BOARD OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE
MANCHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT SAU #37

September 10, 2018 **7:00 p.m.**

Mayor Craig called the meeting to order, at 7:00 p.m.

2. Mayor Craig calls for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Craig stated if Committeeman Beaudry could please introduce the students from Parker Varney.

Committee Member Beaudry stated I have the pleasure to introduce the new Principal first of Parker Varney school, Brian Belanger, is here this evening with students Lucy Callanan, Grade 2 from Parker Varney, and also Izzy and Allie Bachhuber, from Parker Varney, Fifth Grade and Second Grade.

A moment of silence was observed.

4. The Clerk calls the roll.

Present: Committee Members Ambrogi, Scannell, Georges, Want, Freeman, Bergeron, Thomas, Girard, Terrio, Lehoux, Beaudry, Avard, Desrochers and Mayor Craig.

5. Approval of minutes from the Board of School Committee meetings on August 13, 2018 (Regular and Special meeting) and the August 27th, 2018 meeting.

*On motion of **Committee Member Desrochers**, duly seconded by **Committee Member Ambrogi**, it was voted to approve the minutes of the August 13th, 2018, Regular and Special Meeting, and the August 27th, 2018 meeting. **Committee Member Girard** stated in the minutes of August 13th, I think I was recorded as voting in favor of sealing the minutes after that non-public session. I do not believe I was, so I would ask the clerk if she would revisit the vote please.*

Mayor Craig asked you are going to review the tape and see?

Clerk Carey stated yes.

All were in favor and the minutes were approved.

6. RECOGNITION/PRESENTATIONS

7. Fidelity and Boston Cares - For their partnership and continued support of city schools in revitalizing learning environments through the third annual Transformation Day volunteer event at Gossler Park Elementary School and the Middle School at Parkside.

Fidelity and Boston Cares could not be here this evening, item moved to 9/25 meeting.

8. Judge Broderick (Brief Presentation) – Mayor Craig asked for placeholder.

Mayor Craig stated item eight. Judge Broderick. If you want to come forward for your presentation please.

Judge Broderick asked can people hear me?

Mayor Craig stated I think you're actually going to have to use the microphone so that we can.

Judge Broderick asked can I stand? Is that possible?

Mayor Craig stated that should be fine.

Judge Broderick stated well let me just show you this poster and then I'll sit down.

Committee Member Want stated maybe he could be where you are. Could he just come stand where you are?

Mayo Craig stated do you want to just stand here?

Judge Broderick stated well, if that's appropriate.

Mayor Craig stated it's fine.

Judge Broderick stated thank you very much. You can hear me I hope. This poster, which I brought with me is the reason I'm here tonight. The kids in this picture are students at Nashua South High School and it's a poster about mental health awareness. And I appreciate the opportunity to be here. I won't talk for more than an hour and a half, I promise. I won't do that to you, I'll just be a few minutes. I want to thank the Mayor for making this possible. My name is John Broderick, for the record, for 15 years I was on our Supreme Court. For several years I was Dean of the Law School at UNH. But the reason I'm doing this and the reason I'm here tonight, is the most important thing I've done in my entire professional life and I don't say that lightly to you. Over the last twenty-seven months I've traveled 75,000 miles in the state and it's bigger than I thought, by the way, when you do it like I've been doing it. I've spoken they tell me over 60,000 people. I've been to 102 schools, high school and middle schools and that continues to this day. And I'm involved in a campaign to change the conversation and hopefully to change the culture around mental illness because we need to. Mental illness has been hiding in plain sight my entire life. And I didn't see it. I didn't see it in my own family. But I see it now. And my family went through a very tough time very publicly in New Hampshire some 15 years ago, that I wouldn't wish on any family. But we came through it as a family and I'm grateful for that. I was given the opportunity 27 months ago to get involved in this campaign. It's nonpolitical, nonpartisan. Powerful. During those months, I've spoken to thousands and thousands of high school students and middle school students. I've spoken to all four high schools in Manchester and to come up with a topic where kids that age will listen to the grandfather they've never met, it would be hard for me to decide it would be mental health awareness, but it is. I have hugged hundreds and hundreds of kids, I never met, who share with me their own mental health stories. Some of them getting treatment, many of them not. Some of them say my parents are ashamed of my mental health problems or my parents don't believe in mental illness. Those parents are coming from a good place. They want to shield their children from stigma and shame and the shadows of mental illness, but that's not the answer. I can tell you that. My goal is simple, I want to start a different conversation, I want to demythologize mental illness, I want to drive it out to generations from the shadows where it's been hiding. I went to a high school outside of Concord, two years ago. I spoke in the gymnasium at 9:00 in the morning, 840 kids on both sides of that gym and

bleachers. And I looked out at them and I thought this is not going to work. They're probably saying whose grandfather is this guy? What's he doing here? And so, I spoke to them about this campaign and its message and my own family's story for thirty-five minutes. I wasn't sure they could hear me. And when I finished the principal stepped up on the little platform with me. And there was dead silence in that gymnasium. And then after two or three seconds, 840 kids stood up and applauded for more than a minute. The principal said I'm shocked. I said you're shocked. I said these kids aren't applauding me they don't even know me, but what they are applauding is what I'm telling them that it's not their choice, it's not their fault and there's no shame involved. Nobody in my generation ever said that to me. I didn't know anyone in my town of 22,000 people that had mental illness. Every marriage in my town was happy too. Neither of those were true, but that's the bubble I come from. And in many places, too many places, that bubble remains. These kids, high school kids, are the most amazing generation of Americans. I love these kids. And you see them in a much more intimate way than I do. They are the least judgmental generation in the history of the United States and they want change. And so do I. I didn't know there were so many kids with wet eyes and cracking voices. I have hugged kids in high schools, it doesn't matter whether it's a rich district or poor district, who share with me that they try to kill themselves in the last 12 months and it's not right. It is not morally right. It's not medically sound. All I'm asking people to do is say we'd reconsider talking about mental illness, like we talked about every single physical illness in our society, with empathy and understanding. There was a time in America you couldn't talk about AIDS. You can now. In my childhood you couldn't talk about Cancer. Try to imagine. We do now. But mental illness also has come some distance. It's not where it needs to be and I think all of us know that. Almost every family knows somebody who's been suffering and we need to change it. And so why am I here tonight. Next Monday at the State House and the Council Chambers Governor Sununu, who's been great by the way in this campaign, there's not an ounce of politics in it. The Commission of Education, who's been with me to multiple schools. The head of the NHIAA, they governor Interscholastic Sports, Life of an Athlete Program, they love this campaign and their logos on this poster. What I'm hoping will happen is that every high school in the state will have these posters, multiple versions of them around the school. These are high school kids. Athletes, the cool kids in high school that are saying to all of us young and old it's time to change the conversation. It's time to do away with the shame and the stigma. That's why I'm here. I'd

like your help to say to those in public education in this city, we think this is a good idea. We hope you'll consider hanging them in your high school and if they do we will begin either a new or an expanded conversation around mental illness and those who are suffering and believe me in some schools have been told 25% of the kids have a diagnosable mental illness. They will see these posters and feel like maybe they shouldn't feel so alone and left out. And lastly, parents, older folks who come to those high schools and see these posters and see that young people are talking about it. Something their generation never did. Might say my kids are leading the way, maybe it is time to change the culture around mental illness so that people can be saved. That's what it's about. And so, I would leave the poster here, but it's my only poster.

Mayor Craig stated we have one in my office.

Judge Broderick stated oh fabulous. The mayor has one, so she has it and you can see it. If you have any questions feel free to reach back to me. Yes.

Committee Member Bergeron stated thank you, your honor I guess I was just to say I'm not sure if the folks at home watching, I'm not sure if they really understand what REACT is about on the posters that.

Judge Broderick stated the campaign I'm involved with?

Committee Member Bergeron stated the name of it, REACT, I'm not sure if someone maybe seeing you for the first time so I'm not sure they truly.

Judge Broderick stated it's very simple, it's exquisitely simple yet powerful. I wish I'd been bright enough to do it. But I'm bright enough to see it. I'm bright enough to experience it when I go to schools. The goal is to have people understand the five most common signs of mental illness. To understand that mental illness, half of all mental illness in America, arises by age 14. Last year in the United States, more people die by suicide than in every car accident across our country. Every day 20 veterans kill themselves, but we don't talk about it. So, this campaign is to know the five signs and then through the good offices of the Department of Education Dartmouth Hitchcock. How do we react to it? Not how doctors or professionals, how do we react to it when we see the signs? Because that's important too. That's as important as knowing

them. So, this campaign does both. It won't cost anyone money. At least that's the goal. And I'd like to continue it. It's not a silver bullet by itself. But I can tell you this, the largest providers of mental health services in our country are jails and prisons. That make any sense to anyone here tonight? Sixty five percent of the men in the state prison this evening have a diagnosable mental illness, 20% of the population does. So, it's not a coincidence, untreated, undiagnosed mental illness can lead to drug addiction, alcoholism, domestic violence. It's an equal opportunity illness and I'd love your help. Anyway, I appreciate the time and I have a full schedule. Yes.

Committee Member Girard stated thank you Your Honor. Judge Broderick will these posters feature athletes from each of our high schools or will they be proudly possessing the purple Panthers.

Judge Broderick stated I'm sure I couldn't hear.

Committee Member Girard stated will they will they be featuring athletes from our high schools?

Judge Broderick stated yes.

Committee Member Girard stated they will, okay.

Judge Broderick stated this post has the athletes from Nashua South High School. But the goal is every high school should have a picture. every high school has an Athletic Leadership Council, men and women, varsity athletes. And they're the cool kids and it would be great to have their picture in that template and that's easy enough to do. And it would start to speak to kids who are suffering. And when Athletes who are often leaders themselves say this great topic we should talk about, it will matter or we can kick the can down the road like my generation did, which I doubt recommend.

Committee Member Beaudry stated thank you Madam Chairman. This program similar to like an EAP program, is there going to be like a number that somebody could call to report somebody that they feel may have an issue or that individual can we can call a number if they feel themselves that they have an issue?

Judge Broderick stated we have a card that we're distributing to all law enforcement. They asked for it. Which gives you key numbers to call. But most high schools, by the way today it's news to me but they all have counselors who are highly trained skilled people. Some schools have mental health first aid for kids that are juniors and seniors. And so, a lot of this initiates in the school is handling the first instance by the school and if it's serious enough the counselors will reach out to parents and if they need help they will reach out to others in the community who can provide services. So, this is really geared for schools and kids and parents. Although this poster is there, but the campaign is pretty broad. I've been speaking to audiences all around the state. And what I didn't realize is almost every family has someone or knows someone. I didn't know that for most of my life. And so, my guess is that people said you're not in this in this chamber knows somebody who has some mental health problem, we don't talk about it much because everyone's ashamed of it. There's no reason for that. But that's historically what it's been. These kids will change it if we let them. We need to empower them to change. So. I'd love your help.

Committee Member Bergeron stated thank you, your Honors. I just want to really say that. But I guess this is more for you Mayor Craig, who are they going to coordinate in the schools with?

Mayor Craig stated if there's a curriculum associated with it, it would probably would have to go to a C&I, but I would imagine Judge Broderick can touch base with Dr. Vargas and we can talk about coordination. We have to work with the principals as well.

Committee Member Bergeron stated like within the school's health or whatnot. Thank you.

Mayor Craig stated yes. I mean Judge Broderick has been in front of our schools for the last few years, last year talking about this campaign. So, it's not really new to the staff or to the teachers. But there's just another component to it this year that I think we should really move forward on. Great. Thank you.

Judge Broderick stated thank you very much.

PUBLIC FORUM

Mayor Craig advised that the purpose of the public forum is to give the residents of Manchester the opportunity to address the board on items of concerns affecting the community; that each person will be given only one opportunity to speak; that comments shall be limited to three minutes to allow all participants the opportunity to speak and that any comments must be directed to the Chair. Any resident wishing to speak will come forward to the nearest microphone, clearly state their name and address when recognized and give their comments.

Natalie Sears, 207 Lowell Street, Manchester, stated:

Good evening Mayor, Board of School Committee. My name is Natalie Sears. I am a homeowner in Ward 9 and proud to be a teacher at Manchester High School Central. We are here tonight to express gratitude from the faculty and staff of Central. First we would like to acknowledge that the events of Friday were due to a young man losing his life and we express our condolences to his family. If I had more time, I could give example after example of the acts of kindness and compassion that we saw that day and evening. Three minutes does not seem like enough to thank everyone, but we'll give it our best. Thank you to our School Resource Officers and the Manchester Police Department for their hard work and dedication. At all times during the incident, we felt safe and supported. To our amazing food services staff, for making sure that everyone got lunch and dinner. To our school nurse, trainer, paraprofessionals, support staff, specialists, interpreters, administrative assistants, social workers, custodial staff, substitutes, student teachers and interns, who took care of the needs of all of our students. To the MTA and Easter Seals, who drove the trip after trip of our children and staff to Hillside or to their homes. To the district administration, Dr. Vargas and Commissioner Edelblut for coming to Central to help execute the evacuation process. To the mayor, community members, Market Basket, Cafe Lorraine thanks for breakfast this morning. To the board members and the administration and staff of the other schools in the Manchester School District, who worked behind the scenes and went to Hillside, before we even got there, to welcome us and to coordinate reunification, so that we could go home to our families. Thank you. We would like to thank our Admin team, John, Jane, Deb and Will for your exemplary leadership and support on Friday and every day. You make what we do possible. We would like to thank our students for how well they handled the

situation on Friday. We are fiercely proud of you and honored to be your teachers. To the parents and families, thank you for entrusting us with the safety of your children. We want you to know that we will always do everything in our power to keep your kids safe. While the event on Friday was a tragedy in our city, at Central we were able to see the goodness in the community as we came together to support one another. That's Manchester Proud. And to close, in the words of our principal John Vaccarezza, "And Go Central Pride". Thank you.

Rochelle Stern, 120 Pleasant Pond Way, Manchester, stated:

Good evening. My name is Rochelle Stern. I reside at 120 Pleasant Pond Way in Ward 12. I come before you this evening to respectfully ask the School Board Committee to request that the Superintendent of schools bring forward to you the name of the applicant for the vacant position of Administrative Assistant II at Memorial High School. The principal of Memorial High School has followed all the necessary procedures in the appropriate amount of time and put forward the name of an extremely qualified person for the vacant position many weeks ago. It is my understanding that the name has not yet been brought forward. In addition, the request for having a substitute temporarily fill that position has also been refused by the district office. We all know that this is about money. This effort of the district to lessen your budget shortfall by eliminating or postponing this position is both disrespectful and not acceptable. You certainly must be clueless as to the amount of work that each person does to efficiently run the office of a high school in this city. You are expecting an already depleted workforce to add an additional 35 hours of work each week to their schedule. Over the past seven years the office staff at Memorial High School has been cut from 7 Administrative Assistants each day down to currently 4 or 5 depending on the day of the week. At this time, in addition to the missing receptionist, we only have a part time Guidance Secretary, so there's no assistant in the guidance office. We have no sort of any Special Ed assistant and you might as well say we don't have a principal secretary because at this moment she's now one of the receptionists for at least five of the seven hours of the school day. Last week, which was the first week of school, if you had come into the office you might have seen the principal answering the phone, handling paperwork for registration of students, as well as selling bus tickets during the receptionist lunch hour. Or did you not consider that we get a lunch hour or a 10-minute break or we might have to use the restroom or leave the office to bring the mail to the teacher's room. I can't even imagine what will happen if someone

calls in sick. Some things have to get done. Phones need to be answered. Parents need to be greeted. Students need to be admitted tardy and get dismissed. Students are still being registered. Others need help understanding which bus to take home. New students have to be helped getting accustomed to their new schedules. Cut slips and other discipline reports have to be processed. Schedules need to be changed and all staff members and subs have to get their work hours submitted to payroll. I could give you a list of what probably will not get done, but I will leave that for another time if this issue is not settled. Hopefully I will see this matter resolved when I see the personnel report tomorrow. This vacant position was funded as part of the budget for 2018/2019 school year. The money is there. Please do the right thing. On another note I would also like to publicly thank Patty Taylor and Laura Osborne, at the district office, for going out of their way to help me with the many, many, many phone call requests and complaints that I received so far regarding the unacceptable school bus issues from Memorial High School this current year. Thank you.

Erin Kerwin, 291 Ray Street, Manchester, stated:

Hello, my name is Erin Kerwin and I live at 291 Ray Street, in Manchester. First of all, I want to say thank you to the School Board. Both times last year I came up and spoke to you about the emotional behavioral disorder program at Webster and then I have written you all about principal Sarah Lynch. I guess, I don't know the right word, not quite removal. We got a letter home today I don't know the exact wording but thank you very much. I got responses from a lot of people so I really appreciate that. I just wanted to come in support of Miss Lynch. I don't know why she was removed. The rumor mill has started of course but nobody actually knows. I'm concerned it's about the behavioral program because last year as I came in it was out of control and I would hate for her to be scapegoated for that. And I'm hoping that program is fully funded this year, so that the school is safe for the students and teachers and the staff. But mostly, I was just coming to say that. Miss Lynch has brought a lot of creative energy to the school, the teachers work well together, the students seem happy and well cared for. So, I just wanted to come and give some support and thank you guys for your responses. I feel very heard. So, thank you.

Gerald Asterino, Ward 1, Manchester, stated:

Good evening I'm Gerald Asterino, I reside in Ward I in Manchester. Board, Mayor. I'm here about the same issue about Sarah Lynch. This abrupt removal of her from Webster School Elementary on the first day of school is an insult to the students and the parents, blindsiding us. I'm sure that this process of this decision was long standing and you've decided at the very last minute to do this. You should have thought that out a little better. I think that's just poor management. And whoever was involved is just irresponsible. Assuming that this was a legitimate reason for this action, it is disruptive symbiosis for the whole school. It's just disrespectful to all. If you planned on this you should have done this through the summer and had a principal already there or it notified the students and the parents. It does appear to be a retaliation for her standing up to the lack of funding and staff for the EBD program, which falls under Special Ed. So, your Special Ed Coordinators should be held responsible for this. The lack of the funding for this program and Special Ed as a whole is pathetic. We have this needy population in this district, in the state, in the country and you're basically ignoring it. It's a safety issue for both the students and the teachers. So, if you think this isn't, you should go there and try it yourself. Okay. Try to handle some of these kids. Try to see that they're retained and given some education at the same time. There's a high risk for injury for everyone. It's expensive to educate and it's your duty to educate. And it's an obligation by the federal government. Okay. So, you're funding for this should be priority to avoid any retaliation. Now yesterday's newspaper pointed out a lawsuit, I'm sure from this there are going to be parents reading this and they're just going to be flooding your office with lawyers. So, you only have yourself to blame looking back at this. You know there are preschoolers that you should start thinking about the preschoolers because without educating the preschoolers you're just going to be dealing with them for years and years and years. So, the result of that is just an additional expense for this district, which the taxpayers are bearing the burden of. So, I don't know what your thoughts about this are and in behind closed doors, but you guys get your act together because you're not doing a good job at all, not for this district and you are supposed to be doing this for the students. Political reasons don't play a role here. Thank you.

Hilary Mortimer, 379 North Bay Street, Manchester, stated:

Hi, good evening. My name is Hilary Mortimer and I reside in Ward 1, on 379 North Bay Street. We have a kindergartner and a third grader. I'm sorry. First grade and third grade. Oh, don't tell her I forgot she went to first grade this year, at Webster School and they love it there. And the staff there is amazing. We've had nothing but positive experiences and the school year started and we were fully staffed. We very quickly were not fully staffed. Many paras have been pulled out of classrooms, at least three to my knowledge, we are not even a week into the school year. These paras have gone down to the EBD program. We also have our specialty teachers, which are helping out. So, they're covering we had a third-grade teacher who was out the second day of school I believe. So, we had our specialty teachers they jumped right in and they took an hour here and an hour there. And our admin staffs covering and of course they're getting other questions about our principal. So, we started great. We thought it was wonderful we had such a welcoming event. The teachers went in all excited on Tuesday. And you know by Thursday morning parents are asking questions, what are we doing? We already have a sub shortage. This is not new news to many of you. Many parents were here last year from Webster, we had the same problem, I know it's not particular to our school to have a sub problem, but less than one week in, it's very it's very disheartening and it's saddened. I will say my students come home happy every day. The staff that is there is amazing, but they are being pulled away from what you've employed them to do. They're not allowed to do their jobs, they have not been given the proper resources, the proper personnel and the proper tools. And it's very unfortunate because they show up every day and they do an amazing job. Thank you.

Clerk Carey stated there's no one else signed up your Honor.

Mayor Craig asked anyone else wishing to speak? Come on up.

Sue Hannan, Derry stated:

Good evening, Mayor Craig and Board of School Committee. I'm Sue Hannan. I teach at Hillside Middle School and I'm the president of the Manchester Education Association. Five years ago, I came to the board many of whom are still sitting here and asked what your long-term plan was. Where would you be in five years? The strategic plan has quietly expired and while Manchester

Proud is taking that on, it really should have been done already. This planning would have brought us to a different situation. Instead we're in the same place we were then. We're experiencing delays in negotiations that are demoralizing to your employees. Communication has become damaged. We're hearing messages that we're not worthy. We've been called liars here in these chambers and although we have celebrated each other in our schools for the past four days, we don't hear it much from many of you. What if we did that to each other or to the students that we're supposed to be trying to build up. We've made efforts to start over. Continue on. And build relationships. It's obvious from other speakers that communication is breaking down and that's happening with MEA too. Let's recognize and embrace our past. And then move it aside. We do our best every day. Your staff is outstanding at all levels. Thank you.

Mayor Craig asked anyone else wishing to speak?

Jim O'Connell, 265 Prospect Street, Manchester, stated:

Madam Mayor and Members of the Board, I was arriving here as the last speaker was speaking, so I have no idea of what might have gone before me and so I don't want to… I know you have a big, well I have a senior agenda but I know that a lot of stuff going on so I'm sure you're very busy. Well, Jim O'Connell, do you a favor and stay below three minutes for sure. I simply came to express my gratitude to the Superintendent, the staff of the district, the police department, the teachers, the administrators and everybody who was involved in the issue on Friday at Central High School. I most of all would like to commend the students and anybody who has ever tried to manage, in whatever clubs or groups we in, manage a group of 10 or 15 or 20 teenagers and have them listen to us and do what we'd like them to do, it's not that easy. And to see over a thousand young people being well-behaved and respectful, etc. was a great commendation of them, of the instruction that they receive, the respect they have for their teachers and of the community. So, I'm very grateful. I wanted to say thank you and I'm sure that the majority, if not everybody, in the Central High School community feels similarly. I'm hoping that there are lots of lessons learned when the decisions were made about how was best to disperse the kids and have them picked up and everything. There were some lessons to be learned there. But I think this will be valuable that we will be able to do that. But again, thank you to everybody who was there especially, those people who are not to be controversial about it, but the fact is we do have

teachers in this city working without a contract and they were working there without pay, without compensation. Many city employees were there and earning overtime and rightfully so. But we had public employees who rely on us for their living, who were there and not getting paid and doing so complaining. So, thank you all. And leave to your work.

10. Mayor Craig advised that if there was no one else present wishing to speak, a motion would be in order to take all comments under advisement and further to receive and file any written documentation presented.

*There being no one else present wishing to speak, on motion of **Committee Member Beaudry**, duly seconded by **Committee Member Girard**, it was voted to take all comments under advisement and further to receive and file any written documentation presented. All were in favor and the motion passed.*

11. **ACTION AGENDA**

12. CONSENT AGENDA (ITEMS 12-19)

Mayor Craig asked we are on the consent agenda, would anyone like to remove any items.

No one removed any items.

14. Report(s) of the Committee of Coordination/Administration, approval of the following policy changes:

15. Report(s) of the Committee of Curriculum and Instruction, if available.

a. Velcro University

16. Report(s) of the Committee of Building and Sites, if available.

17. Report(s) of the Committee of Athletics, if available.

18. Report(s) of the Committee of Finance, if available.

19. Report(s) of the Committee of Student Conduct, if available.

*Having DULY read the consent agenda, on motion of **Committee Member Ambrogi**, duly seconded by **Committee Member Desrochers**, it was voted that the balance of the consent agenda be approved. All were in favor and the motion passed.*

COMMUNICATIONS

20. Superintendent's Communications.

Mayor Craig stated item 20 is the superintendent's communication.

Dr. Vargas stated good evening. Before going out remarks to report to you I like to again thank all of our teachers and the staff and the Administration and the Chief of Police, the MTA, Transportation people, or food service, our students, our family. I've been here for less than two years and I have never seen a community so united around our children and the work that our educators are doing each and every day to educate our kids, but also one of our obligations is to keep our children safe. And I want to thank Mrs. Gillis along with the Chief of Police, his team, our transportation people were incredible, the Manchester Transit Authority, along with the many, many other people from food services, all the way to our secretaries, to our families who collaborated so incredibly well, to make sure that every child went from school to home safe, that day, with very difficult situation. So, I thank you also to the Board, and everyone who contributed, I know I'm leaving a lot of people out that deserve kudos for the great work that they do each and every day. So, in terms of the opening of the school you will hear at the end I'd like to give us a summary of where we are, we are on our fourth days which is incredible given some of the challenges that we face. But any family that is listening to us can rest assured that our people, our teachers, our staff, do their very best each day to make sure that our kids are getting the education they deserve. I would like to begin with a report around the Special Education. The school board had requested an update, your honor. You have and this is an area of concern to all of us because we have been working for many years trying to address the problem that we are facing. While we have made a little progress, we have a long way to go, as you might be able to see as Mr. Steady presents to you.

Mrs. Steady stated well the dongles not the correct one. Do you have the you have the presentation in front of you?

Clerk Carey stated the board has the presentation. Yes. So, somebody stole the adapter for the Apple computers a while ago. And so, Kelly Jobel usually has hers with her, but she's not here tonight. And I was informed that we've replaced it over and over again and that they don't want to replace it.

Committee Member Girard stated your Honor. Members of the public who want to follow along could get the agenda from the website because the presentation is part of our agenda. So, if they go to the school board page at mansd.org.

Mayor Craig stated they shouldn't have to.

Committee Member Girard stated I agree but it's something. So, if they go to the school board page at mansd, they can go to Full Board agendas and click on today's date and they can at least follow along that way.

Dr. Vargas stated excuse me your Honor, what I would suggest, while Mrs. Steady is getting ready, we can give you the staffing report about the opening of the school, unless you are ready right now.

a) Staffing Update

Dr. Vargas stated why don't we, so we don't lose any time.

Mayor Craig stated perfect.

Dr. Vargas stated so Mrs. Gillis is going to give you an update about staffing.

Mrs. Gillis stated all right so we have continued to strive to get ourselves fully staffed. We are down to filling six teacher positions. Our larger push right now is to fill the paraprofessional positions within all of our buildings. We've continued to staff all of the classrooms, while we

continue to move all of the applications forward through the process. In addition, we promised we would bring you information on enrollment.

Mayor Craig asked can I ask a quick question about staffing? Someone who came up and spoke tonight mentioned to us there's already a shortage in substitutes. Can you address that? Is that happening?

Mrs. Hogan stated we don't have as many substitute teachers as we typically do. It has been difficult to recruit. However, I've not heard any concerns brought to my attention at this point. As far as any significant issues. So that was news to me. There is a teacher specialist at Webster, that we still do need to fill and we've been working towards that and we have another new teacher that's moving over on Monday.

Mayor Craig stated and I know that there was a program with SNHU I believe to help us with the substitutes, is that in place?

Mrs. Hogan stated yes, that's in place at some of the other schools for the schools.

Ms. Allen stated for the schools Parker Varney and Gossler and Northwest and Parkside. So those interns are working within those schools freeing up substitutes across the city.

Committee Member Girard stated thank you, your honor. Just to follow up on your question, I was wondering if there was an abnormally large number of absences in the first five days of school that would require a large number of substitutes?

Mrs. Hogan stated I don't have that information with me, that goes typically directly to payroll first. So, and they're looking at that information as well.

Committee Member Girard stated because I would assume if we were having substitute issues that means we're having absenteeism and I hope that's not the case.

Mayor Craig stated what I heard was that potentially people were moving from different positions for coverage.

Dr. Vargas stated we can give you a thorough coverage of this. This is the first time that I have heard about one school. The only thing I can tell you, at least in the West side, the program that you alluded to from Southern New Hampshire University is working well in terms that the people are in action and that is part of our approach to alleviate the program and the theory here that if we need less people to sub in the west side then we will have a larger pool for the rest of this city. Thank you.

b) Enrollment & Class Size Update

Dr. Vargas stated so are you almost ready?

Mrs. Steady stated yeah.

Dr. Vargas stated so, now we can move to the Special Education and then when we return we will talk about the enrollment and class size that this board is monitoring the class sizes. Okay. While they are working on it, if you don't mind your honor, I'd like to change to the next topic because we have a laundry list, as I mentioned to you, the class size is something that you are monitoring. And even though we have made some progress in the last couple of years, we have a way to go. For example, in the redistricting plan along with the recommendation that I like to see for next year is though we get our kindergarten classes to 20. And first through third grade maximum at 22. But using the guidelines that you had in place, right now we only have six classes that exceed the number under the current situation that we like them to be. You will get a report like you used to get monthly. So, the first one will be coming to you in the Board update this coming Thursday. So, look for it. I hope that you get to review it, that you ask any questions you have. I know that some of you from time to time when you review the class size list you do raise questions and we have been able to respond in the area where you have a significant challenge. I must say that this year, at least on the first day of school, we didn't have a situation like we had in the prior year where the class sizes, particularly the lower grade levels were excessively high and we needed a new teacher for example last year at Northwest, and we needed to take other action, so I can't wait to provide that report to you so that you can see for yourself and you can raise any question that you might have. Around enrollment, I am going to have Mrs. Gillis talk a little bit about that. Okay, well generally the enrollment is so far, we won't

have it in the same clarity, because normally we look at the enrollment on October 1st. That's when for the most part, that is the most accurate data set that you will receive and the reason is that there some students that move from our city to other places you don't immediately remove them. So, by October we have a more solid balance, but the bottom line is that our enrollment is projected to be steady, meaning similar to last year without a drastic change if you will.

Committee Member Girard stated thank you, Your Honor. Dr. Vargas in the enrollment reports we received last Thursday there were several grades and classes that I didn't understand the numbers, for example at Beech Street School in the first grade we have classes with 22, 22, 23, 14, and 19. Are those regular classes and if that's the case why would we have classes at 14 and 19 and then three classes over 20?

Dr. Vargas stated you will see that just like you say six classes that exceed that number. It is impossible, I would tell you this much based on my professional judgment to balance each class with the same number. But as I mentioned earlier Beech Street we are trying to, if you look at the fifth grader in there or the third grader I believe, their number is significantly higher than that. So, we might shift a teacher to, if we haven't done so, I think we might have even done so, in which we're trying to balance those classes that have a high number of students and bring the first grade, like you are saying, to a better average if you will.

Committee Member Girard stated follow up your honor. Well and I was going to ask about the third and fifth grades because if you take a look at the numbers there, they are 23, 23, 24, 23 and 7 in the third grade and 24, 23, 24, and 8 in the fifth grade.

Dr. Vargas stated I think the 7 and the 8, you are not reading that well. The seven, it could be students with special needs.

Committee Member Girard stated well they're not in the grayed-out area that say self-contained. So normally if there's an off class like that it's in the self-contained area. That's why I'm asking.

Mrs. Gillis stated so some of those the numbers that said as they look like outliers may be students that have not been fully put into a class and or they’re Special Ed and they are sitting in

a double place right now. So, we're looking to clean up that report to make it easier for you to read. We've got a different format that just makes it a little bit more black and white.

Committee Member Girard stated I mean there are examples throughout all of the schools in grades like that. So, I was just curious you know why you would have 15 in one and 22 and another.

Dr. Vargas stated as Mrs. Gillis has said, Mrs. Greenspan, as we speak, that's one of the project that she's having and it is part of our goal this year, which I'm going to give you a report about our objective to make sure that we're strengthening our operation, which is a goal last year and that includes making sure that we have data that is actionable and more clear. And she is changing that report because that has been a challenge and when you look at that report you don't get the clarity that you deserve to make the judgment that you need to make concerning the data. So, you will see a change and thanks for allowing me to say that, you probably will see that in the next few weeks, the report that you used to receive will be changing to make the adjustment Mr. Girard just alluded to it.

Committee Member Girard stated well I look forward to those changes because frankly it's an awful report and always has been.

Dr. Vargas stated well we hope we can make progress on that.

Mayor Craig stated I'm just curious. We used the report to get a gauge as to where things are going, how do you use that report?

Dr. Vargas stated I use it for the same purpose, your Honor.

Mayor Craig stated so you use that to make changes.

Dr. Vargas stated correct.

Mayor Craig stated so the teachers... You'll address classroom sizes?

Dr. Vargas stated correct. Ms. Allen, Mrs. Gillis and the whole team, Mrs. Steady and everybody. That's one of the drivers, at some point I'd like to have a discussion with you about data in the District. That is a report and while I use it, I'd like to be more clear and more actionable. At the high school is where we have the most challenge. I could give you any report from a high school and you won't be able to read it, but hopefully I have engaged the people from Aspen, Mrs. Greenspan has been incredible. You will hear a little bit more about that effort that she's working on and the meeting that we have had with people, the vendor from the Student Information System. I need your help, you need to ask everyone in the system to make your life easier and mine easier, and Family life easy and the student easy, and that is when it comes to data we have a long way to go, in terms of giving it to you in a way that is actionable and that you can see if you have a problem, you can see great clarity and if you have a challenge or you are doing well in an area you can see that. For example, I see data that our teachers and our staff should be very proud off, but the way in which it is presented, it doesn't convey the good work for example that our staff are doing. So, in general I would say that it's a both end data that I believe captures the work of the district in a better. Sometimes it's a cure because of the way the data is presented and also, it is difficult when you have a problem to see it, in the way in which the data is presented needs to be improved and that is something that we are working on. So, are you ready?

Mrs. Steady stated just about, it's loading.

Dr. Vargas stated if you don't have any questions your Honor, I'm sorry.

Mayor Craig stated you have to use your microphone please.

Committee Member Bergeron asked are you both referring to the report that I'm looking at the enrollment report? Okay. And that's the one you use for decisions, I didn't know that. That's good. I was just looking at Jewett and I just wondered if the fifth-grade numbers look any better five days later.

Dr. Vargas stated yeah. The fifth grade throughout the system is one, when I mentioned those six classes and some of them are in the sixth grade.

Committee Member Bergeron stated I mean I have to apologize because you may have said something already but I was trying to hook up my laptop. So sorry if I missed it.

Dr. Vargas stated the fifth grader if you look across our school, they have a higher number than what we'd like to say. But as again it's no across the board. It's Jewett, Wilson and there's a couple of other schools that we are monitoring, as you mentioned. We look at this report very seriously.

Committee Member Terrio stated thank you, Your Honor. Dr. Vargas, just a few questions. From the personal report looks like we're hiring 32 Paras tonight. How many open para positions will we have after tonight? Approximately.

Mrs. Gillis stated so we will have, so right now we have currently 30 sitting open, some are still in the process.

Mayor Craig stated 30.

Committee Member Terrio stated so after the 32 we hired, we will still have 30 open.

Mrs. Gillis stated correct.

Committee Member Terrio stated great. Thank you.

Dr. Vargas stated excuse me, just let me add to that. What I'd like to add that is a moving target. We will lose paras and some of you, it's no secret to anyone that the salary for paras is low, so when they find other opportunities, I mean this is the U.S. of America, that people look for a better situation. So, we are experiencing and number of paras for example that are leaving us, that's one reason they leave us and that has to do with wages.

Committee Member Terrio stated I have two more questions. Thank you Dr. Vargas. I looked over the class sizes the other day. I want to say that you're doing a good job overall. The class sizes were reasonable, there were a few spots here and there. But just to clarify something you said earlier. I notice that we don't get data on middle school and high school. But you say you're

going to work with Aspen, so in the future we'll be able to see the class sizes for the middle school and high school broken up.

Dr. Vargas stated yes.

Committee Member Terrio stated all right.

Dr. Vargas stated you should. And you need to.

Committee Member Terrio stated all right and then one last question, your Honor. Mrs. Stern spoke tonight about the administrative assistant at Memorial, will that position be filled soon. Mrs. Stern spoke tonight about the administrative assistant was a personal matter, I would prefer to discuss in non-public.

Committee Member Desrochers asked thank you Your Honor. I'm sorry I couldn't hear you when you were saying the number of paras that were open and could you just answer that again?

Mrs. Gillis stated sure, we have 30 that will still be sitting open as of tonight. We have a number sitting in the queue, which means are in the process of processing.

Committee Member Desrochers asked okay. Thank you.

Committee Member Beaudry stated thank you Madam Chairman. This is a good time to bring this up as far as the paras. I was able to go into an autistic class today and Mrs. Want was also attending the class. And I actually learnt a lot from this teacher on the paraprofessional and I have the utmost respect for our paraprofessionals and I think they do a great job and we need more of them. There were eight students in this class. There were two professionals and one teacher. One paraprofessional had to leave the class with a student because they were going to a mainstream course, which left seven students with a para and a teacher. And I mean, I don't know about autism, but I can tell you this class was very active. And what I witnessed, these two people had a challenge with these seven students. One of the recommendations that was brought to my attention and I would support is that the paraprofessionals right now need 60 credits to become a para. And what was explained to me is that, why do we mandate 60 credits, they could be 60 credits in General Ed and have nothing to do with Special Ed. Can we lower that threshold

and have them be trained for that specific student that they're going to be dealing with, if it's an autistic child or an EBD child and trained for that specific student instead of just generalizing give me 60 credits, which could all be in Athletics, that has nothing to do with the Special Ed. So that's one of the things I would like to see and I don't know if that would have to go to C&I but I would like to send it to a committee to talk about the threshold for the paraprofessionals and I know you're working with the union as far as salaries, so that depending on what the paraprofessional is doing their salary would be commensurate with the work they're doing, because they did lose a paraprofessional at the school to a subsequent school district because they were paying them fifteen dollars an hour and we were starting at 11 something. So again, they're going to go where they can get more money and probably less work, for a lack of better terms. So, I don't know what your thoughts are Doc and what committee we can send them to. But I would make a motion this evening that we send the personnel issue for paras to C&I to at least look at what it takes to become a para.

*On motion of **Committee Member Beaudry,** duly seconded by **Committee Member Scannell,** it was moved to send the personnel issue for Paraprofessionals to Curriculum and Instruction to look at what it takes to become a paraprofessional.*

Committee Member Terrio asked for a friendly amendment. I believe Dr. Avard brought this up before that we should also look, as we heard tonight that there's a substitute shortage, that we should also look at the requirements for substitutes and I would like to see a tiered system where the substitute in a grade school at the grade school level maybe needs less credits as opposed to the middle and high school.

***Committee Member Terrio** made a friendly amendment that the Board also look at the requirements for substitutes and that a tiered system be developed so that less credits are needed at the Elementary School level than are needed at the Middle and High School Level.*

Committee Member Beaudry stated and I would hope that we can have a time certain on this that by the end of the year we come up with, actually I would even like to do it before the holidays come up with a way to attract paraprofessionals and substitute teachers.

Committee Member Bergeron stated thank you, Your Honor. I'm just curious why we're not putting as much effort into the pay part of it.

Committee Member Beaudry stated I can't hear what he said.

Mayor Craig stated what did you say?

Committee Member Bergeron stated well. I didn't know that you're doing the pay part of it at C&I. I only heard the actual job description. So, I'll take your word for it. Never mind.

Mayor Craig stated motion on the floor first by Committeeman Beaudry, seconded by Committeeman Scannell, are you all set? Did you have another question?

Committee Member Terrio stated I just wanted the clerk to read the motion back please.

Clerk Carey stated to send personnel for paraprofessionals and substitutes to Curriculum and Instruction to see what it takes to be a paraprofessional and a sub.

All were in favor and the motion passed.

a) Special Education Update

Mayor Craig asked are you all set?

Mrs. Steady stated yeah I'm all set now. Thank you for your patience and thank you for allowing me to speak to you tonight about Special Education in Manchester. The presentation that you have before you are laid out to give you an overview of Special Education to help understand the fiscal drivers with some concrete action plans to move the system. Although this presentation will focus on Special Education, it's important to remember Special Education is a living, breathing and changing system that is part of a greater whole, regular education in the community at large. They're beautiful children and families and hardworking and loving staff that are part of this system. Viewing it from this perspective will allow you to see the interconnection of the systems and its potential. This is when we'll be able to develop the capacity and commitment for change. However, change can't occur in isolation. It has to be a

commitment from everyone and I'll say everyone, all of us together, collectively, as we are part of this greater whole. There are a few people I need to thank, a couple of administrative assistants who really helped put this together and without them it wouldn't be possible pulling the data for me. Special Education is founded in federal law IDA. It really was developed to be able to make sure that kids have a free and appropriate public education, in the least restrictive environment, least restrictive meaning looking at general education first. That's why I said that we need to make sure this is part of and connected to other systems in our school and also to allow parents to really have a voice in their children's education and to put them at the center of this along with making sure that we're providing services to kids ages 3 to 21 unless they graduate before the age of 21. Federal requirements require us to evaluate children at no cost to the parents. And just because a child has a disability it doesn't necessarily mean they require Special Education, that's where a response to intervention or multitiered system of support will come into play, really looking at what supports the general education has for children with disabilities whether they have a 504 or no plan at all, supporting them with the regular education is key. Special education is supplemental services. There are state requirements, so not only do we have the federal law for Special Education, there are standards that our state has developed. So, when you have the federal law how are we going to implement them in New Hampshire. There are also the rights of parents outlined in the New Hampshire procedural safeguard in this presentation those are also hyperlinked for you. On Manchester School Districts website, these links are provided for family or community members to understand what Special Education is and the laws surrounding that and Manchester School District Special Education procedure plan. As I said this is a living, breathing and ever-changing system. So, I just want you to remember this is kind of like a photo of a very active system, when this was developed back in August. So today these numbers could very well have changed they could increase, they could decrease, they could be staying the same. We have in our pre-K enrollment, at this time, five hundred fifty-five students. And you know our K-12, when we look at the Special Educational enrollment, it's almost 3000 students in Manchester who receive. We have about of that 351 children who are in pre-K. We're starting to see the impacts, which is NAS, of the opioid crisis that happening in our state and children coming in with lower social skills and cognitive abilities than we've seen in the past and they're starting to enter into our preschool. Yes.

Committee Member Terrio stated thank you, Mrs. Steady, just a quick, what does NAS mean?

Mrs. Steady stated its neonatal absent syndrome. So, it's the opioid, it's just a fancy term for kids being born addicted. If we look at our Special Education population, it's about 20 percent, it's grown 18 percent over the time, ten years ago it was about fifteen-point eight percent. If we look at that this identification and we break it down from elementary, middle and high, everything is about 20 percent in our district except for high school. When we compare this to our state average, the state average for Special Education is about 14 percent. I apologize if this is a bit fuzzy, but I just pulled up the major Special Education categories just to give you an idea of how many numbers for the children. So, the first one is specific learning disability, that's the greenish color. Then we have other health impairment and when you think about other health impairment, that's kind of a category that could be anything from diabetes, to A.D.H.D and things like that. When we look at developmental delay that's mainly our elementary population that would have developmental delay. We have speech and language, NACS, autism and an emotional disturbance. Other ones that we do see in our district are outlined there, blindness, deafness; however, it's a smaller percentage and these are the most prevalent categories. Students with disability. There is a process to be identified. First there is a disposition of referral. Anyone can refer, within 15 days the district or the school has to hold a meeting to say, do we have enough information here that we want to move forward and identify this kid with Special Education? Do we have a little bit of information and we need to evaluate? Or do we have enough information and we know that we haven't used or implemented all the supports and services in our school and we really should be going back and trying to support the child in the regular ed environment because that is the least restrictive environment? Once a decision is made that children need to be evaluated for an initial evaluation, it's a 60-day timeline. Children down at that point are determined either they're eligible for Special Education or they're not and Special Education is an entitlement program. So, if a child as we've heard here today, if a child has a disability they're entitled to services. From the identification period, we have 30 days to decide what that program is going to look like and where that's going to happen on that continuum of the least restrictive environment. I kind of went over this so the referral process already, a referral is made, a team comes together and they need to determine have we done enough intervention and the regular education classroom. Yes or no. If we have enough

information, we go to making a decision around the evaluation. Evaluation. It's a 60-day timeline. There are three things that are really looked at during that time. The student must have a disability. But like I said just because a child has a disability does not mean they're entitled to Special Ed or even are able to be identified for Special Education, that disability must be significant and impacting the progress within that classroom of their school. And this is the biggest part they need specialized instruction, so specialized instruction is they need to be taught differently than somebody in the regular ed classroom. So that's where the IEP comes into place and all the goals around that. So, I've outlined it to say okay, now what are we going to do here in Manchester around this. Now that we know that there's a process and that that process is federally mandated and that we have to follow it and we are monitored if we follow this process. So, some of the things that we're doing and tomorrow I'm offering a training and I'll be one of the schools talking about what is this process and what does it mean and what's that timeline look like. So, continuing to offer training throughout the year, we did it last year, various trainings and we'll continue to do it this year so that we are staffs informed that there is a process that's federally mandated that is associated with timelines. Yes.

Committee Member Bergeron stated can I ask a question?

Mrs. Steady stated that is up to you guys.

Committee Member Ambrogi stated let the presentation flow.

Committee Member Bergeron stated I just wanted to know is, first I was curious, which staff was actually trained, you know because I always thought that guidance would be good because people are talking about what they want for classes and that's where I discovered that high school students can get tested or whatnot, was in my conversation with guidance. So, was that ever on the list of staff to train or?

Mrs. Steady stated so teams are trained usually together, but I don't know if I personally haven't reached out to guidance and trained them but that's a wonderful suggestion, I feel that since this is an interconnected system, people who are mainly living and breathing and regular education need to understand Special Education and that there is a process, so I will take that back and because actually…

Committee Member Bergeron stated I was misled on policy just because they probably were unaware of it. So that's why I am highly suggesting it.

Mrs. Steady stated I think Special Ed is complex and sometimes it's hard to understand.

Committee Member Bergeron stated I just think it would be a good idea, thank you.

Mrs. Steady stated when we look at program and placements, I already touched on this a little bit around the least restrictive environment. What do we have for programs within our school district? So, we have, if we speak about preschool Special Education in our district, we have an early childhood of regular education environment, we have early childhood Special Education, we have autism, we have a deaf and hard of hearing, and we have the Bishop O'Neil. We also have some contracts or agreements with Head Start, Manchester Community College, Manchester Community Development, and Reaching for the Stars because preschool really wants you to be able to look at that child in their natural environment and for the Special Education to occur there. So, when it's appropriate and these children are already in program doing reach out to those community programs. Children who receive Special Education and are elementary school, they receive it in the classroom, the least restrictive environment, to a resource room, to a self-contained program. When we start to look at our self-contained programs and we've already heard a little bit that we have EBD programs, behavior programs, autism, deaf and hard of hearing, intellectual and children who have multiple disabilities. We have the same type programming in middle school, kids receive their Special Education and services within a regular education classroom, within resource rooms and self-contained programs. Our self-contained programs are our autism programs, our behavior programs, our intellectual and multiple disability programs. Similar to elementary middle school there's this continuum across the district that children will receive their Special Education in the regular classroom, resource room and self-contained. For high school, we have autism, self-contained program, behavior, intellectual and multiple disabilities. There are out of district or as the least restrictive environment calls it, a separate school that we do sends our students to. And this could be decided in multiple reasons, the IEP team makes the decision here or court could make a decision that a child needs to be placed at one of these. When we were looking at our program placement and we're measured on this, once again by the Department of Education, were

measured to be able to see that kids have access and the only students with disability having access and receive services and resource rooms and self-contained. So, we cannot put a child who is not identified with an IEP, in a resource room or self-contained, because these are program approval for children with disabilities who receive Special Education. We have to always consider as you've heard me speak already tonight around the least restrictive environment to the most extent possible. We heard a little bit about autism program and maybe you visited a self-contained program and some of those children were going out and accessing services in their regular ed and some will stay in that program for the entire day.

Mayor Craig asked so when will we have 17/18 data?

Mrs. Steady stated the DOE provides that. I'm not sure the exact date. This is the most recent data that I have from the Department of Ed.

Mayor Craig stated and the way that I was looking at that. It says 80 percent or more to be in the general education. So, we're going in the wrong direction. Right?

Mrs. Steady stated well I think we're stabilizing. I think it would depend on… So, we're 74 percent. And then it went down to 72. You'd have to take that back and put it into the total number of students, to be able to see how many students it was. So, it could very well be a similar number. But yes, we are. So, this measures how many, 80 percent of the students who are receiving their education in the LRE.

Mayor Craig asked so, can you do that so we know?

Mrs. Steady stated I can pull the population of specialized data from 15/16. I'm sure the Department of Ed can provide that to me.

Mayor Craig stated thank you.

Mrs. Steady stated yeah. Then we have the other part that's looked at is students receiving Special Education 40 percent or less in the regular education. This is the area that when we speak about having an RTI or a multi-tiered system of support model, that could definitely be

impacted. Our district is doing, so if you'll see that 40 percent or less of their time as general education and it's a similar trend. We're not near the state average around that.

Mayor Craig asked so what are we doing to get closer to that?

Mrs. Steady stated I'm going to get there. Yeah. So, after each one of these sections I put an action plan of things that we will start looking at and moving at. Students who receive Special Education in a separate school because that's their least restrictive environment, this is where you're going to see a big jump. We had kids in our district only 1.13 percent and then 16/17 it jumped to 3 percent. And I'll get into that data a little bit later, when we look at some of the fiscal pieces associated with that and the reason for it. If we look at our program placement, 82 students at this time are at charter schools, plus with an additional 15 when I pulled it today when we were speaking about it was probably an additional 23. That's why I'm saying the system changes pretty rapidly. We have 47 students that the district has decided to place in a separate school, in one of those ones that I mentioned. And then there's court ordered placements. And that's when the court says that this child needs to be in a separate school and we are ordered to do that. We are ordered to pay for that.

Committee Member Girard stated madam Chair, just could you clarify the charter school number please, is it 82, plus 15, for a total of 97 or were there 15 new ones in the 82?

Mrs. Steady stated so we had 82 students that were confirmed, at the time when I pulled this number we hadn't got the numbers from our newish charter school in our city. So, it was about 15, they had told me. So, if you add that together. But I was told, when we were looking at it today, it was about 23. So, they're still pulling numbers and you know sometimes when kids enter charter schools and stuff, parents don't want to share that information about the IEP that they had on whether at Manchester. So, it's somewhat having those communication with the parents in the charter schools to be able to get that information and that's back and forth with our district on a daily basis to be able to get an idea.

Committee Member Girard stated so, you're saying there's a total of anywhere from 97 to 105?

Mrs. Steady stated yes. And like I said, this changes daily because we get court orders and kids get court placed, so this number is going up in Manchester. Some of the things we did, that we're doing right now to be able to get a handle on Special Ed programming in our school and our out of district placement is that we hired a court liaison. Manchester hasn't had a full-time court liaison and I think about five years I think is correct. And so just having that face in court to be able to really advocate, keeping kids who are successful in our public schools in our public schools even if they may need a more secure environment for their living situation. We hired an outer district coordinator instead of having a case manager or a teacher do that to really help us get an understanding and a handle on all of these numbers and where the kids are going and really trying to make sure that we are writing IEP goals to look at pulling these kids back into our school and how do we get kids back into their least restrictive environment. Training on least restrictive environment and what that means. Implementing the paraprofessional deliberation guide so that way we're making sure we're providing the right supports in the regular ed environment and the general curriculum really looking at transportation deliberation guideline, we're implementing that at this moment. Looking at IEP goals for increased time and independence in the classroom. And I already mentioned this, IEP goals to include transition back into the least restrictive environment. Yes.

Committee Member Freeman stated thank you, your Honor. Thank you Mrs. Steady. I had a question about the new out of district coordinator. Will they be helping us try to tamp down why we have so many out of district, not court ordered placements because that's a completely different piece, but are they going to be able to help us tamp down why we have so many out of district placements right now?

Mrs. Steady stated I think that we will work in coordination. But as I said when I opened, we really need to collectively work together. That out of district coordinator can't personally do it. I can't do it. When the federal laws or state standards aren't followed that's when we get ourselves in a little bit of difficulties and that's when complaints or due process and those things come in and that we place kids, making sure that from day one we have a good strong RTI model. So that way reading instruction and math instruction is the foundations to this, so that way we're not then saying you know something this kid's a year or two behind and the parents are requesting a child to go to a reading program, a school that has really strong evidence base reading program. So

collectively we need to do this. And I'll say, as I say to Dr. Vargas, we cannot change Special Ed until regular education… or we can't change Special Ed alone without regular education being strong.

Committee Member Freeman stated may I follow up? Mrs. Steady you actually didn't answer my question because I was looking for that. And what I think has happened a lot of times with the out of district placements that we're having, is we don't have a safety net. We aren't looking at ways to avoid that out of district placements, by the time it gets to the district office it's beyond repair. So, I think that's the answer. What you explained to me is exactly the answer I was looking for. That is our safety net. That is our safety net, long overdue.

Mayor Craig stated just going back to the slide, I had a question on, from this action plan. Can you talk to me specifically about what we are implementing, if we already have implemented it, if we haven't when we are, to ensure that students in Special Ed are getting more time in the general education classroom?

Mrs. Steady stated and I think this comes back to education that understanding Special Education is supplemental, that when you take a child and you automatically put them in a resource room and you don't give access back to their regular reading program then you're not allowing for those skills to be developed. So, it's a training piece around that.

Mayor Craig stated so training is going to be addressed?

Mrs. Steady stated yes. Making sure that we train on the least restrictive environment. So that's what I put. So, training with staff members to understand that Special Education is a supplemental program and what I usually say is if you are eating a diet and your doctor says you're low on B12 and you take a B12 supplement, you don't then all of a sudden just get rid of your regular diet and just take your supplement. We need to make sure our staff members are understanding that Special Education, least restrictive environment being access to that general education when appropriate is the most important.

Mayor Craig asked and is that new or has that going on? Have we been providing that training or is this something new?

Mrs. Steady stated I can't speak from before I got here, but we've had conversations already with staff. I was in the new staff training and that was what I spoke about and will continue. We've hired some really great staff at district office, who will be looking at how do you take some of this information and write really strong IEP goals. So, we met with a couple of people around, even today, assistive technology and what does that even mean for kids having access in the classroom and we'll be rolling out more trainings this year.

Dr. Vargas stated this might be a good… if I may your Honor, I would like Ms. Allen to talk about the innovative approach that she utilized at Parker Varney to make sure that children with Autism was talking advantage of the mainstream classes. If you don't mind Ms. Allen to speak about that, because I think there are solutions to this problem, but it would require some training and also require commitment in the part of all of us. This is not something that one person or two people, or even a dozen of us can do. This requires a systemic change, like Ms. Allen took on at Parker Varney around the program of children with Autism. So, if you don't mind elaborating on that.

Ms. Allen stated sure. We had an opportunity at Parker Varney two years ago, when we had a self-contained need, of a district self-contained kindergarten and an innovative kindergarten teacher and a Special Educator who collapsed that self-contained group into a regular ed kindergarten and it became a co-teaching model. So, there were eight students that IEPs had said self-contained. We met with every parent and explained that this would be a great move for them and it was a trying year. We did a lot of training. We did a lot of support. And I am happy to say that actually eight out of the eight students are spending their first-grade year at their home schools in a regular classroom. So, I'd like to be able to continue that work and continue to support those two teachers and principals to develop capacity.

Mayor Craig stated so what does it take to implement that across the district?

Dr. Vargas stated it takes commitment, it takes commitment on my part and your part. It takes us spending less time in things that distract us. I mean to turn around a Special Education program, this is a problem from Maine to California, that too many children, millions of children, are misplaced in the US. Unfortunately, they are some of the most vulnerable. It takes

also resources. I think Ms. Allen might have left out the fact though we were able to put paraprofessionals and change the model, but we didn't have to add dollars to our system, because all you asked me was to allow you to convert a position, right? From a teaching position to have more paraprofessionals in it. So, it requires collaboration, all of us working together, it's one of the most difficult work. And let me just finish, I think your question is excellent, I know that our community is committed to improve this district. You are committed, the entire Board is committed. But it will require for us to turn around the Special Education program, along with the general education, to deliver programs that we provide our kids. For example, our teachers are great, but you cannot give them more students with more challenges and not given them the tools or support or training that they need. You might ask, why don't you do this tomorrow? Your honor, it would be irresponsible unless you have the support, the tools, the training, the resources that our teachers and Administrators and others need in order to achieve significant improvement.

Ms. Allen stated and I think too is that mindset piece, that inclusion really is co-teaching and working within that model and not that resource model and that that's going to be a culture change and a system's change that we need to move forward.

Mayor Craig stated but making it… if I could. Making a change at the kindergarten level such as this if we're going to do something across the district, is this something that we start talking about in C&I? Because if we don't start addressing any sort of change or what the needs are then we're not going to get there. So, I would just respectfully suggest that we start having this dialogue at the committee level, so that we can start implementing some of these much needed changes within the district.

Dr. Vargas stated I think you need to start at the board level. So, when your superintendent says to you we need resources. Don't just hear that. Don't let that space, close that space, you might want to ask me what does that mean that you need more tools? It's no different then when you ask someone to do something, you have to give them the support and the tools. For example, we don't have a reading program that is solid, that speaks to what Mrs. Steady is talking about. So, if you have kids that you don't intervene early, so they end up going into the middle school with the skill set that is still at the elementary level, but we knew before and the sad part for me as

your superintendent is that I know it. That I have significant number of kids that need intervention, but it would cause significant amount of dollars that so far I haven't been able to convince people here that we are prepared to do so. And again, I submit my judgement, my professional judgement, to a third party to review it. Any one can come and look and see. You could do it without needing strong reading programs or numeracy or all kinds of support. And if someone can do it differently, I welcome that. But I don't know a single district that is successful, that doesn't have a strong intervention program. To give you an example, in the redistricting I just went like piecemeal and I asked this board for example, that we need no more than 20 students in kindergarten so that our teachers will have better chance to meet the need of every child. Now, when you go to surrounding communities here, Bedford for example, 20 kids, 1 teacher, 1 paraprofessional. That means when a kid has some challenges, that the teacher can reach out to that paraprofessional and provide better support for that kid. But I would welcome that discussion and I think that you into something here, what we ought to do is come up with a few areas that we really want to work at and bring it to the Board and say we need to just focus on that and perhaps not every meeting that we come here we add things to the law, when you know that we cannot do it all. We might feel good that we think that we are addressing all of these issues, but I don't think that we are going to get far unless we are strategic about how we go about doing this work.

Mayor Craig stated completely agree. And we're all on the same team. And so, I look to you as a superintendent to say what are those three to five things that will have the biggest impact on our student achievement. And if you want to restructure how we're addressing things, I think that you'll get all of our support.

Mrs. Steady stated if we are evaluated… Go ahead. Well, I'm not sure if I'm allowed to do that.

Committee Member Bergeron stated of course I want to better understand, Amy, what you are saying. But at this point since I think people would be excited to sort of emulate that program, so if it does get to the committee level soon and I would like to hear from the educators themselves, their testimony because I think that would be compelling, if you could just… I mean I know it'll be on the agenda, I just don't want to miss it because I'd love to be at that meeting to hear that because I think that would be great or even at the board level. So, I think that would make an

impact. And Dr. Vargas I understand when you need support, but I guess sometimes I need specifics you know. So, thank you for being specific about this.

Ms. Allen stated I think the impact would come from those parents who saw an extremely successful year for these five-year-old students who never thought they could learn what they did. Thank you.

Committee Member Bergeron stated Yeah. Thank you.

Mrs. Steady stated so, we are measured by the state on indicators. One of the indicators that we're measured on is preschool outcomes. So, the good news is that when we look at social emotional growth we looked at early language and communication, early literacy and appropriate behavior, from when the children enter preschool to when they exit, there is growth within our preschool. The growth is not at meeting age expectations though. So, when we look at state assessment data and you've heard this through Manchester Proud, what we're using for state assessment data. When we look at student performance with students who have IEPs compared to students who don't have IEPs, we have seen a steady increase in proficiency in English Language Arts, while the students who are not identified have maintained. So, if we look here on the left side you'll see kids without IEPs, their proficiency has stayed the same in Manchester are children with IEP is it starting to increase. So that's a good thing. When we look at math, you'll see that students with IEPs and without IEPs, they decrease in the percentage of proficiency in math over the past three years. If we look at what we need to, we need to look just what you guys are talking about, looking at our pullout program is that the best way we can serve students, review the amount of students who have paraprofessional support really looking at our districts readiness to implement a multi-tiered system of support or an RTI model, making sure that we're paying attention to our special and vulnerable populations when we're looking at the iReady data and that students are having… and this isn't the action plan to do that, but students are having inconsistent access to rigorous curriculum, grade level curriculum. So, we need to make sure that there's some consistency across the district. One of the things I can share with you that tomorrow we're already doing is that we do have a meeting with some of our behavior specialists to really look at what is the multitiered system support look like for kids who are struggling with mental and behavioral health problems and how do we start addressing that universally throughout the

district. So, all kids are getting what they need and then looking at what sort of data points would we pull if we needed to do some targeted intervention for kids and not intensive. But that conversation is starting to happen tomorrow. If we look at personnel within Special Education there's a very small district team given the size that we are. I'm the director of it. We have four coordinators: one who oversees all of the elementary; one who oversees all of middle and high school; one who oversees preschool and our child fine; and, now one who is starting to oversee out of district. First, if we look all the way to the lower right of this PowerPoint, it starts with the role of the classroom teacher, with Special Education and then you have your Special Education teachers and that should be a coordinated system, so that way when Special Education IEP goals are written or implemented the Special Educator is looking to see what the classroom curriculum looks like and then the classroom teacher is making sure that those IEP goals are being reinforced within the classroom. Then on top of that, in our middle and high school, we have something called an LEA which oversees Special Education. It's an unusual model for such a large system, usually of a coordinator at each school to really start looking at Special Ed with an assistant to help monitor all those cases, so that way just as Ms. Freeman spoke about that, we're not missing things, we're following the proper timelines, there's a lot of attention that needs to go to that. So, we can get that legal and compliance piece done smoothly so that we can spend a lot of attention and time on teaching.

Committee Member Scannell stated this seems to me that the crux of the issue and I can't get my brain around it, when we talk about and I use the term advisedly, cost overruns in Special Ed, are we talking about a lack of efficiency within our own system or are we talking about the true cost of providing a student what the law requires and what that student needs? Because, if it's the latter, we just have to do it and we have a larger revenue gathering issues to discuss.

Mrs. Steady stated I think…

Committee Member Scannell stated its rhetorical.

Mrs. Steady stated I feel like I need, I feel compelled to answer it. Special education is expensive. I mean it just is, it's a lot of time and effort and energy that these kids are entitled to. These are kids that are struggling and we want to make sure that their most productive adults

possible, they're going to be in our communities, they're going to be sitting here one day with all of us and we need to make sure we're doing our due diligence for these families. However, with any system there's always ways to be effective and efficient. So, I just feel like before you always put more money into a system you need to say, is our system effective, is it efficient, how can we make this system better? So, I don't think it's… I think it's a combination of the two.

Committee Member Scannell stated and may I ask one more brief question. What is our percentage in wins and losses at due process in over a one year or two-year period?

Mrs. Steady stated so, I'm going to get to due process a little bit, if you…

Committee Member Scannell stated I can wait.

Mrs. Steady stated okay great. Excellent. Thank you I appreciate it. There's a lot of personnel that goes into Special Ed, not just what I mentioned there's school psych's, there is BCBAs, there's speech and language specialists and pathologists and OT's and PT's, school counselors, school nurse, we have interpreters, we have paraprofessionals, it's a large system. So, I feel like the number one part is really understanding how personnel are used and that Special Education is supplement. It does not replace regular education. We just spoke about effective and efficient allocation of resources, making sure we have really qualified staff that are hired that we do have the adequate staff and the resources that you just spoke about, that can work with a variety of students. Making sure that we are training our staff and that staff are knowledgeable about Special Education law and policies and that we're supporting the mental health needs at a district wide approach.

Committee Member Beaudry stated thank you Madam Chair. The fourth bullet on that is concerning to me. I think there should be an extra word added in there, it should be adequate staff resources and training to meet diverse needs. Because we are not giving the sufficient training to not only our teachers, but to our professionals. And I'll go back to the classroom that I was in today. The teacher was bit by a student last year. She didn't think anything of it. A couple of days later her arm swelled up and she ended up having to get medical treatment. I asked her, I said do you have your Kevlar glove sleeves? She said, "No, I don't have any." We, as you know I sit on a safety review committee, I've been on that board for 14 years. We've had at least four

Special Ed directors come before us, we asked the same questions to each one of them. Do we have the proper safety devices to these paras and teachers and we're assured that they're getting them, while this woman still today does not have a pair of Kevlar sleeves in her classroom? So, it's concerning to me that we're not giving the proper tools to our teachers and our paraprofessionals to keep them safe. One worker's comp case will cost us probably what we pay two or three paraprofessionals. Never mind one. So, I would look at every single classroom, they should have a pair hanging up somewhere and it just concerns me that it's been this long and we still have teachers and paras getting injured because they don't have the proper equipment in a classroom. So, I'm hoping that you take a look and survey this, ASAP, and try to get the proper tools for these individuals, so that we don't see them before us on a worker's comp case.

Mrs. Steady stated so, just so you're aware, I did survey the schools to see who has Kevlar gloves and who does not have them or who is not enough of them. So, we do have that data and we'll be moving that forward. Because I do agree that that we need to make sure they have the resources they need.

Committee Member Beaudry stated I can't hear you if you're not speaking into the mic.

Mrs. Steady stated I'm sorry. I did send out a survey to the schools to find out who does have Kevlar gloves and who does not have them. So, we can put that forward to our business office to talk about ordering that, but that survey did go out.

Committee Member Beaudry stated so by the next… by November we should be able to, every classroom that has Special Ed kids will have a pair in there whether they need them or not?

Dr. Vargas stated it would have to be if it is needed, I mean respectful that might not be appropriate to have it in each classroom, but if it is determined to be appropriate they will have it. That's something the we should be able to provide to our classroom teachers and the staff.

Committee Member Beaudry stated well if I may Madam Chair, I would hope you're going to survey the teachers because I don't know what we know about the illness of the child, one minute they could be hugging you and the next minute they will be biting you so you don't know.

Dr. Vargas stated correct. I'm sure that families who are listening to us right now know there's not a single human being that is… each one of us is a system in itself and the same thing goes for Special Education. Children with Special Education, some of them are the most brilliant, they are less harmful than some of us in the general… I'm sorry, student in general education. I just want it to be cautious that just because you might have a classroom or a classroom has a child with special needs that child doesn't represent the type of threat that I think you're alluding to. But again, point well taken. We will look into it. We'll survey, we will report it back to you and let you know. And by the way, any teacher that feels that is something that they need, they can make that request. But it cannot be, like I say, my judgment is subject to your scrutiny, while the public could scrutinize my judgment and to be a professional you have to be open to that scrutiny. And in my case, I guess what I am saying here, that we need to be very careful that we don't necessarily say because I have a Special Ed kid in that classroom that you need this type of instrument. I guess that's what I am saying.

Committee Member Beaudry stated and I apologize if that's the way you took it. I want the safety equipment in the classrooms that the teachers need to take care of the students and the paraprofessional. So, if you have a parent or teacher you need two pairs in there, then you get two pairs. I don't want them fighting over who will be using them.

Dr. Vargas stated I agree if it is determined that it is needed, we should have it.

Committee Member Beaudry stated thank you.

Mrs. Steady stated so, as I alluded to a little bit ago that we are measured by the Department of Education on specific indicators and we are audited around that. Due process and other types of conflict resolution, there are opportunities to have a DOE facilitated IEP meeting if parents are feeling that they need somebody else to facilitate the meeting, that sometimes when I come in or the district staff when a family member requests that or the school staff request it. There also is a Special Education complaint process. So, if family members feeling that the IEP is not being implemented, they can write a formal complaint to the Department of Education, they look at that complaint, look to see if something was violated, if they feel that's the case they send us a notification and then an investigation happens and then we're either told that there was no

complaint or we are ordered a corrective action. You can go into mediation, which is a similar type thing as due process or formal due process hearing. But there, a long even this, there are opportunities so for the district to resolve it, so, it doesn't go to that extent. And I can say that I've been involved in many of those this year. When I say many. I don't want you to think 30, 40, 50, it's probably about five. So, to try to resolve it before it gets to that point where we are ordered or corrective action because sometimes it's stuff that we just need to do and we should be doing it. I don't know if he had a question. Through this process collaboration is essential. Meeting with those parents, making sure that their voice is heard, having that student at the table, their voice heard and making sure that we are reporting out and being very transparent to the family members of where their child's moving on their goals, on making sure we're having IEP meetings annual. Doing as many phone calls and e-mails. I talk about having to have this wonderful customer service, we need to have good strong customer service with our families making sure that there are parent and teacher conferences. We had parent involvement surveys that went out this year and we handled it a little bit differently this year, we made sure that every single one, it doesn't mean we'll get them back, but we made sure they went from the district office, so that way it didn't take it took a little burden off of the schools to be able to get that out and really working collaborative with our families to try to get those surveys back. Now the fiscal part, if you look we have 58 students who are court ordered, the Department of Education puts a cap on that saying once you've spent a certain dollar amount, then we will pay. You'll see that our claims have gone up, so this year the cap was $46,000 so each year it keeps going up so we have to pay more. We had ten more court orders than the year before, so if you just quickly look at that, that's almost a half million dollars more that we had to pay out even though there is a cap.

Mayor Craig stated so that was my question, in 16/17 you had 48 students. And then in 17/18, 58.

Mrs. Steady stated no.

Mayor Craig asked how many students?

Mrs. Steady stated these are who met the cap claim.

Mayor Craig asked so, the 58 students are year 14 through 18.

Mrs. Steady stated I'm sorry we had 58 students this year. Is the number not right?

Mayor Craig stated 22 have, so of each year, gotcha. Thank you.

Mrs. Steady stated okay, so if you read across, that's the cap and that's how many met the cap, it doesn't mean that that's all we had for court ordered. We could have spent thirty thousand dollars on a child and it never met the cap. Special education aid, there's a cap on that. And then we can start collecting money back for that. The 16/17 year, we had 42 students who met the cap. If you look at our cap, the caps increasing over time that we have to pay out, so is our claims. However, we used to be able to collect 90% back of what we spent, now we're only allowed to collect 72. So, the caps going up, the number of students going up, the amount we're allowed to collect, the percentage is less, so that's increasing.

Mayor Craig asked is that a result of legislation change?

Mrs. Steady stated yeah this all legislation type Department of Ed.

Committee Member Beaudry stated I don't who I can address this question to, but I know there's a 28-a issue about unfunded mandate. If when they cut education costs like that wouldn't that be an unfunded mandate because I'm assuming the taxpayers of Manchester have got to pick up the reduction in the cost?

Mrs. Steady stated I don't know if I can answer that without a lawyer.

Committee Member Beaudry stated I mean there's been so much downshifting as we know from the State.

Mayor Craig stated it's more than just Special Education.

Mrs. Steady stated right.

Mayor Craig stated it's bigger, its pension.

Committee Member Beaudry stated I mean I don't know if anybody's ever challenged that aspect of the 28-a issue as it relates to Special Ed, but I don't know if you can do anything with

the Federal level, but I know the State, they're not supposed to be deferring costs back to the local taxpayers.

Mayor Craig stated Committeeman Freeman.

Mrs. Steady stated so, then when we look at…

Mayor Craig stated Committeeman Freeman has a comment.

Mrs. Steady stated oh, I'm sorry.

Committee Member Freeman stated Thank you Madam Speaker. I'm sorry Mrs. Steady. First off being the only legislator sitting on this board, I want you know we had nothing to do with this. This was not this last term. And second we also have, we're now seeing an increase in Medicaid reimbursement to school districts. So, do we, I know it's probably a little off the track, but is this going to help us defray some of the costs that we're seeing as far as the reduction in the caps that is happening right now.

Mrs. Steady asked do you want to answer?

Dr. Vargas stated no, go ahead.

Mrs. Steady stated yeah. I think the better we get with collecting our Medicaid school dollars will see that. There was legislation change, I'm reviewing tomorrow around that legislation, because we can collect it now for kids who don't have Special Education but have Medicaid and need these medically necessary services. So, the district will be more moving forward with that.

Committee Member Freeman stated right. Thank you.

Mrs. Steady stated if you look at charter schools they've grown over the last few years. Parents have a lot of options. But you know when I did the quick rough calculation of charter school students, about eleven thousand dollars per year for that. We look at transportation cost. It's very costly for Special Education transportation. We look at our paraprofessional cost. Those are very high. And then when we look at understanding LEA role, special ed process, family voice and

we have to go to either due process or we don't go and we do a settlement agreement or something like that, we're talking at least another $100,000 and five cases and that's actually probably higher, when I did the calculation it's probably more than that. But that was a quick estimate because we didn't have those costs because the kids weren't in school of what it would cost this year.

Committee Member Girard stated thank you Madam Chair. Mrs. Steady, I don't know if you would know this question or if perhaps Mrs. DeFrancis would, but what is the overall amount of money we spend on Special Ed either budgeted in this current fiscal year or that we spent in the last fiscal year? Because we have a tendency to take a look at the out of district tuition, the special transportation and the professional technical services and say that's what we spend on Special Ed. But the last time I asked this question, which I think was three years ago the number was about 47 million dollars in total. So, for all services rendered. So, what do we have in this year's budget and what do we get in revenue from the State and Federal governments as an offset to those State and Federal mandates?

Mrs. Steady stated that's an excellent question. I don't have that information with me.

Dr. Vargas stated we could provide that to you, but for the listening audience, normally we get 14 cents for every dollar we spend for Special Education from Federal dollars. The promise was 40 cents, everyone is facing this challenge, unless you live in a community that has a lot of wealth through real estate. But quite honest with you, it's like what you see with a court order placement, you could spend four hundred thousand dollars for a kid and how much you get in reimbursement, you don't get anything close to it and it is going down as you can see. For 73% now, used to be in the 90s. But we will give you that information. I think it's an important question.

Mayor Craig stated can you go back a few years too just so we can see where the trend is?

Dr. Vargas stated I'm sure we can.

Mrs. Steady stated so, what are we doing about it?

Mayor Craig asked, can I just ask a quick question about charter schools? At one point we talked about having standard language or a contract for charter schools regarding Special Ed, is that all set?

Mrs. Steady stated that's one thing that I think we need to talk about, writing a board policy around that. We did do some contracts that way with the schools or the tuition for Special Education and we're adding some standard language into some of those. But I think it probably needs to be out a little bit higher level.

Mayor Craig stated so, are you going to be bringing that forward?

Mrs. Steady stated I'm hoping to be able to bring that forward this fall.

Committee Member Beaudry stated thank you Madam Chairman. Follow up on that Medicaid money, do we get to receive Medicaid money for charter school students that we do?

Mrs. Steady stated Medicaid to school yes. So that's one of the areas that working with the charter schools to be able to collect some of that this year.

Committee Member Beaudry stated okay, but short of that, we pick up the total cost of this Special Ed and transportation, correct?

Mrs. Steady stated we do.

Committee Member Girard stated yeah I mean I don't want this to become a debate about charter schools but having heard from several parents who send their kids to charter schools. The reason why they do it typically is because the environment of the charter school is more conducive to their child's needs and therefore the extra services that they need are less. I'll be the first one to say and I've said it before that I think the process the State imposes on us and the financial responsibility the State imposes on us for kids who go to charter schools needs to be adjusted. But I think we want to be very careful about targeting charter schools as quote unquote part of a problem because those very same kids who if they came to our schools may need even more services because the environment is not as well suited to those children as the schools the parents have chosen.

Mayor Craig stated that's not at all what I was saying.

Committee Member Girard stated I didn't think it was.

Mayor Craig stated we ran into some issues in terms of standardized language and that's all I was asking. Just like we would do with any other third party that we work with.

Committee Member Girard stated no, I'm just saying we're past discussions that have taken place at this board over that issue and I really think it's a bad idea that we go in that direction.

Mayor Craig stated standardized language?

Committee Member Girard stated no just the quote unquote burden of charter schools and Special Ed.

Mayor Craig stated I didn't hear that tonight at all. I was talking about standardized language, working with charter schools to ensure we're providing the services that kids need.

Committee Member Bergeron stated thank you, your Honor. I know I've brought this up before, but you know after talking to some folks when you know when they go into charter schools, they're always just talking about the fact that you know like for example Wi-Fi is intermittent like any school or they'll go in there with either an iPad or something to that effect but ends up going to paper just because you never know if there's going to be Wi-Fi. And so, to me time is money because then they got to do a paper then go back and then basically prepare a document instead of doing it right there on the spot when they're actually out of school. I mean have we thought about those types of efficiencies, for example Changi has this thing where you know they have a product that you basically take it with you only have Wi-Fi where you go, those type of things or sticks or whatnot. So, I'm not sure if those investments would help us in that regard just freeing up the time of the professionals that actually do the job. And after I guess I will and just a comment too when I've been out talking to folks, campaigning and canvassing, it does seem like the parents do appreciate their charter schools and they also appreciate the services we provide. I almost get the feeling like they almost miss the services of a public school

so it's almost like they will always look at more services, so it can be interesting to see what kind of partnerships we can come up with.

Mrs. Steady stated I think that our partnerships are strong and we have somebody dedicated to work with the charter schools.

Committee Member Bergeron stated I mean, I can see some potential. I can see us working together in many other ways, especially if this is successful, but I'm just talking about the time and money and the efficiency when we actually do these visits, especially seeing that…

Mrs. Steady stated and that is some of the conversations I actually had today around that and ways that we can clean that up whether we have some support staff to help us, but you also need to remember even if you had a Wi-Fi device, some schools block all of that, so it wouldn't help. I mean I do think that type of stuff being in real time and doing the IEP and making the corrections and things like that is very efficient and we should be moving in that direction. But there are other ways to support people who are working out in the field. And so, I'm not going to go over… some of this I already went over, really looking at our online systems, so we can track our court ordered placements in or out of district. We actually in real time we'll have some of that information very concrete, once again making sure that there's training, making sure that we're reviewing our policies and practices, working to get that Medicaid to school reimbursement and the Special Education aid reimbursement. And then in the end, the area I would like to really go to and this is the last slide, is to really do WestEd, a professional organization has created an assessment to really look at your assessing and improving Special Education and to be able to make sure that we're spending the right money, we're educating, we're hiring the right staff, there's great family involvement, that we're working together collectively to start this review for some of our schools and district to be able to start looking at Special Education. And some support getting this from Hooksett and Hanover and NHASEA.

Committee Member Terrio stated thank you Your Honor. Just two questions. During the presentation, I believe you mentioned we have about a 20% population of Special Ed compared to the State average of 14% that seems awfully high, one in five. Kind of jumped out at me. So,

my first question is what's driving that substantial increase of Special Ed in Manchester compared to the rest of the state.

Mrs. Steady stated So sorry. What's driving it is really if you look at, we don't have that RTI model across our school district. Ms. Allen could probably speak about how they decrease Special Education referrals by having something similar to that.

Ms. Allen stated sure. At Parker Varney with the multi-age, multi-grade, having students within those classrooms an opportunity to work in small groups to basically get what they need to fill the gaps all the time, so it's basically providing intervention without identification. And really the teachers knowing what those grade level standards are and what interventions to match for those students that are behind. This year we have multi-age classrooms also in Gossler. And we will be looking to expand into further schools as well.

Committee Member Terrio stated so, before I ask my next question, just to clarify. You don't think we actually have a higher population of Special Ed kid. It's more of a process, a misidentification problem?

Ms. Allen stated I think nationally we're higher than the national average. So, I am not sure and I don't believe it's a Manchester issue I think we probably have some over identification and training to do to remedy that.

Committee Member Terrio stated thank you.

Dr. Vargas stated go back to the point, I'm sorry, I think the question is relevant in terms of, remember what I say when you have a system that you don't have a response to intervention, meaning that you don't intervene timely. Normal that kid in Special Education because that's what that school building has to offer to that kid. There's not that many choices. Like if you have a strong reading intervention Program, if a child has some challenges, you can make that referral there. In our case, when you don't have it, normally that would be that child directly going into special ed and it is something that I can't thank Mrs. Gillis enough, and then Southside Community, because the entire district… Some of you keep asking me what is it that we need. I mean, we started to do what we need, we unfortunately don't have the resources to do it at full

speed. For example, every single school, if the Board were to ask me what should we do to improve the district, is that you have a strong intervention program in every one of our schools. Now that would require adding additional staff. That would require providing significant amounts of training and support at all levels and there is no way that you could significantly improve Special Education unless you have that robust, up front intervention program that you could if you would like, you have a great district in this area by the way. And you have great schools internally and with our surrounding community you will find approaches that could definitely significantly reduce the number of Special Ed children, but it won't happen by just wishing that you want this to happen. It will happen by, for example, what we are trying to do on the west side with the network of school, which is to replicate what Ms. Allen was just talking about. That is. But last year in the budget process, we came short for some of the essentially things around curriculum, because you need a strong curriculum. We came short on math that we needed. So, I apologize if sometimes you hear me give you a laundry list of things that I have asked to address some of these issues, but I think we are being responsible in our part to ask our teachers, our principals and others to do this difficult work if we don't give them the tools.

Mayor Craig stated Committeeman Lehoux and then, but a quick question…

Committee Member Terrio stated I had a second question.

Mayor Craig asked can I ask him a question about math. We, our district, don't we have a group of teachers right now looking at curriculum for math.

Dr. Vargas stated we are looking at the curriculum but the funding of the textbook this year, every year that we lose, your honor. We've been looking at curriculum in this district for a very long time.

Mayor Craig stated through the budget process. I thought that what we had talked about was we didn't have a curriculum in place, so that the guide or the feedback to your team was to move forward on looking at the curriculum and to come forward with a recommendation. And it's our Board's priority to make sure that we have a curriculum in place for next fiscal year. But for this fiscal year you weren't ready with a curriculum was my understanding…

Dr. Vargas stated if you look at…

Mayor Craig stated of the conversation. So, are you all set with a curriculum?

Dr. Vargas stated let me go back to what is subjective here, what I proposed to you in the budget process was to provide us with the resources to begin this work immediately this year so that will prepare us that when we went into the redistricting… And one of the things that I said to you, don't do redistricting if that is all you are going to do. The money for us to purchase the math, which I wanted to start with, we came short on that effort. I could work with what we have, but I will say to you that the more that we wait, the longer it will take for us to see the results we need to see here.

Mayor Craig stated so just to be clear this board has approved a math curriculum to move forward with?

Dr. Vargas stated no, this board, I requested a piecemeal, if you will, because I don't think you have the millions of dollars that you need to invest in curriculum. And I said to this Board, let's begin with the five through 8 math curriculum. And I said to this Board, give me four additional math teachers. Because you could have a curriculum, but if you don't have the enchilada if you will, and if you have a doubt we could go back and revisit the proposal that came before the board. I don't know if you would like, I would be more than glad to present that information…

Mayor Craig stated no, I guess. I'm not trying to point fingers at all. I just thought that your team was looking at curriculum and that you would be coming forward this school year with a curriculum that our board would be discussing and improving and so that we could move forward next school year with a new curriculum.

Committee Member Terrio stated my final question. Concerning, so we spend approximately twelve thousand dollars per student roughly. I could be off by several hundred dollars. When we calculate that average per student, is what we spend on Special Ed in that average or is that a separate amount? The reason why I ask is because if Special Ed isn't in that amount, then that's skewed.

Dr. Vargas stated yep, it's in the average.

Committee Member Terrio stated so the 12000-person student, whatever it is. That includes what we spend on Special Ed?

Dr. Vargas stated correct.

Committee Member Terrio stated all right thank you.

Committee Member Scannell stated Mrs. Steady, I know you wear many hats and I know that the 504 portfolio is in your jurisdiction and it is not a Special Ed program, it's separate and apart. I'm wondering if what the costs are to that end and relation to what Justice Broderick spoke about today the 504 area may be the area that addresses depression, anxiety, personality disorders and sort of I think it anticipates some questions that will come up later given the judge's presentation. What is our plan as we read about, particularly how childhood trauma now has a great impact in the Classroom?

Mrs. Steady stated so our plan is starting tomorrow we're really talking about how do we address this within our school district mental health and the opioid crisis. I was privileged this spring to be able to deliver youth mental health first aid to a group of teachers, about 30, of them and we wrote a grant and hopefully we find out this month if we get it and we'll keep our fingers crossed. That would really allow us to start doing mental health awareness training within our community and our schools. When you're looking at this level of work you really need to say what are we doing for all kids? Because it impacts all children, whether it impacts them personally or not. How are we preparing our teachers to respond to it and detect? What's typical development and what's atypical and how am I going to respond to that and how do we speak to parents about what I'm seeing and how do parents communicate back with the school? So, the first part is that universal approach that Judge Broderick was talking about when he spoke about his campaign of know the five signs and then the other part, which is react, how do I respond to that? Working with our community partners and being part of the group here in Manchester that's working closely with our integrated delivery network, which is addressing not and me being part of their team now, so it's a huge task and I look forward to continuing to do that work.

Committee Member Scannell stated could we get our disaggregated results from the Youth Risk Behavior Survey at some point in the future, our school by school results?

Mrs. Steady stated we have them, I did a presentation, I presented on the community schools and used some of that data at a trauma informed care, trauma informed a school conference this summer about some of that. So, have some of that probable data that might be most interesting because that wire B.S. data is a large data set. But we could pull some stuff that we should start looking at and I think you and I spoke, I feel that the children, the students need to study this it's them and their peers and how to support each other.

Committee Member Bergeron stated thank you Your Honor. I just wanted to say according to the, I was looking at Manchester proud that you know the data that they provided which you referred to later on in the presentation, but the students with disability count I guess has remained steadily, but due to enrollment declines are percentages have increased. I guess, 18 percent. I know you had 14, but they had 18 percent. And we were at 2583 in 2017. I don't know if.. what school year, so I guess we're up by 205. So at least New Hampshire's percentages have stayed steady while the counts have diminished by over 3000 students. I just want to provide that perspective to due to enrollment declines like I guess that I don't know what that does to our percentages whether they've always been, but it just looks higher now because of that. I'm not sure that's what they're saying there.

Mrs. Steady stated state average is 15 percent, I mean 14 percent, and ours is 20, but it has increased over time. But it could be decreasing enrollment right? A math thing. However, we are seeing impacts at preschool.

Committee Member Bergeron stated right. And I also wanted to support Mayor Craig's thing about just the fact that students with IEPs and without have steadily decreased percentage of proficiency in math. So, I think… I do seem to recall you asking just for some type of numbers as what that would look like so we can start planning ahead.

Committee Member Lehoux stated thank you. I just had a question. Trying to find some positives in here somewhere, we send kids out of district do we have programs where kids come

into district, where we actually make revenue from others? And why would they send them here? Is it because we're the only program or we're just that good at it?

Mrs. Steady stated we do have programs here that kids come to and some of them it's that there's very few programs in the state that address that. Other times people really love the diversity of Manchester and want their children to have that cultural experience and immersion.

Committee Member Lehoux stated that leads into my next question and it would be part of why maybe we're so high and Special Ed is because maybe the other services that they can get within Manchester, not necessarily within the school districts or families move here to get those other services. I mean that could be a possibility as well. So, I'm wondering if funding, does that take into considerations the population of say Manchester as opposed to Brentwood New Hampshire? Or is it just that even, here's what you get right across the board?

Mrs. Steady stated I missed the last part of that sorry.

Committee Member Lehoux stated I'm just wondering does the funding, do they take into account the population of Manchester?

Mrs. Steady stated no.

Committee Member Lehoux stated it is what it is? We get the same funding as a small town?

Mrs. Steady stated yeah, I think that's a great question to be bringing forward to our State.

Committee Member Girard stated thank you Your Honor. A couple of years ago when the board was debating whether or not it should keep the multisensory reading program, I heard from a number of parents who said their kids were coded, they had an IEP and by one method or another they ended up with one of the multisensory reading teachers, who were able to pick that reading lock for them and suddenly the kids no longer needed the IEP and once they had help with their reading, they didn't have a learning disability. So, my question is when we screen kids particularly at the younger ages and by the way all of these kids whose parents I heard from, were in middle school, I think one was in high school, but when one where assessing kids to determine whether or not they have a learning disability how deep do we look at whether or not

there is a learning disability or there's a problem with literacy or numeracy which if addressed would avoid Special Ed? I guess, it's a long way of asking about over identifying, but I heard from. I would almost say an alarming number of parents about that program and really lead to some fundamental questions about how we're assessing kids.

Mrs. Steady stated so, when you assess a child for Special Education it's not one assessment it's multiple, it's teams it's a variety of perspectives so the team deliberates and they really look through to see if there are some processing issues to have a specific learning disability. So, it's not an easy thing to get identified with a specific learning disability. However, I think maybe what I'm hearing and I agree is that we should probably be making sure that more than just our MSR teachers are trained in these evidence based practice whether it's Orton-Gillingham, Wilson, LIPS Program, so that way it can be delivered, not just by that one service provider but providing that training that we're hearing about for our staff, so that they do have really practices that are grounded in research and that her evidence based.

Dr. Vargas stated let me add too… I think Mrs. Steady said something that I had tried to articulate but I haven't come across clearly to you. And that is the word commitment. For Example, we only have two days for our teachers, for Professional Development. Some of the shortest in the nation. You cannot run and address these challenges unless you address the complexity. That's why the Manchester Proud, I made the decision and I recommended to this Board and I hope it is on the record, I said let's depart from having the traditional strategic plan, that you do every five years with no support, not clarity from the community or internally here. It is my hope that when the Manchester Strategic Plan is completed that you will get the totality of movement in all the parts that need to happen. Like for example, I look at the plan that was presented to you by Mrs. Steady, and I will say to you that it is painful, because for that plan to work or any plan, you have to provide the right professional development for the teachers, so then you have to look at the environment, the context. And as the Superintendent, if I had two days and I have a laundry list that goes from here to Concord to achieve, and I know we have a few teachers in here and you know exactly what I mean. A lot of programs fail in initiative and plan because we don't give our people the tools or the training that they need. And we're going to have to, as a Board and as an Administration, begin to think about this systemically, and make a commitment to move all of these parts. Not necessarily just one part of the equation if you

will, and I hope that will come about with the Manchester Proud plan that will be the result of talking to our teachers, our administrators, our families, our staff, this Board and the entire community. It is my sincere hope, because I believe we can do it, but it would require that we all move together with the same clarity of what would it take to achieve the kind of results that we could. We know that we have great potential and we do it. In terms of if you want to be positive, some of our children in Special Education, like for example, Memorial, the graduation rate in there is pretty solid. It is almost close to that of the general population. I know the Mrs. Freeman had a kid in here with Special needs and I say this because you have spoken publicly about this, our teachers worked extremely hard to do the best that they can and our principals, but at the end of the day, we need to pay attention to what kind of tools are necessary to do this work. I will tell you that other communities would not invest the money that they are investing if they know they could do it for less.

Mayor Craig asked any questions? Thank you.

c) Transportation Update

Dr. Vargas stated so, quickly, we have the transportation. I know that is an area that you have some concerns. So, Mrs. Gillis, I know that some of your colleagues from the MTA are here.

Mrs. Gillis asked can I bring them up?

Dr. Vargas stated yes.

Mrs. Gillis stated so while everyone comes in and settles up here, I just want to quickly thank everybody, who has played a hand very actively in the last couple of weeks with our transportation program. A huge thank you to our families, to our schools, to the team that you're seeing sitting here before us tonight. We have been very, very actively working to troubleshoot through the systems that we have before us with the end goal of really having a very solid transportation program. So, with that I want to do a couple quick introductions because I think sometimes we talk about transportation and we don't know all of the faces behind the scenes so

to my right I have Kelly O'Brien Hebert. This is our transportation person at the district level. To my left I have, do you want to introduce yourself so I don't butcher yours too.

Mike Whitten stated sure, I'm Mike Whitten, I'm the Executive Director of MTA.

Karen Holden stated I'm Karen Holden, Assistant Director to School Operations at the Manchester Transit.

Mrs. Gillis stated so, let me say this while we have had our share of glitches in the last bit of time, this team sitting before you is incredibly committed, they are driven, they've been tireless in their pursuit of getting it right. I want to thank those of you who have reached out to us directly to share a question or a suggestion. We've taken all of those we've been actively working to address everything you've brought before us. But I thought it was important to have those of us who are working on transportation here and visible to answer any other questions you have on transportation.

Committee Member Beaudry stated thank you Madam Chairman, just a comment, actually I just want to thank, I was going to say our new athletic director, our new Transportation Director. The feedback that I received from parents is that you are answering the phone and you're returning phone calls, so that is a good thing that something that was a problem in the past that I personally heard about quite often. And I'm hoping that when secretaries call with transportation issues that you would actually help them out and not just basically say it's their problem.

Mrs. Hebert stated absolutely.

Committee Member Beaudry stated because they're at their wit's end, also. I was at Highland opening day and poor Ann was pulling her hair out. I mean she had probably 20 parents sitting in front of her trying to pick up their students and buses coming in. They were coming in late, so I have a lot of compassion personally and professionally for our secretaries and what they go through.

Committee Member Scannell stated for my own personal understanding, I know that there are glitches on the first day going into the first week and that's perfectly understandable and I

appreciate the magnitude of the undertaking. I read some, I guess it was e-mails from that from the administration, in which people were talking about data entry and computer programs. Why is this problem bigger this year than it has been perhaps at the beginning of others and maybe going back maybe it hasn't been?

Mrs. Gillis stated sure so I'm going to just give you the very basic. I'm new. Kelly is new. So, in that discovery period of when we're trying to figure out how the systems talk and how they work together we have found some data entry errors that were pretty large. I'll say both Karen and Mike were very helpful in helping us recognize where some of the errors were impacting some of the routing, some of the run times. I've been flipping it over the last two weeks in every error comes an opportunity. I keep saying to everybody as we get transportation settled out, we found glitches in school messenger, we found glitches with Aspen and VersaTrans not talking to each other. So, as we went through it all these other little issues popped up that we're fixing as we go forward. So why is it a little bit more noticeable this year. I'm going to say thankfully it is because we're actively working to fix all of those issues. I am going to ask you guys from the MTA perspective to talk a little bit because I've been doing some checking to say what did you see typically? What's different this year? So that we can kind of backtrack in. So, if I can just ask you guys to talk a little bit about differences from years past to now.

Mr. Whitten stated so, from a from an MTA perspective one thing that we try to focus on is just sheer volume. So, from an MTA side we transport about 2000 students in the morning and then another 2000 home in the afternoon. So, when you have 4000 rides per school day you can get 99% of them spot on and you're still going to have 40 families that have a negative experience at the start of school. That is no way to minimize the frustration that those 40 families are going through. But it's just to remind folks of the sheer magnitude of students that are on the bus. The first two weeks every year are chaotic. I think Kelly has done an amazing job. I've been with MTA for 11 years. We've only had two transitions before at the school district, so the first one when Barbara transitioned to Leah, Leah had a huge advantage in that Barbara Gagne stayed with the district. She was still there, she could help her learn how to do that job. Leah has now left, she's with Easter Seals. Kelly's come in cold, so she's done an incredible job getting herself up to speed. But that's a learning curve, it is steep, it was steep for all of us our first time through.

Committee Member Freeman stated thank you Madam Chair. This is Kudo's. I had a very upset parent call me. I reached out to Dr. Vargas, Dr. Vargas reached out to Jennifer Gillis and Jennifer Gillis helped Kelly. Kelly the parent that I called on behalf of want me to give you a hug because she said in all the years she's dealt with the district around transportation she's never received a phone call back. So, she was just so grateful for the attention. And honestly I think that level of communication is the thing that's going to help these parents get through when we're going through some glitches in our system. It's just a matter of communication. So, I'm very grateful at how well everyone in the administration office responded to this and sure we're going to have problems with this and people are going to be upset, but just no one that the people are talking and communicating about it instead of it goes on an answering service and no one gets back to you when you don't know where your kid is. It's just a huge improvement. Kelly I want to thank you very much for that.

Mrs. Hebert stated thank you.

Committee Member Bergeron stated thank you your honor. Speaking about last year I don't know whether I asked Karen or Mike, but there were also some big changes or fairly big changes last year for from what are just some route changes, if I remember correctly. Just because I remember having to deal with and I mentioned this recently, having to deal with a particular neighborhood that was very confused or there was there was just some problems with timing, some of that I'm hearing now too, just delays, but and that's when you know Leah and yourself Mike I believe worked with these neighbors directly and they were actually helpful to you to make changes. So, I just want to say that you know every year I seem to remember that last year too but once again it was the communication as Committeewoman Freeman was referring to. And you know people feel like they are a part of the solution. So, coming into this year, I was at Greenacres on Friday and I seem to hear things about middle school and being late and that run always seems to be the issue there. I've heard my neighbors say about buses not showing up or whatnot, but until I get something in writing or get a little bit more description from them. And I always know what's being worked on. But I guess what do you say about the whole middle school thing as far as those runs?

Mr. Whitten stated so, the middle schools can really be affected by small numbers of changes to students. So, we'll have exceptions, you may have a Parkside one right now is a run we're really challenged with and the run starts on the east side. It picks up a half a dozen student's over here and then it's going to make its way across the river, then do the traditional Parkside one run that does not fit in 45 minutes, so we're trying to creatively work with the district in finding another way to get kids from the east side over to the west side to get to school and obvious that problem compounds on itself in the afternoon trying to get them home. It's only six kids, but it's a balance that we try to work with the district on. Nobody wants to see empty buses out there just picking up five or six or seven kids. But to fill a bus that has to go to both sides of the city doesn't fit within the 45 minutes, you just can't get through the traffic that fast. So, it's that balance of not paying for any more buses than you need to pick the kids up. But doing it within the confines of 45 minutes so that that bus can be used again for an elementary run and be there on time for elementary dismissal.

Committee Member Bergeron stated thank you. And also, I seem to recall Kelly that I think what you discovered was that fifth grade was sort of classified either in the high school numbers and then you had completed all your numbers and you had to go back and do them all over again because you realize that fifth grade was actually included in high school. So, I just want to say God bless you.

Mrs. Hebert stated in the middle schools. Yes. We discovered that all fifth graders in the district had been grade advanced in the spring to the sixth grade in error. So, we had to pull together a team and I worked till after midnight on Saturday that weekend to prepare all the data and then Jenn got a staff to come in, a couple of principals from other schools and Jenn herself and we sorted through all the things by stops and put the messenger out there so that to blast out to the parents that this is your actual correct information. And it came to light only because someone questioned the stop that their child had because it was different from what they had had since they were in the first grade. And so, when I went to chat I said well she's not at Greenacres, she's at McLaughlin. And so, then I called the parent back and then that parents said no she's a Greenacres and so then a queried out all the fifth-grade students in the district in Aspen and then compared them to the sixth-grade students in VersaTrans and found that every single fifth grader

was at the wrong school and on a bus. So, all of that had to be corrected. Okay. So that was over a thousand students.

Committee Member Bergeron stated so I just wanted to shed light on that and the fact that it is coordination with parents. It's just that communications.

Mrs. Hebert stated it was very inspiring, because to see how Jenn pulled the team together and everybody came in and rallied and they were on the floor sorting papers and everybody was pitching in and working together and we fixed it and we got that word out to all the families so that was a successful team effort.

Committee Member Bergeron stated thank you so much and I want to publicly thank all the parents and students out there for their patience.

Mrs. Hebert stated I do as well.

Committee Member Want stated thank you Your Honor. I also had a parent give me a call and I was able to get hold of Mrs. Gillis kind of right away. And I was so grateful for that. And she was able to fix the matter and I was texting back and forth with the mother, who was very concerned about having to take another day off of work. And I asked her, I said, "Well let me know after you talk to Mrs. Gillis if you're satisfied," and she texted me back, "I am absolutely satisfied." So, she was thrilled. And I said to keep me updated, so the next day she let me know that first thing in the morning her son got picked up and was on his way after McLaughlin right on time and she was very satisfied customers and so was I. So, thank you all for your hard work. And I also want to thank you for Friday night, being the Ward 4 School Board Member, Central's in my ward. I want to thank you for getting all those bus drivers there to take care of everybody.

Committee Member Beaudry stated thank you Madam chairman. Two questions for MTA. One, where are you at with drivers? Do you have sufficient drivers? And my second question is athletics, I know last year we had a pretty major problem with getting our athletes to games on time, we had a couple of cancellations because they were late. Where are we as far as your team and do you have a full complement of bus drivers and then how do you feel we're going to be handling athletics this year?

Mr. Whitten stated so for home do school, school to home, we have all of the runs covered. We have sufficient drivers there. The concern this year is the same as last year from an after-school perspective. It's not even a lack of drivers. It's there are ten physical school buses in excess of what you need to get the kids from school to home in the afternoon. Those are available for sports and increasingly over the last couple of years they've been pressed into service for other afterschool programs, whether it's Girls Inc. or 21st Century, these different things. But as programs and middle school sports and high school sports now. St. Joe's has teams. Trinity's in there, everybody's sharing those same ten buses. So, the first Thursday of school last week we had 19 requests for those 10 buses. So, we're trying to work with the athletic directors and some of these afterschool programs, most of which haven't even started yet, to get people out of this 2:30 to 3:15 window when everybody seems to want the buses simultaneously. Especially for things like all of the middle school sports are in town. It may be as simple as a one-way trip from Southside to Parkside, but if you want it at two thirty it's blocking you know West from going to Sanborn or something. So, it's trying to get as much flexibility in there as we can if you can get it out of that window, you take a lot of the pressure off and its just physical buses you just don't have enough.

Committee Member Beaudry stated further question. Is there a mechanism that the district can do of working with other schools too, so that we can have the availability? I don't want to see another year like last year where we have you know teams forfeiting because they were late going to a game.

Mr. Whitten stated and we've worked with Jenn, it's been great so far. You know there are little things that we can do. There's a program, Girls Inc. comes to mind right away, usually has somewhere between 8/12 students, so it can go in a little bus, a 14-passenger bus doesn't take away one of the large vehicles that sports needs except they frequently will do things like build furniture and then that doesn't fit to go home with the kids on the little bus. So now 10 kids are riding a 77-passenger bus because their project is too large. Those type of things I feel like we can work together with the district to fix, so that a little bus can take the 10 kids where they need to go it's a 15-minute trip in town and free that big bus up for sports right.

Committee Member Beaudry stated thank you. Thank you again for all the work you've done a short period of time and hopefully will continue to get better.

Ms. Allen stated we're also working with our middle school athletic teams to either move up the games from three thirty to three to have an earlier pick up time. Hello Mr. Beaudry. I snuck back here. Or moved back to have a later start time. So, we are tackling at least that middle school piece and working with the coaches and the principals to make it work, as well as our athletic coordinators.

Committee Member Georges stated thank you, your Honor. I just wanted to say, because I got a phone call too from the parents, that a student was going to Southside, now she is supposed to go to Parkside. The mother was crying, early morning, calling me and tried to explain. I said, oaky, no problem, I am just going to try and do my best and I am going to call you back. I called Jenn, really that was wonderful and she told me that she was going to get it. In talking with the two principals, they are looking at a solution and they will come back to. And the mother was so happy when I called her, she was happy that I called her back so soon, that's great. And I just want to say thank you because I know you guys went through a lot with the buses and you managed to make it all better and everyone is happy. And I want to say thank you for everything and thank you for Central, because I was over there all day, that is why I will say thank you for everything.

Committee Member Girard stated thank you, your honor. You've referred to glitches. Your explanation in response to other questions about some of the challenges you had to overcome strike me as a bit more than a glitch. Have you determined why all these data issues existed and if so are you able to discuss them in public session.

Mrs. Gillis stated so, yeah, we've been we've been going through and trying to figure out backtracking and I would say it's too early right now to give you a definitive answer. Some of the information we have found, we've been able to backtrack in a number of years, so we're trying to understand how that picture kind of came to be. We can certainly bring more information forward as we, I would say whittle our way through some of these, I like to call them glitches

because it just sounds better than you know the word I would have coming into my head as I'm looking at it at 9/10 at night.

Committee Member Girard stated right. And so, your efforts are not unrecognized or unappreciated especially since you've shared a little bit about what you had to overcome. I'm curious why are there only 10 buses available after school. Is that all we have are 10 buses.

Mr. Whitten stated yes. So that's the that's the full fleet. So, it used to be 15 and then as buses have been needed for home to school as additional schools come in, more schools more buses on the road, the size of the fleet hasn't grown. So, we've just been shrinking down the number of spare buses or sports buses. But your fleet is still 80 buses. So that hasn't moved. I've been here 11 years. That number has been there.

Committee Member Girard stated and I guess I'm somewhat surprised to hear that the district is providing transportation to private after school organizations. I wasn't going to ask about this because I do have a pending inquiry with the superintendent on this, but since it was brought up tonight I'm actually shocked to hear that we're providing transportation to non-district programs. How many of them are we providing transportation to and are they paying for it?

Mrs. Gillis stated so Karen and I started working on that late last week and we got busy with some other activities, so we're going to be coming back to that list. She and I started that Thursday, we started working on where are all the afternoon routes going? Why? Who is the funding source for them? So, we're going to be back to you with that answer.

Committee Member Girard stated just as an editorial comment. I would hope that we would put the districts programs, particularly athletics before the desires of outside organizations. So. you know there are other outside organizations that provide their own transportation like the Boys and Girls Club. And it seems to me that the onus to be on them as a general rule to get the people who pay them to participate in their programs to their programs and not come at the expense of the district and the things that we are, I believe, obligated to provide our own students who have got athletic or other needs. Thank you Your Honor.

Mrs. Gillis asked can I just say one more thing on transportation. I just want to say thank you to both of you and to Dave. In the events of Friday night, what people weren't seeing was the staging that was going on. The communication that was going on. Their driver's hanging and waiting. They were phenomenal. For our district to be able to mobilize what we mobilized in the time that we did it. My hat went off to all of them and I want to add to that list STS because they were also involved in helping us stage buses, so you know you always say you're only as good as the weakest link in a team at any given point in time. Transportation stepped up huge on Friday, so I just want a very publicly thank both of them for all their efforts.

Mayor Craig stated Great. Thank you very much.

Mr. Whitten stated if I could just put one piece for the communication because I agree that that's critical. I think one thing that really helps us, is if this board can help spread the word to parents as you get calls from folks. If the concern from the parent relates directly to the driver or to the physical school bus itself, that's MTA. Don't hesitate, reach out to us directly, we will fix that. If the concern is the school bus stop location or the timing of the run, that is something that only the school of attendance can help them with. So, if you can help us, I just I feel really bad when parents get referred to MTA and it's a school bus routing issue that I then, by policy, can't even share information with them about what time the bus stop Pick-Up is and I send them to the school. Getting them out of that circle I think really helps get them to an answer faster. So, any help you can do making sure they going to the right place would be great.

Dr. Vargas stated thank you Mike and Karen and Kelly, it's incredible the work and I do think that there is a lesson learned in here and that is customer service matters. And I so much appreciate the feedback that you're giving Kelly and Jenn and that's just extremely important, but that is essential for our district to attract families here. And that is just, I passed a survey to the teachers and I hear that internally they are echoing the response that they are getting from Central Office, that it is more timely. And I want to thank Jennifer and Kelly and Amy Allen, Mary, Sherri, Karen, Pam, the team has been incredible. We are, and I am willing to benchmark us, we are the best. Our teachers are the best. They do more with less than anybody else. We do more with less, I wanted the community to hear me, than anybody else. I mean we serve just in transportation alone, it's not 22 school that we serve here, we serve over 40 schools. So, we don't

just serve 14,000 kids. We serve the entire population and many of the charter school's transportation with Special Ed. I just want to conclude that we don't say thank you enough to our folks, but it is incredible the work that they do, from our Administrators, to our teachers, to our secretaries, para, everyone in this district, I will tell you that they are hardworking and it is unbelievable and for that I am indebted and I am proud to work for them.

d) School Opening Update

Dr. Vargas stated so, briefly for the opening of the school many people thought I understand that we don't want to be in a situation in which you find yourself in a situation in which Labor Negotiations is not settled before the opening of the school. And those are challenges. But that is another area that we can be proud. If you ever doubted the commitment of our staff, our teachers and paraprofessionals and Administrators, all you need to see was to go to the opening day of the schools. We have visited all 22 schools. Mr. Beaudry accompanied me to I think it was 18 schools and there was nothing but evidence of the commitment of our teachers and the staff have for our kids and I am talking about all kids. It was just unbelievable. The other thing that we asked and it might comfort you, about the opening of the school, is what do you need? And our people are very humble. Because they realized that we are not giving them what they need, not because you don't want to as a Board, and not because I don't want to as a Superintendent, but there are funding issues that I think that they begin to realize. I just want to highlight Memorial and MST. Along with a team of cooperation and collaboration working in partnership. It was a joy to see the students from MST crossing the street, going into Memorial, and we went to some classrooms there. We still need to work a little bit to make sure that our teachers have what they need and also the Union, Maxine brought up to us, that one teacher didn't have their materials moved and Karen and her team were able to resolve that to make sure that the teacher had what they need. I am sure that I am forgetting a lot of people that I need to thank. What is most important is that they know it and you know it, that anyone that I forgot to mention here is playing a part, but I am very well pleased with the collaboration between the two principals and also the potential for the program, because there are people that are very much interested and we know that MST is a very promising approach that could meet the needs and the

desires of many students and parents here. And I want to thank the Board for your commitment to that partnership between the two schools.

Committee Member Lehoux stated Thank you. On that note I want to thank also Karen, or Ms. Machado, of MST. I got a few calls and it just goes to show the program. I got a few calls from parents that home school that wanted to get their child into MST high school because of how they heard was such a great program and to Mrs. Machado's credit because of the amount of kids we took this year, she felt that the student wouldn't be served the way they should be served. It was a hard decision for her to make. I know it was, but I think in the end it was right. So, we're going to look at possibly the CTE program when 10th grade and see how it all shakes out. So, we do have to make some hard decisions. But I get in the long run I think in the end it was better for the student because he wouldn't have been serviced properly anyway. So, I want to thank Mrs. Machado for that hard decision.

Dr. Vargas stated yes, no, thank you.

Committee Member Beaudry stated thank you Madam Chairman. I just want to echo what Dr. Vargas stated. I was very pleased to see the students in the classrooms at Memorial High School. They were very attenuative. The teachers seemed to be happy. We have to do a little bit about crosswalks and getting them there safely. But it was a great experience. And really I want to thank Dr. Vargas. We've been working on this for at least three years and you pulled that off. So, Ms. Machado I want to thank her also for her collaboration with Mr. Adamakos because they're getting this done. But I would love to see at some point in time Memorial and MST as a campus and that school, in my opinion, could be the gem of the state and it's a start. And I just hope we continue to keep developing more of this collaboration between the two schools. Thank you.

Dr. Vargas stated I just want to add to that maybe a little bit what I believe the strength of the partnership is what each one of these school bring to it. There are some parents that I am very much interested in having a comprehensive high school. And when you merge, perhaps the word merge is not appropriate but when you strengthen that collaboration between the two schools and you present one district, that this is a district that everything that we have here is for our kids whether they go to the MST, or Memorial, that is something that I think is what's going to pay

off for us. And also, could resolve some of the space issues, the surplus space that you have at Memorial, so actually it's a win, win situation for our families, for our staff and also for the district.

Committee Member Beaudry stated If I may Madam Chairman, correct me if I'm wrong Dr. Vargas, when we were at MST and we ran into those individuals from Bedford, I believe we are getting now Bedford's students to come and tuition into Manchester and I think the woman told us this the first that they've done this, so it's great to hear that and I hope we have more of that also.

Dr. Vargas stated that was very impressive and thanks to our staff and teachers and Mrs. Machado there, they were visiting the first day, and that is very important. And I think they were well pleased with what they saw at MST. So, it is good to say that we have great schools here and as someone who is someone knew here, I will tell you that we have an incredibly great school that if we provide the support that we need to give our people in the front line, we will have an incredible future for this district for years to come. And we all should be proud of that because we are impacting children's lives with the work that each one of you do and every one of our staff. So that concludes my report.

Mayor Craig stated very good.

21. Board of School Committee Members' Communications.

a) Board Questions

Mayor Craig stated Board of School Committee Members' Communications, Board Questions are on page 75.

Committee Member Beaudry stated thank you. I have some thank yous, I want to give out if I may. First I want to thank Bakersville staff Mr. Joseph and Mr. Soucy and all the staff that had Bakersville back to school cookout. There were hundreds of parents and students that attended the event. It was an awesome evening to see the kids eager to come back to school. They had all

kinds of food, games, they had a deejay and it was just phenomenal the work that they put on and their staff, from the teachers, the secretary, the paraprofessionals, the food and nutrition, they were there helping out, the PTG was there. They did a fundraiser and raised some money for the PTG. It was an excellent event and I just want to thank the people that have donated to that event, it was the Puritan Back Room, Pizza 911, Panera, Central Paper, Freihofer, Ootes, Costco. Costco donated 450 backpacks and every child that went to the picnic had a backpack when they went home. So that was awesome. And also, John Kelly who provided the music that evening and entertainment. Also, I would like to thank the MST fire program they had 12 members that took the EMT national exam and all of them passed, which is phenomenal. That's not an easy exam to pass. And from my understanding they were some of the highest grades of the people that took the test that day. So, kudos to the Manchester firefighters that and AMR, that instruct these students. And again, it's a great program and hopefully it will continue. And then I would also like to thank the Central staff, I can't say it as eloquently as the young lady that spoke this evening, with all the people she thanked but I would definitely like to echo what happened Friday night and that our staff, the principal, teachers, again all the way down at the janitors, pitched in and did an awesome job. And one thing I would like to see coming from the fire section is that we do a debriefing and that we have a critique because this is something that we actually as a district we can learn from. In my tenure, this is the first time we've ever had an incident like this, where students had to stay that long. And you know when you start looking at resources that you need medications food that's something that was thought of and from my understanding it worked out very well. But I think a critique would be awesome and we can learn from some of the things that we might have done wrong and add the things that we did right. So, I'm hoping that is part of that we do that and I would love to at least attend and hopefully it's open to board members so that we can learn. And I know Ms. Gills that you are very active in getting the safety aspect of our school district, so if you want to say something on that but I just want to give kudos to all the people at Central and Central staff and also I just learned today that we had principals and assistant principals throughout the district that showed up that evening to help out getting kids on the buses and that so it was a collective, collaborative effort and I want to thank them. So, thank you.

Mayor Craig stated and teachers from other schools came as well.

Mrs. Gillis stated the fire service right, you know the whole process the de-brief is where we learn. And I think in any situation there's going to be what we expect, what we didn't expect and then those opportunities for growth. So, Dr. Vargas speaks a lot about Manchester School District being a learning organization with that same mindset we have to apply it to the debrief. So, we're going to be doing the de-brief over the next couple of days, we're going to be pulling some information, pulling timelines and we'll be reaching out to share opportunities to be involved with that. So absolutely.

Committee Member Beaudry stated thank you. And my last thank you is to Mr. Ransdell and his staff for the 9/11 remembrance that we had today at Parkside. Again, that event just, it's touching to me as a firefighter and it just continues to enforce the good that is in this country and in this city. And also, I want to thank West High School and Parkside students, their band and their chorus did a phenomenal job today with the music and it just turned out to be an excellent, excellent event. And again, I want to thank the staff for putting that on. Thank you.

Committee Member Lehoux stated thank you. Real quick, you guys all should have gotten the e-mail today about the invitation up for the 18th, regarding the construction trades Pilot program at Parkside. I want to publicly think Mr. Simpson who's taking that, we actually met today and its basically woodshop 2.0 is what we kind of called it. And it truly is, right now every, being involved in construction, it's really the talk of the state right now about what Parkside is attempting to do or what Mr. Simpson is attempting to do with the trades and promoting it to the seventh grade. So, I hope you guys have an opportunity and you can come by, the Governor hopefully will be there, the Mayor has been invited, so be great to have your support as well. So, thank you again.

Committee Member Freeman stated thank you, your honor. Yesterday I had the opportunity to work with two phenomenal young men that live in the city of Manchester. The organization that they're spearheading is called “All Hands In New Hampshire” and we spent approximately three and a half hours cleaning up Beech Street School, all of the baseball fields and the skate park. And it was quite a daunting task and the thing, I can’t applaud them enough. There was about 8 of us there that were cleaning up. The skate park was something I never want to see again in my life. But I would I like to applaud Mike Garcia and Zach Zimba for the dedication to cleaning up

Manchester specifically yesterday was the east side. And I've encouraged them to reach out to the highway department, they pay for their own gloves, they pay for the 10 contractor's bags that we filled, hand sanitizer and we transported all of that trash to a dumpster, which wasn't right next to us. So, if we could hook that organization up with the highway department, maybe they could supply a way to get the trash to the dumpster, maybe some hand tools. I'm happy to report that we didn't find any drug paraphernalia. We found no needles. Which is a very positive thing as far as I'm concerned it really was. But rake's maybe so it would be a little bit easier to get to the garbage. They're really trying to put the best foot forward to cleaning up different areas in Manchester and I don't think anybody thought that Beech Street would be that big of a deal, the school looked great, the fields looked great, once we got into the skate park it was a different story. So again, I applaud them. And I want to thank them for allowing me to do that yesterday. I know Zach sitting in the audience and Gene is sitting in the audience, we had a big clean up party yesterday. So again, I want to thank them.

Committee Member Girard stated Madam Chair. Just to follow up on Committee Member Freeman, once upon a time and I think they still do it because I've seen them met a couple of school cleanup's that either Parks and Rec or the highway department will actually leave a trailer that's got rakes and gloves and bags and they will come by and pick up. They just need to know in advance when and where to leave the material and when to pick it up.

Mayor Craig stated typically it's on a weekday so we'd have to work out, but absolutely we can work out the details and I can put you in connection with Parks and Rec.

Committee Member Freeman stated just a side note to that your Honor. I think yesterday with the cleanup that we did, if the had gone in and done it, it probably would have cost them a couple of thousand dollars. So, our efforts yesterday were real.. I mean the skatepark was really bad.

Mayor Craig stated we've had a few cleanups at the skate park this summer and unfortunately the next day it looks like it did the day before. That's an issue that we've been, I'm sure if you haven't heard we took a vote on that.

Committee Member Freeman stated I did.

Mayor Craig stated okay.

Committee Member Freeman stated well you know what. I'll just have to go by a patrol every day then because that was a lot of hard work.

Mayor Craig stated it's so terrible that's why we are addressing it immediately.

Committee Member Freeman stated thank you very much and thanks again Zach.

Mayor Craig stated yes thank you.

Committee Member Ambrogi stated thank you, your Honor. I would echo all the very positive comments that have been made by my colleagues tonight and in particular I think the handling of the issue at Central and while I think Committeeman Beaudry is right that I don't remember anything this long. The event did bring back our very clear memories of something that happened about 12 years ago, in the fall which was the shooting of Michael Briggs and my son was in his freshman year at Central and it wasn't anywhere near as long a time. But I think that the one comment that I would have is that the organization around the responses is far better I think than it was at the time and I do think everyone who participated in that. I have one little raindrop I want to put on this parade of happy things and that is just, I have to say, I would be remiss as the School Board member from Ward 1 if I did not address the fact that I have been absolutely barraged by people from Ward 1 who have been very concerned about what's going on at Webster and I understand that there was a letter that went out today, I did see that. I do feel that more and better communication is needed and it's just, it was not fair. I understand there's a lot behind it, but I was upset at how upset some of our parents were. And I think that we just need to really be thinking about that moving forward. And I just want those parents to know that we will be responsive to them. I think it's really important. Thank you.

Committee Member Freeman stated thank you Your Honor. And just another follow-up on that, I actually had some of the parents that had contacted me about what was happening at Webster reply to the information that the administration sent out today and said if we had had this on or about the first day of school it would have made a big difference. So, I think perhaps knowing that we were looking for a way to better communicate with parents. I think what was

sent out today is a pretty good template for us to follow, should we find ourselves in a similar situation in the future and I would hope that we would do that. So, thank you for sending that out bright and you actually brought some happy e-mails from Webster.

Dr. Vargas stated I agree with everything that has been echoed. I just, of course I want to do that the first day, that information wasn't available before, so the information that the parents received actually, Ms. Allen and I worked on Sunday to zero in some of that information, like for example having Ms. Murphy there, that she be a sub there. And she said that she is willing to stay longer if it is needed. And there is also some complexity that I could tell you, at the end of the day, but rest assured that if I had the information that I had last Sunday, the first day, the parents would have received it. And I know it is tough because I cannot go into it fully.

Mayor Craig stated I think like Mrs. Gillis has talked about a phased approach. There could have been something so that parents weren't learning about the principal being out from their children. It could have come from the district first. And we addressed the media before we addressed all of the parents in this school. And I think that it should be the other way around. We should educate the parents first and then…

Dr. Vargas stated I respectfully disagree. Daily I deal with situations that I don't have the information at the moment that I would like to give to parents, like for example we have a principal that could call us before the school opens in the morning. You just don't have that kind… I wish I was living in that kind of world, with that kind of certainty, and as a communicator you understand that there is nothing better than to communicate in absolute, that you can say, yes. But that doesn't happen. Plus, it is not the practice and not possible. I just want to make sure that, I want to send this to all the parents, to understand the expectations, there are many times, and it happens frequently, where a principal or an administrator, for all kinds of reasons, has to be out. And I don't want to set an expectation, I wish I could, that I would say that you will know immediately. Now, if I knew immediately, the information that needs to be communicated, I would do it, and I need the help of the Board to help me communicate that type of information, what is called reasonable. Like for example, by reasonable, I had a situation in another school where the principal wasn't there the first day. It happened to be a different situation and every situation has its own characteristics but rest assured that we are committed to

do that, but I do need your help and I welcome your criticism and your feedback, but I just wanted the reasonable component of all the moving parts of certain situations.

Mayor Craig stated but can we have your commitment that you'll address the needs of the parents in the school before we address the press.

Dr. Vargas stated the press wasn't generated by me and you never heard me say anything to the press. Actually, absolutely, I haven't violated that since I have been here. Let me make clear that some of the parents were telling me that there was an article in the paper and I learned through the paper and I wasn't sited in that paper, actually your office was cited for example as confirming and you cleared that up. And there were others of you that were quoted in the paper. Actually, I don't think that is appropriate for us even in a situation like this. I 100% agree. But because you are asking me, and it is not that I am sounding defensive, but if you are asking me, are you implying that I had anything to do with what was in the paper? Or that was generated by my office.

Mayor Craig stated no.

Dr. Vargas stated okay.

Mayor Craig stated I know that you addressed questions that came from a reporter. Before you sent out the notice to parents. When we were getting, all of us we're getting a lot of questions from parents and we couldn't respond to. And that was my concern.

Dr. Vargas stated the only question that I addressed with the reporter, after some of you had talked, including your office, fairly unfairly. Your office and members of this body, began with the first thing and when members of the press asked me, I only gave them the factual information that already was available. It wasn't anything new, they didn't learn anything new through what I said in the article and I like fairness. And I insist on fairness. Great organizations have great values and one of them is to treat everyone fairly. And I just want to leave it there because I think each one of you know that is not the way I operate. I always go to families first. I insist in my work that families are my first customer.

Committee Member Desrochers stated thank you, your honor. So, did you commit to notifying families before speaking to the press because when Mayor Craig just asked you, September 7th you sent out an e-mail of responses that you had sent to the newspaper and that was well before any of the parents had received notice or any of the staff had received notice. So, will you commit to the future. I understand that there was an article written prior to your response to the paper, but nonetheless you still responded to the paper and people were commenting on that. I got about 47 e-mails this weekend which is a crazy amount for this. And I just think it could have been prevented by a simple e-mail going out like what was sent today.

Dr. Vargas stated I commit to being as discipled as I can be, but I need you to be as disciplined as I can, after all, this body, I had provided information to this body which has been made public before, compromising my own representation and other people's reputation. I just want you to know that what I responded was to a right to know information and I didn't want to add more problems to having already an article being up there. My information for one thing, what I did was clarify the misinformation that was presented prior and I did that. I'm not perfect, maybe I should have waited until today to give that information, but it is not like there is a gap here that I waited anything that happened to be the information was factual, I was asked every single information is public information which parents know. The information that I provided to the press. It wasn't any information that was not available to all of us. It was publicly available information that I presented, which is very different. Publicly available information, I have an obligation to present it to anyone who asks.

Committee Member Avard stated thank you, your Honor. The part that I am very disturbed about, is I found out information by reading the union leader. And that's because a colleague received information that the remaining members of this board did not receive and we've dealt with this in the past, it's been rehashed over and over again. I guess we have to say it again we are a singular body. We have 15 equal parts. None of us should be receiving information, especially important information that the other 14 do not receive at the exact same time. I'm very, very disappointed to find out that some board members are finding things out before other board members that's not appropriate and then the rest of us to find out in the union leaders is just ridiculous. So that I hope never happens again, if important information is given out to any board members it needs to be given to all board members. We all have the same right to the

information. We all have constituents that we need to deal with and we all need to have an equal bearing in this. And that has to be for every issue going forward.

Dr. Vargas stated I would tell you that neither myself, nor my office, gave that information to any single individual in here. It happened to be that there was a non-public session that we had, where general discussion took place and people may have construed things. I also wanted to.

Committee Member Scannell stated and it never came out?

Dr. Vargas stated I don't know if it came out. All I know, and I don't know which new information that one of you received that the others did not receive. Which was that information?

Committee Member Scannell stated the acting principals name was in the paper.

Dr. Vargas stated but she is not the acting principal, that is false. So are you saying that I gave one of your false information.

Mayor Craig stated your microphone isn't on. But we have…

Committee Member Beaudry stated it should go through the chair. Thank you madam Chair. In defense of the superintendent there was false information that was disseminated from the beginning and he's doing damage control before he could even get to the board and we were told several times, when it is a personnel matter and anybody calls you say it's a personal matter. We can't discuss it. That's it. You don't give any pertinent information whatsoever. You hurt the district, you hurt the employee. We've been told several times, but we still continue to keep talking to the press and getting stuff blown out into the papers and they spin what the people are saying and it comes out to be a false statement. So, I am 100 percent behind the superintendent on this. He was doing damage control and he'll give us information as quickly as he can and he's going to disseminate it to, I would assume the parents as soon as he can. As he stated, we had other principals that were not in school the first day of school for whatever reason. But all of a sudden this one seemed to be the focus of discussion. So, I just wish that the board, everybody, just when they get calls on personal matters they don't talk about it and that's it and we won't be

in the situation that we get into and we don't have to have the superintendent adding things into the paper to correct misinformation. Thank you.

Committee Member Girard stated thank you, your honor. As the person being referred to, not by name, I will say that I did speak with Mark Hayward the Union Leader reporter about the situation. I knew that Ms. Murphy was substituting as principal because I had heard from parents at Webster and I had seen social media posts, so I had that conversation with him that ended up with her being listed in the paper as an acting principal and when Superintendent Vargas called me about that being in the paper, I called Mr. Hayward and I corrected that. So, there was no intent on my part to discuss a personnel matter or anything else or have incorrect information be in the paper. And so, I'm not criticizing Mr. Hayward. The vice chairman is correct. I actually refused to answer ninety-nine-point nine percent of the questions that were asked because it was a personnel matter. But I said yes I'd heard that she was in the building and that ended up becoming what it was. So, when the superintendent brought it to my attention I contacted Mr. Hayward and he made the correction. So, lesson learned with apologies to the superintendent, but the idea that he's dishing out information to individual members of the board that the rest of the board is not getting is false. So, that's how I knew. I knew from parents and social media posts who was substituting there.

Committee Member Bergeron stated thank you. I'm going to circle back to events, I was pretty impressed with the turnout at the Hillsville meet and greet for Principal MacDonald. There were a lot of board members there and there were aldermen there and I believe former principals because Amy I believe we took a picture with, how many years?

Ms. Allen stated over 50 years combined.

Committee Member Bergeron stated yeah, that was that was pretty amazing. So, I just wanted to say that was a great turnout. Great turnout. Especially from the students and once again to echo what Committeeman Beaudry was saying there was also there PTO or whatnot, was there and had good presence. I also just want to say quickly about two events I've been to recently and one of them was a community, it was called CAPS, Community Action Poverty Simulation and it was at SNHU and basically it was, you're given a role and several people are there. And for

example, there were students there, RAs and RDs and they were told that you are a family and you are a 13-year-old and pregnant and so basically everybody has a role. And I was the one who gave transportation passes, but by the end of the simulation it's over four weeks so you get to know what it's like to have a limited amount of money and limited resources. And by the end of it, with the student de-brief they were just really shocked at what the situations are that could be some of the families that are sitting right next to you. So, I guess I really see that as a positive thing maybe for our educators or whatnot. But that was an amazing three hours just to see you know how these students reacted to what's really going on. And also, there was something called this the Small Business Innovation Research and this was at UNH and I went just to discover just what options are for our students as well. And it was pretty much the Department of Agriculture, Commerce, Defense, Education, Energy, Homeland Security and all it is participating Agencies that are there to work with you on basically you're pitching them and they had five to 15 minutes to meet with NASA with anybody on your ideas of a business, a small business. And there were there were, you couldn't exceed 100 million dollars basically there's a certain structure but it was amazing to see all these late alumni and all these folks, even young folks just get an idea as to how to actually start a small business no matter what stage you are. So, I just want to say these things are out there and. I was truly impressed and I was thinking about our grant writing team how they would have loved to have been there see all that. So, just another avenue for our students. That's it.

Committee Member Scannell stated so like everyone else I want to associate myself with all the comments, the positive comment about what happened at Central. I don't want to belabor that point. I think they've picked a wonderful spokesperson in Mrs. Sears to deliver their message. I did get a very poignant e-mail from a teacher, who mentioned that this notion of the longest day is now part of the Central ethos. And she went through all the days that don't get attention, when she's been there till 10 o'clock, till 11:00 o'clock, whether it's at Pay subs, or coming back on the bus from Hanover. This is not the longest day for many of our educators. And I think that's something that should be recognized. And if I may just say this, I think it is a sad statement when, I don't know exactly what the timing was but it's a matter of official record we all received email from our council urging us not to say anything about the Webster situation. We had met the night before. I don't want to go into all the details. But I think any message about

someone taking it upon himself to comment in the paper was, that's a grave concern especially if it is based on rumors and social media posts. I think we have better sources. The superintendent being one of where our information comes from. And I think that was sort of a sad day in terms of board behavior.

Committee Member Avard stated just a quick mention, I was not in the state I was in New York City, during the whole event on Friday and I have to say that with some of the best communication I've received about stuff that's going on so even stepping out of the state I knew what was happening in Manchester. I want to thank you very much for the information that you provided.

Mayor Craig asked any other board communications? You're all set? Board Communication?

22. Personnel Report.

Mayor Craig stated personnel report. There is an addition.

Committee Member Avard stated they usually put this out here before we sit down.

Clerk Carey stated I got this after we had started.

*On motion of **Committee Member Beaudry,** duly seconded by **Committee Member Ambrogi,** it was moved to approve the personnel report as amended. All were in favor and the motion passed.*

The Personnel Report approved on 9/10/18 is as follows:

NOMINATIONS: ADMINISTRATION

Name	Position	Building	Salary
Laurie Cloutier	Assistant Principal	Northwest	$73,122/TBD
Michel O'Rourke	Assistant Principal	Wilson	$73,122 / $62,976.60

NOMINATIONS: CERTIFIED STAFF

Name	Position	Building	Salary

Sandra Volkman	Behavioral Health Counselor	Jewett/Green Acres	$71,893
Melissa Walsh	Speech-Language Pathologist	Parkside/West	$71,893 / $70,304.44
Michael Gott	Social Studies - Grade 7	McLaughlin	$66,305
Miguel Pires	Teacher - Mathematics	Hillside	$64,070
Amanda Scheyd	Teacher - Special Needs/LD	Hillside	$59,600
Amanda Blanchard	Teacher - Music	Wilson	$52,895
Hannah Finnigan	Teacher - SAP Coordinator	Central	$50,660
Krystal Mitkonis	Behavioral Health Counselor	District/Smyth/ Weston	$50,660
John Coppens	Teacher - Physical Science	Memorial	$46,563
Lydia Chiang	Teacher - EL	Central	$44,700
Carolyn Guerette	Teacher - Elementary	Parker-Varney	$43,955
Anna O'Connell	Teacher - Social Studies	Parkside	$43,955
Jillian Record	Social Worker	McLaughlin	$43,955
Kerri Haerinck	Teacher - Elementary (One Year)	Wilson	$41,720
Elizabeth Haydock	Social Worker	Southside	$41,720
Kristen Manzumdar	Teacher (one year) - Reading/Math	Gossler Park	$41,720
Christine Breen	Teacher - SAP Counselor	Southside	$40,230
Jason Langevin	Teacher - Science STEAM	McLaughlin	$40,230
Jenna Bancroft	Teacher - EL Magnet Newcomer	Webster	$37,250
Caitlin Hodgman	Teacher - Special Needs	Weston	$37,250
Stephanie Infante	Teacher - Special Needs/EBD	Wilson	$37,250
Jeffrey Pelletier	Teacher - Special Needs/EBD	Northwest/Weston	$37,250
Colleen Vignale	Teacher - Mathematics	Central	$37,250

RESIGNATIONS/RETIREMENTS: NON-CERTIFIED STAFF

Name	Position	Building	Salary
Paula Greenspan	Networking Manager	Administration	$48.78
Carolyn Guerette	Certified Instructor	Gossler	$15.50
Michelle Simoneau	Certified Instructor	Parker-Varney	$15.50
Heather Flannery	Paraprofessional - Special Needs	Parker-Varney	$12.03
Erica Arzilli	Paraprofessional - Special Needs	Gossler	$11.77
Jordan Glickman	Paraprofessional - Special Needs	Memorial	$11.77

Andrea McMillan	Paraprofessional - Special Needs	Hillside	$11.77
Jeffrey Pelletier	Paraprofessional - Special Needs	Northwest	$11.77
Briana Plummer	Paraprofessional - Special Needs	Jewett	$11.77

LEAVES OF ABSENCE: NON-CERTIFIED STAFF

Name	Position	Building	Salary
Hung Huynh	Paraprofessional - Autism	Smyth	$11.77

NOMINATIONS: NON-CERTIFIED STAFF

Name	Position	Building	Salary
Laura DeAngelis	Interpreter/Tutor - DHH	Green Acres/Memorial/ MST	$20.50
Melanie Allen	Paraprofessional - Special Needs	Highland	$11.77
Calista Barbowski	Paraprofessional - Preschool	Highland	$11.77
Kristin Basnett	Paraprofessional - Special Needs	Weston	$11.77
Carole Carlson	Paraprofessional - Special Needs	Highland	$11.77
Eileen Conway	Paraprofessional - Special Needs	Northwest	$11.77
Krystal Dearborn	Paraprofessional - Autism	Parkside	$11.77
Stephanie Desautels	Paraprofessional - Special Needs	Weston	$11.77
Mandy Digan	Paraprofessional - Special Needs	Weston	$11.77
Jennifer Finethy	Paraprofessional - Special Needs	Highland	$11.77
Raymond Fortier	Paraprofessional - EL	West	$11.77
Karen Giguere	Paraprofessional - Special Needs	MST	$11.77
Jessica Gonzalez Ramos	Paraprofessional - Special Needs	Highland	$11.77
Julie Graichen	Paraprofessional - Special Needs	Smyth	$11.77
Kendra Grant	Paraprofessional - Special Needs	Bakersville	$11.77
Megan Hansen	Paraprofessional - Special Needs	Webster	$11.77
Maria Elynnie Lahr	Paraprofessional - Special Needs	Smyth	$11.77
Lynne McFarland	Paraprofessional - EL	Beech	$11.77
Rory Moore	Paraprofessional - Special Needs	Gossler Park	$11.77
Kathleen Mulcahy	Paraprofessional - Special Needs	Weston	$11.77
Jillian O'Rourke	Paraprofessional - Special Needs	Highland	$11.77

Madison Platte	Paraprofessional - Special Needs	McLaughlin	$11.77
Zoe Stamoulis	Paraprofessional - Special Needs	Central	$11.77
Madison Water	Paraprofessional - Special Needs	Beech	$11.77
Alexander Wetmore	Paraprofessional - Special Needs	McLaughlin	$11.77
Joshua Wilson	Paraprofessional - Special Needs	West	$11.77

TRANSFERS: CERTIFIED STAFF

Name	To New Assignment	To School	From School
David Brien	Music (Orchestra & Choir)	Memorial	Memorial/District
Gerard Gagne	STEAM Design Build	McLaughlin	McLaughlin
Dimitri Newman	World Languages - Latin	Central	Central/Memorial
Patricia Syrene	Elementary	Smyth	Gossler
Jennifer Thompson	Pre-K Special Education	Jewett	Northwest/Weston

TABLED ITEMS

23. NEW BUSINESS

Committee Member Avard stated thank you, your Honor. I don't know what we can do with this head of information that came by, that I was given, a friend of mine is a football official and he told me that the other day he went to a Memorial to officiate a. J.V. football game that was delayed because of the way things were scheduled. A soccer game was going on and went into overtime, so it made the J.V. football game goes so late that the light had to be turned on a Memorial. The problem with this is every time we turn the lights on before 8:00 at night it's a thousand dollars. We're looking at Special Ed saying how can we afford these needs that we have in this district and we're blowing a thousand dollars a pop when we have to turn the lights on for a game because of scheduling. The same official told me that he's seen it happen at West High School, he has seen it happen multiple times over the years. This happens a lot. I think if we were to tally it up it's a lot of money that we're just blowing to the win that we don't need to do so we will get to figure out either a better way to schedule or as I was talking to Committeeman

Beaudry, he says that if our metering was done a little bit differently, if these fields were tied to our buildings we wouldn't pay that fee. But we've fought that fee for years. Mayor Gatsas fought that we can't get past the power company hits us with that fee for turning on the lights before 8:00 p.m. So, between scheduling and possibly investing the money to reroute how we wire these fields or at one point in time there was a proposal to get generators. Something has to happen so that we're not spending that kind of money to turn on those lights for a J.V. game. That's all I have. Thank you.

Committee Member Beaudry stated thank you Madam Chairman. The other day I was trying to get a hold of Bakersville school and the phone lines were down so I called the I.T. department to find out what was going on and I was told that there's some hardware that went down and that similar situation happened at Northwest. And it was brought to my attention that we have no spare equipment. So, when this stuff goes down, it could be a day to two days before they can get phone service or internet service and that's kind of scary when they don't have access to internet and their phones. So, I don't know if we can send this, where it's an infrastructure of the schools. We can send this to building sites. But my understanding the hardware is about six thousand dollars why we can't have one spare on board so that when something breaks down especially if it's a common occurrence. We've had two now since the beginning of school. So, and I applaud our I.T. department because they went over to Northwest and worked apparently all night to get Northwest up and running, so that would be open for school. Unfortunately, Bakersville broke down when school had already opened up. So, for six thousand dollars to have something prepared for a district size I think its money well spent. So, I don't know if this is something that the administration can handle or would you want it to go through a committee but it's ridiculous in a budget that's a hundred and sixty-seven million dollars we can't come up with six thousand dollars to have a spare piece of hardware to make sure these buildings are up and running in the safety of our students.

Mrs. DeFrancis stated the I.T. department was able to take care of that issue and that is the case, they did not have a spare. They are working with our vendors I came up with the suggestion as far as working with the vendor to see if we could maybe have one on loan and use that as our spare. So that's something that we're going to work on. One of the reasons that the equipment is

starting to fail is because it's coming to the end of its life. So, we are looking at a replacement as well.

Committee Member Beaudry stated and if I may Madam Chairman, thank you for saying that Mrs. DeFrancis because I believe these this hardware has a seven-year lifespan, right around the end. It's pretty much at the seven-year lifespan. When we look at the I.T. budget they have no money for hardware. So, I don't know where we're going to come up with the money to replace these. I don't if there's one and every school you're looking at six thousand dollars times 22. I mean I don't know if you have to replace them all at once as they break down. But I'm hoping that you know this has been a problem with the I.T. budget for quite some time, when the past director chose to eliminate two hundred fifty thousand dollars in his budget and all of that was to replace hardware and software so they don't have any money for replacements. And I was told that we have a million dollars sitting in an account through iRate. Can you say that again?

Mrs. DeFrancis stated eRate.

Mayor Craig asked can we let Mrs. DeFrancis talk?

Committee Member Beaudry stated I'm sorry, eRate and we have to match it 20 percent, but we're going to lose that money, from what I understand if we don't use it.

Mayor Craig stated let her answer.

Committee Member Beaudry stated I'm going to let her answer I just want to get all the questions out first.

Mrs. DeFrancis stated so, we are working on the last, there is about 1.2 million left for eRate and that would be for next fiscal year, but we would need to build into the budget, this coming budget cycle our 20 percent. So, we are looking at writing an RFP for the infrastructure, eRate does not cover computers and things of that nature but it does cover infrastructure. So, we are looking to put out an RFP, so that we're in the timeline with each rate and then during the budget process we can bring forward our match on that and hopefully get that through and be able to maximize some of that eRate funding.

Committee Member Beaudry stated well again I just want to applaud our I.T. department. People don't realize there's only four people that work in IT now. I'm very glad that what happened tonight happened because that individual is a very important integral part of the I.T. department, so I'm glad that that occurred this evening. But they're running a Director short and they lost the teacher that was working in there. So, they are two people down in that department and they do phenomenal work for the amount of staff we have. So, thank you.

Committee Member Terrio stated thank you, Your Honor. Thank you for sending all that information, the clerk copied it for me and I'm going to hand it out in the second, but I'm going to bring up our lack of a bedbug policy and I want to revisit what is linked into that ur Lice policy.

Mayor Craig stated we have our public health director here. She's been sitting here all night. We might as well call her up. I already have a copy. Thank you. Did you want to address with Ms. Thomas the policy?

Committee Member Terrio stated oh, yes. So, there's two parts to it so the first is Bedbugs. I was contacted by a staff member unfortunately about a student who has repeatedly come into school with bedbugs. So, informing the parent and if the parent takes actions or they haven't taken any action hasn't helped the situation. So, I wanted to refer this at a future date, when I when I can meet the deadline to coordination, so that we have actually an official bedbug policy. I would note that the EPA policy that you sent out on the second page and the dropdown flow sheet it says in instances that are repeated, and lists appropriate social agencies, so I'm not looking… I had a discussion with Committeewoman Desrochers. To clarify, I'm not looking if somebody has bedbugs we do we just send them home, kick them out of school. My concern is in this situation where we have repeated instances of bedbug infestations of a student how we deal with it? so I'd be looking to codify that officially with Coordination, in Coordination at a future date. My second thing is that I'm troubled by is that in talking, this is the third instance that somebody has brought the lice policy to my attention, just to remind the board two years ago we revamped our policy in that if somebody had live lice on them, him or her, they would be sent home. This is the third time that a staff member has told me that the children aren't being sent home and that the Health Department is actually telling the schools to keep the kids in

school. In spite of the Board Policy. I guess that's my question to you. Are you telling the schools, somebody in the health department office, to keep kids in the school with lice?

Ms. Anna Thomas stated so, thank you for the question. And I'm literally getting my sea legs this week so thank you for having me and I also want to introduce Phil Alexakos, who's our Chief of Environmental Health and Emergency Preparedness, as well, who could go over some of these protocols. We follow any policy that's in place. So, your kind of blending two different ones. So, I just want to be clear there's pediculosis and the policy that was passed prior and bedbugs is something that we don't have in place right now. But there is protocol.

Committee Member Terrio stated if I could just stop you for one second. The student who had the bedbugs, also had multiple cases of lice. That's multiple cases of the lice and multiple cases of bedbug. That's why.

Ms. Thomas stated thank you for clarifying. So, I think what is important to remember is that these are not new problems and they are things we grapple with throughout the city and they're actually very indicative in urban areas. Pediculosis is a national issue that most school districts deal with. Bedbugs you know are very hard to remedy and I will tell you from my experience I've never seen a bedbug policy in any school district that would ever send home a child, so I'm happy to hear that that's not the direction that you want to see happen. But I think what would be helpful is to maybe hear a little bit about our protocol and what happens when we get calls like this because this has been something we've been dealing with for years. We will go into people's homes. We investigate these situations when they're called to our attention especially in a school environment. So, I'm going to go ahead and have Phil cover a couple of those steps just so you all have that same knowledge as well.

Phil Alexakos stated sure, thank you. Back in 2011 the bedbug action committee, which is a group of stakeholders, government, social service agencies, Faith based organizations, community organizing groups, and property owners got together to look at bedbugs as a systemic issue across all disciplines and all walks of life so to speak. And in 2011 we came before the Board of Mayor and Aldermen to come together and put together a comprehensive kind of bedbug's strategy, which ended up resulting in New Hampshire's bedbug law or legislation,

which addresses some of the things that you are alluding to when we identify a child who has bedbugs on their belongings. How do we interact with that family? How do we help that family advocate for talking to their property owner? And what mechanisms are there in place, so that they can let their property owners know? And part of our role, the Health Department, it involves case management and School Nursing, but in our environmental health division we have a program known as healthy homes. So, we really look at the home environment in many different ways and so we look to link folks to services, we have a robust set of partners that do sort of home interventions and will help families whether it be for lice intervention, whether it be supplies and education around bedbug treatment and prevention. And we all know that oftentimes with bedbugs, especially it's not necessarily the family under their immediate control, but there are steps that folks can do to prevent bites while a property owner is finding out about the issue and taking steps to look at the building as a whole. So, if you think about care coordination that's sort of what we do in Environmental Health, is we're actually not the enforcement agency. And so that actually makes it a little bit easier for property owners to talk with us, so we can help them go through the strategies of what works and what doesn't, bedbug bombs, aerosols, things of that nature don't work and we don't want people wasting money doing things unsafely. So, we'll counsel property owners on what strategies to use and what things are effective and not effective. And we do that with families as well. So, we really serve as an education entity and a resource linkage mechanism. And so that's sort of our role when we find families that have repeat pediculosis or repeat bedbugs, we have some partners in the community that have intervention at the home level, so they will have peer educator models that they'll go out and show folks how to do treatments, how to do proper vacuuming, how to do surveillance and monitoring which ties into what we do if we find a bedbug in a school. We've developed a protocol based on what New York City had developed and we did that shortly after 2011 and if you were on the board back at that time the late Dr. Brennan and our previous director co penned a letter to every family in the district to say you know bedbugs are an issue there unfortunately something that's not going away, they are very difficult to manage. But raising the level of awareness is paramount and the bedbug law actually you know sort of forces the hand of all stakeholders to report because early intervention from a property owner perspective saves money and really framing it in that way is really effective. But we also have those linkages, just doing surveillance and using things like climb ups. And in the school setting, if we find a bug we ask

that if there's an issue about identifying it that the school nurse can contact our Environmental Health Division to identify it properly and then a work order goes into the Maximo Management system so that the facilities division places a monitor device in a classroom. Because what we're looking to do, is we want to make sure that bugs don't take up residence in a school setting, which they really don't want to do. And if we see any replication of the bugs in a particular classroom or cubby or other area, that's when we would call in pest control but just vacuuming the area where the bug is found is very effective. And it's a non-chemical intervention and that's what we're really looking to do. So, we've worked with facilities, we've worked with the school district previously, we've worked with Aramark to develop a response strategy, we've also done education starting with some of the social workers who first encountered this issue in the school setting and have done trainings for the social workers years ago. I worked with a group this spring on a book Literacy activity that included book donations, so we went through identification and what could we do to make sure that these donations are safe. So really we're a resource link and we're also an education opportunity for folks that have concerns or questions about bedbugs in general. And so that's sort of our role and we really try hard especially with repeat families that we try to link them to services and try to figure out what the barriers are.

Committee Member Terrio stated just to clarify. So, if a staff member told me that the health department is telling schools with kids with lice that their kids have to stay in school that would be incorrect.

Ms. Thomas stated it would be incorrect. I would like to direct them to me specifically so I can investigate that because that's the first I'm hearing of it.

Committee Member Terrio stated all right. Thank you.

Committee Member Bergeron stated thank you, Your Honor. I did look at a good resource from the University of Minnesota and it said exactly that, just to keep the kids at school because sending them home can have negative effects and it can take several weeks to get or some time to get this infestation done. So, I'm glad to see that that's what we don't do because just for that reason alone. Thank you. They even provide a sample letter to parents; this thing is great.

Committee Member Freeman stated thank you, your honor. So, I just like to kind of reiterate what Committee Member Terrio said is that he wasn't looking to send kids home. And I also would like to ask you if no one brings the issue of bedbugs to your attention, how do you deal with that and that is what Committee Member Terrio is bringing is that, he's got a report from a staff member at the school that there is a case of bedbugs. So now we need to find out what to do to reach out to that school to make sure that in fact it's not an infestation. And how do we deal with it going forward.

Mr. Alexakos stated thank you for your questions. So, there are a couple of different pathways that we generally get action to be taken with a sighting of a bedbug or a suspected bedbug. The school nurse is always sort of a good conduit of information, especially around identification. But ultimately the Administration, they are the CEOs of their school, and they have the ability to put the work order into Maximo. And so, if it's an issue with newer Administration we're happy to kind of go over this policy and procedure to make sure that it's clear, so that we can get prompt action, because ultimately we don't want to have any sustained activity in a school or any dwelling for that matter. So, the sooner we can take action, do vacuuming, do monitoring to make sure that no one's taking up residence, that's what we're trying to do.

Committee Member Freeman stated follow-up your honor. Very quickly. Dr. Vargas would it be a stretch if you're wonderful to palm and would send out a quick e-mail to every administrator and let them know what the policy is around lice, just a reminder, lice and how to handle suspected bedbugs.

Dr. Vargas stated we can do that.

Committee Member Freeman stated thank you.

Mayor Craig stated and you can utilize what Mr. Alexakos mentioned that there's a letter already written.

Dr. Vargas stated that's great.

Mayor Craig stated recycle what works.

Committee Member Girard stated thank you, Your Honor. I guess I'm going to go there because I haven't heard that this year, but I heard on more than a couple occasions last year that kids with head lice were being told that they had to stay in school, particularly by the school nurse, so I guess rather than go back and forth on this. Do the nurses keep records of the number of kids who are referred for head lice and the number of kids they send home? Because unless we have that data, you can say all you want.

Ms. Thomas stated so, yeah. So, anything they do is going to be documented. So, with HIPAA and FERPA, a lot of that is protected. But if we wanted to pull things on a population base scale, we could certainly consider doing that with the district's permission to do so.

Committee Member Girard stated Madam Chair I would like the Health Department to forward us by school the number of kids that were sent home for head lice in the last school year and the number of kids that have had multiple cases and I would also like from the administration, since our policy requires for pre K through fifth grade that notification will be sent home to parents or guardians of students in the infected class, how many letters went home? And I hate to go there. But we're not going to clear this issue up with a he said she said unless we…

Mayor Craig stated I don't personally see the value in going back. And so, if we've set what the expectations are very clear here, why don't we move forward with all of these people have an awful lot of work to do.

Committee Member Girard stated If I may your Honor, this isn't the first discussion this board has had and we've set this expectation here…

Mayor Craig stated this school year.

Committee Member Girard stated we've set this expectation in the past that these things were going to be done and it has been questioned, I wouldn't say frequently, but it's not rare that it has been questioned. And so, we won't know, to be perfectly honest, what activity level is being undertaken unless we do go back over the past year and do it and it sounds to me like the data is relatively easily accessed. So, I don't think it's going to be an undue burden but I think we should

know just because of what staff members have told Committee Member Terrio, what I've heard from parents from the last school year. Let's get it cleared up because…

Mayor Craig stated when did you change the policy?

Committee Member Girard stated because this Board's directives are not being followed then they need to be. So, I'd like to know the data and I'd like to know…

Mayor Craig stated I think it's important to know when the policy was changed too.

Committee Member Girard stated the policy was written…

Committee Member Terrio stated 2016.

Mayor Craig stated 2016, okay.

Committee Member Ambrogi stated I disagree with the request for the data. And I actually, because I would agree with you your Honor that I think what's important Ms. Thomas is new in her job. We're making it very clear that we have set policy, we expect the policy to be followed. I think there's a lot going on in this city right now and to ask her to find somebody that can compile this data. I just honestly I don't see what the point of it is. I think going forward making it very clear that there is a policy we want to make sure that the school users are following that policy. And I think perhaps looking at this prospectively rather than retrospectively and asking her to come back in a few months and give us an update based on how things are going. I think a fishing expedition into past data. I honestly don't see what we're going to accomplish by doing that. I think it's a waste of time.

Committee Member Girard stated if I may Your Honor consider it a fishing expedition, but we would have no basis for comparison, if we get a report six months from now to know how it compared to the same period of time from the past year. So, I think it's always good to have a…

Committee Member Ambrogi stated I would ask for a vote on the matter.

Mayor Craig stated we can't, we're not taking a motion in new business.

Committee Member Ambrogi stated I think the data request would require a vote in my opinion.

Mayor Craig stated I agree.

Committee Member Girard stated I think we need a baseline.

Mayor Craig asked Committeeman Terrio, did you have any other questions?

Committee Member Terrio stated no, I would just like clarify…

Committee Member Beaudry stated I think that I've had my hand up.

Mayor Craig stated I'm sorry, it's at 11 o'clock at night.

Committee Member Beaudry stated and I thought this was going to be an early meeting.

Mayor Craig stated yeah we all did it.

Committee Member Beaudry stated just very quickly, I'm reading the school response flowchart and it basically talks about the student that has the alleged bedbugs, but it doesn't talk about the safety of the other students in the class and the teachers and faculty that are dealing with this child. I know that there is protocol set up for like Refuge people when they are moving mattresses and stuff that may have bedbugs, that they have certain things, you don't go home with your clothes, you would have to change. So how are we going to do something for our staff that dealing with these kids that may be infested with bedbugs so they're not taking it home to their families?

Mr. Alexakos stated so I think the best way to look at that and the way that I talked to folks that are actually going into homes that are infested is to use the term in the medical profession of universal precautions. So, having just a basic awareness of your belongings, so when I talk to home visitors and they're going into dwellings that may or may not have pests of various sorts just being mindful of you know putting your personal bag on the ground is not a good idea and

that sounds like a basic thing. But I'm happy to speak at school staff meetings and other events where groups of faculty are together to help kind of reiterate some of those best practices.

Committee Member Beaudry stated you could have a flow chart for our staff similar to what you have here for the student. I think that would be helpful that we can disseminate to staff.

Mayor Craig stated Committeeman Beaudry I'm not sure if you saw this information sheet for teachers, staff and administrators, but it's really helpful. It was in an e-mail that went out today. So, this is exactly what you're talking about.

Committee Member Beaudry stated okay.

Mr. Alexakos stated and I would welcome the opportunity to get together in a small group to work with administration and faculty and paraprofessionals and other folks that are working in the classroom setting to talk about issues and questions that they have and then put together a handout that's specific to the school setting that that would answer those questions, I think that makes a lot of sense.

Committee Member Beaudry stated great, thank you.

Committee Member Terrio stated and I was going to contact Coordination at a future date and just have them put this on the agenda to codify it. So, we have an official policy.

Committee Member Bergeron stated I thought we did.

Mayor Craig stated and I guess I would ask you if there's a policy, you mentioned that you've reviewed some policies. So, if there's one that you can recommend that would be helpful. Okay, any other…?

Committee Member Bergeron stated yeah I just I guess, I wanted to, now that you've been nominated and I want to officially congratulate you.

Ms. Thomas stated I'm sorry, say that again.

Committee Member Bergeron stated I wanted to officially congratulate you.

Ms. Thomas stated thank you so much, I'm sorry.

Committee Member Bergeron stated I don't know if the public is aware and on school's side, on the Alderman side, but Mayor Craig I guess you nominated and the Aldermen approved your new position as?

Ms. Thomas stated one week. So, the one thing I would like to say, if you don't mind me mentioning, thank you for saying that too, is I think we want as a health department to do a better job or a much more proactive job as much as we can with all of you. I want to be available to you. I want to make the staff available to any time you have questions concerns you know you can reach out to us. We're a resource and we're bigger than just the school nurses, although the school nurses are phenomenal, and we had a school nurse in with the central team and we're part of the entire community with you and we all have the same goals and we have other folks who can help in the schools and in the neighborhoods as well. So, we're really there to bring those resources to you. And to answer questions and to do whatever we can to help the constituents so we're going to be much more proactive. We'd like to be here regularly and not just come here when there is an issue. We want to come and bring information to you in a proactive way and data when you need it and the kinds of things that you're interested in that's happening real time in the community that we're all grappling with. So that's a big part of what I think we want to bring is part of our role and in kind of a newer generation coming forward.

Committee Member Bergeron stated your Honor, you did a tour for the Alderman? Did they have a tour of the Health Center, right, the facility itself? Is that something you feel like we would benefit from? I don't know if you went, your honor, I don't know if you were there for that.

Ms. Thomas stated sure so we always invite, thank you for also bring that up. We always invite anyone to come by anytime they want. We especially do it for newly elected officials, that if they want to learn about the role of the Health Department is and who we have on staff and what we do in the community we always welcome any one of you to come at any time and we can even take you on a ride along out in the community if you want to do that with us. But we definitely can orientate you to some of our functions and then certainly the kinds of things that we can do

for your constituents. So, at any time we would love to do that and we do that pretty regularly. So, thank you for bringing that up as well.

Mayor Craig asked any other board communications? No, thank you. Just want to remind everyone there's no school tomorrow. It's election day so get out and vote.

MEETING WITH LEGAL COUNSEL

*On motion of **Committee Member Avard,** duly seconded by **Committee Member Beaudry,** it was moved to recess the meeting to meet with legal counsel under the provisions of RSA 91-A:2 I (b). All were in favor.*

***Mayor Craig** called the meeting back to order at 11:57 p.m.*

24. A motion is in order to go into non-public session under the provisions of RSA 91-A:3 II (a, b, c and e) for the dismissal, promotion or compensation of any public employee; or, the hiring of any person as a public employee; for matters, which if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person; and, consideration of negotiation of pending legal claims or litigation.

*On motion of **Committee Member Girard**, duly seconded by **Committee Member Beaudry**, it was voted to go into non-public session under the provisions of RSA 91-A:3 II (a, b, c, and e) for the dismissal, promotion or compensation of any public employee; or, the hiring of any person as a public employee; for matters, which if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person; and, consideration of negotiation of pending legal claims or litigation.*

Roll Call: Committee Members Ambrogi, Scannell, Georges, Want, Bergeron, Thomas, Terrio, Lehoux, Beaudry, Desrochers, and Mayor Craig voted yea on the motion. Committee Members Freeman and Girard voted nay on the motion. Committee Members Avard and Tessier were absent. Motion passed.

25. A motion is in order to call the meeting back to order.

*On motion of **Committee Member Beaudry**, duly seconded by **Committee Member Terrio**, it was voted to return to the regular session of the meeting. All were in favor and the motion passed.*

*On motion of **Committee Member Beaudry**, duly seconded by **Committee Member Terrio**, it was voted to seal the minutes of the non-public session. All were in favor and the motion passed.*

ADJOURNMENT

26. If there is no further business, a motion is in order to adjourn.

*There being no further business, on motion of **Committee Member Beaudry**, duly seconded by **Committee Member Desrochers**, it was voted to adjourn at 12:16 p.m. Meeting was adjourned.*

A True Record. Attest.
Respectfully Submitted,

Angela M Carey

Clerk of Committee