

MANCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION

Regular Meeting

May 12, 2014

Lincoln Center

PRESENT: Crockett, Cruz, Hagenow, Leon, Pattacini, Pazda, Scappaticci, Stafford, Thames

ALSO PRESENT: Interim Superintendent of Schools Dr. Kisiel, Assistant to the Superintendent for Finance & Management Brooks, Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Personnel Services Matfess, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum Radikas

ABSENT:

A. OPENING

A.1.& 2. Meeting Called to Order

Chairperson Pattacini explained the meeting was previously called to order at 6:32 p.m. in open session and Ms. Cruz moved to go into Executive Session, seconded by Mr. Crockett, for purposes of contract negotiations. Mr. Pattacini called the meeting back to order at 7:02 p.m. All in attendance participated in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, led by Mr. Pattacini.

A.3. Adoption of Minutes of Previous Meeting

ADOPTED – Minutes Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of April 21, 2014. Secretary Scappaticci moved and Mr. Crockett seconded the motion.

8/0 – Voted in favor. (Mr. Stafford not yet present)

B. CONSENT CALENDAR

Dr. Kisiel presented four items on the Consent Calendar for Board approval.

B.1. Personnel Action

Details had already been provided to the Board members with their agenda.

B.2. Transfer of Funds

Details had already been provided to the Board members in their agenda folders.

- Transfer from Buckley Language Arts Field Trip account to Buckley Language Arts Instructional Supplies and Materials account in the amount of \$200
- Transfer from Buckley School Administrative Professional Development account to Buckley School Administrative Office Supplies and Materials account in the amount of \$500
- Transfer from Illing Middle School Administrative In-Service account to Illing Middle School Administrative General Supplies and Materials account in the amount of \$300
- Transfer from Illing Middle School Math Dues & Fees account to Illing Middle School Administrative General Supplies and Materials account in the amount of \$600
- Transfer from Illing Middle School Administrative Professional Development account to Illing Middle School Administrative General Supplies and Materials account in the amount of \$700
- Transfer from Buckley Administrative In-Service account to Buckley Administrative Office Supplies and Materials account in the amount of \$500
- Transfer from Illing Middle School Social Studies Instructional Supplies & Materials account (\$2,195), Math Textbooks account (\$900), and Social Studies Text Books account (\$900) to Illing Middle School Contracted Kelly Subs PD account for a total transfer amount of \$3,995
- Transfer from Bowers School Administrative Repairs account to Bowers School Administrative General Supplies and Materials account in the amount of \$350
- Transfer from MHS Math Instruction Supplies and Materials account to MHS Curriculum & Instruction Professional Development account in the amount of \$1,351
- Transfer from MHS Interscholastic Sports Professional Development account to MHS Interscholastic Sports Athletic Supplies & Materials account in the amount of \$425
- Transfer from System-wide Curriculum Textbooks account to System-wide Curriculum Professional Development account in the amount of \$5,500
- Transfer from System-wide Math Contracted Substitutes account to System-wide Math Professional Development account in the amount of \$1,434
- Transfer from Elementary K-8 PE Contracted Services account to Elementary K-8 PE Professional Development account in the amount of \$1,500

B.3. Approve Board of Education Meeting Dates 2014-2014

B.4. The Manchester Education Secretaries and Informational Technology Employee's Union, AFSCME, Council 4, Local 991

The Chairman called for a motion.

Secretary Scappaticci moved and Mr. Leon seconded the motion to amend Item B4 to include the dates July 1, 2013-June 30, 2018.

8/0 – Voted in favor. (Mr. Stafford not yet present)

Secretary Scappaticci moved and Mr. Crockett seconded the recommendation to approve the Consent Calendar as amended.

8/0 - Voted in favor.

C. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Tom Stringfellow, 183 Hillstown Road, informed us that last week he attended the State Department of Education Board of Education meeting. The Governor and other officials were there. He is a member of the American Postal Workers Union and feels unions should be part of the American History curriculum. Mr. Stringfellow recommended the books: *American Creation*, which is about the Revolutionary War; and *If It's Broken Don't Fix It*. He spoke about Arbor Day and Earth Day and pointed out articles in *Archeology* magazine and the *East Hartford Gazette*. Last, Mr. Stringfellow recommended an article on Civil Rights in America.

D. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT – PART I

D.1. PTA Vice President Report

Dr. Kisiel noted that Ms. King was unable to attend the meeting this evening.

D.2. Status Report on Principal Search (High School and Pre-School Center)

Dr. Kisiel reviewed that the posting for MHS Principal closed last Friday. Dr. Kisiel and Mr. Geary will be completing preliminary interviews with the top two candidates on Wednesday. The Search Committee will meet May 22nd to review the applicants. This committee is comprised of teachers, parents, Board members, and administrators. The goal is to have a new principal by June 1st.

Regarding the principal search for the Per-School Center, the Head Start Policy Council has completed preliminary interviews and will recommend a candidate to Dr. Kisiel and Mr. Geary soon with a goal for an appointment by June 1st as well.

E. NEW BUSINESS

E.1. Proposed Referendum for School Building Repairs

Dr. Kisiel reviewed that even with the pending school building projects there are critical repairs that require immediate attention. He reviewed the Critical Assessment list with the items that cannot wait highlighted by school, which total \$4,495,000.

MHS: Locker room renovations \$1.2 million; weight room HAVAC repairs \$45,000; synthetic turf field and track \$2 million.

Waddell: Oil tank replacement \$120,000.

Martin: Raise chimney/air intake \$40,000; oil fat separator \$10,000; wheelchair lift for stage \$50,000.

Illing: Parking lot repair \$600,000.

Verplanck: Brick & Mortar repairs \$120,000.

Buckley: Oil fat separator \$20,000.

Robertson: Oil tank replacement \$140,000; oil fat separator \$10,000.

Central Office: Brick repointing \$140,000.

Mr. Pattacini reviewed that the goal is to recommend to the Board of Directors to put the above items on a referendum for November.

Ms. Pazda wondered if the track and field is part of the NEASC recommended repairs. Dr. Kisiel stated that they have recommended improvements to the instructional and athletic facilities at the high school. The original thinking was that this would be in the form of a building, however this is a more efficient way to meet the needs. Regarding the locker rooms, Ms. Pazda has first-hand knowledge of the disrepair of the locker rooms, having used them during the power outage a couple of years ago. She feels there is nothing frivolous on this list and all the items are clearly needed. Ms. Pazda feels she would not want either this or the school facilities referendum shot down because the public did not understand the need, so it is important to fully explain the need for both referendums to the public.

Mr. Stafford wanted to know how long synthetic turf lasts and what the benefits are. Dr. Kisiel stated he believes it lasts at least ten years, but impacts the use of the fields. Travel costs could be reduced because the turf will be accessible to all teams, including town teams. Right now we can no longer hold big meets due to the disrepair of the track, which was last updated about ten years ago. Dr. Kisiel earlier pointed out that a recent one foot section of the track that was replaced this year cost \$500.

Mr. Leon noted we have been trying to fund several of these items for many years. The NEASC list is 4 ½ years old and the items have only gotten worse in those years. Regarding the field, it is typical for a synthetic field to last 10 or more years with proper maintenance. The benefits include 24/7 use, it has better drainage, and there is no need for cutting. Mr. Leon notes that most large districts such as Manchester have synthetic fields. For years the Board has been accused of kicking

the can down the road, and we are trying not to do that anymore and now it will be up to the taxpayers to choose whether these items are financed or not. In the last referendum the Board of Directors decided to take out the parking lot at Illing and now it will cost more to repair/replace that. Regarding replacing the track, Mr. Leon feels that it is necessary, and points out that one hurt child could cost millions.

Secretary Scappaticci moved that the Board of Education propose that the Board of Director's consider, in a November 2014 Referendum, to encompass school building repairs in the amount of \$4,495,000.00.

9/0 – Voted in favor.

F. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

F.1. 2014-2015 Board of Education Budget

Dr. Kisiel reviewed the original Board of Education Budget was \$107,404,541 and the Board of Directors reduced that to \$106,506,279, for a total reduction of \$898,262. After some budget adjustments for items paid for by the town and increases to some services, the total amount needing to be reduced is \$779,091.

Dr. Kisiel recommended the following reductions totaling \$572,919:

- 2.38 ELL Teachers
- 1.0 New Library/Media Specialist – Illing
- 1.0 New Hall Monitor – Illing
- 1.0 Social Studies Teacher – MHS
- 1.0 Guidance Counselor – MHS
- 0.4 Assistant Principal – Washington
- Reduction in New Hire Salaries to Masters Step 1

Additional reductions:

- IT Shared Services - \$71,250
- Technology - \$134,922

Dr. Kisiel reviewed that the ELL teachers will remain in the Alliance Grant budget, as they are currently. Regarding the media specialist at Illing, one from the high school will be moved to the middle school for the Chrome Book roll-out.

Mr. Leon wondered if Mr. Geary was in agreement with all the reductions. Mr. Geary was in the audience and affirmed he is in agreement. Regarding the reduction from Step 3 Masters to Step 1, Mr. Leon wondered if this will impact our ability to hire quality teachers. Mrs. Brooks reviewed that we recruit at the UCONN

hiring fair and will try to keep new hires to Masters Step 1. Dr. Kisiel reviewed we also hire some Bachelors Step 1, but need to balance with experienced teachers as well. Right now we are not looking at a lot of new hires for next year, so this is manageable and if there is a qualified candidate for a hard to fill position, there will be room for offering additional steps.

Mr. Leon noted \$100,000 was added to facilities capital repair budget and wondered if that was earmarked for anything specific. Dr. Kisiel stated a project list would be provided to the board soon.

Ms. Pazda felt the budget recommendations were thoughtful. She is happy to have the Alliance Grant money to help with some items, however she reminds us that receiving this funding is not an honor and is meant for reform. As we move more items back to the grant, it impacts our ability to fund reform strategies. We need to be careful of that as we move forward.

Mr. Pattacini wondered, with the 2.38 ELL teachers remaining under Alliance Grant funding, what was not able to be funded through the grant for next year. Dr. Kisiel noted the Math Interventionist, some technology upgrades at the elementary level, and the lead teachers stipend were among the items removed. Mr. Pattacini pointed out the \$100,000 increase in capital repair ensures that Policy 3510 is made whole.

Secretary Scappaticci moved for the Board of Education to approve the Superintendent's recommended budget reduction to achieve the Board of Director's approved Board of Education budget for 2014-2015. Mr. Leon seconded the motion.

Mr. Pattacini pointed out we continue to make these trade-offs and in the past the Board has been criticized for not maintaining our buildings. Regarding the items we are not able to fund, some of them go to the heart of what we need to do for our students. He is hopeful the Board of Directors and our community understand the decisions that this Board is having to make due to funding issues. Mr. Pattacini also thanked the administration, Dr. Kisiel, and Mr. Geary for their work on the budget.

9/0 – Voted in favor.

G. COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Leon announced that the Future Problem Solving group from Bennet competed in North Haven and will be moving on to the international competition in Iowa June 12-15. The team of four needs to raise \$3,000 to go and will be asking the Board members for support. One of the members of the team is Mr. Leon's daughter.

Mr. Scappaticci visited the Lutz Children's Museum recently and received a tour from the director, Bob Eckert. The museum was started by a Manchester public school

teacher in the 1950's and was originally housed in the basement of Waddell School. For the annual \$12,000 stipend, the district is granted unlimited access, which so far this year has resulted in about \$21,000 worth of programming.

Dr. Kisiel revealed the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving has approved a \$50,000 planning grant for the purpose of exploring the opportunity to enhance early childhood education in Manchester. We will be working with Sharon Kozy and other members of the community in planning future programming, along with Dr. Ratchford and Dr. Radikas, who got this moving.

H. COMMITTEE REPORTS

H.1. Personnel & Finance Committee

Mr. Crockett reviewed the last meeting was held April 23rd with himself, Ms. Hagenow, Mr. Leon (via telephone), Mr. Pattacini (via telephone), and Mrs. Brooks in attendance. Ms. Dorsey and Ms. Smith from Human Resources were also present. The Committee entered into Executive Session to discuss contract negotiations. The committee returned to open session and reviewed the budget projections. Originally, the next meeting was to be a budget workshop on May 14th, but Mr. Pattacini pointed out that the two budget workshops scheduled have effectively been cancelled by tonight's adoption of the recommended budget.

H.2. Buildings & Sites Committee

Mr. Stafford reviewed the last meeting was held on May 1st with himself and Mr. Ziegler in attendance. The interior renovations plans for Illing and the electrical upgrades at Keeney and Buckley were reviewed. The bids for the Illing project are out and due May 5th. The Buckley and Keeney projects work began during April vacation. The next meeting is scheduled for June 5th at 6:00 p.m.

I. PUBLIC COMMENTS (Limited to items on tonight's agenda)

Mr. Ron Curran, 65 West Middle Turnpike, feels replacing the oil tanks is unnecessary and a quick Google search revealed a repair option, for spraying the inside of the tanks, exists. He feels this is a cheaper option and uses the existing structure. He found it doing a search of oil tank liner.

Mr. Tom Stringfellow, 183 Hillstown Road, supports the Consent Calendar and hopes #4 went well. Regarding the future high school principal, with the changing demographics in town he hopes the new principal can relate to the parents and students of color in town. We need to encourage kids to excel and feel welcome. He would like to see students of color encouraged to excel in Honors courses. Mr. Stringfellow would like to see a teacher of color for a future Teacher of the Year. Regarding the budget, Mr. Stringfellow feels Dr. Kisiel did his best and made wise choices. The Board of Directors understands rising costs. Mr. Stringfellow read an editorial regarding special education

funding in the paper today. He recommended the books: *Common Core Standards for Parents; Classroom Management; The Apps Generation; and Mindsets in the Classroom.*

Tracy Maio, 57 Horton Road, wondered if the two referendums would be separate or bundled. She does not want needed repairs voted down because people don't like the facilities plan.

Mr. Pattacini reviewed that the Board of Directors will determine how the referendum questions are placed on the ballot. The Board of Education identifies their needs and the Board of Directors determines if they will go to referendum and when and how that will be packaged. Mr. Pattacini encourages members of the public to reach out to the Board of Directors with their thoughts.

Mr. Leon responded regarding the oil tank repair suggestion. He noted that is a good recommendation for an above-ground oil tank, however the tanks in question are below ground and by state law they have to be taken out.

J. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

Mr. Leon would like it to be considered to move the Communication section to be after the last Public Comment session to give an opportunity to respond to comments if Board members wish. Mr. Pattacini noted that the Policy Committee is considering that among other changes to the agenda.

K. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Pattacini called for a motion to adjourn.

Secretary Scappaticci moved and Mr. Leon seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting.

9/0 - Voted in favor.

Adjournment 8:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jason Scappaticci
Board Secretary