

MANCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION

Regular Meeting

October 21, 2019

Manchester High School, Room 293

PRESENT: Conyers, Hagenow, Heinrich, Hughes, Meggers, Stefanovicz, Thames

ALSO PRESENT: Superintendent of Schools Geary, Director of Finance and Management Clancy, Director of Human Resources Sone-Moyano

ABSENT: Scappaticci, Pattacini

A. OPENING

A.1/2. Meeting Called to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Chairperson Thames called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. All in attendance participated in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, led by Mr. Thames.

A.3. Secretary's Welcome

Acting Secretary Stefanovicz stated that as Acting Secretary of the Board of Education, she wished to extend a warm welcome to everyone present and to the television viewers. She, along with the Board and the Superintendent, were pleased to be joined in celebrating the achievement, reviewing information, and discussing areas for growth, along with making policy decisions related to the effective operation of the Manchester Public Schools. Ms. Stefanovicz explained that this is a regular meeting of the Board and all items that will be discussed or voted on this evening have been posted, as required by state law.

Ms. Stefanovicz explained that as the Manchester Board of Education, they are here to set goals, listen to reports of the Superintendent, approve budgets, contracts, and personnel appointments, and to create policy for the district. They are not here to make management decisions or solve the problems of individuals. Members of the public with individual concerns may contact the Superintendent directly. It was explained that meetings of the Board are open to

the public, but are not meetings with individual members of the public. Therefore, comments from the audience will be confined to the time designated for the public to address the Board.

A.4. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

APPROVED – Minutes Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of October 7, 2019. Acting Secretary Stefanovicz moved and Mr. Meggars seconded the motion.

7/0 – Voted in favor.

B. COMMITTEE REPORTS

B.1. Curriculum and Instruction Committee

Mr. Heinrich reported the last meeting was held October 7 with the following in attendance: Mr. Conyers, Mr. Heinrich, Mr. Meggers, Dr. Radikas, Diane Burnes and Pari Ghetia.

Committee members reviewed a document, The Key Characteristics of a Multicultural Curriculum. The document, available through **EdChange**, provides a framework to examine curriculum for potential social and cultural biases.

Committee members used the Key Characteristics of a Multicultural Curriculum framework to examine a Grade 8 Social Studies unit. The unit topic, immigration and citizenship, was reviewed along with the corresponding document based questions (DBQs). Committee members have requested to see student responses to the DBQs at a future committee meeting.

C. CONSENT CALENDAR

Mr. Geary presented twelve 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. Transfer of Funds

Details had already been provided to the Board members with their agenda.

C.3. Permission to apply FY 2019-2020 Title I, Part A - Improving Basic Programs Grant

C.4. Permission to apply FY 2019-2020 Title II, Part A - Supporting Effective Instruction Grant

C.5. Permission to apply FY 2019-2020 Title III - Language Instruction for English Learners Grant

C.6. Permission to apply FY 2019-2020 Title IV, Part A - Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grant

C.7. Permission to apply FY 2019-2020 Bilingual Education Program Grant

C.8. Permission to apply FY 2019-2020 Priority School District Summer School Grant

C.9. Permission to apply FY 2019-2020 Priority School District Extended School Hours Grant

C.10. Establish an increase in appropriation for FY 2019-2021 for the IDEA 611 Grant in the amount of \$1,836,908.

C.11. Establish an increase in appropriation for FY 2019-2021 for the IDEA 619 Grant in the amount of \$65,420.

C.12. End of year transfers - FY 2018-2019 Budget

The Chairman called for a motion.

Acting Secretary Stefanovicz moved and Mr. Heinrich seconded the recommendation to adopt the Consent Calendar as outlined in this evening's agenda.

DISCUSSION:

Mr. Heinrich asked for clarification on items C.10. and C.12. **Mr. Geary** explained that grants are written using the previous year's amount, and then adjust the appropriation based on the actual amount given. Mr. Geary explained that the IDEA grant is specifically used to support programs involving students with disabilities. Mr. Geary clarified that item C.12. was necessary to bring last year's budget to a zero balance. Mr. Geary reminded the board that there were challenges in the FY 2018-2019 Tuition and Transportation budget lines and money that was frozen in other line items was transferred into Tuition and Transportation lines.

7/0 - Voted in favor.

D. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

None.

E. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

F. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT – PART I

F.1. Update on Human Resources

Mr. Geary introduced the Director of Human Resources, Mrs. Sinthia Sone-Moyano. Mrs. Sone-Moyano gave a presentation that is available on the website, outlining the Human Resources Department Talent District Improvement Plan.

Mr. Meggers asked what the retention rate of teachers and administrators hired within the last 3-5 years looked like. Mrs. Sone-Moyano explained that while she doesn't have data going back that far, she can explain that most staff who have left typically do so for promotional or opportunities for growth or for locations

closer to home. There is a trend showing that newer teachers in the millennial generation tend to transfer between employers approximately every 3-5 years, and while our union contracts are comparable to other local school districts, our salary options are not. **Mr. Geary** reported that over the last 3 years, the retention rate has been around 80% and explained that some of the loss was due to early retirement incentives. Mr. Geary reported that they are looking into ways to retain the millennials.

Mr. Hughes asked whether or not there are opportunities for promotion or salary increases for our teachers. Mrs. Sone-Moyano explained that salaries are governed by the union contracts and are negotiated, but that there are opportunities for stipends which offer additional pay and leadership opportunities.

Mr. Conyers requested information on recruitment practices for teachers of color. Mrs. Sone-Moyano explained that they have to think outside of the box to recruit minorities. Most come into the education industry later in life mostly as a second career which means that recruiting directly through college partnerships hasn't produced the numbers to provide more candidates. Mrs. Sone-Moyano discussed the shift to recruiting within our district. She explained how we can invest in our own non-certified staff who show promise and an interest in education to support and grow them.

Ms. Stefanovicz wondered if we see a burn-out or a loss of interest in the millenials, or that possibly they believe they have reached their peak within this job which may explain the turnover. That they may suffer from "compassion fatigue". Mrs. Sone-Moyano spoke about the use of buddies within the same buildings, beyond their mentors. She mentioned the use of our Employee Assistance Program to support stress management.

Mr. Thames mentioned that some people might be uncomfortable with people that they are unfamiliar with (i.e. different race or ethnicity) and that during the interview process, those on the interview panel may tend to lean towards candidates that they are comfortable with. Mr. Thames asked what the process for selecting individuals for the interview panel is, and how are we managing

diversity at that first level. Mrs. Sone-Moyano described that we hire through the lense of diversity, but that we don't have a process to specifically guide our hiring teams yet. This is currently being developed through conversations with administration. The Human Resource Department has guided the hiring administrators in selecting individuals at the building level in certain types of roles to be on the interview panel (teacher, support staff, social worker, etc) and mentioned that some schools who have an active School Governance Council have requirements to have parents participate.

Mr. Thames thanked Mrs. Sone-Moyano for the presentation and was appreciative of the in-depth information that she provided, and the out-of-the-box approach she is taking in regards to recruitment. He reminded the board that we must be able to accept a person based on the gifts they bring to the table, and need to look beyond the surface of the individual. The board has a responsibility to actively market this town and this school district, and that they must continue to push the message of diversity.

G. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

H. NEW BUSINESS

None.

I. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

J. COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Geary reminded the board that the Homecoming Parade and football game is Friday, October 25, 2019.

K. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

Monday, November 4, 2019 - Buckley School Improvement *last meeting of current board.

Monday, November 18, 2019 - Update on Humanities and Reaffirmation of BOE Bylaws
*first meeting of new board

Wednesday, November 20, 2019 - Pre-Budget Workshop

Monday, December 9, 2019 - Fall Data Update

L. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Thames called for a motion to adjourn.

**Acting Secretary Stefanovicz moved and Mr. Meggars seconded
the motion to adjourn the meeting.**

7/0 - Voted in favor.

Adjournment 8:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Melanie Stefanovicz
Acting Board Secretary