

Monadnock Regional School District (MRSD)
School Board Meeting Minutes
July 20, 2021
In person at the MRMHS Library/Zoom, Swanzey, NH

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

Administration Present: L. Witte, Superintendent and J. Rathbun, Director of Curriculum Student Assessment.

Also Present: L. Aivaliotis, Recording Secretary via Zoom

“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:** There were no public comments.
3. **CELEBRATE MRSD:** L. Witte explained the District managed to get through all of the rain fairly well.
4. **MATTERS FOR INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION:**
 - a. **Operations/Superintendent’s Report:**
 - i. **Status of Cookies:** L. Witte reported the company who baked the raspberry filled cookies is no longer in business. They are on the hunt to find a similar cookie.
 - ii. **Trimester 3/Q4 Data Report:** The Board received information from J. Rathbun on trimester 3 and quarter 4. J. Rathbun explained in every grade level the staff has increased the number of standards taught. There are not big jumps but this was a huge year. He was pleased with the results. The data results are from on-site students only. We asked the staff to focus on standards that the students would need and as the year continued more standards were taught. These standards and the major standards all were used in each class and are expected to be assessed. We do have State Standards we need to follow; these are the report card standards. J. Rathbun included in the packet information on the Board SMART Goal. The 7th grade dropped in the last quarter and the 3rd grade cohort increased. All of the results will be discussed with the teachers.
 - iii. **Return to School Plan Review:** L. Witte explained there is no update from the DOE or DHHS. She has been invited to a meeting regarding guidance. There is no agenda at this time, only an invite.

iv. **Cost Per Pupil Review (in packet):** The Board reviewed the cost per pupil information provided by the administration. L. Witte commented each year the State has increased the rate of tuition. The Board will be asked to vote on a Regular Ed. tuition rate of \$18,225.00 at the next meeting.

v. **State Budget Information (in packet):** The Board reviewed the information provided by the administration regarding the changes in State Funding. L. Witte suggested taking it with a grain of salt. The chart is misleading.

vi. **School Approval Letters (in packet):** The Board received copies of the 2 letters received by L. Spencer and written by the NHDOE. These letters were to inform Principal Spencer that the MRMS and the MRHS have been reviewed and the facilities comply with the NH Administrative Rule Ed 306.

b. Board Chair Report/Budget Committee Update:

i. **Requests (e-mail and minutes) (in packet):** Included in the Board packet was a copy of an email to J. Morin from the Budget Committee. The committee is requesting information on the early retirement, spreadsheets, salaries and savings. L. Witte said it is a handwritten report and is not done yet. S. Peters said the group asked about the staff leaving. It was a financial issue. They want to see the comings and goings and the flow chart. L. Witte said there is no information at this point. S. Peters asked what figure is used without knowing the replacement.

ii. **Grants Overview (in packet):** The grant information is in the Board packets. S. Peters said the Budget Committee is also looking for information on the bids for the new classrooms, CARES, ESSER and the federal grants. They want names, allocations and how they are budgeted. L. Witte said the grants have rules. She is concerned in having the discussion. The CARES Funds cannot be returned to the voters to cover taxes. S. Peters asked how we awarded the job for the pavilions. L. Witte said the administration will provide information requested by the Budget committee. J. Rathbun explained the District had a review on the federal grants and passed with flying colors. Maintenance of Equity states if you reduce your budget you will not receive the funds. He said our schools with the highest number of free and reduced cannot see cuts. If you want the funds do not hurt the schools in need.

iii. **CARES Summary (in packet):** L. Witte explained the CARES Funds are a significant amount of money and it is a reimbursement process. This process is ongoing throughout the year. Any change in activity or a quote we will need to go back to be reapproved.

iv. **Administration Attendance (in packet):** The Board received information from the administration on the attendance of the administration at meetings. This information is a result of a request from the Budget Committee.

c. CRC report on progress w/PR firm and plans for Listening Sessions: C.

McDaniel-Thomas explained we had a glitch and were not able to exchange information. We did receive links for other projects the firm has done. The Listening Sessions are important. We also need talking points. The committee would like the town Board representative in attendance at the sessions. S. Peters would suggest the members sign up at the next meeting. She explained the PR firm is willing to do anything. We are going to look at what they have done for the other projects.

d. Policies for First Read:

- i. IGAL/ECF-Energy Conversation (retire IGAL/adopt ECF)**
- ii. IGDB/JICE-Student Publications (retire IGDB, update JICE)**
- iii. KDC-Website Publishing (update)**
- iv. IGDD-Student Performance (retire):**
- v. IGDG-Student Activities Fund Management (retire):**
- vi. IGDH-Non-school sponsored contests for students (retire): K. Noonan**

on behalf of the Policy Committee presented the policies for a first read. Any questions please email K. Noonan.

5. MATTERS THAT REQUIRE BOARD ACTION:

a. Approve Instructional Plan: J. Rathbun explained the Instructional Plan for 2021/2022. **MOTION:** K. Noonan **MOVED** to approve the Instructional Plan for 2021/2022 (review of Tech Ed. Arts, Family/Consumer Science and World Language). **SECOND:** W. Wright. **DISCUSSION:** J. Rathbun explained that everything moved forward from the previous year due to COVID. **VOTE:** 9.636/0/0/3.365. **Motion passes.**

b. Approve Elementary Renovations Ed Spec Part 1: The Board reviewed the Education Spec. Survey. This survey was for the SAU, administration and Board. The next survey will go to the teachers, paraprofessionals and staff. There were 9 out of 17 responses. This information in detail will be given to Barker and Associates. S. Peters reviewed the questions and responses with the Board. N. Mosher said he would like to have the advice of the administration on some of these questions. Professional opinion not personal. K. Noonan said she is leaning toward smaller classrooms. L. Witte said there is a square footage recommendation for the number of students. The number of students and the class size will affect State Building Aid. C. Toomey would suggest 20 students per elementary classroom. The Board suggested K-2 the target being 15-20 students and 3-6 the target being 20-25 students. K. Noonan does not want multi-age classrooms. N. Mosher commented that the Gilsum model is successful. He is not sure about supporting that. It needs a community discussion. Not in favor of it. J. Rathbun said if you change it there will be a need for 3 more teachers and 4 more classrooms. C. McDaniel-Thomas said we have had multi-age classrooms. She is reluctant to say one way or the other. L. Steadman said to use it when appropriate. K. Noonan said the new schools would be big enough to not have multi-age classrooms. Changing from 1-2 one year to 3-4 the next year is not good. We want to

be big enough to have single classrooms. It was commented that multiage classrooms will continue where it has proven successful and to balance classroom size but there is a desire to have space for single aged classrooms when the student count justifies it. J. Rathbun commented that if we have 30 students those 30 students divided in 2 classrooms will be very small. W. Wright commented we need to split grades. S. Peters said some people are comfortable with keeping the split. C. Toomey said we need to be in line with the State. They may refuse to pay for the project. M. Connor agrees with K. Noonan. J. Rathbun commented on the need for safety and security overall. L. Steadman said to consider technology with the upcoming project and play space accessible for all students. **MOTION:** C.Toomey **MOVED** to approve the Education Specs Part 1 to be the survey results presented combined with the meeting notes from 7-20-2021. **SECOND:** M. Connor. **VOTE:** 9.422/0/0/3.578. **Motion passes. Meeting Notes:** Materials that support expanding wireless technologies, Play spaces should be accessible for all students and support students of all abilities (e.g. handicap access and handicap functional), K-2, target, flex to 20, 3-6 target 20, flex to 25, multi-age will continue where it has proven successful to balance classroom size, but there is a desire to have space for single age when the student count justifies.

c. **Approve Policy DFA:** The Board discussed this policy.

d. **Approve Policy JLDBB:** The Board discussed Policy DFA and Policy JLDBB.

MOTION: C. McDaniel-Thomas **MOVED** to approve/renew Policy DFA and Policy JLDBB as written. **SECOND:** C. Toomey. **VOTE:** 9.422/0/0/3.578. **Motion passes.**

e. **Policies for 2nd Read:**

i. **EEAEA/EEAEA-R-Mandatory Drug and Alcohol Testing:**

ii. **IJOC/IJOC-R-Volunteers**

iii. **IKFA-Early Graduation:** **MOTION:** K. Noonan **MOVED** to approve the policy changes to Policy EEAEA/EEAEA-R, Policy IJOC/IJOC-R and Policy IKFA as presented by the Policy Committee. **SECOND:** W. Wright. **VOTE:** 9.422/0/0/3.578. **Motion passes.**

f. **Board Decision on Policy BCA/BCA-R, Ethics and Ethics Form:** S. Peters asked the Board's feelings on the policy being signed by all members. Does it apply to all members or not? There are a few members who have not signed it. The Policy Committee had discussed the policy. K. Noonan said the NHSBA Policy BCA lists all of the points and it says recommended, not required. C. McDaniel-Thomas said we are adapting based on an individual's issue. She does not have a strong opinion one way or another. C. Toomey commented if you run for a position you need to follow what is asked of you. As an elected official this is not inappropriate to sign. E. Stanley would agree. K. Noonan said this is good to have and do not take it out of the policy but it is no cause to ask someone to step down. Do not go against ethics. K. Wheeler said she has not signed it because the policy has changed so many times. She is more comfortable with the form not being signed. ***E. Stanley and N. Mosher are no longer in the meeting.*** **MOTION:** C. Toomey **MOVED** to direct the Policy Committee to adjust Policy BCA-R to reflect the annual receipt of the Ethics Policy (as opposed to the agreement) **SECOND:** C. McDaniel-Thomas. **VOTE:** 7.186/0/1.115/4.699. **Motion passes.**

g. June 15, 2021 Minutes: MOTION: C. McDaneil-Thomas **MOVED** to approve the June 15, 2021 Public and Non-Public Meeting Minutes as presented. **SECOND:** M. Connor **VOTE:** 6.546/0/1.755/4.699. **Motion passes.**

h. Approve Annual Auditor (Plodzik and Sanderson): MOTION: C. Toomey **MOVED** to approve Plodzik & Sanderson to perform the School District's Audit for the 2020-2021 School Year. **SECOND:** W. Wright. **VOTE:** 8.301/0/0/4.699. **Motion passes.**

i. Sealed Minutes: The Board will discuss this item at their next meeting.

j. Approve Student Tuition Rate (\$18,225 Regular Ed): The Board will discuss this item at their next meeting.

k. Manifest: MOTION: K. Noonan **MOVED** the manifest for 2021 in the amount of \$78,311.67 and the manifest for 2021-2022 in the amount of \$37,138.40. **SECOND:** M. Connor **VOTE:** 8.031/0/0/4.699. **Motion passes.**

6. SETTING MEETING'S AGENDA:

- a. Legislative Changes-SB2**
- b. Advocating for Virtual Committee Meetings**
- c. Sealed Minutes**
- d. Tuition Rate-Special Ed rate**
- e. Elementary School Configuration**
- f. Return to School Plan**

7. Public Comments: There were no public comments.

8. ADJOURNMENT: MOTION: C. Toomey **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting at 9:34 PM. **SECOND:** M. Connor **VOTE:** 8.301/0/0/4.699. **Motion passes.**

Respectfully submitted,

Laura L. Aivaliotis
Recording Secretary

VOTING KEY: Yes/No/Abstain/Absent