

MANCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION

Regular Meeting October 10, 2017 Buckley Elementary School

PRESENT: Caldwell, Conyers, Hagenow, Hughes, Stefanovicz, Thames

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

ABSENT: Leon, Pattacini, Scappaticci

A. **OPENING**

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

Acting Chairperson Thames called the meeting back to order at 7:01 p.m., noting the meeting was originally called to order at 6:30 for Executive Session. All in attendance participated in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, led by Mr. Thames.

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

APPROVED – Minutes Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of September 25, 2017. Acting Secretary Stefanovicz moved and Mr. Caldwell seconded the motion.

6/0 – Voted in favor.

B. **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

B.1. **Policy Committee**

Ms. Hagenow reported the last meeting was held on September 25, 2017. In attendance were Ranon Caldwell, Deb Hagenow, Chris Pattacini, Darryl Thames, Matt Geary, and Elsie Torres-Brown, Intern. The Committee reviewed Policy #3280: Gifts, Grants, and Bequests. Mr. Geary will explore other groups,

including PTA and The Foundation for Manchester Public Schools, who might assist teachers with donations before bringing the revised policy to the full Board of Education. The Committee reviewed Policy #5127.1: Requirements for Graduation from Manchester High School which moves the total number of credits required for graduation from 22 to 24 (previously 25) beginning with the Class of 2019. This adjustment is the result of the state graduation requirements being pushed back to the Class of 2023 and insufficient staff to support the new requirements at this time. The Committee recommended that the revised policy be brought to the full Board for consideration at the next Board of Education meeting. The Committee also reviewed Policy #6176: Applied Education, and recommended deletion of the policy since the information included in the policy is part of the Manchester High School curriculum. Last, the Committee reviewed the list of policies to be reviewed during 2017-18.

C. CONSENT CALENDAR

Mr. Geary presented ten 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 System-wide Social Studies Consultants account to System-wide Language Arts or Other Purchased Services account in the amount of \$3,000
- Transfer from System-wide Social Studies Consults account to System-wide Language Arts Instructional Supplies & Materials account in the amount of \$6,000

C.3. Permission to apply for Title I, Part A, Improving Basic Programs Grant for FY17/18 in the amount of \$1,621,938

C.4. Permission to apply for Title II, Part A, Supporting Effective Instruction Grant for FY17/18, in the amount of \$249,895

C.5. Permission to apply for Title III, Part A, Language Instruction for English Learner's Grant for FY17/18, in the amount of \$51,365

C.6. Permission to apply for the Immigrant Students and Youth Grant for FY17/18, in the amount of \$23,009

C.7. Permission to apply for the Bilingual Education Program Grant for FY17/18, in the amount of \$5,139

C.8. Ratification of Manchester Board of Education Buildings & Grounds Supervisors, AFSCME, Council 4, Local 818-49, for the period July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2021

C.9. Establish an appropriation for FY17/18 for the Connecticut State Department of Education for Program Enhancement Projects for Adult Education, in the amount of \$40,000

C.10. Establish an appropriation for FY17-19 for the National School Lunch Program School Equipment Grant, in the amount of \$17,282

The Chairman called for a motion.

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

6/0 - Voted in favor.

D. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

None.

E. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Tom Stringfellow, 183 Hillstown Road, recommended a biography on General Lee and Ulysses Grant. He made mention of the controversy surrounding Columbus Day and noted that men of color sailed before and after Columbus and Indigenous tribes are important. Mr. Stringfellow liked the book 1493. He also suggested a book about Native American Place Names in Connecticut. Last, Mr. Stringfellow noted that

Connecticut Education Association has begun a lawsuit due to the state cuts to the education budget. He hopes an agreement can be reached in the funding.

Mr. Thames thanked everyone for coming this evening. Usually meetings are held at Lincoln Center, but he enjoys seeing parents, students and the schools that we serve. Mr. Thames noted that his grandson attends Buckley.

F. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT – PART I

Mr. Geary noted that MHS was awarded a \$300,000 planning grant from the BARR Foundation in support of personalized learning. More information will be forthcoming, but this grant was only awarded to two schools in Connecticut and is a great honor.

F.1. Buckley School Improvement Plan

Mr. Geary introduced Matt Daley, Principal of Buckley. Along with Julie Tjagvad, Vice Principal, and several staff members and students, Mr. Daley gave a Powerpoint presentation that is available on the website about Buckley's School Improvement Plan.

Mr. Hughes enjoyed hearing about the student's visit to Crestfield, noting his grandmother was a resident there.

Ms. Stefanovicz thanked everyone for their participation and thinks the K home visit program is an excellent way to start. The 2nd graders impressed Ms. Stefanovicz with their articulation of math problems, which is a terrific life skill. Ms. Stefanovicz feels the community outreach of these students is amazing.

Mr. Geary noted that Verplanck and Robertson are also doing Kindergarten home visits and it is hoped to expand that to all elementary schools. This program is funded through the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving. A teacher along with one other staff member does the visit, which is after school or in the evening.

G. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

H. NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Geary noted this is a first read for this policy recommendation and deletion.

H.1. Policy Recommendation

The Policy Committee submits to the full Board its recommended revision for a first reading and approval in accordance with its policy on policy changes: Policy Revisions:

- Policy 5127.1 - Requirements for Graduation from Manchester High School

The current graduation requirements are 22 credits. The State has previously moved to requiring 25 credits with the class of 2019. Now the State has moved that requirement to start with the class of 2023. We are moving to 24 credits as a graduation requirement for the class of 2019. One year of World Language will be required, along with a half credit/year of Personal Finance. Eventually the State will require two years of World Language.

Mr. Conyers wondered about the state requirements for Personal Finance. Mr. Geary explained that is not a state requirement but is being mandated by us and is a half year program. We want students to understand real world finances and not graduate and run up credit card debt. This is a pilot now and will be in full effect for next year's graduating class of 2019.

Ms. Stefanovicz wondered how we will get from 24 to 25 credits when we do increase the requirements (as the State expects to for the class of 2023). Mr. Geary noted a 2nd year of World Language, a one credit demonstration class, and possibly going back to requiring 4 credits of Math instead of 3 would all be ways to reach that extra credit. Currently we do not have the staff required for achieving that.

Mr. Thames wondered how this increase in credits would be rolled out to families. Mr. Geary explained that this is a change for the Class of 2019, but is actually a decrease from their expected graduation credits of 25. The current class of 2018 has a requirement of only 22 credits.

H.2. Policy Deletion

The Policy Committee submits to the full Board its recommended deletion for a first reading and approval in accordance with its policy on policy changes:

- Policy Deletion: Policy 6176 – Applied Education

Mr. Geary explained that this is an outdated policy that is covered in other areas.

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

Mr. Tom Stringfellow, 183 Hillstown Road, liked to see the students understanding math without the use of a calculator. He enjoyed hearing about the Kindergarten home visits, which he thinks is better than having a truancy officer visit. Mr. Stringfellow acknowledged that parents are busy but this is a proactive step to make them feel welcome. He wishes the media would cover things like this instead of just controversial topics. Mr. Stringfellow liked hearing about the students visiting the convalescent home, noting he worked in one as a teenager. Both the older and younger generations can learn from each other. In the Buckley Library, Mr. Stringfellow enjoyed seeing the cultural display. Last, Mr. Stringfellow recommended a movie coming out in December about a physically disfigured boy, "Wonder".

J. COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Thames congratulated the district on receiving the Barr Foundation Grant. Funding like this helps us look at best practices and continue improving the quality of education.

K. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

Mr. Caldwell would like a review of how students can earn college credit.

Ms. Stefanovicz would like to see a targeted, proactive approach to fostering building culture. She noted that when a teacher is absent 10 days their student's test scores are shown to drop.

L. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Thames called for a motion to adjourn.

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

6/0 - Voted in favor.

Adjournment 8:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Melanie Stefanovicz
Acting Board Secretary