MANCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION

Regular Meeting
January 28, 2015

Manchester High School – Room 293

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

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

ABSENT: Pattacini, Pazda

A. OPENING

A.1.& 2. Meeting Called to Order

Acting Chairperson Scappaticci called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. All in attendance participated in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, led by Mr. Scappaticci. Mr. Scappaticci explained that Mr. Pattacini was away on business so he would be filling in as acting chair this evening, with Ms. Cruz assuming duties as acting secretary.

A.3. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

APPROVED – Minutes Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of December 8, 2014. Acting Secretary Cruz moved and Mr. Crockett seconded the motion.

6/0 – Voted in favor.

A.4. Approval of Budget Workshop Minutes

APPROVED – Minutes for Budget Workshop of the Board of Education of January 21, 2015. Acting Secretary Cruz moved and Mr. Crockett seconded the motion.

5/0/1 – Voted in favor.

B. CONSENT CALENDAR

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

B.1. Personnel Information

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

B.2. Transfer of Funds

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

- Transfer from Manchester High School Guidance General Supplies & Materials account ($900), Career Education Other Purchased Services account ($240), Career Education General Supplies & Materials account ($1500), Career Education Instruction Supplies & Materials account ($1700), Career Education Computer Supplies & Materials account ($1000), and Career Education Dues & Fees account ($60) to Manchester High School Classroom Instruction Contracted Services account in the total amount of $5,400
- Transfer from Manchester High School Art Textbooks account to Manchester High School Art Dues/Fees account in the amount of $20
- Transfer from Illing Literacy/Technology Dues & Fees account to Illing Literacy/Technology Computer Supplies & Materials account in the amount of $100
- Transfer from System-wide Science Instructional Supplies & Materials account to System-wide Science Field Trips account in the amount of $250
- Transfer from Highland Park School General Supplies & Materials account to Highland Park School Admin Printing/Advertising account in the amount of $90
- Transfer from Verplanck Contracted Kelly Substitutes account to Verplanck Admin General Supplies & Materials account in the amount of $856
- Transfer from Central Office Administrative Consultants account to Keeney Admin General Supplies & Materials account in the amount of $2,898
- Transfer from Illing Guidance Instructional Supplies & Materials account to Illing Guidance Dues & Fees account in the amount of $400
- Transfer from System-wide ELL Textbooks account to System-wide ELL Professional Development account in the amount of $986 and to System-wide ELL Travel/Lodging account in the amount of $1,014 for a total transfer of $2,000

B.3. Establish an appropriation for FY 14-16 in the amount of $55,843 for the Title III, Part A, English Language Acquisition and Language Enhancement grant

B.4. Permission to file grant application for the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving for FY 14-15 (Trimester 3 and 4-week Boot Camp) and first trimester of FY 15-16 grant in the amount of $50,000

B.5. Approval of Manchester Public Schools 2015-2016 Calendar

B.6. Daily Teachers Sub Rate increase to $87.50 per day

B.7. Approval of Contract with Delta-T Group Hartford, Inc. for Paraeducator Substitutes

B.8. Approval of SkoolLive Agreement (placement and management services for Interactive kiosk system and licensed software)

B.9. Permission to apply for the Heisman Scholars-Achieving by Reading Program Grant in the amount of $22,000 for FY 14-15

B.10. Extended Field Trip Request Form – MHS Varsity Wrestling Championship – Trumbull, CT – 14-17 students; Chaperones: Head Coach and Assistant Coach; 2/20/15 – 2/21/15

B.11. Establish an appropriation for FY 14-15 in the amount of $22,740 for the Art in Education Professional Learning Mini Grant (HOT Schools Program Grant)

B.12. Establish an appropriation for FY 14-15 in the amount of $1,244,039 for the School Security Competitive Grant Program

The Acting Chairman called for a motion.

Acting Secretary Cruz moved and Mr. Crockett seconded the recommendation to accept the Consent Calendar B.1. – B.12.

6/0 - Voted in favor.

C. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

D. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT – PART I

D.1. Family and Community Engagement Plan

Mr. Geary reviewed efforts in the area of community and family engagement. He pointed out the many members of the planning and steering committee that were

here tonight, representing all areas of the town. Mr. Geary reviewed the mission of the Manchester Public Schools, honing in on the sentence, "All students will be prepared to be lifelong learners and contributing members of society." The full presentation is available on the website.

Mr. Geary talked about coherence, with the hope that all students' learning will look the same, regardless of what school they attend or neighborhood they live in.

He reviewed the elements of the family and community engagement plan, which is part of the District Improvement Plan aimed at district level coherence. Mr. Geary reviewed there are two goals in the area of culture and climate. The first goal is around students demonstrating personal responsibility, character, cultural understanding, and ethical behavior. The second goal, and the one we will be focusing on this evening, has to do with building relationships based on trust and understanding, with both parents and the community.

In March 2014, The Hartford Foundation for Public Giving reached out to Alliance Districts in the Hartford area, offering a $50,000 planning grant to plan work in an area that would be supported by the Foundation. This was a long process that lasted all summer, and the district submitted a grant proposal to Hartford Foundation for Public Giving and received the grant of just over $700,000 for year one of what is intended to be a 5 year commitment. Tonight will be a highlight of the work thus far.

Mr. Geary introduced Mr. Doug Edwards and reviewed that we are fortunate to have Mr. Edwards at the head of this endeavor to focus the group and keep everyone motivated and driven. Doug Edwards is the Planning Coordinator for the project and also Director of Real Dads Forever. Mr. Edwards recalled that back in 1995 Dr. Jim Kennedy asked him to be part of a community group to approve the new superintendent, Dr. Eddie Davis. In 1996, Dr. Davis asked him to lead a committee around creating a Parent Involvement Policy in Manchester.

Mr. Edwards stated that parents and schools can partner together for the success of their students. He reviewed that there are 35 people in the planning group, including a doctor, an attorney, students, PTA representatives, a School Resource Officer, a retired principal, a Headstart representative, and parents. They are all stakeholders in Manchester Public Schools. He noted the group looked at research in the area of parent and family engagement. They have conducted site visits, including one to New York City to look at a community school, where parents had a role in participating in the school. The school took advantage of the assets that parents can be. When parents are engaged with schools it is found that the students do better both socially and academically.

Mr. Geary noted this is a productive working group. He pointed out that most of the members of the steering committee were present tonight, as well as some members of the planning committee, underscoring their commitment to this work. Three goals were outlined: strengthening relationships; building capacity; and providing opportunities. The Board will be hearing from Latasha Turnquest, Director of the Family Resource Centers, as well as Nellie Crespo, the new ELL Coordinator, at the next board meeting.

Dr. Ratchford reviewed the three goals. The first, building and strengthening relationships: With parents as partners, trust is built and an open dialogue between the school and parents is created and this benefits the young people. In order to build relationships and partner we look at three groups – the first is teachers/administration/clerical staff; next are parents and community; third is students. If we don't create the conditions to see this as a joint effort then it won't work.

Mr. Geary reviewed the short term outcomes in these areas. In the area of strengthening relationships a new positions has been established which is a Director of Family and Community Engagement. Mr. Geary reviewed that we are preparing to name a person to this position shortly. This person will be doing significant work coordinating efforts around this goal, including looking at before and after school programming, summer programming, and outreach. This person will also ensure the community engagement plan is aligned to the District Improvement Plan and the Alliance Grant.

Communications is another area of work. The efficiency study in 2013 suggested we need to do a better job of communicating. We will be promoting the Family Resource Centers as an entry point and will hear more from Latasha Turnquest at our next meeting. All of our elementary schools have some element of Family Resource Center, with the 5 Title I schools having a full time FRC and non-Title schools having a part time FRC. More comprehensive programming will be offered through the FRCs with a list of potential partners, including ECHN, the Youth Service Bureau, Parks & Recreation, and the Office of Neighbors and Families. We want to explore parent leadership training models to help create parent leaders in the community.

We will also perform a needs assessment and take that data to plan systemic professional learning. We will work with school and community parent organizations to listen to what parents have to say about the schools. Our web and social media presence needs a significant amount of work in 2015. Mr. Geary reminded us that this is intended to be a 5 year commitment from the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving and the items discussed this evening are intended to be the first year and a half goals.

Ms. Cruz feels developing a plan to bring parents into schools is a huge challenge. Mr. Geary noted the hub of this plan is the Family Resource Centers, which will help in building capacity and partnering with parents and families. This is the first phase in this goal.

Ms. Cruz was interested in the site visits, including the New York City one where chess was being taught. Chess involves critical thinking and strategic moves. She wondered if there were other site visits besides New York. Mr. Edwards stated other visits included to the Hartford Family Centers, a program funded by the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, as well as Manchester Family Development Center at Manchester Memorial Hospital.

Dr. Ratchford noted we will learn what works as the plan comes along. In addition to site visits, speakers were also brought in for the group to gain ideas and knowledge. Karen Mapp from Boston was brought in and noted that everything has to derive from the aspect of how it helps student achievement.

Ms. Cruz noted there is a national movement to engage fathers and she hopes the group considers that. Mr. Edwards has been a part of fatherhood work for 20 years and his goal is to get fathers to understand their value in the lives of their children.

Dr. Edwards stated that we have thought of the Family Resource Center as a service to parents without seeing that parents have tremendous assets that can benefit the schools too. Parent leadership programs he has been involved in are in place to help parents realize their own value and skills.

Mr. Leon stated in the past there has been a lot of talk, but it is incredible to see stuff actually getting done. He wonders how long the committee members will serve. Mr. Geary stated they can serve as long as they want and more will be added along the way.

Mr. Leon wondered how success will be measured. Mr. Geary reviewed that data collection will be done and that years 2-5 of the funding is contingent on the success in year 1. The Family Resource Centers already work on data collection.

Mr. Leon agreed that our technology has a way to go and noted that mobile apps would be helpful. Mr. Geary agreed that would be helpful.

D.2. <u>Discussion on Superintendent's Proposed Budget</u>

Ms. Hagenow asked for clarification on capital repairs being unexpected. Mr. Geary reviewed that they have tried to separate repairs from improvements. Fixing a boiler that breaks down is a repair while a new boiler is an improvement. He

noted they looked at the last three years spending in these categories and averaged the numbers. This is not for routine maintenance.

Ms. Hagenow asked about the Substance Abuse Counselor, wondering if this was an in-house person. Mr. Geary reviewed it is 1.5 positions covered in the Alliance Grant current and works with students at Illing, Bently, MRA, and MHS. Now instead of simply issuing out of school suspensions to students caught with drugs or high at school, alternatives could include an in-school suspension and counseling, either in a group setting or individually, depending upon the severity of the problem. Students can also self-refer to see the counselor.

Mr. Stafford asked why the Kelly Services figure was being raised 24% and why we don't provide subs in-house instead of paying a service. Mr. Geary reviewed we did previously provide subs in-house, but had a poor fill rate. Kelly's fill rate is about 95%. Currently we pay Kelly $107.03 a day and they in turn pay the subs $77 a day. Now, we will be paying Kelly $120 a day and the subs will receive $87.50 a day. Mr. Geary further explained that non-certified staff (paraeducators) need appropriate training. Currently we provide in-house staffing and that will be changing to Delta-T, a company similar to Kelly Educational. Mrs. Brooks added that when we provided in-house substitutes our fill rate was about 70%. In addition, we had to pay Worker's Comp, unemployment taxes, and have a person on staff to call in the subs in the morning. Now, Kelly does all that for us, plus they provide their employees with health insurance and 401k plans as well as the ability to work every day in various towns instead of restricting them to work only in Manchester. The substitutes are trained and work in Hartford County. Lately the fill rate has started to decline and the increase in rate will help make Manchester more competitive with surrounding towns, putting us in the mid-range and attracting more subs.

E. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Mr. Geary reviewed the policies and noted that this evening is the second read for the revisions, additions, and deletions proposed.

E.1. Policy Revisions

a. Board Policy #5143.2: School Lunch Accounts

Acting Secretary Cruz moved to accept the changes on Board Policy 5143.2 School Lunch Accounts. Mr. Stafford seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION:

Mr. Crockett asked if this was an existing policy being changed. Mr. Scappaticci confirmed, the policy already exists and is being revised.

7/0 - Voted in favor.

E.2. Policy Additions

a. Proposed Policy: Student Representatives to the Board of Education

Acting Secretary Cruz moved to accept the policy additions to the Student Representatives to the Board of Education in adding two students to be our Student Representatives. Mr. Leon seconded the motion.

7/0 – Voted in favor.

E.3. Policy Deletions

a. Policy 4131 Professional Growth

b. Policy 4133 Continuing Education Units

c. Policy 4147 Credit on Teacher Salary Schedule for Teacher Aide Experience

Acting Secretary Cruz moved to delete Policy #4131 Professional Growth; Policy #4133 Continuing Education Units; and Policy #4147 Credit on Teacher Salary Schedule for Teacher Aide Experience. Mr. Leon seconded the motion.

7/0 – Voted in favor.

F. NEW BUSINESS

None.

G. COMMITTEE REPORTS

G.1. Buildings & Sites Committee

M Stafford reviewed the Committee met December 4, 2014 with himself and Pat Brooks in attendance. Mrs. Brooks informed the Committee that the Connecticut Bureau of School Facilities PREP Meeting for the Cheney/Bennet 5th-6th Grade Academy Project, scheduled for December had been postponed. The Bureau will schedule a meeting in early January to discuss the necessary special legislation language for the project. To keep the project on track, a contract for the architectural services of Tai Soo Kim will be signed prior to the PREP meeting. Mrs. Brooks also updated the Committee on current projects. The next meeting will be held 5:30 p.m. January 8, 2015 at MHS.

G.2. Curriculum & Instruction Committee

Mr. Stafford reviewed the last meeting was held December 8, 2014 with Ms. Pazda, Mr. Stafford, Dr. Radikas, Mr. Geary, Dr. Oliver, and Dr. Ratchford in attendance. The parent brochures for grades K-5 were reviewed. Dr. Ratchford and Dr. Oliver provided overviews of the curriculum academies. Dr. Oliver provided an update on the Science Fair with Invention Convention. Mr. Scappaticci noted that he was also in attendance at that meeting, however he forgot to sign in.

G.3. Personnel & Finance Committee

Mr. Leon reviewed the last meeting was held December 17, 2014 with Mr. Crockett, Ms. Hagenow, Mr. Leon, Mrs. Brooks, and Mr. Geary in attendance with Mr. Boutilier also present. Vendor advertising opportunities were presented and the Committee agreed that the District should take advantage of these opportunities. Mr. Geary will draft an advertising policy for Board approval. The 2015-2017 school year calendar was presented by Mr. Geary. Mr. Geary recommended the school year be decreased to 182 days for students and remain at 187 days for staff to allow for an additional professional development day in January 2016. The Committee supported the recommendation. The substitute pay issue was discussed and approved this evening. The Delta-T contract was discussed and approved this evening as well. Revised budget workshop dates were shared with the Committee. Mr. Geary and Mrs. Brooks informed the committee that the 2015 Graduation will be held at Xfinity Comcast Theater in Hartford. The cost is considerably less than the previous venue and parking is included in the cost, as well as seating is better for guest viewing and the theater accommodates over 4,000 attendees. Mr. Geary and Mrs. Brooks presented their recommended changes to Policy 3510, Facilities Maintenance. Mrs. Brooks informed the committee that the town received $254,736.01 for the District's payment of the 2014-2015 Retiree Drug Subside (RDS). This payment represents reimbursement from the Federal Government for the District providing drug benefits for retirees. The funds are deposited into the Other Post Employee Benefits, OPEB, account to reduce the cost of retiree health and drug benefits. Last, Mrs. Brooks shared with the Committee the September 30, 2014 financial statement. The next meeting will be a budget workshop on January 21, 2015 at MHS.

G.4. Buildings & Sites Committee

Mr. Leon reviewed the last meeting was held January 8, 2015 with himself, Mr. Crockett, Mr. Stafford, Mr. Scappaticci, Mr. Geary, Mrs. Brooks, and Ms. Krieger in attendance. Also present was the Waddell PTA leadership, Denise Curran, Autumn Struk, and Tracy Maio. The Waddell PTA was seeking direction from the Committee regarding the PTA's Playground Project. Mr. Till advised the PTA to wait for the 2017-18 project to fund and build a new playground. It was the consensus of the Committee that the PTA use the funds to fix the current playground and the renovation project would keep what equipment it could. The PTA will meet with Parks & Recreation and Mr. Till on moving forward with repairs to the current equipment. Mr. Leon was appointed chair of the Buildings & Sites Committee. Mrs.

Brooks informed the Committee that Mr. Aaron Alibrio had contacted her regarding Energy Performance Contracting. The Committee agreed they are not interested in meeting with Mr. Alibrio at this time due to the upcoming renovation projects. Mrs. Brooks updated the Committee on current projects. The next meeting will be held February 2, 2015 at Waddell Elementary School at 5:30 p.m.

H. PUBLIC COMMENTS (Limited to items on tonight's agenda)
Mr. Tom Stringfellow, 183 Hillstown Road, felt it was a good presentation this evening by Mr. Geary, Dr. Ratchford, and Mr. Edwards. He hopes that adopted or foster parents, child-free adults, and LGBT families are not excluded. He wishes there was media coverage here tonight. Mr. Stringfellow talked about an article in the *Wallstreet Journal* about college skills. He also mentioned the possibility of free community college. Mr. Stringfellow recommended the article *What Students Should Know Before College* . He recommended *Attitude* magazine and an article regarding special needs student learning. He noted there is a wealth gap in Connecticut. He is glad we are making people feel welcome. Mr. Stringfellow recommended the books: *See Me After Class* and *Real Talk for Real Teachers*. Last, he feels classical music and art should be involved.

I. COMMUNICATIONS
None. Student Representative Joseph Coyne was not present.

J. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS
Mr. Leon requested an update from Chris Till on open projects and a status update on other projects planned.

K. ADJOURNMENT
Mr. Scappaticci called for a motion to adjourn.

Mr. Crockett moved and Mr. Leon seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting.

7/0 - Voted in favor.

Adjournment 7:9p.m.

It was noted the next meeting will be held on February 4, 2015 at Bowers Elementary School.

Respectfully submitted,
Maria Cruz
Acting Board Secretary