

## **MANCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION**

### **Regular Meeting**

**July 13, 2015**

Lincoln

**PRESENT:** Crockett, Cruz, Hagenow, Scappaticci, Stafford, Thames

**ALSO PRESENT:** Superintendent of Schools Geary, Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Management Brooks, Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Personnel Services Matfess

**ABSENT:** Leon, Pattacini, Pazda, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum Radikas

#### **A. OPENING**

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

**Acting Chairperson Scappaticci** called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. All in attendance participated in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, led by Mr. Scappaticci.

##### **A.3. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting**

**APPROVED – Minutes Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of June 22, 2015. Acting Secretary Cruz moved and Mr. Crockett seconded the motion.**

**6/0 – Voted in favor.**

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

**APPROVED - Minutes Special Meeting of the Board of Education of June 29, 2015. Acting Secretary Cruz moved and Mr. Crockett seconded the motion.**

**5/0/1 - Voted in favor.**

**B. CONSENT CALENDAR**

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

**B.1. Personnel Action**

Details had already been provided to the Board members with their agenda.

**B.2. Establish an appropriation for FY 15-17 for the preliminary grant award amount of \$64,261, under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) 619 grant**

**B.3. Establish an appropriation for FY 15-17 for the preliminary grant award amount of \$1,658,730, under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) 611 grant**

**B.4. Establish an appropriation for FY 15-16 for the Medicaid Grant in the amount of \$200,000**

**B.5. Establish an appropriation for FY 15-16 for the Summer School Program, Funded by tuition payments in the amount of \$40,000**

**B.6. Establish an appropriation for FY 15-16 for the State Teachers' Retirement Grant in the amount of \$626,409**

The Acting Chairman called for a motion.

Acting Secretary Cruz moved and Mr. Crockett seconded the recommendation to adopt the Consent Calendar B1-B6.

6/0 - Voted in favor.

**C. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

None.

#### **D. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Mr. Tom Stringfellow, 183 Hillstown Road, spoke about the July 4th patriotism and the significance of the removal of the Confederate battle flag in South Carolina. He feels it is time to move on from that conflict. Mr. Stringfellow notes that he pledges to the flag of the United State of America. An article in *Military Spouse* was recommended regarding asking for help and counseling, along with transition to civilian life. Mr. Stringfellow pointed out the celebration of Ramadan is this weekend. He recommended the book *The Visual Reference Guide to Religions*, which breaks down all the religions across the world. The atomic bomb was dropped in August 70 years ago and student's shouldn't forget about that. He feels that brought about the end of segregation and racist laws. Mr. Stringfellow feels students should get involved in science and he recommended an article in *National Geographic* regarding Pluto. Last, Mr. Stringfellow recommended the book *The New Black*.

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

##### **E.1. Update on Teacher and Administrator Evaluation Instruments**

**Mr. Geary** introduced Vonetta Romeo-Rivers, the Director of Performance, Evaluation and Talent Development. Ms. Romeo-Rivers presented a Powerpoint outlining the Teacher and Administrator Evaluation Plans, which is available on the website.

**Ms. Cruz** wondered how students are selected as a representative sample of their class. Ms. Romeo-Rivers reviewed it is a joint selection process between both the teacher and the evaluator by November. Teachers will have baseline data on their students by that time. Students will be selected at various levels of performance and at least 10 students per class will be selected to represent the class.

Ms. Cruz asked what all 14 attributes were. Ms. Romeo-Rivers pointed out there are four domains in the evaluation, Planning & preparation, Instruction, Climate in the class, and Professionalism. Under each domain, there are 3-5 attributes. Ms. Romeo-Rivers noted that while all four domains will be covered in an

evaluation, not all 15 attributes may be witnessed. Teachers can bring evidence to their end of year evaluation of any attributes that were not witnessed in an evaluation.

Ms. Cruz wondered, for struggling teachers what supports are put in place. Ms. Romeo-Rivers reviewed teachers can find support with coaches, within the PLCs, gaining coverage to observe other teachers, administrator work in PLCs, and through the TEAM mentor program among other supports. Ms. Cruz wanted confirmation that supports are offered early on, and not at the end of the year. Ms. Romeo-Rivers agreed, there are timelines that will catch struggling teachers during the evaluation process.

**Mr. Thames** wondered what was meant by “positive movement expected”. He wanted to know if a teacher has specific goals to attain. Ms. Romeo-Rivers reviewed positive growth and movement for students differs for each student. Goal setting for teachers is present as it reflects on students. Data from the previous year is used for students to see how the student can grow. Ms. Romeo-Rivers reviewed that students may not grow to the next assessment band, but can still make growth within their current band.

Mr. Thames was concerned that a low performing students that makes some growth may not be competitive in a global workplace. He feels we are not quantifying the growth and it is a moving target and he things the teacher should have clear expectations. Mr. Thames feels some growth may not be enough growth. Ms. Romeo-Rivers reviewed a tiered and differentiated approach to teaching and noted that even students at the top of the class need to be challenged. She hears Mr. Thames concern about not being good enough, but we need to meet students where they are and push them. We have to build confidence and then students will achieve more. Teachers assess what skills need to cluster to move students in the right direction.

Mr. Thames wonders, at the end of the year, how is it measured to determine if we are moving in the right direction. How do we balance our success as a school district? Ms. Romeo-Rivers reviewed the district improvement plan and

the four strategic areas of work and noted it is all linked. Fidelity indicators were decided on as a district.

**Ms. Hagenow** wondered if students are monitored throughout the school year and even though goals are to be reached by the end of the year, that a struggling student would be caught early on. Ms. Romeo-Rivers reviewed that grade level and Common Core standards are set and by the end of the year students should have mastered standards, but within those standards there are different kinds of instructional strategies used.

**Ms. Cruz** felt Mr. Thames hit on something, wondering how we are showing progress, both at the lower level and higher level. She wondered what students are being sampled. Ms. Romeo-Rivers reviewed that the students are selected with the evaluator and teacher choosing students that run from lowest to highest levels.

Ms. Cruz wondered what information is being used to assess student growth. Ms. Romeo-Rivers reviewed goal setting is done at the start of the year with the administrator, who discusses student learning objectives to focus on.

**Mr. Crockett** noted that these evaluation tools are on the agenda to be approved this evening. Ms. Romeo-Rivers reviewed that they were submitted to the state May 15th and approved by the State Department of Education June 10th. Mr. Crockett wondered if the teacher's union had approved it. Ms. Romeo-Rivers reviewed that the Union President is her co-chair. The Union doesn't need to approve it, but they worked together to develop the changes.

## **E.2. Update on Building Projects**

**Mr. Geary** reviewed the work on the Bennet project, which required special legislation, is all set and has been approved. Mrs. Brooks and Peter Staye are in the process of selecting a construction manager and commissioning agent. Mr. Geary reviewed we have requested diversity funding from the state, which would mean an 80% reimbursement rate instead of the approximate 60% rate we were

expecting. We are waiting on a response. We are waiting for the ok on the changes at Bennet from the State Preservation Trust.

Mr. Geary acknowledged recent talk of a field house and he revealed that focus groups will be formed to explore that concept.

**Mr. Thames** wondered if there are any strict deadlines regarding reimbursement. Mr. Geary said there were not. Mrs. Brooks assured the Board the paperwork was submitted on time. Mr. Geary reviewed that because the referendum was passed in November, even though the process was started prior to that, the State would not act until after the referendum was passed, that was why we needed special legislation.

**Mr. Crockett** wondered if we are on the list, or actually approved. Mr. Geary stated they are the same thing, once you are on the list, that means the project has been approved. The Bennet project is on schedule.

#### **F. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

#### **G. NEW BUSINESS**

##### **G.1. Extension of Superintendent's Contract**

**Mr. Geary** reviewed that it was discussed at the Special Meeting that to be consistent, the Board needed to give the Chair authorization to sign the contract with the Superintendent, not "enter into".

**Acting Secretary Cruz moved to authorize the Board Chair to sign the agreement with Mr. Geary on behalf of the Board of Education for the purpose of employing Mr. Geary as our Superintendent of Schools July 1, 2015 - June 30, 2018. Mr. Crockett seconded the motion.**

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

## **G.2. Adoption of 2015-2016 Teacher & Administrator Evaluation Instruments**

**Acting Secretary Cruz moved to adopt the 2015-2016 Teacher & Administrator Evaluation Instruments. Mr. Crockett seconded the motion.**

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

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

Mr. Tom Stringfellow, 183 Hillstown Road, offered his support for the Consent Calendar items. He pointed out the 25th anniversary of the American's With Disabilities Act, which was an important piece of legislation. Mr. Stringfellow feels summer school is important. He enjoyed the presentation by Ms. Romeo-Rivers. He had a question about whether parents with disabilities or who are learning English, are parent teacher meetings really working. Also, regarding AP classes, he hopes above average students are encouraged to take those courses, regardless of race or gender. Mr. Stringfellow suggested an article in *TIME* magazine regarding millennials being "color" blind. A *New York Times* article regarding teaching children empathy was recommended. Mr. Stringfellow would like more presentations on his suggestions and other ideas from the community, not just presentations from Central Office staff. Last, Mr. Stringfellow spoke about transgender issues, referencing articles in both the *New York Times* and *Family Circle*.

### **I. COMMUNICATIONS**

**Mr. Crockett** attended a Manchester Athletic golf fundraiser recently, where both Ms. Pazda and Mr. Geary played, along with the Mayor. He wanted to assure us that Mr. Geary is not wasting his time during the day reading golf magazines and improving his golf game. Mr. Geary agreed, he would have to make a lot of progress to make it to grade level in golf.

**J. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS**

None.

**K. ADJOURNMENT**

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

**Mr. Crockett moved and Ms. Cruz seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting.**

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

**Adjournment 8:09 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Maria Cruz  
Acting Board Secretary