

Monadnock Regional School District (MRSD)
School Board Meeting Minutes
November 19, 2024 (corrected 12/3/2024)
Monadnock Regional Middle/High School, Swanzey, NH

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

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

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. #celebrate MRSD: There are cards to be signed by the Board for Support Staff Appreciation. There were 25 students who attended the Trades Fair at NHTI in Concord. The students were chaperoned by staff and it was a very successful day. Today was the day in which NH students are allowed to apply to colleges in NH at no charge. The Football Team lost but had a great season. The next competition for the GOAT Trophy is “Can a Principal”. It is for collecting items for Tiny Tummies. The maintenance dept. has volunteered to pick up the items and bring them to the Tiny Tummies office. Thank you. K. Noonan commented that Emerson has already collected a lot of items.

4. MATTERS FOR INFORMATION & DISCUSSION

a. Standing agenda:

- i. Student Government Report:** There is no representative present.
- ii. Superintendent Goals Update: Building Project:** J.Rathbun explained that K.Barker and Andrew will be attending the December Board/Budget Committee Joint Meeting.
- iii. Board Meeting Calendar & Goals:** The Policy Committee will be meeting on December 10, 2024, the Finance /Facilities Committee will be meeting on December 11, 2024 and the Ed/Tech Committee will be meeting on December 4, 2024.
- iv. School Resource Officer (Status Update):** The Swanzey Police Department has been down a few officers but recently they had hired a new officer. J. Cesaitis suggested having 1 officer from each town on a rotating basis with an MOU. S. Peters said it would be a special certification. J. Rathbun said that the District has a SSO and in previous years did not have a SRO. He explained that the District has gone down every avenue to find an SRO. There is no one else. J. Cesaitis will be contacting area selectmen committees as a citizen and member of the Board. K. Noonan reminded him not to write on behalf of the Board.
- v. Staffing Update:** There are nominations in non-public tonight.

b. 1st Read Policies:

i. DKC-Expense Authorization/Reimbursement: C.McDaniel-Thomas is presenting Policy DKC to the Board. The committee made edits such as the rate for mileage is based on the IRS rate which the District uses but was not stated in the policy. They changed to traveling in New England instead of NH. K. Noonan commented that Policy BGB-R implies that any policy should go to the Policy Committee for review. C.McDaniel-Thomas commented that she is on the Policy Committee. The Board does not have a problem with the Finance/Facilities Committee reviewing the policies and forwarding them as a first read. L.Steadman would suggest a copy of the policy to go to K. Noonan.

ii. School Counseling Follow-up: At a previous meeting Laura Weiderman and L.Spencer presented information to the Board regarding the School Counseling Department. H. Blood had met with L.Spencer for some follow up questions and concerns. Tonight the Board will hear an update. H. Blood wanted to know what guidance actually does. She is bringing concerns to this meeting. She asked how to best support our students. She is hoping for an open dialogue. She spoke with community members. She would like the students to have help with navigating their goals and have opportunities after school. She does not believe that it is happening as well as it should. L. Spencer said that there are pockets that need to be improved. H.Blood said that there is a lot more that needs to be done. S. Peters said that the Education Committee should be on board. C. McDaniel-Thomas is not sure about the Board directing the process. She suggested that H. Blood ventures on her own not as a Board Member. S.Peters commented that the administration is working on it and can report to the Board. J. Strimbeck said that is a great idea. It was commented that the CCC was not able to find teaching staff so some of the students from Monadnock had to leave. What opportunities are there for those students? J. Rathbun said that the Tech Ed., Construction and Auto all lost the instructors. He said he has been talking to R. Malay regarding the CCC set up.

iii. BOY Student Headcount Report: J. Rathbun reported that there are 1622 students in District, 1598 in district and 24 out of district student

iv. NHSASS, Q1, iReady, 3-8: L. Spencer presented the test results to the Board. She commented that she does not believe that our students take the test seriously. The Math scores were similar to the State scores which were not very good. She commented on the SAT Math scores. She said this is not consistent with the current seniors. During COVID students only had Math every other day, we saw this and did nothing. We should have sat down with the students during WIN time, we did not and did a not so great job. J. Rathbun comments that we can not fix the terrible scores but moving forward we can. E.LaPlante commented that this is happening everywhere. S.Peters asked if the State changed testing. L. Spencer said no. L.Spencer explained she and Laura Weiderman attended a conference on assessment and accountability. Since the conference the administration has come up with a month by month planning calendar. She also explained that the State has offered to come and help. The students will practice the test so they know what to expect. It will become more familiar to the kids. B. Tatro commented that the ELA results are higher. She also asked if there is anything that the

Board can do to help. B. Tatro suggested Math Specialists. J. Rathbun said that is a budget item. J. Rathbun explained there is a new Math Program and there should be more training. The Reading Specialists are mandated the Math Specialists are not. K. Noonan thought that was a great idea. The committee discussed the opt out option with the administration. L. Spencer would suggest the principals discuss with the parents to let them know how important the test is. S. Peters said there needs to be a strategy for the students to want to take the test. It was commented that no one has found the perfect hook. L. Spencer commented that the staff will look at the competencies, standards and common core. The Math Dept. will give extra support during WIN as well as following the steps presented in the calendar.

5. MATTERS THAT REQUIRE BOARD ACTION:

a. MDEA Contract: L. Steadman took over the meeting in order to explain the three year MDEA Contract which the Negotiating Team ratified. She explained the steps and some of the language changes. One of the health insurance plans went away and there is an increase. There is nothing we can do. It was explained that the proposed Warrant Article for the first year would be in the amount of \$667,768. **MOTION:** B. Tatro **MOVED** to ratify the MDEA Contract as presented by the Negotiating Committee. **SECOND:** C. McDaniel-Thomas. **DISCUSSION:** K. Noonan commented that it is frustrating to have to vote 10 minutes after getting the contract. S. Peters explained the contract can not be seen by the public until voted on. He told her to take her time reading it. **VOTE:** 8.419/1.118/0/2.469 **Motion passes. (S. Peters recused himself from the vote)**

b. 2nd Read Policies:

i. JLCEA/KFD/GBGBA-Use of Automated External Defibrillators:

ii. JLCIA-Emergency Plan for Sports-Related Injuries & Additional Protocols for Athletic Participation:

iii. JLP Parental Notification of and Involvement in Student Welfare:

MOTION: K. Noonan **MOVED** on behalf of the Policy Committee to approve the 3 policies as presented. **SECOND:** L. Steadman **DISCUSSION:** J. Cesaitis asked about the AED. The Policy Committee changed the policy so everyone is able to use the AED in an emergency not only trained people. **VOTE:** 10.531/0/0/2.369. **Motion passes.**

c. Draft Budget Presentation: J. Rathbun explained the items which will be discussed at the Joint Meeting of the Board and the Budget Committee. He will have K. Barker and Andrew discuss the Renovation Project. J. Rathbun will present the process timeline, outside drivers, the BOY, cost per pupil, State Aid, Revenues, Education Freedom Account Funds, vouchers, proposed budget amount from 1.6 million to 1.4 million, Cutler building and others. The Board will explain the MDEA Contract and the proposed warrants.

d. Warrant Articles: **MOTION:** K. Noonan **MOVED** to accept **Article One** with a proposed budget of \$39,199,676 for FY 2025-2026 as written. **SECOND:** L. Steadman **VOTE:** 10.531/0/0/2.369. **Motion passes.** **MOTION:** L. Steadman **MOVED** to support **Article Two** the MDEA Contract based on the total sum presented for the first year. **SECOND:** K. Noonan **VOTE:** 9.414/1.118/0/2.369. **Motion passes.** **MOTION:** L. Steadman **MOVED** to support

Article Three repair of the roof over the boys locker room and the connecting section in the amount of \$120,000. **SECOND:** K. Noonan. **VOTE:** 10.531/0/0/2.369. **Motion passes.**
MOTION: C.McDaniel-Thomas **MOVED** to support **Article Four** Special Ed. Expendable Trust for \$1, **Article Five** Vehicle Expendable Trust for \$25,000, **Article Six** Building and Grounds Expendable Trust for \$200,000 and **Article Seven** Building and Grounds Expendable Trust for \$1. **SECOND:** J. Cesaitis. **VOTE:** 10.531/0/0/2.369. **Motion passes.** It was explained that **Article Eight** is acceptance of the reports. There may be a need for a placeholder regarding the purchase and sales of Cutler. The Article might ask the voters if they want to sell Cutler. Charter schools have first right of refusal. It has to sell for fair market value. S.Peters explained that there are costs related to closing Cutler. J. Rathbun explained that they are waiting for advice from J. O’Shaughnessy. There is also the bond interest issue which needs legal advice. S.Peters explained that the warrant articles from the unfunded balance can be put in order of importance by the Board.

e. Approve the Agenda

- i. November 12, 2024 Minutes:**
- ii. Manifest: \$ 3,401,311.07**
- iii. Transfers: MOTION:** J. Cesaitis **MOVED** to accept the November 12, 2024 Public, the Non-Public Meeting Minutes, to approve the budget transfer requested by J. Morin in the amount of \$52,900 to come from the Special Ed.Salary line and benefits lines to be placed in the Speech Health Ins. line and Special Ed.Transportation line and the manifest in the amount \$3,401,311.07 **SECOND:** C. McDaniel-Thomas **VOTE:** 9.499/0/1.132/2.369. **Motion passes.**

6. SETTING NEXT MEETING’S AGENDA:

- a. December 3, 2024 Board Meeting**
 - i. Building Update**
 - ii. MDEA Contract Overview:**
 - iii. Proposed Budget:**
 - iv. Warrant Articles Under Construction:**

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS: There were no public comments.

8. 9:20 PM Non-Public Session RSA 91-A:3 II (b) The hiring of any person as a public employee: MOTION: K. Noonan **MOVED** to enter into Non-Public Session under RSA 91-A:3 II (b) The hiring of any person as a public employee. **SECOND:** B. Tatro **VOTE:** 10.531/0/0/2.369. **Motion passes.**

9. 9:28 PM Non-Public Session 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: K. Noonan **MOVED** to enter into Non-Public Session 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:** H. Blood **VOTE:** 10.531/0/0/2.369. **Motion passes.**

10. MOTION TO ADJOURN: MOTION: K. Noonan **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting at 9:32 PM. **SECOND:** C. McDaniel-Thomas. **VOTE:** 10.531/0/0/2.369. **Motion passes.**

Respectfully submitted,

Laura L. Aivaliotis
Recording Secretary

VOTING KEY:Yes/No/Abstain/Absent