

Monadnock Regional School District (MRSD)
School Board Meeting Minutes
September 7, 2021
MRMHS Library/Zoom, Swanzey, NH

Members Present: Kristen Noonan via Zoom, Winston Wright, Colleen Toomey, Scott Peters, Michelle Connor via Zoom, Karen Wheeler via Zoom, Lisa Steadman, Nick Mosher via Zoom, Brian Bohannon, Dan LeClair and Betty Tatro. **Absent:** Eric Stanley and Cheryl McDaniel-Thomas.

Administration Present: L. Witte, Superintendent, J. Rathbun, Assistant Superintendent and J. Morin, 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:** S. Peters called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

2. **PUBLIC COMMENTS:** There were no public comments.

3. **CELEBRATE MRSD:** L. Witte reported she was able to attend the home cross country meet.

S. Peters toured the new Tech/Ed. space and shared the photos with the Board. He said it was great to see the progress.

4. **MATTERS FOR INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION:**

a. **Operations/Superintendent’s Report:**

1. **Opening Updates:**

i. **Staffing Update (in Packet):** L. Witte had emailed a document to the Board regarding the number of vacancies. She provided information to the Board on the new summer hires which the Board had authorized the Superintendent to do over the summer.

ii. **Enrollment Update (in Packet):** L. Witte provided a document in the packet of a quick snapshot of the enrollment numbers. This is not the BOY. The enrollment number as of August 31, 2021 is 1668. This number will fluctuate until October 1. She thought this is where we would be at this time.

iii. **Elementary Class Configurations (in Packet):** L. Witte provided a snapshot of the class configuration in the packets. This information was requested at the last meeting.

2. Title IX and Athletics-A Review (in Packet): L. Witte provided information on Title IX and Athletics regarding Booster Clubs due to a number of emails, questions and a lot of misinformation. The bottom line is we can accept Booster funds but we have to look across all programs and make it even. L. Witte commented that equality is not always the same dollar amount.

B. Tatro asked about a team not being able to attend a game because they did not have a bus. L. Witte explained there was a team who was not able to attend because First Student did not have a driver. It was suggested to have parents drive. L. Witte said there may be a liability issue.

3. Project Beyond the Bell Summer Program Presentation: F. Ashworth is not in attendance. This will be on the next meeting's agenda.

4. Assessment Schedule 2021-2022: J. Rathbun explained that the staff assess the students every day. There are a number of assessments including IReady that the district will be using. This will be given to grades K-2 and 3-8. The information from this test will give up a baseline. This will be administered in Nov. and then compared with the end of the year results. This will allow us to see how much learning was lost and interrupted. The 9,10 and 11 graders will take the PSAT and SAT. The State testing is done in the Spring. The IReady test can be done in the Winter or Spring. If it is done in the Spring the students will have a lot of testing going on. He said the report cards data will continue to be presented to the Board. It was asked how much time would it take for all of the May testing. J. Rathbun explained each section of the test would take a couple of hours, the students need to be in small groups and the whole program would take days to get all of the kids done. He said maybe 6 hours per student. The whole environment of the school changes when testing is going on. It interrupts academics. That is why we do not want to do both tests in May. The testing from last year has not come back to the District. L. Witte explained there was a big opt out on the test about 50% of the students did not take the test. She said that does not tell the story but there is enough to talk about. She also explained they need to do a better job at letting people know they can opt out. We had not been doing that in previous years. B. Bohannon does not agree with holding the data until late Fall or Winter. We need to look at the data. J. Rathbun commented we have been having rich conversations on the report card data. It is significantly better data. The data being asked for is half a set of data. To make big decisions on 50% of the kids he does not agree with. B. Bohannon would like to review the data J. Rathbun has. J. Rathbun explained he had given 6 data reports to the Board. L. Witte explained we have changed the curriculum cycle in Math because of concerns. We have taken some steps. Give us until October 1. She will be seeing the Commissioner on Friday and will ask about the test score results. N. Mosher asked for the classroom data. L. Witte explained that information is in the report card data.

5. ESSR Grant Inputs and Plan Filing: L. Witte reported there were 28 responses to the survey on where to use the grant funds. All of the responses were teachers and a large majority wanted ventilation and climate control. L. Witte said she did submit a plan in

accordance with the time frame. J. Rathbun explained the process for approval of items regarding the grant funds. Quotes and bids may be required for certain items. S. Peters asked if there are any special projects being considered. L. Witte has had a conversation with K. Barker and he gave us broad stroke ideas. We need help from K. Barker. J. Rathbun said air quality is very much in line with the grant.

N. Mosher thought there might be a COVID Update. He thought it should be a standing agenda item. L. Witte explained there was an email to the Board on the number of COVID cases. L. Witte explained when there is a case in a certain school the principal will send a letter home with the students. She also said according to DHHS there is no quarantine with social distancing and masks being worn. It was commented that there are rooms where 3' of social distance is not possible. N. Mosher would like to talk about how parents are notified on the next agenda. B. Bohannon suggested the same letter to the Board be sent to the parents. L. Witte will ask the principals. She does not receive the letter; she receives the notification.

b. Board Chair Report:

i. Follow-Up on June 1st & June 15th Non-Public Minutes: S. Peters explained in the June 1, 2021 Non-Public #3 Minutes potential stipends and compensation were discussed. The Board sealed the minutes because we did not have all of the information. On June 15, 2021 we entered into Non-Public thinking to continue the discussion on compensation but what happened was we were presented with using the CARES funds for stipends for all staff. S. Peters said at that moment we should have left the non-public session. He admitted that as the Chair of the Board it was his fault. The Board went into non-public with the right intention and sealed it with the right intention. The mistake was not exiting non-public for the vote. He does believe the Board was correct regarding the sealing of the non-public minutes. S. Peters apologized to the public. B. Tatro said she is not sure S. Peters should take all of the responsibility. S. Peters said that is the role of the chair. He had the best intentions. L. Steadman as Vice Chair said she is not sure she would have caught that if she was present.

2. Audit Survey: Board Members completed their surveys for the Auditors and J. Morin in turn gave the completed surveys to the Auditors.

3. Elementary Walk-Throughs: S. Peters explained the Fin/Fac Committee conducted walk-throughs of Troy, MTC and Gilsum with K. Barker. Administration, principals, maintenance dept. staff, Board Members and Budget Committee Members were present. The committee will schedule a walk-through for Emerson and Cutler.

4. Board Calendar/CRC/Community Listening Sessions: The CRC is working on scheduling the Listening Sessions for October and November. They would like to have one in Gilsum, Troy, Fitzwilliam and Swanzey. The Board Members of the individual towns are asked to attend. The committee will have to contact the principals to make sure the buildings are available. The CRC is still discussing the possibility of setting up these meetings with Zoom also. S. Peters said having a Zoom meeting also could be challenging.

5. MATTERS THAT REQUIRE BOARD ACTION:

a. Special Education Tuition Rate: L. Witte explained the sending District will be responsible for the cost for the services needed for the student. She did mention that three parents are paying regular ed. tuition to have their student attend Monadnock. J. Morin explained it is a different calculation for the student's individual needs and it is paid for by the sending District. The sending district pays any additional needs of the student. S. Peters summarized and said a Special Ed. student cost is based on elements to support their needs. The Board took no action for a Special Ed. Tuition Rate.

b. Manifest: MOTION: B. Tatro **MOVED** the manifest in the amount of \$2,023,504.50. **SECOND:** W. Wright **VOTE:** 10/0/.757/2.243. **Motion passes.**

c. Continue with the 3 team cooperative for girl's ice hockey with Keene, Fall Mtn. and Monadnock: MOTION: L. Steadman **MOVED** to continue with the 3 team cooperative for girl's ice hockey with Keene, Fall Mtn. and Monadnock. **SECOND:** C. Toomey. **VOTE:** 10.757/0/0/2.243. **Motion passes.**

d. August 17, 2021 Minutes: MOTION: B. Tatro **MOVED** to approve the August 17, 2021 Public Meeting Minutes as presented by honoring the recording. **SECOND:** W. Wright **DISCUSSION:** L. Steadman had a question regarding the minutes. The minutes stated L. Steadman took 2 weeks to respond to A. Hopkins. She was not comfortable with that. The August 17, 2021 recording of the meeting will be reviewed to see if the statement was not correct. **VOTE:** 8.672/1.115/.757/2.456. **Motion passes. N.Mosher left the meeting.**

e. SETTING MEETING'S AGENDA:

- 1. Review COVID Parent Note**
- 2. Follow-Up Committee Virtual Meetings**
- 3. Beyond the Bell**
- 4. NHSASS-DHHS in packet**
- 5. Substitute Rate**
- 6. MS25, DOE 25, 2.5% Reserve**
- 7. October 5, 2021 Resolutions**

K. Wheeler would like to discuss CDC and DHHS in regards to close contact. S. Peters said this has been settled. K. Wheeler would like to have the opportunity to make a motion at the next meeting. She feels as if other members would want to as well.

6. Public Comments: A. Hopkins thanked the Board for addressing the non-public minutes. He also said it was impossible to hear a few of the Board Members due to their soft voice and the Superintendent from behind the monitor. He suggested microphones for the next meeting.

M.Diven via Zoom suggested the Board Members remain as professional as possible. She was referring to a member who made a comment about face masks at the last meeting. She said as a

public representative no matter your thoughts there are comments that need to be kept under wraps. She is concerned about the lunch periods and a lot of children in one place. She would like to know if outside lunch is an option. She suggested keeping the air flowing throughout the schools with fans.

7. NON-PUBLIC SESSION: under RSA 91-A:3, II (c):

a. Review of Sealed Minutes: MOTION: B.Bohannon **MOVED** to enter into Non-Public Session under RSA 91-A:3, II (c) Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely adversely affect the reputation of any person, other than a member of the public body itself, unless such person requests an open meeting. **SECOND:** C. Toomey. **VOTE:** 10.544/0/0/2.456. **Motion passes.**

8. Return to Public Session: During non-public session the Board reviewed sealed non-public meeting minutes and had a conversation on the procedures around the sealing of non-public meeting minutes.

9. ADJOURNMENT: MOTION: C. Toomey **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting at 9:07 PM. **SECOND:** W. Wright **VOTE:** 10.544/0/0/2.456. **Motion passes.**

Respectfully submitted,

Laura L. Aivaliotis
Recording Secretary

VOTING KEY:Yes/No/Abstain/Absent