

MANCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION

Regular Meeting November 10, 2014

Lincoln Center

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

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. Mr. Pattacini asked ~~everyone~~ the Board to observe a moment of silence for Janice Kiesel, Dr. Kiesel's wife, who had passed away unexpectedly this last week.

A.3. Adoption of Minutes of Previous Meeting

ADOPTED – Minutes Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of October 27, 2014. Secretary Scappaticci moved and Mr. Crockett seconded the motion.

8/0 – Voted in favor.

B. CONSENT CALENDAR

Mr. Geary presented seven items on the Consent Calendar for Board approval.

B.1. Personnel Action

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

B.2. Transfer of Funds

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

- Transfer from Bentley Alternative Ed New Equipment account to Bentley Alternative Ed Instructional Supplies & Materials account in the amount of \$800
- Transfer from System-wide Math Textbooks account to System-wide Math Contracted Subs account in the amount of \$15,900

B.3. Extended Field Trip Request Form – MHS Roundtable Singers/Handbell Choir – Washington D.C. – Concert Tour/Competition – 42 students – 2 days of school missed – 5/21/15-5/24/15 – Chaperones/Teachers

B.4. Establish an appropriation in the amount of \$113,596 for the Out-of-District Magnet School Transportation Grant for FY 14/15

B.5. Ratification of the Manchester School Administration Association contract 2015/16 – 2017/18

B.6. Ratification of the Board of Education Buildings & Grounds Supervisors, AFSCME Council #4, Local 818-49 contract 2014/15 – 2016/17

B.7. Permission to Apply for the Nellie Mae Foundation District Level Systems Change, \$3,613,116, January 2015 – January 2018

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

Mr. Tom Stringfellow, 183 Hillstown Road, attended the State Board of Education meeting last week in Hartford. Hopefully in the next meeting they will vote on social studies directives about having students learn in a local way in addition to historical facts, K-12. Mr. Stringfellow recommended a CPTV 8 part series called *America by the Numbers* and noted that by 2043 people of color will comprise 50% of the American population. He notes we should all pull together as Americans no matter where we live or our political affiliation. He is looking forward to the movie about Dr. King, Selma, coming out soon. Mr. Stringfellow attended a lecture regarding Iwo Jima at the Historical Society recently, noting that two Manchester men died there out of 6000 men

who gave their lives in that conflict. He also spoke about the Civil War and the War of 1812, stating we should not forget the veterans that gave their lives.

D. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT – PART I

D.1. Update on SAAM

Mr. Geary welcomed Dr. Radikas to the podium to give an update on the NWEA scores throughout the district from the fall and also discuss the scores of those students that participated in the summer program. Dr. Radikas' full presentation is available on the website. Dr. Radikas noted that our special education, F/R meals, and English Language Learner populations are areas of concern. The achievement gap between our ethnic groups remains an issue that requires attention. To address these issues some support services available to students will be redefined; clear expectations, training, and time for Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) will be provided; and we will continue to craft, reflect on, and revise our English language arts and mathematics curriculums.

Mr. Leon noted the slides provided a lot of information and due to the issues experienced by board members with changing over to the new email system, most of them were just seeing this data for the first time. Mr. Leon would prefer to digest the information and ask questions at the next meeting.

Ms. Pazda noted there are new learning structures in place and was interested in how we monitor that progress. She notes the bands in Grade 5 widen. Dr. Radikas reviewed that at the upper grades the amount of growth is smaller from spring to fall. Dr. Radikas wants to hone in on grades 3, 4 and 5. ~~Dr. Radikas, noted~~ that grades K-2 are making ground. Dr. Radikas wants to look at how well tiered interventions are being implemented and notes there should be fluidity through those support services. Dr. Radikas noted a new ELL coordinator has been hired and will be looking at this data as well as English Language Learner graduation rates.

Ms. Cruz noted it is often a struggle to get families engaged and supportive. She would like an update on family advocacy. Dr. Radikas stated that if we receive the grant from the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving that will help tremendously, along with the Family Resource Centers that were started this year in several elementary schools. Dr. Radikas further notes we are looking at after school programming more closely and seizing the moment of parent/teacher conferences to reach out to parents with how best to contact them and what supports they may need.

Mr. Geary feels we are only in the beginning stages. The Family Resource Centers and curriculum development are both new and he thinks we will see better results in

the future. Mr. Geary also noted that the NWEA is just one assessment and we need to focus on what is happening in the classrooms as a whole.

Dr. Radikas next reviewed that the goal of SAAM was to limit the “summer slide” that often occurs when students are out of the classroom for two months. She reviewed that this past summer SAAM was held at two sites, with Highland Park hosting students exiting grades K and 1 (entering grades 1 and 2); and Bennet hosting students exiting grades 2 and 3 (entering grades 3 and 4).

Because of a partnership with Parks & Rec, the program was able to save over \$200,000 in costs this past summer compared to the first year of implementation. Students participated in classroom work until 11:00 and then were transitioned to a recreation program for the afternoon. On day 1 there were 432 students enrolled in SAAM and on the last day 363 students remained enrolled. Of the 69 students that were disenrolled, many reasons were given, including vacations, daycare issues, families moving, and medical reasons.

Overall, the data shows that in most cases there was growth of a few points from spring to fall scores, or level scores. This data supports the goal of limiting the “summer slide”.

Scott Sprague, Director of Parks & Rec, and Calvin Harris, Rec Supervisor, were present to talk about the recreation aspect of SAAM. Because of the cooperating program, families didn’t have to make a choice whether to participate in the Rec program or summer school. Mr. Harris thanked the Board of Education for this cooperation and the result was a nice program that students enjoyed. He pointed out about 95% of the students that participated were new to the camp program. Mr. Harris outlined a typical day, from transporting the students to various camp locations, lunch, and a wide variety of activities, from swimming to field trips to the zoo, bowling and other activities they may not have had the opportunity to participate in otherwise.

Dr. Radikas had some thoughts about what to consider for next year, including possibly starting the program after July 4th to allow time for families to take a vacation prior to the start of SAAM, keeping the two guidance counselors, journals and phone calls home, homework, and possibly making field trips more in line with the academic aspect.

Mr. Leon reviewed that the first two years of SAAM were paid through the Alliance Grant and he wonders how the program will be funded for year 3 and beyond. Mr. Geary stated it would continue to be funded through the Alliance Grant if funds were available and we would have some idea of that funding soon. Mr. Leon pointed out

we need to know before budget season in January, so we know if we need to budget for it.

Ms. Pazda likes the concept of educating the whole child and feels the children were able to engage in wonderful activities they might not have otherwise had the opportunity to participate in. She felt a great spirit of cooperation. As planning of this program began during a time Ms. Pazda was not on the Board, she was unaware the goal was specifically to limit the summer slide, and not for intervention or acceleration. She wanted to know what the curriculum looked like. Dr. Radikas noted the students invited to participate this past year were among the lowest 20-40% of students. The literacy and mathematics curriculum is an extension of their academic year in a different format and the recreation aspect enriches the student's lives. Ms. Pazda wondered why there were about 700 students in the program the first year and less than 500 in year 2. Dr. Radikas reviewed that the first year the program was open to all students, whether they were struggling academically or not. With that population it was hard to know whether the goal of limiting the summer slide was achieved. It also made teaching more difficult, with varying levels of students in the classroom, during a limited amount of time in summer school. Ms. Pazda wondered if Dr. Radikas feels we have stemmed the slide? Dr. Radikas feels, based only on NWEA data, yes we were successful.

Ms. Cruz appreciated that Mr. Thames' concerns about 200 students being disenrolled the first year were addressed. She ~~notes~~ noted only 24 parents participated in a survey this year at the end of the program and wonders how families were reached out to. Dr. Radikas stated two mailings were sent to SAAM families. She also noted that the lower disenrollment rate in year 2 was probably due to the guidance counselors, who reached out to families after the first absence. Ms. Cruz suggested next year sending the survey home with the kids instead of sending it through the mail. Dr. Radikas also stated she would love to see some Board members visit the SAAM program next year to see firsthand how the program runs.

Mr. Thames commended Dr. Radikas for listening to his concerns regarding attendance. He feels the concentrated efforts made a difference. His grandson participated in the program and he felt the Parks & Rec aspect ~~it~~ was a vibrant and robust program. Mr. Thames wondered how many buses were used. Dr. Radikas reviewed the first year there were 9 buses and 3 sites, while this year 10 buses and a van were used with only 2 sites. Mr. Thames feels that in looking at under-performers we need to see not only the whole child, but the whole family. He feels if parents have struggles, such as no high school diploma, not working, housing issues, etc., they in turn have an adverse relationship with their child and his/her school performance. This creates a cycle of poverty and that pattern is the root problem and needs to be looked at as a community.

Mr. Pattacini looked at the decrease in costs compared to year 1, wondering about the decrease in staff costs. Dr. Radikas reviewed that the first year certified staff worked the full day, providing both instruction and enrichment activities, while this year certified staff worked only half days, with the enrichment being provided through Parks & Rec. Mr. Pattacini stated that seemed to be a more efficient way to deliver the services. Dr. Radikas agreed and noted that it also gave staff more time to reenergize and not burn out, with working full days after completing a school year.

Mr. Pattacini was encouraged that the team is looking at how to continue to improve the program. He feels it is important to say this is a successful program. Mr. Pattacini wondered what the typical slide is compared to this data. Dr. Radikas stated they will look at data for those students who should have attended the program but chose not to versus those who did attend. NWEA data is not broken up by ethic or other bands, but as a whole grade.

Mr. Pattacini wondered how hard it would be to look at data from year 1 versus versus year 2. Dr. Radikas noted the intent of SAAM was to deter the summer slide. Mr. Pattacini wondered what needs to be improved in the higher grades. Dr. Radikas reviewed the focus will be on grades 3-5, looking at curriculum and Tier 1 support. Focus will also be on a parental engagement component to get parents in to give feedback and offer support. Mr. Pattacini was encouraged by the reduction of-in drop outs and wants to look at the 69 who were disenrolled, wondering how many moved out of the district over the summer.

Dr. Radikas welcomed Linda Cavanaugh to the podium. She thanked Linda for her hard work in getting SAAM up and running and provided a gift to show our appreciation. Ms. Cavanaugh thanked the Board and Dr. Kisiel for the confidence they showed in her by appointing her Chief Program Planner and allowing her to assemble an incredible planning team with Ms. DeAngelis and Ms. Johnston. —Ms. Cavanaugh thanked Mr. Geary and Dr. Radikas for their support of SAAM. She has been honored to work with Manchester and also thanked Scott Sprague and Calvin Harris for their efforts as well.

D.2. Referendum Outcome

Mr. Geary expressed his appreciation to the Board of Education, Board of Directors, and SMARTR, along with the town for their efforts to pass the referendum. He reviewed the next steps, noting the ED049 was submitted to the state in June 2014, ahead of the referendum being approved. The full presentation is available on the website, including the anticipated timeline.

Ms. Pazda noted this is exciting work. She wondered what a commissioning agent is, as an RFP is being put out for one. Mr. Geary explained that it is someone that works-looks at systems such as HVAC, etc., so we are not changing systems later.

Mr. Crockett asked about who makes decisions on the field color/markings and Mr. Geary pointed out that the town building committee has the final say on the color and markings of the high school turf. Mr. Crockett doesn't want the Board of Education blamed if people are unhappy and wants people to know that it is now on the town to deliver.

Mr. Scappaticci is thrilled about this exciting time. He thanked Mr. Geary for all his work on the road show, noting he did a great job of explaining the referendum to the members of the public.

Mr. Pattacini wondered about the possible acceleration of the schedule. Mr. Geary explained that if the schedule is accelerated through legislative approval it allows for more planning time, but the broad plan remains on the same timeline.

Mr. Leon thanked the voters and noted our job is just beginning. We now have to work on Ed Specs, swing space, and other planning items.

Mr. Pattacini thanked Mr. Geary and noted it has been a team effort between the Board of Education, Board of Directors, SMARTR, and the administration, encompassing prior boards on this multi-year effort, which culminated in community support for an investment in our schools.

E. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

F. NEW BUSINESS

F.1. Policy Revisions

Ms. Pazda, a member of the Policy Committee, explained that in response to a recommendation to add a Vice Chair position, eight local towns were looked at. Ms. Pazda noted that this position would ensure continuity if the Chair is absent. In the past, if the Chair was absent the Secretary moved to the Chair and a new Secretary was appointed quickly, she is not sure by whom. She notes this suggested policy revision has nothing to do with the current members, just the structure of the Board. Ms. Pazda noted the Board of Directors has a similar configuration with a Mayor, Deputy Mayor, and Secretary.

Mr. Pattacini noted it has been past practice for the Chair to appoint a replacement Secretary if needed;necessary, though it is not a formalized policy.

Ms. Cruz pointed out the Policy Committee was unanimous in supporting this policy. She feels it adds support around the chair and other districts do it. It also makes clear the role of the Secretary. She notes members, including herself, may have wanted to take on the Secretary role, but were not interested in stepping in for the Chair in his absence. She also noted East Hartford does not have a Vice Chair, but does have a Treasurer.

Ms. Hagenow added that this addition would bring clarification and help things run smoother.

Mr. Pattacini this is a first reading and we are looking for feedback.

Mr. Leon respects the work of the Policy Committee, but disagrees with this position being created. He feels having three officers does not make sense. If anything, creating rules for who steps in as a Secretary may be possible.

Mr. Crockett agreed with Mr. Leon. He recalled that in 2007-2008 this topic was brought to the Board and immediately defeated by a bipartisan board. It serves no purpose and he feels is politically motivated. Mr. Crockett feels we should be above playing party politics. We are here for the students and we need to take care of business and stop wasting time.

Mr. Thames feels the existing structure works well and he has seen no problems when the Chair has been absent. The Secretary stepping in is adequate and whomever is chosen to replace the Secretary has also done well. He sees no need to change something that is not broken.

Mr. Scappaticci thanked the Policy Committee for their suggestion. He noted that whenever he has had to step in as Chair he has had notice well in advance and had time to ask someone to step in as Secretary as well. He feels maybe the Policy Committee should address the process of selecting an Acting Secretary instead of adding a new position.

Mr. Leon pointed out that for this Policy to pass six members would need to approve it. Clearly, four members have spoken against it so he sees no need for a vote at the next meeting.

Mr. Pattacini thanked the Policy Committee for their work in thinking outside the box.

G. COMMUNICATIONS

None.

H. COMMITTEE REPORTS

H.1. Curriculum & Instruction Committee

Ms. Pazda reviewed the last meeting was held on October 15th. Present were Ms. Hagenow, Ms. Pazda, Mr. Stafford, and Dr. Radikas. In addition, Ms. Kreiger, Mr. DiDominzio, Dr. Oliver, and Dr. Ratchford were present. A new textbook, *Business Management* was adopted and will replace the ten year old current text. Thirty class copies will be ordered. Dr. Oliver updated the group on STEAM, including Invention Convention, After-school programming, and grant opportunities. Dr. Ratchford updated the group on several literacy and coaching initiatives. The next meeting will be December 8 at 5:30 p.m. at Lincoln Center.

H.2. Policy Committee

Ms. Cruz reported that the last meeting was held on October 27th. Present were Ms. Cruz, Ms. Hagenow, Ms. Pazda, Mr. Stafford, and Mr. Geary. The policy presented this evening was discussed. The School Lunch policy #5143.2 policy will be revised, eliminating the alternate lunch provision. A draft will be brought back at the next meeting. A draft amendment that would add 2 student representatives as non-voting members of the Board of Education was reviewed. This will be brought back for review at the next meeting of the Committee. The next meeting will be held on November 24 at 5:30 p.m.

H.3. Community Relations Committee

Ms. Pazda noted the last meeting was held on October 29th at the Highland Park School Library. Present were Mr. Pattacini, Ms. Pazda, Mr. Thames, Mr. Geary, and Diane Sheehan-Burns, Principal of HPS. An open house for community members to see a 21st Century learning environment was led by Mr. Sheehan-Burns. The committee also reviewed proposed changes in locations of one of the two monthly meetings. The first meeting of each month would be moved to a school. Meetings will be held on Wednesdays between Board meetings at 7:00 at Central Office. The next meeting is November 19th.

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

Ms. Susan Jacobson, 21 Hickory Lane, has a daughter that participated in SAAM both years. Last year she saw no slide over the summer and this year just a slight slide in reading. Regarding the attendance policy, Ms. Jacobson feels it is intimidating regarding the risk of disenrollment. She understands children will get the most from being there every day, but who says children don't learn when they are not there. As far as the new schedule this year, Ms. Jacobson was disappointed in the reduction in academics from four hours to three. With having the children eat breakfast in class and

then be ready to leave, packed up and at the door by 11:00, they really get much less than 3 hours of learning time. She hopes that next year SAAM adds back in that extra hour and also reaches out to more children, possibly with a morning and afternoon session.

Mr. Tom Stringfellow, 183 Hillstown Road, liked Dr. Radikas' SAAM report and the support from Parks & Rec. For parents, Mr. Stringfellow recommends the book *The Everything Book That Parents Should Know About Special Education*. He hopes for continued funding and doesn't like the term "subgroups". Mr. Stringfellow feels that parents of color need to get involved and take more interest in their children. He recommended a documentary, *Big Philosophy for Little People*. Mr. Stringfellow feels music is vital and pointed out an article regarding the summer program held in Glastonbury. He also feels no student should have to work with a hungry stomach. Last, Mr. Stringfellow recommended the book *Where We Be At*, regarding racial balance.

J. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

Mr. Leon again asked for consideration of the Communications section to be placed after the final public comment section.

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 9:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jason Scappaticci
Board Secretary