

MANCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION

Regular Meeting January 22, 2018 Lincoln

PRESENT: Conyers, Hagenow, Maio, Meggers, Pattacini, Scappaticci, Stefanovicz, Thames

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

ABSENT: Leon

A. **OPENING**

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

Chairperson Pattacini called the meeting back to order at 7:13 p.m., explaining the Board had met in Executive Session so the meeting was called to order earlier. All in attendance participated in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, led by Mr. Pattacini.

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

Mr. Thames stated that as Secretary of the Board of Education, he wished to extend a warm welcome to everyone present and to the television viewers. He, along with the Board and the Superintendent, were pleased to be joined in celebrating the achievement, reviewing information, and discussing areas for growth, along with making policy decisions related to the effective operation of the Manchester Public Schools. Mr. Thames explained that this is a regular meeting of the Board and all items that will be discussed or voted on this evening have been posted, as required by state law. Mr. Thames reviewed the mission of Manchester Public Schools, which is available for view on the website.

Mr. Thames explained that as the Manchester Board of Education, they are here to set goals, listen to reports of the Superintendent, approve budgets, contracts, and personnel appointments, and to create policy for the district. They are not

here to make management decisions or solve the problems of individuals. Management is the responsibility of the Superintendent. Students, parents, and families who have individual concerns should reach out to the Superintendent, who can help.

Last, Mr. Thames noted he is proud of this school system and thanked the public for their interest in this evening's meeting and the Manchester Public Schools.

A.4. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

APPROVED – Minutes Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of January 8, 2018. Secretary Thames moved and Ms. Hagenow seconded the motion.

8/0 – Voted in favor.

A.5. Approval of Minutes of Budget Workshop

APPROVED - Minutes Budget Workshop of the Board of Education of January 10, 2018. Secretary Thames moved and Ms. Hagenow seconded the motion.

7/0/1 - Voted in favor.

B. COMMITTEE REPORTS

B.1. Buildings & Sites Committee

Mr. Conyers reported the last meeting was held on January 8, 2018. In attendance were Karen Clancy, Peter Conyers, Matthew Geary, Neal Leon, Tracy Maio, Peter Meggers, and Peter Staye.

Mr. Staye had discussed the purpose of the Capital Project list and how it is developed. It is a list of deferred maintenance projects at schools that are not currently scheduled as a building renovation. Projects on the list were requested by school staff, or added by Buildings & Grounds staff as identified through their regular work in the schools. Costs are estimates that are revised as a project

moves closer to implementation. It is from this list that projects are selected for inclusion in the annual Capital Projects budget. Cost estimates do not include rebates or incentives. Some projects, like the relocation of the Main Office Suite at Buckley have been on the list for several years. Larger projects, like the press box/bleachers at the high school may be candidates for a referendum.

The boiler and electrical room of Martin School were discovered to be flooded on the morning of Wednesday, November 29, 2017. This caused the school to be closed for two days. The flood was caused by a faulty press style (solderless) fitting that was 8 years old. Upon examination it was apparent that the fitting was not completely crimped at installation. The school opened on Friday, December 1, 2017, and has operated normally since. When complete, repairs are expected to cost approximately \$25,000, including overtime. Replacement of the control panel on boiler 1 is the only item remaining to be completed. A new control panel has been ordered and is expected to be delivered the week of January 18, 2017. Mr. Leon had asked what measures have been undertaken to prevent a similar occurrence in the future. Mr. Staye indicated that water alarms are being installed in boiler rooms and other spaces at all schools where flooding could cause serious damage. When activated by the presence of water on the floor, alarms would be transmitted to the on-call supervisor's phone, which is in service 24/7/365. Total cost is approximately \$15,000. Installation is underway and should be complete at all schools by the middle of February.

It was reported that complaints were received that the parking lot lighting was not operating properly in the Brookfield Street parking lot at MHS, as the project to replace it was nearing completion. Mr. Staye indicated that this was the result of people being unfamiliar with the lighting control system. Multiple staff have now been trained in its use. Replacement of the system, which is outdated, is expected in the summer of 2018.

The list of projects included in the 2017 Alliance Capital Grant application was reviewed. Receipt of grant funds has been delayed by the State budget process. Though approval has been issued by the state, funds have not yet been received. Three projects were critical to the opening of school and we had to proceed with them in advance of receiving grant funds. These projects included:

- Replacing the failed walk-in cooler/freezer at Bennet (\$34,575.00)
- Removing the burner from Waddell and installing on boiler 1 at Illing (\$12,975)
- Replacing the Brookfield St. parking lot lights at MHS (\$87,962.00)

We will ask the state to allow us to journal these costs from the Board budget to the grant after the grant funds are received. All Grant funded projects must be completed by October 31, 2018.

The next meeting of the Building & Sites Committee is currently scheduled to be held at 5:30 on Monday, March 12, 2018, at the Lincoln Center – Directors' Room.

C. CONSENT CALENDAR

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

Secretary Thames moved to add C.8. to the Consent Calendar - "Superintendent's Contract Addendum - Authorizing the Chair to Sign the Addendum". Mr. Scappaticci seconded the motion.

8/0 - Voted in favor.

Mr. Geary then presented eight 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 Form – MHS Travel Club Euro Trip – 17 Students April 6, 2018 – April 13, 2018 – (1 school day missed) – 2 Teacher Chaperones

C.3. Extended Field Trip Request Form – MHS - Italian Club – 14-30 Students April Vacation 2019 – 9 days – 7 nights – 1 Teacher Chaperone, 2 others

C.4. Approval of the 2018-2019 School Calendar

C.5. Approval of the 2019-2020 School Calendar

C.6. Establish an appropriation for FY17-19 for the Hartford Foundation of Public Giving, in the amount of \$576,000

C.7. Extended Field Trip Request Form – MHS – Varsity Wrestling – LL State Wrestling Championship – Trumbull High School, Trumbull, CT – 14 Students – February 16 – February 17, 2018 – 1 Chaperone – Gerry Navarra, Asst. Coach

C.8. Superintendent's Contract Addendum - Authorizing the Chair to Sign the Addendum

The Chairman called for a motion.

Secretary Thames moved and Ms. Maio seconded the recommendation to adopt the Consent Calendar.

DISCUSSION:

Mr. Pattacini asked Mr. Geary to discuss items 4 and 5, the school calendars. Mr. Geary noted that we have been trying to approve school calendars two years at a time. Due to building projects in the district, we are again pushing the student start date for school to after Labor Day both of the next two years. Also, it is to be noted that the Muslim holiday we observed this past fall does not fall on a school day the next two years. Also, Three Kings Day does not fall on a school day for the 18/19 School Year, but it is observed in the 19/20 School Year calendar. Last, Mr. Geary made note that currently, due to the number of weather days, the last day of school is Friday, June 22nd. He is concerned that if there are more snow days we would have to cut into April break, so he informed the Board that if there are more snow days he will be asking the Board to approve moving the last day of school to Monday or Tuesday, June 25 or 26. If we have a 3rd snow day, we will begin taking days from April break, starting with Friday, April 13th.

The question was called. 8/0 - Voted in favor.

D. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

Patrick Doherty reviewed that members of the Young Men's Leadership Group were recognized at the MLK Celebration last week. Manchester High School's Young Men's Leadership Group took it upon themselves to come up with a way to help the devastation and suffering in Puerto Rico following hurricane Irma. They chose to use their talents to create an open mic event for which they would sell tickets and donate the money to benefit the recovery efforts in Puerto Rico.

Patrick also noted that MHS was well represented at the 2018 Eastern Region Music Festival. There were 11 students from MHS who competed with their peers this past November to earn a spot in the two day festival event held at UCONN two Saturdays ago.

The MHS wrestling team won the Greater Hartford Invitational tournament on Saturday. Shamar Schand was an individual champion, while Traivon Nieves, and Billy Affini placed second. The wrestlers will be taking on Rival South Windsor this Wednesday in the main gym at 4:00.

Over 400 tickets were sold for this year's Snowball Dance. The dance will be taking place this Saturday, January 27th at Maneeley's in South Windsor.

With Midterms coming to MHS, almost 100 freshman took part in the annual cocoa and cram event in which upperclassman from the "Link Crew" helped freshmen study for their first ever exams. As a member of the Link Crew, Patrick stated the event went great and the Freshman were able to take a lot away from their time spent studying.

Over 500 students across the school were honored in the "Daily Digest" as honor roll students quarter one. As quarter two closes, the administration hopes that just as many, if not more students, can achieve honor roll again.

All five MHS Academies have formed a Student Council. The goal of the council is to be the student voice of decision making in collaboration with administrators to get students more involved with our academies and the offerings they provide. The group has met several times this year and is planning a friendly competition called "Academies for a

Cause" next month. Each academy group will plan an event that will raise awareness and money for a specific charity.

Nabila Hoor Un Ein noted that Academy Information Night will be January 24th in the cafe. Open house for 8th grade families and students is also the 24th, in the auditorium, accompanied by a tour.

Math review is being held January 27 from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. The American Sign Language Club is starting up on Wednesdays in Rm 293, beginning February 14th.

Mr. Conyers attended the MLK celebration event and commended all those honored that evening. It was a great event.

Mr. Pattacini congratulated the students honored and acknowledged the Young Men's Leadership Group for their initiative in helping Puerto Rico.

E. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Matthew Borrelli, 38 Hampton Drive, is a former teacher (along with his wife, who was also present). He read a prepared letter that he had previously given to the Superintendent. It read:

I am a citizen of Manchester and a retired educator. I am here tonight to express to you my dismay, disappointment and concern that, seemingly, you have been, and are now satisfied with the services rendered our children, especially our neediest students. We have been an "alliance district" for 6 years, yet only a little more than half of our children score as expected. That number shrinks to 30% in the Free and Reduced group.

The present budget is a maintenance budget. It basically continues programs as they were, with tweaks here and there. The result is predictable, a battle won here and there, but the war for poor kids is still being lost.

I am asking you tonight to join me, to be as dismayed, disappointed and concerned as I am with how poorly we service our neediest children. I'm asking you to push for the creation of a revolution and to see if it is what is needed. It must involve all participants.

We must all commit to letting this be the last year that we think about the budget as we have in the past, as a fiscal document. How much our programs will cost is the second question you need to deal with; the primary task is to focus on what you are buying.

The single goal for next year should be an in-depth analysis of who we are, how we've done in the past, why we are where we are. We must seek the solution to these issues by having each school define itself and reinvent themselves from base "0", using all stakeholders in the process. We must assure that we offer our kids and parents the same quality of education they would receive in West Hartford or Simsbury.

The children and families of our town need a completely new Manchester Public Schools, not just "improved", no more business as usual.

Mr. Tom Stringfellow, 183 Hillstown Road, supports the Consent Calendar. He knows this is a tough budget year and believes Manchester Public Schools is improving. He wishes the media coverage was better at highlighting the good that happens in Manchester. Mr. Stringfellow had several reading recommendations, including a book about slavery, *Never Caught*, and *The Radical King*, about Dr. King. He noted that the *Star Spangled Banner* was written by a slave owner, Francis Scott Key. Mr. Stringfellow was upset to see a letter in the paper this weekend from a person that stated Martin Luther King did not deserve a day in his honor. Mr. Stringfellow feels Dr. King died for all Americans and believed in the good of this country. Mr. Stringfellow also touched on remembering the Battle of the Bulge.

F. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT – PART I

F.1. Waddell and Verplanck Furniture, Fixtures, and Equipment – Mr. Randall Luther, F – 1 TSKP Studio

Mr. Geary introduced Randall Luther and explained Furniture, Fixtures and Equipment is termed FFE. Mr. Luther noted that the projects are coming along and the Verplanck project bids are due tomorrow and will be chosen by late March.

Ms. Susan Pinckney, of TSKP Studio, explained that there are three buildings being bid currently for FFE. The current furnishings at Cheney are the old Waddell items, which will be replaced. Then both Waddell and Verplanck will need FFE. They are including Verplanck in the bidding to get better pricing and

bids are due to the town tomorrow. Ms. Pinckney presented a power point outlining the schedule and items being bid on. She noted there was a meeting with the State on the 22nd and no red flags were raised. The planned completion review is February 6th and bids are due in March. They hope for a Purchase Order in April and a late July/early August installation at Cheney and Waddell. Ms. Pinckney noted most items qualify for state reimbursement. The items chosen are durable, easy to maintain and will stand the test of time. Her presentation is available for view on the website.

The budgets for the FFE are as follows:

Waddell's budget was set at \$740,000 and the current estimate is \$715,000; Verplanck's budget was set at \$662,000 and their current estimate is \$650,000; and last Cheney's budget was set at \$275,000 and the current estimate on that is coming in higher, at \$290,000.

Ms. Stefanovicz thanked Mr. Luther and Ms. Pinckney for the effort and thought put in to each piece chosen. She was concerned, however, with how staff would clean the upholstery of some of the items. Ms. Pinckney noted the items chosen are always easily cleaned and some have antimicrobial features and are bleachable. Most are a vinyl.

Ms. Stefanovicz asked about what type of wood was used and it was noted that most of the "wood" is actually plastic laminate, though some storage units are real wood.

Ms. Stefanovicz asked what the teachers think of the items chosen. Mr. Geary noted he asked for input from about 15-20 teachers. Due to that input, some items were added or deleted. The teachers especially liked the wiggle stools.

Ms. Stefanovicz wondered about the cafeteria tables, recalling a discussion that all the tables were to be round. Mr. Geary noted that most of the cafe tables are round with bench seating, but that there are a few long tables in the mix to accommodate the number of students needed.

Mr. Pattacini thanked the presenters for their work, along with the administration and staff. He is excited about these projects getting to this point.

Mr. Pattacini wondered about what items would not qualify for grant funding. Ms. Pinckney noted there are very few items, but they are ones that are not expected to last 20+ years, such as waste paper baskets or other “unnecessary” items. After the furniture is received we go back to the State to ask for reimbursement. Those items are still covered in the budget.

Mr. Pattacini wondered about the durability of the castor wheels on many of the desks/tables. Ms. Pinckney noted she has never run into any issues with these. She explained the manuals for all items will be given to the Facilities Director and if there is a problem the vendors would replace the items.

Mr. Scappaticci wondered why there was such a difference in the budgets for Waddell and Verplanck. Ms. Pinckney noted that little bits and pieces add up. Waddell has a couple of swing classrooms and Mr. Geary noted they also have a sensory space at Waddell. All of the rooms are being furnished in like style.

Ms. Stefanovicz wondered about the color palettes. It was noted that Waddell has chosen blues and greens but that Verplanck has not yet chosen colors.

F.2. Update on 2018-2019 Superintendent’s Proposed Budget

Mr. Geary reviewed the previously asked and answered questions regarding his suggested budget for 18/19. He also answered some previously asked questions.

Mr. Geary reviewed the Alliance Capital Grant was \$1,098,500 in 15/16, \$611,500 in 16/17, and \$1,080,000 is budgeted for 17/18. The future of this grant is unknown.

Mr. Geary noted that he did not include information about smaller or one-time grants in his packet. The amounts of grants for the 18/19 year are unknown at this time. For 17/18 the grants are: IDEA \$1,792,284; Title I \$1,621,938; Priority \$415,188; Hartford Foundation \$576,000; and Alliance \$3,821,324. The Head Start grant is pending at this time, but typically it pays about 80% of the pre-K staff members and services. The ESC to the town has remained relatively stable over the last 6 years, with this year being \$30,369,100. It did not go down when Alliance funding came out.

Mr. Geary spoke more about the new Priority grant that we recently qualified for. We qualified under only one of three qualifying components that being the rank of children in families that qualify for temporary family assistant program. We qualified as the last slot (#11) in that section. It was noted that there is a complicated calculation for the exact amount of the grant, but based on a best guess the grant will provide \$415,188 the first year (17/18) and \$830,376 in year two.

Mr. Geary noted that Alliance Districts are identified every 5 years. This was recently done and three districts moved into the category of Alliance Districts, however they did not exit the three districts that moved out of the bottom 30, so there are now 33 Alliance Districts.

Mr. Geary reviewed the money spent to support private and charter schools in town is approximately \$650,000 for transportation, which is budgeted for in the Board budget; \$405,000 for Health Services, which is budgeted for between grants and town funding; and \$125,000 for food services, which is a self-funded program.

Mr. Geary had been previously asked if there were funds devoted to minority recruitment. He noted that falls in the Talent Development Budget. He reviewed the past and future plans for minority recruitment, including "growing our own" through a student mentor/noon aid program with MHS graduates at MCC.

Mr. Geary provided a list of recommended reductions to his original suggested budget, totaling a reduction of \$627,728. These included:

- Moving the cost of the Reading Specialist at Highland Park to the Priority Grant (\$78,500);
- \$65,000 for one EL Teacher by using existing staff that have been TESOL trained;
- \$46,228 for a special education teacher by transferring existing staff within the district;
- Moving \$153,000 for 2 technology integration specialists at Bennet and Illing into the Alliance Grant;

- Reducing the certified staff at New Horizons by \$35,000 due to new state BOE Guidelines; and
- Recalculated excess cost for private tuitions shows an allowable reduction of \$250,000.

In addition to the above recommended reductions to the original suggested budget, Mr. Geary provided a list of other possible reductions totaling \$248,000:

- Other purchased services reduction \$15,000 (tightening the budget around photography services and unpaid lunch balances);
- Instructional Supplies \$78,000 (a 1% reduction in all lines);
- General Supplies \$25,000 (reductions at Central Office, Special Education and Curriculum & Instruction);
- Consultants \$50,000 (Plant Maintenance and Special Education);
- Professional Development \$20,000 (PETD, ELA, Math, Science, Enrichment);
- Repair of equipment \$20,000 (Plant maintenance, Music, Library Media, Information Systems);
- Communications related equipment \$20,000 (Phone upgrades and radios);
- Legal Fees \$5,000 (flat fund)
- Reduction to Lines Dependent on % of budget \$15,000 (Capital Repairs, Capital Projects, Field trips).

On Wednesday Mr. Geary will have actual health insurance costs as those figures were not ready for this evening.

Ms. Stefanovicz noted that we have had to freeze the budget each year over the last couple of years and we are missing opportunities for growth. Some items are being kicked down the road. She is uncomfortable with taking any more from instructional supplies and would rather rebuild that line. Mr. Geary hopes that with budgeting more realistically for tuition costs there will not be a need to freeze the budget next year. He would also prefer not to reduce instructional supplies. He also noted some items can move into the Priority Grant.

Ms. Stefanovicz asked about what the Temporary Family Assistant Program is that qualified us for the Priority Grant. Dr. Radikas reviewed it is the number of

families that are in need financially, whether needing assistance or being on Medicaid.

Ms. Stefanovicz asked about English Language Learners and it was explained by Mr. Geary that there are more certified staff working in EL and there are still some tutors. We have been working on certifying staff from within.

Ms. Stefanovicz asked about dedicated classrooms for behavior and behavior techs. Mr. Geary reviewed some of this was funded through IDEA, but several social workers were added throughout the district, as well as an Assistant Principal at Keeney and several behavior techs throughout the district. While there is not room at every school to have a dedicated behavior classroom, there are spaces in a few schools.

Mr. Geary also noted that over the last four years we have made many changes, including adding STEM specialists, strengthening readers and writer's workshop, engaging parents, moving towards restorative instead of punitive punishments, and increasing personalized learning among many initiatives. We have changed a lot and now we need to fine tune that and let what we have started have a chance to work.

Ms. Maio asked about the unpaid lunch balances and the attempts to collect those funds. She wondered if we send applications for free/reduced meals to families who fall behind in payments. Mr. Geary noted we do, but even if they qualify that does not wipe out a previous balance. Also, many of our families are in need, but do not qualify for the assistance of Free/reduced lunch.

Mr. Meggers wondered what tactics the new company will use in asking families to pay their overdue lunch balances. Ms. Clancy noted that just using an outside company provides more clout to parents. They will send a letter every two weeks noting the overdue balance for a total of 5 letters. They will also make phone calls. The company does not get paid unless they collect funds, so they are motivated. Ms. Clancy noted that some families may qualify for free/reduced lunch but for personal reasons choose not to apply. Mr. Meggers noted that it is important not to create a divide between parents and the schools

as being contacted by an outside company may feel like the debt is being sent to collections, which it is not.

Mr. Pattacini touched on the Priority Grant. He noted that we did not qualify based on the performance of the district, but because of the situation many of our community members find themselves in. This underscores the point that our community is evolving and we need to support the changing makeup of our schools. Mr. Pattacini asked if we had an "extra" \$500,000, what would Mr. Geary want to spend it on. Mr. Geary listed about three different ways he would like to spend it, in interesting and innovative ways. We need to remediate skills in reading and math. He also wants to be able to give children experiences they don't have access to outside of the school day. Mr. Geary would also love to add World Language to lower grades and add STEM excursions.

Mr. Geary noted that about 70-75% of our kids are reading at or above grade level in K-5 and are about the same in math. We need to invest in the 30% below grade level, however we cannot exclude them from specials or STEM to do that. We are adding one Reading Consultant, but we could really use more. In grades 7-12 we need more staff to ensure kids leave us being able to be critical thinkers and productive members of society.

Mr. Pattacini would like to explore this topic, if only to have conversations with the community about it. We are making investments and are forward thinking. He would like to outline what we want our next steps to be and what benefits we may be missing out on by trying to keep taxes down. Everyone wants lower taxes, but they have to then understand what they are not getting. Mr. Pattacini is interested in an informal proposal talking about the kinds of investments we may want to look at.

Mr. Thames is concerned with reducing the budget to where we are jeopardizing the outcomes for our children. He appreciates that Mr. Geary took the time to analyze the cuts that would be least disruptive to our children. Mr. Thames wondered, when items are moved to be funded by grants, what happens to the item that gets bumped from the grant. Mr. Geary noted that typically something does get dropped, however this year we have the Priority Grant, which we did not expect, so items have been shifted to Priority from

Alliance, which then freed up some Alliance money. Different grants are earmarked for different areas, so items were able to be shifted around between them.

Mr. Thames noted that during the election he found that people are concerned with the quality of education and the behaviors. He feels we need to increase the quality of supply resources needed. Mr. Thames hopes we can get innovative resources and develop new programs.

Ms. Stefanovicz notes we are now eligible for Priority funds based on the number of families on Temporary Family Assistance in Manchester. She wondered if that money should be used to help those families by adding reading support, etc. She would like to add more reading specialists, not just move one from our Board budget to the Priority Grant funds. Mr. Geary noted we could always add people, but we could look at that next year since we were not aware of this grant and next year the amount should double. We are also awaiting news on other grants earmarked for summer school and after school programming.

Mr. Thames asked about the summer program. Mr. Geary noted the program is slated for grades K-2 (going into grades 1-3) and the application was sent to the CSDE to see if it is acceptable. We need to spend the money by June 30th, so they are working out those issues. The program will focus on literacy only. Mr. Thames noted his two grandsons attended the program in the past and both benefitted.

Mr. Pattacini recapped that we have heard from the Administration about the budget several times and there is one last budget workshop this Wednesday at MHS. We need to adopt a budget proposal and give it to the General Manager by February 14th. That would mean it has to be ready to be passed by the February 12th Board meeting. He asked Board members to speak up with any other questions they may have.

Mr. Scappaticci expressed his appreciation for the information Mr. Geary provided. He noted that after a 0.75% increase in our budget last year, it is not unreasonable to ask for a 3.7% increase and that he is in favor of not making

any additional cuts. Mr. Geary noted that some of the recommended reductions should most definitely be taken. They are simply more accurate figures.

Mr. Pattacini wondered if we might consider investments of the funds being recommended for reduction elsewhere. Mr. Geary would need more clarification in where and how to add items to the budget. Mr. Pattacini clarified that the recommended budget increase is basically 3.7% minus the recommended reductions.

Ms. Maio clarified that the recommended reductions listed this evening are not because we asked for these, but because we do not need these items. Mr. Geary agreed, noting that we were able to recalculate the reimbursement from tuition bills and shift items to grants. Ms. Maio is not okay with reducing items because we don't think they will get funded. She notes we either pay the cost of education with low test scores or from our pocketbook.

Mr. Conyers supports a lot of this budget and encourages everyone to take their time determining whether they support the budget or not. He wants Board members to listen to each other as well as teachers and the public before forming a decision on the budget.

Mr. Meggers wants to remind everyone that the education system is the true backbone of a city and affect property values and how our children grow up. Education is crucial to a town, but like any "business" the costs continue to rise.

Mr. Pattacini reviewed the next budget workshop is Wednesday at 6:00 p.m. at MHS.

G. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

H. NEW BUSINESS

H.1.

Mr. Thames moved that the Board of Education approve the cost estimate, plans and specifications for Furnishings, Fixtures, and Equipment for the Verplanck Elementary School dated January 8, 2018, prepared by TSKP Studio for submission to the Department of Administrative Services, Office of School Construction Grants for Review of Final Plans. Mr. Scappaticci seconded the motion.

8/0 - Voted in favor.

H.2.

Mr. Thames moved that the Board of Education approve the cost estimate, plans and specifications for Furnishings, Fixtures, and Equipment for the Waddell Elementary School dated January 8, 2018, prepared by TSKP Studio for submission to the Department of Administrative Services, Office of School Construction Grants for Review of Final Plans. Mr. Scappaticci seconded the motion.

8/0 - Voted in favor

H.3.

Mr. Thames moved that the Board of Education approves the cost estimate, plans and specifications for Furnishings, Fixtures, and Equipment for the Cheney-Bennet Academy, dated January 8, 2018, prepared by TSKP Studio for submission to the Department of Administrative Services, Office of the School Construction Grants for Review of Final Plans. Mr. Scappaticci seconded the motion.

8/0 - Voted in favor.

Mr. Pattacini thanked the Board and Administration for their hard work as these projects move along.

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

Mr. Tom Stringfellow, 183 Hillstown Road, enjoyed the presentation by TSKP Studio. He thought it was well done and the items look reliable. Mr. Stringfellow recommended an article in the *New Britain Herald* about EastConn Lab. He notes math and science are important. As for the budget, we do the best we can. He believes in quality education and all voices count. Mr. Stringfellow was glad to see Manchester High School mentioned in *Better Manchester*, with an article about the culinary academy. He feels it is vital to get youth involved in our town and hopes the Board members listen to the public and not have side conversations. Mr. Stringfellow suggested trying to recruit from Hispanic colleges and also look for partnering with mentors as well, not just teachers.

J. COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Pattacini is in the process of reviewing the school liaisons and will work through email to finalize the list and then post it on the website.

K. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

As listed in the agenda the tentative items on the agenda for the next year are as follows:

- Monday, February 12, 2018 Lincoln Center - 2018-19 Budget Questions and Update on NEASC
- Monday, February 26, 2018 Keeney - Keeney School Improvement Plan, Opportunities for College Credit at MHS
- Monday, March 12, 2018 Lincoln Center - Fall / Winter Data Update
- Monday, March 26, 2018 Highland Park - HP School Improvement Plan
- Monday, April 23, 2018 Lincoln Center - Academics Update
- Monday, April 30, 2018 Illing Middle School - Illing School Improvement Plan
- Monday, May 14, 2018 Lincoln Center - Update on Building Projects
- Tuesday, May 29, 2018 Lincoln Center - Manchester High School Improvement Plan
- Monday, June 11, 2018 Lincoln Center - Adult Education Update
- Monday, June 25, 2018 Lincoln Center - Spring Data Update

- Monday, July 9, 2018 Lincoln Center - Close of School Update
- Monday, August 27, 2018 Lincoln Center - Opening of School Update

Ms. Stefanovicz asked if the item that was previously on the schedule for this evening, Teacher Evals and Teacher climate as well as attendance could be put back on an agenda. She also asked about the findings of a survey the town sent out, wondering if the Board of Directors could present their findings. Mr. Geary noted those were bumped to February 12th and will be on the agenda then. He also agreed to contact the town to inquire about a presentation on the survey.

L. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Pattacini called for a motion to adjourn.

Mr. Scappaticci moved and Ms. Hagenow seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting.

8/0 - Voted in favor.

Adjournment 9:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Darryl Thames, Snr.
Board Secretary