

MANCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION

Regular Meeting

Monday, May 29, 2012

7:00 p.m.

Lincoln Center

PRESENT: Crockett, Cruz, Hagenow, Kidd, Leon, Luxenberg, Pattacini, Scappaticci, Walton

ALSO PRESENT: Interim Superintendent of Schools Dr. Kisiel, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, Dr. Richardson, Director of Pupil Personnel Services Matfess

ABSENT: Assistant to the Superintendent for Finance & Management Brooks

A. OPENING

A.1&2. MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:06 p.m. All in attendance participated in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, led by Chairperson Pattacini.

A.3. ADOPTION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

ADOPTED – Minutes Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of May 14, 2012.

Secretary Leon moved and Mr. Crockett seconded the motion.

8/0/1 – Voted in favor. Ms. Cruz abstained.

A.4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF BUDGET MEETING

APPROVED – Minutes Budget Meeting of the Board of Education of May 16, 2012.

Secretary Leon moved and Mr. Crockett seconded the motion.

7/0/2 – Voted in favor. Ms. Kidd and Mr. Pattacini abstained.

B. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT – PART I

B.1. Student Representative Report

Anna Manser, the new Student Representative, gave her report from MHS.

- Friday May 25-Sunday May 27th MHS drama club performed *You're a Good Man Charlie Brown*. Friday's show was sold out and the other performances were well attended.
- Tuesday, May 29th-Wednesday, May 30th nearly 600 awards were being distributed for both community and department awards.
- Friday, June 1st 160 seniors will attend their picnic at Holiday Hill.
- Saturday, June 2nd, is the senior prom at the Convention Center. 412 tickets were sold.
- Friday, June 8th, Final exams start and end on June 13th, with make-ups on June 14th.
- Monday, June 11th is the Super Senior Dinner to recognize all seniors who have never received an office referral in their four years at MHS.
- On Monday, June 18th, Senior Graduation will be held, meeting at 3:45 in Bailey Auditorium and then at 6:30 at the Convention Center.
- Boys Tennis made the state finals.
- Baseball made the state finals, but lost today v. South Windsor.
- Boys and Girls Track both had numerous athletes qualifying for states, and 5/30 is the station championship.

B.2. PTA President Report

Ms. Madore was not available this evening and asked for her report to be tabled to the June 11th meeting.

B.3. Buckley School Highlight

Principal, Matthew Daly, reported it had been an exciting school year with the Highland Park students and staff at Buckley. They will all be missed next year when they return to their home school. Mr. Daly showed a slide show highlighting the Hat Drive that had been spearheaded by three students, Joseph, Catherine, and Charlie this winter. This community service project received over 240 hats that were delivered to MACC charities.

Mr. Leon told the kids they had done a great job.

Mr. Pattacini thanked Mr. Daly for the presentation and stated this was just one example of the Manchester Public School students showing their public service and community involvement.

C. CONSENT CALENDAR

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

C.1. Personnel Action

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

C.2. Manchester High School – Extended Field Trip Request

Future Business Leaders of America National Leadership Conference to be held in San Antonio, Texas June 29th-July 3rd.

C.3 Appropriation to create an appropriation for CREC Student Success Plan Grant, in the amount of \$5,000 for the 2011-2012 school year

C.4. Permission to apply for the ED-244 grant, for the 2012-2013 school year in the amount of \$904.260

C.4. Transfer of Funds

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

1. Transfer from Martin School Administration Professional Development to Martin School Administration Hourly account - \$80.00.
2. Transfer from Systems Maintenance Consultant to Systems Maintenance Contracted Services account - \$40,000.00
3. Transfer from System Curriculum & Instruction Supply/Material to System Curriculum & Instruction Contracted Services account - \$388.00

The Chairman called for a motion.

Secretary Leon moved and Mr. Crockett seconded the recommendation to adopt the Consent Calendar, as outlined by Dr. Kisiel.

9/0 - Voted in favor.

D. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Tom Stringfellow, 183 Hillstown Road, spoke about the War of 1812, this being the bicentennial year. He suggested some articles including one in *Military History* magazine. Mr. Stringfellow spoke about anti-Muslim bias and noted an article in the November *Education Digest* regarding religious diversity and tolerance. In the summer edition of *Education Digest*, Mr. Stringfellow suggested articles on making summers count and the economics of inequality, the value of early childhood education. He also recommended the book, *New College Reality* by Bonnie Kerrigan Snyder, regarding how to choose a college, loan applications, and the application process.

Ms. Stephanie Knybel, 138 Bobby Lane, noted she had attended the play at MHS last week and thought it was a good performance. She expressed her dismay at the lack of press for the good things happening in town, and is hoping in the future more press will be reporting on the good events, like the Roundtable concert, the awards ceremonies, the free concerts, etc. We have to publicize the good in our town. Ms. Knybel gave kudos to Mr. Tyler for the wonderful job he does with the kids in the music department at MHS. Ms. Knybel is looking forward to prom and graduation this year, with her youngest graduating from MHS. She also hopes to see us at Relay for Life.

E. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT – PART II

E.1. SB 458 Overview and Implications for Manchester

Dr. Kisiel gave a Power Point presentation regarding new legislation to attack the issue of underperformance in the state. The new law has 96 different components and he presented the highlights tonight.

- 30 Alliance School Districts are effected, Manchester being one.
- Grant Procedures were reviewed.
- Grant funding of \$1,343,579 is available.
- District Improvement Plan is required.
- The grant is payable to the school district.
- The funding is renewable for up to 4 years.

Dr. Kisiel noted that on June 5th the State Board of Education will act on the grant guidelines and by June 11th we will receive those guidelines. By August 15th we have to submit our proposal for the grant in our District Improvement Plan.

The legislation also proposes a new design for professional development, eliminating the 90 CEU credits currently required and instead requiring 18 hours of PL (professional learning). New content addresses restructuring math and literacy and administrators will be required to have 15 hours of PL every five years.

Teacher evaluation is also addressed with new state model and guidelines as well as new requirements.

- Teacher rating/ranking
- PL based on group or individual needs
- Administrator training
- Remediation plans
- District plan needs to be consistent with state plan

Other pertinent sections of the law include:

- New statewide reading assessment for K-3

- Teacher reading exam for teachers and administrators in grades K-3.
- Physical exercise requirement of 20 minutes of continuous movement every day.
- School governance councils for under-performing schools
- Teacher tenure and termination
- Minority students identified for special education
- Coordinated K-3 reading program

Mr. Leon thanked Dr. Kisiel for the summary of the extensive legislation. He was surprised there was no requirement for pre-K. Dr. Kisiel stated that as part of the legislation there is coordinated early childhood efforts with community agencies, though he would also have expected more. In our own plan there is clearly an opportunity to address early childhood education. Mr. Leon also expressed concern that after the four years of possible renewals, we will be stuck with unfunded mandates. Dr. Kisiel agreed that even with the \$1 million, that is not a lot of money to achieve the expected goals.

Mr. Leon asked when we would expect to receive the grant as it will impact planning, and will it be required to be spent in this next fiscal year? Dr. Kisiel stated there was a short window of time, and if it is required to spend in the coming fiscal year a plan such as an extended school year will have to wait another year.

Mr. Leon also expressed concern that giving only two months to put together a grant proposal is not sufficient to do it right, as it is a daunting task. Dr. Kisiel agreed, but that was the requirement.

Ms. Walton thanked Dr. Kisiel for the overview and wondered if the teacher evaluation procedure was based solely on administrator observation. Dr. Kisiel stated student performance would also factor in.

Ms. Walton asked how frequently benchmark assessments were given to students. Dr. Kisiel stated they were scheduled for three times a year, but in between teacher-made assessments were also given. Student growth is looked at over a period of time.

Ms. Walton inquired as to how many Manchester schools already have School Governance Councils? Dr. Richardson noted Illing, Verplanck, and Robertson currently have them. Ms. Walton wondered if any more schools would add them next year, and that is yet to be determined, based on this years' testing results.

Ms. Walton was pleased with the 20 minutes of physical activity daily and wondered if it was required to be led by a certified physical education teacher? Dr. Kisiel stated that would be impossible and he would be looking into exactly what is meant by "20 minutes of continuous activity".

Mr. Pattacini noted that the Board will need to adopt the plan, which would likely not be ready by the June meeting, so a special meeting will need to be scheduled prior to August 15th. Mr. Pattacini wondered if it would be possible to ask for an extension. Dr. Kisiel stated he would inquire, but it would not be likely given. Mr. Pattacini asked if there were any other issues the Board needed to look at regarding this. Dr. Kisiel stated that the Board has a responsibility to ask administrators to report back about how students are doing and present regular presentations to the Board. He noted the grant will have time frames built into it.

F. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

F.1. Policy Proposals

Dr. Kisiel noted that the social networking policy presented at the last meeting will be tabled for now while the law firm investigates the objections by the ACLU and reports back. Dr. Kisiel asked for adoption of the other four policies presented at the last meeting.

F.1.a. Prohibition on Recommendations for Psychotropic Drugs

F.1.b. Confidentiality and Access to Student Records

F.1.c. Board of Education issued credit card

F.1.D Student Privacy

Secretary Leon moved for the Board of Education to adopt Policy listed as letter a, Prohibition of Recommendations for Psychotropic Drugs. Mr. Crockett seconded the motion.

9/0 - Voted in favor.

Secretary Leon moved for the Board of Education to adopt the Confidentiality and Access to Student Records policy. Mr. Crockett seconded the motion.

9/0 - Voted in favor.

Secretary Leon moved for the Board of Education to adopt the Board of Education Policy Board of Education issued credit card policy. Mr. Crockett seconded the motion.

9/0 - Voted in favor.

Secretary Leon moved for the Board of Education to adopt item d, Student Privacy policy. Mr. Crockett seconded the motion.

9/0 - Voted in favor.

F.2. District Technology Plan

Dr. Pease was available to answer any questions Board Members had on the plan that was presented at the last meeting. It was noted that the plan must be submitted to the state by June 15th. There were no questions.

Secretary Leon moved for the Board of Education to adopt the District Technology Plan as outlined by Dr. Pease. Mr. Crockett seconded the motion.

9/0 - Voted in favor.

F.3. 2012-2013 Board of Education Budget Adoption

Dr. Kisiel presented the edited list of reductions, as outlined in the last budget meeting.

Mr. Leon recapped the budget meetings and some of the reductions agreed to:

- Town Pension plan reduction \$310,000
- Self-insurance policy reduction MSIP \$ 16,980
- Town Information Services \$ 2,300
- 0.5 Town Facilities Project Manager \$ 59,198
- Early Childhood Specialist \$ 41,434

In fact the Board did not want to eliminate the Early Childhood Specialist, but is hoping to retain that position through the grant Dr. Kisiel outlined earlier. Everyone was in agreement not to eliminate the four teachers in the 3 elementary schools, but even with pushing off purchasing replacement vehicles other than the one necessary for immediate replacement, the budget was still \$121,000 short to fund those four teachers. It was decided to under-fund the MSIP account and go back to the Board of Directors, as suggested by several Directors, and ask for help with the unexpected transportation contract overrun of \$185,000.

Ms. Walton asked if the vote tonight was to approve the total budget figure (as required) or the specific line items? Dr. Kisiel noted it was for the total budget number. Ms. Walton noted she wants the Early Childhood Specialist and four teachers to remain in the budget and she supports going to the Board of Directors for help.

Ms. Luxenberg was concerned about the reduction of four teachers and urges the Board to see if any more money could be cut to fund those teachers.

Ms. Kidd also expressed concern about cutting the four teachers and would like to meet again to go over the budget.

Dr. Kisiel expressed his confusion about these issues. It was his understanding that the four teachers would not be cut, and MSIP would be under-funded for the time being instead, and by the end of the year we would make efforts to find the additional funding to make up that deficit.

Mr. Leon echoed Dr. Kisiel's remarks and stated we have no choice but to adopt the budget given to us by the Board of Directors, and we do not need to have all of the line items firm.

Ms. Cruz agreed with Dr. Kisiel that the Board had reached a consensus on those issues and was confused as to why it was being addressed tonight. The budget needs to move forward and she would like to adopt it tonight.

Secretary Leon moved for the Board of Education to adopt the Budget for the FY 2012-2013 in the amount of \$100,646,835.00. Mr. Crockett seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION:

Mr. Pattacini noted this reflects a reduction of \$1,085,721.00 from the original proposed budget sent to the Board of Directors. He thanked the administration for their efforts on the budget. Mr. Pattacini noted there was a significant reduction this year, not only with the \$1 million+ being cut by the Board of Directors, but the loss of 40 staff already cut because of the Education Jobs Fund monies ending and the \$2.4 million in other requests that were not approved in the original budget. He feels this is the reality that all Boards of Education face today – we need to balance the budget but public education has to do more with less. Every year cuts need to be made, but at this point it is starting to impact education. It is ironic that at the same time, the state is offering a grant that we need to apply for and work hard to get. Mr. Pattacini supports the motion for adoption of the budget.

The Chairman called the question.

9/0 - Voted in favor.

G. NEW BUSINESS

G.1. Request for Additional Appropriation

Mr. Pattacini noted that several Directors had opened the door for the Board of Education to request additional funds needed to cover the \$184,691 shortfall in the transportation contract.

Mr. Crockett stated this was the 7th budget he had been involved in with the Board and each year we never get what we request. He hears we will be devastated because of the budget, that we won't be able to open our doors, etc. If that were true, we would have been closing our doors in the past seven years. He supports asking, but does not think the Board of Directors will give us any more money. He feels we will make do with what we got and we will survive.

Mr. Leon stated we are not devastated by the budget, but he feels it is the Board of Education's job to advocate for every penny they can get to continue to enhance their education and he supports the request. Mr. Leon noted that back in January we had shown the Directors the need for critical repairs in our schools and in response to that the SMARTR Committee was created, which in the long-term will help, yet we had no choice but to cut the \$200,000 from our budget for those repairs. We have to at least try to get the additional funds, if for nothing else than to show the public we are trying.

Ms. Luxenberg thanked Mr. Leon for eloquently saying what she wanted to say. She asks the public to advocate for this additional funding on behalf of the Board of Education.

Ms. Kidd states that her children have been in the Manchester Public School system for the past 20 years and it has always been status quo. She hopes the Board of Directors can help us improve that and offer a better education for the children of Manchester.

Mr. Crockett wanted to be clear, he will support the motion.

Mr. Pattacini assured us that our schools are safe. He thinks we need to be providing more services to meet the needs of the students in our community. While he feels fortunate we are being offered a grant, he is at the same time saddened that we are one of the 30 lowest performing school districts in the state, which is what qualifies us for that grant. Mr. Pattacini states it is incumbent upon the Board to work to secure as much funding as possible.

The Chairperson asked for a motion.

Secretary Leon moved for the Board of Education to request an additional appropriation of funds in the amount of \$184,691.00 from the Board of Directors for the budget overrun of the transportation budget. Mr. Crockett seconded the motion.

9/0 – Voted in favor.

H. COMMUNICATIONS

None.

I. COMMITTEE REPORTS

I.1. SMARTR Committee

Mr. Crockett reported that the committee had met last Wednesday. The plan is to meet again on June 20th to continue the tours. They will begin at Highland Park at 5:15 p.m. and tour Bennet and MRA, ending with a meeting at MRA at approximately 7:15.

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

Mr. Tom Stringfellow, 183 Hillstown Road, congratulates the Buckley students for their noble effort in their hat drive. He offers his support of the consent calendar, especially for the Future Business Leaders of America. As he has asked before, Mr. Stringfellow would like a presentation from the MHS Business Department head, along with a student representative from DECA and FBLA, and the career center before the full Board during the coming year. Also, he would like a presentation from the Manchester Chamber of Commerce and the Junior Achievement.

Mr. Stringfellow stated the District Technology Plan was good and that SB 458 was also a good plan and important. He pointed out Barnes & Noble had some good resources for school technology. Mr. Stringfellow noted an article in the November 2011 issue of *Education Digest* about the top ways to help students with ADD/ADHD. He also suggested the article in *Ebony* magazine entitled "Why Good Boys Get a Bad Rap" in the May 2012 edition. An article on physical fitness in the Summer 2012 edition of *A Better Manchester* was suggested. Mr. Stringfellow also recommends the book *Childism, Confronting Prejudice Against Children* by Elizabeth Young-Bauehl.

Mr. Stringfellow disagrees with Romney's remarks in a *NY Times* article about U.S. education being third world.

K. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

Ms. Kidd would like all the committee reports on all future agendas. She noted inconsistencies with the reports, not being able to deliver them at the last meeting because copies were not included in the agenda, and this meeting the reports were distributed to Board members, but they were not listed in the agenda or reported on. She feels the public has a right to know what the Board is doing and who is attending these meetings.

Ms. Luxenberg would like to see the Odyssey of the Mind teams at the next meeting, on June 11th, so we can congratulate them. She feels we should be

recognizing these outstanding students and their coaches and be proud of their accomplishment at the World Competition in Iowa recently.

L. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Pattacini called for a motion to adjourn.

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

9/0 - Voted in favor.

Adjournment 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Neal Leon
Board Secretary