

MINUTES OF THE REGIONAL SCHOOL UNIT 1 SPECIAL BOARD MEETING HELD AT MORSE HIGH SCHOOL ON May 2, 2022 AT 6:00 PM. (NOTE: These minutes are not official until approved by the Board. Such action, either to approve or amend and approve, is anticipated at the May 23, 2022 meeting).

Members Present: Lou Ensel, Chairperson; Lorna Ryan, Vice Chairperson; Anita Brown, Jamie Dorr, Lorna Ryan, Bill Perkins and Jennifer Ritch-Smith; Natalie Emmerson, Student Representative; Patrick Manuel, Superintendent of Schools

Members Absent: Jonah Smith

Others Present: Katie Joseph, Debra Clark, David Richards, Justin Keleher, Jennifer McKay, Ross, Berkowitz, Dean Emmerson, Brandon Ward, Jason Libby, Julie Kenny, Eric Varney, Sandra Gorsuch-Plummer

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Ensel called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

RECOGNITION AND COMMENTS FROM CHAIR

Chairperson Ensel acknowledged that it is staff and teacher appreciation week and, on behalf of the Board, thanked all of our staff and teachers who do an incredible job every day to make this district as great as it is.

PUBLIC SESSION ON FY 2023 PROPOSED BUDGET

None

SECOND READING AND APPROVAL OF FY 2023 SCHOOL BUDGET

The Board was provided with two different versions of the proposed FY 2023 budget. One has an increase of 3.03% and includes the Dean of Students positions while the other shows a 3.57% increase and includes the Dean of Students and the RTI coordinator positions.

Superintendent Manuel stated that if the Board selects the version with the two positions then federal funds would be set aside in the event that additional equipment or supplies are needed. The \$4 million of federal money has been earmarked for equipment, maintenance projects, RTI components, and staff.

Vice Chairperson Ryan reported that a letter was received from the Town of Woolwich advocating that we fund the RTI position through federal funds. Ms. Ryan shared some things to consider including how competitive the market is right now and the fact that the RTI position would need to be filled by a highly qualified person which may affect the applicant pool if the position was advertised as a two-year position. Ms. Ryan also stated that Woolwich currently has two interventionists and one middle school teacher that are being funded with federal funds. In reality, we may want to maintain those positions and put them into the budget in FY 2025 which happens to be another negotiation year. Ms. Ryan stated that, although she can appreciate wanting to use federal funds for the RTI position, this position isn't a temporary position and will be around for a while.

Board member Ritch-Smith stated that federal funds have been used for other teaching positions and the RTI coordinator could truly be most beneficial right now because of the academic struggles some of our students are having as a result of the pandemic. Ms. Ritch-Smith stated that she hopes the district can afford to fund all of the positions needed in the future but we don't know what our needs will be in 2025 and taxpayers are asking why their taxes are increasing when the district has federal money to fund this position.

ADJOURN

MOTION: Fuller

SECOND: Perkins

VOTE: Board (7-0)
Students (1-0)

TO: Adjourn at 6:31 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Patrick M. Manuel".

Patrick Manuel, Ed.D.
Secretary