**BOARD OF SCHOOL COMMITTEE**
**SPECIAL EMERGENCY MEETING**
**MANCHESTER SCHOOL DISTRICT SAU #37**

**March 21, 2020** **9:00 a.m.**

**Mayor Craig** called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

A physical location was provided for the public, at 20 Hecker Street, SAU District Office, where the Board Clerk was present and the meeting was displayed on the Apple white board for the public to listen to and see the meeting as it took place.

**2.** Pursuant to RSA 91-A:2 III (B), Mayor Craig has determined that an emergency exists due to the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic and, therefore, a physical presence of a quorum is not practical.

**Mayor Craig** stated pursuant to RSA 91-A:2 III (B), I have determined that an emergency exists due to the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic and, therefore, a physical presence of a quorum is not practical.

**Mayor Craig** asked Committee Member Porter to lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

A moment of silence was observed.

**4.** The Clerk calls the roll.

The following Board Members were present via electronic or telephonic communication.

The Clerk called the roll.

Present: Committee Members Porter, Kelley Arnold, Soule, Want, Dobson, O'Connell, Lachance, Shea, Perich, Beaudry, Beaulieu, Leapley and Mayor Craig.

Absent: Committee Member Bergeron and Thomas.

*The following items were deemed to be an emergency that needed immediate attention by the Board of School committee to allow for the continued operations of the School District during this time period. This meeting was broadcasted live via Facebook for all members of the public*

*to view. The meeting was also taped by Manchester Public Television to be aired immediately after the meeting had taken place.*

**5.** Waiving of the policies and procedures, including:

a. Attendance Policy, Students 101.1;
b. Grading Policy; and,
c. Waiving of the requirement of needing a Doctor's Note for Sick and FMLA leave exceeding three (3) days for all employees, pursuant the Health Department and CDC recommendations.
*(Note: This requirement is listed in the union contracts.)*

**Ms. Allen** added that she would like the Board to waive the current grading policy on excepting late work with penalties. She stated they will be doing a current review of all of our policies and will bring them to the Board Clerk in case we need to waive any other policies during this time.

*On motion of **Committee Member Want,** duly seconded by **Committee Member Perich,** it was moved the Board of School Committee moves to approve the waiving of Attendance Policy, Students 101.1; waiving the Grading Policy; and, also waves the requirement of employee's needing a Doctor's note for sick and FMLA leave exceeding three (3) days for all employees, pursuant to the Health Department and CDC Recommendations.*

*Roll Call: Committee Members Porter, Kelley Arnold, Soule, Want, Dobson, Shea, Perich, Beaudry, Beaulieu, Leapley, Lachance, O'Connell and Mayor Craig. Committee Members Bergeron and Thomas were absent. Motion passed.*

**6.** Approval of health coverage for Covid-19 testing for employees

*On motion of **Committee Member O'Connell,** duly seconded by **Committee Member Soule,** it was moved that effective immediately, and retroactive to March 1, 2020, Manchester School District will cover one hundred percent of the cost of any COVID-19 testing administered to Manchester School District health insurance plan participants and one hundred percent of the cost of the initial visit at a Primary Care Provider (PCP) office, Urgent Care provider location, Emergency Department location, or LiveHealth online in connection with COVID-19.*

*Roll Call: Committee Members Porter, Kelley Arnold, Soule, Want, Dobson, Shea, Perich, Beaudry, Beaulieu, Leapley, Lachance, O'Connell and Mayor Craig. Committee Members Bergeron and Thomas were absent. Motion passed.*

**7.** Report(s) of the Committee of Finance and Facilities, of March 10, 2020:
*(Please review the minutes from the Committee Meeting regarding the discussion that was had on each of the following items.)*

a. FY19 Audit Report
b. FY19 Expendable Trust Transfers by Karen DeFrancis ($566,778.00)
c. Hillside PTO Group Fundraising Proposal
d. Repurposing Excess Space in the High Schools – Facilities Audit for all schools to determine the adequate space needed for our student population
e. Financial Reports
f. Treasurer's Report
g. City Services Invoices by Karen DeFrancis ($630,669.74)
h. Manifest of Authorized Expenditures by Karen DeFrancis ($14,436,535.87)
i. Professional Leaves by Sherri Nichols ($5,727.42)
j. Grant, Gifts and Donation Report by Sherri Nichols ($175,000.00)
k. National Technical Assistance Center for Special Education (WESTED) by Mary Steady ($65,000.00)
l. Use of Taxis for McKinney-Vento Pupil Transportation by Kelly O'Brien Hebert
m. Edmentum-Contract Renewal by Jenn Gillis ($19,462.00)
n. School Messenger-Contract Renewal by Jenn Gillis ($82,507.50)
o. Deputy Treasurer posting of position in the amount of $5,000

*On motion of **Committee Member Perich,** duly seconded by **Committee Member Want,** it was moved to approve the items as approved by the Finance and Facilities committee at their March 10, 2020 meeting.*

*Roll Call: Committee Members Porter, Kelley Arnold, Soule, Want, Dobson, Shea, Perich, Beaudry, Beaulieu, Leapley, Lachance, O'Connell and Mayor Craig. Committee Members Bergeron and Thomas were absent. Motion passed.*

**8.** Approval of the Manchester School Board joining Amicus Brief in ConVal School Funding Case

*On motion of **Committee Member Shea,** duly seconded by **Committee Member Want,** it was moved that the Manchester School Board join the Amicus Brief in the ConVal School Funding case at no cost to the District.*

*Roll Call: Committee Members Porter, Kelley Arnold, Soule, Want, Dobson, Shea, Perich, Beaudry, Beaulieu, Leapley, Lachance, O'Connell and Mayor Craig. Committee Members Bergeron and Thomas were absent. Motion passed.*

**9.** Personnel Report.

*On motion of **Committee Member Beaudry,** duly seconded by **Committee Member Soule,** it was moved to approve the Personnel report as presented.*

*Roll Call: Committee Members Porter, Kelley Arnold, Soule, Want, Dobson, Shea, Perich, Beaudry, Beaulieu, Leapley, Lachance, O'Connell and Mayor Craig. Committee Members Bergeron and Thomas were absent. Motion passed.*

**10.** Covid-19 Update by Dr. Goldhardt

**Mayor Craig** stated that she would like to thank everyone in the District, from the District leadership, the educator, to the kitchen staff, the bus drivers, and everyone involved in assisting our kids with education. There has been a tremendous effort with tons of collaboration from within the district and outside to ensure that our students are continuing to learn remotely and also to be continued to be fed. I just want to publicly thank all of you for all that you have done over the last few days knowing that things are changing very rapidly. For the Board, after Dr. Goldhardt's presentation, just because we can't see each other, and we did this with the Board of Mayor and Aldermen, what I would like to do is go through Ward by Ward for questions, so we are not talking over each other.

**Dr. Goldhardt** stated he will give his historical perspective and then we will have the Assistant Superintendent's give their perspective and then allow you to ask questions of us and get information that you have been wanting and may not have received. Starting in January, and even before that when we were hearing about the Coronavirus in China, I was paying very close attention to that. In February, the virus starting moving across Europe and I became more

concerned and it was at this time that I asked Assistant Superintendent Gillis, Chief Operations Officer, for her to oversee that area when it came to the United States. I knew it was not an if, but a when. She began the preparation work of looking at our Emergency Operation Plan that was in place at that point and time. In March, as it started coming forward, more came to be. If you go back one week, on March 13th, I have a south-central meeting with the Superintendent's in the south-central region. This was very interesting and there were questions of whether schools should remain open or not and there was no determinant of that group whether they should or should not. At this time, I felt school should stay open but I knew within the week we would be closed. That evening I received word of the DMV worker and I knew that the schools would be closing. The next morning, we met at the Emergency Operations Center and Anna Thomas, the Health Department Director, provided the district with information and I was concerned about the cases and we all agreed that we needed to close by Monday. This situation changes hourly and by minute. The decision was made to close for two weeks and decide and the next day the Governor held a news conference and closed the schools for 3 weeks and we followed that as well. In between this time and throughout the week, multiple waivers for lunches, where they should be served outside of school so that they would count for funding, waivers for remote learning counting as school days, other waivers in regard to instruction. We get memos every day and we have to determine what we will do with them. Arrangements were immediately made for the buses to be used to deliver lunches and work to our students. One of the biggest issues that I had to deal with in regard to closing the school wasn't just the health issue, although this is a big issue, because a lot of my colleagues in the State are in rural districts where they do not have the poverty issues that we have in our district. When we have 60% plus of our students living below poverty and are depending on us for at least two meals a day, I was gravely concerned as to what those children would do at home alone without those meals. We had to do something to address this. The bus option was the best way to get this done, but we knew we couldn't sustain this over a long period of time and a plan needed to be in place to work through this. Last weekend, there were a large group of people who worked very hard to get things put together to make this last week come to fruition. I really appreciate the work of these people. We knew and you heard me say it when I was quoted in a couple of papers, that it would be clunky. We are not used to doing remote instruction. It isn't my favorite way of instruction, but it is something we have to do. By Thursday, remote instruction began and things have gone better than expected. We have also had multiple employees working from home. There were concerns that we were forcing teachers to be in buildings and exposing them to germs. We did

not require teachers to be in large groups, and we told the principals not to do it either, and if there were teachers that were in high risk groups we worked with them and allowed them to work from home. Teachers who stated that they wanted to be able to work from the school were allowed to do so. By Monday, we have asked everyone who was non-essential, even though all our employees are essential, to work from home. There may be the need that people have to come into the buildings to get materials as needed. Whenever they have been in the buildings we have asked them to be separated. Even in our cabinet meetings, we sit 6 feet apart and it is very interesting to see us all scattered across the room. It has been a world-wind. I know some of you have felt left in the dark, but I counted that we have sent 41 communications this last week to try and keep people informed. Now that we are through the first week, I hope that I will have more time to start doing more of my own communications to the Board. I had to make choices this week on whether I take an hour to write a communication to the Board or did I take an hour to get something ready for the district to get the kids what they needed and I had to make those choices. He stated he was sorry if some of you felt that you didn't get some things that you thought you should have, but I had to make those choices. When I have to make choices, I always go with what the students and the teachers need first. This is my duty. We have tried our best to do what we can do. As I have told some of you, this is our first pandemic and we are learning from it, but we hope to never have another one again. There has been incredible commitment by the team at the District level. Teachers have stepped up and designed materials for student learning. People have been coming forwarded and volunteering help and this is very exciting. If we get to the point where we need to shelter in place, we will address that as well to keep people safe. This is a tough time and we all have our own personal issues that we deal with.

**Mrs. Gillis** stated to bring the Board in and to walk you through some guiding documents, we do have the EOP (Emergency Operation Plan) and if you don't have it by now please let me know. Pages 90 and 152 -155 cover pandemic flu. I want to caution you that those pages were built around when H1N1 hit a few years ago and we are looking to make some improvements to the language of this section. In addition, you are hearing words such as Coop, Clan, ConOp (Continuation of Operations) and these are covered in the plan on page 16 and focuses on language related to ICS or Incident Command Systems and NIMS, National Incident Management Systems. If you are looking for more information on how to navigate that language let me know and I can give you some online learning modules to get you up to speed on that

language. In addition, as we have planned and built the team that is supporting all of the work and have continuously built in a three-tiered system: What do we have today? What do we think we might project a week out? What can we project about a month out? This has allowed us to be really dynamic and flexible as we have responded. Last night we did the update to the busing plan and have reduced from 8 kitchens, to 7 and now we are at 2 kitchens on Monday. We went from 33 buses and we are going down to 8 on Monday. We are doing this deliberately to reduce the number of volunteers in our schools and on our bus routes. Every step we have taken has been with the guidance and information of the Health Department, they are constantly looking at data. Any choice that we are making the goal has been to allow our students access to meals and academics and making sure our staff and our families are supported. The team that has been working on transportation and food has been continuously looked at those three dynamics.

**Ms. Allen** stated in addition to what Mrs. Gillis and Dr. Goldhardt have reported, we have met with all the Union Heads to make sure that they understand what remote work looks like and providing the kids with the information and the teacher's with opportunities for professional development, collaboration and support of the families and students and working ahead to build and plan kindergarten registration and other items. We do have an alternative graduation date, at the SNHU arena. Graduation is still on plan for June 13th and this message has gone out to the high schools and the high school staff. All field trips have been cancelled indefinitely by the Governor. There is a trip that is scheduled that is not a school sponsored trip, but they leave from our school to Washington DC and this has been postponed. They are looking to take the current 8th graders to Washington DC during September of their freshman year. We will continue to work with the Commissioner and the Governor in making sure that our families are getting the support that they need.

**Dr. Goldhardt** stated just so the Board is aware, unfortunately during the time where there is an emergency, there is also fraud. We are receiving up to 25 emails a day from vendors trying to sell us really bad products because people are desperate for remote learning materials. We have to be very careful that we are not receiving bad materials. We also have to be careful with our employees, because our guard needs to be up as people are working remotely from home and there are more hackers out there. Steve Cross is keeping track of this. If we have to go a longer time with remote learning, we are looking at quality programming that we can utilize to help our teachers with the remote learning, so that the students are receiving good instruction.

**Ms. Allen** stated students without Chromebooks have been issued Chromebooks from the schools and they have been signed out by parents. We know we still need to get more computers in the hands of students and we are working with a pretty large donation that will be donated to families in the next few weeks and those computers that are donated by this organization will be given to the parents and will not have to be returned to the district.

**Committee Member Porter** indicated that the Administration went through a lot and answered a bunch of my questions. I want to say thank you to all the Administrator and staff, I can't believe how well everything has been going. I have been at the bus stops, things are running smoothly and families are happy with everything, especially the communication. I want to say thank you to City Year who has been on those buses. I had questions on graduation, which you answered. I had a question about how long we are going to be out total and if it would be for the whole year. The last question is about teachers doing lessons online. My daughter's teacher put a lot of stuff in her classroom and there are hours of work on there, which is great, but people are asking about live lessons and what would be done with disadvantaged kids, but this question was answered already.

**Dr. Goldhardt** stated we can't say how long. We don't know how long.

**Mayor Craig** stated the Commissioner of Education came out yesterday and said that it could be for the rest of the year. We really don't know.

**Mrs. Gillis** stated as far as live lessons, we are only in day 2 or 3 of remote learning and we have a team that has been built that will be looking at ideas and resources to make sure that we have access to as many students as we possibly can and we are looking to engage Manchester Public TV, Google Classroom, and looking at a spread of opportunities and trying to make sure that we have access to all. This will be coming and over the weekend we hope that our teachers can take a breath, regroup, settle and then come back brainstorming, so that when the team meets early in the week we have more ideas on the table.

**Mayor Craig** stated she has noticed some teachers doing videos on YouTube which is fantastic.

**Mrs. Gillis** stated we have asked each school to build a Facebook page, so that those videos can be loaded. We had to do some shoring up for some so that everyone knew how to use that tool. I think in the coming days you will see that continue to grow and get better and better.

**Committee Member Kelley Arnold** stated are we expecting anything coming down from the State regarding special education?

**Ms. Allen** stated I know the Special Education Commissioner is working with the NH Department of Ed because there has been an issue from the OCR, from Offices of Special Ed. Mary Steady has been working collaboratively with the Special Education directors in the State to get guidance on that. We anticipate that coming forward. President Trump announced yesterday that all students will be waived from Standardized tests. We are anticipating Commissioner Edelblut to file that waiver and our students and teachers will be waived from having to do the Standardized testing.

**Dr. Goldhardt** stated in addition to that, we have received noticed from the folks that administer both the AP examines and SAT and ACT that they are doing accommodation modifications. They are doing some of the AP examines where they can actually be done from home. They have thousands of versions of these so that they can control any cheating, so the students still have the opportunities to take these exams and they are encouraged to start taking those as soon as possible while the materials are still fresh in their minds. They are making those accommodations as well.

**Mayor Craig** asked if we are pushing this information out to the parents?

**Dr. Goldhardt** stated yes, I am having Andrew send out a message to all the high schools on that one.

**Committee Member Kelley Arnold** asked what are we utilizing to train our teachers on remote learning?

**Ms. Allen** stated some of our greatest resources are the teacher's themselves. We have teacher leaders within each building that are training each other on Google Classrooms, Zoom, meet up,

Facebook. People are going outside of their comfort zones on that. The Department of Education has released Professional Development that is free to engage in online learning. This will continue to be pushed out from them and the New Hampshire Association of School Administrators.

**Committee Member Kelley Arnold** stated the last thing I would like to know is an update on when we can expect to have Committee Meetings. We have a lot of work that should go through Teaching and Learning and we should be having these committee meetings.

**Mayor Craig** stated we can talk about it now. She stated at the Board of Mayor and Aldermen side, we have ordered iPads for all the Aldermen. We had to get up to speed quickly on this technology as we cannot meet in person. What we have decided to do during our last meeting was meeting remotely is a challenge and we will only be addressing critical issues at the Board level. We are not going to continue with the Committees. We are pushing everything to the Board meeting. Things that we normally would have taken care of at the committee level, will be put on the Consent agenda. It is up to this Board how you would like to proceed. I believe Leslie and Angela have been coordinating all the efforts on the school Board side.

**Committee Member Beaudry** stated that a memo was sent out to the Board stating all Committee assignments would be discontinued except for Finance depending on what the Administration wants to do going along with the Chairman of the Committee.

**Clerk Carey** stated we had expected to follow the same procedure that the City was following as of this time. I believe some devices were ordered for Board Members that may need them for these remote full Board meetings.

**Dr. Goldhardt** stated yes those have been ordered and should be in by Monday or Tuesday at the latest.

**Mayor Craig** stated what we are doing on the City side is we have the iPads and we are making sure that everyone understands and knows how to use them and this will take a little time as well.

**Committee Member O'Connell** stated when I saw that we were cancelling on Committee meetings, my question was where did this vision come from and why? I think the Chairs should

decide. I don't think we should end action of the Committees without the Committees being the ones to have a voice on whether this happens are not.

**Mayor Craig** stated and that is why we discussed it as a Board and decided as a Board on how we would move forward and that is why we are discussing it right now.

**Committee Member O'Connell** stated the email came out that meetings were cancelled. This is not the same and it is good we are discussing this right now, because I don't think this decision should be made without this Board having any voice in it.

**Mayor Craig** stated I don't recall that email that folks are referring to, but I was told that was in the interim. We have the opportunity now as a Board on how we would like to move forward. We can either continue with the committee process or we can do similar to what the Board of Mayor and Aldermen are doing.

**Committee Member Kelley Arnold** stated we have items that need to get done and I think that putting a pause on that will not help the future of the district. We need to get these things done. At a full Board meeting this would be a lot of work to get done.

**Mayor Craig** stated she agrees that we need to continue moving forward. Given that we have now been put in a completely different place then we were a week or two ago, it may be beneficial for the District Leadership team to take a look at the Committee reports and really prioritize now knowing everyone's resources are stretched and pulled in different directions because of this pandemic and identify key items that we should be continuing to focus on knowing we won't be able to do everything that we highlighted two weeks ago. Does that make sense everyone?

**Committee Member Soule** stated I agree with what Committee Member Arnold stated, however there are also things that we as the Board can be doing ourselves to support the Superintendent and the School District when they give us the priorities, so that we can be doing some leg work too behind the scenes. I do think that Teaching and Learning should be meeting or at least touching base once we find out what the priorities are, so that we continue to move forward in spite of this challenging situation.

**Committee Member Leapley** stated I agree with what everyone is saying. I think that we know that we can do this remotely, as our students are doing their work remotely. I feel like the Committee work will be easier than the full Board meeting. It is easier to video chat with 5 people then with 15-20 people. She stated she agrees that we can help by continuing to move along policies that we have been updating and communicate with each other and the Administration around establishing priorities.

**Mayor Craig** stated it seems as though the consensus from what I am hearing is to continue with the Committee process. The leadership at the District will look at what is currently in the Committee and prioritize for all of us, but it will be up to the Chairs to coordinate with Angela because all the meetings still need to be noticed and public.

**Clerk Carey** stated based on what the Governor has indicated, we have to have a physical place for the public. Which means I will have to be face to face with the public, but all of you get to be remote?

**Mayor Craig** stated that is still what the AG and the Governor are requiring, but we did, Alderman Long helped and worked with the Municipal Association, put forward language that said that is something that is not beneficial. At our Board of Mayor and Alderman meeting our Clerk did the same thing at City Hall and no one from the public showed up. I am not sure if anyone from the public is there with you now. At a time when we are encouraging at all times the public to stay home, it doesn't make sense for us to encourage people to come to a place to listen to our meetings, especially if we are going to record them through public television. I want you to know that we did provide that feedback and it will be going before the governor.

**Clerk Carey** stated okay, perfect. Also, we do have a public email now so that the public can give us input and that it will be put on the website next week. If we need to, for committee meetings, they can submit comments prior to the meeting and those questions can be answered on any items coming before the Board.

**Committee Member O'Connell** stated this meeting is also on Facebook live right now.

**Mayor Craig** stated and public television is recording too.

**Committee Member Soule** stated she would like to echo everyone else's comments about thanking everyone in the district for all of their work and their efforts because this was a monumental task that we had never expected in our life and I appreciate their focus on the students and their families. I had the opportunity to see firsthand how this folded out, because I was on the first bus from Beech Street, and you couldn't have asked for a better group. There were teachers, the Principal was on the bus, the bus driver was wonderful, the food service peoples had already prepared over 300 breakfast and lunches. My question is about McKinney-Vento Students, the homeless students, that I received from my Alderman. How are we servicing them, getting them food and schoolwork? The other question is, with all of this happening, what does it do to the District financial and how can we access any of the resources from the State or Federal level for any help that we need to make this happen?

**Mrs. Gillis** stated as far as the McKinney-Vento students, we are working with our Homeless liaisons and our Coordinators, in addition to case managers, teachers and principals at each of our schools. Phone calls have been going out to see what they need. We also have our special education transportation set up to collect both work materials and meals, so that we can get those shuttled to the appropriate locations. If there is anyone who is in need, a couple of steps would be to make sure that you are reaching out to your school directly and/or expect those phone calls to be coming to your house. If anyone needs anything, we are also posting resources and groups within the community that will be offering additional resources and support in the coming days.

**Committee Member Soule** asked if there was a contact person at the District office that my Alderman can contact?

**Mrs. Gillis** stated it is Jocelyn and we can make sure that her contact information is posted and if you need to, you can email me and I get you her direct extension.

**Committee Member Want** stated I was talking to the Board earlier when they were discussing the Committee meetings. I was not able to get through on the computer. I wanted to let you know that the reason we had decided not to do Committee Meetings at first was because no one has the technology yet and we were making sure that we had the technology first. It appears now

this meeting is working well. We will start them as soon as the Chairs want to. My questions are how are we taking attendance for our students and if teachers are maintaining daily contact with their students?

**Mrs. Gillis** stated we have a three-tiered system built. We have classroom teacher's reaching out to the homes. Our second tier is that we broke all the buildings into an Advisory or small group, where teachers are responsible for keeping contact with their groups. Our third tier targets any students we haven't received feedback from or who we haven't seen respond in the frequency that we expect. This tracks attendance and student engagement during this time.

**Committee Member Want** stated are our non-salaried employees going to be paid during this time, for example, paraprofessionals, 21st Century and Bring It?

**Ms. Allen** stated that Bring It employees are not our employees, so I can't speak to that, but our employees are that will be working from home. 21st Century is a Federal grant and any of our Federal Project positions have to document the work that they are doing. Mr. McGee and his group have created some excellent enrichment activities and enrichment videos that will be shared out.

**Committee Member Dobson** stated that many of the things that I had questions on have been answered. He stated the IT staff, Steve Cross and team, are getting devices ready, getting accounts set up for students who didn't have accounts and that has been impressive. He stated he hasn't received too many questions from his constituents, because the district has done a good job getting information out through the website and Facebook page. His questions were around non-English speaking families and the more disadvantaged families and most of the questions have been answered. He stated his concern is that he doesn't want to see students fall through the cracks. As this becomes the new normal, now it is about enforcing these things. He stated he is concerned about those people without email and the non-English speaking students and asked if you could speak more on this.

**Ms. Allen** stated we have terrific bilingual family liaisons, our social workers, our principals and they have all been doing home visits. One high school emailed everyone and the 60 students that

hadn't responded, their team went out and found those families and got them set up. It's a boot on the grounds effort and we are connecting with community partners.

**Committee Member Shea** stated I've been listening. I haven't received too many concerns of parents and the questions and concerns that have been addressed I have addressed them. He stated he wanted to compliment the Mayor, the Superintendent and all the staff that have been implementing all the things that are being shared by the families and the children. I am glad to follow the policies of the Board and I don't want to take everyone's times. This meeting has been very productive and the new way of learning and communicating and I express my thanks to everyone.

**Committee Member Perich** stated the first thing I want to do is send prayers and thoughts to MST students and staff who lost one of their Staff Members this week, Chef Mike, who passed away suddenly. He was a very important person and very friendly. I would like to send my condolences to them. Last Sunday, I saw our District Staff, our principals and our BLILs hard at work at Northwest and I want to shout out to them how hard I saw them working and developing these plans. Thank you for giving up your Sunday and being there and getting this work done. I thank the teachers, paras, bus drivers, City Year and all the people working hard to deliver all of the stuff. The one question he had was if we still need volunteers to go out on buses and if so, those in Ward 8 would like to know how they volunteer?

**Mrs. Gillis** stated we sent out to the Board yesterday afternoon the new sign ups. I will say that within 30 minutes almost all slots were filled for about the next week and a half. Volunteers are coming in quick. We do have Lynn Standish, who is helping us Coordinate all of our Volunteers, so if anyone has a question I shared her email in the update I sent to everyone yesterday. Right now, we are looking solid for volunteers and we are trying to limit the numbers because we want to make sure that we are maintaining the social distancing. Everyone wants to help and hop on the buses, but we have to remind people to stay 6 feet apart and maintain that social distancing.

**Committee Member Beaudry** stated he wants to thank Dr. Goldhardt, Ms. Allen, Mrs. Gillis and our Clerk, Ms. Carey, and all our staff and agencies who are working very hard to accomplish an extraordinary staff. Dr. Goldhardt I commend you for your leadership. You

have been unbelievable on this journey, as we call it, and it is new to all of us. I want to echo Committee Member Perich's condolences to Chef Mike's family. That man was wonderful and the work that he did at MST was phenomenal and he will be greatly missed. I have only had one phone call through this whole situation and it was a substitute teacher that subs every day and wanted to know if they were going to get paid for not subbing, but I was able to get an answer and get back to them. The information has been disseminated very well and if I have concerns I will reach out to the leadership of the district and they have been very responsive to my concerns in the past. Job well done and again, the Administration and staff has done a lot of work in a very short period of time.

**Ms. Allen** asked if Committee Member Beaudry could forward to her the information on the sub. Yesterday on our conference call with the Department of Ed, which take place 3 days a week, there are opportunities for, especially substitutes, to work through the Department of Health and Human Services, because they are setting up daycare centers for our First Responders and I can send out a blast to those that are looking for work, especially for the substitutes during this time.

**Committee Member Beaulieu** stated I want to commend the Superintendent and his Assistant's and everyone in the district, the leadership has been tremendous. She asked where the command center is for food preparation for breakfast and lunch and how is that going to continue through the weeks and months ahead?

**Mrs. Gillis** stated we have two locations right now, Beech Street school and West High School. We have additional kitchens that can help if needed; however, we have determined at this time that streamlining to two locations was appropriate. We have a plan in case we have to further reduce to keep food preparation going and meals being delivered because we believe very strongly that this is a huge aspect of the time period that we are in.

**Committee Member Beaulieu** stated there are several stable restaurants that may be able to help with this in the future. She stated the teachers can advise the families that the students should get outside for at least 1 hour every day, which may help their mental state.

**Mayor Craig** stated that this is a great point and is something that we can encourage from a Community perspective. Fresh air and exercise are good for everyone; however, we need to continue with the social distancing and be at least 6 feet apart from people.

**Committee Member Leapley** stated in my Ward there are schools with 80% poverty rates and I want to thank the Administration for centering these kids. It is isn't the minority of kids in my neighborhood and I feel like the district has been very proactive to make sure that the needs of our kids are being met. I want to thank you also for your flexibility, because you are not just looking at today but looking forward and looking at what being proactive next week means, and in the future. She shared a story about her son's teachers who did a google meet with the students and the students were happy to be able to see and talk to each other. After the teacher left the meeting, the meeting stayed open and the teacher didn't realize it and the kids continued to talk to each other and rediscovering the social aspect of school. Letting the kids connect with each other socially matters too because we don't just do academics in school. Thank you to all the teachers for facilitating face connection with the kids and she hopes that we keep the social part in mind. Also, center kids producing and sharing what they are producing with other kids, because it doesn't always have to be with the teacher. My only question is, it sounds like you have been doing a great job being proactive and evolving as we are going through this. I was wondering if in the reports, through Board updates or at Board meetings, you could center how you are continuing to reach out to the kids that might fall through the cracks.

**Mrs. Gillis** stated we have been in touch with Andrew and have been discussing what communications will look like in the next couple of days and possibly weeks and to provide some data to show the information of what is going on in the district. We are looking to build our communications in a way that will give you the feeling of what is taking place in the remote learning plan.

**Dr. Goldhardt** stated also, I have talked to Andrew as well. Once we get a little more settled we will be looking at getting more stories about specific families and kids that are positive in regard to what is happening between them and their teachers, so that the community is aware of the incredible teachers who are reaching out to kids.

**Mayor Craig** stated haven't you set up a special email for anyone who has questions around this? It is covid19@mansd.org.

**Dr. Goldhardt** stated that is correct.

**Mayor Craig** stated students, parents, community members, and partners can email that address and the district will answer their question.

**Committee Member Lachance** stated first I want to give a shout out to everyone at the district. It has been pretty neat to see something we have never dealt with before and how quickly everyone came forward and got a plan in place. I want to thank the Board Members who are helping with the bus runs, unfortunately I am still in the classroom and can't be there during the day. Yesterday I spoke at lengths with Dr. Goldhardt and I had a lot of my questions answered then. I have been in contact with Committee Member O'Connell, as he is getting hammered as the other at large representative. We were not sure how to answer some of the questions but understanding the predicament that we are in and the trajectory that the leadership took, I am understanding and this is a work in progress. I received an email from someone asking about the homeless and you have given us the answer to that. Regarding special education funds, there are some rules for when the school is closed and the district being responsible and I want to see if we still receive funds for special education when we are closed, at the Federal level, and are we following TPS, paras and our 1 on 1s. Where do we stand from a SpEd standpoint during this?

**Ms. Allen** stated that Mrs. Steady has worked collaboratively with all of our providers and some of this will be done remotely. We are receiving our IDA placements and are waiting for our technical assistants that are coming out due to the services that can't be provided. We will be looking into this and will be looking for some compensatory education as well.

**Committee Member Lachance** asked so we will still receive information on kids that are in placement and any of that will still be funded by the Government?

**Ms. Allen** stated correct. Where we will see a decrease is in the Medicaid reimbursable services during this time. So, we are tracking that and I can give an update at our next meeting. I can

give an update from AmericaCity for where we are at with that and how many services that are being provided and what we are planning on for Compensatory education.

**Committee Member O'Connell** stated he has notes and there are about 6 pages, but he won't be going through all of them. He stated he is glad that Committee Member Lachance is talking about how he is getting hammered, and I am also getting hammered. He has spent about every night on the phone this week. He stated he has spent a lot of time in the schools and has been on the buses and he feels he has a robust view of what it looks like in the streets. I have agreed with everything my colleagues have said and I am certain they have been working long hours this past week. I am grateful to everyone in the district, from the Mayor down, and everyone should be proud of how they have stepped up for our community. He stated that he doesn't want his criticisms to be seen in contest with my opening remarks. I don't doubt the benevolent and good will and the extraordinary effort of the leadership, the city and our staff has made in response to this urgent crisis. My first comment is that everybody needs to be out of our schools. I don't understand how there is a single person left in our schools, when we have shut down state agencies, court rooms, city agencies, and are approaching a shelter in place but the Manchester schools remain with staff in them. What is happening where the staff are is deeply disturbing to me. I have photographs that I haven't shared with anyone. I counted 21 people in a small corridor of one of our high schools. These people were bus drivers, kitchen staff, janitorial staff and our custodians, some of whom are elderly, that are passing paper bags and cardboard boxes to each other, within 2 feet of each other. The boxes carry the virus. The paper bags can carry the virus. I shared this with Dr. Goldhardt and Jennifer Gillis in conversation yesterday. If I am right, we have something serious to deal with. If you were trying to design a pathogen transfer system for a community, you couldn't have designed a better one than the food distribution system in Manchester. No one was wearing gloves, there was no sterility. This is against everything that everyone is talking about in this country and across the world. Look at contagion models.

**Mayor Craig** asked if the district could address this because we have talked about this and they have some feedback.

**Mrs. Gillis** stated when we built this first level of response, we worked closely with the Manchester Health Department and we reviewed plans as we were building them with the

Department of Education. We have been talking and promoting and sharing that people need to be maintaining social distancing of the 6'. We have recommended that people use hand sanitizer, washing their hands, we have provided gloves on all of the routes and in the kitchens. We have been going in when we are told that people are getting too close, to re-distance. Yesterday I went in to separate some people and when I moved away they reconnected. I had the school resource officer go out and make sure that we maintained the social distancing. When we know, we have gone in very pointedly to make sure that we are upholding the expectations that we have set. In addition, we moved from the 8 locations to 2 locations, because we understand people are trying to help, people are trying to do right by our students, so we have reduced the amount of the people very deliberately. I answered the question earlier when it was asked about volunteering. It is hard to say to people that they need to stay away, but we are doing that concretely to minimize the amount of people that are in the spaces and maintaining the 6'. Nothing has been done in isolation, we have been doing this in partnership with many people who have contributed and evaluated the plans as we have built them.

**Mayor Craig** stated that she would like to add that all of us know what the expectations are. We are well aware that we are supposed to be staying 6' away. We are well aware that we should be wearing gloves and the common sense safety protocol that should be followed, so at any point and time if you see anyone in the community, anyone volunteering to help a situation, I would expect that we would say something. I was on a bus the first day that food was being delivered and some parents were waiting and they were too close to each other. We immediately told them to move away from each other and why, so that they would understand it going forward. The experience that I had delivering lunches, there were some bumps in the road, but we fixed them. The other point is that this is a learning process and everyone is doing the best that we can. I hope that we can take information as we see it and use it to make modifications and I appreciate the district doing that and we shouldn't dwell on what went wrong when this first started.

**Committee Member O'Connell** asked if he could respond. He stated that it brings him no joy to point this out, but I have to say I have made the Administration aware of this and I have sent emails to the district on this topic. We can write on paper anything we want. We can say whatever we want. I have been in the schools every day but yesterday this week. On Thursday there was a man that turns 80 this week in the school that is a paraprofessional and walked up to

me with 3 other people, who were less than 6' apart, and he attempted to take my hand as he has in the past.

**Mayor Craig** stated Committeeman O'Connell, as of today the only individuals who are potentially in our buildings are principals. Again, things are changing. The policy now is that everyone is out of our schools.

**Committee Member O'Connell** asked if he could respond. A message came out from the district on Thursday night that said on the 20th, Friday, that only essential staff, principals and some administration, would be in our schools. I sent a message that I must have misinterpreted the information because on Friday the staff was still there. I got a call at 7:30 last night being told that no message had gone out to tell them they didn't have to go to work on Monday. So, I called other teachers and asked them and they stated they did not. One teacher told me that she had received an email that stated when they came in on Monday, we would work on your continuing credits for next year. There is a distinct difference between what you said and what multiple teachers have indicated.

**Dr. Goldhardt** asked if he had asked the teachers if they had talked to their principal about that message?

**Committee Member O'Connell** stated not specifically, I asked them if they had received a message saying they should not be in school and they stated they had not.

**Dr. Goldhardt** stated if they ask you that, then you need to encourage them to contact your principals, as a message was sent by the district and this is what is supposed to happen.

**Mayor Craig** stated normal protocol like anything when you get a call from a teacher that they should contact their principal.

**Ms. Allen** asked if you could give her the name so that they can take care of this?

**Committee Member O'Connell** stated it is multiple schools.

**Mayor Craig** asked for Mr. O'Connell to tell us the schools because it is really important that this is addressed?

**Dr. Goldhardt** stated if this is coming from multiple schools, we need to find out and fix it. He stated he needs the names.

**Committee Member O'Connell** stated the teachers that I spoke with last night were from multiple schools. They were from Central and from Hillside, but I don't know where the other person works to be honest.

**Dr. Goldhardt** stated they will address it.

**Committee Member O'Connell** stated most importantly, we are saying that the policy now is that every teacher who is hearing this and every principal who hasn't sent out the message, that the message should go to all of the employees in the city that they should not be in our schools on Monday morning and our schools are now closed. Is that correct?

**Dr. Goldhardt** stated that is correct. If they have to go in the building because they need something for their work, they can go in if they are following safe practices. We are not on a lockdown as far as the city is concerned. If they need to get in to get their materials, I am not going to stop them if they are following protocol, but they can't be forced to do so.

**Mayor Craig** stated I also need to inform you that since we are in remote learning and remote work, we still have to register students that come to register. There will be a time that a parent calls that we will have to bring in the registrar at the high school to get them set up with work.

**Committee Member O'Connell** asked if he could continue.

**Mayor Craig** stated one more question.

**Committee Member O'Connell** stated on the previous question, I just want to be explicit that teachers are out of our schools and our schools are closed. I am opposed to any staff member entering the schools. He asked about the work distribution issue. He stated he knows

remarkable work has been done around Chromebooks. The response of educators who are engaging in this have learned very quickly to get the remote learning going and this was achieved in 3-4 days. My question is about work distribution and the expectation that students are being distributed work and that work is being done and then handed back with more work coming back out. He stated he has been told by multiple people that this model is not sustainable. He stated he thinks we should be preparing for different circumstances then what we have today and we should be preparing now for what is coming in the hours and days ahead. Nothing I have said should lessen my gratitude for the amount of work that has been done.

**Mrs. Gillis** stated that she would like to remind everyone that we are planning for today. We have the plans that we have had in place for the days that have passed and are planning for today and planning for what we anticipate tomorrow and the week ahead and also for weeks and months ahead. We have an amazing team that is not sitting stagnant and are looking at this in steps and we are three plans deep and we are building the next contingency plan since this started.

**Committee Member Beaudry** stated regarding Committeeman O'Connell's comment, the Administration sent out protocol and if people are not following the protocol, what do they expect the Administration to do? I can't speak highly enough of the Administration and all of our staff for what they have done. This is an unprecedented situation and anyone can be a Monday morning quarterback and say we should have done this or that, we should be looking at what we did right and critique it and the things that might have been wrong we can work on. He asked if Committeeman O'Connell went to the Administration and brought the concerns to their attention, because when I call them they respond immediately and the answer. He asked if he is just doing this tonight because the cameras are on.

**Committee Member O'Connell** stated he went to the Administration and expressed it in the language similar to what he has used here today. Yesterday he spoke with Dr. Goldhardt and Jenn and stated we needed to look at the distribution system for packages.

**Committee Member Beaudry** stated these are trying times and we should be working with the Administration and not against them. We are going to get through this and it is a learning process for all of us. I commend you also Madam Chairman for leading this city and you are

doing a great job of getting the information disseminated throughout the city and I hope we can work together and support our administration.

**Mayor Craig** stated that she agrees and what is important is that if anyone is seeing or experiencing anything, and a number of us are parents, who are going through this both as elected officials and with our children at home, to notify the district, the principals as soon as possible. Don't sit on something for days because we are flexible and do know that potentially what is going on may need modification. As we have said a number of times this is all new and the communication is key here and I would appreciate it going forward.

**Committee Member Want** stated thank you for this meeting. She stated she wanted to thank the Administration for the extraordinary effort district wide to do the best we can during the most difficult situation we have ever faced during my time that I have been associated with this district. I want to thank you, your honor, for your leadership in the city and the school district to implement the plans that are in place. She stated that she would like to thank the Clerk, Angela, for the hard work that she has done and the IT department to make this meeting happen. I want to thank my colleagues for their patience and understanding as we move forward here. We all need to realize that we are in unchartered territory that is going to require a lot of patience on our part. We are going to learn a lot from this. One of the upsides is that we will come out the other side of this and we are going to be stronger as a district.

**Committee Member Beaulieu** stated she wants to reiterate that if a parent or a student or teacher has a question, that question should go to leadership and not to the School Board member, because we have Jim O'Connell that seems to be on the phone 24/7 when he should be directing those phone calls to the Superintendent's office or the principals. We can't waste any time and we don't need to pontificate.

**Committee Member O'Connell** stated your honor, quickly on another matter. I am hoping we have a list of waivers and suspensions and we have changed some of our own rules and I am sure it has been done already, but if we could capture those in one place over time so that we have a place to go to know what was suspended nationally or at state level and then also what we have done for ourselves and the changes that we have made temporarily. That would be a small housing thing. Also, on another matter, I would like to inform people that the YMCA in

Manchester is beginning food distribution every afternoon starting on Monday the 23rd. They have bags of food for any child in the city of Manchester that needs food.

**Committee Member Shea** stated the wise man listens much and says little.

**Committee Member Perich** stated if kids want to go to Kids Café, they are open every night of the week also.

**Mrs. Gillis** stated as a quick note to anyone in the city listening, if you have questions, we have set up our covid19@mansd.org. You can call your school directly. You can reach out to your principals directly by email and your teachers by email, or even the district staff. We are also monitoring Facebook and responding to questions off of our Manchester School District Facebook page.

**11.** Board Clerk working remotely

*On motion of **Committee Member Beaudry,** duly seconded by **Committee Member Want,** it was moved to allow the Board Clerk to work remotely.*

*Roll Call: Committee Members Porter, Kelley Arnold, Soule, Want, Dobson, Shea, Perich, Beaudry, Beaulieu, Leapley, Lachance, O'Connell and Mayor Craig. Committee Members Bergeron and Thomas were absent. Motion passed.*

**Mayor Craig** stated before we adjourn, the best way to fight against Covid-19 is social distancing. At every possible opportunity I encourage people to stay home. It doesn't mean you can't go out for fresh air for a walk, but if you can work from home or do whatever you need to do from home, that is the best thing that we can do in our community right now.

## ADJOURNMENT

**12.** This being a special meeting of the board, no further business can be presented unless by 2/3 majority and a motion is in order to adjourn.

*This being a special meeting, no further business was presented, on motion of* ***Committee Member Beaudry****, duly seconded by* ***Committee Member Soule****, it was voted to adjourn at 10:49 p.m.*

*Roll Call: Committee Members Porter, Kelley Arnold, Soule, Want, Dobson, Shea, Perich, Beaudry, Beaulieu, Leapley, Lachance, O'Connell and Mayor Craig. Committee Members Bergeron and Thomas were absent. Motion passed.*

*Meeting was adjourned.*

Respectfully Submitted,

Angela M Carey

Clerk of Committee