

Monadnock Regional School District (MRSD)
School Board Meeting Minutes
September 18, 2018 (corrected 10.2.18)
Monadnock Regional MS/HS, Swanzey, NH

Members Present: Winston Wright, Kristen Noonan, Neil Moriarty, Nicholas Mosher, Cheryl McDaniel-Thomas, Rob Colbert, Brian Bohannon, Lisa Steadman, Karen Buono, Betty Tatro, Eric Stanley and Scott Peters. **Absent:** Karen Wheeler

Administration Present: L. Witte, Superintendent and J. Swanson, Business Administrator.

Also Present: L. Aivaliotis, Recording Secretary

“We collaborate not just to teach, but also to engage and educate every student in our district in an environment that is challenging, caring and safe, while fostering life-long learning.”

1. **Call to Order:** L. Steadman called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

2. **PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

1. **Student Government:** There is no report.

2. **Presentation on the work of the Monadnock Funding Group:** J. Cesaitis of the Monadnock Funding Group read a letter to the Board which explained the committee had disbanded due to the fact they could not agree on a formula.

Rob Young a previous member of the Monadnock Funding Group provided the Board with an information packet which contained the work they did. He is optimistic that the School Board will be able to come up with a formula that will make most of the people happy and put this to rest for another 5 years.

Jim Rousmaniere a Selectmen from Roxbury explained the Monadnock Funding Group did a lot of work on the committee. The committee proposed alternative options and he would ask the Board to look at them. C. McDaniel-Thomas thanked the committee for all of their hard work. L. Steadman asked did the committee seek legal counsel in regards to the cap. The committee did not seek legal counsel.

3. MATTERS THAT REQUIRE BOARD ACTION

1. CCC Regional Agreement: L. Witte passed out the CCC Agreement to the Board. She asked that they review it and possibly take action at the next meeting.

2. K-2 Class Size: L. Witte passed out class size information to the Board. She explained there are no classes that exceed the State of NH requirements but there are classes that exceed the MRSD requirements. She met with C. Woods, J. Rathbun and the principals to discuss this situation. She said it was a great discussion. She said currently the district had budgeted for 76 para professionals. There are 2 vacant spots. She would like to add 2 paras at Emerson and 2 paras at Troy. They would like to hire 4 para professionals but it is one additional position as far as funds go. **MOTION:** S. Peters **MOVED** to direct the Superintendent to hire 4 para professionals as previously described by the Superintendent. **SECOND:** B. Tatro. **DISCUSSION:** The Board asked if there was any discussion with MESSA. L. Witte said there was no need for a sidebar or MOU. B. Tatro thanked the administration for listening. L. Witte said the principals were very happy. Thank you from the team. N. Mosher asked what funds will be shifted to hire the para. J. Swanson said some areas have been identified. There are areas where funds were allocated for raises and not used because the positions were filled with less compensation. She could bring specific accounts next time. N. Mosher does not want to compromise. J. Swanson said she assured the Board they are not compromising. L. Witte said we had vacant positions and hired at a lower rate. We have made sure the children with IEPs have their one on one and we have adjusted the groups. **VOTE:** 11.243/0/.998/.757. **Motion passes.**

4. MATTERS FOR INFORMATION & DISCUSSION:

1. Board Chair Report: L. Steadman informed the Board there will be a non-meeting to discuss issues with legal counsel following this meeting.

2. Operations/Superintendent's Report:

1. Open Positions: L. Witte reported there are open positions at Emerson, Gilsum, Cutler and a school psychologist at the high school. L. Witte explained they are contracting the special education services. Special Education teachers are a critical area.

2. School Safety: L. Witte reported she had met with D. LaPointe, J. Swanson and N. Richardson, read the list of safety issues and looked at 3 or 5 that would have the most significant impact. The group came up with locked doors-interior and exterior, cameras-upgrades and new installation, door sensors/alarms on all doors, 3M bulletproof film on all 1st floor windows and secure vestibules. L. Witte explained on opening day the administration instructed the staff to make sure all doors are locked at all times. They can be open in the rooms but need to be locked. There also has to be functional covering on the windows. So far this has gone well. It is a huge improvement. The exterior doors cannot be left opened; this is a real priority. We are focusing on the safety teams at each school, we are reviewing the emergency

plans at each schools and working with the local emergency folks to refine the plans. Five out of the 6 schools have already had some kind of a drill. The district has received funds from a grant for safety items for the schools.

Troy and Emerson will have their homeland security audits soon and then apply for more grant funds.

L. Witte has reviewed the District Wide Climate Survey and she has identified what is awesome and where we need more effort. R. Colbert commented we will always have safety items is it appropriate to have a line for safety items in the budget. L. Witte explained we have to break it out by object code. Yes, it is appropriate she said. It was asked if every staff member has a name tags. R. Colbert said he has been in the schools and there are people that do not have them. L. Witte said they are supposed to. R. Colbert asked about a security officer. L. Witte said it was not discussed during the meeting and was not on the list. R. Colbert said N. Richardson had said there is a need to have a security officer in each school. L. Witte did not hear that and must have missed it on the list. N. Moriarty suggested pinning the name tags on their shirts on the left side. L. Witte explained her presentation to the staff on the first day of school is shared in the packets she passed out. L. Steadman has safety concerns with the court yard.

L. Witte informed the Board the budget timeline is in the packet. The joint meeting with the Board and Budget Committee will be on November 17, 2018. B. Bohannon will ask the Budget Committee if that date is agreeable.

L. Witte included the NH Legislative Service Requests in the packet. L. Witte is asking for support from the Board so she will be able to oppose these bills on the Board's behalf.

High Level Report on Troy School incl. Structural and Soil Testing: D. LaPointe reported there are no serious concerns regarding the soil testing at Troy. There was nothing found and there were no contaminants. He will have a full report for the Facilities Committee at their next meeting.

A list of fundraisers and special events was presented to the Board.
There is no need for non-public session. There will be a non-meeting to meet with legal counsel.

Thursday, September 20, 2018 there will be an Education Funding Forum at the KMS. This is a joint effort with SAU 29 and SAU 93.

Motion from the Facilities Committee: MOTION: R. Colbert **MOVED** on behalf of the Facilities Committee to ask the Superintendent to instruct the Business Administrator to gather information on the cost per student per school for each elementary school in the District.

SECOND: B. Tatro. **DISCUSSION:** It was asked how much work would we be asking of the Business Administrator. J. Swanson said it is obtainable and would take 5 to 6 hours. L. Witte commented they have 2 contracts being negotiated and a proposed budget being worked on. N. Moriarty said the committee needs the information for a building project. This motion was previously requested by a single Board Member. B. Tatro asked if the audits were still being worked on. L. Witte said the FY17 is almost complete and then the FY18. N. Mosher asked when a good time would be to look at this. B. Bohannon suggested November 10, 2018. L. Witte would ask for December 11, 2018. B. Tatro commented that the committee is not proposing a building project for the upcoming budget. R. Colbert and B. Tatro would agree on the December 11, 2018 date to present the information. **VOTE:** 11.120/1.121/0/.759. **Motion passes.**

3. Educational Report:

1. MRMHS Band: R. Skrocki reported on the High School, Middle School and the elementary school band programs. He explained the High School Band Program has increased to 88 students with 37 students in the 3 Jazz Bands. They also have an Honor Band. He informed the Board there is a Pep Band that performs at basketball games and also at KSC and FPU. This is on a volunteer basis. The High School Band has been invited to the Outback Bowl. They will be away from December 28, 2018 until January 2, 2019. They will be marching during half time. They will be driving down to Florida. The Middle School Band is at an all-time low and half of the class is inexperienced. This low turnout could be due to the MS schedule change. Band is scheduled in the middle of the day. The choice is band or recess and the students are going out to recess. This is an item of concern. The elementary schools are not scheduled in. There are about 30 students at Cutler participating in band. His long term goal is for 25% of the MS students playing an instrument. E. Stanley asked the cost of the trip to the Outback Bowl per student. R. Skrocki said the cost is \$1160.00 per student. He explained there is some fundraising going on. N. Mosher commented on a great presentation and B. Bohannon appreciated all of the work R. Skrocki has done for the programs. R. Skrocki said the goal is \$120,000.00 for the trip, new uniforms and some new instruments. They would like to fund raise \$13,250.00. The funds are due Nov. 1, 2018. R. Skrocki said we are the only band from the Northeast attending the Outback Bowl. B. Tatro would like to challenge all of the other Board Members to donate the stipend they receive for being on the School Board to this trip. She will be donating all of her stipend. L. Steadman asked R. Skrocki to come back in November to let the Board know where they stand on the funding.

2. Keene School Start Times: L. Witte attended the meeting regarding a later start time for KHS. This is a parent driven meeting. The MSHS will start later but the elementary schools will start earlier. There is no information on how this will impact the CCC or the sending districts. She would like to compliment everyone that spoke. There were about 90% of the people present who were opposed to the change. The Keene School Board will take this up in October.

3. School Supplies: J. Rathbun conducted a survey to find out how much if any the staff spends on supplies for their students. The amount ranged from \$0.00 to \$300.00+. The reasons for the teachers spending their money for supplies also varied. L. Witte explained there is a pre-approval process. J. Swanson said it is important to go through the requisition process. Currently it is a paper process and we are looking to fix that. N. Mosher commented that student's families have been asked for basic items. He does not believe this should be the practice. It should be available to the schools. N. Mosher said the principals should make sure the teachers have what they need. C. McDaniel-Thomas commented if the parents do not donate the budget will go up. L. Witte commented it is what teachers do they spend their money. R. Colbert commented the reimbursement process is too slow. J. Swanson said they are working to speed up the process. N. Mosher would like this discussion to be on the next Board agenda.

4. Education Committee Charter: MOTION: B. Tatro **MOVED** on behalf of the Education Committee to approve the Education Committee Charter as presented. **SECOND:** C. McDaniel-Thomas. **VOTE:** 11.166/0/1.075/.759. **Motion passes.**

4. Other Matters for Discussion:

1. Policies for First Read:

1. ACE-Procedural Safeguards/Non-discrimination on the Basis of Handicap or Disability: S. Peters explained it does not seem that the Board is reading the policies in their packets prior to the Board Meeting so at the first read he would like to go through the rationale. S. Peters read the rationales for each of the policies. The Board will vote on the policies at the next meeting after all questions have been answered.

2. GCQ-Non-renewal, Termination and Dismissal of Certified Staff: S. Peters read the rationale.

3. KB-Title I Family and Community Engagement Policy: S. Peters read the rationale.

4. IJ-Instructional Resources and Instructional Resources Plan: S. Peters read the rationale.

2. Policy JLF as it pertains to Title 9: L. Witte explained Policy JLF refers to when an adult believes a child is being abused or neglected. R. Colbert will have an online conversation with L. Witte regarding the Title 9.

3. SAU Operations-Phone Attendance, HR position: N. Moriarty said he called the SAU and the message said the box was full. He would suggest every phone call to be answered in less than an hour. This situation needs to be corrected. L. Witte said she was not aware of this and will look into it. L. Witte reported we now have an office manager.

L. Witte explained she plans on presenting a proposal for an HR person. She also explained they do follow progressive discipline. R. Colbert said he would support a full time HR position. L. Witte said she has not decided what we need. N. Moriarty would like to put this on the 2nd meeting in November's agenda.

4. Update on MDEA Insurance Pool: L. Witte explained the issue is still in the judges' hand.

5. Funding Formula: N. Mosher said personally he will not invest a lot of his time in this. There are not a lot of avenues. L. Steadman said if the School Board does not do something the towns will come up with options. C. McDaniel-Thomas said we need to take this on and get it passed. Do we need an ad hoc committee? K. Noonan would suggest asking legal counsel what the options are regarding the cap. L. Steadman would suggest the Board look at the information the committee is supplying. L. Witte has a packet the committee had given to her and she will email it to the Board.

6. SRO/SSO: It was explained an SRO can only do the job in Swanzey not the other towns. The SSO is able to go to all of the schools in the District. R. Colbert asked during the previous meeting did anyone consider or ask the sheriff's dept. N. Moriarty believes the warrant article was defeated. N. Mosher commented if we had the funds he would like both positions if not stick with the present position. C. McDaniel-Thomas would suggest deferring this to the Superintendent for personnel and ask her to make any changes if she thinks it is appropriate.

7. Update on Discussion around MTC/Cutler: R. Colbert explained in the Facilities Meeting the MTC/Cutler option is one of many ideas. B. Bohannon explained the original motion was to send it to Finance and Facilities.

5. CONSENT AGENDA:

1. September 4, 2018 Minutes: MOTION: C. McDaniel-Thomas **MOVED** to approve the September 4, 2018 School Board Meeting Minutes as amended. **SECOND:** B. Tatro. **VOTE:** 11.243/0/0/.750. **Motion passes.**

2. Manifest: MOTION: B. Tatro **MOVED** the manifest for 2017-2018 in the amount of \$2080.22. **SECOND:** C. McDaniel-Thomas **VOTE:** 11.243/0/0/.750. **Motion passes.**

MOTION: B. Tatro **MOVED** to approve the manifest for 2018-2019 in the amount of \$1,192,554.85. **SECOND:** C. McDaniel-Thomas **VOTE:** 11.243/0/0/.750. **Motion passes.** J. Swanson will show the Board Members 20 minutes prior to the next Board Meeting how to read the manifest.

6. SETTING NEXT MEETING'S AGENDA:

- 1. CCC Agreement**
- 2. School Safety Meetings**
- 3. Improve Supply Procedure**
- 4. Phone System**
- 5. School Funding Formula**
- 6. Budget Committee/Board Meeting**
- 7. MDEA Insurance Pool**
- 8. SRO/SSO Sheriff's response**
- 9. 2017-2018 Surplus**

7. PUBLIC COMMENTS: D. Coffman commented that it was very hard for the audience to hear the Board's conversation. There were no microphones. He would suggest not forming an ad hoc committee to study the funding formula. He would suggest the Board pick a night and come up with something. He did attend the KHS school start time proposal presentation. He would suggest the Board not waste their time on this issue. More than 40% of the students are in extra-curricular activities not to mention jobs. Let's spend money on education instead of this time change. D. Coffman would encourage the Board to find the funds for the band trip.

Barbara Young of Fitzwilliam explained the Funding Committee spent over 6 months working on the information they passed out to the Board. Give them the time it deserves. There are committee members available to help the Board go through the information.

Robert Young informed the Board that he would be available to help with the forms.

8. ADJOURNMENT: MOTION: S. Peters **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting at 10:12 PM. **SECOND:** K. Noonan. **VOTE:** 11.243/0/0/.750. **Motion passes.**

Respectfully submitted,

Laura L. Aivaliotis
Recording Secretary