

# MANCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION

## Regular Meeting

June 25, 2018

Lincoln

**PRESENT:** Conyers, Hagenow, Leon, Maio, Pattacini, Scappaticci

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

**ABSENT:** Meggers, Stefanovicz, Thames

### A. **OPENING**

#### A.1. & 2. **Meeting Called to Order**

**Chairperson Pattacini** called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. All in attendance participated in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, led by Mr. Pattacini.

#### A.3. **Secretary's Welcome**

**Mr. Leon**, acting secretary, welcomed the public to the meeting.

#### A.4. **Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting**

**APPROVED – Minutes Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of June 11, 2018. Acting Secretary Leon moved and Mr. Scappaticci seconded the motion.**

**6/0 – Voted in favor.**

### B. **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

#### B.1. **Personnel & Finance Committee**

**Ms. Hagenow** reported that the last meeting was held June 11th. In attendance were herself, Mr. Thames, Mr. Meggers, Mr. Geary, Ms. Clancy and Mr. Aldi.

Mr. Aldi had reviewed the Paid Lunch Equity guidance and shared that the calculation tool resulted in a recommendation for a ten cent increase in lunch prices for 2018-2019. The

Committee also reviewed the 2017-2018 lunch price comparisons of local school districts and school districts within our District Reference Group. Manchester has the lowest lunch prices of the 19 districts on the chart.

Mr. Aldi reminded Committee members of the Healthy Food Certification Initiative. We have participated in this program the last 11 years and each year the Board is asked to vote to certify whether we will continue or not. The Board must also vote whether they want to allow for an exemption on the sale of food items that do not meet the standards under certain conditions.

Mr. Aldi presented information on the USDA's Community Eligibility Provision, which is a program that allows eligible local educational agencies and schools to provide free breakfast and lunch to all students. Eligibility is based on April 1, 2018 Direct Certified student enrollment percentages. MPS Title I schools are eligible for this program. There are a number of benefits with this program. A full presentation will be made to the Board at the 6/25/18 regular meeting.

Ms. Clancy provided an update on the status of the 2017-2018 budget. Areas of deficit were identified as well as the plan to offset these budget lines. The largest areas of concern are tuition and transportation. We are still in the process of verifying residency for a number of students attending magnet schools and payment will be remitted once residency is verified. We continue to implement a budget freeze. Overall, the budget is stable at this point.

Ms. Clancy reviewed the current budget process, which is based on statutory requirements, town charter, and board policy. There was discussion around this process and whether there is any flexibility in the steps that could potentially be changed. Ms. Clancy suggested the Board of Education meet with the Board of Directors earlier in the process, such as October, in order to establish direction or guidelines. A current services budget will be projected in October or November in order to establish a starting point for a discussion with the Board of Directors.

Mr. Geary provided a copy of a job description for the Human Resources Director for Committee members to review. The position will be posted internally prior to June 30th.

Mr. Geary then shared a proposal for a Middle Academy for students in grades 5-8. The purpose is to create a program that supports the individual needs of students who struggle with behavior by blending time at an offsite location, time in the student's home school (Bennet or Illing) and time in the community. Central Office Administration will be meeting

with Father Cavanaugh, of Assumption Church/School, to discuss the possibility of leasing the currently closed Assumption School for this program.

### **C. CONSENT CALENDAR**

**Mr. Geary** presented three 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. Extended Field Trip Request**

Illing Middle School - 2019 Grade 8 Washington DC Trip - 200-250 Students from April 10, 2019 to April 12, 2019 - 3 school days, 1 adult chaperone for every 8 students

#### **C.3. Extended Field Trip Request**

Manchester High School - Boys Cross Country - Manchester, New Hampshire - Cross Country Meet - September 21, 2018 - September 22, 2018 - 8 students participating - 2 chaperones

**The Chairman called for a motion.**

**Acting Secretary Leon moved and Mr. Scappaticci seconded the recommendation to adopt the Consent Calendar, Item C of tonight's agenda.**

**6/0 - Voted in favor.**

### **D. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT**

**Mr. Geary** and Mr. Pattacini recognized the two years of service of our graduating student representative, Nabila Hoor Un Ein. Nabila was an active member of the MHS community, participating in many activities, including National Honor Society, Activities Planning Board, Health Occupation Academy, Women's Leadership, and Multicultural Club among many. Although accepted to many colleges, Nabila has chosen to begin her college life at MCC. We thank her for her service as a student representative to the Board of Education.

Mr. Geary then introduced Krista Myrie, who will join Patrick Doherty next year in representing the students. Krista will be a junior next year and attends the Public Service Academy at MHS. She wants to be a lawyer and also participates in cross-country, is a link leader and is a member of the Multicultural club among her many activities. She was welcomed.

**Mr. Scappaticci** was excited to hear that Nabila would be coming to MCC, as he works with all new students and would be seeing her soon. He welcomed Krista to the table.

**Mr. Pattacini** also thanked Nabila for her service and welcomed Krista.

#### **E. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None.

#### **F. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT – PART I**

##### **F.1. NEASC at MHS Update**

**Mr. Geary** introduced Ms. Katelyn Miner, Principal of MHS and Ms. Torres, AP. Their presentation is available on the website. They reviewed the collaborative conference visit from NEASC that took place May 21-22, 2018. There has not yet been a formal report received from the visiting team, though one is expected by the fall, there is a strong sense of what they want to see and five areas for growth were outlined:

1. Written curriculum for all courses in all departments.
2. Embed the vision of the graduate in all MHS curriculum, instruction and assessment.
3. Program evaluation for effective, timely interventions.
4. Provide authentic learning experiences.
5. Student connections to the school community.

**Ms. Maio** wondered if the student connections happen naturally or are all assigned. Ms. Miner noted that while many do occur naturally, Monday Mentor tries to fill the gap for those that do not already have a "person" to rely on.

**Mr. Leon** wondered if adults in the building are trained to be receptive to all students to form connections. Ms. Miner noted there is professional learning around mentoring and that work will continue. The goal is to build the adult skills for Monday Mentoring.

**Mr. Pattacini** asked for clarification, wondering if the NEASC Committee comes back in two years for a formal report. Ms. Miner reviewed that this process is being revised, so we are one of the first to go through the new process. The focus is that in the spring of 2020 the team will look at the action steps that we have taken on the five or six goals that are laid out in the letter we will receive this fall. They want to see data on the improvements we have made in those areas of need. At that point they will decide if we will retain our accreditation.

**Mr. Geary** pointed out the strides MHS has made in the last 10 years, noting at that time they were on warning for leadership organization from NEASC. He commends the current and recent leadership at MHS for their hard work.

## **F.2. Update on Manchester Middle Academy**

**Mr. Geary** reported on the new District Learning Center that will include classes currently housed at Bowers, Bennet, Illing, Bentley and MRA. This program will support the individual needs of students who struggle with behavior by blending time at an offsite location with time in the student's homeschool (Bennet or Illing) as well as time in the community.

The school day will include recreational, vocational and volunteer components in addition to academic programming. A team model, similar to what is in place at MRA, will be created to support students grouped by needs related to the causes for the behavioral challenges.

Individual plans will be created to meet students' needs.

Staffing will include an administrator, nurse, custodian, secretary, 3.0 regular education teachers (1 from Bentley and 2 to be hired), 3.0 special education teachers (2 from Bentley and Illing), 1 Psychologist, 1 Social Worker (moved from Illing), and 4 paraprofessionals (to be moved from Bennet and Illing).

This program will form strong home/school connections. There will be clear school-wide expectations and a behavior system and individual behavior intervention plans as needed. There will be entrance and exit criteria. There will also be a plan for when and how to transition the students back to homeschool.

The approximate cost for the program, including rent and additional staffing, is \$416,729. Funding will come from savings found in the tuition line, Alliance funds, IDEA carryover funds and a potential offset to the budget by taking tuition students (in the future) at approximately \$60,000 per student.

**Ms. Hagenow** wondered if there would be additional transportation costs for these students. **Mr. Geary** noted the students will need transportation, however most if not all of these students currently in DLC programming already utilize special transportation, so it will just be a change of location. The cost difference should be minimal if any. **Ms. Hagenow** wondered if this will free up space in other schools. **Mr. Geary** noted that primarily it will free up space at Bentley for more high school students. In the future, the program may be moved to another building and he is hoping for a one year lease at the current location.

**Mr. Leon** wondered about the size of the Assumption building and if there was a cafeteria. Mr. Geary noted there are 7 large classrooms. Food will be brought in as there is no cafeteria. Mr. Leon wondered if we can do a year to year lease. Mr. Geary asked for a year to start and then would reassess our needs. As for transportation, Ms. Clancy stated Dattco will attempt to include the transportation in the existing tiers with no additional cost. The initial plan is for approximately 45 students (based on those currently in or needing programming). The plan is for as many as 65-70 as the need arises. This fills a need for us. More staff can be hired as we need, and if we take on tuition students.

**Mr. Scappaticci** wondered where the administrative and office staff was coming from and it was noted the administrator was being moved from the middle school. The nurse will be a new hire and Mr. Geary is not sure about the secretary and the custodian.

**F.3. Update on USDA's Community Eligibility Provision Program for Title I Schools**

**Mr. Geary** introduced Nick Aldi, Director of Food & Nutrition Services. Mr. Aldi reviewed the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP), which is available on the website. Based on the calculations, the title elementary schools are eligible to participate in the program that would provide free breakfast and lunch to all students in those buildings, regardless of their individual family income.

**Mr. Leon** appreciated Mr. Aldi's hard work and wondered about an expiration date on CEP. Mr. Aldi stated there is no commitment on our part and we can pull out at any time. The percentage reimbursement is good for 4 years. This is federally funded and stable.

**Mr. Pattacini** noted this has no impact to our budget as food services is fully self-funded. Mr. Geary pointed out that, although that is correct, each year there are approximately \$80-90,000 in outstanding unpaid lunch bills that the Board helps pay and this program will help lower those numbers, so it will impact the budget in a positive way.

**Ms. Clancy** confirmed this application is being submitted June 30th and will take effect for this coming 18/19 school year.

**G. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

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

None.

## **I. COMMUNICATIONS**

**Mr. Scappaticci** noted that last Wednesday Verplanck hosted an open house for anyone that wanted to walk the building before the renovations. He was pleased to see over 100 people there, including retired staff and graduates, who wanted to walk the halls one last time. Many commented the building hadn't changed in decades, so he was confident in the decision to renovate! Mr. Scappaticci was pleased to hear that the historic paintings, the trowel that laid the cornerstone and the original flag will all be preserved.

**Mr. Pattacini** announced that this evening will be Mr. Leon's last meeting. He thanked him for his many years of service and appreciates all the hard work he has done in advocating for our children. He will be missed.

## **J. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS**

- July 9, 2018 - Spring Data Update
- August 27, 2018 - Opening of School Update

## **K. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**Mr. Pattacini** reviewed that typically Executive Sessions are held prior to Board meetings. However, this evening the Board attended a Ribbon Cutting at the new Welcoming Center at 555 Main Street and therefore an executive session needed to be rescheduled to near the end of the meeting to review a bargaining unit contract and the superintendent's evaluation.

**Acting Secretary Leon moved for the Board to go into Executive Session. Ms. Hagenow seconded the motion.**

**6/0 - Voted in favor. 8:06 p.m.**

**Meeting called back to order at 8:53 p.m.**

**Acting Secretary Leon moved to add Item L.4. "Authorize Board Chair to Enter into Negotiations with Superintendent" to the agenda. Ms. Hagenow seconded the motion.**

**6/0 - Voted in favor.**

## **L. NEW BUSINESS**

### **L.1. Ratification of Tutor Contract**

**Acting Secretary Leon moved for the Board of Education to ratify the Manchester Tutor Association, Local #6545, AFT CT, AFL-CIO, contract dated July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2022. Ms. Hagenow seconded the motion.**

**6/0 - Voted in favor.**

### **L.2. Superintendent's Evaluation and Contract**

**Mr. Pattacini entered the following letter into the record:**

June 25, 2018

Mr. Geary,

In accordance with board policy and your employment agreement, the board has completed its evaluation of your performance. This letter constitutes the written evaluation of your performance for the period of July 2017 through June 2018.

The process as in the past, was jointly agreed upon by you and the Board of Education and included the development of an evaluation rubric. The developed rubric included evaluation of a number of qualities across the following major competencies:

- Develops and implements a vision that inspires action and commitment
- Aligns resources to drive a district-wide strategy for improving the performance of all students
- Establishes structures and processes that sustain a culture of continuous improvement and accountability, by focusing on results and capacity building

In addition, the rubric included board priorities, jointly developed by you and the board, as outlined below:

- Continually monitor the District Improvement Plan that includes clearly defined goals and strategies in the areas of Systems and Operations, Academics, Culture and Climate, and Talent Development to support improved student performance for all students
- Implement Phase 1 of the Manchester Public Schools 2025 Building Renovation Plan which includes the Bennet-Cheney 5/6 Academy, Waddell Elementary School renovation and expansion, and Verplanck Elementary School renovation and expansion along with planned security upgrades at all schools
- Improve and build more collaborative relationships with Town officials and the community at large



- Actively promote the good work of the Manchester Public Schools through strengthened communication and outreach

You provided the board of education with a self-reflection of your growth and progress against the above criteria, along with numerous supporting artifacts. The board subsequently met in executive session to review and discuss both the provided materials, as well as your performance.

The board appreciates the establishment of transparent and high expectations for yourself and the district, as well as your commitment to achieving these stated goals. The board recognizes the following district accomplishments under your leadership:

- Continued achievement of greater than a ninety percent (90%) graduation rate as measured by the District Data Dashboard, reflecting steady, multi-year sustained gains across a wide range of student demographics.
- Continued, steady growth (3-5% gains) in reading fluency scores at the elementary level with overall achievement at the elementary school level of 71% achievement, reflecting gains across all student ethnic groups.
- Continued work to support all learners through research based, engaging, student centered practices which the board believes will continue to shrink the achievement gap, including a continued commitment to the readers, writers and math workshop models, as well as personalized student-centered learning opportunities that allow all students to engage in deeper, more relevant learning, supported by programs such as IMAGINE College and Careers at MHS.
- Continued work on staff recruiting that ensures that both the staff and administration reflect the makeup of our student population, including an increase from 9.96% to 12.28% in minority Certified Staff and a sustained level of 25% minority administrators.
- Expanded and sustained private grant investments, which not only support the board's vision, but also reflect the district's including multi-year sustained support from Nellie Mae Education Foundation, and the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, as well as other private competitive grants from the Barr Foundation, the Graustein Foundation and the United Way.

The Board remains excited about the future prospects of the district and its students and looks forward to your continued efforts to improve curriculum, instructional practices and school climate, allowing for further improvements in student achievement for all students. The board looks forward to working with you to jointly establish targets for continued improvements in the following areas:

- Further improvements in student achievement, as measured by the District Data Dashboard, against jointly agreed to target increases.
- Continued work on the district-wide improvement cycle, with a focus on accountability and capacity building as well as ongoing support for professional learning at all levels of the organization

- Continue to strengthen proactive work that supports student behavior, including professional development on restorative practices the implementation of the Manchester Middle Academy.
- Continued success in recruiting and hiring high caliber administrators and staff that reflect the makeup of our student population
- Continuing the work with the Board on the Board's self-evaluation and resulting action plan that aligns with the district mission and vision.
- The ongoing use of strategically aligned grant funding, from a variety of public and private sources.

Your work and leadership continue to positively move the district forward across multiple dimensions, as detailed above. Your clear sense of purpose and deep commitment to excellence and equity for all students has allowed the Manchester Public Schools to undertake educational reforms that has resulted in tangible, measurable success. We recognize the work is not easy, nor is it complete, but it's clear that substantive, and sustainable progress is being made in a number of critical areas in a sustained manner over the last few years.

The Board also acknowledges your recent recognition by the Connecticut PTA, as the 2018 Outstanding Superintendent. The Board is proud of your efforts that contributed to this recognition and appreciates that you were recognized both by the local Manchester Town-wide PTA who submitted your nomination, and the larger state-wide organization, who selected you from other administrator submissions from around the state. This award is proof that the important work you've led towards partnering with parents and families, is both effective and appreciated.

The Manchester Public Schools and the Board of Education are proud to have concluded another successful school year under your leadership. We are encouraged to see the progress made in support of our mission to ensure that all students will be prepared to be lifelong learners and contributing members of society.

Thank you for your service to the district, our town, and especially our students.

Regards,

Christopher Pattacini, Chairman, Manchester Board of Education

### **L.3. USDA Eligibility Provision**

**Acting Secretary Leon moved for the Board of Education to allow Mr. Nick Aldi, Director of Food & Nutrition Services, to apply for the USDA's Eligibility Provision for Title I Schools. Ms. Hagenow seconded the motion.**

**6/0 - Voted in favor.**

**L.4. Authorize Board Chair to Enter into Negotiations with Superintendent**

**Acting Secretary Leon moved for the Board of Education to authorize the Board Chair to engage in negotiations with the Superintendent for a new contract. Mr. Scappaticci seconded the motion.**

**6/0 - Voted in favor.**

**M. ADJOURNMENT**

**Mr. Pattacini called for a motion to adjourn.**

**Acting Secretary Leon moved and Mr. Scappaticci seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting.**

**6/0 - Voted in favor.**

**Adjournment 8:56 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Neal Leon  
Acting Board Secretary