

Minutes of the School Committee
Regular Meeting
Milton High Library
Date: October 16, 2013

Committee Present: Lynda-Lee Sheridan, Chair; Leroy Walker, Vice Chair; Mary Kelly, Becky Padera, Mike Zullas. Student Reps: Audrey Erickson, Matt McCarthy and Evvie Oliverio

Not Present: Kristan Bagley Jones

Staff Present: Mary Gormley, Superintendent; John Phelan, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Personnel; Glenn Pavlicek, Assistant Superintendent for Business.

Call to Order

The Chair called the October 16th meeting of the School Committee to order at 7:01 pm

Approve Agenda

The committee approved the Oct. 16th agenda after removing the Diversity Report (Item 5a) to be added to the next agenda. Ms. Sheridan asked to add a vote for a School Committee rep to the Master Planning committee and to remove the first quarter report from Finance Subcommittee. In executive session, item "d" was added -- negotiation strategy for non-union personnel.

Citizens Speak

Patrick Whelan and Patty Burke Sanchez came to promote the upcoming Best Buddies "5K Gobbler" at Cunningham. This is the sixth year hosting the 5K in Milton and they have raised more than \$40,000.

Approval of Minutes

The chair entertained a motion to approve the following minutes of the Milton School Committee:

School Committee Meeting August 21, 2013

Move: Mr. Walker

Second: Ms. Padera

Edits: Ms. Kelly asked if her name could be removed from the August 21st (in the comments section)

Vote: 5-0-0

School Committee Meeting September 18, 2013

Move: Mr. Walker

Second: Mr. Zullas

Vote: 5-0-0

School Committee Meeting September 25, 2013

Move: Mr. Walker
Second: Mr. Zullas
Vote: 5-0-0

Superintendent's Report

Topic One: Topic Three: ELE Presentation (Attachment) Alysa Buchanan, English Language Education Teacher/Coordinator came to discuss the overview of English Language Education. To view the entire report, click here:

<http://www.miltonps.org/documents/SchoolCommitteePresentation101613.pdf>

Ms. Buchanan discussed the Milton Public School Department's screening program, placement of students with needs, parental notification, etc. She compared what is offered now to what was offered 2010. New, standard-based curriculum. She reported that the MPS will participate in SEI (sheltered English Immersion classroom) training. She talked about Eligibility Determination and the district's home language survey. Ms. Buchanan showed a pie chart that broke down the languages spoken by ELL students, with the primary language being Haitian Creole, followed by Chinese, French, Spanish, Igbo and "other." She reported that all ELL students participate in MCAS, except for those who are in their first year in this country. She talked about ELE students' performance on the MCAS. She also explained what the process is to determine English proficiency for FLEP (Former Limited English Proficient.) She discussed the upcoming RETELL Course held here in Milton beginning in February. This is a 35-hour class, which includes additional coursework. This is 'great news for us' because the course we are providing has been funded by the DESE. We are getting this for no cost and getting it before it's required in 2016. After this, teachers will have to pay for this on their own. Mr. Walker asked if there is a recommended student/teacher ratio for students at Level One. Ms. Padera noted there are only 4 ELL teachers and 6 schools, so how do you do it? Ms. Buchanan said we have teachers who travel -- one covers MHS and Tucker, another covers Pierce and Glover. Ms. Padera asked if students have to be moved to specific schools to get the ELL program? Ms. Buchanan said currently, this does not happen, but in the past, that was sometimes the case. Mr. Zullas asked, regarding screening, do you have problems getting the records? Ms. Buchanan said, for the most part, we're getting pretty good records. We are finding, even throughout the state, that some students are having interrupted education. There will be students coming in with limited records and we're dealing with it. Ms. Buchanan described last year's Lunar Festival, held at the Cunningham/Collicot school. She also discussed translation services offered to parents.

Topic Two: Annual Field Trip List (Attachment) (Vote) Mr. Phelan gave an update on the field trip list. This year, Pierce will hold a Quebec Trip. Also, the annual music trip at the high school level. Ms. Sheridan asked about the fundraising opportunities for these trips. Fruit sale, etc. For Quebec, they plan to run a car wash and other fundraisers. Ms. Kelly pointed out that for Quebec, proceeds from fundraising will be used to add an activity to the existing itinerary. She feels that fundraisers should offset the cost of the

trip and asked to revisit that? Mr. Zullas asked if there was a limit to the number of students who go on the trip and if there is a ratio of students to chaperones? Mr. Phelan replied that there is currently no limit on how many students go, provided there are enough chaperones. Ms. Sheridan entertained a motion to approve the list.

Move: Mr. Walker

Second: Ms. Padera

Vote: 4-0-1 (Kelly voted no)

Happenings: Ms. Gormley talked about how, thanks for a donation from the Copeland Family Foundation, every 10th and 11th grader at Milton High School had the opportunity to take the PSAT in school today. Last Saturday, MHS marching band participated at UMass during half-time. This week, Becky Padera will be helping to run the Iron Chef Jr. Competition. Ms. Padera asked Jackie Morgan to help with this project. Ms. Oliverio (student rep) noted that this could be a good event for high school students, also. Other upcoming events include Swing into Sports, thanks to Ken Quigley & Curry College. Ms. Gormley announced that the Mass. Secretary of Education, Matt Malone is coming next Thursday. The Milton Library Gala is next Thursday night. Also, first meeting of PAC is upcoming. South Pacific will be performed next week at MHS, the Monster Dash will be held Sunday, October 27th. The MHS Girls Volleyball Team is raising money to raise breast cancer awareness. The event is next Tues, Oct. 29th at 5:15 pm. Also, Commission of Education is coming to Pierce on Nov. 13th. Best Buddies 5K in November.

Chairman's Report

Ms. Sheridan explained that Dr. Pavlicek's term as the School Committee Rep to the Master Planning Committee has expired and that even though he is no longer on the School Committee he can continue to represent us on that Committee. Mr. Walker moved to let Dr. Pavlicek continue with this committee, and he agreed to continue in this post.

Move: Mr. Walker

Second: Ms. Padera

Vote: 5-0-0

Topic One: School Committee/District-Wide Goals (Attachment) (Vote) Ms. Kelly asked for an explanation of this topic. Mr. Walker explained that back in July, the School Committee began a discussion about School Committee goals and District goals. Each of us offered ideas about each of those. He said that Ms. Sheridan agreed they're best combined. He said he doesn't think the School Committee should have ideas independent of the district goals. Ms. Kelly asked if these would be added to the action plan of the district? Mr. Walker said they would be part of an integrated planning cycle. This is starting that discussion. Ms. Sheridan asked the School Committee members to look at the first five items on the handout.

On Item #1 (Increase outreach to families before Kindergarten to increase early literacy and K preparation as well as closing achievement gaps), Mr. Walker said this would be on his top five list. Other members agreed. Ms. Kelly said the current Pre-K program offered is not full-day and this would require a subcommittee to look at the obstacles.

Ms. Kelly also said that she has an issue with the district-wide goals. She noted that this is a huge list and asked, how do they fit into what already exists?

Committee members continued to work through the list and discuss the merits of each of the goals. Mr. Walker offered his view of the most prominent themes represented by the submissions from various School Committee members:

Strategic planning

Outreach to Pre-K families

Funding for athletics/music/art/clubs and lowering barriers to participation

Coding and computer courses of study

Advancement initiatives & tracking achievement budget

Mr. Zullas said that if the “review consolidation” goal does not make the cut, he would like to take it on as his personal goal.

Ms. Erickson (student rep) noted that athletics programs are getting "lots of funding," and that's great, but also encouraged funding for clubs and activities. Ms. Oliverio (student rep) agreed, and said the funding needs to be a bit more spread out with sports and the theater department. Mr. McCarthy said he participates in both athletics and clubs and thinks it's important that funding goes into both.

Ms. Kelly asked if the strategic plan could be moved to the top of this list. Ms. Sheridan said the list was not prioritized, but agreed to move it. She entertained a motion to approve the top five goals, which include:

- Develop and implement an integrated annual planning model (strategic, student achievement, budget, collective bargaining)
- Initiate digital literacy and computer coding programs of study for the MPS
- Successful execution of FY14 Advancement Initiatives (closing the proficiency gap, advancing Science and STEM initiatives, early literacy achievement)
- Develop a plan for full funding of clubs, athletics, music and art programs
- Increase outreach to families with Pre-K age children and increase early literacy skills of those children

Move: Mr. Walker

Second: Ms. Padera

Ms. Kelly said the committee hasn't talked about the Superintendent goals and how this comes together. She said she doesn't want to approve them and then have them not fit into where they belong. Ms. Sheridan said we should discuss at our next meeting. Mr.

Walker said he respects the goals we've established and would like to hear what the Superintendent thinks. Why continue to put it off? He said the committee started this conversation in July. Ms. Sheridan suggested calling these the "Proposed School Committee goals for the district," and Mr. Walker accepted this.

Vote: 4-0-1 (Ms. Kelly opposed)

Topic Two: Proposed Milton Public School End-of-Year Data Points (Attachment) (Vote)
Ms. Sheridan said Ms. Gormley had agreed to look into whether to report MCAS data by teacher was appropriate. She did some research and it appears that school and grade reporting can be done, but there are too many variables to access classrooms. We can also report by grade and by program (French and English), so reporting by district, school, grade and program would be her recommendation. Mr. Walker said we should continue to work on this question. How can the School Committee and parents get info on the quality of instruction going on in their child's classroom? How do we compare the quality of one school to the other? How do we know what the quality of math instruction, etc.? Ms. Sheridan said this exhaustive list might be difficult to compile without a full-time data person. Ms. Padera said she's concerned about the teacher evaluations being used as data points. She feels that it taints the process and doesn't think it should be a data point, as it might put too much pressure on evaluators. Ms. Sheridan said she agreed. Ms. Padera said she doesn't think this is how the tool was intended to be used. Mr. Walker asked, what if, in one particular school, there was a pattern of poor ratings? Ms. Padera replied that this would be a principal/administrative issue, not a School Committee one. Mr. Zullas asked, the question is, is this info useful in the aggregate? Ms. Kelly asked for the Superintendent's input. Ms. Gormley said she would be willing to report to the school committee, to talk about the new evaluation tool and share the data. She would be willing to do both. Mr. Walker volunteered to "clean up" the document, but said these data points had already been voted on.

Move: Mr. Walker

Second: Mr. Zullas

Discussion: Ms. Kelly asked, where we have elements that go down to "classroom", change that to "by program."

Vote: 4-0-1 (Ms. Sheridan opposed)

Topic Three: MASC Resolutions (Attachment) (Vote) Ms. Sheridan read each of the Resolutions Committee.

Resolution One: Funding for K12 Transient Student Success Mr. Zullas said he doesn't support this. Ms. Sheridan said she thinks it would help us, perhaps in the future. Mr. Walker said agrees with Mr. Zullas and said he would not support this.

Move: Ms. Padera

Second: Ms. Kelly

Vote: In favor of resolution: 1-0-4

Resolution Two: Performance Assessment for Readiness for College & Career

Ms. Kelly asked if this was a request to put off the PARCC for a year. Ms. Padera said she can ask for clarification at the conference. Ms. Gormley added that 4 of our schools will be piloting PARC. There was a motion to approve this resolution.

Move: Ms. Padera
Second: Mr. Walker
Vote: 5-0-0

Resolution Three: Teacher Evaluation. This allows for additional support for administrative evaluations. Move to approve this resolution.

Move: Mr. Walker
Second: Mr. Zullas
Vote: 5-0-0

Resolution Four: Evaluation of the Commissioner. Mr. Walker moved to reject this resolution, saying it's not the way the world works. Move to reject this resolution.

Move: Mr. Walker
Second: Ms. Kelly
Vote: 5-0-0

Resolution Five: Confirming Actions from 2012. Mr. Walker moved that we authorize the delegate to continue to support those that we supported last year and reject those we rejected.

Move: Mr. Walker
Second: Ms. Kelly
Vote: 5-0-0

Topic Four: Superintendent's Evaluation

Ms. Sheridan explained we're at the mid-cycle review of a two-year cycle. Ms. Kelly asked if we're supposed to determine where we are and see what needs to be tweaked. She also asked if School Committee members are supposed to fill out the form? She also asked to see something on the notes, saying this should be a check-in as to where we are as a district. Ms. Gormley said she'd be willing to do a presentation of the goals.

Topic Five: Televised School Committee Calendar (Attachment) Ms. Sheridan explained the changes, including how the Site Council presentations are made. The recommendation is to ask the principals to come together on one night to do the MCAS data. Also, they have cancelled the 10/23 meeting. On November 6th, we'll do the residency update, Superintendent Evaluations and the principals' MCAS presentations. Mr. Walker said the Site Councils can have input on the budget and suggested doing this on Dec. 4th. No vote is required.

Finance Subcommittee:

Topic Two: DOR Report: Ms. Kelly said the one thing that pops out is the Student Activity Fund. We're not in compliance and we need to work on this. Dr. Pavlicek said this is not an issue of the school office, it's an issue of reconciliation with the town's treasurer office. He said these accounts are set up by the principals. It's a communications issue. Ms. Kelly noted the report also concluded the School Committee should establish a maximum balance and said we need some clarifications on this point. Mr. Walker said there is very little mention of the schools in this report. Ms. Kelly said, regarding combining resources, she thinks the committee should look into technology and how it can help us. She said the DOR recommended combining technology department with the town.

Next Meeting Agenda Items

The chair noted they cancelled the 10/23 meeting due to the scheduled BOS –SC joint meeting to review the DOR report. On November 6th, include the residency update, Superintendent Evaluations and the principals' MCAS presentations. On December 4th, the Site Councils will provide input on the budget. Mr. Zullas asked to add "review of consolidation of business functions with the town." Ms. Kelly asked to include the SPED PAC calendar on the School Committee calendar.

Citizen Speak Response

Ms. Gormley reported that the father who came to School Committee later met with her. He had some excellent input, gave data, he's a writer and offered to help the English department with upcoming writing competitions.

The Chair entertained a motion to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of Negotiation Strategy for Collective Bargaining with AFSCME; Negotiation Strategy for Collective Bargaining with MEA; Deployment of Security Personnel; Negotiation Strategy for Non-Union Personnel and to adjourn directly from Executive Session and not return to Open Session.

Move: Mr. Walker

Second: Ms. Padera

Roll Call Vote: 5-0-0

The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 pm.