

MANCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION

Regular Meeting September 14, 2020 Lincoln Center/Virtual Meeting

PRESENT: Gundersen, Heinrich, Hughes, Meggers, Pattacini, Patterson, Scappaticci, Stefanovicz, Thames

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

ABSENT:

A. OPENING

A.1. & 2. Meeting Called to Order

Chairperson Thames called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m. All in attendance participated in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, led virtually by Mr. Thames.

A.3. Secretary's Welcome

Mr. Pattacini stated that as Secretary of the Board of Education, he wished to welcome the online viewers to this regular meeting of the Board of Education. He, along with the Board and the Superintendent, were pleased to be 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. Pattacini 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. For the public speak section, speakers are asked to sign up in advance. If a member of the public is not able to virtually attend this meeting, they are welcome to reach out to the Superintendent via email.

Mr. Pattacini thanked the public for their interest in this evening's meeting and the Manchester Public Schools. He is proud of the work happening in Manchester.

A.4. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

APPROVED – Minutes Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of August 31, 2020. Secretary Pattacini moved and Mr. Scappaticci seconded the motion.

9/0 - Voted in favor.

B. COMMITTEE REPORTS

None.

C. CONSENT CALENDAR

Mr. Geary presented 11 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 Iling Middle School Interscholastic Sports Field and Athletic Trips account to Iling Middle School Library/Media Services Software Licenses and Fees account in the amount of \$600**

C.3. Permission to Apply Coronavirus Relief Funds for the FY 20/21 in the amount of \$861,097

C.4. Establish an appropriation for the Priority School District Grant FY 20/21 in the amount of \$848,228

C.5. Establish an appropriation for the Priority School District - Summer School Grant FY 20/21 in the amount of \$155,832

C.6. Establish an appropriation for the Priority School District - Extended School Hours Grant for the FY 20/21 in the amount of \$131,930

C.7. Establish an appropriation the Alliance District Grant FY 20/21 in the amount of \$7,632,367

C.8. Establish an appropriation for the Rise Innovation Grant FY 20/21 in the amount of \$210,000

C.9. Establish an increase in the appropriation for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) 619 Grant FY 20/22 in the amount of \$503, bringing the total grant award to \$65,923

C.10. Establish an increase in the appropriation for the IDEA 611 grant FY 20/22 in the amount of \$87,619, bringing the total grant award to \$1,924,527

C.11. Establish an appropriation for the Adult Education Grant FY 20/21 in the amount of \$760,569

The Chairman called for a motion.

Secretary Pattacini moved and Mr. Scappaticci seconded the recommendation to adopt the Consent Calendar as outlined in the evening's packet.

9/0 - Voted in favor.

D. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE

None.

E. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

F. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

F.1. Opening of School Update

Mr. Geary reviewed the two presumed positive cases of Covid-19 we had last week at MMA and Bowers. The students in question were last in school when they were asymptomatic, and when symptoms appeared their parents kept them home and alerted the district that they had been in contact with someone recently diagnosed positive. Because both students exhibited high risk symptoms, they and anyone in their cohort who had close contact for more than 15 minutes are self-quarantining for 14 days. The local health department was involved in contact tracing. All affected families were notified by a school nurse and Mr. Daly and Mr. Geary dropped everything and went to the building in question to talk with staff. Health and safety is our top priority. When you are asked to self-quarantine in this fashion, you cannot "test" out per the Department of Public Health. Mr. Geary recently sent a checklist to families that review what symptoms should indicate a child remains home.

Currently, Mr. Geary reviewed we have about 1770 students learning fully remote and about 4253 in the hybrid model. There have been over 200 requests to change (in both directions) and while we had to pause changes for a time, we are starting to make some of those moves now.

While technology distribution has begun, we are still waiting on some of the items to arrive.

Mr. Pattacini asked for a review of the child's experience with meals this year. Mr. Geary noted that all breakfast is grab and go this year and students eat at their desks, behind their shields. For lunch students in grades 5-12 have a similar experience, with a grab and go home lunch. Their lunch is not eaten at school as they are dismissed early enough to take lunch home. For grades PK-4, however, they are in school later in the day and they eat lunch in their classrooms behind shields as they do breakfast.

The reason the cafeteria is not being utilized is that we do not want the children to be in large groups, especially with no shields. The high school cafeteria is being used as a study hall for free period with a limit of one student per table/50 kids.

During this time administration is keeping an eye out for what changes we are making now that we may choose to keep once “normal” life resumes.

Mr. Geary addressed the question about why we are not taking student temperatures upon entry. First, a fever is not a sure sign one way or the other regarding Covid. You could have Covid with no fever and a fever with any number of other diagnoses. Next, the line of students waiting to have their temperatures taken would be unsafe in terms of the number of people having to wait next to people not in their cohort, making it impossible to contact trace. We hope if your child is feeling unwell at home you assess their symptoms and keep them home if you are unsure.

F.2. District Improvement Plan Update

Mr. Geary gave a brief update on the District Improvement Plan, which is available online.

Mr. Pattacini was glad to see there is a focus beyond Covid and he appreciates the administration’s efforts. He wonders what changes we are making now that we might keep doing in the future. Mr. Geary notes we are trying to survive this time, but at the same time education systems change slowly and we won’t get another chance to ask critical questions and make thoughtful change. We cannot miss this opportunity to evaluate “how we do learning”.

Mr. Thames pointed out the SAT is now viewed differently. We have to look at how we track and measure student progress. He asked about SBAC and the F&Ps. Mr. Geary noted Grade 11 students still take the SATs, though the future regarding college admissions is uncertain, the state uses the SATs as a state assessment. Next week even remote students will come in to take the SATs) SBAC is typically given in person in the spring. F&Ps are individual assessments

that are still used. They can be given in person or remotely. They typically start about the second week of October. Mr. Geary noted that last spring the College Board gave AP exams remotely for the first time, so changes are happening.

F.3. Professional Development Highlights

Mr. Geary reviewed that when given permission to drop the number of student days to 177, the decision was made to add PD days for staff. This gave more time to get acclimated to working in buildings again, as well as time to learn more information about Covid and the safety measures in place. Everyone missed the enthusiasm of convocation.

Dr. Radikas reviewed all PD was held remotely this year, which had benefits and drawbacks.

Day 1 - Welcome

Day 2 - Equity

Day 3 - Recognition of Teachers of the Year and Teaching & Learning\

Day 4 - Family Partnership and Human Resources

Day 5 - Superintendent's message

Dr. Radikas reviewed we will be using Seesaw with parents this year. She noted there were some glitches with the Protraxx modules this year. Each Wednesday, teachers will have a 90 minute PD, with the September 16th topic being Learning Plans.

Mr. Thames asked how it went doing virtual PD. Dr. Radikas liked some aspects, such as not needing to set up chairs, where in the building was space available, etc. It was nice that she was able to pop in and out of various sessions without having to walk all over the building. Mr. Thames suggested surveying staff about their experience.

G. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

H. NEW BUSINESS

None.

I. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

J. COMMUNICATIONS

None.

K. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

September 28 - Update on Technology

October 14 - Bennet School Improvement Plan

October 26 - Update on Human Resources

L. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Thames called for a motion to adjourn.

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

9/0 - Voted in favor.

Adjournment 8:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Christopher Pattacini
Board Secretary