

Minutes of the School Committee
Regular Meeting
Milton High Library
April 3, 2013

Committee Present: Glenn Pavlicek, Chair; Mary Kelly, Leroy Walker, Becky Padera, (Ms. Bagley-Jones arrived late); and Student Rep Acadia Ryder

Staff Present: Mary Gormley, Superintendent and John Phelan, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Personnel.

Call to Order

The Chair called the April 3, 2013 meeting of the School Committee to order at 7:03 pm

Approve Agenda: The chairman approved the agenda for April 3, 2013 after removing Item 8a (Policy BA)

Citizen Speak – (Policy BEDH – 15 minutes)

Approval of Minutes Mr. Pavlicek entertained a motion to approve the minutes of March 6, 2013 with no edits. (Attachment)

Move: Mr. Walker

Second: Ms. Sheridan

Vote: 5-0-0

Superintendent's Report

Topic One: Milton High School Boys Basketball Team (Division 2 South Sectional Finalists) came to School Committee. Coach Sean LoPresti was accompanied by Team Captains AJ Flanagan and Tyler Greene. The team received congratulations from the School Committee.

** note *** Ms. Bagley Jones arrived at 7:09 pm.

Topic Two: Milton High School Site Council (Attachment). Principal James Jette, Vice Principal Michelle Kreuzer, along with Community Representatives Michael Zullas and Vicki McCarthy; Parent Representative Veronica Guerrero-Macia, Nancy Barber and Betty White came to present the School Improvement Plan. Missing from the site council was Ben Kelly, Vicky McCarthy and Ariana Keith (student). Mr. Jette presented a PowerPoint on some of the highlights of the year at Milton High School. He said MHS offers 20 AP courses, which is one of the highest in the area. Other highlights from the data:

All three MCAS subjects increase in the number of students scoring proficient/advanced from 2011 to 2012.

ELA: 96% scored proficient/advanced in 2012

Math: 63% advanced in 2011 to 67% in 2012

Biology: 75% proficient/advanced in 2011 to 82% in 2012.

No ELA failures, but five students in Needs Improvement category

Math failures decreased from 3% to 2%

100% of 2011-12 eligible seniors participated in the SAT exam while continuing to outperform the national average.

Participating in AP exams has increased while the percentage of qualifying scores on the AP exams increased from 54% to 66%.

Mr. Jette addressed the issue of why Milton was not mentioned among the top AP schools in the region. The reason is because our students are already high performing, and large percentages are enrolled in AP courses.

He also talked about the success of the collaborative time initiative. Ms. Kruezer talked about starting the Milton High Happenings blog and a MHS Twitter account. She said they are continuing Naviance for college planning, and getting out good news out to local media. Mr. Jette said that the Parent Information Night is very well-attended; and they plan to invite students from elementary and middle to come to MHS to see the debate team, robotics club and other clubs in action, as part of an effort to keep quality students in the district. Also, they are planning an AP info night. Mr. Jette also talked about the community relationships they've built, including Schools to Careers Partnership.

Mr. Jette said the first list of College Acceptances has been compiled, and this year, students have been accepted to many of the top schools in the nation, including MIT, Brown, BC, Northeastern and Harvard. Mr. Zullas, who is on the site council, talked about the new policies, technology, dress codes, etc., as did Mrs. Queally. Finally, Mr. Jette said he would like to re-implement Speech as a trial course or an elective at MHS.

To view the entire presentation, visit this site:

<http://www.miltonps.org/documents/MHS-SchoolCommittee040313.pdf>

Ms. Padera asked about the status of the peer-counseling program for drug and/or counseling issues. Mr. Jette noted that he met with Dr. Knight on March 14th and Ms. Kruezer reported that they applied for a grant for a peer counseling program.

Ms. Kelly congratulated the site council on the quality of their report. She thought it was important to spread the word about this presentation.

Topic Three: Consolidated Facilities Report (Attachment); Consolidated Facilities Director William Ritchie and Operations Manager Robert Mayhew. After a difficult winter with extraordinary snow removal duties, Mr. Mayhew noted that the custodians did a great job.

Mr. Ritchie made a presentation on the Consolidated Facilities department, which is now about a year and a half old. He said he would like to hire a full time painter/carpenter, and outlined the goals of the CF department as follows:

Continue to evaluate and consolidate vendor contracts for efficiency/cost savings

Continue to reduce energy consumption for cost savings and recommend Energy Grants in all School/Town Buildings

Continue to utilize in-house skilled staff in order to program and maintain our sophisticated Electrical, Plumbing and HVAC systems, as well as roofing, painting, carpentry, and grounds maintenance.

A few years ago, Mr. Richie began participating in the "SchoolDude" software program. Since starting this, his department has completed 1600 work orders and is helping to track everything. He also talked about the bi-directional antenna for the high school building, which was a \$680,000 project.

To view the entire presentation, visit this site:

<http://www.miltonps.org/documents/SC04-03-13Facilities.pdf>

Ms. Kelly complimented Mr. Ritchie for always looking for cost savings. She asked for an update on the offsite solar panels and wanted to know if the town-side with also be doing this? Mr. Ritchie said the attorneys are reviewing the contracts now. Ms. Kelly also asked about the cellphone tower at the PMS. Although the School Committee rejected the idea a few years ago, Ms. Kelly asked if the schools could still pursue this. Mr. Ritchie replied that he would be willing to look into this. Ms. Kelly also asked how often the CFD plans to sweep the buildings for non-approved appliances, such as refrigerators.

Ms. Sheridan noted that Mr. Ritchie has won several awards from local and national groups for his "green" initiatives. She also said that regarding square feet, there are 680,000 sq. ft. and we have 25 custodians. She said at one time, we had 32 custodians managing 400,000 sq. feet of space and asked if our staffing levels are acceptable.

Ms. Gormley thanked Mr. Ritchie for his report and noted that Mr. Tony Cichello also deserves thanks for getting the CF concept going.

Happenings: Finalist for Assistant Superintendent Position. The committee has been interviewing for Tucker principal, as well and they will provide updates on that search. Also, Frank Schroth visited MHS and did tutorial on town government to prepare the high school Debate Team for the Candidate Night on Tuesday, April 9th. Ms. Gormley noted that town elections are April 30th. Also, representatives from MECA came to MHS and congratulated Eileen Mullen for being chosen as the Outstanding Educator. Two closing notes: The MFE's Teacher of the Year nominations are out and due on April 12th. Summer Enrichment info will be coming out. Also, Milton did submit a letter to the Campaign for Proficiency. Mr. Walker asked to confirm that Tucker gets art and science in the summer enrichment program.

Chairman's Report

Topic One: Superintendent's Mid-Cycle Review. Ms. Kelly said she's confused about the process. From a policy perspective, what next? Ms. Sheridan noted that the committee hasn't changed its policy to align with this evaluation process yet. They are in the first year of a two year cycle. We should do a "slight" update in June. She said the goal is to go through the process once and get feedback of the committee. Ms. Gormley said she called other superintendents who are going through the cycle to see how they have handled it. There is no detail on what school committee's reaction to the updates

should be. Committee members made positive comments about the Leadership Walks, the fiscal goals, the STEM program and the communication efforts.

Ms. Gormley said she would like to take snippets of all the research materials in the binder and give them to teachers. She suggested brainstorming ideas on how to execute this. Also, Ms. Kelly asked, regarding student outcomes, do we have testing that we're doing? Do we have interim testing that shows progress?

Finance Subcommittee Report

Ms. Kelly reported that there is nothing to vote on this week. The subcommittee will put together a presentation for Town Meeting, if needed. They are keeping a close eye on the end of the year numbers. Mr. Walker said they are looking at the budget to identify budget overages and underages. He also requested the committee should try to find some money for a strategic plan. The estimates for this are approximately \$25,000 and he would like to have it in place so it can drive FY15.

Policy Subcommittee Report

Ms. Sheridan said there are several policies up for re-approval. It was suggested they be grouped together for voting. The first group was as follows;

- b. Policy BEDH, Public Participation at School Committee Meetings, Vote to Reapprove
- c. Policy BEDJ, Broadcasting/Taping of School Committee Meetings, Vote to Reapprove
- d. Policy BEE, Special Procedures for Conducting Public Hearings, Vote to Reapprove

The chairman entertained a motion to approve b, c and d without any edits.

Move: Ms. Sheridan

Second: Mr. Walker

Vote: 6-0-0

The next policy for consideration was letter "e" on the agenda -- Policy BG, Policy Development, Vote to Reapprove.

Move: Ms. Sheridan

Second: Mr. Walker

Discussion: Ms. Sheridan noted there were some minor changes to the policy. The document handed out is the revised version. Ms. Kelly said that although she was not at the last meeting, she wishes the committee hadn't deleted policies. Also, if the subcommittee is going through the entire policy manual, she suggested that it would be really helpful when, if edits are made, we can see the original "marked up" version, or tracked changes. On the policies that have been deleted, Ms. Kelly indicated that she would like to open them back up. Ms. Sheridan explained that the Policy Subcommittee decided to delete some policies. They have been working on the policy binder for a year, and they've only gotten as far as "B" -- so this will take some time. She said the

decision was made to delete because some policies are covered by Mass. General Law, or the Ed Reform Act in an effort to streamline. Also, some of the policies are not enforceable, which is why they were deleted.

Ms. Sheridan said that if the committee wants them to go back and "track change" the policies already re-approved, she would be okay with this.

Ms. Kelly reiterated that it's difficult to see the changes. She said that regarding the deletions, many of our policies cite Mass. General Law, and that's not sufficient cause to delete them. She worried they might not be "getting it right." She noted that in the past, they hired an advisor to help with the policy manual. Mr. Walker said that he is a leading proponent for rescinding policies that are unenforceable. But regarding "getting it right," Mr. Walker said he thinks we have been getting it right. He said if it's the will of the committee to go through each policy together, then it should be done by the full school committee. Ms. Bagley Jones said that going through the policy book at meetings is untenable, but she liked the idea of tracked changes and of hiring a consultant to help. Mr. Walker noted that if it's necessary to submit side-by-side comparisons of each policy being re-approved, then a Policy Subcommittee is no longer necessary. Ms. Kelly thought there should be a goal for the policy subcommittee. The chairman noted there was a motion on the floor to adopt Policy BG as edited.

Vote: 6-0-0

Committee members moved on to Policy "f" on the agenda (Policy BHE, Use of Electronic Messaging by School Committee Members.) This was a vote to Re-approve. Ms. Sheridan noted that they deleted final paragraph, which discusses public records law and Open Meeting Law. She suggested that at the next meeting, she could provide the tracked changes. However, she then moved to table the remainder of the policies until the subcommittee can provide tracked changes or side-by-side documents. Ms. Kelly asked if it's procedurally correct to vote on these policies if they are the First Reading? Mr. Walker said that since they are trying to review these policies in a productive manner, then doing a first reading, second reading then vote won't be the best method. The chairman offered to look up the procedure regarding re-approval of policies and made a motion to defer the rest of the policies until the next meeting.

By unanimous consent, the Committee tabled the remaining policies.

The Chair entertained a motion to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing negotiation strategy with the MEA and AFSCME and to adjourn directly from Executive Session and not return to Open Session.

Move: Mr. Walker

Second: Ms. Sheridan

Roll Call Vote: 6-0-0

The meeting adjourned at 10:06 pm.