

Monadnock Regional School District (MRSD)
School Board Meeting Minutes
August 20, 2024
Monadnock Regional Middle/High School, Swanzey, NH

School Board Members Present: Scott Peters, Edmond LaPlante, Lisa Steadman, Cheryl McDaniel-Thomas via Zoom, Betty Tatro, Eric Stanley, Dan LeClair, Kristen Noonan and Jeff Cesaitis via Zoom. **Absent:** Hannah Blood, Brian Bohannon, Gine Carraro and Jennifer Strimbeck.

Administration Present: J. Rathbun, Superintendent, J. Morin, Business Administrator and L. Spencer, Assistant Superintendent.

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

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS: There were no Public Comments.

3. #celebrateMRSD

a. Welcome/Meet Greg Pickering - Principal of MRMHS: G. Pickering, the new MRMS Principal, attended the Board Meeting and introduced himself. He is happy to be in the Monadnock School District.

b. ESY & Beyond the Bell Wrap-up & Back to School: J. Rathbun would like to celebrate ESY and Beyond the Bell. Both programs went well. Beyond the Bell had over 300 students in attendance. He would like to thank all of the staff in the programs and the building staff as well. J. Rathbun commented that the National Guard brought a helicopter to the Swanzey and Troy Programs. The kids as well as the adults loved it. Today the whole staff came back to school. The staff was welcomed back and participated in the annual Suicide Awareness Drill. The Board Members will be receiving the same tee shirt the staff received which had the mascot of each school on it. There will be monthly competition with the staff that will focus on the students. The next challenge is Homecoming and trying to get people to attend and help. S. Peters mentioned that 2 staff members of the District wrote a book which is now available.

c. District Website Updates: The District website has a new look thanks to C. Czifrik and L. Sutton.

4. MATTERS FOR INFORMATION & DISCUSSION

a. Standing agenda: Student Government Report: There is no Student Government report tonight.

b. Standing agenda: Superintendent Goals Update:

i. Employee Evaluation Process: L. Spencer and L. Stevens will be meeting to start the evaluation overhaul. The administration met for goal setting with special measurable goals. They will be meeting to check on the goals and the Board can be informed without crossing the line.

ii. Mt. Caesar Back to School / Community Communication: At the next meeting the Board would like to invite K. Barker the architect of the Elementary School

Renovation Project and A. Day, the Project Manager for an end of the summer update. J. Rathbun explained that the footings have been poured and the steel is coming. The new parking lot is done. MTC drop off and pick up of students has changed during construction. M. Suarez has sent out 3 or 4 notifications to the parents to make them aware of the change. The Emerson Project is set to begin in early September, the fencing should be put up soon. Gilsum and Troy projects are in the design phase.

c. Standing agenda: Board Meeting Calendar & Goals Update

i. Finance/Facilities - Update on Compensation Study: B. Tatro reported that the committee is working on a salary comparison for the unaffiliated staff with other districts. We are in need of more information that the committee has not received yet. The MTC project is moving along with the playground complete and the paving done. S. Peters commented that the committee had hoped to have the comparison information collected and ready for the budget.

ii. Education - Update on Cell Phone Policy: H. Blood, S. Peters and G. Carraro met with the Behavior Committee for about 2 hours regarding the cell phone policy in schools. The committee will be meeting on August 28, 2024 at 4:30 PM to work on the policies. There is no expectation to put in a new policy. The Behavior Committee said there may be a new policy after December break. E. LaPlante explained the responses that he had received. S. Peters commented that community outreach needs to be done. There are many more steps to go. This policy has to be for both kids and adults.

d. Education Report: J. Rathbun presented Data from the IREADY and the SAT results. He explained that Math is split by grade. It is stronger in the younger grades. Cutler and Gilsum had growth. The teachers have been working hard as well as at MTC. The 7th and 8th grades did not report out due to the timing of the test. Overall in Reading in IREADY the students are moving in the right direction. There was a big jump in the younger grades. The 7th graders made a great jump. Cutler, Gilsum and MTC stand out and everyone did a great job. The District is in a good place with the elementary schools. The Special Education students are included in the data but have their accommodations. The SAT results had dipped in all areas. The next step is for the administration to review and look into the results. The District lost a lot of high-end scores. Some of the colleges do not require SAT. Parents can also opt their students out. There are students who will go to the military and trade schools and they do not care about the SAT test. Now that it is a State Test it is just another day. We are always above the National Level and did really well in writing. The AP scores show a different result. J. Rathbun explained the results and said that the students are not forced into taking an AP class. It is not the right choice for all students.

L. Spencer has come up with a list of what the District will be focusing on this year. The staff will be receiving training for the new Math Program, Illustrative Math. There are 14 new teachers and 4 veterans that will receive 2 days of training. Ninety-Five Percent-Literacy Program will be rolled out with 4 days of training in September. The Academic Leaders will be meeting to focus on a number of goals including empowering teachers to make change. IREADY Training will take place in September for the administration. She will be preparing a Monthly Newsletter from her office to connect the schools with the SAU. The Evaluation Committee will

be meeting throughout the year. There is a Marzano High Reliability training coming up for staff in November. She is also thinking of presenting a Podcast with monthly themes such as the Homecoming and the Construction Project to name a few.

e. Annual Review of Student Handbooks: The Board received a copy of the Student Handbook. This is for Board information only.

5. MATTERS THAT REQUIRE BOARD ACTION

a. * Policies for Immediate Approval

i. Motion to Waive 1st Read for policies AC, AC-R (2), ACA, and ACAC:
MOTION: L. Steadman **MOVED** to waive the first read on Policy AC, AC-R (2), ACA and ACAC. **SECOND:** B. Tatro. **VOTE:** 9.829/0/0/3.171. **Motion passes.**

ii. Motion to adopt new and modified policies

1. AC - Non-Discrimination, Equal Opportunity Employment and District Anti-Discrimination Plan

2. AC-R - Nondiscrimination: Title IX Grievances

3. ACA- Discrimination & Harassment Grievance Procedure

4. ACAC- Title IX Sexual Harassment Policy and Grievance Process:

MOTION: K. Noonan **MOVED** to adopt new and modified policies AC, AC-R (2), ACA and ACAC as presented by the Policy Committee. **SECOND:** L. Steadman.

DISCUSSION: K. Noonan explained that these policies were in a Special Bulletin from the NHSBA and they would recommend that the Board accept the policies without a 2nd read. There are minor edits to the policies and different links to our website. We do need administrative help and the change would only be clerical. **VOTE:** 9.829/0/0/3.171.

Motion passes.

a. * Policies 2nd Read

i. JHBB: Attendance Monitoring/Accounting

ii. JICE-R: Student Publications

iii. JIHC: Use of Metal Detectors

iv. JLIA: Supervision of Students

v. EBB: School Safety

vi. JLIF: Receipt and Use of Sex Offender Registry Information

vii. EG: Creation of Communication Plans: MOTION: L. Steadman **MOVED** to adopt all policies as presented. **SECOND:** B. Tatro. **VOTE:** 9.829/0/0/3.171. **Motion passes.**

viii. Approval of SEALED July 16, 2024 Non-Public Meeting Minutes:

MOTION: L. Steadman **MOVED** to approve the Sealed July 16, 2024 Non-Public Meeting Minutes as presented. **SECOND:** K. Noonan. **VOTE:** 6.482/0/0/3.347. **Motion passes.** (C. McDaniel-Thomas and J. Cesaitis not included in the vote.)

b. * Approve the Consent Agenda

i. July 16th, 2024 Minutes

ii. Manifest: MOTION: B. Tatro **MOVED** to accept the consent agenda which included the July 16, 2024 School Board Meeting Minutes, the manifest for FY24 in the amount of \$785,711.24 and the manifest for FY25 in the amount of \$1,838,491.47. **SECOND:** L.

Steadman. **VOTE:** 8.697/0/1.132/3.171. **Motion passes.**

iii. Special Education Expendable Trust Withdrawal Authorization: J. Morin explained that the auditors came last week and she was waiting for the final number to withdraw from the Special Education Expendable Trust. The final number to withdraw from the Trust is \$86,294.00. **MOTION:** L. Steadman **MOVED** to withdraw up to \$86,294.00 from the Special Education Expendable Trust to account for FY24 negative end of the year balance. **SECOND:** B. Tatro. **DISCUSSION:** It was commented that J. Rathbun and J. Morin did a lot of work to get the number reduced. The deficit would have been a lot larger. J. Rathbun explained that it is appropriate to withdraw from the Special Education Expendable Trust because the negative was due to the Special Education expenses. **VOTE:** 9.829/0/0/3.171. **Motion passes.** J. Morin explained that the Board voted to retain funds last year but would not recommend doing it this year. **MOTION:** L. Steadman **MOVED** to retain \$0.00 from the FY24 Unexpended Fund Balance. **SECOND:** K. Noonan. **VOTE:** 9.829/0/0/3.171. **Motion passes.**

6. SETTING NEXT MEETING'S AGENDA:

- a. Loss of SRO**
- b. Staffing Update**
- c. CCC Update**
- d. Homecoming**
- e. Building Project Update**

7. SUPERINTENDENT'S CLUB: J. Rathbun informed the Board that they are working on the RSVPs for the evening mixer hour with soft drinks and appetizers for the members of the club, parents, administration and staff. It would be nice to have Board Members attend maybe one from each town. The event will be on September 17.

J. Morin asked the Board Members to please fill out the Annual Finance Audit. She has only received 5 responses.

8. PUBLIC COMMENTS: E. Stanley is very excited with the plans proposed by J. Rathbun under Celebrate MRSD which will get the kids and the teachers involved.

9. MOTION TO ADJOURN: **MOTION:** K. Noonan **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 PM. **SECOND:** B. Tatro. **VOTE:** 9.829/0/0/3.171. **Motion passes.**

Respectfully submitted,

Laura L. Aivaliotis
Recording Secretary

VOTING KEY:Yes/No/Abstain/Absent