**Monadnock Regional School District (MRSD)**
**School Board Meeting Minutes**
**September 3, 2019**
**Mt. Caesar Elementary School, Swanzey, NH**

**Members Present:** Winston Wright, Nicholas Mosher, Colleen Toomey, Rob Colbert, Brian Bohannon, Lisa Steadman, Kristie Wilder, Betty Tatro, Neil Moriarty, Kristen Noonan and Scott Peters. **Absent:** Karen Wheeler and Eric Stanley.

**Administration Present:** L. Witte, Superintendent, J. Rathbun, Director of Curriculum and Assessment 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. Public Comments:** Lynette Soucia an employee of the District had asked to have her children attend Monadnock MS/HS. The District explained they would be allowed at a tuition rate. L. Soucia commented 2 employees of the District were allowed to send their children to this District at no cost. She is now asking to allow her child to attend the District this year at no cost.

**Charles Hansel-Work Based Learning CCC:** L. Steadman explained Charles Hansel is not in attendance tonight. He will address the Board at another time. ***B. Tatro arrives.***

**2. MATTERS FOR INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION:**

**a. Board Chair Report:**

i. **Welcome Back!:** L. Steadman welcomed everyone back for another school year. Members toured the school and it looks beautiful.

ii. **Board Goal Check-In:** The Board has been focusing on their Board goals. Legislative Advocacy, the Board has been following the school funding issues which were vetoed by the Governor. The Board has been moving the facilities forward with a long term plan. The Facilities Committee met with the architect on the Feasibility Study. The Board has heard at each of their Board meetings an update on academic performance.

L. Steadman reported she and W. Wright attended a Negotiations Workshop at SAU 29. It was a super meeting to share ideas and develop relationships. There will be more meetings in the future.

L. Steadman explained the Board had extended an opportunity to the Budget Committee with a facilitator and it was not welcomed by the Budget Committee. W. Lechlider was in attendance and had no comment.

**b. Education Report:**

i. **ACES (After School) Programming Update:** Franny Ashworth the Director of ACES presented information to the Board and an update on the program. She explained there are a few things that are changing and we need to observe the federal limits. This program is co -curricular enriched for every child. There will be 20 clubs per session. There is no type of after school program at the Middle School currently.

**c. Operations/Superintendent's Report:**

i. **SRO Update-Lt. DiRusso, SPD:** L. Witte explained the letter from the Sherriff's Dept. stated they are not interested in regards to an officer at the MS/HS. Lt. DiRusso explained Fall Mtn. works with the State Police but a different officer is at the school daily. The Board would be working with the Swanzey Police Dept. on the SRO issue. L. Witte explained budget season is coming upon us and this is good timing. R. Colbert asked if anything would be done this school year. L. Witte replied she is not sure there are funds and the process will take

most of this school year. We want to get something in place for next year. Swanzey and the School have a different fiscal year. Lt. DiRusso commented a part time SRO is not entitled to benefits. They are allowed to work 1352 hours. N. Mosher is in favor of a part time SRO with F. DeTurris as the SSO but do not compromise education make sure we have the funds. B. Tatro commented do not build around the person but around the position.

**ii. State Board of Education Meeting (9-12-19):** L. Witte will be in attendance at the Sept. 12 meeting. The change in the funding formula is on the agenda.

**iii. School Funding Update:** The State did appeal the State Funding Issue. L. Witte will keep the Board updated.

**iv. Opening Enrollment:** L. Witte passed out the opening enrollment numbers. The official enrollment number is based on the October 1, 2019 number. The number today is 1689. There is an increase in the MS/HS due to returning students from MC2. There is also a stream of students at the elementary level. The 1689 includes Pre-K and K.

**v. Continuous Improvement Efforts in Hiring, Training and Employee/Student Communication:** L. Witte passed out a written summary of things the administration has done differently regarding hiring and training specific to coaches and District staff. We are still continuing to look at the process. Text messaging to students is not okay. Communication will go through the District Accounts. There was a coaches meeting and discussion on what are appropriate boundaries. The coach's meetings will be repeated on a regular basis. The staff is asked to read the NHDOE Code of Ethics and Conduct. Everyone is required to report inappropriate behavior. She explained do not put yourself in a situation. J. O'Shaughnessy had worked with SAU 29 on this issue and suggested the Board look at Keene's Policy GBEF it is really good. She would like to see it come forward in the Policy Committee soon and make sure the language is consistent and clear in all policies. L. Witte explained the parents will be informed that texting coaches is not appropriate during the athlete/ parent meetings. L. Witte will continue to work with L. Spencer and T. Cote on this issue. R. Colbert

commented there are a lot of clubs that are not covered by this. We need to make it clear who this issue should be reported to.

**d. Policies for First Read:**

**i. GBA-Equal Opportunity Employment, GBJ-Personnel Records and Files, KBAA-Right to Know Law, KGE-Use of School Building for Religious Purposes, KH-Public Gifts to the Schools and KH-R-Gifts to the Schools.** S. Peters read the rationale for each policy. The Board will vote on these at the next meeting.

**e. Other:**

**i. Budget Timeline (Approved 7/9/19):** A copy of the Budget Timeline was provided to the Board. The joint meeting with the Board and the Budget Committee is on November 19, 2019 which is a Tuesday. N. Moriarty is concerned with the joint meeting being changed from a Saturday to a Tuesday. **MOTION:** N. Moriarty **MOVED** to schedule the joint meeting of the Board and the Budget Committee on Saturday, November 23, 2019. **SECOND:** N. Mosher. **DISCUSSION:** L. Witte explained the information is ready on the Saturday around Halloween but on a Saturday the attendance is down due to conflicts with families, sports and activities. The meetings have gotten considerably shorter each year. W. Lechlider commented some Budget Committee Members work out of town and would prefer Saturday. That is best for the Budget Committee. **MOTION:** S. Peters **MOVED** to table the motion until W. Lechlider can ask the Budget Committee Members for input. **SECOND:** N. Mosher. **VOTE:** Unanimous for those present. **Motion passes.**

**ii. Elementary Honor Roll and Standards Based Grading:** N. Moriarty asked why there is no longer honor roll in the elementary schools. L. Witte explained it has been phased out. There are some forms of recognition. J. Rathbun explained it had been phased out years ago. N. Moriarty commented we give a kid a trophy for sports but they do not get recognized for education. L. Steadman commented the kids get awards at the end of the year.

iii. **Early Identification of Unique Student Needs:** B. Bohannon commented regarding J. Rathbun's student example of the last meeting. He said we are missing the opportunity in early years to flag kids to get them more help. J. Rathbun explained there are a lot of Title One funds going to early intervention. We are doing an outstanding job. More individual attention for each kid. We have a Pre-K to K transition position. The standardized testing did not show improvement as it did in the school year with extra help from the staff. S. Peters asked if a teacher feels a student should be assessed do we have the staff and ability to do so. J. Rathbun explained each school has a Child Concern Team. The team has scheduled meetings that meet often. There are highly trained educators that look for the concerns. We have files that move with the child to the next grade. Knowing the student is essential. The staff meet and discuss each student for the transition. He commented multiage classrooms may be better for a student who is comfortable with the same teacher. Teachers do not teach in isolation they work as a team. B. Bohannon asked if what we are doing is working. He is concerned with the lower grades. We have never heard that what we are doing is making a positive impact. J. Rathbun commented testing with MAPS 3 times this year was not a big benefit. Direct us to bring goals and objectives to the Board. We could buy testing but it would not improve education practices. L. Witte asked if we are interested in assessing or learning. Testing is taking away from learning. Our students will get frustrated and shut down. We do not do standardized testing the first 6 weeks of school. K. Noonan commented 2 Board Members are asking to hear about assessments. She is interested in community and the Education Reports. R. Colbert agrees he does not want 100% assessment but some type of barometer to assess. B. Bohannon asked how we define success. Are we on track to meet our goals? He is frustrated that we do not have a mechanism. If we are not informed about the academic performance, we will not succeed with our Board goals.

iv. **Enrichment for Students Above Grade Level:** B. Bohannon would like to start the conversation about enrichment. He said it is unacceptable not to have a plan. J. Rathbun stated that NH does not recognize gifted and talented programs. We individualize those

students. We also do not believe in skipping grades. If there is a student rising, we individualize them. B. Bohannon said it has not happened for his kids. He would like to have a conversation. He is not happy or satisfied. J. Rathbun explained that is a Board discussion. The Board should discuss with L. Witte and then direct him. We are focusing on the culture and community. We are not perfect. We are certainly not being status quo. J. Rathbun also stated if you have a higher reader you also need to make sure they can write. If kids do not feel safe and unaccepted they will shut down. If we get all of this test information what do, we do. N. Mosher said we can see if the students are making improvements. L. Steadman would like to know what Keene and Fall Mtn. are doing for gifted and talented students.

**v. School Lunch:** It was commented that some students were not purchasing lunch due to the free or reduced stigma. L. Witte explained everyone pays the same way. She will ask T. Walsh to come to a future meeting. J. Morin explained we are the only school in NH with a breakfast vending machine. She mentioned with free and reduced you are not able to get extra items.

**3. CONSENT AGENDA:**

**a. August 13, 2019 School Board Meeting Minutes: MOTION:** S. Peters MOVED to approve the August 13, 2019 School Board Meeting Minutes as presented. **SECOND:** R. Colbert **VOTE:** 11.122/0/0/1.878. **Motion passes.**

**b. August 13, 2019 Non-Pubic: MOTION:** W. Wright **MOVED** to approve the August 13, 2019 Non-Public Meeting Minutes as presented. **SECOND:** K. Noonan. **VOTE:** 11.122/0/0/1.878. **Motion passes.**

**c. Manifest: MOTION:** B. Tatro **MOVED** to approve the manifests in the amount totaling $4,432,525.56. **SECOND:** W. Wright. **VOTE:** 11.122/0/0/1.878. **Motion passes.**

**4. Setting Next Agenda:**

**1. School Lunch**

**2. Policy KGE**

**3. Report on Facilities**

**4. Education Report-after meeting with principals**

L. Witte reported the following positions still need to be filled: Special Ed. position, Reading Specialist and Interventionist.

**5. Public Comments:** Ed Sheldon of Swanzey is concerned regarding the active shooter drill. His child is at Mt. Caesar. L. Witte explained the District works very closely with the Swanzey PD. The active shooter training does not involve students. We are required to submit a plan to the State. She explained MTC did a lockdown drill but explained the entire process to the students. The students were not traumatized but prepared. ***N. Moriarty leaves the meeting.***

**6. 9:00 PM Motion to enter into non-public session under RSA 91-A:3, II (a):**

**MOTION:** R. Colbert **MOVED** to enter into non-public session under RSA 91-A:3, II ( c ) Matter which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person, other than a member of the public body itself, unless such person requests an open meeting.. **SECOND:** B. Bohannon **VOTE:** 10.047/0/0/2.953. **Motion passes.**

**7. ADJOURNMENT: MOTION:** N. Mosher **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting at 9:10 PM. **SECOND:** K. Noonan **VOTE:** Unanimous for those present. **Motion passes.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Laura L. Aivaliotis**

**Recording Secretary**