

Mansfield Board of Education Meeting

January 31, 2013

Mansfield Middle School 7:30 p.m.

Board Members: Mark LaPlaca, Chair; Shamim Patwa, Vice-Chair; Martha Kelly, Secretary, April Holinko, Holly Matthews, Katherine Paulhus, Jay Rueckl, Carrie Silver-Bernstein, Randy Walikonis

Agenda

7:30 Call to Order

7:35 Special Presentation

7:50 Hearing for Visitors

7:55 Communications (P.1)

8:00 Additions to the Present Agenda

Reports:

8:05 MMSA

8:20 Committee Reports

8:25 The President's Plan to Reduce Gun Violence (M) (P. 5)

8:30 Report of the Superintendent

- Mansfield Middle School Power School Parent Portal
- Board of Education Meeting Materials (P. 7)
- Library Grants (M)
- School Maintenance, Repair, and/or Replacements Priorities (P. 9)
- Meeting with Mansfield Town Council
- Southeast Principal Search
- Healthy Workplace Platinum Award (P. 10)
- Enhancing Student Achievement (P. 13)
- 2013-2014 Proposed Budget – Regular Instructional Program

NEW BUSINESS: (If needed, items from the "Consent Agenda" may be added at this time.)

CONSENT AGENDA: (M) (P. 15)

The following items for the Board of Education January 31, 2013 meeting be approved or received for the record, unless removed by a Board member or the Superintendent of Schools.

That the Mansfield Public Schools Board of Education approves the minutes of the January 24, 2013 Board meeting.
That the Mansfield Public Schools Board of Education approves the request for leave of absence for the 2013-2014 school year from Elyse Poller, Mansfield Middle School Teacher.

9:45* Hearing for Visitors

9:55 Suggestions for Future Agenda

Adjournment

* Estimate

Mansfield Public Schools

Board of Education Goals – 2012-2013

- I) Help every student to be a confident and successful learner.
 - a) Engage and motivate every student.
 - b) Improve, as appropriate, the mathematics, reading, science, and writing skills of every student.
 - c) Ensure student safety, health, physical, and emotional well-being.
 - d) Preserve and support the full breadth of the District's program.
 - e) Encourage the civic engagement of students.
 - f) Maintain a systematic review of all program offerings.
 - g) Involve and engage a wide variety of parents/guardians in the education of their children.
 - h) Obtain and maintain National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) accreditation, as well as review, evaluate, and implement an expanded preschool program to address the needs of early learners.
 - i) Address the need to align our current Language Arts/ Reading and Mathematics curriculum with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS).
 - j) Select an anthology which addresses the CCSS and provides a strong pk-6 Language Arts/Reading foundation.
 - k) Integrate current technology in a value added way to the instructional program as well as use it to extend student learning of both subject matter and appropriate use of technology.
 - l) Explore and develop additional support services for those students in need of community and/or health services.
 - m) Review recommendations from all sources and implement best practices as appropriate.
- II) Attract, hire, support, and retain qualified and motivated professional staff.
 - a) Facilitate and encourage a positive, professional learning community.
 - b) Recognize teacher and staff effort and success regularly.
 - c) Foster a climate of respect at all levels.
 - d) Maintain quality educational programs at multiple sites while adjusting staff levels and resources despite increase and/or decrease in overall enrollment.
 - e) Address school/district leadership issues to maintain and surpass current levels of student achievement.
 - f) Integrate current technology in a value added way to the instructional program as well as use it to extend student learning of both subject matter and appropriate use of technology.
 - g) Develop with input and collaboration from certified staff, an effective evaluation program which supports the development of confident student learners and encourages the continued growth of all staff.
 - h) Refine our current professional development program to maximize the growth of certified and non-certified staff while addressing state and federal requirements for required training while maximizing student instructional time.
 - i) Review recommendations from all sources and implement best practices as appropriate.
- III) Continue to improve the effectiveness of the Board of Education.
 - a) Invest time and effort in Board members' learning and development.
 - b) Celebrate and acknowledge student achievements at Board meetings and other venues.
 - c) Foster and encourage communication between the Board and the communities it serves.
 - d) Collaborate with community members and organizations that support the District's students.
 - e) Review recommendations from all sources and implement best practices as appropriate.
 - f) Address the need to align our current Language Arts/ Reading and Mathematics curriculum with the Common Core State Standards (CCSS).
- IV) Monitor and regularly assess the District's status and requirements with respect to the quality of facilities, sufficiency of space, level of security, adequacy of maintenance, and reliability of student transportation.
 - a) Stay involved in all aspects of any School Building Project decisions.
 - b) Keep the public informed and involved.
 - c) Reduce energy consumption and minimize the District's environmental impact.
 - d) Pursue practices and develop policies that reduce energy consumption and district costs.
 - e) Incorporate curricula that investigate energy use and environmental issues.
 - f) Implement a long term plan endorsed by Mansfield Town Council and supported by voters to address pk-8 building needs.
- V) Employ Fiscal Planning for Long Term Sustainability
 - a) Transition from a budget which used a series of federal/state funds to support district staff to a predictable and sustainable funding source.
 - b) Advocate for continued Education Cost Sharing which supports current programming and develop a plan to address any change to current funding level.
 - c) Continue to explore potential partnerships with other groups to maximize program effectiveness while containing costs.

Robert's Rules of Order General Guidelines

As outlined in the MBOE By-Laws, Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the proceedings of the Board unless otherwise provided by the by-laws. Following are some general guidelines from Robert's Rules and the By-Laws that should be followed to ensure efficient meetings and the rights of all members, aid decision-making and allow all to be heard.

1. During any discussion, a member must be recognized by the Chair before speaking.
2. A member will not be allowed to speak a second time until all other members wishing to speak have been allowed to do so.
3. Members should refrain from speaking a second time unless they have a new point to make or need to respond to new information.
4. As a general rule during discussion, comments should be directed through the Chair to the whole Board, rather than to other or individual members. All discussion is with the Board as a whole. Questions of the Superintendent or other non-BOE members making presentations should be directed to that individual.
5. Private conversations can be distracting to those speaking and should be limited.
6. During discussion, the Chair should try to provide equal time to those in favor or against a given topic or motion.
7. A majority is more than half of the votes cast, not a majority of the Board. For example: if only 7 members choose to vote, and the result is 4-3 in favor, the motion is adopted. Members who abstain are "refraining from voting".
8. If discussion on a *motion* is lasting a long time, any member can "move the previous question" or "call the question". They must be recognized by the Chair in order to do so. This is not debatable, and a two-thirds vote is required to pass. If two-thirds vote in favor of ending debate, the Board ends all discussion on a motion and then moves to an immediate vote on that motion.
9. Committee reports that recommend action should be submitted in writing. This allows for clear understanding of recommendations.

Celeste N. Griffin

From: Mark LaPlaca
Sent: Thursday, January 31, 2013 11:58 AM
To: Celeste N. Griffin
Subject: FW: Board of Ed letter

Another one to include

Mark LaPlaca
Chair, Mansfield Board of Education

From: Mark LaPlaca [marklaplaca@snet.net]
Sent: Thursday, January 31, 2013 11:58 AM
To: MBOE_BOE
Subject: Board of Ed letter

This was sent to my personal email address, but clearly meant for all Board members.

Mark LaPlaca

Mansfield Board of Education Members,
I support the appeal you are making in your letter to our national government to take positive steps to control gun violence and increase school safety.

Ken Rawn
kenrawn@sbcglobal.net

Celeste N. Griffin

From: Mark LaPlaca
Sent: Thursday, January 31, 2013 12:02 PM
To: Celeste N. Griffin
Subject: FW: letter to Sen. Blumenthal

another

Mark LaPlaca
Chair, Mansfield Board of Education

From: Alicia Welch [alicia06250@yahoo.com]
Sent: Thursday, January 31, 2013 12:01 PM
To: MBOE_BOE
Subject: letter to Sen. Blumenthal

To Mansfield Board of Education:

I heartily approve of the letter to Senator Blumenthal and other federal representatives as it is written. We should do all we can to prevent violence. Alicia Welch, 19 Hillside Circle, Storrs.

Celeste N. Griffin

From: Mark LaPlaca
Sent: Thursday, January 31, 2013 11:49 AM
To: Celeste N. Griffin
Subject: FW: Letter to Senators

Please print copies for communications tonight.

Mark LaPlaca

Chair, Mansfield Board of Education

From: Lee Terry [ttery8388@charter.net]
Sent: Thursday, January 31, 2013 11:37 AM
To: MBOE_BOE
Cc: Mark LaPlaca
Subject: Letter to Senators

Hello, I want to urge you to send that excellent letter to our Senators. The paper on gun violence is so relevant. From personal experience with a sibling who shot himself, I can say that the combination of mental illness, including paranoia, hearing voices, seeing ghosts, combined with his ex-wife's inability to get him mental health care he needed despite his increasingly frightening behavior, and his ability to stockpile guns (opportunity) led to his suicide. It's very painful to recall these devastating personal events surrounding a beloved brother, but I have put two and two together from the discussions going on around Newtown and from my own experience that while we can't always solve a person's refusal to recognize that he is seriously ill and accept treatment, we have to somehow get help for troubled people and make it more difficult to buy guns.

Lee Terry (former Board member of EOSmith in the 1990s)
114 Dunham Pond Road
Storrs, CT

Celeste N. Griffin

From: Mark LaPlaca
Sent: Thursday, January 31, 2013 12:25 PM
To: Celeste N. Griffin
Subject: FW: Confronting Gun Violence

Another one.

Mark LaPlaca
Chair, Mansfield Board of Education

From: Leslie Turner [leslieturn3@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, January 31, 2013 12:21 PM
To: MBOE_BOE
Subject: Confronting Gun Violence

Dear Members of the Board of Education,

Thank you for making the reasonable decision to confront our country's epidemic of gun violence. My family and I wholeheartedly support both President Barack Obama's "Now Is The Time" plan and the Town of Mansfield Board of Education's proposals to study gun violence, provide mental health training for teachers and staff to identify potential threatening situations and to ban automatic weapons and multiple magazines for public use.

We have a responsibility to our community to ensure a safe environment in order for our youth and others to reach their potential.

Leslie Turner,
Storrs, CT

ensureesasenviornments



THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF MANSFIELD, CONNECTICUT

Mark LaPlaca, Chair, Mansfield Board of Education

AUDREY P. BECK BUILDING
FOUR SOUTH EAGLEVILLE ROAD
MANSFIELD, CT 06268
(860) 429-3350
Fax: (860) 429-3379

September 14, 2012

Senator Richard Blumenthal
702 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Blumenthal,

On Thursday, January 31, 2013, the Mansfield Board of Education discussed the President's plan to reduce gun violence and improve school safety and how the recent tragic events in Newtown have impacted not only our school district but our entire state and nation.

While no law or set of laws will end all gun violence, the time has come for common sense legislation to reduce the possibility of another tragedy like the one at Sandy Hook Elementary School. Improving access to mental health services, providing resources to make schools safer, and reducing the possibility of weapons falling into dangerous hands are the three aspects of the President's plan and we urge you to support these measures.

The Mansfield Board of Education encourages you to act on behalf of the children and citizens of our town, state, and nation by supporting the following proposals:

- The Comprehensive School Safety Grant to allow districts to hire school resource officers and school counselors, or purchase school safety equipment.
- Project AWARE - to provide training for teachers and other adults who regularly interact with students to recognize young people who need help and ensure they are referred to mental health services.
- The President's proposals for funding state-based strategies to support young people with mental health or substance abuse issues, to offer students mental health services for trauma or anxiety, conflict resolution programs, and other school based violence prevention strategies.
- The proposal to fund stipends and tuition reimbursement to train more than 5,000 mental health professionals serving young people in our schools and communities.
- Provide funding for the CDC to conduct research on the causes and prevention of gun violence, including links between video games, media images and violence.
- Expand the National Violent Death Reporting System to all 50 states.

- Require background checks for all gun sales, including the 40% of gun sales made by private sellers who are presently exempt from this requirement and close the “gun show loophole”.
- Reinstate and strengthen the ban on assault weapons and the prohibition on magazines holding more than 10 rounds.

We hope you will represent our voice and share with your colleagues that we believe these actions are in the best interests of all children. Finally, the Mansfield Board of Education extends to you an open invitation to meet with us at any time.

Respectfully,

Mark LaPlaca
Board Chairperson

C: Frederick A. Baruzzi, Superintendent of Schools
Board of Education Members

MANSFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

DOCUMENTS CALENDAR DIRECTORY ALERTS

Quick Links



Mansfield Public Schools

Mansfield District Office Mansfield Middle School Goodwin Elementary School Southeast Elementary School Vinton Elementary School

District Information For Students For Parents For Staff Community Links

Board of Education Agendas and Minutes

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- ▶ [January 24, 2013 Agenda and Packet](#)
- ▶ [January 24, 2013 Agenda](#)
- ▶ [December 13, 2012 Agenda and Packet](#)
- ▶ [December 13, 2012 Minutes Draft](#)
- ▶ [December 13, 2012 Agenda](#)
- ▶ [November 8, 2012 Packet \(revised 11/5/12\)](#)
- ▶ [November 8, 2012 Minutes](#)
- ▶ [November 8, 2012 Enclosure](#)
- ▶ [November 8, 2012 Agenda](#)
- ▶ [October 25, 2012 Packet](#)
- ▶ [October 25, 2012 Minutes](#)
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Four School Renovation Project
Option A vs. Potential Repairs Years 1 - 10

Description	Council Requested * Potential Repairs	
	Within 5 Yrs	Within 10 Yrs
Septic System	35,000	40,000
Playscape	100,000	
Paved Play Area (3000SF)		
Oil Tank Replacement	15,000	200,000
Adjust Grade-Handicap Accessibility		
Asbestos Abatement Allowance		
Roof Replacement		4,000,000
Soffit Panel Replacement		
Relocatable Roof Replacement		
Bulkheads at Tunnels	50,000	
Window Replacement		
Exterior Door Replacement		25,000
Wall Replacement at Transite Walls		
Operable Partition at Gym Allowance	35,000	80,000
Toilet Room ADA Modifications		65,000
Classroom Doorway Renovations	20,000	
New Elevator - ADA Compliant		180,000
Gym Floor Replacement		150,000
VCT Replacement		
Kitchen Upgrades	20,000	300,000
Ventilation System	5,000	15,000
Replace HVAC Control & Heat System		
Replace Boilers	100,000	200,000
Replace Plumbing Fixtures		
Electrical Service Upgrades (1200AMP)		
NU Charges		
SubPanel Upgrades (allow 15 panels)		
New Fire Alarm System		400,000
Technology Upgrades		
Floor, Carpet, shelves, tables - CIP	80,000	
Sub-total	460,000	5,655,000
LEED Construction - 5%	23,000	282,750
Total	483,000	5,937,750

ESTIMATED LOCAL SHARE

483,000	2,787,750
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* Note: As requested by the Town Council - list of "potential" repairs with an estimate of what may need replacement/repair.

From: Tanya Court [mailto:tcourt@businessfairfield.com]
Sent: Thursday, January 24, 2013 1:10 PM
To: Ande Bloom
Subject: 2013 Healthy Workplaces Award

Dear Ande,

Congratulations! The Business Council of Fairfield County would like to recognize Town of Mansfield, Mansfield BOE, and Region 19 BOE as a Platinum winner for your successful efforts in promoting a healthy workplace. By recognizing the hard work of employers to promote healthy lifestyles, we hope to serve as a catalyst for other employers in both the private and public sector to take action.

Please join us for the Healthy Workplaces Best Practices Award Ceremony on February 14, 2013 from 7:45 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. The event will be held at Sheraton Stamford Hotel, Stamford, CT. Directions to the event can be found at the following link:
<http://www.businessfairfield.com/Directions/sheraton.htm>.

All Healthy Workplace winners will be celebrated for their commitment to employee health and well being. At the appropriate time, we will ask the companies to come forward as a group with your colleagues (e.g. silver, gold, platinum). When your company is called up to accept the award, you should come forward, accept the plaque and have a photograph taken with your colleagues. You will not be required to make any prepared remarks.

Once the awards have been distributed, the second half of the program will get underway. A panel of companies will share their wellness stories with us.

We know that many individuals are responsible for making your wellness program a success. You are welcome to invite your colleagues to the February 14th event as our guests.

Please let us know the names and email addresses of other team members who will be attending by February 6th. Have a wonderful day; we look forward to seeing you on February 14th.

Best regards,
Tanya

Tanya M. Court
Director, Public Policy and Programs
The Business Council of Fairfield County
One Landmark Square, Suite 300
Stamford, CT 06901
Telephone: 203-705-0668
Fax: 203-967-8294
email: tcourt@businessfairfield.com

**Mansfield Public Schools
Enhancing Student Achievement
2012-2013**

School	Gr.	Number Served	Subject	Focus	Activity Name	# of Sessions	Length of Each Session	Instructional Hours Per Student	Start/End Date	Total Cost
GW	K	8-10	Reading	Read Aloud	Books & Breakfast I	6	1 hr.	6	10/18/12-11/29/12	\$375.00
GW	K	8-10	Reading	Read Aloud	Books & Breakfast II	6	1 hr.	6	10/19/12-11/30/12	\$375.00
GW	All	15	Reading	Reading	Read All About It!	13	1 hr.	13	10/10/12-12/3/12	\$927.83
GW	All	15	Reading/ Writing/ Math	Reading/ Writing/ Math	Homework & Independent Work Club	14	1 hr.	14	10/10/12-12/3/12	\$1089.98
GW	All	12	Reading	Reading	Books, Books, Books! (Online Reading)	5	1 hr.	5	10/10/12-12/3/12	\$250.55
SE	3/4	All	Physical Fitness	Improving Physical Fitness	Southeast Running Club	10	1.25 hrs.	12.5	9/7/11-11/9/12	\$1,600.00
SE	3/4	All	Reading	Reading for enjoyment	Battle of the Books I	24	1.5 hrs.	36	10/10/12-1/28/13	\$366.24
SE	3/4	All	Reading	Reading for enjoyment	Battle of the Books II	24	1.5 hrs.	36	2/11/13-5/15/13	\$366.24
SE	3/4	12/14	Math/ Reading	Increased reading & math skills	Study Island	17	1 hr.	17	10/2/12-12/6/12	\$456.79
SE	K	8-10	Reading	Read Aloud	Books & Breakfast	6	1 hr.	6	10/16/12-12/4/12	\$375.00
SE	3/4	12/14	Math/ Reading	Increased reading & math skills	Study Island	17	1 hr.	17	1/8/13-3/7/13	\$456.79
VN	K	8-10	Reading	Read Aloud	Books & Breakfast	6	1 hr.	6	10/17/12-11/28/12	\$375.00
VN	3/4	All	All	Scientific process, Reading, Math	VN Giving Garden Club	13 per grade	1.5 hrs.	19.5 per grade	2/12/13-5/22/13	\$3,306.50
MMS	All	22+	All	Homework Help	Big Friends	6	1 hr.	6	10/16/12-12/4/12	\$150.00
MMS	5-8	All	All	Completion of Homework	Afterschool Homework Help (I)	6	1.25 hrs.	7.5	9/17/12-11/2/12	\$750.00
MMS	5-8	All	All	Completion of Homework	Afterschool Homework Help (II)	8	1.25 hrs.	10	11/5/12-1/18/13	\$1,000.00
MMS	5-8	All	All	Completion of	Afterschool Homework Help	10	1.25 hrs.	12.5	1/22/13-4/5/13	\$1,250.00

School	Gr.	Number Served	Subject	Focus	Activity Name	# of Sessions	Length of Each Session	Instructional Hours Per Student	Start/End Date	Total Cost
				Homework	(III)					
MMS	K-8	All	All	Access to library/ books	A Night at Your School Library	14	2.5 hrs.	35	1/16/13-4/17/13	\$875.00
MMS	All	22+	All	Homework Help	Big Friends	9	1 hr.	9	1/29/13-4/9/13	\$225.00
TOTAL										\$15,695.92
REMAINING BALANCE										\$14,304.08

DRAFT

**Mansfield Board of Education Meeting
January 24, 2013
Minutes**

Attendees: Mark LaPlaca, Chair, Martha Kelly, April Holinko, Holly Matthews, Katherine Paulhus, Carrie Silver-Bernstein, Randy Walikonis, Superintendent Fred Baruzzi, Board Clerk, Celeste Griffin
Absent: Shamim Patwa, Jay Rueckl

The meeting was called to order at 7:30pm by Mr. LaPlaca.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION: Goodwin School's third and fourth graders demonstrated technology used in the classrooms.

HEARING FOR VISITORS: None.

COMMUNICATIONS: Letter from JoAnn Goodwin, Chair, Mansfield Planning and Zoning Commission, regarding Mansfield Tomorrow Advisory Group. Flier from Tolland Parent Groups regarding screening of "Race to Nowhere."

ADDITIONS TO THE PRESENT AGENDA: None

Goodwin School PTO: Mrs. Adamczyk reported of the success of the PTO in the absence of the Co-Presidents due to illness.

COMMITTEE REPORTS: Personnel Committee: Mr. LaPlaca reported the need for an Executive Session following the meeting.

Ms. Patwa arrived at 8:03pm.

THE PRESIDENT'S PLAN TO REDUCE GUN VIOLENCE: The Board discussed the report and agreed to draft a letter for future discussion to be sent to Federal Legislators.

REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT:

- Windham STEM Academy: Ana Ortiz, Superintendent, Windham Public Schools, and Jeff Wihbey, Principal, Charles H. Barrows STEM Academy, reported on the school to open for the 2013-2014 school year.
- SmartBus Live: Dana Meinke, Sales Specialist, reviewed the Student Guardian bus monitoring program. MOTION by Ms. Patwa, seconded by Ms. Matthews, to authorize the Superintendent to enter into an agreement with Student Guardian System with town and school district legal review of contract language. VOTE: Ms. Silver-Bernstein, Mr. Walikonis, Ms. Matthews, Ms. Patwa, Mr. LaPlaca and Ms. Holinko in favor. Mrs. Kelly in opposition and Mrs. Paulhus in abstention.
- NAEYC Accreditation: Dr. Leclerc reported the Mansfield Public Schools' preschool program received accreditation on January 4, 2013.
- MMS School Trip Request: Mr. Nguyen reviewed the Robotics Club trip to Vex World Championships in Anaheim, California in April. MOTION by Mr. Walikonis, seconded by Ms. Silver-Bernstein to approve the school trip request. VOTE: Unanimous in favor.
- Emergency Procedures: Mr. Baruzzi reported that meetings with staff and parent organizations have occurred and the administrators and appropriate safety personnel will be reviewing District Safety Procedures and revising as necessary.
- School Climate: Mr. Baruzzi reported that the Principals are reviewing the school climate surveys with the Building School Climate Committees and developing plans as appropriate.
- School Building Project: Mr. Baruzzi reported that at its meeting on January 23, 2013 the Mansfield Town Council voted not to send a building project to the voters at this time and have requested that the Council and the school Board meet in the near future to develop a plan for needed repairs. The Board discussed preparation for this meeting to be discussed at the January 31st meeting.
- Enhancing Student Achievement: Three new projects were reviewed and will be implemented at the schools in support of this activity.
- Class Size Enrollment: The building principals reported no significant change in enrollment in the district.
- 2013-2014 Proposed Budget – Introduction and Overview: Mr. Baruzzi presented his proposed budget of \$20,941,020 representing an increase of 1.7% from the adjusted 2012-2013 budget of \$20,588,160.

NEW BUSINESS: None

CONSENT AGENDA: MOTION by Mrs. Paulhus, seconded by Mr. Walikonis, to approve the following items for the Board of Education January 24, 2013 meeting. VOTE: Unanimous in favor.

That the Mansfield Public Schools Board of Education approves the minutes of the December 13, 2012 Board meeting.
That the Mansfield Public Schools Board of Education accepts the retirement of Jamie Lang-Rodean, grade two teacher at Goodwin School effective the end of the 2012-2013 school year.
That the Mansfield Public Schools Board of Education accepts the retirement of Norma Fisher-Doiron, Principal Southeast Elementary School effective the end of the 2012-2013 school year.

HEARING FOR VISITORS: None

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE AGENDA: Electronic documents for Board meetings.

MOTION by Mrs. Paulhus, seconded by Mrs. Holinko, to move into Executive Session at 11:10pm regarding union grievance and strategy in respect to collective bargaining. The Board was joined in executive session by the Superintendent.

The Board returned to open session at 11:41pm.

MOTION by Ms. Patwa, seconded by Mr. Walikonis, that the Board of Education adopt the recommendation of the Personnel Subcommittee and authorize the Board Chair to issue the Board's decision in the pending union grievance. VOTE: Unanimous in favor.

MOTION by Ms. Silver-Bernstein, seconded by Mrs. Paulhus, to adjourn at 11:42pm. Vote was unanimous in favor.

Respectfully submitted,
Celeste Griffin, Board Clerk

January 28, 2013

Mr. Fred Barruzzi and
Members of the Mansfield Board of Education
4 South Eagleville Road
Mansfield, CT 06268

Dear Mr. Barruzzi and Members of the Board of Education,

I am writing to request an unpaid leave of absence for the 2013-2014 academic year, returning for the 2014-2015 academic year. I would like to join my husband on his sabbatical leave, but we will reconsider our plan if this puts my job in jeopardy at MMS. I would like to take the opportunity to study and teach overseas. This opportunity will directly enhance my contributions to the school as a social studies and literature teacher and as an advocate for global awareness and appreciation. If my request were granted, I would spend half a year in Adelaide, Australia, and half a year in Jena, Germany.

There are various opportunities that I am planning for the year. In Adelaide, I hope to audit a class or two at the University of Adelaide. I am also interested in exploring and incorporating the history and culture of the Australian Aborigines. I believe examples of the art and practices of this ancient people would be useful in our survey of ancient history in social studies and our emphasis on cultural diversity in literature. In addition to these studies, I hope to observe and/or guest-teach in a local classroom in Adelaide. I always find it fascinating and useful to learn about other educational systems. It provides new perspectives into what we accept as "the way it is done" and new ideas about classroom management, planning, instruction and teacher-team structures.

In Jena, I plan to take a German language course. This might help me to provide assistance periodically to students taking German at the Middle School (depending on how I do!). There will also be opportunities I hope to take advantage of to observe and/or tutor English in a local school, as well. I hope to engage in discussions with other teachers about their training, planning and instruction.

Traveling and living in other countries always presents me with new resources and insights to incorporate into my teaching. This leave would provide me with an opportunity to immerse myself in different cultures, learn a foreign language (that I could use at MMS), visit pertinent historical sites in Europe and the Pacific Rim, take courses on relevant topics, and be involved in foreign education systems. It will expand my knowledge, widen my understanding of diverse viewpoints and experiences, and enhance my skills as an educator, all of which will support my work in the Mansfield School System.

Thank you for your consideration of my request. If you have any questions or requests for further information, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Elyse Poller

cc: Thanh Nguyen
Candace Morell