkable and he is truly irreplaceable.

Thayer Redman, 52 Hillcrest, feels Bob Healy represents the best of Manchester. He has deep roots and pride in Manchester. Mr. Healy has taught courage and to do the right thing. He values collaboration through teamwork and values the person more than their athletic ability. Mr. Healy helps young men find their way to a good life. He wants all players to have a great experience. Mr. Redman feels Mr. Healy is a role model who teaches life lessons and is building good men. He urges the Board to reconsider this decision and to listen to the speakers this evening. Manchester wants coaches like Bob Healy.

Brendan Luman, 107 Echo Ridge Drive, Vernon, thanked the MHS community for coming out tonight to show support for this important public servant, Bob Healy. Mr. Luman feels Coach Healy is an incredible human being. In 1996, when he came to MHS as a freshman basketball player, Mr. Healy was his coach and four years later Brendan was named tri-captain of the team. Talent comes and goes, and the ones to sort through that are the coaches. Mr. Healy balanced this job with class and commitment. His approach to coaching is fair, just and to stay true. Mr. Healy is a calm, great coach who teaches that mistakes are to be learned from.

Rich Deneen, 4 Carolyn Drive, Vernon, has coached basketball for 30 years and for the past 2 years he was Bob's JV Boys Basketball coach. He feels Bob Healy is being unfairly treated and Mr. Deneen has quit as the boys JV basketball coach because of this treatment. He quoted Bill Bradley, who said "Leadership is unlocking people's potential to become better." Bob Healy exemplifies this definition of leadership. Mr. Deneen has known Bob for over 20 years and knows him to be generous with his time and spirit. He has shown players how to become better on and off the court. He has nurtured their skills, both academically and in the sport. Bob cares about basketball and the community. Bob spends hours of his own time in the off season, monitoring classwork and behavior of his players. Mr. Healy has integrity and he has earned the respect of others and deserves to be treated better.

Frank Kinel, 107 Lamplighter Drive, lived in Manchester for 60 years and taught here for 30 years. Bob Healy was his assistant coach for 8 years. Bob loves MHS basketball and losing him would be so harmful to Manchester and the student athletes. Mr. Kinel flew in from South Carolina to speak tonight. Manchester is blessed to have a coach who is an outstanding educator, role model, who holds players responsible, and counsels them one on one about basketball, academics, and life. There are a lot of former players here this evening to support Coach Healy, who is known throughout Connecticut as having the highest level of sportsmanship and integrity. His knowledge of basketball is high. Mr. Kinel recalled a story of a homeless boy years ago. Mr. Healy and his family took the boy in for weeks until he could be placed in the TLC Home. The boy, Marvin, later went on to great success in the military, which he would not have done without the help of Coach Healy, who always does the right thing.

Benson Treadow, 48 Timrod Road, noted his children attended school in Manchester and received an excellent education. His son played basketball for Coach Healy and though he got little play time, Mr. Treadow has unlimited respect for the coach. Mr. Treadow's son was Valedictorian and at graduation he read a poem about ways to live your life that Coach Healy would recite to the players. Coach Healy has molded our sons into fine young adults. Mr. Treadow wants to know what has changed, why is the coach not being allowed to continue. He believes in Manchester Public Schools and

hopes that in the spirit of making things right, that the Board will investigate what is going on and fix it. Our children deserve better.

Ron Jones, 181 Parker Street, has known Coach Healy for 9 years, having been the boy's Freshman Coach in 2007-2011. He noted that Coach Healy is helpful, knowledgeable, and impressed him. He took time with the freshman teams after his own players were done with practice. He is concerned about the academics of his players. Mr. Jones hopes to conduct himself as Coach Healy has, bringing class, character, commitment, and dedication to his coaching.

Kevin Hayes, 18 Brookfield Street, Ellington, read a letter he submitted to the Board that appeared in the *Journal Inquirer*. Mr. Hayes has known Coach Healy for 25 years and worked under him as an assistant coach in the past. Mr. Hayes noted that Coach Healy is well respected by other coaches and he learned a lot under his tutelage. Countless lives have changed for the better under Coach Healy. Mr. Hayes believes you must be a great teacher and listener to be a great coach. Mr. Healy is a legacy at MHS. There are few coaches with a better understanding of the game. Mr. Hayes cannot even list all he has done for the kids. When the time comes to replace Coach Healy the task will be monumental, but Bob Healy should determine when that time is, he has earned that consideration.

Bob Hayes, Stafford Springs, is a former assistant basketball coach at MHS and has known Bob Healy over 40 years. He notes that Mr. Healy coaches because he loves the game, respects the game, and loves the players. Not many people would coach for no money, but he knows Healy would. Coach Healy cares about making better people. Many of his players keep in touch with the coach and want to make him proud. Just like his father before him, Coach Healy is a greatly respected coach in the state. Mr. Hayes hears nothing but good things about Healy; he has class and integrity and if the Board of Education cares about the kids, they will keep him on.

Chris Rizy, 35 W. Gardner Street, Sturbridge, MA, was a 1993 MHS graduate. He grew up playing basketball and had hoped to play for Coach Healy among some other great coaches. These coaches knew the game, knew how to coach the game, and most importantly prepared players for life. Mr. Rizy is disappointed to have to speak tonight.

We should be honoring Coach Healy's service to MHS athletics instead. Healy stuck with coaching and has produced fine student athletes that are upstanding members of society. Coach Healy should leave coaching when he is ready, on his terms.

Felicia Falkowski, 24 Drescher Road, is a Physical Education teacher under Bob Healy. She has been a coach for 18 years. Bob is devoted to the town and the students. He strives to provide the benefits and opportunities he had in this school system. Bob is a man of exceptional integrity and hard work. Coach Healy is an example of the best MHS has to offer. Ms. Falkowski finds it unimaginable that Coach Healy's judgement, professionalism, or ability to do any aspect of his job are being questioned. It would be a loss to remove Bob. His consistency, calm demeanor, and continuity to the program provide a role model for the players and staff. He is a leader in the classroom, on the court, and in the community. She thanked the Board for their thoughtful consideration.

Michael Stroneski, West Hartford, is a boys basketball coach in West Hartford. Mr. Stroneski testified that Bob Healy is passionate about basketball and the Manchester community. His life is a lesson in commitment. Coach Healy knows each player, former and new. He counsels students and reviews players grades weekly. If athletics is about wins, he has won the respect of his peers and success in difference conferences.

Joel Harrell, 89 Peila Drive, is a 2009 MHS graduate. He played for Coach Healy for one year and thinks he is an awesome guy who taught him a lot. He encouraged school work and good grades, practice, teamwork, and the value of hard work. He helped in any way he could and his door was always open. Mr. Harrell feels Mr. Healy is a genuine guy and we are fortunate to have him as a coach. Coach Healy wants to win, but he teaches life lessons that last long after high school. He hopes we keep him as a coach.

Patrick Bobbi, Lebanon, is an MHS teacher and coach. He urges the Board to reconsider this termination of Coach Healy. He is charged with educating the children of this community and preparing them for life after school. People are defined by how they handle failure and Coach Healy shows how to pick yourself up and move on. He works hard to get athletes grades up and finds ways to have a positive influence on

students. Mr. Bobbi has the highest praise for Healy and notes it is about more than wins and loses.

Sarah Jones, 661 Middle Turnpike East, was an MHS employee from 1998-2012. She is here to speak about Coach Healy, and how hard he works to build relationships and teach lessons. Being a student athlete is about learning first. The students here tonight learned important life lessons from Coach Healy. Sometimes school athletics is the first time a student encounters a coach that is a professional in how to teach. We shouldn't move away from teachers as coaches. She encourages the Board to consider how we value athletics and what we hope the young people will learn from them, and to consider how we value the employees of our schools who serve in the important role of teacher and coach.

Devin Johnson, 34 Durant Street, played under Coach Healy for four years and they were the best four years under a great coach, and a better person. Coach Healy taught him to be a great player and a better person. When Mr. Johnson played the team made states four times. He feels Mr. Healy is a great coach.

David Maloney, 114 Thayer Road, is asking the Board to restore Bob Healy as coach. He is an exceptional coach and educator who deserves to continue to coach and represent the town. Evaluations should be done by administrators on a yearly basis and based on facts, not on personalities, race, gender, age, etc. Mr. Maloney asks the Board to review the evaluation completed on Mr. Healy and examine Healy's responses and analyze what is fact and what is opinion. Coach Healy has done as expected by the Board, parents and players. Bob coached Mr. Maloney's kids and was a role model with an emphasis on family and school before athletics. Mr. Maloney has never witnessed anything by Coach Healy that has not been positive. He has seen him coach, teach, and discipline athletes at games. He is the best coach at the school and cannot be replaced.

Jeff Thorton, 31 Sunnybrook Drive, reviewed the primary purpose of competitive athletics from the MHS student handbook - to develop physical fitness, body control, train in the spirit of good sportsmanship and teamwork, have wholesome fun. Nothing about wins and loses is mentioned in the description. Board of Ed Personnel Policy

4150 states a coach shall adhere to all Board policies, conduct himself in a professional manner, serve as a role model for students, and demonstrate competence and proficiency in the role of athletic coach of a particular sport. Again, no mention of wins. Mr. Thorton reviewed that Bob Healy conducts himself in a professional manner and demonstrates a winning attitude. Bob Healy nurtures athletes to become productive responsible members of society. Mr. Thorton recalled that Mr. Geary stated that despite outside pressures he trusts educators to make the best decisions for students and to focus on the needs of the whole child. It's not about wins, it is about compassionate coaches like Bob Healy.

Kathy Thorton, 31 Sunnybrook Drive, notes that when you care about something you have to do something. When someone feels threatened they sometimes find an excuse to get rid of the threat. She wants the Board to be skeptical about firing a coach for a losing season. As a taxpayer, is scares her that the Board would support this type of evaluation system.

Rick Cross, 17B Tudor Lane, knows Coach Healy as a life coach. Since day one Healy was there for him with an open door policy, even it it was to criticize the coach. Coach Healy believes that it is a privilege to represent Manchester. He is building great men and citizens. Mr. Cross works with youth now because of the influence of Bob Healy. Coach Healy instilled the values of being a better man, husband, and hard worker in life. Mr. Cross is disturbed to see someone else determine the Coach's fate.

Dashawn Thames, Hartford, is another support of Coach Healy. He notes that Mr. Healy is more than a basketball coach. Coach Healy taught him to be introspective and how to carry himself. He imbedded leadership skills in him. Coach Healy bonded with students to and from games, and outside the court and treated both the best and worst players the same. Coach Healy paid attention, gave his time, love and taught life lessons to his players.

Dwayne Barnes, 81 Main Street, Sturbridge, MA, was a 1997 graduate of MHS. It was hurtful to hear the decision to not renew Coach Healy. He is family. The foundation he helped build in basketball, teaching students to be men, is priceless. Mr. Barnes was ranked 9th in the nation in scoring when he went off to college and he has modeled his

life after Coach Healy. If we lose the coach is it our loss, not his. He wants to be here and Mr. Barnes notes the student in student athlete comes first.

Steve O'Reilly, 118 Princeton Street, has taught for 9 years and coached for 7 years. He has found Bob Healy to be a true professional and his dedication is unmatched. He has helped Mr. O'Reilly as a coach and is a fixture in the community. Bob represents what good coaching is about. Mr. O'Reilly feels an investigation into this dismissal is imperative to ensure a just process in this matter and those to follow.

Susie Camilleri Healy, 44 Robert Road, is here to talk about the academic success of our student athletes and the "C" rule policy that is in place at MHS. It seems prudent to change the current policy, providing a consistent mandatory academic monitoring program administered and run by the athletic director across all athletic programs, not left up to coaches to develop and run. Some of the coaches are not full time employees at MHS and do not have an understanding of the academic rules to assist the student athletes. Ms. Healy thinks coaches should be asked if they are implementing the program. The athletic director, not the coach, should be the central resource to the student athletes and should work to ensure they are compliant with the "C" role. It is important to have coaches involved in the academic success of athletes but it should not solely fall on the shoulders of the coach to manage this critically important school-wide requirement in addition to their coaching responsibilities. The Board should investigate procedures in the athletic department to ensure all policies are legally and equitably enforced and evaluated using the same standards. Ms. Healy stated that Policy 4150 (and State law) says all coaches will be evaluated on an annual basis, which she believes is not being done. Many coaches fear retribution and therefore will not speak out about their concerns. There are extensive problems in the athletic department and she implored the Board to research, review, and resolve these issues. She provided copies of the referenced policy for the Board.

Stan O'Brodnick, address not stated, had been a coach for 14 years at East Catholic and 27 years before that at Trinity as the head basketball coach. Now he scouts for the NBA in his retirement. To say basketball is a part of his life is an understatement. This decision about Bob Healy is shocking. Bob knows basketball and how to teach it. He

has impeccable credentials and lives that life. He is teaching young men who are fortunate to have this quality of a teacher who has earned respect. He thinks not about himself, but about the players. Mr. O'Brodnick hopes the Board revisits this decision and he hopes at that point Bob Healy will want to take his job back.

Bob Schneider, 59 Scarborough Road, is befuddled by this as he has known Bob Healy for 25 years. Mr. Schneider feels something is not right. He has heard from all who spoke tonight and he wants to find out who made this decision. It can't be about wins and loses and the Board needs to look into this. You don't let a gentleman like this go. He hopes the Board does the right thing as it is important for children to see we can correct our mistakes. On behalf of the town and students of Manchester, this needs to be reconsidered.

Tom Stringfellow, 183 Hillstown Road, stated that Bob Healy was a class behind him at MHS and he hopes the Board reconsiders, as he is a man of character across ethnic lines. It shouldn't be about wins or personalities. He is a good man, husband and citizen of Manchester. Regarding the Gay/Straight Alliance, Mr. Stringfellow pointed out an article on hate crimes, which are not just about race. He took issue with something someone said earlier, pointing out that many blacks don't use drugs and he is a proud college educated black man. Mr. Stringfellow suggested an article in *TIME* magazine about Jackie Robinson. He noted that multi-racial families are a part of life, occurring in approximately one of every 14 families. We need to show respect for each other and character counts.

Tom Nicholas, 134 Hunter Road, Tolland, is also the MEA President. First, Mr. Nicholas thanked Tom Stringfellow as he is always impressed with the information he shares. Regarding Bob Healy, as MEA President, he would have grieved the decision, but found out that coaches fall under state regulations so he couldn't. When you work with kids, if the only thing you teach is to be kind then you have done your job. Bob Healy has saved lives, changed lives, and improved lives. Mr. Nicholas asks that you place him back as coach of Varsity Basketball because we do not want to lose a coach like him. He touches and improves lives.

Autumn Struk, 26 Little Street, didn't know there would be so many supporters here tonight, but she hopes if she were ever in a similar situation to have so many people supporting her. Regarding Project Playground for Waddell PTA, this is the final update. Over the past two years they have raised just under \$17,000 and the playground has been ordered. The build will be Saturday, August 8th and it is a community build, so please join in. She thanked Mr. Leon for his generous donation and also Mrs. Brooks for all her support - it is appreciated.

**The Chairman called for a short recess.**

**Mr. Leon moved and Ms. Cruz seconded the motion to take a short recess.**

**9/0 - Voted in favor.**

**Recess 8:31 p.m.**

**Back in session 8:41 p.m.**

**Chairman Pattacini** reminded the public that the Board cannot speak about personnel matters. He also suggested amending the agenda to allow some guests to speak in a timely manner.

**Secretary Scappaticci moved to amend the agenda to move Item H.1. to become Item E.1. and the current Item E.1. to become Item E.4. Mr. Leon seconded the motion.**

**9/0 - Voted in favor.**

**E. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT – PART I**

**E.1. Rockville High School FFA Agricultural Program**

**Mr. Geary** introduced Anthony Falchetta from Rockville High School, who was here to recognize Kathryn Davis, a graduate of the Agricultural Program. He thanked the Board, because without their support Katie would not have had the opportunity to graduate from this program.

Katie Davis also thanked the Board for allowing her the opportunity to attend Rockville High Agriculture Education Program. She learned about public speaking animal science, and leadership. It gave her time to figure out her future, and she will be attending UCONN in the fall to major in Agri-Education.

## **E.2. Update on Gay/Straight Alliance for Equality - GSAFE**

**Mr. Geary** introduced Marie Michael Rogers, a social worker at MHS, for this presentation, which was requested by a Board member. Ms. Michael Rogers is the advisor of GSAFE. Also with her were students, Miqel was the President of GSAFE this past year, and Gaby and Carina are the co-presidents for the upcoming year.

A powerpoint on the club is available for viewing on the website. In 1997 the club was started by a straight student who had a vision to work together to make change, but faced opposition. In 2001 Ms. Michael Rogers began to advise the group and noted that the name used to include "tolerance" but was changed to "equality" as the students wanted to feel equal, not just tolerated. Conditions have improved for the LGBT+ community since its founding.

**Mr. Scappaticci** would have like a club like this when he was in highschool. He wondered if we have gender-neutral bathrooms or what the options are for transgender students. Ms. Michael Rogers stated right now the nurse's office or handicapped bathrooms (which are singles) can be used, but a transgender student should be able to use either Boys or Girls bathrooms. Gaby pointed out many transgender students have bladder issues because of not being able to safely use the bathroom. Mr. Scappaticci noted that at a meeting at MHS he happened upon a men's room that was painted for the group. Ms. Michael Rogers noted that several years ago various clubs painted bathrooms, but it seems only the GSAFE painting has survived the years.

**Ms. Pazda** wondered how many members of the group are not LGBT+ Gaby noted it is important to have straight allies and it also helps those members who are gay but are in the closet be able to join the group. Ms. Pazda pointed out there have been tremendous changes in her lifetime and this is a difficult path. She feels to have this kind of club is a wonderful thing and it take courage to be true to yourself and be counted. She is happy to hear of the opportunity and positive ways to get the message out.

### **E.3. Social Emotional Learning through Social Thinking**

**Mr. Geary** introduced Christa Perkins, who is a social worker at Bowers. Ms. Perkins gave a Powerpoint, which is available for viewing on the website. She reviewed the results of the climate studies taken by students, faculty, and parents. She spoke about Social Emotional Learning (SEL) and social thinking. Last, Ms. Perkins touched on the Superflex program that was started this year and will be used in more classrooms next school year.

**Ms. Pazda** wondered if all schools will be implementing this programming. Ms. Perkins noted that in January Social Thinking teams were trained for the Title schools and a couple of classrooms in each Title school were piloted. This next school year the program will be school wide in the Title schools. Mid year, the same process of piloting the program in a couple of classrooms will be done for non-Title schools, and next school year the program will be townwide.

Ms. Pazda wondered if the teachers will be able to train other staff and if the program is taught daily. Ms. Perkins stated that the teachers will train their building co-workers and the program is a once a week lesson that is then reinforced throughout the week. Ms. Pazda asked Mr. Geary if he would be repeating the survey again to see the impact of this program. Mr. Geary noted that we did contract with the National School Climate Survey Center for a two year, pre and post survey.

**Mr. Leon** wondered how the social and emotional security, which dips, was defined on the survey. Mr. Geary stated various questions were asked and combined for this score.

Mr. Leon wondered if there are programs for upper grades available. Ms. Perkins stated there is a lot of good information available for the middle and high school levels and hopefully will be coming in the future.

**Mr. Geary** noted there is a Social Thinking conference in Boston in October and Ms. Perkins and her team will be attending. Mr. Geary stated that if any Board member wants to go they should email him.

**Mr. Pattacini** was excited to see action being taken based on data.

#### **E.4. Update on Close of School**

**Mr. Geary** is delighted to introduce the three new principals in town.

- Dr. Jim Collin will be the Principal of Washington Elementary and he comes to us from Suffield, where he was Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction for three years. Previously, he was Assistant Superintendent in Watertown, and also served as Principal at two middle schools. Dr. Collin is happy and excited to be part of the team.
- Dr. Joanna Ali will be Principal of Highland Park and she comes to us after having been Assistant Principal of Bullard Havens High School in Bridgeport and Platt High School in Milford. Prior to being an administrator, Dr. Ali was a Science teacher at Connecticut IB Academy in East Hartford. Dr. Ali stated she is happy to be here.
- Ms. Kim Loveland will be the Principal of Waddell. For the past two years Ms. Loveland has served as the Supervisor of Pre-K - 12 Mathematics in Suffield Public schools and prior to that was a Math teacher in Glastonbury. Ms. Loveland is excited for this new journey in Manchester.

**Mr. Pattacini** welcomed all three Principals to Manchester.

- Mr. Geary revealed he and his family are now residents of Manchester, having moved to town on Friday.
- Mr. Geary spoke about Project Spark, which is a non-traditional summer program to identify candidates for our gifted programming.
- He revealed 438 students will be participating in SAAM, out of 925 invited.
- Classroom libraries are being refreshed.
- Mr. Geary noted that last week was Maker Week across the country and Manchester schools participated.
- The teacher and administrator evaluations have to be reported on to the state by June 30th. In August, the evaluation plan will come to the Board.
- The climate survey results are in and are being reviewed and will be shared in July or August with the Board.
- Administrator's Professional Development will be June 29-30th.
- We are monitoring Kindergarten sections and hope to maintain class sizes at 18-20.
- Science Specialists are being hired, two per elementary school. Fourteen of the 18 openings have been filled. These are being funded by the Alliance Grant.
- Building summer projects are underway. The portables at Robertson are being demolished and painting at Illing, including refurbishing of lockers, is being done.

**Mr. Thames** felt it appeared the SAAM participation number was reduced. Mr. Geary reminded the Board that in year one all students were invited, so there was a higher participation rate, but that this years numbers are similar to last years numbers. Mr. Thames wondered if we are still partnering with Parks & Rec for the program. Mr. Geary noted we are, and the academic aspect of the program was cut back from 6 weeks to 4 weeks. The week prior to and after the academic portion is Parks & Rec only. We have also employed an external program evaluator to review the program.

**Ms. Pazda** wondered who pays for the Parks & Rec weeks prior to and after the academic program. Mr. Geary stated initially the plan was to fund that through

the Alliance Grant, however the state, after receiving a complaint from a resident, stated they would not pay for that. The Board budget will pay for the program this year and next year the plan will be to implement sliding scale fees for this \$50,000 cost. There is social and emotional learning happening during those weeks on the many field trips the students participate in.

#### **F. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

#### **G. NEW BUSINESS**

##### **G.1. Superintendent's Evaluation**

**Mr. Pattacini** reviewed that the Board has met a number of times in executive session and he read a letter that he signed to Superintendent Geary reviewing the four major goals outlined for Mr. Geary and his progress from July 2015 to June 2015. The letter is available in full on the website.

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

Tom Stringfellow, 183 Hillstown Road, enjoyed the presentation from GSAFE. He suggested an article in *USA Today* about health concerns with transgender youth in Kentucky. Mr. Stringfellow felt the Elementary Social Emotional Learning presentation was excellent. He spoke about Barbara Bush's Foundation for Family Literacy and getting families involved, visiting museums, go to parks, etc. Mr. Stringfellow feels kindergarten play is important. He thinks that the East Side is turning that side of town around and they have some positive summer programs for the youth. Last, Mr. Stringfellow has been impressed with the Superintendent, feeling Mr. Geary is a good listener and seems to understand diversity.

#### **I. COMMUNICATIONS**

**I.1. Lori Fogg, Student Representative**, thanked the Board again for the opportunity to serve. She had no idea how many hours Board members worked for the community and she is looking forward to the next year participating in the meetings.

**J. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS**

**Mr. Crockett** was surprised that public comments were not limited to Manchester taxpayers and residents. He would like to bring this to the Policy Committee for clarification, as he believes the Board of Education follows the Town Charter, which dictates that public speakers must be residents of the town. Mr. Crockett also discussed graduation. He feels it is rewarding for a Board member to go to graduation and watch the seniors graduate. He notes each year the Chairperson gives a speech, and he wonders why other Board members couldn't give speeches instead, rotating years, possibly giving priority to a Board member with a graduating senior, etc. The bylaws do not address this and he would like to discuss it. He feels it would send a good message to the community to be able to work this out across party lines.

**Mr. Pattacini** would like the Policy Committee to investigate Board member expectations, roles, and responsibilities.

**K. ADJOURNMENT**

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

**Secretary Scappaticci moved and Ms. Cruz seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting.**

**8/0/1 - Voted in favor.**

**Adjournment 10:00 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Jason Scappaticci  
Board Secretary