

MANCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION

Regular Meeting September 12, 2016 Lincoln

PRESENT: Caldwell, Hagenow, Jacobsen, Leon, Pattacini, Scappaticci, Stafford, Stefanovicz, Thames

ALSO PRESENT: Superintendent of Schools Geary, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum Radikas, Director of Finance & Management Clancy

ABSENT:

A. OPENING

A.1. & 2. Meeting Called to Order

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

A.3. Action to Fill Board Member Vacancy

Chairperson Pattacini stated that with MaryJane Pazda's resignation, the Republican nominee to finish her term is Ranon Caldwell.

Ms. Hagenow officially nominated Ranon Caldwell to fill the vacancy on the Board. Mr. Caldwell was born in Manchester and attended Bowers and Illing prior to graduating 4th in his class in 2009 from Cheney Tech. Ms. Hagenow noted that Mr. Caldwell has a passion for Manchester and he is ready to work as a team member of the Board of Education to help the children of Manchester develop the tools they need to succeed.

Mr. Scappaticci seconded the nomination of Ranon Caldwell. Mr Scappaticci noted that he has been impressed by Mr. Caldwell and feels that he has the best interests of the students at heart. He also noted that Mr. Caldwell is a graduate of MCC.

The Chairman called the vote:

8/0 - Voted in favor of Mr. Caldwell's nomination.

A.4. Swearing in of New Board Member

Joseph Camposeo, Town Clerk, swore in Mr. Caldwell to support the Constitution of America, the Constitution of the State of Connecticut, the Town Charter of Manchester and to faithfully discharge his duties.

Mr. Caldwell, now an official member of the Board of Education, thanked everyone and looks forward to working together for the benefit of Manchester's children.

A.5. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting

APPROVED – Minutes Regular Meeting of the Board of Education of August 29, 2016. Secretary Scappaticci moved and Mr. Leon seconded the motion.

9/0 – Voted in favor.

B. COMMITTEE REPORTS

B.1. Personnel & Finance Committee

Mr. Leon reviewed that the last meeting was held on August 29, 2016. In attendance were Ms. Hagenow, Mr. Leon, Mr. Thames, Mr. Geary and Ms. Clancy. Ms. Clancy provided the Committee with the June 30, 2016 End of Year Financial Report and Transfers. The budget ended at zero. The next meeting will be held on October 11, 2016 at Bowers Elementary School.

C. CONSENT CALENDAR

Mr. Geary presented six items on the Consent Calendar for Board approval.

C.1. Personnel Action

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

C.2. Transfer of Funds

- Transfer from Illing Middle School Contracted Services account to Illing Middle School General Supplies & Materials account in the amount of \$3,400
- Transfer from Adult Education Salaries account (\$5,437), Adult Education Life/Social Security account (\$12,274), and Adult Education Rentals account (\$1,143) to Adult Education Consultants account in the amount of \$526, to Adult Education Transportation/Travel/Other Purchases in the amount of \$11,713 and to Adult Education Supplies/Textbooks account in the amount of \$6,615, for a total transfer of \$18,854

C.3. Permission to revise the Authorized Signatures Change Form from the Connecticut State Department of Education Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education for the ED-099 Agreement for Child Nutrition Programs

C.4. Establish an increase in appropriation for FY 16-18 for the final grant award amount of \$2,619, under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) 619 grant, bringing the total grant award to \$66,922

C.5. Establish an increase in appropriation for FY 16-18 for the final grant award amount of \$68,201, under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) 611 grant, bringing the total grant award to \$1,742,703

C.6. Updated signatures on bank accounts, including Illing Middle School, Food & Nutrition Services, Manchester High School, Student Activity and Manchester Adult Continuing Education with United Bank

The Chairman called for a motion.

Secretary Scappaticci moved and Mr. Leon seconded the recommendation to adopt the Consent Calendar as outlined in Section C of tonight's agenda.

9/0 - Voted in favor.

D. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

Ms. Shania Stanton shared her excitement about the start of the new school year. She reported Freshman First Day was held on September 1st. About 75 juniors and seniors were present to mentor about 375 freshman. The upperclassmen attended three days of training prior to the event. The freshman were excited to start their school year and participated in activities and tours. Also on September 1st was the 183 Pizza Party for Seniors, with food and raffles. Seniors were able to retrieve their Chromebooks that evening as well.

On September 9th the assemblies for each of the academies was held. Open house will be held on September 14th. Parents will be able to follow their student's schedule that evening. On September 17th the Welcome Back Dance will take place in the MHS Cafeteria. Homecoming this year has a Dr. Seuss theme with the parade happening on October 1st and the dance held on October 2nd.

The ribbon cutting for the new Track & Field will be on September 23rd. SATs will be held at MHS on November 5th, although they start being held in this area as soon as October 1st. The Google Summit will be held September 30 through October 2nd at MHS.

This year there are approximately 313 fall athletes partaking in a variety of sports, some of which include track, football, soccer, swimming and volleyball. Their locker room renovations will be complete by the end of October.

Mr. Pattacini thanked Ms. Stanton for being a mentor for the freshman and wished her a great school year.

E. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Tom Stringfellow, 183 Hillstown Road, noted the 15th anniversary of 9-11 was yesterday. He expressed pride that we were able to pull together as a nation during that tragedy. Mr. Stringfellow recommended the book *America's Swastika*. He suggested an article in the September 1st *East Hartford Gazette* regarding Epipens and their cost. He also suggested an article on school athletes and concussions, along with a Civil War magazine he found interesting.

F. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

F.1. Update on Smarter Balance

Mr. Geary noted that we received the Smarter Balance results about two weeks ago. Dr. Radikas presented the results in various charts, which are available on the website.

Mr. Leon wondered which data could track cohort data. Dr. Radikas stated Fountas & Pinnell is used from Kindergarten through grade 6. For Science there is no cohort data. Mr. Leon feels it is important to see how each child trends up. Dr. Radikas also pointed out that the Student Assistance Team is working to be more consistent.

Ms. Stefanovicz wondered how easy it is for teachers to access a student's previous year's test scores. Dr. Radikas stated that is easily accessible online through Performance Tracker. Mr. Geary pointed out the data dashboard, which we didn't have before, makes it easy for the principal to see their school data by grade, band and in comparison to other schools.

Mr. Pattacini noted that last year the focus was on ELA and clearly there has been growth there. He is encouraged by that. With math there was not as much of an increase and he feels grades 7th and 8th need the most improvement.

Dr. Radikas felt that in the past the principals at Bennet and Illing were not as cohesive as could be. They have looked at what students need and supporting the teachers.

Mr. Geary reviewed that the data dashboard is monitored three times a year. He noted that our scores didn't get like this overnight and they will not get dramatically better overnight either. Improvement will take time, but we are clearly trending upwards. Mr. Geary notes that we must continue to seek grant funding as we cannot continue improvement without financial support.

Mr. Pattacini was encouraged by the progress and feels the Board and Administrators have worked together to create successes and that everyone is on the same page to work together to make improvements.

Dr. Radikas ended her presentation by extending an invitation to Board members to visit schools with her and ask questions they may have.

F.2. Introduction of New Administrators

Mr. Geary introduced all of the new administrators in the district. Pari Ghetia is the new Director of STEAM. She was previously a principal in residence and a 5th grade teacher in the district. Angela Manhertz, a previous school psychologist, is now the Special Education Supervisor for grades 6-8. Brienne Whidden, a previous first grade teacher and interim principal, is the new Special Education Supervisor for the elementary schools. At Bowers, the new Vice Principal is Anthony Brooks. He previously was a Dean in Hartford and a teacher in New Britain. Kathryn Parker, a previous ELA teacher at Illing, is now a Dean there, along with Darbin Patel, who previously was a Dean in Hartford. Cory Jackson is a new Assistant Principal at Illing after previously being an Assistant Principal in Meriden and New Haven. Last, Megan Thompson, who was previously a principal in residence at Keeney, is now the Interim Principal at Bentley.

Mr. Thames welcomed the new administrators to our team. He pointed out we have many challenges and our success depends on each of us to improve the

quality of education in Manchester Public Schools. Mr. Thames acknowledged that each new administrator has passed rigorous interviews and he welcomes them.

Mr. Pattacini looks forward to the new administrators great successes.

F.3. Update on Talent Development

Ms. Vonetta Romeo-Rivers presentation on talent development is available on the website. She reviewed recruitment and hiring, diversity, building from within, investing in our new teachers, TEAM, investing in our new administrators, university partnerships and the Hi5 program, along with employee wellness programs.

Mr. Scappaticci wondered how well attended the wellness events have been by staff. Ms. Romeo-Rivers noted that the yoga and salsa events were well attended, however the workshops presented by CIGNA were not as popular. This year Salsa will be taught by one of our teachers in the district, Jason Pepin. Another district employee, Heather Elsinger, will teacher Zumba classes. Board members are welcome to participate as well.

Mr. Scappaticci congratulated Ms. Romeo-Rivers on the 97% staff fill rate to start off the school year. He wondered what Principal Pause Day is. Ms. Romeo-Rivers reviewed that this past year principals have gathered on a regular basis to reflect on what successes they had and what might need to be changed. Administrators also have a pause day once a month at Central Office.

Mr. Scappaticci was happy to hear about the link with MCC for noon aides. He was pleased that his son is one of the new hires, working at Waddell, and the boy is enjoying his new job.

Mr. Thames suggested, as a way to increase minority recruitment, to advertise in ethnic papers. He also asked that recruitment flyers be shared with Board members, who may come into contact with prospective employees. Mr. Thames is excited about the grant from the State Department of Education and feels that

we can make a difference with that grant. He wondered how we can see that materialize. Ms. Romeo-Rivers stated it depends on funding as to how many people we will be able to support with test prep. We will look to principals to identify non-certified staff who are fabulous with students and parents that might be helped.

G. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Mr. Pattacini reviewed this is the second reading for the following policies. Unless there are objections, they will be adopted this evening.

G.1. Policy 1121 - Communication with Public & Media

Secretary Scappaticci moved for the Board to adopt Policy 1121 - Communication with Public & Media. Ms. Stefanovicz seconded the motion.

8/0 - Voted in favor.

G.2. Policy 5141.4 - Student Wellness Policy

Secretary Scappaticci moved for the Board to adopt Policy 5141.4 - Student Wellness Policy. Ms. Stefanovicz seconded the motion.

8/0 - Voted in favor.

H. NEW BUSINESS

None.

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

Mr. Tom Stringfellow, 183 Hillstown Road, felt Dr. Radikas' presentation was thorough. He notes that parental involvement is important and pointed out there are many different types of families, including grandparents raising children, foster families, gay parents, and adoptive families among other types of families. Mr. Stringfellow notes that he is a black man who speaks his mind and he hopes people keep an open mind

and not pre-judge. The book *A Test* about the pro's and con's of testing was recommended. In the *Hartford Inquirer*, Mr. Stringfellow recommended an article on dealing with minority issues. He noted that blacks come from many different countries and backgrounds. Mr. Stringfellow feels we need better teacher training across the board.

J. COMMUNICATIONS

Ms. Jacobsen invited everyone to partake in the CT Down Syndrome Buddy Walk to be held at Rentschler Field on October 1st. She also noted that Bowers Elementary School PTA is raising funds to build a new playground and their theme is "Do You Want to Build a Playground".

Mr. Scappaticci gave kudos to Verplanck for their 9-11 ceremony that he attended yesterday. Both the fire department and police department were present at the event, including a Verplanck alumni who is a fireman.

K. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

Ms. Stefanovicz is requesting a monthly update on the 2025 plan, including specifics on the Cheney construction and where the Waddell building design is, as well as the transition plan for the Cheney building. Ms. Stefanovicz is also looking for a follow-up regarding how and when the non-certified staff were able to view the video shown at the last Board meeting regarding student interaction. Last, Ms. Stefanovicz is excited about the school liaison program.

L. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Pattacini called for a motion to adjourn.

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

8/0 - Voted in favor.

Adjournment 9:21 p.m.

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Respectfully submitted,

Jason Scappaticci
Board Secretary