

MANCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION

Regular Meeting

January 7, 2019

MHS - Room 293

PRESENT: Conyers, Hagenow, Hughes, Maio, Pattacini, 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: Meggers

A. OPENING

A.1. & 2. Meeting Called to Order

Chairperson Thames called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. All in attendance participated in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, led by Mr. Thames.

A.3. Secretary's Welcome

Mr. Pattacini 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. 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.

Mr. Pattacini 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. Members of the public with individual concerns may contact the Superintendent

directly. It was explained that meetings of the Board are open to the public, but are not meetings with individual members of the public. Therefore, comments from the audience will be confined to the time designated for the public to address the Board.

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

Mr. Thames strayed from the agenda to acknowledge the life of James Fromme. Mr. Geary noted that Mr. Fromme, who was most recently at Bentley as an Assistant Principal, had worked for the district for many years and passed away last week after a battle with cancer. Mr. Geary noted Mr. Fromme will be missed and his service to the Manchester Public Schools was appreciated. He sends thoughts and condolences to Mr. Fromme's friends and family. There was a moment of silence in honor of Mr. Fromme.

A.4. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

APPROVED – Minutes Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of December 10, 2018. Secretary Pattacini moved and Ms. Hagenow seconded the motion.

8/0 – Voted in favor.

B. COMMITTEE REPORTS

B.1. Curriculum & Instruction Committee

Mr. Conyers reported the last meeting was held on December 10, 2018. In attendance were Mr. Conyers, Mr. Scappaticci, Ms. Stefanovicz, Dr. Radikas, Ms. Burns, Gina Carrese, Heather Elsinger, Ms. Ghetia, Ms. Miner and Susan Parra.

There were two items discussed. The first was information regarding the Seal of Biliteracy, which was established to recognize public high school graduates who have attained a level of proficiency in English and one or more languages. Members of Manchester's World Language Department and the Director of Teaching & Learning, Humanities, Diane Burns, have worked with colleagues in

two other districts to provide this opportunity to students at MHS. Manchester has put aside funds to pay the \$20 fee for the series of tests for current seniors to take part and plans are underway to eventually prepare students so they make take part in practice tests in grade 7 and the actual tests as early as grade 10.

Next, the unit planner was discussed, which was an extension of a discussion started in October. A new process for reviewing curriculum quarterly, through unit reflections on Manchester's digital curriculum platform - unit planner, was further explored. Board members were lead through unit planner to see the vast resources, including lesson plans, assessments, and pacing guides, created by teacher leaders PK through Adult Education. Close to 1,250 units are currently available for Manchester teachers and administrators in all content areas, including art, music, and physical education.

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 Highland Park School Administration General Supplies and Materials account to Highland Park School Administration Dues and Fees account in the amount of \$235.

C.3. Establish an appropriation for FY 18-19 for the Title IV, Part A, Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grant, to be funded by the Connecticut State Department of Education, in the amount of \$109,771

C.4. Establish an appropriation for FY 18-20 for the Title I - Part A, Improving Basic Programs Grant, to be funded by the Connecticut State Department of Education, in the amount of \$1,614,299

C.5. Establish an appropriation for the FY 18-20 for the Title III, Part A, English Language Acquisition and Language Enhancement Grant, to

be funded by the Connecticut State Department of Education, in the amount of \$51,972

C.6. Establish an appropriation for the FY 18-19 for the Bilingual Education Grant, to be funded by the Connecticut State Department of Education, in the amount of \$4,927

The Chairman called for a motion.

Secretary Pattacini moved and Ms. Hagenow seconded the recommendation to adopt the Consent Calendar as outlined in this evening's packet.

8/0 - Voted in favor.

D. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

Patrick Doherty reported that tickets to the annual Sno-Ball dance go on sale January 14th. The dance is on January 26th and will take place at Maneeley's in South Windsor.

Registration for the annual talent show is now going on in Student Activities. The theme of the show is Hollywood Nights, and that will take place February 22nd in the MHS auditorium.

The Freshmen class is hosting a flower sale for Valentine's Day. Flowers can be purchased at \$5 a bunch, and they will be delivered to the person of your choice on Valentine's day. Forms can be picked up in Student Activities.

The MHS wrestling team went 4-0 this weekend at the South Windsor Invitational meet.

Liam Chennette and Majesty Moore were featured on Channel 3 News this past weekend for their thoughts and opinions about diversity in Congress and modern politics.

Over 1,100 people packed the MHS gym Friday to watch the Varsity boys basketball team play cross town rival East Catholic. The boys lost the game 75-57, but the spirit and energy at the game will be hard to forget.

MHS Broadcast Journalism will be hosting their annual Bingo night to raise funds for the Student Television Network competition this March. Tickets can be purchased for \$25 for adults, or \$15 for students. Food and Beverage will be served at the event.

Thursday, January 17th, marks the next Open Mic event from 2:30 to 3:30 in our MHS PAC space. Anyone with special talents is encouraged to perform and all are welcome to attend.

Mr. Thames noted he attended Friday's basketball game and the energy was something.

E. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

F. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT – PART I

F.1. Presentation of 2019-2020 Superintendent's Recommended Budget

Mr. Geary noted that this presentation is among the most important presentations in his years with MPS. He presented his recommendations for the 19-20 budget, which are available in detail on the website and will be reviewed over the course of the three budget workshops coming up the next three Wednesdays. Mr. Geary is proposing a budget of \$118,876,678, which is an increase of \$5,470,498 over last year's budget and a 4.82% increase. While Mr. Geary reviewed the basics of the budget, further detail will be provided at the budget workshops.

Mr. Hughes noted the per student expenditure is about \$16,000. He wondered, when a student comes back to district after being in a private placement, what the impact is to the budget. Mr. Geary noted there is a savings of approximately \$80,000 when an outplaced student returns to district programming.

Ms. Hagenow asked if the 230 students with special needs includes all magnet schools or excludes those students at Hartford Public magnets. Mr. Geary reviewed that was the total in all magnets/voag. Ms. Hagenow wondered why

we pay for those student services even if we pay tuition to the school. Mr. Geary reviewed that by law we must allow students the choice to attend those schools and by law we are required to provide special services if a student qualifies. Ms. Hagenow wondered who decides what special services a student requires. Mr. Geary explained the PPT process and our oversight, explaining that while in-district we know the student and family more intimately and also have the ability to provide services with a budget in mind, i.e. providing a different class, shared paraprofessional, or other budget-friendly options. With out of district schools we do not have the same input, though our staff does chair the PPT meeting, we cannot control how they choose to serve the student, such as hiring a new paraprofessional, etc.

Ms. Maio wondered if the 18/19 percentage of special education students at magnets (14.2%) included students with 504s. It does not.

Ms. Maio wondered if it was wise to move Manchester Middle Academy next year, making for another transition. Mr. Geary noted that the school they currently rent is small and they need a better space. He will give them Robertson for a year, which has a gymnasium and more space.

Mr. Pattacini noted that with Washington closing, sections have been added to Verplanck and 4 elementary teaching positions will be eliminated. Mr. Geary noted sections have also been added to some other schools as well.

Mr. Pattacini wondered if the town or General Manager has provided any direction on their ability to fund the budget. Mr. Geary has not had that discussion with the General Manager yet, and he will share the current percentage of the requested increase with him soon. Mr. Pattacini would like some guidance from the General Manager.

Mr. Pattacini wondered if we have received the town assumptions on items such as fuel and other town shared services. We have not, so some numbers may change.

Mr. Pattacini wondered if there is a plan for another medical insurance holiday, or even partial holiday, next year. Mr. Geary and Ms. Clancy noted that was a one-time event. Mr. Pattacini would like that confirmed with the town.

Mr. Pattacini appreciates the work in showing the list of the Alliance Districts funds per student and he noted that consistently underfunding our district is catching up to us and we are on thin ice. We will not be able to continue to provide the level of services we do unless we are properly funded. Mr. Geary agreed, noting that without some surprise grant funding this year we would have been in more trouble with supply lines. He does not like to create havoc in the system by suggesting cuts where we do not want to cut, but at this point the only places he sees that can be realistically cut are people.

Mr. Pattacini spoke about the huge rise in special services for students attending magnets from about \$1.2 million in 16/17 to \$2.1 million in 17/18. Mr. Geary noted that was a huge jump and we often do not get the billing quickly so there is no way to predict such a huge increase from year to year. We are looking into these issues and asking for details and verifying residency on students. Mr. Pattacini pointed out that the total Board budget in 17/18 was LESS than the increase in magnet student special services! Ms. Clancy noted that the Board of Directors and the legislature both need to understand this financial strain.

Mr. Pattacini felt that we will be lucky to get a 2% budget increase from the Board of Directors and that \$3million reduction to the recommended budget will translate into about 50 staffing cuts. Mr. Pattacini liked seeing that though MMA costs money in the budget, Mr. Geary pointed out the potential cost reduction of serving those students in district instead of out-placing them. Mr. Geary noted he will provide that information for other in-district programs at a budget workshop.

Mr. Scappaticci wondered how the state arrived at the figure of 4.5 times the per pupil cost before they will reimburse 75% of the excess cost for magnet students. He would like to see that figure reduced, perhaps to 3 times the per pupil cost before reimbursement. There is a meeting Friday with the legislature and he is unable to attend, but hopes someone brings that question for him.

G. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

H. NEW BUSINESS

None.

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

None.

J. COMMUNICATIONS

None.

K. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

January 9 - Budget Workshop

January 22 - Update on Equity Informed School Climate Assessment

January 23 - Budget Workshop

February 11 - Budget Adoption

February 25 - Update On Building Projects

L. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Thames called for a motion to adjourn.

Secretary Pattacini moved and Ms. Hagenow seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting.

8/0 - Voted in favor. Adjournment 9:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Christopher Pattacini
Board Secretary