Milton School Committee Retreat
Superintendent's Conference Room
June 17, 2008

Committee Present: Beirne Lovely, Chair, Lynda Lee Sheridan, Vice Chair, M. Kelly, G. Pavlicek and K. Bagley-Jones

Staff Present: Mary Gormley, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Personnel; Paul Hilton, Assistant Superintendent for Business, John Phelan, Principal

The meeting was called to order at 4:20 p.m.

Mr. Lovely thanked Ms. Sheridan for facilitating this meeting. Ms. Sheridan explained the first item on the agenda is to address goals for the upcoming school year and discuss what the Committee hopes to accomplish.

1. **School Committee Goal Setting, FY08-FY09 School Year**
The following are goals and suggestions made by School Committee members for the 2008-2009 school year.

Communication

- Reconnect and re-establish communication with key groups (community, parents, government boards and committees, Pre-School parents, etc.)
- How do we increase parental involvement?
- Improve response to emails and phone calls
- Reach a conclusion regarding the French Immersion issue – do we maintain it as it is; modify it; or eliminate it? Develop a framework for this discussion.
- How do we educate parents and the entire community better with regard to this program?

Budget

- Present budget early
- Provide a well communicated budget
- Publicize information when money is found (i.e. Retirement, Resignations)
- Clearly articulate the impact of this year's budget. It was suggested that Ms. Gormley, Mr. Phelan, and Mr. Hilton present a slide show at the first School Committee meeting in September (9/2) as to where we are with regard to staffing at each school, enrollment figures, Principals and Assistant Principals, etc.

When asked, Ms. Gormley replied some priorities of Administration would be student achievement, addressing French Immersion, the AP grant and its impact on the Middle School.

Facilities

- What can we do to improve efficiency and maintenance?
- Should we consolidate activities to perhaps two buildings?
- Should an outside company be brought in to manage energy?
- When considering consolidation of after school building activity, be clear as to why buildings may have to close early – articulate to the community with a dollar amount next to the reason.
- Determine the cost of having lights on at night at athletic fields.

- Consider the possibility of having Community Schools at one school.

Diversity

- Student Achievement
- Faculty

When discussing if these were School Committee goals or Administration's goals, Ms. Gormley replied these were many of the same matters discussed by the Leadership Team. Mr. Phelan added that making the budget more transparent and communicating with parents is important. He feels the goal of the School Committee should be to fund the schools adequately since it is apparent what the district can do when it is funded at an adequate level. Mr. Lovely responded it is important to convince people as to what we need. Building the budget from the bottom up, showing what every person does and what they contribute to the system should help. Ms. Kelly feels the Committee should also discuss what the expectations for public schools in Milton are. What in the community is sustainable (i.e. scheduling – should it be 6 periods/day or 8 periods/day)? In response, Ms. Gormley added what is sustainable is what the community wants; that is what they will vote for. Ms. Bagley-Jones suggested that Administration type up a summary describing the budget framework – how do we go about the budget process, what is the timeline, etc.

2. **Brainstorm Talking Points/Presentations for Next Year's Meetings**

- When are we going to address the corrective action status at Pierce? Explain clearly that we are in corrective action and this is the action plan we have in place. It was suggested this be done at the 9/16/08 School Committee meeting.
- Have brief presentations by the Principals of 3 schools per meeting (9/2 and 9/16) discussing student achievement goals they have for the school year and how these goals will be measured.
- Student Athletics Report (Boosters/Athletic) 10/21/08
- Site Councils should report around budget time. It was suggested to have PTOs report at the same meeting (tentatively 11/18/08)
- Discuss the Principal/Assistant Principal for Pierce Middle School in September
- Have PAC report at the 9/2/08 meeting
- Have all presentations be concise and last no more than 20 minutes
- If possible, provide information regarding presentations in advance to all Committee members
- Have Milton Foundation for Education (MFE) along with the PAC report at the 9/2/08 meeting. Ms. Gormley reported the MFE generously voted to fund $40,000/yr. for three years for a grant writer. This grant writer will be engaged and paid by the MFE to work with the schools. This person will coordinate directly with Ms. Gormley and they will work together to set goals; however it is an independent contract paid for by the MFE.
- Due to the Presidential election on November 4, 2008, schools will be closed. This is being done as a pilot due to safety concerns.
- Full Day Kindergarten Report (11/5/08)
- Fees must be voted annually; perhaps this should be done in the spring. At the 9/2/08 meeting a public announcement should be made about fees for the upcoming school year and how we plan to collect them. This could be done also by the Principals when they report on 9/2 and 9/16.

- Final reports will be given for the English/Language Arts Review Team and also the Science Review Team.
- Other presentations to be scheduled would be from the Guidance Dept., Co-Taught Classrooms, and a report from the new Director of the Pre-School Program.

3. **School Committee Calendar Dates and Events**

Committee members discussed the 2008-2009 School Committee Calendar and made the following changes/additions. Summer meetings are scheduled for July 22nd, August 12th and August 26th at 6:00 p.m. A meeting was scheduled for November 5th due to Election Day November 4th. A tentative meeting was added for January 27th. The meeting scheduled for February 17th was tentatively changed to February 24th and a meeting was added for March 31st. The April 7th meeting was changed to April 14th and the April 21st meeting was changed to April 29th.

4. **School Committee Agenda Format**

Information for School Committee packets is ready the Friday before each scheduled meeting. Ms. Sheridan suggested that any member who would rather pick up his or her packet in the Superintendent's office rather than having it e-mailed should make that request to Bev Quinn. For those wishing to do so, they would bring the packet with them to the meeting. It was also suggested a section be added to the agenda for "Old Business". Within this section there could be a "Citizen Speak Topic Response" where Committee members could acknowledge something that was addressed during Citizen Speak at a previous meeting and respond to it. It was also suggested that a section be added for "New Topics for Discussion". At the beginning of each meeting the Chair can ask members if they have anything to add to the agenda. Another request was to add a section to the agenda for the Superintendent's Report.

Mr. Lovely requested that the School Committee receive a packet from each school Principal of any notices of consequence that went out during the week, events being held, etc. He requested that School Committee members be put on that mailing list. He also requested that Principals forward School Committee members copies of their Newsletters. A schedule of athletic events should also be posted on the website.

The Committee also discussed the various School Committee subcommittees. Mr. Lovely will stay involved with the Policy Subcommittee; however, he will not be on the Finance Subcommittee. Mr. Lovely will also sign payroll.

By a roll call vote, the Committee voted unanimously to adjourn the School Committee Retreat to enter in to Executive Session for the purpose of discussing contract negotiations and litigation and to adjourn directly from Executive Session.

Meeting adjourned at 5:50 p.m.