

## **MANCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION**

### **Regular Meeting**

**April 25, 2016**

Lincoln

**PRESENT:** Hagenow, Jacobsen, Pattacini, Pazda, Scappaticci, Stafford, Stefanovicz, Thames

**ALSO PRESENT:** Superintendent of Schools Geary, Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Management Brooks, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum Radikas

**ABSENT:** Leon

#### **A. OPENING**

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

**Chairperson Pattacini** called the meeting back to order at 7:02 p.m. Mr. Pattacini explained the Board had been in Executive Session regarding personnel matters. All in attendance participated in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, led by Mr. Pattacini.

#### **B. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

##### **B.1. Curriculum & Instruction**

**Ms. Pazda** reviewed the last meeting was held April 18th with Mr. Scappaticci, Ms. Pazda, Ms. Jacobsen and Dr. Radikas in attendance along with Ms. Sheehan-Burns. Two topics were discussed: First, the American Flag Initiative. This is a new unit of study in Humanities and Manchester is the first district in the state to incorporate these inquiry-based lessons into their curriculum. Manchester will be showcased on April 21st at an MOA breakfast at the Armory in Hartford.

The second topic was the Science Fair update. The Committee was given a sneak peek at the program for the District-Wide Science Fair with Invention Convention being held at Illing Middle School April 23rd. This year 500 students from across the district participated in the Science Fair and Invention

Convention, with 76 students participating in the District-Wide Science Fair. Eighteen Manchester Students will take place in the Invention Convention State Finals at UCONN.

**C. CONSENT CALENDAR**

**Mr. Geary** presented five 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 MHS Physical Education Contracted Services account to MHS Interscholastic Sports Athletic Supplies and Materials account in the amount of \$2000
- Transfer from Curriculum & Instruction Professional Development account to Curriculum & Instruction Instructional Supplies account in the amount of \$5,500

**C.3. Permission to apply for the Art Learning Grant, for the FY 2016-2017 in the amount of \$20,000**

**C.4. Permission to apply for the State Farm Service Learning Grant, for the FY 2016-2017 in the amount of \$100,000**

**C.5. Establish an appropriation for FY 2016-2018 YWCA Partnership in the amount of \$27,270**

**The Chairman called for a motion.**

**Secretary Scappaticci moved and Ms. Pazda 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**

Ms. Lori Fogg reviewed that her Illustration class made a book that will be distributed May 21st to the younger students in town.

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

Mr. Tom Stringfellow, 183 Hillstown Road, reminded us Earth Day just passed, April 22nd. He recommended a book on FDR's efforts on Earth Day entitled *Rightful Heritage*. Regarding bullying, Mr. Stringfellow recommended a book by Jennifer Costa called *The Conscious Parent's Guide to Positive Discipline*. *History Revealed* is a British magazine with an article on MLK that he recommends. Mr. Stringfellow spoke about the World War I memorial to be built in Washington DC. He touched on the testing of lead in water and he hopes our water supply is good. Last, Mr. Stringfellow recommended an article in *TIME* magazine's April edition on video selfies for college applications.

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

##### **F.1. Update on 2016-2017 Alliance Grant Application**

**Mr. Geary** shared the draft Alliance Grant application with the Board. He noted we have been told to anticipate the same level of funding we have gotten the past couple of years. There are not a lot of differences in this application from last year's application. The areas mimic the District Improvement Plan. The entire draft is available for viewing on the website. The plan should be approved by the state in the summer and then funding will be available.

**Ms. Pazda** noted she is so glad we have this opportunity. She asked about the goal of a 3% increase in minority certified staff. Mr. Geary reviewed last year the goal was a 2% increase and we increased minority certified staff by 1.7%. With that increase we have approximately 10.5% minority certified staff now. Our ultimate goal is to have about 40% or more minority certified staff.

**Ms. Pazda** asked about 2.2, with 20% of Tier 2 students exiting the program, she is curious about the 70% of students reading at grade level. Mr. Geary took this from the board's data dashboard and agreed it is an ambitious goal.

**Mr. Thames** asked about the two principals in residence, and wondered if there was any diversity in those staff members. Mr. Geary stated this year 1 of 2 are minority. Mr. Thames commended the efforts in minority recruitment, which increased by about 12 staff members this year. He hopes we continue to recruit within Manchester Public Schools. Mr. Geary agreed we are aiming to grow our own and pointed out the start of the noon aide program this year.

**Mr. Pattacini** was encouraged to see how this plan is aligned with the District Improvement Plan and that the Hartford Foundation funding is all linked. He wondered about the status of the program evaluation. Mr. Geary noted the evaluator is contracted and looked at SAAM and now is looking at instructional coaches, principals and teachers. A year-end data collection tool and STEM work are next. The Evaluator will work with the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving and we will have a recommendation in the fall from her.

Mr. Pattacini supports the comments by Ms. Pazda and feels our goals are aggressive. It is our responsibility as a Board to strive for and push towards these goals. Mr. Pattacini noted no action is needed tonight. After approval from the state, we then will take action. Mr. Geary noted we will submit the draft and in July when the funding is finalized the Board will take action.

## **F.2. Proposed Reductions to 2016-2017 Budget**

**Mr. Geary** was asked to prepare potential alternatives to the \$100,000 reduction in Capital Improvements. He offered two alternatives, but recommended neither. The first was a reduction to regular and homeless transportation. It would be risky to reduce this line. The other alternative is to reduce the tuition for other district and private placements. Again, Mr. Geary feels this would be an unwise reduction as we often go over budget on these items.

**Mr. Pattacini** noted that at the last meeting the Superintendent made his recommendations for reductions of \$350,000. In order to accomplish those reductions, the Board must modify Policy 3510.

**Mr. Thames** wanted Mr. Geary to discuss the impact of sending the capital improvements to a bond. Mr. Geary reviewed that a bond would push off the work by about a year and a half, instead of it beginning this summer. Mr. Geary noted we have worse parking lots that the one being affected by this proposition. The lot in question is the high school East Middle Turnpike lot. Mr. Geary noted that even though we will be postponing some work to be bonded, we also will be accomplishing some work with the \$1.4 million in funding being given to Alliance Districts. Mr. Thames noted he was a strong advocate to increasing the percentage for Policy 3510, but he feels this is a good plan.

**Ms. Jacobsen** is in favor of moving the \$100,000 to bond.

### **F.3. Update on Bullying Policy 5131.1**

**Mr. Geary** noted the Policy Committee took the previous recommendations, including adding the word "alleged". We are waiting on feedback from legal and he anticipates a final draft for the May meeting. Critically important is the one page document for parents and families that he will bring to two parent leadership groups for feedback, along with to PTA forums to be sure the document is understandable.

## **G. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

## **H. NEW BUSINESS**

### **H.1. Action to change the funding guidelines for Policy #3510**

**Secretary Scappaticci moved to suspend the funding guidelines for Policy #3510 for the 2016-2017 School Year. Ms. Pazda seconded the motion.**

**DISCUSSION:**

**Mr. Pattacini** reviewed this policy is in place to require a minimum budget amount of 0.6% of the school budget to be dedicated to capital improvements. Changing this requires a  $\frac{2}{3}$  vote of the Board, which would then allow the town to go to bond for that work. This would result in an approximate 1½ year delay in the work.

**8/0 - Voted in favor.**

**H.2. Approve the 2016-2017 Manchester Board of Education Budget in the amount of \$110,897,460**

**Secretary Scappaticci moved for the Board to approve the 2016-2017 Manchester Board of Education budget in the amount of \$110,897,460. Mr. Thames seconded the motion.**

**8/0 - Voted in favor.**

**Mr. Pattacini** thanked the administration, especially Mrs. Brooks and her staff, along with the Board of Education and the Board of Directors. Mr. Pattacini noted this passage means the scheduled budget workshops are now cancelled.

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

Mr. Tom Stringfellow, 183 Hillstown Road, enjoyed the presentation by Mr. Geary. He feels it is good to have a STEM program and the Invention Convention. Mr. Stringfellow feels foreign languages are important and are often the first to get cut. He thinks we should all become multilingual. Financial literacy is important and he recommended an app called Splurge alert. Mr. Stringfellow thinks apprenticeships are making a comeback and he recommended an article in the March 23rd *USA Today*. He would like a presentation on that topic. He notes Science is important and recommended an article in the *Smithsonian magazine* about Mars. He made note of Harriet Tubman on the \$20 bill. Mr. Stringfellow recommended an article on graduates in *Ebony* magazine.

**J. COMMUNICATIONS**

**Ms. Pazda** had the opportunity to attend the Science Fair and Invention Convention last weekend. She thanked Dr. Radikas, Dr. Oliver, the parents and staff who participated in the event. It was wonderful to walk around and see the project and to engage with the students. Ms. Pazda also recently went on the MHS website and recommended the Pulse. It was engaging and she encouraged everyone to take a look.

**Mr. Scappaticci** also attended the Science Fair and Invention Convention and gave kudos to the town wide PTA for hosting the event.

**Mr. Pattacini** was at the Science Fair and Invention Convention as well and he thought it was great that even a kindergarten student was there presenting his science project. He thought it was terrific to see the STEM program alive and well.

**K. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS**

None.

**L. ADJOURNMENT**

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

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

**8/0 - Voted in favor.**

**Adjournment 7:49 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Jason Scappaticci  
Board Secretary