

MANCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION

Regular Meeting

April 18, 2016

Illing Middle School Media Center

PRESENT: Hagenow, Jacobsen, Leon, Pattacini, Pazda, Scappaticci, 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: Stafford, Stefanowicz

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. The Illing Singers performed the National Anthem.

A.3. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

APPROVED – Minutes Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of March 14, 2016. Secretary Scappaticci moved and Mr. Leon seconded the motion.

7/0 – Voted in favor.

A.4. Board Appreciation

Mr. Geary explained that Board members are volunteers that not only attend twice monthly meetings, but also take part in subcommittees, evening and weekend events, and give a lot of time and energy to the students and families of Manchester. This week is Board Member Appreciation Week and Board members were gifted with a small token of appreciation, Google glasses. These glasses have been used by students this year, in conjunction with smart phones, to "travel" to different places similar to the viewfinders of years past.

B. COMMITTEE REPORTS

B.1. Personnel & Finance Committee

Ms. Hagenow reviewed the last meeting was held March 15th with herself, Ms. Jacobsen, Mrs. Brooks and Mr. Aldi in attendance. Mr. Aldi, of Food Services, had shared the State of Connecticut, Department of Education Operational Memorandum #38-15, regarding Paid Lunch Equity: School Year 2015-2016 Calculations and Tool, with the Committee. It was suggested by Mr. Aldi that in order to remain in compliance, all school lunches should increase next year by 10 cents. Adult lunches will be increased to \$4.00. Mr. Aldi provided the Committee with background information regarding the Healthy Food Certification Program that provides the district with approximately \$72,000 per school year.

Mrs. Brooks reviewed the February 29, year-to-date budget status report with the Committee. The next meeting will be held May 23, 2016.

B.2. Buildings & Sites Committee

Ms. Jacobsen reported the last meeting was held March 23rd with herself, Ms. Hagenow, Mr. Geary, Mr. Staye, Mr. Luther (from Tai Soo Kim), and Mr. Till in attendance. Mr. Luther presented the conceptual designs for the Waddell Elementary School renovation.

Mr. Staye presented a list of projects from the 3-year Capital Plan that are proposed to be funded through a bond. The list is devoted to projects at schools that are not currently in a "like new" renovation schedule. These projects are not currently included in any funding plan and due to their cost are beyond the scope of Buildings & Grounds' Capital budgets. The Committee recommended the plan be submitted to the full Board at its June meeting.

The Committee discussed the request of the MHS Class of 2018 to locate 3 clothing boxes on the site of MHS. The student proposal is intended to generate potentially \$150/month from the sale of clothing deposited in the boxes. These funds could be used to reduce the cost of prom tickets and other student functions. Mr. Staye indicated that similar proposals at several schools had been

discussed by the Committee in the past and had all been denied. The Committee denied the request due to various concerns. The next meeting is to be held May 9th at MHS.

Mr. Leon took exception to this denial and made a motion to amend the agenda to add to New Business: Donation Boxes to benefit the sophomore class. Mr. Scappaticci seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION:

Mr. Pattacini reviewed that in order to amend the agenda a $\frac{2}{3}$ vote was necessary and if achieved the item would become H.2. under New Business.

Ms. Hagenow would like to discuss the issue further, as she felt the Committee was presented a one-sided view until after the meeting, when another speaker gave his point of view. She wished that speaker was here this evening. She thinks his name was Justin. Mr. Scappaticci noted Justin had emailed him and was unable to attend the meeting this evening.

7/0 - Voted in favor. The item has been added as H.2.

B.2. Policy Committee

Ms. Pazda reviewed the Committee met on April 6th. In attendance were Ms. Hagenow, Ms. Pazda, Mr. Thames and Mr. Geary. The Committee discussed the proposed use of Therapy Dogs in Schools policy and requested that the benefits of using a therapy dog be added to the draft. The revised draft will be sent to the full Board for a first reading at their next meeting. Sandra Lok, community member and therapy dog handler, has assisted with the development of the policy and was present at the meeting.

The Committee reviewed the current policy on Kindergarten Enrollment, specifically the age requirement. The Committee will make a recommendation on this policy following the April 25th meeting.

The Committee members next worked on proposed revisions to the Bullying policy. The revised draft will be sent to the full Board for a first reading at their next meetings. The members also directed the Superintendent of Schools to prepare a one page document that explains the process for parents and guardians. The document will not be included in the policy and will be brought back to the Committee at their April 25th meeting for review. Community member and parent Candy Lopez was in attendance and assisted.

Based on the advice of JoAnn Freiberg, Education Consultant School Climate, Bullying and Character Education, the Committee will develop a policy focused on school climate, which will ultimately encompass the existing Bullying Policy.

The discussion regarding the School Wellness Policy and the Transfer and Non-Resident Students Policy was tabled until the April 25th meeting.

C. CONSENT CALENDAR

Mr. Geary presented nine 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 Systemwide Music Education Professional Development account to Systemwide Music Education Dues & Fees account in the amount of \$350
- Transfer from Systemwide Social Studies Contracted Kelly Subs account (\$8,500) and Travel/Lodging account (\$3,000) to Systemwide Language Arts Instructional Supplies and Materials account for a total transfer of \$11,500
- Transfer from Systemwide World Language Contracted Kelly Subs account to Systemwide Language Arts Instructional Supplies and Materials account in the amount of \$3,000
- Transfer from Verplanck Software License/Fee account to Verplanck Admin Professional Development account (\$2,000) and Admin

General Supplies/Materials account (\$2,000) for a total transfer of \$4,000

- Transfer from Systemwide Medical Services General Supplies/Materials account to Systemwide Medical Services Travel/Lodging account in the amount of \$1,050
- Transfer from Washington Math Instructional Supplies/Materials account to Washington Social Studies Field Trips account in the amount of \$892
- Transfer from Systemwide Social Studies Professional Development account to Systemwide Language Arts Instructional Supplies & Materials account in the amount of \$8,020
- Transfer from Systemwide Mathematics Printing and Advertising account (\$1,372) and Instructional Supplies and Materials account (\$315) to Systemwide Mathematics Professional Development account for a total transfer of \$1,687
- Transfer from MHS Technology Education Periodicals account (\$65), AV Supplies and Materials account (\$194) and Instructional Supplies and Materials account (\$60) to MHS Technology Education Repairs account for a total transfer of \$319
- Transfer from Bowers Admin Repair account (\$400) and Library/Media Software Licenses/Fees account (\$80) to Bowers Library/Media Computer Supplies and Materials account for a total transfer of \$480
- Transfer from Illing Admin Contracted Services account to Illing Admin Professional Development account in the amount of \$434
- Transfer from Waddell Admin Contracted Services account to Waddell Admin Office Supplies and Materials account in the amount of \$1,000
- Transfer from Waddell Admin Professional Development account to Waddell Admin Contracted Kelly Subs PS account in the amount of \$3,500
- Transfer from MHS Science Repairs account to MHS Science Instructional Supplies and Materials account in the amount of \$490

- Transfer from MHS Music Education Repairs account to MHS Music Education Instructional Supplies and Materials account in the amount of \$1,500
- Transfer from MHS Family & Consumer Science Periodicals account to MHS Family & Consumer Science Repairs account in the amount of \$300
- Transfer from Systemwide Enrichment Field Trip account to Systemwide Enrichment Instructional Supplies & Materials account in the amount of \$2,100
- Transfer from Keeney Admin Professional Development account to Keeney Admin Contracted Kelly Subs account in the amount of \$3,140
- Transfer from Systemwide Science General Supplies & Materials account to Systemwide Science Contracted Kelly Subs account in the amount of \$821
- Transfer from Systemwide Music Education Assist Other Events account to Systemwide Music Education Contracted Services account (\$28) and Repair account (\$672) for a total transfer of \$700
- Transfer from Systemwide Science General Supplies & Materials account to Systemwide Science Contracted Kelly Subs account in the amount of \$750

C.3. Approval of State Department of Education Addendum to Agreement for Child Nutrition Programs (ED-099) - Healthy Food Certification Statement

C.4. Establish an appropriation for FY 16/17 in the amount of \$15,312 for the Manchester Head Start Training and Technical Assistance grant

C.5. Establish an appropriation for FY 16-17 in the amount of \$11,137 for the Enfield Head Start Training and Technical Assistance grant

C.6. Establish an appropriation for the period 3/1/16-2/28/17 in the amount of \$813,097 for the Enfield Board of Education's Head Start Program

C.7. Establish an appropriation for the period 3/1/16-2/28/17 in the amount of \$1,169,102 for the Manchester Board of Education's Head Start Program

C.8. Establish an appropriation for FY 15-17 in the amount of \$611,500 for an additional award for General Improvements to Alliance Districts' School Building Grant Program

C.9. Item to amend, Appropriation Instructors of the Handicapped (IOH) Pool Repairs at Manchester High School for FY 15/17 in the amount of \$229,000.

Secretary Scappaticci moved to amend the Consent Calendar and add C.10. Approval of an Increase in School Lunch pricing by \$0.10 (10 cents) for all schools, increasing the 2016-2017 School Year prices to: Elementary \$2.15; Middle \$2.40; High School \$2.55. Mr. Leon seconded the motion.

7/0 - Voted in favor.

Secretary Scappaticci moved that the Board approve the amended Consent Calendar. Ms. Pazda seconded the motion.

7/0 - Voted in favor.

Mr. Geary noted Mr. Aldi from Food Services was here this evening. Mr. Geary wanted to clarify that the increase in lunch prices is due to the fact that we participate in the National Lunch Program and we cannot offset full price meals with that funding, so there was a necessity to increase prices to remain in compliance.

D. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

Shania Stanton enjoyed seeing the talented Illing students sing and listening to the orchestra players. She felt we should be proud of them. Regarding snow delays, Shania thought it would be helpful to add a 90 minute delay schedule somewhere students could access because transportation delays were difficult to figure out. Shania attended the 5th grade leadership conference with Buckley students and it was very interactive. She saw a lot of potential in our students, though it did make her feel old! She was happy to be able to be a mentor.

Lori Fogg apologized for missing a few meetings, but she had a conflict with driver's ed. She didn't attend Illing for middle school, but enjoyed the student led tours earlier and loved the music and how so many kids were involved. Her middle school didn't offer music, so she was especially impressed. Lori let us know that the senior picnic is May 20th and Graduation is June 15th. She was excited to report that her stats class is going on a field trip to Laser Quest on May 26th.

E. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Tom Stringfellow, 183 Hillstown Road, attended Bennet and MHS, class of '74. He was impressed with the musical talent this evening. He also enjoyed the STEM displays in the media center and seeing the diverse staff. Mr. Stringfellow reminded us that the 46th anniversary of Earth Day is Friday. He suggested an article in *Archeology* magazine. Mr. Stringfellow was a 1976 graduate of MCC and enjoys their *Livewire* publication. He noted the 240th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence is approaching. Mr. Stringfellow attended the State Board of Education meeting on March 5th. He spoke briefly about the 5 year equity program and the suspension and expulsion reports. The movie *Bridge of Spies* with Tom Hanks was recommended. Last, Mr. Stringfellow pointed out that Illing teacher Ryan Parker was featured in this weekend's *Hartford Courant*.

Ms. Elizabeth Keyt, 730 Keeney Street, has three daughters in the Manchester school system. Her oldest daughter, Morgan, is a senior and she feels that she is well prepared for college. Ms. Keyt recently chaperoned a field trip with juniors and seniors, along with two teachers. She wanted us to know we should be very proud of our kids.

Many of the teens from other schools were caught breaking curfew, or drinking. Some were even disqualified from the event due to their behavior. Our students spent the evening playing UNO in their rooms. Ms. Keyt's middle child, Taylor, is taking part in a Science program - Quorum sensing, and will graduate with 12 credits from SUNY Buffalo. Ms. Keyt noted that the enrichment showcase and history day events showed what bright, wonderful kids we have. She is eternally grateful to Manchester Public Schools and feels people are crazy to send their kids to magnets when we have so much to offer.

F. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT – PART I

F.1. School Improvement Plan - Illing Middle School

Mr. Geary introduced Beth Hayes, Principal of Illing Middle School. Ms. Hayes, along with many staff members, gave a presentation which is available on the website detailing the Illing School Improvement Plan and many great things happening at the school.

Mr. Scappaticci though it was wonderful to have buses available for families to attend Open House. He also thought it was clever to tweak the schedule to allow for cost effective ways to be able to have teachers meet more often to collaborate.

Mr. Scappaticci noted that last year there was Board discussion regarding changes to the 8th grade electives and he wondered how that was going. Ms. Walton noted this year was the first class that was able to choose their electives. Previously students were taking required exploratory electives, but now they can choose to take two or three elective courses in subject matters they want to learn more about, such as technology, photography, music, etc. Students seem to enjoy being able to try different things, even if that means sometimes they realize they do not like something. Courses are 45 days long.

Mr. Leon thought it was great that Mandarin is being offered along with high school Spanish and wondered how many children are exposed to that. Ms. Hayes noted that last year 60 students took high school Spanish and this year 170 students have taken that course. There are also two teachers for Mandarin

that came over here from China and all of 7th grade has been offered this opportunity.

Mr. Leon congratulated Assistant Principal Osunde, who will be a Principal in Windsor next year. Mr. Osunde noted he began his career as an intern for Manchester Public Schools and he will miss the district.

Ms. Pazda thanked Ms. Hayes for all the work being done on behalf of the students. She sees the engaging work of Ms. Hilton and the orchestra students and was impressed with the building tour. She feels Illing is a place you want to be and the focus is on doing the best for children. She commends Ms. Hayes.

Mr. Pattacini saw many examples of staff learning and growing and being engaged in student's lives. He feels we are changing adult behavior in the best interests of the children.

8:16 - Mr. Pattacini called a 10 minute recess to allow staff to visit the school store and see what children can purchase with the coins they earn. Back in session at 8:26.

F.2. Superintendent's Proposed Budget Reductions 2016-2017

Mr. Geary reviewed that the town budget handed down by the Board of Directors calls for a \$350,000 reduction in the Board of Education Budget. Mr. Geary detailed his suggested budget cuts.

Regarding the reduction in heating costs, the number was adjusted based on the town's suggestion due to lower than expected costs.

In terms of the contracted services reduction, this is regarding the shared IT services with the town. The town recently did an audit and the shared services cost to the Board of Education is less than was budgeted.

The Capital Improvements reduction, which includes the parking lots, will be sent as a road bond by the town.

Last, the health insurance reduction is due to a reduction in the number of staff opting for health insurance.

Mr. Thames asked about the \$100,000 reduction in parking lot repairs. He wondered if this means the repairs will not happen. Mr. Geary explained in approximately 2 years the town will put this on a road bond so the repairs will be delayed and done with town funds instead of with Board of Education funds.

Mr. Pattacini asked about the impact on Policy 3510 regarding the Capital Improvements minimum amount of budget obligation. Mr. Geary noted that last year the Board voted to double this commitment from .3% to .6% of the budget. If this reduction is approved, the Board would have to waive that piece of the policy for the 16-17 school year. Mr. Geary does not recommend changing the policy. He noted that we are also anticipating \$1.4 million from the state, which is being given to Alliance Districts for building improvements next year.

Mr. Pattacini requests these budget cuts be brought up at the next meeting for consideration. He notes there is the possibility of budget workshops if the need is felt, but if the Board is comfortable with the cuts, they can be approved at the next Board meeting and the budget workshops can be cancelled.

Mr. Thames wondered what the timeline is for approving the budget. Mrs. Brooks stated there is no date requirement as the budget amount is dictated by the town. It is just up to the Board of Education to identify the changes necessary to reflect that amount. Any delay in the budget reductions just holds up spending on next year's purchases.

Mr. Thames wondered if we have to change Policy 3510 before approving the budget reductions. Mr. Geary noted that on the next agenda will be an item to waive compliance with that policy, which would be voted on. Then the budget reductions would be voted on.

Ms. Pazda wondered about the information technology reduction of \$107,000. Mr. Geary reviewed that this represents a reduction in what we pay the town for IT support. We now do a lot of our own work, so the town is charging us less

for our shared services. The town had audited their billing, at our request, and reduced the shared service costs. Mr. Geary reviewed that all four areas being considered for budget reductions have no great impact on us and we are very fortunate.

Mr. Leon is not in favor of holding a budget workshop, but would like to see an alternative to cutting the capital improvement line. He felt that we just put this policy change into effect and are already asking to waive it. He does not want to set a precedent like that and would like to explore other options.

Mr. Pattacini proposed that at the next Board meeting we can hear an update on the topic and then the Board can decide how to proceed, either voting the reductions at that meeting or holding a budget workshop, which is already scheduled for early May.

G. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

G.1. Policy Recommendations:

Policy Revisions:

- a. Board Policy 1330 - Community Use of School Facilities**
- b. Board Policy 5142 - Administration of Medication by Personnel**
- c. Board Policy 5121 - Wearing of Photo Identification Badges**
- d. Board Policy 3110 - Budget**

Policy Deletions:

- e. Board Policy 6143 - Physical Education External Credit**
- f. Board Policy 3150 - Adoption of the Budget**

Secretary Scappaticci moved that the Board adopt policy revisions: Board Policy 1330 - Community Use of School Facilities; Board Policy 5142 - Administration of Medication by Personnel; Board Policy 5121 - Wearing of Photo Identification Badges; and Board Policy 3110 - Budget; and that the Board

adopt the policy deletions: Board Policy 6143 - Physical Education External Credit; and Board Policy 3150 - Adoption of the Budget. Mr. Leon seconded the motion.

7/0 - Voted in favor.

Mr. Pattacini thanked the Administration and Policy Committee for their great work.

H. NEW BUSINESS

H.1. Policy Recommendations

Policy Revisions:

a. Board Policy 5131.1 - Bullying

Mr. Geary reviewed the suggested changes to the Bullying policy.

Ms. Jacobsen noted that bullying is mean spirited. She suggested that the paperwork should say "alleged acts of bullying" since it is investigation paperwork and the bullying has not been verified at that point. She also recommended the "if yes" words be deleted as the follow-up should still take place even if the investigation shows mean spirited behavior and not bullying. Mr. Geary will look at the full document and add "alleged" to the appropriate areas.

Mr. Leon wondered if our attorney should look at the policy prior to additional changes. Mr. Geary noted that this policy is from Shipman & Goodwin, but will call them for their opinion on adding "alleged".

Ms. Pazda asked about the Student Safety Plan, wondering what the plan is to address mean spirited behavior. Mr. Geary will draft something for the Policy Committee.

b. Board Policy - Use of Therapy Dogs in Schools

Mr. Geary noted we have been using therapy dogs for some time now. Sandy Lok works with these dogs and has helped with the drafting of this policy. Mr. Geary noted the Committee tried to set parameters, benefits, and how the dogs will be used, along with standards and procedures. He thinks therapy dogs are very beneficial.

Ms. Jacobsen loves the idea of therapy dogs. She noted the policy governs more about the handlers, procedures for signing in, etc. She doesn't see anything in regards to the curriculum, working with the Family Resource Centers, etc.

Sandy Lok, who helped draft the policy, is currently working in three schools in Manchester. She does a different type of program in each school. At Verplanck she works with students with special needs one day and another day she works with students who have chosen to read to a dog as a reward. At Buckley she works in one classroom with a teacher that works with students with challenging behaviors. She sees a huge benefit to the students there. At Keeney there is a pilot to bring in dogs for reading. Students with special needs work with the dogs as well and the dogs visit each classroom. Ms. Lok noted she is responsible for the dog's behavior, not for the children.

Ms. Pazda was curious about how the conversation goes at a school level. Ms. Lok stated it depends on the handler. She happens to be a volunteer, but some handlers are staff members. Once a connection is made they set up parameters. Ms. Pazda thinks the Committee should revisit communication. Ms. Lok noted that currently once the connection is made, the school refers the handler to the Superintendent for approval.

Ms. Leon loves this idea and being able to expand it.

Mr. Pattacini noted the Committee will revise the policy and it will be presented again.

H.2. Discussion of Possible Action Regarding Bin Program at the High School

Mr. Leon wondered if the Board needs to take action on this topic or if we could leave it for the Superintendent and administration to decide.

Mr. Pattacini noted there was a recommendation from the Buildings & Sites Committee to deny the request. He felt we would need to request Buildings & Sites to reconsider the request.

Mrs. Hagenow is not even sure why this question was brought to the Board. She heard a one sided view from the facilities manager, which had valid points about location, clutter, who would be responsible for the bins once the current students graduate or during summer, etc. However, after the meeting of the Committee, Justin had approached the members and she then heard the other side of the story. After listening to him, she wouldn't have a problem with a trial period. She noted only four students are on the committee.

Mr. Geary noted that historically this type of situation is referred to Buildings & Sites, however he would be comfortable making a decision on the topic. Mrs. Brooks reviewed that the previous Superintendent (at the time of the last request of this nature) did not want to make a decision on the topic, so it went to Buildings & Sites.

Mr. Scappaticci doesn't feel the Board needs to weigh in. He thinks this is best left to the administration to work on with the students. He hopes it gets approved, but wonders if we should vote on it now since the end of the year is approaching. Mr. Scappaticci wondered if the Superintendent would need a yes or no vote, or if the Superintendent can simply decide.

Mr. Pattacini stated the next Buildings & Sites Committee meets May 9th and we could send it back to them.

Mr. Leon recommended we send this to the administration for a decision.

Mr. Thames was confused about the process, noting the subcommittee made a recommendation not to approve this. Mr. Pattacini clarified that we are discussing whether the Board even needs to weigh in on this topic. Mr. Thames

is not against the bins, however he is uncomfortable with changing past practice. He is actually in favor of the bins.

Mr. Scappaticci noted there is not a policy on this. It was simply referred to us because it has been referred to us in the past. Mr. Scappaticci feels this is not for us to determine and the sophomore class needs an answer now.

It was suggested the administration will make a decision and Mr. Pattacini could direct the administration to work with the students to hopefully move forward with their plan.

Mr. Thames noted we normally take suggestions made by the subcommittees.

Mr. Pattacini noted we could accept the recommendation or we could send it back to the Committee. At that point, Mr. Geary could take the topic back from the Committee and make a decision.

Mr. Thames was still concerned about changing policies. He feels we should follow standards consistently. He is in favor of the bins, but not in favor of changing the rules.

Mr. Pattacini suggested the Board not take action on this and we should send this topic back to Buildings & Sites.

Mr. Geary noted Buildings & Sites can decide that it is not their call and give the topic back to him.

Mr. Leon suggested the Buildings & Sites Committee could hold a quick meeting after this meeting to decide to send the topic back to the administration. He feels we have spent too much time on this issue.

Mr. Pattacini confirmed the issue is being sent back to Buildings & Sites.

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

None.

J. COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Scappaticci noted he and Mr. Leon attended the JAG event as judges at Capital Community College. MHS students placed 1st and 3rd in employability skills and 2nd place for career planning. Two MHS students were also honored as JAG Outstanding Students.

Mr. Scappaticci also noted that the Verplanck kindergarten class has published a book which will be available this spring on Amazon. The author who facilitated this also worked with grade 5 students at Buckley.

K. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

Mr. Thames noted that when the revisions to the bullying policy are eventually approved, it would be a good idea to discuss how we will roll it out to staff and the district.

L. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Pattacini called for a motion to adjourn.

Secretary Scappaticci moved and Ms. Pazda seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting.

7/0 - Voted in favor.

Adjournment 9:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jason Scappaticci
Board Secretary