

MANCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION

Regular Meeting November 14, 2016 Robertson Elementary School

PRESENT: Caldwell, Conyers, Hagenow, Jacobsen, Leon, Pattacini, Scappaticci, Stefanovicz, Thames

ALSO PRESENT: Superintendent of Schools Geary, Deputy Superintendent & Special Services Radikas, Director of Finance & Management Clancy

ABSENT:

A. OPENING

A.1. & 2. Meeting Called to Order

Superintendent Geary 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. Geary.

A.3. Election of New Board Chair and Board Secretary

Mr. Geary explained that this is the annual organizational meeting. He welcomed new Board member Peter Conyers, who was elected last year and replaces Carl Stafford. Mr. Geary called for nominations for Board Chair.

Ms. Stefanovicz nominated Chris Pattacini for Board Chair. Ms. Stefanovicz reviewed Mr. Pattacini has served on the Board for 8 years and has show supportive, thoughtful communication and steady leadership. He has integrity and believes in the kids of Manchester. Mr. Caldwell seconded the nomination, noting Mr. Pattacini has been exceedingly helpful as he joined the Board and he looks forward to working with him.

9/0 - Voted in favor.

Mr. Pattacini thanked the Board and called for a nomination for Board Secretary.

Mr. Thames nominated Jason Scappaticci for Board Secretary. He noted it has been a pleasure serving together over the last two years and that Jason does a skillful job as secretary. Mr. Thames noted that Mr. Scappaticci is a fixture throughout Manchester Public Schools, attending many events and volunteering. He is a mentor and role model and as an employee of Manchester Community College he is able to encourage our older students as well. He is the right man for the job. Ms. Hagenow seconded the motion, noting Jason is respectful, dedicated, and responsible.

9/0 - Voted in favor.

Mr. Pattacini thanked the Board and noted that every member contributes to our success.

A.4. Introduction of New Board Member

The newest member of the Board, Peter Conyers, who was elected last year joined us and was welcomed.

A.5. Reaffirmation of Board of Education Bylaws and Policies

Scappaticci moved for the Board to reaffirm the Board of Education Bylaws and Policies. Ms. Jacobsen 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 24, 2016. Secretary Scappaticci moved and Ms. Jacobsen seconded the motion.

9/0 – Voted in favor.

B. COMMITTEE REPORTS

B.1. Policy Committee

Ms. Hagenow reviewed the last meeting was held October 24th. In attendance were herself, Ms. Jacobsen, Mr. Stafford, Mr. Thames, Mr. Geary and Imnaam Kahn. The Committee reviewed the proposal to consider adding a School Based Health Center at Illing Middle School. The Superintendent will get parent input on the concept before bringing the idea to the Board for consideration.

The Committee reviewed the revised Wellness Policy, Fingerprinting of New Hires Policy, Closing a School Policy and Enrollment and Tuition Policy and will send the revised policies to the Board for a first reading.

The Committee directed the Superintendent to put all possible holidays on a draft calendar for the 2018-19 School Year and bring the draft back to the Committee. The Superintendent will also send the Religious Holidays survey to high school students.

C. CONSENT CALENDAR

Mr. Geary presented six 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

- Transfer from Systemwide Library/Media Software Licenses account to Systemwide Library/Media Library Books account in the amount of \$1105
- Transfer from Systemwide Language Arts Dues & Fees account to Systemwide Language Arts Instructional Materials & Supplies account in the amount of \$540

C.3. Establish an appropriation for FY 16/17 for the USDA Head Start, breakfast and lunch grant appropriation in the amount of \$120,100

C.4. Establish an increase in the appropriation for FY16/17 for the Manchester Head Start in the amount of \$21,044, bringing the total award to \$1,190,146

C.5. Extended Field Trip Request Form - MHS - Young Men's Leadership Group - Comfort Inn & Suites, Meriden, CT - State Leadership Conference - December 2, 2016 through December 3, 2016 - 4 Students/1 Chaperone

C.6. Permission to apply for FY 16-18 Hartford Foundation for Public Giving's Community Innovation Fund Planning Grant in the amount of \$50,000

The Chairman called for a motion.

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

9/0 - Voted in favor.

D. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

Shania Stanton announced the Seniors won the Turkey Bowl with a score of 36 to 6. Approximately 400 cans of food were donated to MACC. The holiday vendor and craft fair was the past weekend and was successful. Tomorrow is the Leadership meeting. November 18th is a Robotics competition. There is a blood drive being held November 28th from 8:00 to 2:00, sponsored by the National Honor Society. The inductions to the National Honor Society will be held November 22nd or 29th. The Winder Wonderland Dance will be held December 10th.

Mr. Pattacini thanked the MHS students for their support of the community with both the can drive and blood drive.

E. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

F. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT – PART I

F.1. Robertson Elementary School Improvement Plan

Mr. Geary introduced Stuart Wolf, Principal of Robertson. Mr. Wolf presented a video, which is available online, detailing the happenings at Robertson.

Ms. Hagenow asked about the Remind App. Mr. Wolf reviewed teachers invite the parents of the entire class and are able to text messages to the group or to individual parents about various happenings, field trip reminders, specifics about their child, and links to helpful websites. This helps engage families to be active partners in their child's education.

Ms. Jacobsen asked about the home visits mentioned, including who goes and how often, how are families selected and what is their response. Mr. Wolf noted that in the past, about 9 years ago when Kindergarten started the year with half days, home visits were the norm. Now that model doesn't work anymore. This new pilot has Kindergarten teachers going in pairs with another staff member, maybe someone from the FRC, a social worker, etc. Parents love it and the kids are thrilled to share their home with their teacher. This pilot shows the family how much the teacher wants to help their child. There are many different cultures represented at Robertson and getting to know more about that goes a long way towards teaching the students.

Mr. Leon wondered how many languages are used by families at Robertson. Mr. Wolf estimated there are 12-15 languages. He noted that Blackboard has translation ability, which has helped tremendously.

Mr. Pattacini asked about the coaching model and the experience of the teachers with that and how much time a teacher might spend in working on a typical coaching cycle each week or month. Ms. Legault, a coach, reviewed that a goal is set at the first meeting, then a plan is formulated Notes are taken on the teacher's lesson and then feedback is given. Coaches meet about once a week with teachers.

Mr. Geary reviewed that the Remind app and kindergarten home visits are pilots happening at Robertson this year. Bowers, Washington and Verplanck are piloting APTT. There is ADL work happening on race and culture at Highland Park, Washington and Verplanck. A presentation on the app is planned for the Board at a future meeting.

G. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

H. NEW BUSINESS

H.1. Policy Revisions

These are first readings of policy revisions.

1. Policy 5141.4 - School Wellness Policy

This policy was clarified six months ago. The new focus is on behavioral health and new legislation requirements are spelled out.

2. Policy 4000 - Fingerprinting/Criminal History/Reference Checks/DCF Background Checks

New legislation, effective October 1st, tightens language. The goal is to ensure all applicants are vetted.

3. Policy 3270 - Closing A School

This language draft is around how to welcome students and families to new schools.

4. Policy 5118 - School Enrollment

The language regarding non-residents and the tuition fees policy were matched up.

5. Policy 3240 - Tuition Fees

The language regarding non-residents and the tuition fees policy were matched up.

Ms. Stefanovicz had a question about the risk assessment in the School Wellness Policy. Mr. Geary clarified the social worker can assess or 211 can be called if we think there is a risk.

Mr. Scappaticci pointed out a stray question mark in Section 3 of the Nutrition Policy.

Mr. Pattacini noted that the credit reporting score may be appropriate to check for a potential employee working in finance, but he is glad its use will be limited. Mr. Geary agreed it will be used for those potential employees that would deal with money.

Mr. Leon wondered about the liability in giving references to other districts. Mr. Geary reviewed there is a new form with basic questions. He has consulted legal and we will err on the side of caution.

Mr. Thames asked for an example of "additional cost" in tuition for an out of district student. Mr. Geary noted that if a para was required, that would not be covered by the basic tuition. Generally that type of cost is paid by the sending district or parents.

Mr. Pattacini thanked the administration and Policy Committee for their work on these policies, which will all come back at the next meeting for adoption.

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

Rebecca Thereault, 103 Diane Drive, was considered about Policy 4000 and background checks. She pointed out sexual misconduct, such as grooming behavior, was not identified. Things such as inappropriation online contact, inappropriate contact in the classroom, "friending" a child on Facebook, even when conversations may not be sexualized, are all concerning. She also worries that we may already have current employees that would not pass the test. She wonders if maybe every 2-3 years all staff should be reviewed. Ms. Thereault is concerned we will miss things. She noted that there is a loophole as an employee may resign a former position prior to an investigation being completed and that needs to be taken into account.

J. COMMUNICATIONS

None.

K. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

None.

L. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Pattacini called for a motion to adjourn.

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

9/0 - Voted in favor.

Adjournment 8:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jason Scappaticci
Board Secretary