

MANCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION

**Regular Meeting
October 26, 2015
Lincoln**

PRESENT: Crockett, Cruz, Hagenow, Leon, Pattacini, Pazda, Stafford, Thames

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

ABSENT: Scappaticci

A. OPENING

A.1. & 2. Meeting Called to Order

Chairperson Pattacini called the meeting to order at 7:00 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 October 13, 2015. Acting Secretary Cruz moved and Mr. Crockett seconded the motion.

7/0/1 – Voted in favor.

APPROVED - Minutes Special Meeting of the Board of Education of October 15, 2015. Acting Secretary Cruz moved and Mr. Crockett seconded the motion.

6/0/2 - Voted in favor.

B. CONSENT CALENDAR

Mr. Geary presented four 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. Transfer of Funds

- Transfer from Systemwide Enrichment Other Purchased Services account to Systemwide Enrichment Office Supplies account in the amount of \$1,850
- Transfer from Illing Middle School Admin Office Supplies account to Illing Middle School Admin Dues/Fees account in the amount of \$250

B.3. Establish an appropriation for FY 15-16 Adult Education, REACT 1, College Transition Pilot Grant in the amount of \$98,972

B.4. Permission to apply for the FY 15-17 General Improvements to Alliance Districts' School Building Grant Program in the amount of \$1,710,000

Acting Secretary Cruz moved to amend the Consent Calendar to include item #5 Accept the revisions to the following Head Start documents as endorsed by the Head Start Policy Council:

- **Community Partnership Plan**
- **Education Plan**
- **Family Partnership Plan**
- **Governance Plan**
- **Proposed Child Health & Development Plan**
- **Proposed Child Health & Safety Plan**
- **Proposed Nutrition Plan**
- **Service Disabilities plan**
- **Process for impasse**
- **Confidentiality Policy**
- **Recruitment Plan**
- **Selection Criteria**

Mr. Crockett seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION:

Mr. Geary reviewed the switch to full-day Pre-K has necessitated some changes to the Head Start policy documents.

Mr. Pattacini clarified these were not Board policies, but Head Start

8/0 - Voted in favor.

The Chairman called for a motion on the amended Consent Calendar.

Acting Secretary Cruz moved and Mr. Crockett seconded the recommendation to accept the amended Consent Calendar B.1. - B.5.

8/0 - Voted in favor.

C. COMMITTEE REPORTS

C.1. Curriculum & Instruction Committee

Ms. Hagenow reviewed the last Committee meeting was held October 13, 2015. In attendance were Ms. Hagenow, Mr. Scappaticci, Mr. Stafford, Dr. Radikas, Diane Burns, and Dr. Oliver.

The Directors of Teaching & Learning for Humanities and STEAM provided an overview of the curricular work that has been completed since the summer. The committee was given a real-time look at Unit Planner. All curriculum has been moved from Curriculum Connector to Unit Planner. Updates were given on coaching, STEM specialists and enVision. Last, updates were given regarding new elective courses offered at Illing. The next meeting will be held December 14, 2015 at 5:30 p.m. at Lincoln Center.

D. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

Ms. Lori Fogg apologized for missing the last meeting, but she was preparing for the SATs the following day. On Tuesday her Illustration class visited Mystic Aquarium to gain inspiration for a book they are making for the younger students in town regarding things that live in the ocean. A representative from the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston visited on Thursday to review the portfolios for the portfolio class. College Planning night took place to provide information to parents about financial aid. Homecoming took place with the Freshman Float winning.

Ms. Pazda would like to see Ms. Fogg's portfolio. Ms. Fogg explained there are 6 students working on oil paintings to build their portfolios to attend art school. The representatives that visit critic the portfolios so the students can improve their chances.

Mr. Pattacini would like to hear more about the book being done for the younger students. Ms. Fogg reviewed that the creative writing classes are writing the book and the illustration class are doing the drawings. They are still in the early stages and she will bring the completed book for the Board to see.

E. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Tom Stringfellow, 183 Hillstown Road, spoke about the Korean War vets, noting we should not forget. With the anniversary of the end of World War II, Mr. Stringfellow suggested an article in *Sea Classics* magazine. He suggested an article in *AAA Car Safety* regarding seatbelts. To the STEAM Director, Mr. Stringfellow recommended *Scientific American* magazine, noting articles on pyramids in one and that every edition is different. He suggested the movie *Martian* and an article in *Estonia* magazine on slavery.

Ms. Shootz, 12 Conway Road, was sad this evening to see so few people. She notes in the past she has seen the room packed with people, including students and their parents. Ms. Shootz feels the reason people are not here is because they do not trust the Board. She is a parent, a grandparent and taxpayer who feels that education has changed in this town. Ms. Shootz thinks there is too much focus on sports and buildings. Though she knows the world is changing with technology, she feels if children can't read and write, what good is that technology. Ms. Shootz thinks many children don't know how to use computers and she recalled from a past meeting one of the student representatives noted that testing is now done on a computer and she

wondered if the students would do better with pen and paper testing. She wishes more people would come to meetings and even at meetings held at the elementary schools, the parents come but do not speak out. She would like to see young people who went through our schools come and present different, fresh ideas to join the Board of Ed. She is also disappointed with the Board of Directors and the fact that they talked about was sports and schools, and didn't talk about education. She felt the Board of Directors didn't ask tough questions of the Board of Education.

F. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT – PART I

F.1. Capital Improvements

Mr. Geary introduced Facilities Director, Peter Staye, who presented a three year plan for dealing with the inside of the buildings. This plan does not address exterior improvements or renovations and is available for viewing on the website. There are approximately 105 projects to be completed in the next three years.

Ms. Cruz had a question about the sidewalk repairs listed in different lines. Mr. Staye clarified the difference between the fiscal year and the school year.

Mr. Pattacini questioned the possibility of a bond for some of the work. Mr. Staye stated the bond process is laborious and the sooner the process is started the better. Mr. Pattacini looks forward to sending this to the Board of Directors to bond. The lighting of some parking lots, including the high school and Waddell, was discussed. Mr. Staye noted that the electrical capacity at Waddell prevents the addition of lighting at this time.

Mr. Leon wondered when a bond would happen. He noted that the Board previously tried to add the Illing parking lot to a bond and the town pulled it off. The problem has only gotten worse since then. He recalled Mr. Till speaking about the lighting at the high school last month and notes we need to work with the Board of Directors to get it on the radar.

Mr. Pattacini requested the administration to guide the Board on key items to bring to the Board of Directors for consideration.

Mr. Staye reviewed the funding available to Alliance districts for general improvements through a grant. There is \$1.71 million available, but there can be no reduction in the current level of funding. The State is not looking for a plan to review, and would use local building inspectors. We just learned about this grant in late September. Next summer work is planned for Keeney, Washington, and the high school.

Mr. Geary noted that this grant for Alliance districts is different than the educational funding provided in the Alliance Grant.

Mr. Pattacini wondered if we simply complete the work and look for reimbursement. Mr. Staye clarified that we need to get approval for the grant first. The application is 75% ready and will be submitted by the October 30th deadline. It was clarified that this item was approved on the Consent Calendar tonight.

Mr. Leon thanked Mr. Staye and the administration for a good, holistic approach broken down by category and priority. In the past we have talked about critical needs, but we need to keep working at them. She looks forward to updates as we make buildings that students will be proud to attend. Ms. Pazda feels Mr. Staye is a welcome addition.

Mr. Pattacini feels it is incumbent upon the Board of Education to work with the Board of Directors to move forward.

F.2. Humanities & STEAM Presentation

Mr. Geary introduced Ms. Diane Sheehan-Burns, Director of Humanities and Dr. Santosha Oliver, Director of STEAM. Their Google presentation is available on the website. They reviewed the unit planner, which was rolled out in September in grade level PLCs.

Ms. Pazda felt this was very useful and wondered who is writing the units and if they are reviewed before they are put up. Dr. Oliver reviewed that the literacy and numeracy curriculum academies developed the curriculum as a team and the units are then uploaded to the unit planner for teachers. Ms. Burns added that there are literacy and math coaches at the curriculum academies so they can go back to PLCs and help address goals.

Dr. Oliver also reviewed that the two STEM specialists per building are responsible not only for core science instruction, but for the science fair and Invention Convention, which will be held March 19, 2016.

F.3. Alliance Grant Update

Mr. Geary wanted to give a brief update on the Alliance Grant as he had some question about carryover dollars and the current status of the actual Alliance Grant. He reviewed what we spend the money on and noted we create a proposal based on an anticipated amount and when we get the final award amount the proposal is revised. The presentation this evening shows how spending is divided by category. He reviewed how the increased funding was spent, to enhance the original proposal.

Ms. Pazda asked what AD stood for. Mr. Geary clarified that meant Alliance District.

Mr. Thames wondered why it is necessary to have carryover funds. Mr. Geary reviewed that you cannot budget 100% accurately and the budget is just a best guess. Mr. Geary noted that when we do have carryover funds we use them to expand on currently funded items, instead of creating new items to fund.

Mr. Pattacini clarified last year's \$450k carryover is now being spent this year instead. He wondered about the anticipated carryover of \$250k this year. Mr. Geary stated it is too early to say how much we will have to carryover, and he feels it will be far less than that. Mr. Geary also stated the state may cap carryover to 5%, which would be \$120k.

Mr. Thames asked about timing, from applying for the grant, being awarded, and finding out the funds. Mr. Geary stated the preliminary application is due in early April. The Alliance funds are tied to the state budget, so the actual numbers are not known until mid-August. At that point we revise our budget within about two weeks from that time.

Mr. Pattacini felt it would make sense to talk with the state legislators to work on the timing.

Mr. Geary noted that as we move into year 5 of the Alliance Grant we need to plan for the future and work with donors, such as the Nellie Mae Foundation and the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, to plan.

G. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Mr. Pattacini reviewed the policies being discussed tonight were previously presented and will be up for adoption this evening.

G.1. Policy Recommendations

a. Board Policy 5131.6 - Smoking

Acting Secretary Cruz moved to adopt Board Policy 5131.6 - Smoking Policy. Mr. Leon seconded the motion.

8/0 - Voted in favor.

b. Board Policy 6000 - Purpose of Education in Manchester Public Schools

Acting Secretary Cruz moved to approve the deletion of Board Policy 6000 - Purpose of Education in Manchester Public Schools. Mr. Leon seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION:

Mr. Pattacini reviewed that the Mission Statement encompasses this policy and makes it unnecessary.

8/0 - Voted in favor.

H. NEW BUSINESS

H.1. Policy Revisions

Mr. Geary, along with the Policy Committee, submits to the full Board a first reading of its recommended revision to Policy 6120 - Manchester Public Schools Mission Statement. This policy was adopted last year and this revision will add the district goals, the process of the District Improvement Plan, indicators of success and fidelity indicators. The policy draft is available for review on the website.

Mr. Pattacini reviewed the Mission Statement and vision came from a 3 workshop series that the Board worked on together.

Ms. Pazda stated it makes sense to use language they have worked hard on and it makes it easy to see the focus.

Mr. Thames felt the indicators of success were vague. Mr. Geary clarified that this policy only shows that we have the indicators, but as they will change yearly, they are not specifically listed.

Mr. Pattacini noted this revision will come to the Board at the next meeting for adoption.

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

Mr. Tom Stringfellow, 183 Hillstown Road, supports the Consent Calendar, especially the REACT/Adult Ed program. He feels Dr. Kearney and her staff are doing a wonderful job in this important program.

Mr. Stringfellow felt Mr. Staye's presentation was very thorough and it is important to get the information to the public. He also felt Mr. Geary's presentation on the Alliance Grant was a thorough update. Mr. Stringfellow enjoyed Dr. Oliver and Ms. Sheehan-Burn's presentation. He feels students can learn in different ways and suggested a *New York Times* article on gamers. He notes that not everyone goes to a 4 year college. Mr. Stringfellow suggested an article in the *Wall Street Journal* on science and relativity and a poverty article in the *New York Times*.

J. COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Pattacini reminded everyone about the election coming up on Tuesday, November 3rd. The last meeting for at least two of the sitting Board members will be November 9th, with the swearing in ceremony of the new Board occurring on November 16th and their first Board meeting on November 23rd.

K. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

None.

L. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Pattacini called for a motion to adjourn.

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

8/0 - Voted in favor.

Adjournment 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Maria Cruz
Acting Board Secretary