An Open Meeting of the Mansfield School Committee was held at the Town Hall on Tuesday, October 18, 2011. Chairman, Mr. Michael Trowbridge, called for a motion to open the meeting. A motion was made by Mrs. Losiewicz, 2nd by Mrs. Kiera O’Neil, with a roll call vote and called to order at 6:30 PM by Chairman, Mr. Michael Trowbridge. The Open Session meeting will be reopened and called to order by Chairman, Mr. Michael Trowbridge after the Strategic Plan meeting at 7:30 PM.

Motion U.C.  5 - 0

Members Present – roll call vote to re-open the Open Meeting:

   Mr. Michael Trowbridge, Chairman;          yes
   Mrs. Lisa Losiewicz, Vice Chairman;         yes
   Mrs. Jean Miller,                           yes
   Mrs. Kiera O’Neil                           yes
   Mr. Jim Perry                                Arrived Late

Also Present:

   Mrs. Brenda Hodges, Superintendent of Schools
   Mr. Edward Vozzella, Director of Finance

Strategic Plan:

Dr. John Mullin, of Mullin & Associates, met with the School Committee and went over the planning indicators to begin the process of implementing strategy for the Town and the School Strategic Plan. Focus groups and community staff will determine standards and set priorities with which the Town will determine progress over the next five years and beyond.

Dr. Mullin started by stating that he has met with Town employees and gained their insights. He also stated that he met with building principals who he described as very articulate and provided a lot of insights. We are slowly beginning to generate a vision of what we think it is, particularly on the infrastructure side. The downtown and industrial park, going forward. He has not captured a vision. In terms of school, and what the priorities are and how we should go forward. Dr. Mullin directed the Committee to the list of education indicators. We have looked at other school districts to get an idea or a degree of benchmark, of other schools to see how you are doing. We will go from there and see what we can do over the next five years to position Mansfield schools so that they are truly as excellent as they can possibly be. He applauded the willingness of everyone to participate. It shows that you have a great degree of confidence in your schools and that you are dealing from strength already. Now we must determine how do you go to the next level and become the best amongst the best.
Dr. Mullins asked the percentage of student with limited English proficiency and Mrs. Hodges told Dr. Mullins Mansfield has 85 ESL students out of 4800. Mrs. Miller asked if this is appropriate for us being such small numbers to have ESL. Mrs. Hodges stated that we are held to the same standards regardless of the number of ESL students in the district. The cost to the district is huge. Dr. Mullins asked what the level of secondary education is in Mansfield and Mrs. Hodges responded the percentage of students that go on to college is in the low 90’s percentile. This includes both 2 year and 4 year college. Approximately 84% attend 4 year colleges.

Dr. Mullins asked about what Mansfield needs and the physical improvements required. Mrs. Hodges replied that the roofs need to be looked at and the windows in Robinson and Roland green need to be looked at. The high school, middle school and Jordan Jackson are all in good shape. Mrs. Hodges is going to address the repairs to the Capitol Improvement Committee; Dr. Mullins would like a copy of that list. Mrs. Hodges also stated the schools are in good shape and there is no need to add another school. Mr. Trowbridge told Dr. Mullins that we have added modular buildings to the High School and that was a great temporary fix but our enrollments numbers are down so we have no need to add buildings.

Dr. Mullins asked how the students do when they graduate college or come back from the military. Mrs. Hodges responded that it is hard to track those statistics. Dr. Mullins asked how Mansfield does with students going to top notch schools and Mrs. Hodges responded that she is very proud of the schools the students are getting into. She stated that the more important factor is that students graduate from college and report that they were well prepared.

Dr. Mullins asked for the school’s target for class sizes and Mrs. Hodges responded, 21 - 22 at Robinson and 23 or less at Jordan Jackson. Dr. Mullins then ask Mrs. Hodges what a quick estimate cost would be to make your goal and Mrs. Hodges responded 2 ½ - 3 million dollars for the next year.

Dr. Mullins asked if the town side is supportive to the schools and Mr. Trowbridge answered, “Yes they are.” Mr. Perry also mentioned that the residents of the town are very supportive of the schools. Mrs. Hodges told Dr. Mullins that the MESA and PAC group are great and cannot say enough about them. They are a group of parents in the town that help provide support and funds for the schools. The biggest group of parents are at the elementary level. It dwindles at the secondary level, mainly because at the high school level, parent’s support the different booster clubs, depending on what activity or sport their child is participating in.

Dr. Mullins asked if Mansfield has school choice and Mrs. Hodges answered, no, due mainly to space and capacity and the school choice is a policy voted on by the School Committee each year.

Dr. Mullins asked how many students does Mansfield lose to Technical Schools and Mrs. Hodges answered approximately 23 students attend 2 different schools Tri-County and South Eastern Technical School.
Dr. Mullins asked if Mansfield loses students to Catholic Schools and Mrs. Hodges told him, yes we do and also to the Charter schools. **Mr. Trowbridge** said it has always remained pretty constant and a main reason is the student/teacher ratio, which is a red light for us to watch. **Mrs. Losiewicz** also wanted to point out that Mansfield Schools does not have a curriculum director and the superintendent does not have an assistant at the Central Office. **Mrs. O’Neil** added her concerns regarding the lack of enrichment programs and she listed them as foreign language in elementary schools, classes for gifted students, music and more electives at the High School.

Dr. Mullins asked if they are happy with Advanced Placement Classes and Mrs. Hodges said she would like to add more classes and **Mr. Trowbridge** said he would like to see more classes as well. **Mr. Perry** said adding more AP classes are great. I agree with what Mrs. Hodges said earlier about needing more classes for the students on the middle. **Mr. Trowbridge** asked if they all in agreement that the High School needs more electives and they all said yes.

Dr. Mullins asked the School Committee to list some schools that they would like to be compared with and **Mr. Trowbridge** said Medfield, Holliston, Winchester and Needham. **Mrs. O’Neil** listed Ashland, Hopkinton, Reading, Westwood and North Reading, and Dr. Mullins noted that Hopkinton gets a lot of support from companies in their town. Dr. Mullins thinks Hopkinton is the perfect town to be compared to, geography is similar and cost of living also similar.

**CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED**

None

**SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT:**

Ms. Kim Goff’s Grade 4 class gave a presentation for the School Committee about their daily weather forecasts. These students represented a number of students at Jordan Jackson who provide daily information on the weather. This is one component of the science curriculum and one that generates a great deal of student curiosity and enthusiasm. The Superintendent thanked Ms. Goff, and her students, for providing the School Committee and the community with a snapshot of the science curriculum at Jordan Jackson. The following children were nominated by their classmates to report for the School Committee, Areianna Delaney, Shane Doherty, Rebecca Hottleman, Cameron Eddy, Kareana Sylvain and Jack Larochelle.

**APPROVAL OF WARRANTS**

The following warrants were presented and accepted by the School Committee on October 18, 2011, **Salary & Wages** #2012-5 dated 9-2-11, in the amount of $237,206.88; **Goods & Services** #2012-1006 dated 9-6-2011 in the amount of $293,708.46; **Salary & Wages** # 2012 - 6 dated 9-16-2011, in the amount of $1,331,317.27; **Goods & Services** # 2012 - 1007 dated 9-20-2011, in the amount of $299,717.60; **Salary & Wages** , #2012-7 dated 9-30-11, in the amount of $1,372,662.95.

Chairman Michael Trowbridge called for a motion to approve the warrants. A motion was made to approve the warrants 1st by Mrs. Lisa Losiewicz. , 2nd by Mrs. Kiera O’Neil.

**Motion U.C.  5 – 0**
APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Executive & Open Session Minutes for August 23, 2011 were tabled.

OLD BUSINESS

Superintendents Evaluation:

Chairman Michael Trowbridge called for a motion to approve the Superintendents evaluation. A motion was made 1st by Mr. Jim Perry, 2nd by Mrs. Lisa Losiewicz.

Motion U.C. 5 – 0

Superintendents / Goals

Chairman, Michael Trowbridge, stated that he had sent along the final evaluation document to the Committee and called for a motion to approve the final document. A Motion was made Mr. Jim Perry, 2nd by Mrs. Lisa Losiewicz.

Motion U.C. 5 – 0

NEW BUSINESS

Dawn Langtry – Food Service

Mrs. Dawn Langtry, Mansfield Food Service Director, gave a presentation for the School Committee. The presentation included Dawn’s professional education and training along with her experience. Mrs. Langtry has been with our district for 13 years. The presentation also included information outlining the oversight procedures by the USDA / DESE and the local Board of Health. An explanation of the program funding was shared, along with information regarding collaborative bidding, and the derivation of the food products used within the program. USDA nutritional requirements for school lunches were described, as was the menu planning process. Mrs. Langtry described the manner in which she managed federal and state regulations, financials, and student appeal within the food service program.

Mrs. Langtry described the program improvements that have been made and shared the upcoming regulations of Healthy Hungry-Free Kids Act of 2010. These program changes will become effective in August 2012. In addition, she shared the Massachusetts Regulations contained in, 105 CMR 225.000 Competitive Foods, that also effective August 1, 2012. These regulations govern nutritional standards and safety regulations for all foods and beverages brought into the school, including 30 minutes prior to and 30 minutes after the school day closes. These regulations will create a new approach to the way that we provide some services.
Mr. Vozzella commented that putting together a menu is like an art and science, science is making sure it is a healthy meal that complies with the standards of the state and an art is putting a meal together that is appealing to students.

Mrs. Miller thanked Mrs. Langtry and told her that they appreciate her coming tonight and giving them a presentation. She did have a few questions. Mrs. Miller wanted to know how much food is prepared on site and how much is prepared by an outside source. Mrs. Langtry did not have the exact percentage but she is looking at moving away from premade and making more on site, but cautioned as to how expensive it is to make a change. Mrs. Miller then asked how much fresh produce is used. Mrs. Langtry responded that she would love to use more fresh but it is sometimes difficult to find a farm that will deliver. She did look into it for this past September. This year the storms damaged a lot of the crops. Mrs. Miller spoke of an article in the Boston Globe where the Boston Public Schools brought in a chef to do the cooking and preparing of menus and is able to use fresh produce to prepare school lunches making it more like restaurant quality. Mrs. Langtry answered that a lot that is done in the Boston Public School is funded by grants that we do not qualify for. They have 50% of the students on a free and reduced lunch which we will never have. Grants are based on free and reduced lunch counts.

Mr. Trowbridge asked how many employees Mrs. Langtry has, she answered 32, and we make 1,500 meals per day. Mrs. Losiewicz asked if she looked at what gets thrown away. Mrs. Langtry said yes they do. That is where your customer acceptability is. We see what they throw away, why they throw it away and do they even try it. You have to keep trying the same food. It can take at least seven tries for a child to accept a new food.

Mr. Trowbridge noted that Mrs. Langtry mentioned a parent can sign up to have control of what their child purchases for lunch and asked how many parents have done that and Mrs. Langtry said they have a good amount at the Elementary Level.

**QMS Improvement Plan:**

Qualters Middle School Principal, Zeff Gianetti presented the Qualters School Improvement Plan. You may view the 2011-2013 SIP at the Qualters website. Principal Gianetti and the Qualters School Council outlined five major goals and objectives, increasing student academic performance in all curriculum areas, organizing the structure of the school into smaller learning communities, increasing the use and the variety of instructional technology, improving internal and external communication regarding student academic progress and providing students with a greater variety of extended day learning opportunities. The SIP was also supported with an action plan and description of individuals responsible for implementing the action plan.

**Summer Institutes:**

A summary of Summer Institutes had previously been provided to the School Committee for their review. While the school committee members had no public discussion regarding the summer work, comments did include an acknowledgement of the number of curriculum areas where summer work was completed and the quality of the work that was presented. Mrs. Hodges thanked her Department Chairs and Staff for all the summer institutes that took place over the summer and thanked them for their commitment.
**CHAMPS / Band & Orchestra:**

Shauna Leary, Director of Champs, provided an update on the after school music program. Thirty four students are participating in the band program, 16 students are receiving piano lessons and thirty six students are engaged in orchestra lessons. Mrs. Leary stated that the parents are thrilled with the quality of the lessons being received by their children and are and very satisfied with the hourly rates charged for the lessons. Shauna also shared that the grade 6 band program is larger this year than in the recent past. Mr. Trowbridge asked if you went from 71 to 34 students in band and this is because you switch days do you think next year you can pick a day where there is not a conflict. Mrs. Leary responded right. We only have Mr. D’Ambrosio as an instructor and those days are the only days he is available. He also teaches in Rehoboth & Plymouth. He only had Mondays and Thursdays and he is doing the 5th graders on Monday at 5:00 because of CCD.

**Mrs. Miller** stated that the Middle School has 36 band members and that is a good number and she is in no way criticizing that number. She questioned why we had 100 students in band and orchestra prior to the after school program. Mrs. Miller just does not want to see this program die out. Mr. Trowbridge would like to see the difference in numbers from 2008 until now. Mrs. Leary also stated that the parents are thrilled with the program and with the tuition.

**Electronic Report Card / Timeline & Process:**

The School Committee was updated on the timeline for implementing electronic report cards for the Robinson and Jordan Jackson schools. The first electronic report cards will be issued at the end of the first marking period. The electronic report cards will permit the district to meet DESE requirements for reporting K-12 district data to the state. Mrs. Hodges told the School Committee that the electronic report cards should be put in place by November.

**Medicaid Reimbursements:**

The FY 2010-11 Medicaid Reimbursement of $243,873 was reported to the School Committee. This is reimbursement that covers some of the additional educational costs for some special needs students.

Mrs. Hodges gave a report on Medicaid, stating that Mrs. Marcia Healey works very hard on Medicaid; she is paid by the town to do all the work on Medicaid. Mr. Trowbridge told the committee that the numbers are up from last year, and Mrs. O’Neil asked if the school was expecting more this year. Mrs. Hodges answered the question by stating that it depends on how many parents sign the form. They need to give permission for the schools to access all records to see if a student qualifies. There are a lot of components that go into seeing if a student qualifies. Mr. Vozzella said a lot of work goes into Medicaid from Mrs. Healey, Mrs. Scott and himself and the money goes to the town, and in turn comes back to the schools.

**Field Trip Approvals ( if any) :**

There was a request for the 8th graders at QMS to attend the performance of the Dickens classic A Christmas Carol on December 1, 2011, at the Trinity Rep Theater in Providence, Rhode Island. The cost of $20.00 per person will be paid by the students. There will be 25 adults accompanying the students.

Chairman Michael Trowbridge called for a motion to approve the QMS field trip to Providence for the performance of A Christmas Carol. A motion was made 1st by Mr. Jim Perry, 2nd by Mrs. Lisa Losiewicz.
FY “13 Budget:

Ed Vozzella, Director of Finance and Operations, informed the School Committee that the Fy13 Budget Process has begun. He also recommended that the School Committee, Board of Selectmen and Finance Committee create a subcommittee to meet regularly with the Superintendent, Director of Finance and Operations and the Town Manager to discuss the FY 13 School Budget. This process proved to be very beneficial in supporting the FY 12 Budget.

Mr. Trowbridge would like a list of priorities for CIP FY13 at the November 1, 2011, School Committee meeting. The Capital Improvement Committee will need a copy of the list and we will need to see where they are and what the progress of the projects is.

Mrs. O’Neil would like to see a copy of previous budgets and the actual against them. Mr. Vozzella said we can do that but we sometimes spend more on one line item and less on another line item, so it does balance out in the end. We look at it as a road map. This is the amount of money we have to spend and how we are going to spend it, things change, but the bottom line stays the same.

Mrs. Losiewicz wanted to make it clear that even though you are changing things around you are staying in the same category.

Mrs. O’Neil asked if these changes have to come back to the school committee. Mrs. Miller would like to see where things move and thinks it is useful for the town parents to see also. Mrs. Miller would like to see the history of each line item and would also like to see the actual. Mr. Perry said he has never seen actuals and Mr. Vozzella said no you have not.

Mrs. Hodges asked the School Committee if there is anything they would like to add, or change to the budget process. She is looking for input. Mr. Trowbridge responded to Mrs. Hodges saying that the more we get on the website regarding the budget the better for everybody. Mr. Trowbridge would like to get things moving along with the liaisons. If we do, we will have a good jump on things. We all know this is going to be a difficult year. Mrs. Losiewicz asked if the School Committee was going to set up a meeting and Mr. Trowbridge said, yes. He will email and set up a meeting with selectmen liaisons and Kevin Moran.

Mrs. Miller asked if there is a fall town meeting and the answer from the board was none had been communicated.

Mrs. O’Neil asked if the School Committee has the final numbers from the FY11 budget and Mr. Vozzella said he has his numbers. He is waiting for the town to produce a report that is 100% accurate so that I can show you the numbers and the town’s numbers. The variation is $168,000.

CITIZENS COMMENTS:

John Rice, Mansfield High School English teacher and Mansfield resident, spoke during Citizens Comments. Mr. Rice expressed his concern regarding the ballot question proposed by the organization, Stand for Children. This initiative attempts to diminish the role of seniority and experience in personnel decisions, impose limits on bargaining educator evaluation systems and preclude part-time teachers from attaining professional status. Mr. Rice shared that his experiences as a teacher and parent in Mansfield had been very positive. He praised the dedication and hard work of the teachers and staff and recognized the efforts of the school committee and superintendent to provide and support a quality educational program for all students. He urged the parents and the community of Mansfield to vote no on the upcoming ballot question and to refrain from signing the petition that is being circulated throughout towns and communities in Massachusetts. Superintendent Hodges commented that the Mass Superintendent’s
Association provided information to the membership urging superintendents to review the proposed bill. The information provided indicated that some aspects of the bill may be cause for concern. Chairman Trowbridge stated that he recently had observed a petition being circulated at a local business. Mrs. Nancy Breef-Pilz commented on the statement read by Mr. John Rice and said what Mr. Rice is talking about is on the State level and not something Mansfield has done. Mr. Trowbridge asked, “are you not a member of the state” and Mrs. Breef-Pilz said yes, they are. Since the new chairman has been elected, Mrs. Breef-Pilz stated that they do not have a say as to what goes on, but we as a local level have not gotten together on this matter. Mrs. Hodges said the superintendents are aware this is going on and that the superintendents’ association had encouraged the local superintendents to do their own research. The association expressed that there may be reason for concern. Mr. Trowbridge said he did see them with petitions at the Hannaford’s in Easton.

**SCHOOL COMMITTEE NEW BUSINESS:**

Mrs. Miller asked if we have a high school student liaison in place yet. Mrs. Hodges said no. Mr. Trowbridge asked that we please do it sooner than later.

Mr. Trowbridge told the School Committee he is attending the selectmen’s meeting the next night and he would updated them on the schools and they would tell him what they are doing on the town side. Mr. Trowbridge asked Mrs. Hodges to send an email to the parents to get liaisons for the Strategic Plan Committee.

**OTHER:**

**Motion to adjourn:**

Chairman, Mr. Michael Trowbridge, called for a motion to adjourn the School Committee Meeting of **October 18, 2011, at 9:20 PM** for the sole purpose of adjourning. A Motion was made to close the meeting by Mr. Jim Perry, 2nd by Mrs. Jean Miller. A Roll call vote to close: Mr. Michael Trowbridge, yes; Mr. Jim Perry, yes; Mrs. Jean Miller, yes; Mrs. Lisa Losiewicz, yes; Mrs. Kiera O’Neil, yes.

**Motion U.C. 5 - 0**

Respectfully submitted,

Mary O. Jackson
Secretary to the Superintendent & School Committee