

Monadnock Regional School District (MRSD)
School Board Meeting Minutes
March 1, 2022
MRMHS Library/Zoom, Swanzey, NH

Members Present: Winston Wright via Zoom, Colleen Toomey, Michelle Connor via Zoom, Lisa Steadman, Brian Bohannon, Cheryl McDaniel-Thomas, Betty Tatro, Dan LeClair, Nick Mosher via Zoom, Scott Peters, Karen Wheeler via Zoom and Eric Stanley. **Absent:** Kristen Noonan

Administration Present: L. Witte, Superintendent and J. Morin, Business Administrator.

Also Present: L. Aivaliotis, Recording Secretary

“We collaborate not just to teach, but also to engage and educate every student in our district in an environment that is challenging, caring and safe, while fostering life-long learning.”

1. CALL TO ORDER: S. Peters called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS: Stephen Ciolino of Swanzey thanked the Board for lifting the mask mandate. There is a board in the 800 Wing that promotes Black Lives Matter. He said all lives matter. He is tired of the schools pushing this agenda. Get rid of it and include all lives matter. It is anti-police. It should not be pushed in the schools. Teach them something. He is tired of this and this is the reason his family left Connecticut.

Timothy Carrier commented that in public schools the students have first Amendment Rights. It is inappropriate when issues are teacher led. It is not just on the bulletin board but it is teacher led. There are safe space signs on the classroom doors, he asked what if a student wanted to put a church sign there. He would like to see the signs taken down if they are teacher led or also allow other signs, equal opportunity. It is out of bounds if it is teacher led.

S. Peters asked Jennifer Strimbeck, who is running for the Gilsum School Board seat to introduce herself.

3. CELEBRATE MRSD: The Division III State Champion Girls Basketball Team was invited to attend the Board Meeting so the Board could congratulate them. **Congratulations!!!**
MOTION: E. Stanley **MOVED** to award the Girls Basketball Team the traditional swag for winning the Division III State Championship. **SECOND:** D. LeClair. **VOTE:** 11.02/0/0/1.098.

Motion passes.

The Board congratulated Coach Bobby Fortes for being named Coach of the Year.

4. MATTERS THAT REQUIRE BOARD ACTION:

a. February 1 2022 Minutes: MOTION: C. Toomey **MOVED** to approve the February 1, 2022 School Board Meeting Minutes as amended. **SECOND:** B. Tatro **VOTE:** 10/0/1.902/1.098. **Motion passes.**

b. Motion on the Manifest: MOTION: C. McDaniel-Thomas **MOVED** to approve the manifest in the amount of \$3,192,373.54 as presented by the administration. **SECOND:** C. Toomey **VOTE:** 11.902/0/0/1.098. **Motion passes.**

c. Budget Transfer: J. Morin presented 3 budget transfers to the Board. The first request is from J. Rathbun in the amount of \$12,650 from Legal Fees to Purchased Services for Power School Consultant/Training. The second request is from A. Salzmann in the amount of \$13,067 from Reading Improvement, Health Insurance to Reading Improvement, Print Media Materials for books for ReadyGen Reading Program. The last request is from L. Stevens in the amount of \$24,250 from Regular Instruction Health Insurance to Furniture and Fixture to replace old lunch tables and chairs with bench tables that the other schools have. **MOTION:** L. Steadman **MOVED** to approve the 3 budget transfers as presented by the Business Administrator. **SECOND:** C. Toomey **DISCUSSION:** The Board asked about the ReadyGen Reading Program and asked if it was maybe an oversight in ordering. L. Witte said that J. Rathbun would be able to answer better. This was supposed to be for the last meeting when J. Rathbun was present. **VOTE:** 11. 902/0/0/1.098. **Motion passes.** J. Morin explained the District had received 3 quotes for the tables for Emerson. **MOTION:** C. McDaniel-Thomas **MOVED** to accept the bid from School Furnishings in the amount of \$24,207.40 for the bench tables for Emerson. **SECOND:** K. Wheeler. **VOTE:** 11.902/0/0/1.098. **Motion passes.**

d. 2022-2023 School Calendar: L. Witte presented the 2022-2023 School Calendar to the Board. She explained that Monadnock follows the KHS Calendar because of the Cheshire Career Center. We do have multiple voting days. She also said the Associations had input to the calendar and they had no concerns. The Board asked other questions regarding the calendar. **MOTION:** C. Toomey **MOVED** to approve the 2022-2023 School Calendar as presented by the administration. **SECOND:** B. Bohannon. **VOTE:** 11.902/0/0/1.098. **Motion passes.**

e. Policies for 2nd Read:

- i. KEC/KEC-R Reconsideration of Instructional Materials**
- ii. EEAG-Use of Private Vehicles to Transport Students**
- iii. BBBC-Board Member of District Office Resignation**
- iv. BBBE-Vacancies and Unexpired Term Fulfillment**
- v. BEC-Non-Public Sessions**

vi. **BEDG-Meeting Minutes: MOTION:** B. Bohannon **MOVED** to accept the policy changes as presented by the Policy Committee. **SECOND:** C. Toomey. **VOTE:** 11.697/0/.206/1.098. **Motion passes.**

5. MATTERS FOR INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION:

a. **Debrief from Deliberative Session:** L. Steadman explained it was a very short Deliberative Session with no conflict. J. Khan presented a proclamation to L. Witte as Superintendent of the Year.

b. **Timing of upcoming communications: Warrants in Plain English, Educational News, etc.:** C. McDaniel-Thomas said the Warrants in Plain English have been mailed and she had received hers. She has the signs and she would ask the Board Members to bring them back to their neighborhoods for the upcoming vote.

c. **Student Information System (SIS)-Alma:** L. Witte explained we have Power School which was a gold standard but there are newer products, more advanced. The State DOE will be announcing their contact. The Student Information System will be announced. We are in the process of switching and this will be in effect next year. Alma is the same cost as Power School but more information, data reports to run and customize. Power School has shifted their support overseas. The State will be announcing their choice and if everyone is going with the same company it will be a click of the button. This is information for the Board. She explained the plan is to have it up and running for the Fall. There will be information on how to provide training either come in or webinar. B. Bohannon asked if there would be a link and L. Witte said definitely.

d. **Ecology School:** L. Witte announced that the students will be participating in the Ecology School. She is hopeful many students will attend.

e. **Masking Update:** L. Witte explained there has been no new information. Last Thursday the guidance from DHHS had changed and on Friday the guidance of the CDC had changed regarding the wearing of masks on buses. The district is working with First Student and the students are good to go. There is currently one active case. L. Witte would like to shift the weekly notification from the principals to a weekly notification as a dashboard update. C. Toomey asked if the COVID testing is continuing. L. Witte said yes. She has seen a decrease in cases.

f. **Dress Code:** D. LeClair would like the Board to review the code policy. Who decides what is appropriate to wear to school? He said it sounds like the discretion of the teacher. S. Peters suggested contacting the Policy Committee and the principal. He also said there is a handbook. D. LeClair said he does not believe each teacher should decide. He would also like to review the sexual education policy. There are gender identity items on the wall in question. L. Witte suggested having the principals respond to it.

g. **DOE Audit on Federal Grants:** J. Morin explained every few years the DOE comes in to do an audit of the federal grants to make sure we are compliant. This started a few years ago. There are a few findings that need to be completed. The Board does not need to do

anything. There is nothing of concern. We have until July to implement. J. Morin said that all districts will have these findings. We are not being singled out and we are not behind. They did applaud us on how well prepared we were.

h. Committee Report: L. Steadman asked the Board to allow the Legislative Committee to become an advisory committee. The committee will have no minutes and will not have to follow RSAs. The group believes they will be more productive this way. S. Peters explained the Board will reorganize at the next meeting and we can discuss it then.

6. SETTING NEXT MEETING'S AGENDA:

- a. Election Results**
- b. Superintendent Performance Review**
- c. Committee Appointments**
- d. Overview of end of year activities**
- e. Discussion on Homecoming and Prom**
- f. 2022-2023 Board Meeting Schedule**
- g. Board Ethic Policy-Annual Review**

7. Public Comments: Stephen Ciolino of Swanzey has 3 sons that go to this school and it is unfair that there are 2 Homecoming queens. His child was told by a staff member that the sweatshirt he was wearing was inappropriate. His children have been tested 15 times for COVID and he has received notes about truancy. He said there are a lot of kids that do not like 2 queens.

Timothy Carrier of Swanzey said it is not appropriate to have teacher led expressions. Take the signs down or have competing ideas placed on the walls. It is legally wrong if it is teacher led.

8. 8:08 PM Enter into Non-Public Session under RSA 91-A:3-II (c) Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely adversely affect the reputation of any person, other than a member of the public body itself, unless such person requests an open meeting. MOTION: B. Bohannon **MOVED** to enter into Non-Public Session under RSA 91-A:3-II (c) Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely adversely affect the reputation of any person, other than a member of the public body itself, unless such person requests an open meeting. **SECOND:** D. LeClair. **VOTE:** 11.902/0/0/1.098. **Motion passes.**

9. ADJOURNMENT: MOTION: C. Toomey **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting at 8:18 PM. **SECOND:** C. McDaniel-Thomas **VOTE:** 11.902/0/0/1.098. **Motion passes.**

Respectfully submitted,

Laura L. Aivaliotis
Recording Secretary

VOTING KEY: Yes/No/Abstain/Absent