

## MANCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION

### Regular Meeting August 25, 2014 Lincoln Center

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

**ALSO PRESENT:** Superintendent of Schools Geary, Assistant to the Superintendent for Finance & Management Brooks, Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Personnel Services Matfess, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum Radikas

**ABSENT:** Hagenow

#### **A. OPENING**

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

**Chairperson Pattacini** called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. All in attendance participated in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, led by Mr. Pattacini.

##### **A.3. Adoption of Minutes of Previous Meeting**

**ADOPTED – Minutes Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of July 14, 2014. Secretary Scappaticci moved and Mr. Leon seconded the motion.**

**7/0/1 – Voted in favor with Ms. Cruz abstaining.**

#### **B. CONSENT CALENDAR**

**Mr. Geary** presented twelve 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. Extended Field Trip Request Form – Bennet Academy Team Ruby Bridges Discovery Center, Woodstock, CT** – Approximately 150 Students; 8 Teacher Chaperones; 10/6/14-10/8/14.

**B.3. Extended Field Trip Request Form – Bennet Academy Team Truth Discovery Center, Woodstock, CT** – Approximately 150 Students; 8 Teacher Chaperones; 10/8/14-10/10/14.

**B.4. Extended Field Trip Request Form – Illing Middle School – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Class Trip to Washington, DC** – Approximately 250 Students; Teacher/Parent Chaperones; 5/6/15-5/8/15.

**B.5. Establish an appropriation in the amount of \$28,088 for FY 14/15 for the Manchester Head Start, State Department of Education Link Grant**

**B.6. Establish an appropriation in the amount of \$94,884 for FY 14/15 for the Enfield Head Start, State Department of Education Enhancement Grant**

**B.7. Establish an appropriation in the amount of \$39,988 for FY 14/15 for the Enfield Head Start, State Department of Education Link Grant**

**B.8. Establish an appropriation in the amount of \$2,966 for FY 14/15 for the Enfield Head Start, State Department of Education Services Grant**

**B.9. Extended Field Trip Request Form – Washington Elementary – Discovery Center, Woodstock, CT** – Approximately 60 Students; 3 Teacher Chaperones; 11/17/14-11/19/14.

**B.10. Permission to apply for the Adult Education REACT I College Transition Pilot Grant for FY 14/15 in the amount of \$102,500**

**B.11. Permission to apply for the MCC/Adult Education REACT II College Transition Pilot Grant for FY 14/15 in the amount of \$268,000**

**B.12. All Hazards School Security and Safety Plan**

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.

8/0 - Voted in favor.

### **C. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Cherie Giumond, 18 Starkweather Street, is the parent of a new Kindergarten student this year. She was notified today that even though there is an established bus stop next door to her home, her child is not eligible to ride the bus. Ms. Giumond showed a picture of the bus stop in relation to her house. Mr. Pattacini informed Ms. Giumond that she may submit her complaint to the Transportation and Residency Committee for review and a possible hearing.

Mr. Tom Stringfellow, 183 Hillstown Road, spoke about various historical points that he feels students should study, such as the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Sherman's 1864 March to Atlanta, the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1964 Nobel Peace Prize for Dr. Martin Luther King, and the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution, among other items he feels should be studied. Mr. Stringfellow pointed out the moving Vietnam memorial will be in our town next year. Mr. Stringfellow also reviewed the free summer meal program that was available in Manchester this past summer.

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

#### **D.1. Interim Middle School Principal**

**Mr. Geary** reviewed that with the late resignation of Mr. Welch at Illing, there was not time to do a proper search for a permanent replacement. The middle school is currently at the end of some renovations to the tech/art/music classrooms and curriculum work is being done in all core content areas. Mr. Geary wanted a strong interim principal to be able to step in and oversee the school while a search for a permanent principal is conducted. He introduced Beth Hayes, who has been an assistant principal at MHS for the past two years. Ms. Hayes stated she was honored to have the opportunity to support the work happening at Illing for the 14/15 school year. She has enjoyed meeting the staff along with some parents and students at Illing, and she hopes for a seamless transition to continue the good work happening there. Her focus is rigorous, relevant and engaging instruction for each student.

**Mr. Pattacini** welcomed Ms. Hayes and looks forward to a successful year.

#### **D.2. Opening of School Update**

**Mr. Geary** welcomed back the staff this morning at Convocation to start three days of professional development prior to the first day of classes. There was a ceremony to congratulate Teacher of the Year Evan Chekus, along with Paraprofessional of the Year Matthew Montgomery. Keynote speaker was Michael Fullan. Mr. Geary's focus is to create lifelong learners who are contributing members of society. Creativity, collaboration, and high expectations are the key areas of focus. Mr. Geary also reminded the Board that the Google Summit will take place in Manchester October

17-18, with about 300 people from around the country coming together. This will be the first time the Google Summit has taken place in Connecticut.

**Mr. Thames** wondered if new curriculum has been developed in-house or purchased. Mr. Geary stated that teams of teachers, led by Dr. Radikas, the Directors of Teaching & Learning, built the curriculum, taking the best of what was purchased and collaborated over the summer. Mr. Thames felt that was a great approach and was happy to see the goal is the same curriculum across the board.

**Ms. Pazda** attended Convocation this morning, along with Mr. Leon and Mr. Pattacini, and watched Mr. Geary paint a vision of work for the future, focusing on creativity, collaboration and high expectations for all, along with a commitment to the work and a clearly articulated overview. Ms. Pazda stated she has never been more optimistic for the future of our schools as Mr. Geary sets the course of academic excellence.

**Mr. Thames** wondered about the Request for Proposal (RFP) for teachers, when it is due and what amount will be awarded. Mr. Geary stated the RFP will go out late September and the denominations have not been set. Each RFP will be reviewed by a team individually. Mr. Geary hopes that the Manchester Foundation for Public Giving, led by Mrs. Pattacini, will also contribute. Mr. Thames hopes that any successful strategies can be replicated throughout the system.

Regarding the buildings, Mr. Geary reviewed the following:

- Safety bags and emergency response cards are in each room
- Illing's elective areas will be finalized as of tomorrow
- Buckley and Keeney's electrical work was completed in August
- Many lavatory floors were replaced
- The cafeteria at Illing, Keeney, and MHS was refurbished
- The Robertson library had work completed
- The Family Resource Centers will be opening on the first day
- The buildings opened to staff on August 20<sup>th</sup>
- 100% of classroom space, except for one classroom at Keeney, is being used throughout the district K-5

Regarding staffing:

- 62 new certified staff, including 10 new administrators were hired
- There are currently 7 openings
- At Bennet there was one opening for a counselor, however by utilizing carried over Alliance Funding, a second counselor position was created

**Mr. Leon** echoed Ms. Pazda on the praise of convocation. Mr. Geary's "keeping it simple", effective style was well-received.

**Mr. Pattacini** also echoed Ms. Pazda and Mr. Leon on a successful convocation, noting the energy of the staff was positive.

**Mr. Geary** noted his work was well supported by the Central Office staff, Mrs. Brooks, Dr. Radikas, Ms. Matfess, and many secretaries among other support staff.

**E. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

**F. NEW BUSINESS**

None.

**G. COMMUNICATIONS**

None.

**H. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**H.1. Buildings & Sites Committee**

**Mr. Crocket** reviewed the last meeting was held August 7<sup>th</sup> with himself, Mr. Geary and Mr. Ziegler in attendance. The referendum projects at Illing, along with the electrical upgrades at Buckley and Keeney were reviewed. The next meeting is September 4<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. at Illing.

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

Denise Curran, 65 West Middle Turnpike, is a Waddell parent and PTA officer for the incoming year. She received the math packet for her Kindergartener and while she thinks it is a great idea, she couldn't even figure out the answers. She feels parents need to also be educated on the Common Core so they can help their children. Regarding the addition of several Family Resource Centers, she is excited about that, especially having a special needs child in her family. One complaint Ms. Curran had is that her child's teacher did not send home a back to school letter, other than a late post-card stating the teacher was having a great vacation, so no information regarding what might be necessary to purchase for the start of the year was given. Ms. Curran was not happy to have no idea what might be expected or needed to be purchased for the start of school.

Mr. Tom Stringfellow, 183 Hillstown Road, was impressed with Mr. Geary's presentation. He also read a good story about him in last Saturday's *Journal Inquirer*. He hopes the new principal at MHS will make a difference. Mr. Stringfellow feels it is good to reach out to diverse communities and understand where they are coming from. He suggested an article on minorities in the July 2<sup>nd</sup> *New York Times* and again hopes we stay away from the term "subgroup". The importance of art was highlighted

regarding the New York Film Academy. Mr. Stringfellow found the article in this evening's *Journal Inquirer* regarding not posting baby pictures or selfies online to be interesting. He likes the idea of the safety bag and feels Manchester continues to change for the better.

**J. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS**

None.

**K. ADJOURNMENT**

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

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

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

**Adjournment 7:54 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Jason Scappaticci  
Board Secretary