



It is the mission of the Mansfield Board of Education, in partnership with the Mansfield Community, to ensure that all children acquire the knowledge, skills, and attributes essential for personal excellence in learning, life, and work within our global community.

Mansfield Board of Education November 12, 2020 DRAFT Minutes	
Attendees:	Kathy Ward, Chair, Susannah Everett, Vice-Chair, Martha Kelly, Secretary, Edith Allison, Rebecca Aubrey, David Litrico, Elizabeth Verge, Kelly Zimmermann
Excused:	David Litrico, Katherine Paulhus, Elizabeth Verge

The meeting was called to order at 7:01pm by Ms. Ward

Ms. Ward read the following statement: In accordance with Governor Lamont's Executive Order 7B and social distancing guidelines recommended by the CDC to slow community spread of COVID-19, this meeting is physically closed to the public. The public may view the meeting live at <https://mansfieldct.gov/video> or on Charter Spectrum Cable Channel 191 (the website is recommended as it is a higher image clarity). Public Comment will be accepted by email at mboesupt@mansfieldct.org or by USPS mail care of the Mansfield Board of Education, 4 South Eagleville Road, Mansfield, CT 06268 and must be received by 3:00 p.m. on the day of the meeting to be included in an updated meeting packet. Public comment received after this time will be shared at the next meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Motion by Ms. Allison, seconded by Ms. Everett to approve the minutes of the October 8, 2020 meeting.

Vote: unanimous in favor.

Motion by Ms. Allison, seconded by Ms. Zimmermann, to approve the minutes of the October 22, 2020 Workshop. Vote: Unanimous in favor.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION: Ashley Rancourt, Mansfield Teacher of Year 2021 and Nikki Pelto, Mansfield Paraeducator of the Year 2021, were honored by the Board, Building Administrators, and school staff.

HEARING FOR VISITORS: A letter from Sam Bruder, Town Council Member but addressing the board in his individual capacity, expressing his gratitude for all the work the Board and all the staff members have been doing for Mansfield's children. (attached)

Mrs. Paulhus arrived at 7:35pm

COMMUNICATIONS: None

BOARD REPORTS: Personnel Committee: Ms. Zimmermann reported there is a need for an Executive Session following the meeting regarding negotiations with custodians, maintenance, and food service workers. The paraeducators negotiations are almost complete. The Town Council accepted the Administrators and Certified Staff contracts. Ms. Ward reported the Finance Committee met prior to this meeting. There have been many personnel changes including new hires and new positions due to the pandemic. At this time there are no concerns about expenditures in the 2020-21 budget.

INFORMATION, PRESENTATIONS, AND ACTIONS:

- School Development Plans: Mrs. Lyman presented the 2020-21 Mansfield Development Plan. The plan is updated annually to reflect the priorities and actions to be taken to address the strategic framework established by the Board of Education.
- New School Project Overview: Mrs. Lyman reported the design of the new school building has almost been completed. A review of the school design was presented. The plan follows the Education Specifications adopted by the Board.
- Revision to 2020-21 School Calendar: Motion by Ms. Aubrey, seconded by Ms. Zimmermann, to adopt the revision to the school calendar. Vote: Unanimous in favor.
- Board of Education Meeting Calendar: Motion by Ms. Everett, seconded by Ms. Allison to approve the Board of Education Meeting Calendar. Vote: Unanimous in favor.
- MMS Roof Update: The referendum passed in the recent election. The project schedule calls for construction beginning in June 2021.

- Revisit Board of Education 2021 Meeting Calendar: Motion by Ms. Aubrey, seconded by Mrs. Paulhus to revisit the Board of Education 2021 Meeting Calendar. Vote: Unanimous in favor. November 11th is Veterans Day which public meetings cannot be held. Motion by Ms. Allison, seconded by Ms. Aubrey to meet on November 18, 2021 in lieu of November 11, 2021. Vote: Unanimous in favor.
- Update on October Holiday: The Board discussed sending a letter to the Human Rights Commission with the letter from Mary Lynch, a MMS student, requesting the Town rename Columbus Day to Indigenous People Day. Mrs. Kelly presented the attached brief with her request if the sentiment is to rename Columbus Day, a remembrance substitution, such as Discoverer's Day, be considered. The Board came to consensus to submit a letter with Miss Lynch's letter. Mrs. Kelly will submit her brief to the committee also.

NEW BUSINESS: None

HEARING FOR VISITORS: None

CONSENT AGENDA: Motion by Ms. Allison, seconded by Ms. Aubrey that the following items for the Board of Education November 12, 2020 meeting be approved:

That the Mansfield Public Schools Board of Education accepts the 1st Quarter Financials dated September 30, 2020.

That the Mansfield Public Schools Board of Education approves the salary transfers FY2020-21.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE AGENDA: None

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Motion by Ms. Zimmermann, seconded by Mrs. Paulhus to move to Executive Session for the purpose of contract negotiations and to invite the Superintendent into the session at 8:55pm. Vote: Unanimous in favor.

Board returned to open session at 9:09pm.

Motion by Ms. Allison, seconded by Ms. Aubrey to adopt the proposed agreement between the Mansfield Board of Education and UPSEU (Mansfield School Custodians, Maintenance Employees, and Food Service Workers) effective July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2023. Vote: Unanimous in favor.

Motion by Mrs. Paulhus, seconded by Ms. Aubrey to adjourn at 9:11pm. Vote: Unanimous in favor.

On Mon, Oct 19, 2020 at 8:40 PM Samuel Bruder <samuel.bruder@gmail.com> wrote:

Good evening,

My name is Sam Bruder and I am currently serving as a member of Mansfield's Town Council. I am contacting you in my individual capacity this evening and not as a member of the Town Council.

I write to you tonight to express my heartfelt gratitude for all the work you and all the staff members have been doing for our children. Specifically, we currently have two 4th graders at Southeast Elementary.

While I am sure this is a story repeated, it deserves mentioning. Our twins were having a very hard time with the online learning. Working with their teacher, Chuck Warinsky, really helped but did not solve the problem. And things just kept getting worse.

That's when Lauren Rodriguez, our principal, stepped in and made us feel our issues would be listened to and addressed. She had some other options we could try. Most importantly though, between the efforts of both Mr. Warinsky and the principal our kids did so much better.

Even parents with experience such as us, we've already had five older kids go from Goodwin through EO Smith, Lauren Rodriguez was able to help guide us through this most difficult time.

I hope this can be included in the BOE public comments section. People like these are what make Mansfield a great community and we feel blessed to be here.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Sam Bruder

Boulder Lane, Mansfield, CT

Renaming *Columbus Day* Holiday

Christopher Columbus is a man of the fifteenth century. This era marks the beginning of the Renaissance in Italy, his country of origin. It is the age of artists da Vinci, Botticelli, and Masaccio. Gutenberg invents moving type. Copernicus discovers that the sun, not the earth, is the center of the universe. Joan of Arc defeats the English and is burned at the stake at age 19. Machu Picchu is constructed; the Aztecs become dominate.

And Columbus sails to the New World. No gamble in history has been more momentous than the landfall of Columbus's ships--the Nina, the Pinta and the Santa Maria--in the yet-to-be-named Americas in 1492.

He had no great lineage, education or achievements but had sailed on various commercial voyages. Throughout the Spanish courts he tirelessly advocated his proposal—which was based on legends--to cross the ocean from Spain to China to open a direct trade route to the west. There he hoped to find gold, jewels and spices from the Orient, as described by Marco Polo. He was so sure that this route would be successful that he brought along an Arabic speaking crew member because it was presumed that the Chinese, Japanese and Indians (of India) spoke Arabic.

He estimated the distance between Portugal and Japan at just over 2700 miles, not the actual 12,000 miles. He thought islands—not continents--lay between Spain and China. He had no knowledge of the legends of the Vikings' earlier colonization of Greenland, Newfoundland and Labrador.

At this time, Spanish and Portuguese sailors cautiously traveled along the coast of Africa never far from the sight of land. Columbus was among the first to use the newly invented ship's compass, so that a journey far from signs of land became theoretically possible. Adept at using a compass and a quadrant, he was the first to navigate perilous waters by making calculations using the altitudes of the sun and the North Star; he knew how to take advantage of winds and currents, sailing out with the trade winds and returning with the westerlies.

He boldly risked dangers on his long voyages, undertaking journeys into deep oceans unknown to anyone. Waves were rumored to roll as high as mountains and had the ability to crush ships. The true shape of the hemisphere was unknown.

Five hundred twenty-five (525) years later, his intrepidity to brave the mysteries of the perilous deep is now contentious. Now his human frailties have become Exhibit One in why he should be purged from recognition. However, his courageous voyages joined the Old World to the New. Taking above-noted fifteenth century historical events into account, one must understand that Columbus was a man of his age. Therefore, I contend, uniformly discounting him in our enlightened age is reactionary.

His explorations empowered Amerigo Vespucci to explore the coast of what is now called South America. In fact, three Americas are named after Vespucci, who, in the late summer of 1499, made a brief slave raid in the [Bahamas](#), capturing 232 native peoples and returning with them to Spain.

Another man whose fault lines are recorded is President Franklin D. Roosevelt. In 1942 he forced 120,000 Japanese people, 62% of whom were second- and third-generation American citizens, to relocate and become incarcerated in concentration camps in the western part of the U. S. Anyone with even 1/16th Japanese lineage was included in the internment. Germans and Italians were also taken into custody. Despite the fact they were loyal to the U.S., born and educated here, these citizens lost their homes, businesses, were expelled from colleges; their lives were torn asunder. To FDR's prejudiced administration, persons of Japanese ancestry were a menacing element. Earl Warren (then Attorney General of CA, later Chief Justice of the U.S.) participated in this discriminatory action; the Census Bureau culled their records to find Japanese citizens. After the Supreme Court ruled in the favor of the internees, their imprisonment ended, but because FDR feared these captive Americans might endanger his 1944 reelection campaign, he postponed their release for a few months.

President Roosevelt was a man of his times also. America had entered into WWII, incited by the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. His administration's racial profiling and mass incarceration resulted in the Reagan administration—nearly fifty years later--offering an apology; a small payment of \$20,000 was granted to each internee *who was still alive*.

FDR's statues are not being defaced; he is not being discredited. Neither the District of Columbia nor Columbia University is changing their name. North, Central and South America remain so called.

While it might not be woke to consider the beginnings of Columbus Day, the facts are that its 1892 formalized origins were the result of the largest mass lynching in the United States. Eleven innocent Italian men were hanged in Louisiana, provoked by a hostile anti-Italian mob crying "we want the Dagoes." As part of an effort to ease tensions with Italy and to placate Italian Americans, President Benjamin Harrison declared the first nationwide celebration of Columbus Day, commemorating the 400th anniversary of the Italian explorer's landing in the New World.

In view of this brief, I suggest that if the sentiment is to rename Columbus Day, a remembrance substitution, such as Discoverer's Day, be considered. Such a theme is comprehensive. Individuals who aspire to explore, discover and challenge themselves are curious, adventurous, have perseverance, are creative, resilient, take risks, are independent and motivated, have a sense of higher purpose, are focused, and so forth. These are all attributes we want to instill in our students.

MKelly
11/12/20