

MANCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION

**Regular Meeting
November 8, 2021
Lincoln/Virtual**

PRESENT: Eisenthal, Kohls, Meggers, Mix, Orsene, Pattacini, Patterson, Stefanovicz, Thames

ALSO PRESENT: Superintendent of Schools Geary, Deputy Superintendent Curriculum & Special Services Radikas, Director of Finance & Management Clancy, Director of Human Resources Sone-Moyano

ABSENT:

A. OPENING

A.1. & 2. Meeting Called to Order

Superintendent Geary called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. All in attendance participated in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, led by Mr. Geary.

A.3. New Board Members Introduction

Mr. Geary noted the official swearing in of Melanie Stefanovicz, Richard Kohls, David Eisenthal and Michael Orsene will take place November 15th. This evening, Mr. Camposeo was present to swear in the one returning and three new Board members.

A.4. Election of New Board Chair and Secretary

Ms. Stefanovicz nominated Chris Pattacini as Board Chair. She noted Mr. Pattacini has been a member of the Board since 2008 and was Chair for 9 of those years. Mr. Meggers seconded the nomination.

8/0/1 - Voted in favor.

Mr. Thames nominated Tracy Patterson for Board Secretary. Ms. Patterson has been on the Board since 2018 and has four children, some still in the school system. Mr. Meggers seconded the nomination.

8/0/1 - Voted in favor.

A.5. Reaffirmation of Board of Education Bylaws

Secretary Patterson moved for the Board to reaffirm the Board of Education Bylaws. Mr. Eisenthal seconded the motion.

9/0 - Voted in favor.

A.6. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

APPROVED – Minutes Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of October 25, 2021. Secretary Patterson moved and Ms. Mix seconded the motion.

7/0/2 – Voted in favor.

B. COMMITTEE REPORTS

None.

C. CONSENT CALENDAR

Mr. Geary presented one item on the Consent Calendar for Board approval.

C.1. Personnel Action

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

Mr. Pattacini took a moment to explain the Consent Calendar approval process to the new Board members. Mr. Pattacini reviewed that items can be excluded from the vote if there are unanswered questions on certain items. He then called for a motion.

Secretary Patterson moved and Ms. Stefanovicz seconded the recommendation to accept the Consent Calendar.

9/0 - Voted in favor.

D. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

None.

E. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Tom Stringfellow, 183 Hillstown Road, recommended a book entitled *The Age of Exploration*. He informed us that November is Native American Month. On CPTV tonight there is a 4-part series starting on native peoples. Mr. Stringfellow recommended another book, *All the Real Indians Died Off*. Last, he reminded us that it has been 80 years since Pearl Harbor.

F. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

F.1. Overview of Manchester Public Schools

Mr. Geary presented a slide show that reviewed Manchester Public School's mission, desire for equity, and demographics. He reviewed our goals and progress to date as well as the Board and Superintendent shared priorities.

A Covid-19 update listed the current case count and number of students and adults in quarantine. Mr. Geary reviewed a new suggestion for "Screen and Stay" which would allow students and staff who are unvaccinated or only partially vaccinated to remain in school after close contact with a Covid-19 person in certain circumstances.

Masks will continue to be used in schools and on buses at least through February 15th. They are not required outdoors.

Approximately 90% of staff are fully vaccinated with another 3% having had their first shot. There are 107 employees required to test weekly.

Mr. Eisenthal recalled hearing about a change in testing rules. Mr. Geary reviewed that currently if staff are not vaccinated the weekly required testing is covered by the Board funded insurance. As of 12/31/2021, only those staff who

have a verified medical or religious exemption will have testing for non-diagnostic purposes covered by insurance.

Mr. Pattacini wondered how community reporting would change if we use screen and stay. Mr. Geary stated we would still report the number of infected and the number of people who would be quarantined if not using screen and stay along with the number of people actually quarantined (whether they did not qualify for screen and stay or chose to quarantine anyway). If this new process is rolled out it will be explained to parents.

G. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Mr. Pattacini explained to the new Board members the process of adopting policy, including a first reading at one meeting and then a vote at a second meeting. This provides time for questions as well as community input. The following policies were previously presented for a first read, however they are being represented this evening for the benefit of new members.

G.1. Policy Recommendations

1. Credit for Online Courses [Optional and Remote Learning] Policy # 5127.12

This is a new policy intended to clarify remote learning that is funded by the district versus taking a regular online course that is self-pay.

2. Meeting Conduct Policy # 9000 - Bylaws

Addresses having remote or split Board meetings.

3. Community Use of School Facilities Policy # 1330

Follows our health and safety guidelines.

4. Visitors and Observations in Schools Policy # 1300

Follows our health and safety guidelines.

5. School Volunteers Policy #1401

Follows our health and safety guidelines.

6. Green Cleaning Policy # 1506

Clarifies we can use any cleaners approved by the federal government to clean the schools.

7. Transportation Policy # 3541

Clarifies that health and safety rules must be followed on buses as well.

Mr. Orsene asked where the full policies can be found. Mr. Geary noted the links in the document and also directed members that all policies can be found on the mpspride.org website.

H. NEW BUSINESS

None.

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

Mr. Tom Stringfellow, 183 Hillstown Road, welcomed the new members to the Board and wished Mr. Thames best of luck as the new Town Clerk. Mr. Stringfellow enjoyed Mr. Geary's presentation. He suggested Barnes & Noble bookstore for their children's section. Last, Mr. Stringfellow mentioned children and stress, suicide, and safety in schools.

Ms. Sheralyn Lazu, 22 Oak Grove Street, wondered about previously mentioned plans to hold vaccination clinics now that the age group for vaccines has included ages 5-11. Mr. Geary is working on this and looking at late afternoon or evening clinics so parents can be present with their children.

J. COMMUNICATIONS

Ms. Stefanovicz mentioned the liaison program, noting that as the liaison for Waddell she recently attended a virtual PTA meeting. There were about 56 members online and represented 15 teachers, behavior techs, and the principal. Ms. Stefanovicz also gave kudos to teacher Mrs. Daigle for stepping up to run the PTA.

Mr. Pattacini reviewed he will be emailing Board members about subcommittee assignments as well as liaison schools. He will be requesting their first and second choices.

Next, Mr. Pattacini invited everyone to attend the official swearing in ceremony in the Cheney Hall on November 15th. He believes the time will be about 6pm and notes it is a great experience to attend.

K. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

Thursday, November 18, 2021 - Budget Update. This date may be subject to change based on schedules of current Board members.

Monday, November 22, 2021 - Update on Humanities / STEM PK-4

Monday, December 6, 2021 - Fall Data Update

Monday, December 20, 2021 - Update on Humanities / STEM 5-12

Ms. Stefanovicz would like to see a standing agenda item to rotate through the liaisons for each school and promote the good news of each school. She also questioned the PD dates coming up. Last, Ms. Stefanovicz enjoyed (pre-Covid) having Board meetings at each of the schools and wonders if there is any plan to return to doing that.

L. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Pattacini called for a motion to adjourn.

Secretary Patterson moved and Ms. Stefanovicz seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting.

9/0 - Voted in favor.

Adjournment 8:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tracy Patterson
Board Secretary