

MONROE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Monroe, Connecticut

Meeting Minutes
April 18, 2017

Present: Chairman Donna Lane
Secretary Shannon Reilly-Monaco
Board Member Christine Cascella
Board Member David Ferris
Board Member Jerry Stevens
Board Member Alan Vaglivelolo

Also present: Superintendent James Agostine
Assistant Superintendent John Battista
Finance Director Gabriella DiBlasi
Masuk Student Board Representative Kevin Brown
Masuk Student Board Representative Michelle Cobuzzi

Absent: Vice-Chairman George King III
Board Member James Martinez
Board Member Carlos Reinoso
Masuk Student Board Representative William Santee

Call to Order

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

Motion to amend the Agenda to add Item 10 –B under New Business; Acceptance of the Superintendent’s Letter of Resignation for the purpose of Retirement

Motion: (S. Reilly-Monaco)

Second: (J. Stevens)

Discussion: None

Motion passed 6 (Lane, Reilly-Monaco, Cascella, Ferris, Stevens and Vaglivelolo)-0

17-030

Report of the Chairman

Chairman Lane said that she would discuss the Superintendent’s letter later in the meeting. She continued that the budget passed and the District will be holding off making some adjustments until the state budget is known. The state is supposed to vote on a budget before the end of the fiscal year, but it is possible that there will be a delay.

Motion to approve the Consent Agenda

Motion: (S. Reilly-Monaco)

Second: (D. Ferris)

Discussion: None

Motion passed 6 (Lane, Reilly-Monaco, Cascella, Ferris, Stevens and Vaglivello)-0

17-031

Reports of the Committees and Liaisons

Student Board Representatives

Student Representative Cobuzzi noted that the color guard, strings, and chorus groups returned from their trip from Virginia Beach. They also returned from a music workshop at Christopher Newport University. There will also be a band concert on April 27th. She added that *Principal Kobza* ran the Boston Marathon with a time of 3 hours 54 minutes and 51 seconds. *Student Representative Cobuzzi* continued there will be a Blood Drive on Friday and the Talent Show on Thursday evening. *Student Representative Brown* said members of the Robotics Team are leaving tonight for the Robotics competition in Kentucky. Next week, DECA will have five students going to Anaheim to compete on a national level.

Public Participation

There was none at tonight's meeting.

Report of the Superintendent

Superintendent Agostine said the he and *Assistant Superintendent Battista* gave out eleven layoff notices today, in the event that the cuts exceed \$3 million and reiterated that the District has to wait until more is known about the municipal funding.

Fund Activity Statement

Ms. DiBlasi said the District's spending freeze is still in effect and that the insurance continues to be an area of concerns. There are four claimants that have met stop loss for the year. There are eighteen claimants with claims over \$50,000 at this point. She added that though the Town budget passed, there is still no definitive information on the State budget, which prevents rolling the budget forward for next year. *Superintendent Agostine* added that despite the reductions, there are still some anticipated openings but again, the State budget is a driving factor.

Insurance Cost Update

Assistant Superintendent Battista provided the Board with an update on the insurance costs. They are working with One Digital, an insurance broker, to understand the dramatic increases this year. He said that the District budgeted \$5 million and has spent \$3.8 million year to date. Based on the trend, One Digital determined that the budget for next year needs to be \$5.6 million. *Assistant Superintendent Battista* continued that One Digital said there is a five year cycle, where there will be a bad year and the thought is that this year is the anomaly.

He noted that through contract negotiations, the HSA deductible has increased from \$2000 to \$2500 for single and from \$4000 to \$5000 for family, which helps the District with the cost of premiums. One Digital re-bid the stop loss, due to the increase and this is

the least expensive option for the District. *Assistant Superintendent Battista* added that the rising prescription costs are not unique, and they have saved by changing from Benecare to Cigna Dental. He reiterated that the increases in employee contributions are the result of contract negotiations. One Digital compared Monroe to similar districts and *Assistant Superintendent Battista* said the District's negotiations have been effective with Monroe at the top of the group in terms of cost savings. The average increase over five years is 6.7%. One Digital has noted the District would not save money by going to another plan.

Stepney Roof Project Update

There was no update as the Board of Finance tabled the Bond resolution at their meeting tonight.

Wingman Program Update

Superintendent Agostine said that the Wingman Program is positive behavioral program, founded in memory of a student at Sandy Hook. Stepney Elementary has taken on some of the aspects in their K-5 program, where fifth grade students work with Kindergarten students. He noted that all staff has been trained in the PBIS program and after speaking with the Elementary School Principals, it was felt that due to the District's investment in PBIS and the guidance program, there isn't a need to change the behavioral program.

Presentations

Board of Education Professional Development, *Sheila Casinelli*

Ms. Casinelli provided the Board with a Curriculum overview. The Curriculum Philosophy supports the District's mission by "ensuring that instruction is engaging, rigorous, relevant, inquiry based, while meeting the needs of the 21st century learner. Upon Graduation, all students will be college and career ready, prepared to succeed in a diverse global community.

There are monthly Curriculum Council Committee meetings. The committee is comprised of administrators, teachers, a Board of Education member and parents. *Ms. Casinelli* continued there is a 5 Step Process for looking at curriculum:

Step IR is to review current curriculum. This step compares the existing curriculum with the current CT standards and determines where revisions are needed. The committee uses the Curriculum Alignment & Review Form and Instructional Leaders/K-5 Coordinators lead vertical teams to review and/or revise curriculum. The committee gets feedback from the vertical team members regarding needed revisions, analysis of student data, including student work and an analysis of documents from other districts. Once the Curriculum Alignment & Review Form is completed, the vertical team meets with *Ms. Casinelli* and/or *Assistant Superintendent Battista*.

Step 1N is for new curriculum proposals or major revisions to curriculum. There is a set of Curriculum Proposal Forms that allow teachers to share course information, describe how the proposal meets the district mission, provide a proposed scope and sequence, identify curriculum hours, and request professional development requirements.

Step 2 is an Instructional Materials Review and is used as needed. Vertical teams examine several resources and complete a form for each one they review. The material or resource is rated by how well it is aligned with key concepts, the coverage of topics, the lay-out and format. After the review, the team can either postpone the adoption of new materials or continue with the adoption process. If they continue with the adoption process, the vertical team members will vote to select the textbook or instructional material and complete the form. The proposal form includes the specifics of the book (title, publisher, and author), the rationale and need for the resource as well as funding specifics.

Step 3 is a presentation to Curriculum Council and then to the Board of Education if an approval of a new course and/or materials is needed. Once the Curriculum Council and/or the Board of Education approve the revision work, teachers on the vertical team begin updating the curriculum maps.

Step 4 is when the curriculum is implemented in the classrooms and the committee monitors how it is being delivered.

Step 5 is when the curriculum is monitored and reviewed. Ms. Casinelli showed the Review and Revision Schedule that was created in 2014 which shows the schedule for the next five years. The areas that are planned include ELA, math, science, social studies/history, SPED, world language, PE/health, music, art, school counseling, CTE and library media.

Ms. Casinelli concluded that the Curriculum Council's purpose is to:

- Provide a forum to vet new proposed curriculum and resources
- Provide a critical and constructive feedback to the authors
- Provide K-12 perspective on curriculum
- Provide a curriculum review and revision cycle
- Ensure that all curriculums have common elements

Old Business

Policies-Second Review

Motion to approve Policy #5121.3 Academic Dishonesty/Cheating/Plagiarism, and Policy #5134, Married and Pregnant Students, as presented

Motion: (J. Stevens)

Second: (S. Reilly-Monaco)

Discussion: None

Motion passed 6 (Lane, Reilly-Monaco, Cascella, Ferris, Stevens and Vaglivello)-0

17-032

New Business

Approval of 2018-2019 School Calendar with Contingency Plan

Motion to approve the 2018-2019 School Calendar and Contingency Plan as presented

Motion: (S. Reilly-Monaco)

Second: (J. Stevens)

Discussion: None

Motion passed 6 (Lane, Reilly-Monaco, Cascella, Ferris, Stevens and Vaglivello)-0

17-033

Motion to accept the Superintendent's Letter of Resignation for the purpose of Retirement

Motion: (J. Stevens)

Second: (S. Reilly-Monaco)

Discussion: Superintendent Agostine thanked the Board members for their support and concern for the students and staff over the years and noted that Monroe is the capstone of his 36 years experience in education. He continued that he will work with the leadership team to ensure a smooth transition and can be available through the summer. Secretary Reilly-Monaco thanked Superintendent Agostine for all his work and said that he is leaving the District in a much better place. Board Member Vaglivello thanked him for putting students first. Chairman Lane reiterated that the Board reluctantly accepts the resignation and that under his direction, the students and staff have done outstanding work and that he will be greatly missed; Board Member Ferris echoed those sentiments. Superintendent Agostine said that the District's success has been a team effort.

Motion passed 6 (Lane, Reilly-Monaco, Cascella, Ferris, Stevens and Vaglivello)-0

17-034

There was an Internet Safety Program presented by Google representatives at Jockey Hollow this afternoon. The multi-media presentation to students focused on what to share on the Internet in a safe and positive manner. There was no cost to the District for the program including the transportation for the STEM students from Masuk.

The Anonymous Alerts launch will be on Thursday.

Adjournment

Motion to Adjourn at 8:15 p.m.

Motion: (J. Stevens)

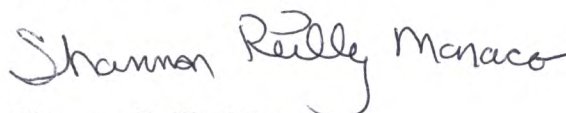
Second: (D. Ferris)

Discussion: None

Motion passed 8 (Lane, King, Cascella, Ferris, Martinez, Reinoso, Stevens and Vaglivello)-0

17-035

Respectfully submitted,



Shannon Reilly-Monaco
Board of Education Secretary