

**Milton School Committee  
Regular Meeting  
Milton High School Library  
February 26, 2008**

**Meeting called to order at 7:00 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; Mary Gormley, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Personnel; Paul Hilton, Assistant Superintendent for Business

Before the meeting began Mr. Lovely asked for a moment of silence in memory of Carol Blute. Ms. Blute was a long time contributor to the town and secretary to the Warrant Committee. A scholarship fund has been established in her name at Milton High School. Anyone wishing to contribute can contact Anne Marie Fagan at Town Hall.

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

Andrew Isner, a 5<sup>th</sup> grade Collicot student, spoke on behalf of the FLES program and the loss of recess once a week for these students. Mr. Isner urged the Committee to bring recess back this year on an equal basis for all students. Mr. Isner was joined by Kevin Conway and Eric Hill who are also 5<sup>th</sup> graders at Collicot.

Rebecca Schaffner, a 5<sup>th</sup> grade Collicot student, also believes English students should not lose recess once a week and asked the Committee to please bring back equal recess time.

Laura Conway feels that additional cuts to the FLES program may result in more parents choosing French Immersion which could result in that program becoming overloaded. Ms. Conway also urged the Committee to look into hiring a grant writer.

Susanna Ryan discussed the importance of providing reading specialists in the early years of education. She feels bringing back this position would be money well spent.

Bridget Mastandrea urged the Committee to continue to support all the World languages in our elementary schools and feels cutting back on FLES would be a mistake. She also feels that information regarding the World Language program should be made much more available.

Sheila Varela agreed that all the above mentioned matters would be part of a “wish list” (no additional cuts to FLES, equal recess time, a grant writer position, reading specialists, a full year of art and music). She urged Committee members to visit PTO meetings to speak with parents so there is more communication as to what steps are being taken to better the system across the board.

2. **Field Trips**

Motion was made to approve the second reading of the Milton High School Music Department field trip to Washington, DC, April 3-6, 2008.

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

Motion was made to approve the second reading of the Pierce Middle School World Language Department field trip to Quebec May 24-26, 2008.

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

3. **Approval of Minutes**

Motion was made to approve the minutes of the January 29, 2008 School Committee meeting.

Move: C. Huban  
Second: G. Pavlicek  
Vote: 6-0-0

4. **Guidance Department Presentation – Mr. Ken Aubert, Director of Guidance**

Mr. Aubert discussed the Group Guidance Program at Milton High School and stated the goal is to try to move the program to the Middle School in some fashion. The program at the High School is a 4 year program in which Guidance meets with students in groups according to grade level to review matters such as graduation requirements, 4 year college entrance requirements, the grading system at Milton High School, mid-year and final exams, homework policy, provide sample High School transcripts, explain how GPA is calculated, etc. Each year the program progresses a bit in an effort to prepare students for college and the application process, discuss options, and involve the students and their families as much as possible. Mr. Aubert also discussed the events held throughout the school year at which this information is presented to students and their families and reviewed AP, SAT and PSAT testing. Following his presentation, Committee members commended Mr. Aubert for the work he has done with this program. Mr. Aubert stated that all the information regarding this Guidance program can be found on Edline.

5. **School Calendar**

Dr. Giffune reviewed the School Calendar and questions were raised regarding the possibility of changing the 3/20/09 Teacher Professional Day. The Committee agreed to approve the calendar and amend the 3/20/09 day if necessary.

Motion was made to approve the July, 2008-June, 2009 School Calendar.

Move: L. Stillman

Second: C. Huban

Vote: 6-0-0

6. **Proposed Revisions H.R. 648-NCLB (No Child Left Behind)**

Mr. Lovely provided Committee members with a Quick Reference Guide to H.R. 648 and information regarding proposed changes and sample resolutions for adoption by local School Boards. He asked that Committee members review this for consideration at the next meeting.

7. **FY09 Budget**

**Revolving Accounts**

Motion was made for the School Committee to approve four revolving accounts. They would be for Middle School Activities, High School Activities, Athletic Advertising and Full Day Kindergarten tuition.

Move: G. Pavlicek

Second: C. Huban

Vote: 6-0-0

**Full Day Kindergarten** – There has been a remarkable response to Full Day Kindergarten and Mr. Lovely thanked Administration and everyone involved for the informative presentations given to families. The Warrant Committee had presented the School Committee with several questions regarding Full Day Kindergarten which were answered with the help of Administration. Mr. Lovely commended Dr. Giffune, Ms. Gormley and Mr. Hilton for their help in getting this done. The questions from the Warrant Committee along with the responses will be posted on the website. Ms. Gormley took a moment to mention that anyone who missed the original Kindergarten screening dates should contact Central Office. Another screening will be held on March 11, 2008 for those students and the hope is to have a firm number by March 28, 2008. Mr. Lovely discussed that in an effort to keep class size at 20, some students may have to move from their district. One of the original guidelines had stated that student assignment would be determined by the timing of the initial deposit payment. That guideline has since been removed. Mr. Lovely also mentioned that based on current projections half-day Kindergarten will not be offered at every school. If a child has to attend a half-day Kindergarten program outside of his/her home district, that student will be able to return to his/her home district in 1<sup>st</sup> grade. Ms. Kelly suggested that since it may be necessary to move students, another option may be to take into consideration those closest to school boundaries in an effort to keep neighborhoods together. Ms. Stillman asked if someone has been assigned or hired to handle the collection of fees to make sure

everything is done in a timely manner. Dr. Giffune replied that payment options for Full Day Kindergarten have been offered. Fees collected come to Central Office to one specific person who handles fees for every program. Ms. Kelly inquired if the use of UniBank services such as the Treasurer's Office uses for the collection of real estate taxes, etc. had been considered. Dr. Giffune replied they are currently trying to link the student information system in an effort to generate one bill per family for all fees collected. Ms. Kelly suggested that Administration explore the possibility of using UniBank services with the Treasurer's Office. Mr. Hilton added they would like to move in that direction but the first step would be to have their systems automated.

**Budget Presentation/FY09 Proposals** – Mr. Lovely stated that the budget has been submitted to the Warrant Committee and it is in excess of what the Town estimates they can cover. The Committee has been asked to present various scenarios in anticipation of the fact that we may not get what was requested, we may be level funded or we may be potentially asked to cut further. The Finance Subcommittee requested Administration to show some additional scenarios in the event this was to occur. Dr. Giffune stated she was asked to present proposals anywhere from +300,000, +\$383,000, level funding, -5%, or -10%. Her hope is to settle on a number tonight. Dr. Giffune reviewed the January 28, 2008, budget proposal she had previously presented and the recent School Committee directive that the original proposal should be modified to include maintaining the current four K-5 elementary schools and the current administrative structure as important goals. Given those parameters, Dr. Giffune stated the reduction from the request could be approximately \$1.7 million. When looking to cut that amount of money, Dr. Giffune explained it could come from retirements, proposed positions, existing positions or materials and supplies. She emphasized the fact that we cannot cut anymore teaching positions. Dr. Giffune presented one scenario showing deep administrative cuts and a complete reorganization of the system. An alternate scenario showed reductions keeping in mind the Committee's desire to maintain the four elementary schools and the current administrative structure. Slides were shown detailing the reductions that would be made in each of these scenarios. After discussing some of the points raised in this presentation, Mr. Lovely stated that the Warrant Committee meets tomorrow night at which time the Committee will advocate for the budget as it was presented and explain why we need the budget which was originally submitted. Although the various scenarios will be presented and explained, Mr. Lovely feels the School Committee needs to study all proposals and continue to advocate for what is needed to adequately educate the children of Milton. Ms. Stillman stated the Committee needs to make clear to the Warrant Committee the ramifications to the system if such deep administrative cuts become necessary. Ms. Kelly suggested that the School Committee present the Warrant Committee with a detailed listing of the positions already cut this year. She also suggested that weekly Finance Subcommittee meetings be held and that these meetings be open to all School Committee members. Dates will be scheduled and meetings will be posted. Mr. Pavlicek stated the School Committee should verify the date of the Warrant Committee Saturday meeting and post a School Committee meeting for the same time.

8. **School Building Committee Report/Acceptance of Cunningham/Collicot Project**

Mr. Pavlicek explained that the School Building Committee needs the School Committee's acceptance of the Cunningham/Collicot building in order for the School Building Authority to release the \$1.2 million they are retaining for this project.

Motion was made that the School Committee accept the Cunningham/Collicot building for use as a school recognizing there are still punch list items which need to be completed.

Move: G. Pavlicek

Second: M. Kelly

Vote: 6-0-0

Motion was made to adjourn the regular School Committee meeting and enter Executive Session not to return to Open Session.

Move: C. Huban

Second: G. Pavlicek

By a roll call vote the Committee unanimously voted to adjourn.

Meeting adjourned at 9:45 p.m.