

MANCHESTER BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR MEETING
Monday, September 22, 2008

Lincoln Center
7:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Crockett, Edwards, Hackett, Moran, Small-Miller,
Rizzo, Stafford

ALSO PRESENT: Superintendent of Schools Ouellette, Assistant to the Superintendent of
Finance & Management Brooks,
Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction
Richardson.

ABSENT: Marcano, Pattacini

A. OPENING

A.1. Call to Order

Ms. Hackett called the meeting to order at 7:40 p.m.

A. 2. Pledge of Allegiance

Ms. Hackett led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. Hackett sought, and received, the unanimous approval of the Board to remove Item F.1
“Superintendent’s Evaluation” from the agenda.

A.3. MINUTES

Ms. Hackett asked for a motion to approve the Board of Education Minutes of September 8,
2008. The motion was made by Mr. Stafford and seconded by Mr. Edwards.

MOTION: Stafford/Edwards s.v. the Manchester Board of Education approved the Minutes of
September 8, 2008, as printed, with an abstention from Ms. Hackett. 6/0/1.

B. SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT - PART 1

B.1. Dr. Gina Glickman

Dr. Ouellette introduced Dr. Gina Glickman who had been appointed as the fifth President of
Manchester Community College. Previously she was the Vice President for Teaching, Learning
and Student Development at Elgin Community College. Dr. Glickman was the Chief Academic
and Student Services Office at Elgin, a member of the President’s Executive Team, and President’s

Planning Council and Resource Development Team. Prior to her appointment at Elgin, Dr. Glickman became Associate Provost and Assistant Provost in 1999 at the University of Baltimore. Dr. Glickman's qualifications included a BFA, General Fine Arts, Maryland Institute College of Art, MS in Counseling and Education, John Hopkins University School of Education, and a Ph.D. in Education, Policy and Planning, University of Maryland, College Park.

Dr. Glickman thanked Dr. Ouellette for the introduction and very warm welcome. She had relocated to Manchester and was living in close proximity. She commented that MCC had reached one of its highest enrollments ever, having 6,649 students and exceeding all the community colleges in the system by about 500 students. Over 50,000 community college students were registered. What was interesting, in terms of the enrollment was that we were growing in our younger student population with students aged twenty-one and younger. That was up 10% since last year. We had the largest and youngest population in community colleges in Connecticut.

Dr. Glickman recapped on an issue on which they had worked very hard in Elgin; a national issue - college preparedness! She hoped they would be working closely together to tackle how they could get their faculties together so that students coming from a high school environment (a little bit more organized in many ways) into a college environment which was less so, also more autonomous, so students were more prepared to take on those responsibilities.

Dr. Glickman concluded she was very glad to be in Manchester.

Ms. Hackett thanked Dr. Glickman on behalf of the Board.

B.2. Activities to Promote Behavior Standards

Dr. Ouellette reported that at the 23rd June 2008 Board meeting a request had been made by one of the members for an update on how each of our schools would disseminate the district standards and requirements for discipline at the start of the new school year. Information had been tabled. Dr. Ouellette requested Board members email her any concerns or comments.

C. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Eileen Sweeney, 86 Hawthorne Street commented that town leaders refused to conduct a public meeting regarding the plan to tear down Bentley/Hollister Street School. She referred to an incident following a public comment made at the previous Board Meeting when a member of the Board left his seat to chastise citizens who had taken the time to share their concerns with their elected leaders. She asked if there was an established policy that allowed this during the public session. Public participation should be encouraged not undermined. She suggested the Curriculum and Instruction Committee of the Board revisit the 'Participation in American Society' course at the High School, which was required for graduation if it was not going to be an authentic educational experience and students could not implement what they had learnt.

Ms. Sweeney continued that Chapter #133 "Demolition of Buildings" in the Manchester Ordinance to protect our cultural historical resources for our economic and community welfare had not been adhered to in either the first or second public notice published for Hollister Street Bentley School. The Town must comply with its own laws, and those of the State of Connecticut. Any future lawsuit would cost Manchester taxpayers unnecessary hardship if the demolition application was not properly processed in accordance with Chapter #133. The purpose of that law

was to notify the public of planned action and provide time for public discussion. In recent weeks, with public comments televised and newspaper articles appearing regarding the issue, people had come forward with concerns about the proposed plans. Many had not heard of the plans and feared retaliation if they came forward. A public meeting was requested to honor open government in Manchester and let the public know the cost and design elements immediately.

Theresa Miffitt, 42 Delmont Street, represented the Manchester Girls' Travel Basketball Program and provided the Board with its origin. The program was run entirely by volunteers. The program prepared them for the reality of high school and potentially college basketball. Ms. Miffitt read out an impressive list of various colleges in which their alumni had participated.

In mid-June they had had been told that their sponsor, Manchester Police Activities League, would be cutting back on the program leaving them with little or no time to search for a new sponsor. The program could no longer offer a reduction in fees.

Ms. Miffitt said they needed access to a full-sized gym on Saturdays for the coming winter. Costs would be \$37.50 per night, Monday through Friday, and \$329.24 for four hours of gym time at Illing for one Saturday. Ms. Miffitt surveyed the other ten towns in the League and they had responded to her request. Three of them, including Glastonbury and Rocky Hill, were sponsored and charged no fees. Of the seven remaining towns which included West Hartford, Cromwell, Torrington, Wallingford, Madison and Wethersfield, only one has a facility at a cost of \$40. an hour.

Ms. Hackett encouraged Ms. Miffitt to summarize her comments or put them in writing for the Board. Ms. Miffitt responded that basically they were looking for a facility-use waiver as they were paying more than any other town in their League. The program would not survive if they had to pay exorbitant fees.

Ms. Miffitt tabled a letter addressed to the Board written by Mr. Don Longtin, President of the Connecticut Girls' Basketball League.

Milt Perlman, 3 Sanford Road read an excerpt from "*The Berkeley Daily Planet*" with the heading "Let's reconsider the purpose of high school." Written by Terry Doran, School President. He tabled a copy of the excerpt to Board members.

Mr. Perlman concluded by reading the final paragraph of the excerpt verbatim:

"Expected School wide Learning Results" should be reflected in our graduation requirements. What I was trying to say, at the last school board meeting, is that these requirements should not be designed to elevate one possible post high school path over any others. I believe this set up elitist attitudes among our faculty and students, and unnecessarily doomed some students to a feeling of failure when we should be celebrating all the alternative paths to success."

Mr. Perlman stressed the point that many successful students did not take all the courses necessary to go immediately to a four-year college. They were not required to take those courses to graduate and chose not to take them. The article went on to list some of the successful careers chosen by such students and he urged the Board to reconsider the purpose of high school.

Stephanie Knybel, 138 Bobby Lane said it was her last four years of involvement with the Manchester School system after twenty-one years. She commended the fact that she had received the CMT scores for her son because after seeing how he had fared in 8th grade CMT; the last page had also given her a graph of how he had fared in 6th grade CMT and how well he had done in 4th Grade. They could see the comparisons over the years – a very valuable tool for parents, teachers, Administration and the Board of Education.

Ms. Knybel expressed concern that it was unbearably stifling in the choir and music room. Mr. Tyler had asked parents if they had any questions and Ms. Knybel wanted to know if it was always as hot in this room. She was told it was. Apparently it had been over 90 degrees. Ms. Knybel pleaded “Let’s do something in those back rooms. No one could really work with ninety students in that room.”

Ms. Knybel expressed concern about the English Vocabulary book for freshmen. Students were being asked to pay for this. She felt that as it was a required course for graduation, not an elective where they had to pay a fee, not an AP college class they had to pet, it should not be necessary for students to purchase the book.

Ms. Brooks interjected with the information that the Vocabulary Book had been investigated and would be free to all students the following year.

Tom Stringfellow, 183 Hillstown Road, personally welcomed Dr. Glickman informing her that he was proud of having been a graduate student from that college, Class of ’76.

Tidbit on the Revolutionary War “Independent Dames” talked about the importance of women in that war and contained great illustrations.

This was Spanish Heritage Months and he recommended two books, i.e., “*Brown*” by Richard Rodriguez and “*Hispanic*” by *Geraldo Rivera*.

“*Real Education*” by Charles Murray, and “*Global Education Gap*” by Tony Wagner.

Verplanck School and Cheney Hall recognized the 7th year Anniversary of the September 11th catastrophe.

“*Education Digest*” article about keeping schools safe, and ‘Peace Study’.

Winthrop Porter, 70 Columbus Street vehemently criticized the lack of Administration backup given to teachers. He claimed there was not another school countrywide that did not have this backup. He wanted to know why the Administration could not make the lives of teachers a little better. He recommended that teachers should be treated in a similar manner as industrial employees and work an eight hour day. Papers should be corrected in school hours, enabling teachers to leave for home and live the same lives as other people.

Mr. Porter expressed his disapproval of block scheduling.

D. CONSENT CALENDAR

Dr. Ouellette listed four items on the Consent Calendar for Board approval.

D1. Personnel Action

The Board already had the details and supplemental information in their agenda packets.

D.2. Appropriation for Education Special Projects - \$1,200

Frank Rizza Cross Country Challenge.

D.3. Extended Field Trip Request

Adjudication Festival Competition, April 16-April 19, 2009.

This had been approved by the Board in the past.

D.4. Approval for Increase in Tuition for Manchester High School

High School Driver Education Program

Presently the tuition for the Manchester High School Driver Education program was \$380. In order to support the new State driving regulations, the increased instructor's hourly rates and the increased cost of gasoline, the tuition for the program needed to be increased to \$400. The Personnel and Finance Committee had approved the increase at their September 17 meeting, effective October 1, 2008.

Ms. Hackett called for a motion. Mr. Stafford made the motion which was seconded by Mr. Edwards.

MOTION: Stafford/Edwards s.v. The Manchester Board of Education unanimously approved the Consent Calendar, as presented by Dr. Ouellette. 7/0/0.

E. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT - Part II

E.1. CMT/CAPT/AYP Report

Dr. Ouellette showed obvious excitement regarding a note handed to her from Dr. Richardson containing news regarding Connecticut Mastery Tests and the CAPT scores. It was extremely good news as things had improved even better because of a change in data feedback. The Board would be delighted to receive an update in their next agenda packet.

Dr. Richardson introduced members of her department - Mrs. Luce, new Language Arts Supervisor, Mr. Julius, Math Supervisor, Dr. Pease, Supervisor of Science and Technology and Don Cook. Ms. Kearney's name was included in the names read out but was not present as she was indisposed.

Dr. Richardson began her report by referring to it as "joyous." The report was in two phases and she guided the Board through the forty-three page report in the form of a Power Presentation. Hard copies of the slides had been provided to the Board in their agenda packets.

Data outlined CMT Comparisons in Math, Reading and Writing for 2006-2008 - Students At or Above Proficiency:, Manchester Public Schools "CMT Comparison by Ethnicity At or Above Proficiency, CMT Point Gains 2006-2008 by Ethnicity At/Above Proficiency CMT Comparison by Ethnicity Percent At/Above Proficiency Grades 3 and 4, 5 and 6, 7 and 8, F/R Meals, SED, ELL percent At/Above Proficiency, Grades 3 and 4, 5 and 6, 7 and 8; Students At or Above Goal, Comparison by Ethnicity At or Above Goal, by F/R Meals, SPED, ELL At or Above Goal.

Cohort Data had been broken down under CMT Comparison of Same Cohort At or Above Proficiency for 2006-2008 showing one year, two year and no growth/no loss years for Grades 3, through 8, At or Above Goal - Grade 3 through 8.

Demographic Reference Group (DRG) in Comparison Ranking Order for Students At or Above Goal for 2007-2008; CMT Comparison State/Manchester for 2008 highlighted, where the district had better than State average.

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) was broken down by Target Change - CMT & CAPT (Proficient & Above); Status for 2007-2008 School Year highlighted data which reflected Safe Harbor.

Dr. Richardson reported changes were attributed to

- Extraordinary staff;
- Emphasis on closing the achievement gap;
- Emphasis on higher order thinking skills across content areas;
- Strong emphasis on reading and writing across the curriculum;
- Providing enrichment opportunities to challenge all learners;
- Accountability and high expectations for all;
- Assessments;
- Culturally relevant awareness and instruction

Factors to consider included

- Research suggested that improvements/gains took time
- Manchester had demonstrated increases over the past two years (2006-2007. There was a 5 point average gain and in 2007-2008 there was a 10.0 average gain.)
- Mobility data
- Content + Skill + Cultural Relevance + Data = Delivery of Curricula.

Dr. Richardson concluded the slide presentation with ELL Demographics

- Significant enrollment changes in this school population over the last three years;
- Close to 300 students learning English, with increasingly diverse backgrounds and skill levels.
- Some English language learners are also part of the special education program.

Family Mobility Data

- Manchester had been experiencing significant demographic changes in its school population during the 2007-2008 test year;
- White families moving **out** of Manchester schools = 138
- White families moving **into** Manchester schools = 78
- Total loss of White families = 58
- Black families moving **out** of Manchester schools = 47
- Black families moving **into** Manchester schools = 79
- Total gain of Black families = 32
- Hispanic families moving **out** of Manchester schools = 59

- Hispanic families moving **into** Manchester schools = 101
- Total gain of Hispanic families = 42

Total gain of 74 Black and Hispanic families and loss of 58 White families

Plan for Improvement

- Continued emphasis on reading and writing abilities across the curriculum;
- Continued focus on cultural responsiveness to support staff and students and create success through equity;
- Data teams: assessment data informs instruction and determines direction.
- Continued emphasis on accountability and high expectations for all;
- Student goals are established for each child in Language, Art English and Math content areas
- Implementation of new Strategic Plan
- Effective teaching strategies.

Dr. Richardson asked the audience to look at the jump that had faced us this year. This had been extremely difficult for districts to maintain as the target moved higher and higher. The staff in Manchester had achieved this; they had reached Safe Harbor. We had reached the Bar – students and staff had made it.

Dr. Richardson’s comment drew a round of applause from Board members.

Mr. Edwards offered congratulations to Dr. Richardson on her update. He recapped that many times Assistant Superintendents in the past had come to the table and tried to put a happy face on scores that had not changed essentially. He specifically recalled that two years ago they had five years worth of data in front of them and what he had seen was “‘noise’ – numbers went up; numbers went down but overall stayed the same.” He had looked at the numbers for the previous year and had been hopeful that this was not just a “blip up”. His thought at that time was “Was the hammer going to fall next year?”

Mr. Edwards was very happy to see the situation was now the opposite – they had a 3-year trend which was virtually all up.

Mr. Edwards reiterated his congratulation to Dr. Richardson and included the Superintendent and the rest of her Administration, teachers, parents, and all those who had attributed to making this goal come to fruition. We were not yet out of the woods but had made tremendous strides and the State had recognized that fact by giving us Safe Harbor. It boded very well for the future.

Mr. Edwards interpreted for those who might not fully understand the meaning of ‘Safe Harbor’ it meant you did not quite make the numbers you hoped you would make but had made enough progress to deserve another chance. Because we had now got three years’ worth of data, it was fairly clear to him that the work we had put in for the last five years was starting to pay off. Change took time.

Mr. Edwards declared he was big on ‘Cohort Data’ because it was the only way they could prove the pull around had been truly executed. He wondered if Cohort Data could be desegregated by

subgroup. He would be interested in that data with the minimums that were required, e.g., in order to report a subgroup there had to be a certain population in that group where scores could be attributed to individual students and criteria met.

Ms. Small-Miller extended her congratulations to Dr. Richardson and her staff for their current success.

Ms. Small-Miller and Dr. Richardson had a short discussion on the subject of the Reading data which appeared on Slide 3 and the progress on that subject. Ms. Small-Miller did not think there had been enough progress in that data to get excited about and she wondered about that. She thought that black students were not doing so well in reading.

Dr. Richardson agreed Ms. Smaller-Miller had made an excellent point. Reading across the country was an issue and this had been talked about by the Commissioner. The Board had stepped up to the plate within the District, having done a Reading Comprehension program for all teachers as a Staff Development. They were looking at bringing in additional assessments to become much more diagnostic around each child and analyze their status and how they could be moved forward. They had also begun assessments in the 1st, 2nd and Kindergarten grades.

Mr. Moran extended his congratulations to all involved on the update. He expressed the wish that they had been in possession of this information at the previous meeting of the Board when they had discussed the Strategic Plan.

Mr. Moran discussed with Dr. Richard his concern about how we would commend teachers; how we would recognize them, and ensure that as we went forward they did not reach burnout.

Dr. Richardson concurred with Mr. Moran; it was always a concern because the scores go up and it was important to ensure morale was rising. Change was difficult. They had had a celebration for teachers when everyone had received a small token of appreciation and the public acclamation that evening was a sincere comment. Mr. Moran said we should all be very proud of Manchester in that we had illustrated we were moving forward.

Mr. Crockett concurred with the congratulations and kudos already handed out by fellow Board members. He commented that they were blamed if the scores went down and praised if they went up so the congratulations were very much in order.

Mr. Rizzo commented that Mr. Edwards had sat on the Board for a number of years trying to find good news and this had been frustrating. He knew over the last several years they had made a lot of changes; asked staff to do a lot of different kinds of things than what they were used to. He thought that Board members and the public had been waiting to see the results. He was of the opinion there had never been a better area looked at by the Board than these test scores. This had been enlightening. There had been many ups and downs during the years but this year had resulted in a tremendous increase and he appreciated the slide which had looked at the average increases. Last year it had been 5 points and this year it was 10. That obviously showed some great gains. We were finally seeing some of the results of the data driven decision-making; teachers were actually looking at individual student work and data, taking test scores back to the classroom and

making appropriate changes to the instructional practices. He was delighted to see these kinds of results and the enthusiasm of Dr. Richardson and her staff.

Mr. Rizzo recalled he had been looking at scores for ten years, always trying to glean more information from them. It had seemed to him that not enough information had been provided previously, but this year they had 'Hit the nail on the head'. They had received a glut of information. It had been a monumental task.

Mr. Rizzo discussed data by school and thought they should take another look at it to see which schools were doing better. "Were they all doing the same, or did some schools show more progress than others?" It would be helpful to the Board to see if it needed to reassign other resources. Dr. Ouellette concurred absolutely.

Mr. Rizzo expressed the hope that the entire staff would get the opportunity to see the data as it would give them feedback on just how good a job they were doing. They needed to keep this up as the Bar got raised each year.

Mr. Stafford recalled last year thinking that they would be sitting holding their breath, but the numbers this year were very good and he commended everyone who had had a hand in this. He was hopeful they could keep the trend going and things that had all been put in place would continue to work. He also hoped they would work even harder for the children who were in the most need, and focus in on them. We still had a long way to go but were getting closer.

Ms. Hackett commented that last year we had begun to get a hint of some dramatic improvement in 5th and 6th grades, especially with Hispanic and Black children. They had hoped that would be the start of something good; her expectations had been exceeded. For this year, to show two years' growth in one year was a tremendous feat and one that directly resulted from our teachers doing more than what it took. They had done a tremendous job, as had Administration, who had driven the expectations and really looked at what was required to make this happen. It all came down ultimately to wonderful staff. She had been sitting on the Board for twelve years and had seen stagnant scores but these were by far the most dramatic test scores she had ever seen. Ms. Hackett enquired what the State Department of Education had said about the scores. Had other school districts demonstrated as much growth as Manchester?

Dr. Richardson responded that our DRG was closer to this and watched how we had risen to number 5 place frequently. She said they could see dramatic changes in Bristol also where it became concentrated. Usually districts would make it on the second or third time as they hold the target over three years. Manchester had made it and was right there.

Ms. Hackett affirmed that if they could repeat this performance one more year they would not be classified as a district not making progress. However, we would not rest on our laurels but continue to move forward. The goal above this was Mastery.

Ms. Hackett and Dr. Richardson discussed the status and if we were closer to the goal. Dr. Richardson said that when one saw eighties in the report that was the goal so one could look through and see those areas. That was why the Cohort Data was so exciting. The question of Mastery was also discussed.

Ms. Hackett added her personal congratulations on the results.

Dr. Richardson had more good news concerning CAPT. Apparently the numbers had changed from those given previously. The Board would see excerpts from the Report that evening and she would like to come back and give the Board the full breadth of the analysis between the subgroups; between Black, Hispanic, Special students etc. to match the now revised AYP. Some details were incorrectly reported in a newspaper and had been challenged. The misreport was confirmed; the figures recalculated, and the High School was reported at reaching 'Safe Harbor', which was very commendable. The good news was that the scores had come back from the State higher than the ones they were crunching, so even though the original ones appeared to have reached a 'Safe Harbor' level, they had actually achieved an even higher band.

Mr. O'Donnell, Principal of Manchester High School, commented that Manchester High School's voyage to Safe Harbor had not been a smooth one. He reiterated that the test cores had been erroneously reported in a newspaper. The report was challenged by the staff of the High School and after investigation the newspaper was proven to be inaccurate, as the State had misreported the data. Mr. O'Donnell undertook to bring back a correct and in-depth report to the Board at its next meeting.

Mr. O'Donnell thanked the Board for taking the time to question the data received from the State and discovering the error. This did not leave him with a really good confident feeling that people who were supposed to give us accurate information had somehow slipped up. He would be interested to know how this problem had arisen.

Mr. Rizzo debated whether it was a question of the scores themselves that were different, or if was the classification of Safe Harbor. Mr. O'Donnell explained it was not a simple formula, it was very complex and he and his staff had sat with calculators collectively.

Mr. Rizzo expressed his thanks to Mr. O'Donnell and his staff for their work. Decisions had been made, based on the information we had received from the State. If we thought it was wrong and did not question it - "shame on us." We had questioned this time and recalculated. He looked forward to seeing the real numbers.

Ms. Hackett thanked Mr. O'Donnell on behalf of the Board. This was a tremendous improvement. She looked forward to seeing a fresh set of even more positive data than that provided that evening.

E.2. Huckleberry Finn Update

Dr. Richardson updated the Board on recent discussion about the teaching of the novel "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn". The book had been placed on a moratorium while an investigation was being completed. They were looking at a new approach to teaching "Huckleberry Finn" in the classroom. They would combine discussions about Race; White Privilege; training teachers on Beyond Diversity also using a new book; looking at a new Curriculum, basically the re-teaching approach had focused on effecting social change; the deliveries of seminar-type approach; pre-reading; opportunities for discussion of history and discussion of aspects of Race at that time, adding in new resources such as "The Jim Dilemma"

and “Satire or Evasion” which would bring in a variety of different multiple perspectives around the book.

Dr. Richardson reiterated the book was the #1 controversial book around the country and there was a lot to discuss and engage teachers in training sessions. The first training session had taken place that day and the next one would take place the following Thursday. “Beyond Diversity” was coming up within one week.

Mr. O’Donnell reported eleven teachers at the High School had indicated an interest in proceeding with the use of the book as part of their curriculum. They were being trained that week by a panel of experts who Dr. Richardson had arranged to come into the school.

Mr. Rizzo was told the experts were Professor Terry Driscoll, Saint Joseph’s College, a Huckleberry Finn/Mark Twain scholar; Rev. Selner, an individual who had joined the group for discussions last spring with respect to Race; Greg Hutchkiss, Program Director and Historian for the Mark Twain House.

Dr. Richardson had been pleased to have a DVD of Dr. Jocelyn Chadwicke, who had written the “Jim Dilemma”; a woman of color who taught at Harvard University. They had enthusiastically tried to engage her presence for a direct Staff Development. She had had other commitments but they had seen a ‘clip’ of her philosophy, approach and thoughts about the book.

Mr. Crockett was reassured by Dr. Richardson that the book was out there and still available for reading.

Mr. Moran asked how soon after the training sessions would they start using the book and was told “in about a month.” The book could not be taught by a teacher unless they had gone through the training session.

Ms. Hackett was anxious that parents and students would be aware of the new training taking place. She asked about plans for updating the public. Dr. Richardson suggested they could send a note home indicating new procedures had been put in place and the class would now begin to read the book. She believed it was in the policy that there should be notification about books being taught.

F. OLD BUSINESS

F.1. Bylaws Revision

Ms. Hackett recapped on the background of the revision of the Bylaws that took place in December, 2007. At that time they consisted of two things, i.e., Revision of the Bylaws to reflect best practices for a Board that had not been looked at in a long time; Addition into the Bylaws of ‘Standards of Ethical Conduct ‘ for Board of Education Members. The Board of Directors had adopted a similar version of the Ethical Conduct Code. Over the past few months the Town Attorney, Tim O’Neill, had found a way to adapt their document into a newer format.

Ms. Hackett called for a motion, which was made by Mr. Stafford and seconded by Mr. Stafford.

Mr. Edwards thanked the Chair for all the hard work she had personally put into the change in the Bylaws. He suggested that as he had not read them the matter be postponed to another meeting. The actual Bylaws were quite different from the ones they had adopted in the past.

Mr. Edwards made reference to the “Standards for Ethical Conduct.” He knew they had come from work which was on the Town Charter. He pointed out the Chair had spent an inordinate amount of time on that Committee and should be commended for that also.

He called attention to one provision which had been discussed, i.e., page 3, section 3, 2nd paragraph containing a notation that “No chair shall hold that office for more than six consecutive one-year terms.” He recalled at one point there was some discussion about removing that clause. He would be supportive of removing it because he thought it was perfunctory to get around - having a Board Chair re-elected, resign, then have another Board Chair - the same, re-elected. He thought more importantly if they had a good Chair for the Board they should not be limited to six terms.

He asked for a friendly amendment to that particular line. Apart from that he did not see anything that was different to what had been talked about in Committee.

Ms. Hackett asked for, and received, clarification from Mr. Edwards as to the exact location of the text to which he referred and that it appeared in the Bylaws. It appeared in the Bylaws as follows:-

Article II – ORGANIZATION AND MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION

P.3. Section 3 "Election of Officers", para.2.

“No Chair shall hold that office for more than six (6) consecutive one-year terms.”

Mr. Stafford requested the Chair to modify his motion accordingly. The modified motion was seconded by Mr. Rizzo.

MOTION: Stafford/Rizzo s.v. the Manchester Board of Education unanimously adopted the By-Laws Revision as modified, and the Ethical Code of Conduct 7/0/0.

G. NEW BUSINESS

G.1. Textbook adoption

Dr. Richardson presented and discussed the Social Studies book which needed adoption by the Board. Mr. Ian Webster and Erin Bernard from the Social Studies Department were present and elaborated on the textbook for Honors Students, which encompassed various different perspectives. The book emulated the CAPT style essay across the discipline; had an intro; opposing viewpoints imbedded in the text and a summary. It also incorporated technology.

Ms. Hackett confirmed the item would come back for approval by the Board at its next meeting under ‘Old Business’.

H. COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Stafford had received a communication from Susan Moore about the Bentley School building. She had asked that it be recorded that the monument commemorating the old Bentley Building be

put in place when the grounds were completed. She was not in favor of the demolition of the building but felt that at least there should be some kind of monument.

I. COMMITTEE REPORTS

I.1. Curriculum and Instruction Committee

Mr. Stafford précised the Minutes of the Curriculum and Instruction Committee Meeting held on September 17, 2008.

1. The Committee had looked at the Honors Level Social Studies Textbook that was brought before them.
2. They also discussed the Huck Finn Review and the Roll out of how they were going to train the teachers. They discussed Kindergarten Full Day, about when to actually start those classes. They would start looking at that, the issue being that Full Day did not start until approximately five weeks after the first day of school. Students currently attend a half day program until home visits are conducted. More research was needed from surrounding school systems to correctly determine. The main interest is to put as much time as possible into instruction.
3. Discussion took place about the first day of school for all students being a full day rather than half day for elementary schools. Further research is being completed to report to C&I next meeting.
4. The District Emblem Overview - a review is taking place to research emblem. How much will it cost to change and the history of emblem? This information will be reported to the Board of Education for review.

I.2. Personnel and Finance Committee

Mr. Rizzo reported on the Personnel and Finance Committee meeting of September 17, 2008.

“Ms. Brooks reviewed the meeting schedule of the Personnel & Finance Committee. It was the consensus of the Committee to change the days from Tuesdays to Wednesdays, beginning with the October 2008 meeting.

Ms. Brooks shared the September 3, 2008 enrollment and class sizes information. It was tentative at the moment as they were waiting for the October 1st data. Presently they were showing an increase of 69 students over the June 2008 enrollment.

Ms. Brooks also reviewed the needs of the Manchester High School Driver Education Program that was on the Consent Calendar. It was recommended that the program increase its fees from \$380 to \$400, effective October 1, 2008.

J. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Melissa Dumont, 9, Hendee Road referred to a public comment made earlier that evening when people spoke their minds and then got home early enough to watch Monday night football. Any member of the Town, parent or otherwise, had always been welcome to come and share their comments, no matter how unpopular. For anyone who had been a true attendee of meetings for the last several years there had been much discussion about the Bentley project, followed by newspaper articles. Regarding the “Bentley Eight” - which she believed they were lovingly

referring it to. An article had been published in the Hartford Courant so they had previous warning that their plight was not going to have a good ending. They had acknowledged it was going to be a cost to the taxpayers so perhaps that was why they were feeling discomforted and not for reasons they had given.

Ms. Dumont referred to the previous meeting at which a Board member had given his comments as a citizen of Manchester and also as a parent, expressing his frustration at the eight people who were causing taxes to increase and which would, inevitably, come back and bite the Board of Education.

Ms. Dumont said no threats had been made as she was present at the meeting; None of the Bentley Eight was present, having already left the meeting.

Mr. Tom Stringfellow, 183 Hills Town Road, supported all the items on the Consent Calendar. He commended the good reports from Dr. Richardson and Mr. O'Donnell on the CAPT and CMT. He hoped that the affected groups would score better on the tests. Students needed to know the content and learn all the basic aspects of History and Math.

Recommended Reading: “Results Now”; Gap Year Advantage” for students who may not go on to college immediately but join the Peace Corp for a while.

“The 75 Biggest Myths about College” by Dr. Jerry Israel, Ph.D. - what parents and students should really know about behind the scenes.

Issue of Remediation College. A good introduction by Dr. Glickman.

The Future of Privacy - scientific American magazine - two stories dealing with Privacy in a Face book Age also Internet Wire tapping through the Internet.

Mr. Stringfellow recognized Huck Finn would be continued. He recommended Smart Notes and Clip Note booklets as supplemental views about Native Americans in a recent biography of Mark Twain.

Book by Tim Wise dealing with bigotry and racism in a White community “Speaking Treason Fluently” - anti racist reflections from an angry white male.

K. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

Mr. Stafford requested a report of some kind of accounting of the #3510 account so that we presented what we did with the money. There was a perception out there somewhat that this account was like a huge bucket of money and we could do all kinds of things and everything with it. He would like to present to the public what we did with the money and how much of our budget actually went in real numbers into the #3510 account - just to give the community some idea.

Ms. Hackett added that it might be good to break this report down by school and location, if possible.

Ms. Brooks interjected that this would be possible although supplies were involved and that could prove to be difficult.

Mr. Moran suggested the Board ask the Policy Committee to revisit the question of rental fees established last year. He wanted us to ensure our fees were not too high for the community who wished to use our facilities.

Ms. Hackett said there appeared to be a lot of interest in the new Community Relations Specialist position. She understood there was a developed entry plan and Goals and Objectives for it. She hoped we could get an overview of what the short and long term goals were. She wanted to know if there was any similarity between the Town and the Board and if there was an overlap.

L. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Hackett called for a motion to adjourn.

MOTION: Edwards/Rizzo s.v. The Manchester Board of Education unanimously approved the motion to adjourn the meeting at 9.40 p.m. 7/0/0.

Respectfully submitted,

Enrique Marcano, Sr, Board Secretary
Manchester Board of Education