

MANCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION

Regular Meeting November 28, 2016 Lincoln

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

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

ABSENT: Jacobsen

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. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

APPROVED – Minutes Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of November 11, 2016. Secretary Scappaticci moved and Mr. Leon seconded the motion.

8/0 – Voted in favor.

B. COMMITTEE REPORTS

None.

C. CONSENT CALENDAR

Mr. Geary presented seven 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 Keeney School Administration Printing/Advertising account to Keeney Language Arts Instructional Materials/Supplies account in the amount of \$200
- Transfer from Bentley Alternative Education Field Trips account to Bentley Alternative Education Dues & Fees account in the amount of \$1,500
- Transfer from Manchester High School Computer Technology Contracted Services account to Manchester High School Computer Technology Office Supplies/Materials account in the amount of \$350
- Transfer from Manchester High School Information Services Contracted Services account in the amount of \$1,500 and from Manchester High School Information Services Repairs in the amount of \$2,200 to Manchester High School Information Services Computer Supplies/Materials account for a total transfer of \$3,700
- Transfer from Highland Park School Administration Periodicals account to Highland Park School Administration Dues & Fees account in the amount of \$75

C.3. Establish an increase for FY 16/17 for the Enfield Head Start appropriation in the amount of \$14,636, bringing the total award to \$854,182

C.4. Establish an appropriation for FY 16/17 for the Bilingual Education grant, to be funded by the Connecticut State Department of Education, in the amount of \$4,945

C.5. Establish an appropriation for FY 16-18 for Title III, Part A, English Language Acquisition and Language Enhancement grant, to be funded by the Connecticut State Department of Education in the amount of \$55,987

C.6. Establish an appropriation for FY 16/17 for the Out-of-District Magnet School Transportation Grant, in the amount of \$75,500

C.7. Permission to apply for FY 17/18 for the Head Start Federal Grant SF424 for the period 3/1/17-2/28/18

The Chairman called for a motion.

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

8/0 - Voted in favor.

D. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

Shania Stanton informed the Board of a Barnes & Noble fundraiser at the mall on 12/7.

Nabila Hoor Un Ein informed the Board about the Winter Wonderland 12/10, sponsored by FBLA and the National Honor Society. All children are invited and there are many activities, both free and for a small fee.

Ms. Stanton noted the quarterly academy assemblies are held 12/9. On 12/12 the Stem Academy Hour of Code introduces students to computer science and programming. She invited Board members to join the Hour of Code. Ms. Stanton also informed us that on 12/15 Global Studies will have a guest speaker in Rm 193 at 11:00 am. The Student Ambassadors Club is showing the movie *Radio* and admission will be two cans, \$2 or gloves for the less fortunate.

E. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Tom Stringfellow, 183 Hillstown Road, spoke about his concerns with sex trafficking and medical marijuana use by students. He recommended a book about Native American awareness and one on Chicano history. Mr. Stringfellow remembered the

anniversary of Pearl Harbor, which is approaching on 12/7, and recommended a book on the topic.

Ms. Rebecca Thereault, 103 Diane Drive, pointed out an article from 2001 regarding a teacher suspended with pay. She is concerned about the 4000 series policy discussed tonight. She remains concerned that there are loose ends regarding the term “unsubstantiated”, noting sometimes charges are dropped to protect children. In the sexual misconduct definition there is no definition of grooming, which is having an inappropriate relationship with a child to gain trust. This policy also does not address current employees. She implores the Board to listen to its constituency. Ms. Thereault also felt it was disconcerting to be told not to bring her concerns to the Board.

F. SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT – PART I

F.1. Update on Cheney/Bennet and Waddell projects

Mr. Geary noted that the Buildings & Sites Committee, along with several Board members, toured the Cheney/Bennet project this evening. Mr. Chris Till was present and informed the Board that the project is on schedule and on budget. It should be completed this summer.

Tonight Mr. Till and Randall Luther, from TSKP, reviewed the final plans for Waddell, with a goal to request approval from the Board to present the application to the State to go to bid. They are pushing to get the project out to bid by mid-December to maximize time and get competitive pricing. Joe Disanti, from Downes Construction, was also present to speak about the bid packages and scope of work. He noted there will be 23-25 different sub-contractors for this project. The original budget was \$24,946,570 and the current estimate is \$24,796,126, a decrease of about \$150,000.

Mr. Leon asked about the decrease in budget projection, noting only a 5% contingency amount. Mr. Disanti stated the original contingency was 7%, and he is very comfortable decreasing that to 5%. The extra funds were transferred to the Bennet/Cheney project, which is a much more complex project.

Ms. Stefanowicz asked about having only \$20,000 for play equipment. It was clarified that that amount was not for the playground, but for the interior slide in the lobby.

Mr. Pattacini stated action on this topic is scheduled for this evening, so he encouraged Board members to ask any questions they may have.

Mr. Leon asked if the Bennet/Cheney project was still on track for completion this summer, on schedule. It is.

Ms. Stefanowicz asked about the possibility of play equipment at Bennet/Cheney during the transition year when the Waddell students are at the school.

Mr. Caldwell asked about the solar power numbers. Mr. Luther noted they are included in the electrical numbers. Mr. Caldwell inquired about maintenance on the solar panels. Mr. Randall stated they are virtually maintenance free for 20 years plus.

Mr. Pattacini asked if the Building Committee had already approved this plan. Mr. Luther stated they will formally vote Monday, but as they have been intimately involved in the project he sees no concerns. There have been no substantive changes to the plan, only minor improvements.

F.2. Academics Update - Humanities and STEAM

The Director of Teaching & Learning Humanities, Diane Sheehan-Burns, and the Director of STEAM, Pari Ghetia, gave a presentation, which is available on the website.

Mr. Thames felt Sem-R is a great concept and he wondered how the partnership with UCONN happened. Ms. Burns noted that school wide enrichment model has been used for many years in the district, starting about 20 years ago at Keeney. Dr. Joe Renzulli, Gifted & Talented Director at UCONN, began the partnership. About a year and a half ago it was expanded to Illing as we tend to lose readers in middle school, so we are trying to accelerate readers.

Mr. Thames asked about the struggling readers and Ms. Burns clarified this is a school wide enrichment model, not just aimed at gifted students. Mr. Thames feels it is up to us to pull out the gifted and talented aspects of all students.

Mr. Thames also noted each teacher has a set of goals and wondered how the evaluation impacts those goals. Ms. Ghetia explained that Kristin Smith helps develop goals with the coaches and teachers and develops an action plan in November/December. In February there is a follow-up to reassess, but the entire time Ms. Smith is providing support.

Mr. Thames wondered how parents are connected through these activities. As a grandparent of a 5 and 10 year old in the district, he feels we do this extremely well. Ms. Ghetia noted there are resources on the website, we work with the Family & Community Partnership with Dr. Ratchford for community events, and teachers use technology to involve parents.

Mr. Pattacini wondered if Envision is available for anyone online. Ms. Ghetia explained it is a student log-in system, but if Board members would like to take a look she can create a test log for them.

Mr. Pattacini attended the APTT at Washington and thought it was amazing and powerful. He enjoyed seeing the parents talking to each other and the teacher. Mr. Pattacini stated there is amazing work going on in this district and he thanked all the staff for their contributions.

G. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Mr. Pattacini reviewed that the policy revisions this evening are being presented for a second time and will be voted on barring any objections.

G.1. Policy 5141.4 - School Wellness Policy

Ms. Stefanowicz pointed out some wording needing revision in Section 3, Page 4. The words "non-food" should be replaced by promotional activities sponsored by outside organization are encouraged to follow the national guidelines.

Mr. Leon noted the children sell candy bars and other food items for fundraisers and he wanted to be sure that could continue. Mr. Geary assured him it could and the policy was not in place to police fundraisers like the pie sales and candy bars.

Secretary Scappaticci moved for the Board to adopt Policy 5141.4 - School Wellness Policy, as amended. Mr. Leon seconded the motion.

8/0 - Voted in favor.

G.2. Policy 4000 - Fingerprinting/Criminal history/Reference Checks/D.C.F. Background Checks

Mr. Geary noted he had discussed this policy with legal council and the changes were related to a change in state law around tightening the hiring process. The definitions used are statute defined.

Ms. Stefanowicz pointed out this policy addresses volunteers, however there is another policy being reviewed currently that also addresses volunteers and she wondered if this policy should be tabled until the volunteer policy is ready.

Mr. Leon pointed out the general statutes address sexual misconduct only in regards to students and not to other adults in the district, and he wondered if we should revise that.

Mr. Pattacini noted that with these questions still on the table, it would make sense to table this policy for now. Mr. Geary noted we are already using the forms and he will look into the pending questions and bring the policy back to the Board in February.

G.3. Policy 5118 - School Enrollment

Secretary Scappaticci moved for the Board to adopt Policy 5118 - School Enrollment. Mr. Leon seconded the motion.

8/0 - Voted in favor.

G.4. Policy 3240 - Tuition Fees

Secretary Scappaticci moved for the Board to adopt Policy 3240 - Tuition Fees. Mr. Leon seconded the motion.

8/0 - Voted in favor.

Mr. Pattacini thanked the Policy Committee and the administration for their work on these policies.

H. NEW BUSINESS

Secretary Scappaticci moved for the Board of Education to approve the plans and specifications for Additions and Renovations to the Waddell Elementary School, dated October 28, 2016, prepared by TSKP Studio, and the associated cost estimate, dated November 23, 2016, prepared by Downes Construction, for submission to the Department of Administrative Services, Office of School Construction Grants for Review of Final Plans for Construction Authorization. Mr. Leon seconded the motion.

8/0 - Voted in favor.

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

Ms. Tracy Maio, 57 Horton Road, is excited about the plans for Waddell Elementary Schools. She is, however, concerned about the fact that the playground plans are not

yet defined and is worried that will get cut back. She likes the idea of putting the information in the plans now and then possibly taking some of the items for temporary use at Cheney. Ms. Maio feels that many parents would volunteer to help with installation and that could help with costs. Ms. Maio would also like to see the code of conduct reviewed.

Ms. Rebecca Thereault, 103 Diane Drive, discussed Policy 1220 - Public Comment. She pointed out the only thing prohibited is confidential information. She is concerned that public information was asked not to be brought up at this meeting. Ms. Thereault pointed out that a teacher at Illing is currently on leave due to giving a cell phone to a student. She can't help but notice a correlation between that issue and the revision of Policy 4000. She was pleased the policy revision was tabled and hopes the Board looks carefully at the policy. Ms. Thereault also feels we need to look at the Code of Conduct for teachers and not have this swept under a rug.

Mr. Pattacini noted that executive sessions include personnell items and specific individuals are entitled to the protection of due process. He thanked Ms. Therault for her comments.

J. COMMUNICATIONS

None.

K. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

Ms. Stefanowicz noted that the prevention of abuse is 2-pronged, utilizing both background checks and periodic checks. We also need to educate our children and families about what to look for. She brought up Erin's Law, which mandates that school districts must teach children to report anyone who tries to touch them inappropriately. Ms. Stefanowicz pointed out that $\frac{1}{3}$ of girls and $\frac{1}{6}$ of boys are sexually assaulted by the time they turn 18. Assault is linked to addiction, unprotected sex and other problems. She would like to see us facilitate healing.

L. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Pattacini called for a motion to adjourn.

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

8/0 - Voted in favor.

Adjournment 8:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jason Scappaticci
Board Secretary