

MANCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION

Regular Meeting December 9, 2019 Lincoln Center

PRESENT: Gundersen, Heinrich, Hughes, Meggers, Pattacini, Patterson, Scappaticci

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

ABSENT: Thames

A. OPENING

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

Acting Chairperson Pattacini called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m. All in attendance participated in the Pledge of Allegiance, led by Mr. Pattacini.

A.3. Secretary's Welcome

Acting Secretary Patterson 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. Patterson 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. Patterson 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 of Pre-Budget Workshop of the Board of Education of November 20, 2019. Acting Secretary Patterson moved and **Mr. Scappaticci** seconded the motion.

8/0 – Voted in favor

A.5. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

APPROVED - Minutes of Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of November 20, 2019. Acting Secretary Patterson moved and **Mr. Meggers** seconded the motion.

8/0 - Voted in favor

B. COMMITTEE REPORTS

None.

C. CONSENT CALENDAR

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

C.1. Personnel Actions

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. Establish an appropriation for FY 19-20, for the AT&T Aspire Grant in the amount of \$6,000

C.4. Establish an appropriation for FY 19-20, for the Garrett Lee Smith Suicide Prevention Grant in the amount of \$15,000

The Chairman called for a motion.

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

There was no discussion.

8/0 - Voted in favor.

D. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

Tiffany Henry was present to report the following:

- The F.A. Verplank Chapter of the National Honor Society held their induction ceremony last week for students in the class of 2020 and 2021. Congratulations to the inductees!
- Young Men's Leadership just finished their weeklong food drive to support the food pantry at the Second Congregational Church of Manchester. They collected 700 cans and the church was very thankful to have them in time for the holiday season.
- The Youth Equity Squad co-facilitated the monthly district equity team meeting with our very own Director of Humanities, Mrs. Diane Sheehan-Burns. They focused on analyzing curriculum units of study using Gorski's multicultural framework. In the future, the Youth Equity Squad wishes to engage and work collaboratively with teachers and other district leaders to further analyze curriculum through a multicultural lens.
- Winter sports have begun.
- On December 17, 2019, the MHS music department will have their first concert of the school year.
- MHS Academies will be holding assemblies this week where there will be student recognition, including those students who made honor roll.
- Coming up on January 16, 2020 there will be a midwinter concert for all of the auditioning music groups. Miss Henry is in the Chamber orchestra and is personally looking forward to this date.

E. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Tom Stringfellow, 183 Hillstown Road, expressed his support of the student representative and her report. He wishes that we could get more press coverage for all of the good things that are happening within our district. Mr. Stringfellow recommended the movie *A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood* starring Tom Hanks, as well as the book Who Was Mr. Rogers. He also recommended several other books and magazines which give credit to explorers of color: *1434 The Year A Magnificent Chinese Fleet Sailed to Italy and Ignited the Renaissance* by Gavin Menzies; *A History of War, Issue 73*- a magazine published in Great Britain which has a cover story about Russian Marshal Georgy Zhukov and Guiseppe Garibaldi, liberator for a United Italy during the 1860's; *The Underground Railroad Records* by William Still.

F. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

F.1. Update on Fall Data

Mr. Geary presented the fall data update which is available on the website.

Ms. Patterson asked if the ISS and OSS data is tracked by the degree of punishment, for example lunch or after-school detention? **Mr. Geary** confirmed that the data is broken down and can be provided.

Mr. Hughes spoke to the "summer slide" effect and wondered if there was a system in place for referring families to summer educational programs. **Mr. Geary** reported that we offer the Summer Advantage Academy of Manchester, but that it is for students identified during the year as needing extra help. We currently do not profile the slide nor do we intentionally target students who end the year at or above grade level who may lose some during the summer. He mentioned the possibility of partnering with the library.

Mr. Gundersen asked for clarification regarding the testing systems of the F&P and SBAC, mentioning that he has heard that the F&P is outdated. **Mr. Geary** responded that the F&P is a reading assessment, testing whether a student can not only read, but comprehend what it is that they're reading. We also use the Common Lit Pilot which is for higher level thinking, and that the SBAC goes

beyond testing comprehension. Mr. Geary stressed that the goal of our teachers is to know their students as readers and to observe student behavior as learners.

Ms. Stefanovicz thanked Mr. Geary for the takeaways, and mentioned that she understands how each school is different and each child is different. We can see that by the wide variety of trends in the data presented. She wondered if we can disperse the best of each school throughout the district so that we can grow equally as a community. **Mr. Geary** responded that there is appropriate support in the buildings and that we underestimated the impact of the moves of the schools over the last few years not only for the students but also for the staff. Mr. Geary continued to stress the need to make sure that staff are collaborating with each other across the district.

Ms. Stefanovicz wondered if there was a parallel between teacher absenteeism and student achievement. She mentioned that we have data collected regarding the correlation between student attendance and achievement, and wonders if the same can be seen with teachers who have a high rate of absenteeism. **Mr. Geary** discussed the standardized attendance policy that went into place this year for staff and anticipates the trend to level out. Ms. Stefanovicz made a point to reflect on why there are certain buildings with higher rates of staff absenteeism and wondered if it is related to school climate.

Mr. Pattacini remarked on the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving grant that will be reducing and asked if there is anything else that the Board should be prepared for regarding the budget and specific needs. **Mr. Geary** mentioned that HFPG primarily sponsors minority recruitment and the Family Resource Centers in each of the elementary schools and suggested that if the Board is serious about continuing these programs, they will need to put money into those programs.

Mr. Pattacini asked if there was anything that the Board could do in terms of policy to support the District's programs. **Mr. Geary** mentioned that chronic absenteeism is an uphill battle, so continued support for programs to get students to school is a priority, and that talking with state legislators is also helpful.

Mr. Pattacini thanked the administrators who were in the audience supporting Mr. Geary and the Board, for the work that they do and continue to do. Mr. Pattacini reminded the Board that just five years ago they were in a one-year plan, waiting until the end of the year to determine what would be a priority for the next year, when it was almost too late to do anything. He supports the belief that we will start to see changes very soon.

F.2. U.S. Census Presentation

Mr. Geary introduced Ms. Catherine Marx, Manchester's Partnership Specialist with the U.S. Census Bureau. Ms. Marx gave a presentation on the importance of the 2020 U.S. Census and its impact on the community in regards to financial support for services. Her presentation is available on the website.

G. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

H. NEW BUSINESS

None.

I. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Tom Stringfellow, 183 Hillstown Road, supported all of the items on the consent calendar and extended congratulations to the new board members. In response to the data update, Mr. Stringfellow noted concern about expulsions and poverty which has no color line; it affects all classes. He recommended the book *When Smart Students Underachieve at School* by Todd Whitaker and several other books relating to classroom survival. Testing is counterproductive in that we are always being compared to other schools, even though we are all in this together. Mr. Stringfellow supported the idea that minority recruiting and hiring is very difficult. He also supported the presentation on the Census, and believes that it is positive for both documented and undocumented persons.

J. COMMUNICATIONS

None.

K. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

Monday, January 13, 2020	Budget Presentation
Wednesday, January 15, 2020	Budget Workshop #1
Wednesday, January 22, 2020	Budget Workshop #2
Monday, January 27, 2020	Regular BOE meeting Update on Equity Update on STEAM
Wednesday, January 29, 2020	Budget Workshop #3

L. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Pattacini called for a motion to adjourn.

Mr. Scappaticci moved and **Mr. Meggers** seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting.

7/0 - Voted in favor.

Adjournment 8:33 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tracy Patterson
Acting Board Secretary