

MANCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION

Regular Meeting

January 14, 2013

7:00 p.m.

Lincoln Center

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

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

ABSENT: Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, Dr.
Richardson

A. OPENING

A.1&2 MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m. All in attendance participated in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, led by Chairperson Pattacini. Mr. Pattacini reminded the audience that tonight was the one month anniversary of the tragedy at Sandy Hook and the room observed a moment of silence in memory of the staff and students lost.

A.3 ADOPTION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

**ADOPTED – Minutes Regular Meeting of the Board of Education
of December 10, 2012.**

Secretary Leon moved and Mr. Crockett seconded the motion.

9/0 – Voted in favor.

B. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT – PART I

B.1. PTA President's Report

Mrs. Madore, Town-wide PTA President, was ill and unable to attend the meeting tonight and this report will be moved to a future agenda.

B.2. SMARTR Committee Report

Dr. Kisiel introduced Mrs. Megan Flick, a member of the School Modernization and Reinvestment Team Revisited (SMARTR) Committee, who presented a Power Point with the Committee's recommendations to the Board to date. The full presentation is available on the website. Mrs. Flick, who works for the State Department of Education, began by noting that the 30 Alliance Districts had received their grants recently and that at a recent meeting, her colleagues had commented that the Manchester Family & Community Competitive Grant was the strongest application in the state and for that we should be proud.

Mrs. Flick reviewed the charge of the SMARTR Committee, along with outlining the members of the committee and guiding principles established. She then moved on to the recommendations outlined in her presentation. The educational model SMARTR is recommending consists of Kindergarten through 4th grade being housed at the elementary schools with the creation of a Grade 5 and 6 campus at Cheney/Bennet, with a fully renovated and/or expanded Cheney School. The Committee also recommends the development of design feasibility parameters of a new or like-new renovation for Washington and Robertson Elementary Schools. The last recommendation brought forth tonight was for the creation of a magnet school within our district.

Mrs. Flick reviewed the rationale SMARTR had in making these recommendations. Regarding the K-4 model, this will create capacity for growth and/or swing space in the elementary schools, as well as allow for potential Pre-K in the future. Regarding the 5th/6th grade campus, this allows for students to acclimate to each location for longer and is an educationally sound and widely-used model. The rationale for choosing Washington and Robertson Schools is that both schools are currently at capacity and continued growth is predicted for these two areas. As for the recommendation for a magnet school, this will allow for innovative, theme-based learning for Manchester students and would help Manchester remain competitive given the regions many school choices.

Ms. Flick next reviewed the actions taken to date and the anticipated timeline. Currently there are Requests for Qualifications/Proposals (RFQ/P) from architects being done, which are due back in late January. By mid-late February interviews of architecture firms and a final selection of firms will be made. By late March the feasibility study of Cheney, Washington, and Robertson should be complete. In early to mid-June proposed schematic design and cost estimates will be submitted. SMARTR will review and approve final recommendations in early July. Review and approval by the Board of Education should be complete by late July/early August, followed by review and approval of the Board of Directions by late August/early

September. Plans will be submitted to the State by mid-September and a referendum should be on the ballot in November 2013.

Mrs. Flick then reviewed future priorities that SMARTR will now be focusing on, in no particular order: NEASC report for MHS; possible relocation of Central Office and Bentley; a central location for facility crews; attention to the Critical Assessment list; and enhanced security measures.

Mr. Crockett noted the magnet school recommendation is complete and has to come back to the Board of Education to make the final recommendation. Mrs. Flick agreed that SMARTR has identified it as a viable option for the town, but the design and model for the magnet would be a matter for the Board of Education to decide.

Dr. Kisiel noted that the timeline for a magnet school is essential and there is currently legislation pending for the consideration of expenditures for potentially three new magnet schools in the Hartford area. It is important for the Board of Education to provide the Superintendent with some direction by its vote to explore that option within this month or early next month and to authorize the Superintendent to begin discussions with the State.

Mr. Scappaticci recalled that the Board of Education had been asked by SMARTR to prioritize the schools they felt were in need of renovation at a prior meeting and that the list included Washington, Robertson, and Verplanck. He was curious why Verplanck was not on the list of recommendations tonight. Mrs. Flick noted that due to the population growth in the Washington and Robertson areas it was felt those schools were the first priority. Mrs. Flick did acknowledge that SMARTR is aware Verplanck is in need of repairs and it is on the table for discussion. She noted that other repairs will be addressed while trying to remain fiscally responsible within the feasibility of one referendum.

Ms. Luxenberg wondered what the drop deadline was to reach a referendum in November 2013. Dr. Kisiel stated he believed mid-late September. Dr. Kisiel also noted that the SMARTR Committee would like the Board to approve these recommendations by the next meeting so they can move forward.

Ms. Cruz wondered why we cannot take action on these recommendations tonight. She felt the questions asked by the Board were answered in this presentation.

Mr. Pattacini stated we can take action tonight. He feels it would be reasonable to direct the Superintendent to talk with the state and to authorize the feasibility study.

Dr. Kisiel felt it was not a question of the feasibility study, but the Committee wanted to know if the Board supports the proposals. Mr. Pattacini encouraged Board members to provide feedback and ask any questions they have.

Ms. Cruz again noted that we asked SMARTR to come forward with this information and they did, and she would like to take action tonight.

Ms. Walton clarified that the Board had asked three questions of SMARTR prior – to present an education model, to which SMARTR has recommended the Pre-K or K-4th grade elementary, 5th/6th academy, 7th/8th academy, and 9th-12th; to decide on a recommendation of a magnet school, to which SMARTR has recommended a magnet and moved this subject back to the Board; and for the anticipated renovation/capital improvement plan, which has been outlined tonight.

Ms. Cruz again noted that the answers have been given and action should be taken this evening.

Ms. Luxenberg stated she is not against affirming this, but had some questions. Regarding a magnet school, she wondered what the Committee envisioned, what grades would it host, would this be an intra-district or inter-district school?

Ms. Flick noted that SMARTR was only to investigate the feasibility of the magnet school option, but that it is up to the Board to make other decisions regarding grades, theme, and intra/inter district etc. Dr. Kisiel added that those issues will be discussed with the Department of Education and suggestions will be brought back to the Board.

Mr. Pattacini asked Ms. Flick about the 5th/6th campus and how widely used a model that is. Ms. Flick noted that it is an effective structure and used across the country, though not the most common. Dr. Kisiel added that he became familiar with this model 9 years ago and had researched it, finding that it was common in the mid-West. Dr. Kisiel noted that several other communities in Connecticut use the 5/6 model currently. This decision also recognizes that with the developmental level of children at that age it is an ideal time to bring those groups together.

Mr. Alan Strong, who is also a member of SMARTR and joined the discussion, noted that when looking through design models utilizing Cheney, which is a historic building which cannot be demolished, just made sense. He suggested possibly closing the street between the two buildings, which would lend itself to a campus atmosphere, with classes in different buildings, but

intermingling the students in the cafeteria, arts, library, etc. He noted it also made sense to allow for space in the elementary schools and to possibly add Pre-K at some point in the future.

Mr. Pattacini noted the feasibility study will be complete by late March and asked if it will then come back to both Boards for review. Ms. Flick noted that will likely be the next presentation SMARTR makes to the Boards.

Mr. Leon, who also sits on SMARTR and supports the recommendations, wants the Board not to lose sight of the critical assessment list. He reminds us that SMARTR was started because of that critical assessment list and we cannot forget it. Mr. Leon feels some of those items should be attached to this referendum.

Ms. Walton, another member of SMARTR, agreed and that the next phase will address the critical assessments and incorporate and prioritize them. She notes the proposal should serve all students throughout the district. Ms. Walton also acknowledges the tight timeline, but feels that the design and execution of the SMARTR Committee really allows for this to happen, with members of both Boards as well as the community leadership of the Committee, all allows us to look at all angles to benefit the taxpayers, students, and families that we serve.

Mr. Crockett, who Chairs the SMARTR Committee, wants the Board to be aware that if the feasibility study on Cheney comes back negative, this plan is shot. He asks that if any Board members have questions they need to ask them now. He feels it is important that both Boards stand together if we want this to pass.

Mr. Leon disagreed with the notion that if Cheney is not feasible that the whole plan is shot. He feels renovating Washington and Robertson is still a good plan. Mr. Crockett clarified that he meant the educational model of moving 5th grade to the Bennet campus would be shot, not the whole plan.

Ms. Walton wondered if SMARTR should start working on a contingency plan to consider other options while waiting for the feasibility studies to return.

Mr. Pattacini wondered if SMARTR had looked at alternatives other than the 5/6 model. Ms. Flick noted they had looked at a variety of models, including K-2, 3-5 among others. While she notes there is no contingency plan currently, the Committee will continue to meet regularly and can develop a plan. Mr. Strong felt that if Cheney is not feasible we should know by the end of February.

Mr. Pattacini reviewed the three items tonight:

1. Regarding the magnet school recommendation, the Board needs to decide to direct the administration to engage in discussion with the State to develop and explore the option of a magnet school in Manchester;
2. The Board needs to affirm the work of the SMARTR Committee and the educational model so they can proceed with the plan in place; and
3. Regarding the Critical Assessment list, the Board needs to decide whether the SMARTR Committee needs to evaluate the remaining critical assessment list or pass that back to the Board and Administration for review.

Secretary Leon moved for the Board of Education to direct the Administration to investigate a magnet school within our District. Mr. Crockett seconded the motion.

9/0 – Voted in favor.

Secretary Leon moved for the Board of Education to direct the SMARTR Committee to proceed with the plan outlined tonight, which is development of the educational model of Pre-K/K-4, creation of the 5/6 campus between Cheney and Bennet, and continue with the feasibility study for Washington and Robertson Schools. Mr. Atwater seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION:

Dr. Kisiel suggested the motion be revised. Dr. Kisiel feels the SMARTR Committee is looking for an affirmation of the educational model only, so they can move ahead. Mr. Crockett agreed.

Secretary Leon withdrew his motion. Mr. Atwater withdrew his second.

Secretary Leon moved for the Board of Education to affirm the educational model that the SMARTR Committee has outlined. Mr. Atwater seconded the motion.

9/0 – Voted in favor.

Mr. Pattacini then asked whether the Board felt the Administration or the SMARTR Committee should be reviewing the critical assessment list.

Ms. Walton believes is it premature to take action on this question tonight. She notes that the administration advises the SMARTR Committee and we should ask SMARTR to take a look at the list in collaboration with the Administration and then present an informal list of recommendations back to the Board. Mr. Pattacini agreed.

Mr. Crockett also added that the Buildings & Sites Committee has asked Mr. Ziegler to update the Critical Assessment list because the \$5 million received through this past referendum is being used to repair roofs and make some repairs.

C. CONSENT CALENDAR

Dr. Kisiel presented ten 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. Establish an appropriation in the amount of \$2,850 for FY2012-13 for the Enfield Head Start Grant from the State Department of Education for the augmentation of its services to low-income families

C.3. Establish an appropriation in the amount of \$92,137 for FY2012-13 for the Enfield Head Start Enhancement grant that is used for their extended day full year program and continuation summer program

C.4. Establish an appropriation in the amount of \$19,594 for FY2012-13 for the Manchester Head Start Link Grant for the expansion of its services to low-income families

C.5. Establish an appropriation in the amount of \$46,125 for FY2012-13 into a special funds account for Head Start Debt Service – Intercept Replacement Grant

C.6. Establish an appropriation in the amount of \$28,885 for FY2012-13 for the Enfield Head Start, State Department of Education Link grant

C.7. Establish an appropriation in the amount of \$50,990 for FY2012-13 under the Title III, Part A, English Language Acquisition and Language Enhancement. This grant will provide support to ELL students, teachers, and tutors in Grades K-12

C.8. Transfer of Funds

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

C.9. Manchester High School - Extended Field Trip Request – MHS Wrestling Tournament – Trumbull, CT – 14 students participating – February 15-16, 2013

C.10. The Board of Education to name itself as the Search Committee for the permanent Superintendent of Schools, including Dr. Kisiel and Mrs. Patricia Brooks as professional Advisors to the Board's Search Committee

The Chairman called for a motion.

Secretary Leon moved for the Board of Education to adopt the Consent Calendar, Item C in our agenda. Mr. Crockett seconded motion.

DISCUSSION:

Mr. Leon noticed that two elementary school principals will be retiring at the end of the year and he would like Dr. Kisiel to bring them forward prior to the end of the year so the Board may thank them personally for their long service within our District. Dr. Kisiel agreed.

9/0 - Voted in favor.

D. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Cynthia Joiner, 29 Cornell Street, who is a Washington parent, was distressed to learn recently that the Early Bird Program at Washington School is being discontinued as of March 1st. She is dissatisfied with this decision, and also with the fact that the staff that runs the program was not notified about this prior to the parents being notified recently. She feels this has been an effective program for the students. She knows that the Town has a contract with MELC for their before school program, and she recently visited MELC at the school and they had only 3-4 students in their program. She feels that the Board should have said, this school has a program, we do not need to contract with a service in this school and we will put MELC elsewhere. Ms. Joiner also noted the cost difference of MELC over the Early Bird program of an extra \$15 a week and this should have been considered as well. There needs to be more consideration and the Board should have looked outside the box and not waited until the last minute to say this is what is going to happen.

Stephanie Knybel, 138 Bobby Lane, felt the SMARTR Committee report was very informative. She does hope the community is kept involved, as this will be a big

price tag on the referendum. She feels the Town is being very positive with education, but feels we need to be careful. Ms. Knybel notes that the town looked at magnet schools in the past, and tried them in the past, and it hasn't worked. She is hoping going through the State this time they will give us better guidelines. Ms. Knybel notes that magnet tuition is starting to drive our budget with exorbitant amounts of money. She wonders if we can develop a good magnet school in town, will it be open to just Manchester students or opened up to surrounding communities. If it is open to surrounding communities, it could provide some income to the town, which would be great. Ms. Knybel states that we know the schools need improvements, but we have to listen to the community in regards to educational models – we want neighborhood schools. She notes that it is hard for parents with multiple children to go to multiple schools within the same family. It impacts the involvement of parents if they have to be at various programs in different schools. Regarding possibly closing School Street, she notes that was looked at in the past and the fire and police were against the idea.

Mr. Tom Stringfellow, 183 Hillstown Road, reminded us that both Dr. King's birthday and the 2nd inauguration of President Obama are next week. He stated Goodwin College is hosting guest speaker Diane Nash, who will be speaking about a non-violent approach, on Tuesday 10-noon and again on Monday at Smith Middle School in Glastonbury from 7-9 p.m. (information can be found by calling 860-913-2033). Mr. Stringfellow reminds us that Dr. King died for all Americans. He hopes people will take a positive message from his holiday. Mr. Stringfellow recommended the *Abolitionist* series on CPTV. He recommended the books *Capital Men, Do I Get My Allowance Before or After I'm Grounded?* and *Bullying – the Essential Guide – Prevention and Intervention*. Mr. Stringfellow noted that school violence is a problem nationwide, and should not just be a problem when it hits in the suburbs like with the tragedy in Newtown. He noted that in Chicago and other cities such as East Los Angeles, that children of color have been killed for many years, even in New Haven. He feels all children's lives should be valued, whether you live in the suburbs, urban, or rural areas. Now that it is a national problem talk about armed guards and arming teachers is occurring.

E. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT – PART II

E.1. School Safety and Security

Dr. Kisiel welcomed Chief of Police Marc Montminy this evening. Dr. Kisiel noted that the events in Newton on December 14th have forced us to look at the way we respond to incidents and the actions we take to protect our students and employees in schools. Dr. Kisiel notes that we could not build a school that would guarantee absolute safety, but we can take reasonable actions to improve communication, structure, and procedures regarding safety. Dr. Kisiel asked for the principals to meet with their staffs last month

before the holiday to consider what we need to do to improve the security in our schools. Dr. Kisiel commends the town of Manchester for the many initiatives that were already taken prior to this tragedy. Dr. Kisiel is currently collaborating with staff, parents, police, and fire and will have a full recommendation before the Board by March 11.

Dr. Kisiel gave a Power Point presentation, which is available on the website. He reviewed that the police department is in the midst of completing their safety and security assessment. One of their officers was specifically trained to do this type of work in the town, and we will have this report presented to us.

Dr. Kisiel stated we are standardizing the emergency response template for crisis management. In the past this was a flip-chart and it is being translated into a two-sided one page document for easier use in the case of an emergency.

All administrators are being trained in the use of Incident Command Systems (ICS) as required by the Homeland Security Presidential Directive #5. There are several new administrators in our district who have not had the benefit of that training and that is in progress of being completed.

All school visitors will be required to sign in, identify themselves and their purpose, and receive a visitor's pass. Staff has been asked to increase their vigilance to ensure all visitors are wearing their passes and that the school office is notified if a visitor is not wearing a pass or is unfamiliar to them.

All interior and exterior doors will remain locked. This does not mean interior doors need to be closed, but will be locked so that in the case of a lockdown it can easily be closed and will be already locked.

Dr. Kisiel will be seeking approval of a policy entitled Violence in the Workplace, which is a policy statement that states we will not tolerate violence, the threat of violence, or the use or carrying of a weapon within our schools.

The Community Taskforce will define the specific action steps that need to take place to improve safety and security. Dr. Kisiel reviewed some recommendations that have been sent to him so far, and will be reviewed by the taskforce, and eventually some will be included in a report to the Board. Some details cannot be discussed regarding security issues, as those details need to be kept as confidential as possible. As much as can be made public will be and the public should know that these issues are being looked at very seriously and carefully.

One item that is under consideration is changing classroom door locks to enable classroom doors to be locked from the inside. Currently they are only able to be locked from outside in all but four schools. Another item that has been suggested is for possible consideration for security to be present at the main entrance of all schools. Creating a buddy system between the School Resource Officers at the high school and elementary schools is also being considered, so if there are safety concerns the elementary Principal has direct contact with the SRO, instead of having to call the Police Department directly. Other items suggested to Dr. Kisiel are for installation of sound and motion detectors for evening building security; installation of visitor tracking systems; additional training for social workers, psychologists, administrators, and nursing personnel in managing the emotional aftermath of a tragedy; distribution of emergency backpack kits to all classrooms. Dr. Kisiel explained that the safety backpacks, which will be provided for each classroom, will include a first aid kit, flashlight, and instructions among other items. There is \$10,000 budgeted for next year for these backpacks, and they will be in every classroom either by the end of this school year or the start of next school year. The installation of an emergency communication alert system from classrooms directly to the police department (i.e., a panic button), is an interesting concept brought up at a state-wide meeting.

Chief Montminy stated there is a 60 page manual from the International Association of Chiefs of Police and the Bureau of Justice Assistance on how to prevent school violence, but the reality is there is nothing that can be done to stop an individual with an assault rifle. He noted that Manchester is more advanced than some of our neighbors and that since approximately 2007 we have been improving security. He noted there is a team comprised of members of the Board of Education, senior personnel, fire, and police that meet regularly to deal with these issues. Chief Montminy advised us that the Manchester Police have a response time of under 3 minutes, while the national response time is approximately 18 minutes. He notes that our police are active-shooter trained, and will engage as quickly as possible and do not have to wait for SWAT to arrive. Manchester is one of few communities with personal experience, having dealt with the shooting at Hartford Distributors in 2010. The chief spoke about the Safe Neighborhoods Initiative and that there is extra police presence in all routes that kids typically take to and from school. He noted that there are four School Resource Officers plus a supervisor (2 at the high school, 1 at MRA/Bentley, and 1 at Illing). Chief Montminy feels the schools need to concentrate more on safety drills, not so much on fire drills.

Chief Montminy next spoke about the MAPS initiative, which is a collaborative with the police allowing schools to handle problems that previously may have resulted in arrest. The chief reviewed the arrest data over the past three years. There has been approximately an 84% reduction in arrests over the

course of two school years. The MAPS initiative allows the police officer to step back and allow for other interventions to take place in dealing with behaviors. The goal of the SRO is to be a mentor and a positive role model in the school for the children.

Ms. Cruz was excited and asked for more explanation of MAPS. MAPS stands for Manchester Agencies, Police & Schools and is comprised of Youth Services, the education system, police, and fire to find a better way to deal with behaviors that may have resulted in involvement with the juvenile justice system in the past. They are working together to stop arrests, while addressing the problems that lead to the behaviors.

Ms. Walton wondered if the Board would be moving into executive session this evening to discuss security issues that should not be discussed in a public forum. Mr. Pattacini felt that could be done if there are questions the Board has that they do not want to be made public, or the executive session can wait for when Dr. Kisiel completes his study. Chief Montminy noted that if there are any questions tonight he will answer to the best of his ability and if there is a question that cannot be answered in public he will say so.

Ms. Walton commended the chief on his work with the MAPS initiative and that Manchester is taking a leadership role for the entire state, with the program being replicated in other towns, including Bridgeport, Windham, and Hartford. The results are excellent and it is obvious our students have benefitted from this. Ms. Walton does wonder if we are seeing any arrests at the elementary school level. Chief Montminy replied that it is rare to see an arrest at that level and more often than not there is a mental health issue versus an actual criminal intent at that age and they refer the individual for other sources of care rather than the criminal justice system.

Ms. Walton wants to tie back into the district's overall goals in looking at the achievement gap and wants to see arrests broken down by race, age, and charge to look at needed interventions. The chief noted we do have that data and that is the direction they are going, and they already track race, age, and sex. Dr. Kisiel noted tonight's presentation does include the reasons for arrests. He notes that MAPS has a database that tracks that information and the next report will include more details for the Board.

Ms. Walton wondered if this information should be looked at in a subcommittee instead of the Board as a whole. Dr. Kisiel suggested that possibly a District level Accountability Team be utilized. He has had this discussion with a representative of the Department of Education, who is the liaison on the Alliance Grant. This data, attendance data, benchmark data, etc., all needs to be analyzed by a District-wide Accountability Team. This is not yet done, but needs to be.

Mr. Leon thanked the Chief for his report and noted he is not comfortable asking security questions tonight, but does not want to wait until the March 11 final report. He would like the opportunity to go into executive session at some point to discuss security.

Ms. Walton wondered if there is an opportunity for the Board to look at both security and mental health services. She feels there is an opportunity to pave the way with a two-tiered approach to both security and looking at the mental health needs of our students and families simultaneously.

Mr. Pattacini suggested that there is a need for an executive session regarding security prior to the next meeting.

E.2. Suspension and Arrest Data Report

Dr. Kisiel noted that the arrest data was covered by Chief Montminy already and Dr. Kisiel presented suspension data to the Board. Dr. Kisiel noted that the data covered September through November for both this school year and last. Overall there has been a decline seen from 518 suspensions in 2011 during that time to 412 suspensions in 2012. There has been an increase in out-of-school suspensions from approximately 98 to 124, mostly from two elementary schools. These suspensions are mostly due to safety issues requiring the need for exclusion of the student from the classroom. The report notes that minority students are twice as likely to receive an out-of-school suspension as white students and three times as likely to receive an in-school suspension.

Dr. Kisiel noted that clearly in-school suspensions do not necessarily change the behavior; it only conveys that the behavior was inappropriate. Dr. Kisiel states that the model that the high school has adopted, using an integrated system of a team approach, the assistant principal works in hand with the social worker, psychologist, and guidance counselor, to intervene when necessary and this needs to be replicated in our middle school as well. The next report will be presented to the Board in February or March.

Ms. Walton wondered if these are the total number of incidents requiring suspension, or the total number of days of suspension. She feels there would be a benefit in looking at the number of days of out-of-school suspension. It was noted these are the total number of incidents, not days. Ms. Walton also asked if this should be looked at in subcommittee as it ties into the achievement gap, one of the district goals.

Dr. Kisiel noted the beginning efforts are being made to accumulate this information so that we can make decisions in the best interests of the children. The data is required to make the proper decisions. We are talking

about the mental health of the school and the climate of the school. This may be deferred as part of a district-wide Accountability Data Team to look at all the data being collected on students, so that important decisions about program changes, new programming, support systems, etc. can be made.

Ms. Walton asked if the Board would receive a quarterly update and Dr. Kisiel assured her they would.

Mr. Leon asked for clarification of the 412 suspensions, asking if these include repeat offenders. Dr. Kisiel noted it does. Mr. Leon feels it is important to look at the repeat offenders. Dr. Kisiel stated that he reads every suspension report throughout the district and that more often than not students receiving out-of-school suspensions are repeat offenders.

Ms. Cruz asked if we can get a breakdown of repeat offenders for the next quarterly report.

Mr. Pattacini wondered what the timeline would be to take the data back and establish an accountability team. Dr. Kisiel is working with the Department of Education so they can assist us in forming a data accountability team through the Alliance Grant. He states we need to take a holistic look at all information in determining how we should proceed with programs, interventions, new programs, etc. The Department of Education expects this to be in place by the start of the next school year. Mr. Pattacini wondered if the role of the Board will be a full Board update or to occur in subcommittee fashion? Dr. Kisiel has no thoughts on this yet.

Ms. Matfess added that she also looks at that data in deciding whether to suggest a referral of a child for special education for intervention. There are in-district programs that students are referred to when they have significant challenges and have received multiple suspensions.

Mr. Pattacini looks forward to an update on this committee and the next steps.

F. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

F.1. MOU Regarding Great Path Academy at Manchester Community College

Dr. Kisiel provided the Board with a revised Memorandum of Understanding that was initiated by the President of Manchester Community College and her discussions with the Attorney General's Office. The framework of the organization of Great Path Academy has changed over the years. It has gone from a school originally organized and supported by Boards of Education and Superintendents of Schools to provide an alternative and a middle-college

experience for our students. In the evolution of the last ten years, this has morphed into a school that was turned over by the Superintendents to a management agency, namely Capital Region Education Counsel, to oversee the management and administrative components of the school, because that was the request of Manchester Community College. In order to proceed to the next level, in giving Manchester Community College as having sole responsibility for the oversight of this magnet school program, having the operations managed now by the Hartford Public Schools, Manchester Community College having oversight, the Memorandum of Understanding really disbands the old governing body board and in its place establishes an advisory group of Superintendents or their designees to help advise Manchester Community College about the program and services required by students enrolled in that program. This is a shift in the governance structure of the school and one that the Superintendents representing the six districts who originally signed the agreement would like to see happen immediately. Dr. Kisiel asks the Board of Education to endorse the agreement as proposed by him and the President of Manchester Community College.

Secretary Leon moved for the Board of Education to endorse the Memorandum and authorize the Chairman of the Board of Education to sign the Memorandum of Agreement. Mr. Crockett seconded the motion.

DISCUSSION:

Dr. Kisiel reminded the Board they are actually voting to disband the old governance structure related to the management of Great Path Academy.

9/0 - Voted in favor.

G. NEW BUSINESS

G.1. Violence in the Workplace – Policy 4302

This is to be moved to a future agenda.

G.2. Certified Staff Code of Conduct – Policy 4303

This is to be moved to a future agenda.

H. COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Pattacini announced the mid-winter concert is scheduled for Wednesday, January 16th at Manchester High School at 7:30. It was also noted that the Budget meeting is set for Wednesday the 16th from 6:00 p.m. to approximately 8:00 p.m. and he encourages the public to attend.

I. COMMITTEE REPORTS

I.1. Buildings & Sites Committee

Mr. Leon reported that the last meeting was on January 3rd and in attendance were: Mr. Crockett, Mr. Leon, Mr. Atwater, and Mr. Ziegler. The committee toured Buckley for a review of the projects completed last summer. Mr. Ziegler outlined the gym floor refinishing project and the problem with the bleachers, which renders them unable to be used.

Mr. Ziegler updated the committee on the status of the school referendum projects. He noted that RFQs for the roof specifications are in and under review.

Mr. Ziegler updated the committee on the investigation of the potential solar energy project. Our facilities qualification for the project is to be determined.

The surplus equipment auction has been completed. The Nathan Hale gym and café are being cleaned for use by the Early Childhood Winter Fest on February 2nd and for future use by Recreation.

Mr. Ziegler asked the committee to consider a recommendation to update policy 3510 to adjust allocations to provide for the current needs of our facilities. The committee clarified that the current policy allocations are minimum percentages of the total budget and that they could be adjusted during the budget process.

The next meeting will be held on February 7, 2013 at 6:00 p.m. at Robertson Elementary.

I.2. Policy Committee

As the Policy Committee only just met this evening, the report will be held for the next Board meeting.

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

Mr. Tom Stringfellow, 183 Hillstown Road, concurs with the SMARTR Committee's report. He agrees with Ms. Knybel about the neighborhood school concept. Mr. Stringfellow thinks maybe we should look at themed schools. He feels input should come from a variety of people. Regarding security, Mr. Stringfellow felt the report from the Chief was great.

Mr. Stringfellow again remarked that he does not like the term "subgroup". He spoke about cultural stereotypes and that struggling white students also get in trouble and have family issues. Mr. Stringfellow would like to see reports from other principals regarding positive happenings.

Mr. Stringfellow recommended an article regarding underage drinking, physical activity, and amount of sleep impacting learning. He hopes for a better, safe year and notes he does not want armed campuses. We should focus on the positive.

Ms. Wilda Wyse, 102 Wetherell Street, was a school psychologist in the Manchester schools for 21 years. She wonders if we have a psychologist and social worker in all schools now. She expressed joy in working at Manchester High School and felt it was more like the real world. In the elementary schools, during her time in the system, the staff was mostly women and almost all white. ~~At MHS she encountered all races, both women and men, and she felt it was a~~ wonderful mix. In her 21 years there she never heard of partiality due to gender, race, or culture on behalf of the staff and it was a wonderful experience for her.

K. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

None.

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 9:18 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Neal Leon
Board Secretary