

MANCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION

Regular Meeting November 13, 2017 Martin Elementary School

PRESENT: Conyers, Hagenow, Hughes, Leon, Pattacini, Scappaticci, Stefanovicz, Thames

ALSO PRESENT: Superintendent of Schools Geary, Director of Finance & Management Clancy

ABSENT: Caldwell

A. OPENING

A.1. & 2. Meeting Called to Order

Chairperson Pattacini 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. Pattacini.

A.3. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

APPROVED – Minutes Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of October 23, 2017. Secretary Scappaticci moved and Mr. Leon seconded the motion.

8/0 – Voted in favor.

B. COMMITTEE REPORTS

B.1. Buildings & Sites Committee

Mr. Leon reported the last meeting was held October 23, 2017. The following were in attendance: Lindsey Boutilier, Ranon Caldwell, Karen Clancy, Peter Conyers, Matthew Geary, Neal Leon, Jason Scappaticci and Peter Staye.

At the April 2017 meeting MHS had presented a request by the PTA to paint a mural on an exterior wall outside the boy's locker room. There has been no further action or discussion about this idea.

Mr. Boutilier reported that he and other staff have seen an increase in the unauthorized use of the synthetic field since last spring. He continues to receive inquiries from people interested in renting the field. Mr. Boutilier had surveyed nearby schools with synthetic fields and most rent their fields, though prices vary widely. He believes the high school field would generate significant income by charging \$50/hour. The Committee was generally supportive of the idea, provided no additional administrative staff are required to administer the process. Mr. Boutilier was sure his current staff would be sufficient. The Town's role in maintaining the field was discussed. It was agreed that a meeting will be held with Parks & Rec, The Town of Manchester maintenance and the administration to resolve any outstanding issues and upon resolution the field will be rented on a test basis for a period that includes the summer of 2018.

Mr. Staye presented a summary of projects Buildings and Grounds completed over the summer. There was a brief discussion about the lease of 555 Main Street, which is the new home of Adult Ed and Family Partnerships. The lease will expire in 5 years. Alternate sites had been considered.

Mrs. Clancy had reviewed how different schools treated redeemable bottles and cans. Some collect the items and offer them to the PTA. Mr. Geary reported that recycling is covered in the curriculum in Unit 3. Mr. Staye reported the average costs for recycling are \$11.94/ton and for trash disposal the cost is \$94.33/ton. A memo will be drafted to schools advising of the cost difference and the importance of recycling and the opportunity to reduce expenses by recycling as much as possible.

The next meeting will be held January 8th at Lincoln Center.

C. CONSENT CALENDAR

Mr. Geary presented six 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 Elementary Enrichment Field Trips account to Elementary Enrichment Dues and Fees in the amount of \$2,400
- Transfer from Bennet School Administration General Supplies and Materials account to Bennet School Administration Other Purchased Services account in the amount of \$642
- Transfer from Elementary Music Certified Teacher Salaries account to Head Start Other Purchased Services account in the amount of \$49,716
- Transfer from Buckley School Administration General Supplies and Materials account to Buckley Plant Utilities Telecomm/Related Equipment account in the amount of \$310
- Transfer from Plant Operations System-wide Custodial Supplies and Materials account to Plant Operations System-wide Telecomm Related Equipment account in the amount of \$421

C.3. Extended Field Trip Request Form – MHS Boys Cross Country – New England Championship Cross Country Meet – 2 Students – November 10, 2017 through November 11, 2017 – Chaperones will attend – Belfast, Maine

C.4. Permission to apply for FY 17/18 for Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA): Title IV, Part A, Student Support and Academic Enrichment (SSAE) Grant in the amount of \$29,270

C.5. Increase in appropriation for FY 17/18 for the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Secondary Basic Grant provided through the State of Connecticut in the amount of \$40, bringing the total to \$95,662

C.6. Establish an appropriation for FY 17/18 for the Manchester Community College, College Career Pathways Program, in the amount of \$8,635

The Chairman called for a motion.

Secretary Scappaticci moved and Mr. Leon seconded the recommendation to adopt the Consent Calendar as outlined in Section C of tonight's agenda.

DISCUSSION:

Ms. Stefanovicz was interested in #6 of the Consent Calendar. Mr. Geary explained the funds support the MCC courses that are offered at MHS, such as finance, culinary and child development.

8/0 - Voted in favor.

D. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

Patrick Doherty reported Homecoming was two weeks ago and 11 groups participated. The Junior Class enjoyed their 3rd win in the float competition. Unfortunately, the football team lost to Simsbury. About 500 students enjoyed the Homecoming Dance that weekend.

Patrick reported the vendor fair was held last weekend to benefit the Senior Class. The Junior Class is working on the planning for the Murder Mystery Dinner for the Spring.

The last edition of *The Pulse* centered round the election.

Nabila Hoor Un Ein reported Project Graduation is having a fundraiser at Sweet Frog on Friday. She also mentioned the Turkey Bowl Friday, entry is 2 canned goods or \$2. Candy-grams are available for purchase to benefit Puerto Rico.

Nabila noted Imagine College Night and the National Honor Society Induction coming up on 11/21.

Ms. Stefanovicz asked the pair how they felt Flex Hour is going. Patrick answered that it took a few weeks to settle in, but it was an easy transition and he feels it is going well.

E. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

F. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT – PART I

F.1. Martin Elementary School Improvement Plan Update

Mr. Geary introduced Sophia Krisch, Principal of Martin. Along with several staff members, students and parents, Martin's update was presented, which is available on the website.

Ms. Hagenow enjoyed the presentation, and the fun ways they teach. She wondered how Dash & Dot were used as part of a writing project. It was explained that the students learn to write with perspective. Ms. Hagenow also asked how the invention of a water saver worked. The gadget, when placed on a faucet, stops the ability to open a full stream of water, so less water is wasted.

Ms. Scappaticci pointed out the invention made it to the Nationals in Washington D.C.! He thanked the staff for their statistics and their motivation to make changes in response. It was noted that after a visit to Haddam last year, clustering was started at Martin in January.

Mr. Scappaticci wondered how students for the FRC Journey Project are chosen. It was noted that in consultation with the STEM teachers, and 3rd and 4th grade teachers, students were invited that could benefit from this enrichment project.

Mr. Scappaticci stated he was impressed by Martin's Kid Governor.

Mr. Hughes reported he has been a Martin parent for 2 ½ years and he thanked everyone for their hard work.

Ms. Stefanovicz asked about the HOT School designation. HOT stands for Higher Order Thinking and Martin has been a HOT School for about 21 years. They combine their curriculum with the arts.

Ms. Stefanovicz also asked about the ties with UCONN. It was explained that a teacher runs a course with graduate students working on library certifications. They come to Martin 2 days a week after school to work with students.

Ms. Stefanovicz wondered what Best Buddies and Echo were. It was explained that Echo stands for Extracurricular HOT opportunity. Best Buddies is one of those Echoes, pairing students. Other opportunities include Zumba, Readers Theater, Origami, and Ukuleles among others. Children are allowed to pick 3 Echoes and they get one of their picks for Fridays in 8 week cycles.

Mr. Thames enjoyed hearing from the teachers. He congratulated the FRC for opening and wondered how connections are made between parents and the academic component. It was detailed that the FRC is open and welcoming and they reach out to families through calls and surveys. Parents reach out asking for help understanding some of the educational jargon. Connections are built. Martin teachers are also growing their Social Media connections through Twitter and Instagram. Some classrooms also use a DOJO app that is only available to parents in that particular class to be able to see pictures of their students and work.

Mr. Pattacini noted the Board has focused on behavioral supports the last couple of years and he wondered how students move through the tiers of support at Martin. It was noted that about 8 or 9 students (7 of which are new to Martin) have moved fairly rapidly through the tiers. It was noted the social worker, behavior tech and principal spend approximately 90% of their day dealing with challenging behaviors. This takes away from the powerful things happening in the building. Mr. Pattacini noted we are faced with difficult obstacles and the administration is committed to what our children need. Mr. Geary talked about budgets and resources, noting there are no simple solutions. Manchester has dedicated staff members that strive to do what is best for the kids. We try to use our resources wisely. Mr. Pattacini thanked the Martin group

for all they do for their students. His children attended Martin and he is aware of the sense of inclusiveness in the PTA, classrooms and PE.

F.2. Building Projects Update

Mr. Geary welcomed Randall Luther from TSKP Studio. Mr. Luther presented the final plans for Verplanck, which are available on the website. He also reviewed the end design proposal for Waddell. The Building Committee approved the plans last week and tonight he is looking for Board approval in order to submit the complete design to the State Department of Education to review and approve the documents. Once the State DOE approves the project it is put out to bid from contractors. There are approximately 270 drawings and thousands of pages of specs that the Building Committee already reviewed. This evening is just an overview of the project. Mr. Luther reviewed that the drawings show where and how much space something takes up, and the specs show exact details. The state should approve the project by the end of November and the project should be bid the first couple weeks of December. The hope is to break ground in March and occupy Verplanck by the Summer of 2019.

Mr. Luther reviewed that the budget contingency was reduced by about \$240,000. The original number given to the state was \$31,676,591 and the current budget is \$31,177,097. The contingency gives a cushion in the bidding process. Right now, with all the hurricane damage, some construction materials may become scarce.

Ms. Hagenow wondered if the budget includes the new glass door Mr. Luther pointed out. Mr. Luther noted it includes everything and was completed on 10/25/17 with all changes known to that date. Since then code reviewers and Downes Construction are reviewing and double checking all the documents.

Ms. Hagenow wondered what is happening with the old play structure. Mr. Luther noted that there was discussion of moving the structure closer to the ball field for the community to use it or relocating it to another school. That decision has not been made yet.

Ms. Hagenow asked about the rear exit, wondering if it will only be open in the afternoon. Mr. Luther stated that is likely to be used only in the afternoon, as that is when the traffic is the worst. It is only one way due to the concern expressed by neighbors.

Mr. Hughes pointed out that Waddell will have a slide as a main focus in the lobby and wondered if Verplanck would have any unique object in the lobby. Mr. Luther noted, as Verplanck is a one story school, a slide is not possible. The outdoor classroom is the special feature in this school. The main lobby will have dramatic lighting coming from the large windows, with tree-like shadows being cast on the walls. He also noted that the large corridors will contain alcoves for some one-on-one teaching in the hallways.

Ms. Stefanovicz wondered what kind of vetting was done with the community and staff. Mr. Luther noted there was a group formed consisting of the Superintendent, parents, and staff (of both Verplanck and Washington). There were also some evening meetings with the neighborhood last year, mostly focused on the parking situation. Ms. Stefanovicz asked for clarification of the cafeteria walls. Mr. Luther noted the cafeteria space is existing with large windows that will have sun shades. The interior corridor will be open to the café, which presented a problem during lockdowns. It was determined a door would be added from the teacher's lounge directly to the café, so children can enter that closed lounge during a lockdown.

Ms. Stefanovicz wondered about the outdoor classroom during bad weather. Mr. Luther reviewed there is an overhang in the doorway and the door itself folds up to provide an additional overhang. The doors can also be closed to bad weather. The slanted roofs all have drainage systems to prevent ice dams.

Ms. Stefanovicz loves the bright, beautiful foyer and noted there is an opportunity to hang something fun in that area. She wondered how many cubbies would be in the hallways. Mr. Luther estimated 5 or 6.

Mr. Luther continued the update, moving on to Waddell. The project is on schedule, with mechanicals and plumbing rough-ins done and the roof going on

the addition. The masonry repair is being done on the existing building. Currently, meetings are being held to discuss furniture options.

Mr. Leon wondered if there was an opportunity to buy in bulk to benefit the Verplanck project as well. Mr. Luther noted that is difficult due to the lack of storage for items that wouldn't be needed for over a year.

Mr. Pattacini wondered about the budget and timeline on this project. Mr. Luther noted the construction manager states they are either on schedule or ahead of schedule on most items, with very few items being slightly behind schedule. All the abatement and the bulk of the site work is complete, which is usually where delays occur. Asbestos removal required about \$100,000 out of the contingency fund.

Mr. Pattacini loved the heated floors in the library, for students to comfortably sit on the floor. Mr. Luther noted that is easier in some areas than others, and with Waddell having a basement below this area they were able to install this. It will not be possible in Verplanck.

Last, Mr. Luther gave a final update on the Cheney Bennet Project. They are trying to close out the project and complete the punch list items. Last week the Superintendent walked the buildings to flag items still needing to be fixed. There has been a small leak below grade in front of the Cheney building. Downes Construction is going to dig about 4 feet down to locate the source of the leak. The cost of this item (and who pays it) will depend on what is found. Furniture will be moved in this summer after the Waddell School is relocated to their building.

Ms. Stefanovicz wondered when the punch list/warranty period is. Mr. Luther noted there is no real hard dates, but once the building is occupied is when the little problems are discovered and fixed. The commissioning agent is an independent firm (PVH Engineers) who comes in to test that the systems were done to the specifications. They will come in the winter this year and then again in the summer to recheck items.

Mr. Pattacini wondered if there is a budget for punch list items and the leak issue. Mr. Luther stated it depends, the contractor is responsible for most items and 5% of his fee is held until the punch list is completed. The funds are released when all the work is complete. As for the leak, if it is not a contractor issue then the contingency funds will be used. Right now there is about \$300,000 in allowances, \$300,000 in the contingency fund unspent, and additional FFE monies, in all about \$1 million.

Mr. Hughes asked for clarification on FFE funds. Mr. Luther explained that stands for Fixtures, Furniture and Equipment.

Mr. Pattacini had some concern about the HVAC/boiler system. Mr. Luther stated that so far it is functioning well. The concern was mostly with the existing building because the chiller was so oversized. Now that the chiller has more of a load, it is being better used. It hasn't been very cold yet this year, so there are no known heating issues.

G. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

H. NEW BUSINESS

**Secretary Scappaticci moved and Mr. Leon seconded for the Board to pass the following:
Resolved, the Board of Education approves the plans and specifications for Additions and Renovations to the Verplanck Elementary School dated October 27, 2017, prepared by TSKP Studio, and the associated cost estimate dated October 25, 2017 prepared by Downs Construction, for submission to the Department of Administrative Services, Office of School Construction Grants for Review of Final Plans for Construction Authorization**

8/0 – Voted in favor.

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

None.

J. COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Pattacini noted that this evening would have been Mr. Caldwell's last meeting, but he was called away to a family emergency. He thanked Mr. Caldwell for his service and will pass along a parting gift. Mr. Conyers and Ms. Hagenow also thanked Mr. Caldwell for his service, noting he is a kind and generous person. Mr. Pattacini added he was eager to learn, listen and grow.

K. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

None.

L. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Pattacini called for a motion to adjourn.

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

8/0 - Voted in favor.

Adjournment 9:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jason Scappaticci
Board Secretary