

**Milton School Committee
Regular Meeting
Milton High School Library
November 27, 2007**

Meeting called to order at 8:40 p.m.

Committee Present: Beirne Lovely, Chair, Lynda Lee Sheridan, Vice Chair, Chris Huban, Mary Kelly, Laurie Stillman and Glenn Pavlicek

Staff Present: Dr. Magdalene Giffune, Superintendent; Paul Hilton, Assistant Superintendent for Business

1. Citizen Speak (Policy BEDH-Residents may speak for up to 3 minutes)

Liz O'Rourke-Harris spoke of bullying and feels a written Bullying Policy is needed from the Superintendent's office to formally address this issue.

Amy Hartford voiced her support for a full day Kindergarten program for the upcoming school year. She urged the School Committee and the Milton Public Schools to move ahead with this important issue.

2. Approval of Minutes

Minutes of 11/13/07 were approved.

Move: L. Stillman

Second: L. Sheridan

Vote: 6-0-0

3. Reserve Fund Transfer – AYP/Pierce Staffing

Dr. Giffune explained the impact on the school system if it became necessary to fund the amount needed to fill the 1.85 positions requested for Pierce Middle School for the remainder of this year to address AYP matters. As discussed at a recent Finance Subcommittee meeting, they feel it is appropriate to seek a Reserve Fund transfer for the full amount necessary to fund these positions and present to the Warrant Committee the consequences to the system if the schools had to fund this internally.

Motion was made to seek from the Warrant Committee directly a Reserve Fund Transfer in the amount of \$92,500. In connection with the submission of that request, the Committee will provide such information necessary to satisfy the Warrant Committee as to the impact on our budget of having to self-fund the \$92,500 or whatever portion they may not approve.

Move: M. Kelly

Second: C. Huban

Vote: 6-0-0

4. FY09 Budget

Dr. Giffune explained revolving accounts, how they can be used, and why there are balances in these accounts at the end of the fiscal year. The Committee had requested this information since the suggestion had been made that the schools use funds from these revolving accounts to help with the budget needs. In summary, Dr. Giffune stated it is a bad practice to zero out revolving accounts and there are stringent rules as to how the money is spent.

With regard to the implementation of full day Kindergarten, the rough estimate to implement this without taking into consideration the increase in health care costs for staffing would be approximately \$378,000. Based on current assumptions of the number of employees who may opt for health care insurance, the estimated cost to implement this program would be \$511,000. Recognizing the estimate of available funds for next year is insufficient, the Committee had requested that Dr. Giffune develop a proposal for a fee based full day Kindergarten program. Dr. Giffune explained the assumptions she used when coming up with these estimates. Given these amounts, the approximate fee for a full day Kindergarten with health care costs included would be approximately \$3,300. The approximate fee without the health care component would be \$2,800. A sliding fee scale would be offered for families on the free and reduced lunch program. Dr. Giffune feels the Committee needs to evaluate the adverse consequences of trying to fund the health care portion. She believes budgeting for health care is a Town function and indicated that the State may not allow this and it could impact the grants we receive. Mr. Lovely stated the Committee is trying to be cognizant of what it will cost the Town for health care since they normally pay 85% of this cost. If we do not include the cost of health care within the fee, it must be made clear to the Warrant Committee that the additional impact on the Town side would be approximately \$130,000. Mr. Lovely stated the impact on the grants and what the State will allow must be determined. Ms. Kelly inquired why Tucker School was not included in Dr. Giffune's calculations. Although Dr. Giffune responded that she had not included Tucker since their program is currently up and running, Ms. Kelly feels that if we go to a fee based program Tucker School must be part of the equation. Ms. Rosmarin joined the conversation to discuss the various types of grants – Planning, Transition and Quality full day Kindergarten grants. Mr. Lovely feels the question as to whether or not Tucker School can be included if we convert to a fee based program system wide is another matter that must be resolved.

Committee members discussed whether or not it is appropriate to fund health care costs. Ms. Sheridan does not think it is beneficial; however, it may be necessary if that is the only way to get a full day Kindergarten up and running. Ms. Stillman had previously stated she worries that if we do it now it will be an expectation in the future. Mr. Pavlicek feels it would be a disservice to the town if we did not explain that eventually the health care cost associated with the full day program would go to them since the hope is to eliminate fees for this program. However, if it meant that we could not implement a full day Kindergarten, he would agree that factoring in the \$130,000 is necessary. Ms. Kelly believes this is a good, cooperative way to move forward. The continued goal is that there will be no fees charged for a full day Kindergarten program. The Committee unanimously agreed that if we go to a fee based program, Tucker School should be included. Mr. Huban verified that the ½ day Kindergarten program will still be offered and inquired if KEDS would continue. Dr. Giffune replied that would depend on enrollment. Discussion followed that it may be counter productive to offer KEDS if we want the full day Kindergarten to work. It had been previously been discussed that teachers from KEDS would be offered some positions that will be necessary to staff a full day program. Ms. Rosmarin and Committee

members feel the public must be made aware of the benefits of providing a full day Kindergarten program. It was suggested these benefits be promoted at Kindergarten Information nights, open forums, and through the media. Mr. Pavlicek mentioned that providing a full day program in addition to having to provide a ½ day program may result in the ½ day program not being offered at every school. This could result in other transportation and logistical issues.

Motion was made that it is the direction of the Committee to implement full day Kindergarten for next year on a fee based basis across the system. If possible and legal, this fee based basis will include Tucker School.

Move: B. Lovely
Second: C. Huban
Vote: 6-0-0

The Committee discussed the budget and the preliminary number to be presented to the Warrant Committee on December 1, 2007. This number, \$33,184,463, includes FY09 step increases only and does not include increases to be discussed as part of the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Motion was made submit \$33,184,463 to the Warrant Committee as a preliminary budget figure.

Move: L. Sheridan
Second: G. Pavlicek
Vote: 6-0-0

4. Old/New Business

The Committee deferred the discussion of the Costa Rica field trip until the next meeting.

The Copeland Family Foundation has requested a one-year deferral for naming certain areas within our new buildings as specified in an agreement dated 5/1/02.

Motion was made to approve the one-year deferral requested by the Copeland Family Foundation.

Move: L. Sheridan
Second: L. Stillman
Vote: 6-0-0

Mr. Hilton reported that the Boosters have agreed to fund the cost of the Ski Team. A request for a coaching position will be posted shortly.

Motion was made to adjourn.

Move: C. Huban
Second: L. Stillman
Vote: 6-0-0

The meeting adjourned at 10:40 p.m.