

**Milton School Committee
Regular Meeting
Milton High School Library
November 17, 2009**

Committee Present: Lynda Lee Sheridan, Chair, Glenn Pavlicek, Vice Chair, Beirne Lovely, Chris Huban, Mary Kelly, and Kristan Bagley-Jones

Staff Present: Mary Gormley, Superintendent, John Phelan, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Personnel, Matthew Gillis, School Business Administrator

1. Meeting called to order at 7:00 p.m.
2. **Approval of November 17, 2009 Agenda**
With the Committee's consent, Mrs. Sheridan approved the agenda of November 17, 2009.

3. **Citizen Speak (Policy BEDH-Residents may speak for up to 3 minutes)**
No one came forward to speak.

4. **Approval of Minutes**
The minutes of the October 20, 2009 School Committee meeting were approved.
Move: G. Pavlicek
Second: M. Kelly
Vote: 5-0-0

The MASC Annual Business Meeting votes which were an addendum to the October 20, 2009 School Committee meeting minutes were approved.

Move: M. Kelly
Second: C. Huban
Vote: 5-0-0

*Mr. Lovely was not present for the voting of minutes.

5. **Superintendent's Report**
Ms. Gormley invited members of the Collicot Site Council to the table to discuss the Collicot Elementary School Improvement Plan. Members of the Site Council present this evening included Principal Gerald Schultz, parent representative Patti Elliott and teacher representative Julie Ostrowski. Other members of the Site Council include Lisa White, Kathy Caccamo, and Courtney Affanato. The Site Council is in the process of looking for a community member to participate. Mr. Schultz explained that everyone at Collicot is concerned with the AYP status in the aggregate in English Language Arts and in the special education subgroup. Collicot has worked hard in both of those areas and last year began inclusion for all language-based students to participate in regular education classrooms for a portion of the day. Another strategy being used at Collicot to help in these areas is Response to Intervention. The goal of this strategy is to go into grades K-2 classes initially and find out through assessments what students may need extra support. Resource Room teachers will help focus on students in the "gray" area (not quite grade level but not special education) and will consult with teachers on ways to provide support. In French Immersion classrooms, Mr. Schultz explained that Collicot plans to use the newly added assistants to help teachers with whole-group instruction which will allow the classroom teacher time to focus on students who require extra support. After reviewing the various tiers of instruction used in the Response to Intervention model, Mr. Schultz explained that Collicot also uses the SST Team (Student Study Team) to discuss students who may require additional support. If a

teacher has concerns about a student's progress, he or she can bring the name of the student to the SST Team and discuss what interventions have been used and brainstorm alternate solutions. Mr. Schultz stated that when a student is initially referred to the SST Team, there may be informal communication with the parents; however, when interventions are implemented parents are contacted so they are aware of what is being done to help the student. Mr. Schultz feels that Collicot has a good handle on the students in the "gray" area, particularly in grades K-2, and in three years it will have the whole school involved in Response to Intervention.

With regard to the school/parent/community involvement objective described in the Collicot Improvement Plan, Mr. Schultz stated that this is not an area of much concern since Collicot is very fortunate to have a strong community. In addition to an active PTO, there is good communication with parents and most parents are involved in the parent/teacher conferences. With regard to the student mentoring goal, Mr. Schultz stated that in the elementary grades the homeroom teacher acts as the mentor. Certain children who may need an extra person in their life have been identified (Mr. Schultz mentors approximately twelve students); however, this goal is developing slowly.

In addition to his role as Principal, Ms. Gormley mentioned that Mr. Schultz also oversees the pre-school program at the Collicot/Cunningham site. Mr. Schultz commended Marybeth Callahan for the wonderful job she does managing this site and stated that he is there to provide assistance when needed. Mr. Schultz added that the partnership with NECC (New England Center for Children) for children on the autism spectrum has been a wonderful addition to the public school system and the seven students participating in this program are flourishing. Ms. Gormley stated that the bottom floor of the Collicot/Cunningham site resembles an early education center. In addition to some Kindergarten, 1st and 2nd grade classrooms, there are five pre-school classrooms. Some of these are half-day programs, some are four-day programs and there are morning and afternoon sessions being held. The School Committee thanked Mr. Schultz and the Collicot Site Council for this presentation.

Ms. Gormley updated the Committee and the public on the work being done by the Consolidated Facilities Exploratory Committee. This committee was appointed by the Board of Selectmen and members include Tony Cichello (Chair), Kathy Fagan, Lynda Lee Sheridan, Chris Huban, Dick Williams, Jerry Cahalane, and Murray Reagan. Ms. Gormley stated that she and Town Administrator Kevin Mearn have been attending recent meetings as well. The recommendation for the consolidation of town and school building maintenance functions into one town Facilities Department is what has driven this group. The School Department and the Board of Selectmen recently each gave \$2,000 to hire a consultant, Joe Piantedosi, who will assist in this effort. Mr. Piantedosi is very experienced in the area of maintaining town and school buildings and recently spent two days exploring Milton's various buildings. Mr. Piantedosi will report back to the Consolidated Facilities Exploratory Committee in December with his recommendation. After exploring the buildings, Mr. Piantedosi discussed the need for a five-year capital plan and feels that Milton would benefit from having another skilled, licensed trade maintenance person on staff. Ms. Gormley will provide updates to the School Committee as the work of the Consolidated Exploratory Facilities Committee continues. Mr. Piantedosi also plans to make presentations to the Board of Selectmen and to the School Committee and a report will be made available to the public.

Ms. Gormley reminded the public that parent/teacher conferences will be held this week and she encouraged all families to participate. Ms. Bagley-Jones asked why Pierce Middle School conferences could not be scheduled the same way as Milton High School. Milton High School's parent/teacher

conferences are scheduled on-line and parents can meet with each teacher individually. Mr. Phelan replied that he will discuss this possibility with Principal Jette.

Ms. Gormley provided the School Committee with the names of students who received perfect MCAS scores in English Language Arts and/or Math. Two students, Sadie Marcus (Grade 5 Glover) and Jack Radley (Grade 8 Pierce) received perfect MCAS scores in both English Language Arts and Math. On behalf of the Milton Public Schools, Ms. Gormley congratulated all of these students for their accomplishments. Congratulatory notes will be sent to all students.

Ms. Gormley updated the Committee on the H1N1 status in the Milton Public Schools. Attendance is being tracked for students and staff and, to date, attendance has been relatively normal. Ms. Gormley reported that there was a slight spike at Cunningham Elementary School last week; however, that seems to have been resolved. When asked if the town expected to receive additional doses of the H1N1 vaccine, Ms. Gormley reported that the town had originally received 100 doses of the H1N1 vaccine and is still awaiting the regular seasonal flu vaccine. The School Department communicates daily with the Board of Health and once vaccines become available a Saturday or a possible evening clinic will be held. When the town received the original doses of H1N1 vaccine, members of the Milton Public School staff who are pregnant were contacted since they are considered a high risk category. Mr. Huban inquired if any thought had been given to holding the clinic during the school day rather than a Saturday to insure more participation. Ms. Gormley replied that this had been discussed by the team and it seemed preferable to have K-5 students vaccinated at their doctor's office with their parents present. She will, however, discuss the possibility of an in-school clinic further with the team. With regard to staff absenteeism, Ms. Gormley reported that there was a spike in absenteeism at two schools. Absenteeism typically runs between 0%-2% and it has gone to 4%-6% in some schools.

Ms. Gormley reminded the public that the Celebration for Education will be held Saturday, November 21, 2009. She mentioned that Tom Fahey, a Milton parent, is making a memorable video presentation which will be shown at this event. Mrs. Sheridan suggested showing this video at the next School Committee meeting. Since Milton High School athletic sign-ups were recently announced, Ms. Bagley-Jones asked that Ms. Gormley speak about how students can apply for a waiver for sports or for participation in the free and reduced lunch program. Ms. Gormley replied that Steve Traister's next email blast for sports will include this information. Ms. Gormley explained that any student who wants to participate in sports should identify themselves to Mr. Traister, a teacher, guidance person, or any member of the Milton High School administration and they will provide them with the proper forms to fill out for the free and reduced lunch program. Participation in the free and reduced lunch program enables a student to have a reduced athletic fee or possibly no fee. Application forms for the free and reduced lunch program can be found on the website. Any family or student requiring additional information can also contact the Superintendent's office. Mr. Gillis reminded students and families that applications for the free and reduced lunch program can be submitted at any time throughout the school year.

6. Chairman's Report

Mrs. Sheridan updated the public on the School Committee goals for 2009-2010 which were approved at the August 25, 2009 School Committee meeting. These goals are on-going and include:

- Maintain the high level of communication that was established this year
- Maintain the level of communication with inter-town committees
- Explore the possibility of consolidating evening activities (moved under Facilities Subcommittee)

- Review student achievement
- Design a yearly fundraising goal by the end of each school year
- Engage School Site Councils (Site Councils are in the process of reporting at School Committee meetings and will be asked to come back in the spring)
- Reactivate Academic Review Team (English and Science will present to the School Committee this year and Arts will begin the review process)
- Review programs that could be moved to clubs (not yet done)
- Review World Language Program for grades K-12 (members of the World Language Committee were announced and this committee will report back to the School Committee in February or March, 2010)
- Review the sustainability of the number of programs offered in the Milton Public Schools (this goal is on-going through the budget process)

Ms. Bagley-Jones asked that Ms. Gormley provide School Committee members with the dates of PTO meetings so they can begin to schedule what meetings they are available to attend. Ms. Kelly mentioned that the Finance Subcommittee will get a fundraising update at its next meeting and will present that information at the next School Committee meeting.

Mrs. Sheridan read the District's Improvement Plan and the Superintendent's goals for 2009-2010 as outlined in a recent letter from Superintendent Gormley to the School Committee. District-wide goals include:

- Student Achievement – Through targeted Professional Development, curriculum development and increased, targeted and tiered instruction, the primary goal of the district is to maximize the individual academic, artistic, athletic and leadership abilities of each Milton Public School Student.
- Improving and Increasing School/Parent/Community Involvement
- To utilize all financial resources (town budget, grants, Stimulus funds, MFE funds, PTO funds, fundraising dollars) to establish a fiscally responsible budget that maximizes student achievement and school maintenance.

The Superintendent's goals include:

1. To lead and work collaboratively with all staff to improve student achievement and close the achievement gap in all subgroups.
2. To strengthen communication and build relationships between and among: (a) Milton Educators Association and Administrators; (b) Staff and Parents; and (c) Schools and Community
3. To work collaboratively with the Milton School Committee members to implement their policies and to advance a challenging and comprehensive pre-school through Grade 12 public school system.
4. Budget – (a) To work collaboratively with the School Committee to communicate the budget needs of the Milton Public School to the community; (b) To demonstrate fiscal responsibility and transparency
5. To recruit, hire, evaluate and supervise and outstanding leadership, instructional and support staff.

Mr. Pavlicek stated that these goals will form the basis for the Superintendent's evaluation next year.

Motion was made that the School Committee accepts the goals submitted by the Superintendent.

Move: G. Pavlicek

Second: C. Huban

Before voting, the following friendly amendments were made:

Goal #1 - Change the wording to perhaps read "to help lessen the achievement gap" rather than "close the achievement gap"

Goal #5 - Include a reference regarding the continuing effort to reflect diversity in our staff

With these suggested changes, the School Committee voted to accept the goals of the Superintendent.

Vote: 6-0-0

Before ending her report, Mrs. Sheridan thanked everyone in the community who attended the recent open houses at our new schools. Mrs. Sheridan also thanked the administrators and School Committee members who took time out of their weekend to attend. On behalf of the School Committee, Mrs. Sheridan extended congratulations to everyone involved in the recent High School production of *The Music Man*. Special thanks were extended to Dr. Noreen Diamond Burdette and Rebecca Damiani for their hard work with this show. Mrs. Sheridan noted that the changes discussed at the last School Committee meeting were made to the 2009-2010 School Committee calendar (Draft #3).

7. School Building Subcommittee Report

Mr. Pavlicek reported that the contracts were awarded for remaining projects at Collicot/Cunningham. Bids were opened for the solar panels on the roof and were surprising under what was expected. As a result, the committee is looking at the possibility of putting more solar panels on the roof. At Pierce Middle School the Conservation Committee's Certificate of Completion has been received and some tree planting will be done in the spring. At Milton High School the committee is waiting for the Conservation Committee's Certificate of Completion. The culvert clean-up was finished and the final bid going out for the High School will be for some duct work on the roof. The committee is waiting for the historical displays to be completed for both the Middle School and High School auditoriums and the 1st draft of the narratives has been received. The final phase for this committee will be to close out the books. The committee is discussing the possibility of presenting an overview of what the projected costs for this project were vs. what the actual costs have been.

8. Finance Subcommittee Report

Mr. Pavlicek reported that the primary topic discussed at the last Finance Subcommittee meeting was special education. Jeff Rubin reviewed placements, costs and trends and what will be needed in that budget. Mrs. Sheridan stated that at that meeting it was suggested that the School Committee may want to make a presentation to the Warrant Committee regarding special education funding and financing. She has contacted Tom Hurley to try to arrange a convenient date. Ms. Kelly stated that the Warrant Committee has requested a joint meeting with the School Committee and the Board of Selectmen to discuss the upcoming 9C cuts. The approximate amount of these cuts could be \$900,000. The Finance Subcommittee will continue to work on the details of what the impact will be on the Milton Public School system if it has to cut an additional \$566,000 this year. Although it had been suggested to hold this meeting on Monday evening, Ms. Kelly stated that some School Committee members are not available on that date. Mrs. Sheridan asked School Committee members to let her know dates they would be available for this meeting. Ms. Kelly stated that the Finance Subcommittee also is continuing with the timeline for the FY11 budget and putting together the impact of a level dollar budget.

9. Old Business/Citizen Speak Topic Response

Mrs. Sheridan reiterated that the School Committee does take all the comments made at Citizen Speak seriously. She thanked parents for continuing to come to Citizen Speak to express their concerns.

10. Next Meeting Agenda Items

Ms. Kelly asked if the Policy Subcommittee has had the chance to review the Class Size Policy. Mrs. Sheridan stated that the Policy Subcommittee was also going to review the Superintendent's Evaluation. Mr. Huban replied that the Policy Subcommittee has not met recently. Updates will be provided to the School Committee at a future meeting. Ms. Bagley-Jones asked that a ballpark figure for the athletic budget be given at the next meeting.

Motion was made to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing labor relations and to adjourn directly from Executive Session and not to return to Open Session.

Move: B. Lovely

Second: M. Kelly

By a roll call voice vote, the School Committee voted unanimously to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing labor relations and to adjourn directly from Executive Session and not to return to Open Session.

Meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.