Monadnock Regional School District (MRSD)
School Board Meeting Minutes
December 1, 2020
Zoom Virtual Meeting, Swanzey, NH

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

Administration Present: L. Witte, Superintendent, J. Rathbun, Director of Curriculum and Student Assessment, C. Woods, Director of Student Services 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 opened the meeting at 7:00 PM.

2. Public Comments: William Larson read the school mission statement to the Board and then said it was a bunch of crap. He said he has 2 children who want to quit school. It is not a school. The SAU is required to provide education. The SAU has broken the law. The students are supposed to go to school for 180 days and they are going 78 days. They go to school for 2 days and 3 days have no work. He has emailed Board Members and has received no response. He said none of the Board has done a good job. He asked what he's supposed to do.

Henry Sokol has 2 children in school. He disagrees with the first speaker. His children go to school 2 days a week and have work to do on the other 3 days. He would encourage the Board to do only remote learning until after the New Year. There are a number of increased cases. We are entering the red zone. He also commented on the air quality in the schools. He has seen kids go to school with runny noses and coughs. He thanked the Board and asked them to consider his request.

M. Divens is concerned that Monadnock is still open with the hybrid model. She said it is dangerous keeping the schools open. She would hope the Board would consider her comments.

Dale Harrision Smith said she would echo the comments. There are other schools doing remote. She commented on how wonderful the teachers are. She is afraid one case will trickle down. She is concerned about the staff, students and bus drivers. She asked the Board to consider the concerns.

Rachel Vogt is a graduate of MRMHS and now has 2 children in the district. It is a hard decision to make. If we are going to keep the students at home, we need to step up our game. Keep kids healthy and active. There needs to be a program to help kids with the things in the world today.

3. MATTERS FOR INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION:

a. Board Goals Review:

i. Education Goals Checkpoint: J. Rathbun reported out on last year's 7th and 11th grade scores in ELA and Math. He reviewed the first quarter scores of the 8th and 12th grade scores in ELA and Math and then compared. From 7th to 8th grade the numbers have decreased in 11th to 12th the numbers have increased. He will be working with the team to try and see if there is a reason for the 7th/8th grade results. J. Rathbun explained it is not a true cohort because it does not include the remote learners. The number is the total number of Cs or higher. This information is based on the report cards. J. Rathbun will report out on the Interim Assessment, trimester results, SAT and the PSAT results at the next meeting.

C. Woods reported on IEPs for students with different disabilities. She also reviewed the number of schools for out of district placement. Some of the students are either court ordered or placed by the district. She explained there are some students who may have an IEP by the age of 3. There are 4 Charter Schools in which we send some of the students. At the next meeting when J. Rathbun gives his report and she will also have information. C. Woods said the district tries to place the students within a one-hour drive. S. Peters thanked J. Rathbun and C. Woods for the information.

b. Operations/Superintendent's Report:

i. Hybrid/Remote Update:

1. Enrollment Update: L. Witte reported the percentage of students doing hybrid is 82.5% and remote is 17.5%. Hybrid has decreased slightly. She did report that some families at Emerson went remote after the new cases.

L. Witte explained the BOY on October 1, 2020 was 1644 and last week it was 1647.

2. Mask Policy: L. Witte explained the Mask Policy discussion was requested. The masks are required when moving around the schools when social distancing is not possible. Last week the Governor made a Statewide mandate for wearing masks. This order does not affect schools. The intent was that schools have policies in place. B. Bohannon asked if anyone had to quarantine due to close contact in the schools where cases showed up. L. Witte explained some folks did have to quarantine. L. Witte explained some students were absent after the holiday weekend. She was not surprised. Regarding the staff, attendance was good. She is not sure who traveled. We have asked people to do the right thing and quarantine if they traveled. There is a process when we become aware of a person with COVID. A list of people in which the person has come in contact with in the past 48 hours of the symptoms. Those people are contacted. We work with DHHS. B. Bohannon asked if the staff have a feeling about hybrid or remote. L. Witte explained we will continue to meet with the association leadership. We have a plan, things are working. She cannot say it is 100%. The feeling in the schools is very good and masks are being worn.

ii. Trust Funds: L. Witte put the list of Trust Funds in the Board packet for information only. She explained the 2009 Trust Fund will be drawn down by a vote of the voters. It is similar to the Maintenance Account. The BASP is for the Before and After School Program. The district has not needed to draw down those funds. The MRSD Health is for increased health costs.

4. MATTERS THAT REQUIRE BOARD ACTION:

a. Warrant Articles: The Board reviewed the Warrant Articles. J. Morin explained in Article One the Budget Committee comes up with the number for the default budget. The warrant article is not complete. Article Two and Article Three have already been voted on by the Board. **MOTION:** C. McDaniel-Thomas **MOVED** to approve the Specialist Warrant Article as presented. **SECOND:** K. Noonan **VOTE:** 9.669/0/1.335/1.996. **S. Peters is recused. Motion passes. MOTION:** W. Wright **MOVED** to approve the MDEA Contract Warrant Article as presented. **SECOND:** K. Noonan **VOTE:** 10.667/0/1.335/.998. **S. Peters recused. Motion passes. MOTION:** W. Wright **MOVED** to approve the MESSA Warrant Article as presented. **SECOND:** K. Noonan. **VOTE:** 10.667/0/1.335/.998. **S. Peters recused. Motion passes. MOTION:** K. Noonan **MOVED** to approve Warrant Article Seven, Eight and Nine as presented. **SECOND:** C. McDaniel-Thomas. **VOTE:** 13/0/0/0. **Motion passes.**

b. Plow Truck: The district would like to sell the old plow. They had purchased a plow truck at the end of 2019 which the Board approved. **MOTION:** W. Wright.**MOVED** to approve the sale of the old plow truck in the amount of $2200.00. **SECOND:** B. Bohannon. **DISCUSSION:** J.Morin said the sale will be as is. **VOTE:** 13/0/0/0. **Motion passes.**

c. Health Insurance Surplus: J. Morin explained the Health Trust had a surplus and they will have to give it to the district. The district will receive $283,521.52. The School Board has to vote to accept the unanticipated funds. J. Morin has not had to deal with the Health Trust since she got here. L. Witte explained a lot of the surplus is due to COVID. There was a decrease in the number of claims. The savings will go to the district. **MOTION:** N. Mosher **MOVED** to approve the return of the Health Trust surplus in the amount of $283,521.52. **SECOND:** W. Wright. **DISCUSSION:** L. Witte explained years ago LGC was holding the surplus and there was a lawsuit. The lawsuit led to no more LGC. Health Trust is more careful and the rationale makes sense. J. Morin explained Health Trust will give a detailed list and determine if anything goes back to the employees. **VOTE:** 13/0/0/0. **Motion passes.**

d. Manifest: MOTION: B. Tatro **MOVED** the manifest in the amount of $995,239.61. **SECOND:** C. McDaniel-Thomas. **VOTE:** 12.243/0/.757/0. **Motion passes.**

e. Winter Sports: MOTION: K. Wheeler **MOVED** to postpone Winter Sports until after Christmas Vacation. **SECOND:** N. Mosher. **DISCUSSION:** E. Stanley explained there are no games scheduled until January 2021. The kids are practicing against themselves. He went into the gym and there were 10 people all with masks on and social distancing. He spoke to the trainer. The kids go to school with the same kids they are practicing with. N. Mosher said there are different cohorts. B. Tatro is concerned about Fine Arts not being included. S. Peters said that is a separate issue. B.Bohannon would suggest continuing with what we are doing. **VOTE:** K. Noonan-no, W. Wright-no, K. Wheeler-yes, M. Connor-yes, N. Mosher-yes, B. Bohannon-no, D. LeClair-no, C. McDaniel-Thomas-yes, E. Stanley-no, B. Tatro-yes, C. Toomey-no, S.Peters-no and L. Steadman-yes. 5.286/7.714/0/0. **Motion fails.**

f. Minutes:

i. November 10, 2020: MOTION: S.Peters **MOVED** to approve the November 10, 2020 School Board Meeting Minutes as amended. **SECOND:** K. Noonan. **VOTE:** 10.667/0/2.333/0. **Motion passes.**

ii. **November 17, 2020: MOTION:** W. Wright **MOVED** to approve the November 17, 2020 School Board Meeting Minutes as presented. **SECOND:** B. Tatro. **VOTE:** 11.665/0/1.335/0. **Motion passes.**

ii. **November 21, 2020: MOTION:** W. Wright **MOVED** the November 21, 2020 School Board/Budget Committee Joint Meeting Minutes as presented. **SECOND:** K. Noonan. **VOTE:** 9.787/0/3.213/0. **Motion passes.**

5. SETTING NEXT MEETING'S AGENDA:

a. Education Presentation
b. CRC Presentation
c. Ration Hybrid/Remote
d. Dashboard
e. Extra-Curricular Discussion
f. Deliberative Session-Zoom?

6. Public Comments: Henry Sokol commented regarding contact tracing and the fact it is 5 days behind, testing delays and long term effects with COVID. He said he spoke to teachers and they are afraid. He will not send his children to school the Monday or Wednesday after Thanksgiving.

Dan Sepulveda commented regarding the Education Report. He asked why the 8th grade numbers are the way they are.He is very interested. He also commented on Article 4 and Article 5, the increase amounts to the Unions contracts. He would like to know the actual increases in the contracts. He asked what are the drivers for the increases in the contracts.

S.Peters explained during Public Comments the Board does not respond but will bring the topic up for a future conversation.

M. Divens commented other schools are closing around us. If we wait for a cluster we will already be too far.

7. 8:52 Motion to enter into a Non-Public Session under RSA 91-A:3 II(c) Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person: MOTION: K. Noonan **MOVED** to enter into a non-public session under RSA 91-A:3 II (c) Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person. **SECOND:** C. Toomey. **VOTE:** 13/0/0/0. **Motion passes.**

8. ADJOURNMENT: MOTION: N. Mosher **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting at 9:58 PM. **SECOND:** M. Connor **VOTE:** 13/0/0/0. **Motion passes.**

Respectfully submitted,

Laura L. Aivaliotis
Recording Secretary

VOTING KEY: Yes/No/Abstain/Absent