

MANCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION

**Regular Meeting
March 28, 2022
Lincoln Center/Virtual**

PRESENT: Eisenthal, Kohls, Mix, Ntem-mensah, Orsene, Pattacini, Patterson, Stefanovicz

ALSO PRESENT: Superintendent of Schools Geary, Deputy Superintendent Curriculum & Special Services Radikas, Director of Finance & Management Clancy, Director of Human Resources Sone-Moyano

ABSENT: Meggers

A. OPENING

A.1. & 2. Meeting Called to Order

Chairperson Pattacini called the meeting to order at 7:03 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 March 21, 2022. Secretary Patterson moved and Mr. Eisenthal seconded the motion.

7/0 – Voted in favor.

B. COMMITTEE REPORTS

None.

C. CONSENT CALENDAR

Mr. Geary presented five 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

None.

C.3. Permission to apply for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) 611 Grant for the FY 22/24 in the amount of \$1,944,847

C.4. Permission to apply for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) 619 Grant for the FY 22/24 in the amount of \$66,393

C.5. Establish an appropriation for the Manchester Education Association (MEA) President Release Time for the FY 21/22 in the amount of \$25,863.34

The Chairman called for a motion.

Secretary Patterson moved and Ms. Mix seconded the recommendation to adopt the Consent Calendar as outlined in the agenda.

7/0 - Voted in favor.

D. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

Leila Affini shared the MHS update:

- This past week, the musical *Beauty and the Beast* was a huge success amongst staff and students. Many amazing reviews on the musical and about the talent displayed by our students have been heard in the halls.

-The end of the 3rd quarter is this Friday, April 1st. Many students are taking last minute opportunities to meet with their teachers and gather the materials needed in order to end the quarter strong and successfully.

-With the end of this quarter, many people are very excited for spring break. These last few months have been a challenge for everyone and we are all ready to have the time to take a break for a little bit.

-Navy, Coast Guard, and Army Recruiters will be present throughout the building on April 4th, 5th and 26th for students who are interested in pursuing careers in the armed forces.

-Last, Junior prom tickets will be going on sale this week. Senior Prom tickets will be on sale shortly after the Junior sale is over.

Mr. Pattacini told Leila that the meeting last week was held in the Freshman Center and the Board was pleased to see the PJ fundraiser for the Ukraine. It was a great example of how our students are aware of needs not just in our own community, but in the whole world.

E. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mr. Tom Stringfellow, 183 Hillstown Road, spoke about teacher burnout and why teachers are dropping out of the profession or retiring early. Mr. Stringfellow mentioned two unions that are headed by women, the EFT and NEA. Last, Mr. Stringfellow recommended two books about war and slavery.

F. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

F.1. Update on Humanities/STEM 5-12

Mr. Geary introduced Sharda Shipman, Director of Humanities and Joshua Steffenson, Director of STEM. Ms. Shipman and Mr. Steffenson gave an interactive presentation, which can be seen on the website.

Ms. Stefanovicz liked hearing about data and probability - as that is her field. She wondered what different industries benefit from the type of exposure to engineering thought patterns and if we are exposing the students to these. Mr. Steffenson agreed many industries use the same type of thinking and we are exposing our students to many different industries.

Ms. Patterson asked for an example of the shift in the classroom in grades 9-12 ELA. Ms. Shipman spoke about junior English and how they grab the student's interest and then teach the skills students need first and then choose the text and materials that will support that. We prioritize the standards and build the course off that.

Ms. Patterson liked the compelling thought provoking questions. Ms. Shipman noted it is not like a traditional worksheet. The students are acquiring the ability to analyze and articulate their thoughts and make sure their evidence is credible. They then write a response. For example in grade 7 the students are studying Africa. They were tasked to develop their own questions and then research the answers. The unit culminated in a presentation night where students used many different styles to communicate their project.

Ms. Mix noted a plan years ago to move kids away from literature and more towards non-fiction writing. Ms. Shipman stated we balance what we expose students to. We do have units on non-fiction as well as literature. The bottom line is to cultivate a love of reading.

Mr. Pattacini drew a connection between the work the Directors are doing with the Board's vision and mission for Manchester Public Schools - creating good citizens. Mr. Pattacini thought it was refreshing for a night to not hear about test scores. We need thinkers, engaged students, learning to have a math mindset, be scientists and problem solvers.

Mr. Eisenthal thought this was exciting stuff. A lot of what is being taught is crucial to making good citizens and some of it he didn't get taught until he was in college. Mr. Eisenthal felt it would have been beneficial to him to have learned those skills earlier like we are doing now.

Mr. Geary noted that both of these talented Director's positions are funded through ESSER currently and are on the "to keep" list to be moved into the Alliance Grant. We would not have gotten such an in-depth presentation if we weren't able to split the Director's jobs into Pre K-4 and 5-12.

G. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

G.1. Policy Recommendations

Mr. Geary submits to the full Board its recommended policy changes for a second reading.

Secretary Patterson moved for the Board to approve the revisions to the following policies:

- **Student Privacy (PPRA)**
- **Attendance, Truancy and Chronic Absenteeism**
- **Drug and Alcohol Use by Students**
- **Chemical Health for Student Athletes**

Mr. Eisenthal seconded the motion.

8/0 - Voted in favor.

H. NEW BUSINESS

H.1. Appointment to Rockville Regional Agricultural Education Consulting Committee

Mr. Geary reviewed that we currently have 12 students attending the Rockville VoAg Program. The program is in their 10 year cycle for accreditation and they asked for us to approve these two advisors for that committee.

Mr. Pattacini wondered if these two people live in Manchester. **Mr. Geary** confirmed they do and that both have VoAg backgrounds and experience.

Secretary Patterson moved for the Board to appoint Tracy Longoria and DJ Lupacchino to the Rockville Regional Agricultural education Consulting Committee. Mr. Orsene seconded the motion.

8/0 - Voted in favor.

H.2. Ratification of the Connecticut Association of Labor Unions (CALU) Hall Monitors, Security Guards, Lead Security Guards, Behavior

Technicians, Lead behavior Technicians, and Tiered Interventionists Contract

Mr. Geary noted this contract was reviewed earlier by the Board in Executive Session. This is a new bargaining unit as prior only Hall Monitors were in a union. Mr. Geary thanked Ms. Sone-Moyano and Ms. Clancy for their contract negotiations which was supported by legal counsel.

DISCUSSION:

Mr. Eisenthal wondered if there were funds for this contract in the current budget to handle the retroactive compensation called for. Mr. Geary noted that they have been without a contract since 2020. Previously the rate for 2021 was negotiated and backpay was provided. This contract will call for some back pay from August through now and that cost was estimated in the budget.

Secretary Patterson moved for the Board of Education to approve the Connecticut Association of Labor Unions (CALU) Hall Monitors, Security Guards, Lead Security Guards, Behavior Technicians, Lead behavior Technicians, and Tiered Interventionists Contract, covering the period of July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2026. Mr. Eisenthal seconded the motion.

8/0 - Voted in favor.

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

Mr. Tom Stringfellow, 183 Hillstown Road, enjoyed the presentation on the high school. He has always been interested in Science and there are many good shows on TV and magazines on the topic. Mr. Stringfellow mentioned the end of Women's History Month and the important impact first ladies have had on the United States. Last, he spoke about equality and slavery and recommended several magazine articles.

J. COMMUNICATIONS

None.

K. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

Monday, April 25, 2022

Update on Technology

Monday, May 9, 2022

Manchester Preschool Center Update

Monday, May 23, 2022

Adult Education Update

L. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Pattacini called for a motion to adjourn.

Secretary Patterson moved and Mr. Ntem-Mensah seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting.

8/0 - Voted in favor. Adjournment 8:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tracy Patterson, Board Secretary