

**Milton School Committee
Regular Meeting
Milton High School Library
September 8, 2009**

Committee Present: Lynda Lee Sheridan, Chair, Glenn Pavlicek, Vice Chair, Chris Huban, Mary Kelly
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 September 8, 2009 Agenda**
With the Committee's consent, Ms. Sheridan approved the agenda of September 8, 2009.
3. **Citizen Speak (Policy BEDH-Residents may speak for up to 3 minutes)**
Steve Traister, Athletic Director, discussed the upcoming Walkathon being held at Brooks Field on September 26, 2009 (3:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.) to help support sports, clubs, and activities. Mr. Traister stated that last year's Walkathon raised \$28,000 and approximately 288 Milton High School students participated. He is hoping to have even more students participate this year. While the students are walking, a variety of other performers and a Disc Jockey will provide entertainment. Although the Walkathon is currently for Milton High School students only, Mr. Traister stated that the possibility of making this a community event is being discussed. In the event of inclement weather, the Walkathon will be moved to the Copeland Field House.

Earl Fay thanked the School Committee for the attention and thoughtful discussions it has had regarding students who may require additional support. In the context of these discussions, Mr. Fay asked that everyone be more aware of the language used when discussing special education services. Mr. Fay stated that there are no students "in" special education; they are all students of the Milton Public Schools.

4. **Superintendent's Report**
BeSafe Program, Milton Police Sergeant Jack B. Richman
Sergeant Richman reported that Janet and Gerard Lorden have made a generous donation which will allow the Milton Public Schools to participate in the BeSafe program. Sergeant Richman explained that the Milton Police Department previously initiated a "lock down" training program for the Milton Public School system in the event of an emergency situation. This year the Milton Police Department was contacted by BeSafe Technologies, Inc., a company that offers a more comprehensive emergency response plan. By participating in this program, representatives of BeSafe Technologies will come to the Milton Public Schools to take photographs, locate utilities, determine emergency access points and offer digitized floor plans. These floor plans will give the Milton Police Department (and the Milton Fire Department) instant access to important information in the event of an emergency. In addition to this information being available via the internet, it will also be available on CDs and will be put in a booklet. Ms. Gormley informed the Committee that she and Mr. Phelan spoke to Police Chief Richard Wells and he feels this would be an extraordinary opportunity for the Town of Milton. Sergeant Richman will be the contact person for this program, and he has been asked to discuss this program with the private and parochial schools in Milton at an upcoming meeting. Sergeant Richman added that

Milton Academy has already started to utilize this program. Once the program is up and running, Sergeant Richman informed the Committee that he will do a presentation at the Milton Police Station. Questions and/or comments regarding this presentation included:

- Who will have access to this information on the internet? Sergeant Richman responded that this will be a secure, password-protected website and access will be granted through the company only to authorized individuals.
- Will the grant being accepted fully reimburse the cost to implement this program? Sergeant Richman stated that the donors will sponsor this program for a two-year period. This includes the start-up charges and the monthly internet access fees for each building. The Milton Public Schools do not pick up any charges for the private or parochial schools that may become involved.

Motion was made to accept the donation of \$2,890.80 from Janet and Gerard Lorden to implement the BeSafe Technologies, Inc. program in the Milton Public Schools.

Move: G. Pavlicek

Second: C. Huban

*Before voting Ms. Kelly requested that these funds go into a grant account rather than a revolving account.

Vote: 4-0-0

School Opening

Ms. Gormley updated the Committee on the successful opening of school and publicly recognized the entire staff of the Milton Public Schools for the phenomenal job it does in making this happen. Ms. Gormley reported that she and Mr. Phelan met with Margaret Gibbons, Head Nurse, Dr. Bonacci, the school physician, and representatives from the Milton Board of Health and Milton Hospital regarding the H1N1 virus. This group has come up with a tentative plan to deal with the upcoming flu season and will present this information at a future School Committee meeting.

Enrollment

Ms. Gormley reported that there are 106 more students in the Milton Public Schools this year. Mr. Huban inquired what the increases and/or decreases have been over the last few years. Mr. Phelan replied that the Administration can examine that information over the past three years and present it at an October School Committee meeting. Ms. Kelly stated that she would be interested in seeing the increases/decreases per grade level. Ms. Gormley complimented Mr. Phelan, Sean Walsh, the school secretaries, and everyone involved in the registration process. Mr. Phelan stated that they have been working hard to make sure that every folder submitted by parents has been carefully reviewed. Mr. Phelan has also met with Chief Wells to discuss how residency will be investigated. Both Ms. Gormley and Mr. Phelan thanked parents for their patience with the registration process.

School Choice

Ms. Gormley provided the Committee and the viewing public with a Power Point presentation regarding school choice. This presentation and back-up information will be posted on the website. In summary, this presentation explained that the presumption is that all Massachusetts school districts will admit non-resident students under the school choice program. Withdrawal from the school choice program can only occur when a school committee has a public hearing on this issue, followed by a school committee resolution to withdraw the town from the school choice program. This vote must be taken by the school

committee prior to June 1st and will remain in effect for the following school year. The resolution to withdraw from the school choice program must contain a reason for the withdrawal, and this resolution must be filed with the Department of Education. Ms. Gormley reviewed the facts regarding school choice, entry level options, tuition, and how school choice relates to students on IEPs (Individual Education Plans). The Committee also discussed Chapter 70 funding and how it is received and allocated to school choice districts. Ms. Gormley's presentation showed that Milton had one student attend an outside district in FY 2008 and one student in FY 1997. Mr. Gills pointed out that the Milton Public Schools must be providing good services since not many students are opting to leave the district. Questions and/or comments regarding this presentation included:

- In the past, the Milton Public School system has opted out of school choice due to lack of space. Do we have extra space available at this time? Ms. Gormley replied that they will analyze enrollment numbers and look at this information again in the spring to determine if there are any open classrooms and at what level. Currently there are 2 or 3 empty classrooms at Collicot.
- If we were to offer school choice at the 1st grade level, we would have to identify if the availability was within a French Immersion or English classroom.
- Even if Milton opts out of school choice, do we have to let a student go if he or she wishes to attend another district that does participate? Yes. Under those circumstances, Ms. Gormley replied that we would have to let a student go.

On behalf of the School Committee, Ms. Sheridan thanked Ms. Gormley for this presentation.

World Language Program Committee

Ms. Gormley reported that the School Committee and the Administration had previously discussed forming a committee to look at the World Language Program for grades K-12. Ms. Gormley asked that School Committee members email her with any points they would like analyzed as part of this review. Ms. Kelly was not sure if this should be a review of the World Language Program. Ms. Kelly would like this committee to review the impact of having two separate tracks within the school system. Ms. Gormley replied that the committee will look at that and will also look at how the integration of French Immersion and English students in grades 4 and 5 is working. Ms. Sheridan stated that it was her recollection that the decision to form this new committee came up when discussing the possible elimination of FLES and Latin in addition to the discussion involving the two-track system. It was agreed that all Committee members will email Ms. Gormley with their thoughts for this committee. Ms. Gormley added that a World Language curriculum review was done two years ago and this information will be incorporated into this review.

5. Chairman's Report

Ms. Sheridan commented on the wonderful experience she had attending the new teacher luncheon. She also attended the opening meeting for the start of the school year attended by all faculty and staff and stated that Ms. Gormley gave a heartfelt speech to all teachers. Ms. Sheridan thanked the Administration for the part it plays in making the opening of the Milton Public Schools so successful. Ms. Sheridan also reviewed some changes made to the School Committee calendar which had been discussed at the retreat held on June 22, 2009. They are as follows:

- November meetings will be held on November 3rd and November 17th. By the November 17th meeting the School Committee has to vote its total budget request for next year.
- There will be no School Committee meeting on April 27th
- The first meeting in June will be June 2nd due to Milton High School graduation.

Ms. Kelly asked that the School Committee's report to the Annual Report be done at either the December 8, 2009 School Committee meeting or at the January 5, 2010 meeting. At the January 26, 2010 School Committee meeting, the Committee must vote the total detailed budget request for the Warrant Committee. Ms. Kelly requested that the School Committee institute an Enrollment Detail Report (as previously discussed by Mr. Phelan) and establish an appropriate due date for that information to be presented each year.

6. Finance Subcommittee Report

Ms. Kelly reported that the Finance Subcommittee continues to work on the line item budget and hopes to have that voted at the next meeting. The Finance Subcommittee will then bring a recommendation to the full School Committee. The Finance Subcommittee has also started to work on the FY11 budget timeline and continues to monitor full day Kindergarten projections.

Ms. Gormley reported that she and Jackie Morgan, Food Service Director, were asked to go to court regarding the monies stolen from the Milton Public School Lunch Program by a former employee. \$83,000 was stolen over the period of September, 2004 to April, 2007. This case consisted of three counts, and the former employee pled guilty to two out of three counts and will repay \$47,000 to the Milton Public School Lunch Program within the next five years and will be put on probation for five years. Ms. Gormley will follow up with the Board of Selectmen regarding the remaining funds owed.

Ms. Gormley updated the Committee on the Facility Rental Coordinator position. Although this position was originally funded by the Copeland Family Foundation, the former Superintendent moved this position to the School Department's budget. Ms. Gormley explained that last year this position was cut through the budget process. Ms. Gormley reported that she was contacted by the Copeland Family Foundation and they feel very strongly regarding the importance of this position. Ms. Gormley stated that the Copeland Family Foundation offered to fund the total position; however, she felt the work could be achieved with a half-time position. After working with the Finance Subcommittee, Ms. Gormley approached the Copeland Family Foundation regarding insurance costs for this .5 position, and they agreed to fund the insurance costs. The School Committee and the Administration expressed their gratitude to the Copeland Family Foundation for their continued generosity.

Motion was made to accept the gift from the Copeland Family Foundation for \$27,029.16 to fund the FY10 salary for the Facility Rental Coordinator and an additional \$15,646.80 to fund health insurance costs for this position.

Move: G. Pavlicek

Second: C. Huban

Vote: 4-0-0

*Ms. Kelly requested that these funds be put in a grant fund account so the salary can be funded directly from that account.

7. Consolidated Facilities Committee

Mr. Huban reported that a revolving account has been set up to hire the consultant for the Consolidated Exploratory Facilities Committee. Both the School Department and the Town each gave \$2,000 to fund this consultant. Mr. Huban hopes that the Consolidated Facilities Committee can meet again by the end of the month to finalize plans for this consultant.

8. Old Business/Citizen Speak Topic Response

- Mr. Fay was asked to email his comments from this evening to School Committee members.
- If anyone wishes to make a donation to the Walkathon being held September 26, 2009 or perhaps sponsor a student, they can contact Steve Traister (straister@miltonps.org), Kristan Bagley-Jones, or Laura Kessler.

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

Move: G. Pavlicek

Second: M. Kelly

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

Meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.