

**MONROE BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**Monroe, Connecticut**

**Meeting Minutes**  
**March 7, 2016**

**Present:** Chairman Donna Lane  
Secretary Shannon Reilly-Monaco  
Board Member Christine Cascella  
Board Member Jeff Guttman  
Board Member Carlos Reinoso, Jr.  
Board Member Jerry Stevens  
Board Member Alan Vaglivelo

**Absent:** Vice-Chairman George King III  
Board Member James Martinez

**Also present:** Superintendent James Agostine  
Assistant Superintendent John Battista  
Finance Director Gabriella DiBlasi  
Masuk Student Board Representative Kanu Caplash  
Masuk Student Board Representative Amit Gupta  
Masuk Student Board Representative Ali Moraveck

**Call to Order**

*Chairman Lane* called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. and led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Exemplary People**

*Lisa Peterson*, Secondary Instructional Leader, World Languages. *Assistant Superintendent Battista* introduced *Lisa Peterson* who worked on the Curriculum Mapping that was presented at a previous meeting. He said that *Ms. Peterson* had approached him a few years ago with the idea of using Google Docs to create the Curriculum Mapping after the District had purchased software that was not doing the work they wanted. *Assistant Superintendent Battista* continued that *Ms. Peterson* not only saved the District money, she provided a better product. *Ms. Peterson* gave a brief presentation on the curriculum maps and explained it is really a large number of Google Doc links. *Ms. Peterson* gave a brief presentation on the curriculum maps; “it is a living document, teachers are using it regularly and it doesn’t cost the District anything. It is really a large number of Google Doc links.” The maps show every course with a description and details the content of every unit. There is also a faculty page for every unit in addition to the parent page so teachers can upload any resources they have to share with their colleagues. *Assistant Superintendent Battista and Superintendent Agostine* thanked *Ms. Peterson* for the work she did and noted it was a major undertaking.

## **Report of the Chairman**

*Chairman Lane* reminded the Board that voting on the Turf Field will be held tomorrow at the Senior Center.

### **Motion to approve the Consent Agenda**

**Motion: (Reilly-Monaco)**

**Second: (C. Cascella)**

Discussion: None

**Motion passed 7 (Lane, Reilly-Monaco, Cascella, Guttman, Reinoso, Stevens and Vaglivello)-0**

16-011

## **Reports of the Committees and Liaisons**

**Masuk Student Representatives** - *Student Board Representative Moravek* said last week the Senior Class saw the Yellow Dress, a one woman play on dating violence. The Ring dance is Friday evening and the Pi Day 5K will be held on Sunday. The race raises money for a scholarship in the name of *Kathy Kuhl* which will be awarded to a senior going into a field involving mathematics. *Student Board Representative Caplash* said that last Friday the Boys Swim Team hosted the Southwest Conference Championships and this Saturday, there will be the Class M trials. The students will have an advisory on the Capstone this Wednesday and there will be a school-wide assembly on the dangers of E cigarettes on March 16<sup>th</sup>. Over the weekend, The New England Regional Companionship and the Masuk Robotics Teams participated and two of the teams qualified to go to the World Championships in April. He continued that the Prom Fashion Show, a fundraiser for Post Prom, will be held on March 16<sup>th</sup>. There will be a Capstone launch assembly next Tuesday for the junior class.

**Curriculum Committee** - *Board Member Vaglivello* said that the committee met and discussed doing a course revision for Introduction to Business Concepts and Technology at no cost to District. The original curriculum was developed in 2009 when the emphasis was on keyboarding. The other course proposal is Facing History and Ourselves. The curriculum proposals will be discussed later at tonight's meeting.

## **Public Participation**

There was none at tonight's meeting.

## **Report of the Superintendent**

*Ms. DiBlasi* said that the February update will be presented at the next meeting. The Food Service RFP did go out and 3 companies attended the walk through on February 23<sup>rd</sup> and bids are due on March 14<sup>th</sup>. She continued that insurance is still trending positively though February was a heavy month for claims as people are beginning to exhaust their HSAs. *Ms. DiBlasi* added that she will have a conference call on Thursday regarding procurement of energy pricing for the 2017-2018 fiscal year. *Superintendent Agostine* said that State of Connecticut has contacted the District on the New Accountability

System from last year's test results and Stepney Elementary School has been recognized as a School of Distinction.

*Superintendent Agostine* said that the District is beginning to have conversations regarding migrating the Unified Sports Program to the Culinary Arts Program in conjunction with the Coffee Cart. He continued that the Coffee Cart was impacted due to the District's commitment to the nutritional standards; *Peggy Ann Diaz* had suggested that the students and their mentors bake according to the new standards and offer those items on the cart. The cart is operational and there are discussions to potentially offer a course next year that would involve the special needs students and their mentors in a Unified Culinary Program.

*Superintendent Agostine* said that the District has been invited by the State Controller to participate in The Connecticut State Employees Insurance Program called the Connecticut Partnership. The idea is to take all CT State employees, invited municipalities and Boards of Education and offer insurance at more competitive rates due to their buying power. *Jay Fiorello* from Ovation did a cost comparison of the proposed plan; the projected savings of \$13,600 by going to the State system would be negated with the 4.5% annual increase for each year in the 3 year commitment. *Superintendent Agostine* said that this is not a viable option for the District. *Superintendent Agostine* said that the Board of Finance budget workshop with the Board of Education will be held tomorrow evening. He continued that the Kindergarten numbers are coming in higher than anticipated and it appears that a Kindergarten section will need to be added at an estimated cost of \$60,000. By state statute, the graduation date cannot be finalized until April 1, but the tentative date for Masuk Graduation is scheduled for June 14.

## **Presentations**

**Board of Education Professional Development - Overview of Facilities and Operations** – *Dr. Zamary* said that many facets and areas are impacted by Facilities and Operations and what they do; “when things go well, things are invisible. You may not see the good work these people do every day, but there are a lot of great things going on.” He continued that there is over 569,000 square feet in the District buildings to maintain as well as grounds as well. In addition to the thousands of students and faculty who use the buildings on a daily basis, the buildings, particularly Masuk, are also used at night by community groups and organizations. *Dr. Zamary* explained the cleaning ratio which is the number of staff to the number of square feet in each building. He continued that the first shift is generally the head custodians and they manage the buildings, maintenance, heating and cleaning. The second shift is the individuals who clean the entire building when the facilities are not in use during the time. *Dr. Zamary* added that Facilities and Operations work closely with many departments including:

Administration

Staff

Boards and Commissions

Land Use Department

Health Department

Police Department

Fire Department

Department of Public Works  
Engineers  
Contractors  
Vendors

He continued that the custodial staff includes a licensed electrician, a licensed plumber, landscapers, mechanics, carpenters, painters, heavy equipment operators, and an artist. *Dr. Zamary* added that there is on-going training for the staff including:

Human Resources  
Health Department  
CIRMA  
Honeywell  
Fuss & O'Neil  
The State of Connecticut  
DuMouchel

The list of Projects includes:  
Roof Replacements  
Honeywell Energy Efficiency Contracts  
Oil Tank Replacements  
Security Systems and Sally Ports  
Ongoing repairs with Heating, Electrical and Equipment

### **Old Business**

There was none at tonight's meeting.

### **New Business**

**Curriculum Proposals, First Review** - *Mr. Schwarz* introduced Finance and Investing for Grades 10, 11 and 12. It is a 2<sup>nd</sup> level business course for students who have completed the personal finance course. Last Spring, the State Department of Education recommended that a second level finance course be added, the District applied for and received a \$20,000 grant. *Mr. Schwarz* noted there is a great deal of interest from students and there is no additional cost to the District. *Jonelle DiSette* has a strong financial background and she will develop the curriculum; topics included Banking, Goods and Services, Retirement Savings, and Business Ownership. It is an unweighted course, as are all the business courses, so it is not intended as an honors level course. *Board Member Reilly-Monaco* asked if the course would run in the fall, *Mr. Schwarz* said that is their intention.

*Mr. Lowell* presented Facing History, a blend of the study of human behavior and historical case studies from America and around the world, to learn how people's actions affect history. The course requires students to consider their role as citizens in our community, country and the world. The course is an elective and will be open to juniors and seniors. There is no additional cost to the District.

Both proposals will be voted on at the next meeting.

**ALICE** - *Superintendent Agostine* said that he, *Dr. Zmary* and *Officer Buckley* recently attended training in response to violent intruders in our schools. ALICE stands for Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter and Evacuate. He said that the Hide and Hope method is no longer sufficient and the basic premise of the training was to change the perception of who is a first responder. *Superintendent Agostine* said they learned that the average response time for a first responder to arrive on scene is approximately 5-6 minutes while the average length of time an intruder is active is 4 minutes so the school staff become first responders. He continued that through simulations, they learned to take action by barricading doors and creating disturbances/distractions to slow down an intruder; “we need to practice more evasive action.” The training will be brought to the Safety Committee as well.

*Assistant Superintendent Battista* said the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual da Vinci Festival will be held on April 1<sup>st</sup> and April 2<sup>nd</sup>; a mailing was sent home to every household in Monroe.

### **Board of Education Self Evaluation-Executive Session Anticipated**

#### **Motion to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of reviewing the Board of Education’s Self Evaluation**

**Motion: (J. Guttman)**

**Second: (C. Cascella)**

Discussion: None

**Motion passed 7 (Lane, Reilly-Monaco, Cascella, Guttman, Reinoso, Stevens and Vaglivo)-0**

16-012

#### **Motion to Adjourn at 8:15 p.m.**

**Motion: (J. Guttman)**

**Second: (J. Stevens)**

Discussion: None

**Motion passed 7 (Lane, Reilly-Monaco, Cascella, Guttman, Reinoso, Stevens and Vaglivo)-0**

16-013

Respectfully submitted,

Shannon Reilly-Monaco  
Board of Education Secretary