

## **MANCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION**

### **Regular Meeting**

**October 13, 2015**

Lincoln

**PRESENT:** Crockett, Cruz, Hagenow, Leon, Pattacini, Scappaticci, Stafford, Thames

**ALSO PRESENT:** Superintendent of Schools Geary, Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Management Brooks, Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Personnel Services Matfess, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum Radikas

**ABSENT:** Pazda

#### **A. OPENING**

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

**Chairperson Pattacini** called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m. All in attendance participated in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, led by Mr. Pattacini. Mr. Pattacini reviewed that every other Board of Education meeting since last winter has been held at a school, and this evenings meeting is being held at Highland Park and it is great to see so many community members present tonight.

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

**APPROVED – Minutes Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of September 28, 2015. Secretary Scappaticci moved and Mr. Crockett seconded the motion.**

**8/0 – Voted in favor.**

#### **B. CONSENT CALENDAR**

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

##### **B.1. Personnel Action**

Details had already been provided to the Board members with their agenda.

**B.2. Transfer of Funds**

- Transfer from System-wide Medical Services Medical Supplies account to System-wide Medical Services Printing & Advertising account in the amount of \$593
- Transfer from Waddell School Admin Office Supplies & Materials account to Waddell School Admin Dues & Fees account in the amount of \$400
- Transfer from System-wide Language Arts Instructional Supplies account to System-wide Language Arts Field Trips account in the amount of \$2,000
- Transfer from System-wide Math Textbooks account to System-wide Math Professional Development account in the amount of \$10,500
- Transfer from System-wide Science Instructional Supplies account to System-wide Science Professional Development account in the amount of \$445
- Transfer from Waddell School Admin Postage account to Waddell School Admin General Supplies & Materials account in the amount of \$350
- Transfer from System-wide Math Instructional Supplies & Materials account to System-wide Math Contracted Substitutes account in the amount of \$700

**B.3. Establish an appropriation for FY 15-16 in the amount of \$25,625 for the Parent Leadership Training/Parent Trust Fund Grant**

**B.4. Increase the appropriation for the final grant award amount for FY 15-17 in the amount of \$42,000 under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) 619 grant, bringing the total grant award to \$64,303**

**B.5. Increase the appropriation for the final grant award amount for FY 15-17 in the amount of \$15,722 under the Individuals with**

**Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) 611 grant, bringing the total grant award to \$1,674,502**

**B.6. Permission to apply for FY 15-16 for the MCC/Adult Education REACT II College Transition Pilot grant, in the amount of \$204,451 (amended)**

**B.7. Extended Field Trip Request for MHS Broadcast Journalism Class - Atlanta, GA, for the Student Television Network Convention - March 9, 2016-March 14, 2016, 23 students - 4 chaperones**

**B.8. Grant MEA President, Tom Nicholas, 0.50 release time for the 2015-2016 school year, and establish an appropriation in the amount of \$25,882 to be funded by the Manchester Education Association (MEA)**

**The Chairman called for a motion.**

**Secretary Scappaticci moved and Mr. Leon seconded the recommendation to adopt the Consent Calendar as outlined in Section B of tonight's agenda.**

**8/0 - Voted in favor.**

**C. COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**C.1. Policy Committee**

**Ms. Hagenow** reported the last meeting was held on September 28, 2015 at Lincoln Center. In attendance were herself, Mr. Stafford and Mr. Geary. The Committee discussed the Community Use of Facilities policy, #1330 and was comfortable with not charging local and athletic and other groups utility, labor and materials costs or custodial fees provided the event does not require additional custodial staffing. A draft policy revision will be sent to Personnel and Finance before being presented to the full Board.

The members discussed Parent Family Involvement policy, #1400, and directed the Superintendent to draft a revised policy containing language that includes formal parent decision-making bodies at each school as well as training that provides parents with practical strategies for working with other parents, educators, and community leaders to examine education policies and practices. A draft policy revision will be brought back to the Committee at the November meeting.

The members discussed the External Credit Courses policy, #5127-11, and directed the Superintendent to revise the policy to include opportunities for mastery-based learning, pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes Section 10-221a(f)(3), Guidelines for Mastery-Based Learning. Members also requested the Superintendent review the Physical Education External Credit policy, #6143. Draft policy revisions will be brought back to the Committee in November.

The members discussed the proposed revision to the Smoking Policy, #5131-6, and will present a revised policy to the Board October 13th.

Committee members discussed the Purpose of Education in Manchester Public Schools policy, #6000 and will send the proposed deletion of this policy to the full Board on October 13th.

The members of the Committee discussed the Manchester Public Schools Mission Statement policy, #6120, and directed the Superintendent to add the Board of Education vision statement and priorities to the policy, and to delete any information that is obsolete. The policy will be presented to the full Board on October 26th.

The members discussed the Field Trip policy, #6153, and directed the Superintendent to draft language around funding for field trips. A draft policy will be brought back to the Committee in November.

Last, the members discussed the Evaluation of Programs policy, #6180, and directed the Superintendent to draft language, a process, and a timeline for evaluation of district programs. A draft policy will be presented to the Committee in November. The next meeting will be held November 9th at 5:30 p.m.

#### **D. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Mr. Tom Stringfellow, 183 Hillstown Road, felt there was a good gathering this evening, with diversity, including a principal of color, which reflects the diversity of our town. Times have come a long way since he was a student. Mr. Stringfellow reported that he took part in the traveling Vietnam memorial wall this past week. It was quite moving. He recommended an article on the Pledge of Allegiance in the *American History* magazine and in *Teaching Tolerance* magazine on indigenous American history. Regarding Columbus Day, Mr. Stringfellow wants all discoverers to get credit. He suggested an article in *TIME LIFE* magazine about Aztecs, Mayans, and Africans and notes that they all contributed in building this world.

#### **E. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT – PART I**

##### **E.1. Highland Park School Improvement Plan**

**Mr. Geary** introduced Joanna Ali, Principal of Highland Park Elementary School, who presented a video about the school, which was supplemented by many staff members. The presentation is available for view on the website.

**Mr. Leon** felt it was useful to see the improvement plan in action. He noted this school was remodeled about six years ago and he sees the new technology being used in all aspects of learning. To the coaches, Mr. Leon asked how receptive the teachers have been. Both Mr. Pearce and Ms. DeAngelis responded that they have been a part of the Highland community for over 16 years and they have built relationships with the staff, who know the coaches are there to collaborate with to improve student learning. The teachers trust them to find answers when questions arise .

Mr. Leon wondered what Dr. Ali felt was her biggest challenge in her first few months at Highland Park. Dr. Ali noted she was previously a high school administrator, so learning the differences that occur in an elementary school, such as the use of noon aides and room parents, has been a learning curve. She appreciates everyone's patience with her.

**Mr. Thames** has a clear grasp of the school after the lively presentation. He was impressed with the Husky mascot present this evening, as well as the theme song sung on the video by the students. Clearly there is a school-community partnership. Mr. Thames wonders how the school might be connected with MCC or the Workforce Investment Board. Dr. Ali noted that with Mr. Geary's help they have partnered with MCC to find noon aides that were graduates of MHS to work with the students. Highland has four MCC students now acting as noon aides and there has been a decrease in discipline during lunch and recess and the kids really respect the young adults working with them. Sean Webster, the coordinator of the Highland Park Family Resource Center, noted that the FRC, working in conjunction with Adult and Continuing Ed, offers GED and ESL classes at three elementary schools and at the Adult Ed site.

**Mr. Crockett** complimented Mr. Rizzo in his position as an elementary teacher, having formerly been on the Board of Education.

**Mr. Pattacini** thanked everyone for bringing education to life this evening. He sees great work happening at Highland Park.

**A recess was called for at 7:59 p.m.**

**Mr. Scappaticci moved and Mr. Leon seconded the motion to recess.**

**8/0 - Voted in favor.**

**Back in session at 8:13 p.m.**

## **E.2. District Improvement Plan**

**Mr. Geary** presented the Data Dashboard to the Board along with the District Improvement Plan. His presentation is available on the website.

**Mr. Leon** thinks this is great information that we have been talking about for years. It will allow us to make data-driven decisions. Regarding the suspension information, Mr. Leon wondered if this includes repeat offenders. Mr. Geary clarified the data presented this evening shows people are counted, not the number of suspensions.

Mr. Leon wondered, when this is populated, how will it be shared with parents and the community. Mr. Geary noted that the Board will decide what to share, and it will be available on the website. Each school will have their own data dashboard, along with the district-wide data dashboard.

**Mr. Thames** has heard about “the work” being done regarding test results, and now he sees this shows what “the work” is. Regarding the DRAs, which are given three times a year, Mr. Thames wanted to know if that was the same test given or if it changes. Mr. Geary reviewed that the DRA measures a student’s ability to read on grade level, so it is the same assessment given.

Mr. Thames wondered if all schools have School Improvement Plans with personalized learning. Mr. Geary stated they do and he wants to make sure every child in Manchester gets the opportunity to pursue a passion, and we are starting with a few kids at a time.

**Ms. Cruz** felt this dashboard has done an exemplary job of breaking down all categories. She doesn’t see ELL included. Mr. Geary stated that all data will be broken down by categories, including ethnicity, race, ELL and free/reduced lunch.

**Mr. Pattacini** asked if the PSAT 8/9 was a new test. Mr. Geary noted that typically the PSAT was given once a year in 10th grade. Giving the test earlier

helps see if kids are on track and helps assess needs earlier to close the opportunity gap.

Mr. Pattacini questioned the issues with accommodations for the SAT. Mr. Geary reviewed that some students IEP allows for extended time for test-taking or other accommodations. In the past if their IEP provided for accommodations the school filled out a form and provided the accommodations. The College Board doesn't work that way, and after submitting a form, they either approve or deny the accommodation. There is a question of what to do if they deny an accommodation that we are legally obligated to provide. This is being investigated currently.

Mr. Pattacini is excited to see how the work is connected together and linked to the vision of the Board of Education and the mission statement. He notes there is a clear sense of urgency, but this work takes time. He sees a broader vision than just teaching to the test. It is incumbent upon the Board and administrators to develop appropriate measures to track and ensure student success. He would like to know when and in what format the Board will discuss this. Mr. Geary replied that there will be a Board workshop held in early November for this purpose.

#### **F. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

#### **G. NEW BUSINESS**

##### **G.1. Policy Revisions**

**Mr. Geary** presented a first reading of the revision to Policy 5131-6 Smoking Policy. Mr. Geary reviewed the policy was edited to include banning vaping (electric cigarettes) and the section regarding employee discipline was deleted, as it was unnecessary as progressive discipline will be used.

##### **G.2. Policy Deletion**



**Mr. Geary** presented a recommendation to delete Policy 6000 Purpose of Education in Manchester Public Schools. Mr. Geary reviewed that this policy is unnecessary as we have a mission statement and vision statement already that describe the purpose of education.

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

Mr. Tom Stringfellow, 183 Hillstown Road, supports the Consent Calendar, especially the IDEA grants as it is important to education students with special needs. Regarding the smoking policy, Mr. Stringfellow pointed out some forms of tobacco that were not noted, including chewing tobacco, flavored cigars, and marijuana. He was impressed with the Highland Park presentation and feels this is a positive learning environment. Mr. Stringfellow suggested an article on diversity in *Better Manchester*. He was impressed with Mr. Geary's District Improvement Plan presentation. In *Parents* magazine October issue, Mr. Stringfellow recommended an article on thirty ways to show love to kids and inspire them outside school. In *Your Teen* magazine, he recommended an article on managing the middle school transition along with articles on concussions and autism. Mr. Stringfellow also suggested *Washington Monthly* magazine and an article on student ranking.

**I. COMMUNICATIONS**

**Mr. Scappaticci** wished a happy birthday this evening to the recording secretary, Carla Trovato.

**J. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS**

None.

**K. ADJOURNMENT**

**Mr. Pattacini called for a motion to adjourn.**

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

**8/0 - Voted in favor.**

Manchester Board of Education  
Regular Meeting  
October 13, 2015

Page 10 of 10

**Adjournment 9:11 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,

Jason Scappaticci  
Board Secretary