

**Milton School Committee  
Regular Meeting  
Milton High School Library  
December 8, 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 December 8, 2009 Agenda**

With the Committee's consent, Mrs. Sheridan approved the agenda of December 8, 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 November 3, 2009 School Committee meeting were approved.

Move: G. Pavlicek

Second: B. Lovely

Vote: 5-0-0

\*Mr. Huban was not present for the voting of minutes.

5. **Superintendent's Report**

Ms. Gormley invited representatives of the Glover Elementary School Site Council to the table to review the school's Improvement Plan. Site Council representatives included Dr. Dore Korschun, Principal, and Mr. James Sopresa, parent representative. Dr. Korschun explained that in response to the "Needs Improvement" AYP status the Glover staff examined MCAS results and compared Glover's results to those of the state and the district. Individual MCAS results for students in the Needs Improvement and Warning categories were reviewed in detail. Dr. Korschun explained that this information is valuable since it shows areas of strength and weakness for students and where more targeted instruction may be beneficial. These individual profiles are also informative to help determine what it is needed for students in the Proficient category to move up to Advanced. Dr. Korschun informed parents that this level of detail for their child's MCAS results could be obtained if they wished. Based on this data, it was decided to maximize time-on-learning and provide support for under-performing students.

Dr. Korschun discussed standards-based instruction and the work being done in this area. Grade level meetings (K-5) are held to align instruction to the Frameworks and common planning time is provided in grades 4 and 5. Teachers are encouraged to teach to the standard and to provide differentiated instruction that will meet the needs of all students in the classroom. Dr. Korschun reviewed the Open Response initiative and explained what an Open Response question entails and the rubric used to score an Open Response question. Dr. Korschun stated that students are encouraged to practice self-assessment using the rubric provided by their teacher. Since many points are lost in the Open Response area of testing, it is hoped that this initiative will help improve MCAS scores.

Dr. Korschun reviewed the Tufts Reader's Workshop initiative and stated that this had previously been implemented for grades K-2 and will now be expanded to grades 3-5. There has been professional development focusing on Reader's Workshop and Tufts consultants come in on an on-going basis to support teachers and model lessons. The leveled book room collection has also been expanded to include fiction and non-fiction books with a wide range of genres, topics, and reading levels.

The second part of the Improvement Plan involves communication with teachers, parents, and the community. Dr. Korschun stated that the effort to increase communication with teachers includes making maximum use of faculty meetings to communicate school and district goals, provide professional development, and discuss the implementation of initiatives. Also, common planning time will be provided for 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade teachers to align curriculum, plan instruction, and assessments. In an effort to increase communication with parents and the community, information is communicated via PTO and School Site Council meetings, the weekly Post-it, Alert Now phone calls and e-mails, bi-monthly Principal's letters and monthly Principal's coffee. Glover promotes community involvement with Senior citizen volunteers, Milton High School student volunteers and Milton Academy volunteers. Mr. Sopresa reviewed the Junior Achievement initiative that Glover will pilot this year for 3<sup>rd</sup> grade classrooms. He explained that Junior Achievement is a volunteer-based program where volunteers (through the PTO) come in to teach the principals of economics to five classes for approximately 30-45 minutes per week. This program will begin after the February vacation and will be a great way for parents to get involved. Dr. Korschun stated that she will be informing families of the details of this Improvement Plan via newsletters. Ms. Gormley added that once all of the schools have presented their Improvement Plans, they will be rolled into the district's Improvement Plan and posted on the website.

### **English Curriculum Review Team Presentation- Martha Sherman, Stephanie Nephew and Barbara Kelly-Wright**

Ms. Sherman explained that the study of English Language Arts (ELA) has taken place over the last three years. The task of this team had been to identify focus areas (reading, writing, and curriculum), collect data (through MCAS results, best practice research, teacher surveys and classroom observations) to determine strengths and weaknesses and make recommendations. Ms. Sherman publicly thanked all members of the team for their dedication to this study. Details of the presentation given this evening can be found on the Milton Public School website, <http://www.miltonps.org/documents/MicrosoftPowerPoint-ELAPP1arevised12-8-09.pdf>. Ms. Nephew and Ms. Sherman reviewed the results of this review with the School Committee and the Administration and discussed initiatives that have been put in place and the team's recommendations moving forward. Following the presentation, the School Committee, the Administration and team representatives discussed ways to promote parental involvement with reading (i.e. Literacy nights), differentiated instruction, and the importance of vertical articulation of the curriculum as well as a well-documented K-12 curriculum. Other topics discussed by the group included the importance of common planning time and professional development. The Committee and the Administration thanked all members of the English Curriculum Review Team for their hard work in this process. \*Mrs. Sheridan mentioned to the public that book donations (English and French) are always welcome. Ms. Gormley added that PTO presidents are in the process of coordinating a town-wide book drop-off day at each school.

### **Banner/Athletic Update – Kate Sumner, Steve Traister and Matthew Gillis**

Ms. Sumner thanked the businesses, organizations and families who came forward last year to help with the sale of advertising banners. Ms. Sumner informed the Committee and the public of a new initiative they are planning for outside banners. Pole banners can be purchased which show the Wildcat paw along with the sponsor's logo. These banners will be distributed throughout the parking area and the outdoor sports complex at Milton High School. There will also be larger banners available for inside Brooks Field on the light posts. Anyone interested in purchasing banners can contact Ms. Sumner directly at [kate@gofullcontact.com](mailto:kate@gofullcontact.com) or can call 866-748-3700. Steve Traister will have the flyers describing these banners at all the sports events held at the Copeland Field House as well as at the Ulin Skating Rink. The flyer will be published via an email blast and can be found in the Milton High School office as well. Mr. Traister thanked Ms. Sumner for her dedication to this project and thanked the Administration, the School Committee and the Board of Selectmen for allowing them to go forward with this project.

Mr. Gillis reviewed the athletic program's FY10 year-to-date budget. The financials showed the total revenue broken down to reflect what is appropriated from the General Fund, revolving funding sources and student funding. Mr. Gillis explained that revolving funds and student funds can carry over each year. Mr. Traister pointed out that we were able to bring money forward in these areas due to the amount of fundraising done last year and the increase in athletic fees. Mr. Traister feels that Milton is at the breaking point with athletic fees. Athletic fees are currently \$250 per sport and \$500 for hockey. He explained that there are opportunities for students to participate in the free and reduced lunch program which may reduce/eliminate these fees and families have the option of payment plans. Mr. Lovely inquired as to why hockey was not listed on the financial page which showed student fundraising by team. Mr. Traister explained that this sheet was prepared as of 11/30/09; however, the hockey teams do plan to do some fundraising. Mr. Lovely asked if the Boosters still contribute towards uniforms for various sports teams. He wanted to make sure that help from the Boosters is something that benefits all sports programs. Mr. Traister replied that the Boosters are currently in a state of reorganization; however they have said they will be able to help out with uniforms. Some teams will be making formal requests to the Boosters for help. Ms. Bagley-Jones voiced her concern over the amount of fundraising necessary. Ms. Gormley stated that there are three main fundraising events: the Walk-a-thon, banner sales, and the golf/tennis tournament. The Boosters will continue to work with Mr. Traister; however, the goal is to try to pull back on the amount of individual team fundraising. Mr. Gillis stated that a further update regarding the athletic program will be given in February with the winter season included. At this point in time, Mr. Gillis stated that he foresees no threat of not being able to fund the spring sports program. Mr. Huban pointed out that at a recent Finance Subcommittee meeting Mr. Traister had explained that he was able to trim some expenses for the Golf and Ski teams in order to enhance other areas in the Athletic Department. Mr. Traister explained that as a result of the good relationship we have with both Wollaston Golf Course and Granite Links, we have been given more time to have matches and practices which lessens the amount spent on green fees at Ponkapoag. Some expenses are trimmed for the Ski team since many students either work at the Blue Hills Resort or have season passes. The School Committee and the Administration thanked Mr. Traister and Mr. Gillis for this update. Before closing, Mr. Traister announced that the first boys' basketball game will be held Friday night at the Copeland Field House. There will be a brief ceremony at this game to honor last year's State Championship winners and Coach Lopresti.

### **Revised Superintendent's Goals**

As discussed at the last School Committee meeting, Ms. Gormley provided the Committee with a copy of the revised Superintendent's goals. Ms. Kelly suggested that going forward the School Committee and the Administration may want to coordinate yearly goals.

Motion was made to approve the Superintendent's goals for 2009-2010.

Move: B. Lovely

Second: C. Huban

Vote: 6-0-0

### **Residency Update**

Mr. Phelan stated that the Milton Public Schools have benefited from the organized approach to residency issues. Through a recent organizational change a stipended position has been created for someone to organize material regarding residency issues, communicate information to the Milton Police Department and building principals as well as the Superintendent's office and to work with the Registrar at Milton High School. This position was discussed with the Finance Subcommittee and has been posted. Potential candidates were interviewed and tomorrow it will be announced who will fill this position. The funding for this position is the result of a current residency officer going on maternity leave. Mr. Phelan reported that there were approximately 140 residency investigations last year. By mid-spring 40 students were excluded from the Milton Public Schools and approximately 20 more through the summer. Although he did not have a current number available, Mr. Phelan stated that he will update the Committee on residency again after the holiday break. Ms. Kelly suggested that the School Committee may want to have a future discussion with regard to seeking reimbursement from families who have abused the system since this is written in the Residency Policy. Before moving on in the agenda, Ms. Kelly asked that the Administration send an email out regarding the College Financing Seminar to be held December 16<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. Ms. Gormley stated that she will put that information out via an Email Blast and Alert Now message.

### **6. Chairman's Report**

Mrs. Sheridan asked if Committee members had any comments on the updated draft (#5) of the School Committee Calendar. Mr. Huban stated that the Activities Update should be moved to January 5, 2010. The Athletic Financial Update which is on the calendar for January 5, 2010 was given this evening. Mrs. Sheridan reported that she has been going through Executive Session minutes to see what can be released. These minutes will be voted at a future Executive Session prior to release. Due to tonight's full agenda, Mrs. Sheridan suggested showing the video from the Celebration for Education at the next School Committee meeting. As requested by Mrs. Sheridan, Mr. Pavlicek briefly updated the School Committee on the voting results from the recent MASC Annual Meeting.

### **7. Policy Subcommittee Report**

**First Reading for Field Trip Policy Addendum-** Mr. Huban discussed the addendum to the Field Trip Policy. He explained that every year there are certain field trips that do not change much from year to year. The addendum to the Field Trip Policy would allow trips designated as "Annual Field Trips" to forego the typical School Committee approval process. A list of "Annual Field Trips" will be provided by the Superintendent. These trips would be considered approved unless they have change significantly from the preceding year or unless otherwise recommended by the Superintendent. The Superintendent has provided the Committee with a list of suggested "Annual Field Trips" for this year. Mr. Pavlicek suggested adding a date to the sentence in the addendum regarding the Superintendent providing a list of

annual field trips to the School Committee. Mr. Phelan stated that they have discussed providing this list to the School Committee in the spring prior to the school year being discussed. This would give teachers adequate time to plan fundraising opportunities and would give families adequate time to plan for expenses. Ms. Kelly feels it important for the School Committee to have discussions involving the cost of trips, time missed from school and fundraising opportunities.

**First Reading of the Class Size Policy** – Mr. Huban reported that certain language had been eliminated from the Class Size Policy and he provided Committee members with the revised policy. Ms. Kelly suggested strengthening the language used in the first sentence since the School Committee does strongly believe that class size is important for effective teaching. Mr. Huban asked that School Committee members send any suggested language changes to Bev Quinn and she will forward them to the Policy Subcommittee for review.

**Superintendent's Evaluation Policy** – Mr. Huban stated that the Policy Subcommittee had been asked to review this policy since it did not include a goal for AYP. Since AYP is not addressed in the Superintendent's goals, the Policy Subcommittee voted not to make any changes to this policy at this time. Ms. Kelly suggested that this be put on the agenda for the next meeting. If it is the recommendation of the Policy Subcommittee that no further review to this policy is necessary, the School Committee should vote to approve the Policy Subcommittee's recommendation.

## **8. Finance Subcommittee Report**

**FY10 Budget** - Ms. Kelly reported that a meeting was held with the Warrant Committee to present what the impact would be to the school system if an additional \$550,000 cut had to be made. Mr. Pavlicek explained that the Warrant Committee had been discussing reducing town budgets by \$700,000 at the special Town Meeting in February in anticipation of 9C cuts; however, the Warrant Committee has since been advised by Town Counsel that they cannot prospectively reduce budgets. If budgets were to be reduced, that money would have to be reallocated somewhere (i.e. stabilization fund or reserve fund). The Warrant Committee meets tomorrow to discuss this further. Mr. Pavlicek stated that it may be necessary for another article to be added to the warrant in the event the Warrant Committee wanted to reduce appropriations in current year budgets. Mr. Pavlicek suggested to the Warrant Committee that they could also ask department heads to hold funds back in anticipation of 9C cuts.

**FY11 Budget** - With regard to the level dollar budget being discussed, Ms. Kelly emphasized that this year's funding issues will be as dire, if not worse, than last year even though there was an override. **Mr. Lovely asked that these minutes clearly reflect that on December 8, 2009, the School Committee publicly disclosed that there will be very serious problems facing us for next year.** Mrs. Sheridan pointed out that in addition to stimulus funds and the override this year, there were administrators (Superintendent and the Assistant Superintendent) who took no raises this year. Mr. Pavlicek also emphasized that stimulus funds are one-time monies; therefore, what is used in FY11 will be cut in FY12.

## **9. Wellness Subcommittee Update**

Ms. Bagley-Jones informed the Committee and the public that a Parent Internet Safety Night will be held on January 13, 2010. More details regarding this event will follow and a more detailed report will be given by the Wellness Committee in January.

**10. Consolidated Facilities Committee Update**

Mr. Huban stated that a report was received from Joe Piantedosi and distributed to all School Committee members. Mr. Piantedosi recommends that we move forward with the Consolidated Facilities project. After reading his report, the Consolidated Facilities Committee decided to form a subcommittee to draft a recommendation. This subcommittee will consist of the members of the Consolidated Facilities Committee who would not be voting on the recommendation (Mr. Huban, Selectmen Kathy Fagan-Bauer and Mrs. Sheridan will not be on the subcommittee). Mr. Lovely clarified that the subcommittee of the Consolidated Facilities Committee will formulate the recommendation for the Consolidated Facilities Committee and the Consolidated Facilities Committee will vote it up or down and make a recommendation to the Selectmen and the School Committee. Mr. Huban also reported that Mr. Piantedosi has submitted his bills and they were higher than anticipated (\$4,700 instead of \$4,000). Mr. Huban believes Mr. Piantedosi will be willing to write off the \$700.

**11. Facilities Subcommittee Update**

Mrs. Sheridan stated that the Facilities Subcommittee continues to look at all opportunities to benefit from rebates. The solar panel project is complete at Milton High School and the Collicot/Cunningham project has gone out to bid. Mrs. Sheridan also stated that the new HVAC person is doing a great job for the Milton Public Schools. Some goals of the Facilities Subcommittee include:

- having more skilled tradesmen on the payroll
- exploring opportunities for energy conservation
- exploring the consolidation of evening activities at the schools (Mrs. Sheridan and Ms. Gormley will be meeting with PTOs after the first of the year)
- energy consumption updates on a regular basis

Mrs. Sheridan stated that the Facilities Subcommittee meets from 4:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m. on Thursdays if any community member is interested in joining. The next meeting is scheduled for December 17, 2009.

**12. Next Meeting Agenda Items**

- Ms. Kelly asked if the Annual Report had to be submitted prior to the next School Committee meeting. If so, she asked that it be sent out via Bev Quinn for edits. Ms. Gormley stated that they are on schedule with the Annual Report and the School Committee will have ample time to review it.
- Mr. Lovely publicly announced that he does not intend to run for re-election in the spring.

Motion was made to adjourn.

Move: C. Huban

Second: B. Lovely

Vote: 6-0-0

The meeting adjourned at 10:00 p.m.