

Minutes of the School Committee
Regular Meeting
Milton High Library
September 19, 2012

Committee Present: Glenn Pavlicek, Chair; Lynda-Lee Sheridan, Vice Chair; Mary Kelly, Kristan Bagley-Jones, Leroy Walker, Becky Padera.

Not Present: Lynda-Lee Sheridan, Mary Kelly.

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

Call to Order

The Chair called the September 19th meeting of the School Committee to order at 7:04 pm.

Approve Agenda

The committee approved the agenda after adding a presentation from the Milton PAC as the first item in the Superintendent's Report. Also, insert a brief MCAS update after the the MHS time sub-committee. Instead of Brian Borde, Dyann Crowley will speak. Drop the FY14 Budget Calendar (6c) Under elementary assignment, there is a new piece of data added (attachment) Also, in executive session, there will be no approval of minutes. They will discuss electric power and energy contracts. Declared approved.

Citizens Speak

Lori Bilewicz came to let citizens know about Celebrate Milton event. She also announced the winners of this year's Community Builders event. They are as follows: Sherry Holder Watts of Celebrate Milton, Christine Mines of the Milton High Diversity Committee, Marcia Uretsky, principal of Tucker Elementary School and Frank Schroth of My Town Matters.

Next, Jessica Laine and Christine Howley came to speak about a recent article in the Boston Globe which discussed the co-taught classroom. They both have had very positive experiences with this program.

Next, Carol Seidman came to make a few comments about the French program and students on IEPs.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Pavlicek entertained a motion to approve the August 28th minutes of the Full Milton School Committee at Finance Subcommittee with the following edits: In the top row change AM meeting to PM meeting.

Move: Mr. Walker

Second: Ms. Padera

Vote: 2-0-2 (Mr. Pavlicek and Ms. Bagley Jones abstained.)

The chair entertained a motion to approve the Minutes of July 25th, 2012.

Move: Ms. Bagley Jones

Second: Ms. Padera

Vote: 3-0-1 (Mr. Walker abstained)

The chairman entertained a motion to approve the minutes of August 8, 2012

Move: Mr. Walker

Second: Ms. Bagley Jones

Ms. Jones expressed concern about the format of the minutes being too specific and Mr. Pavlicek suggested that dialogue not include specific names going forward.

Vote: 4-0-0

Superintendent's Report

Topic One:

Gerard Vitti came to speak on behalf of the Special Education Parents' Advisory Council. His family has participated in French, in English, in co-taught, etc. He came to speak in favor of a proposed cap on the French Immersion program. He felt that there was not a large enough pool of student to act as role models in the co-taught classroom. He stated that the PAC is strongly in favor of a cap on French. As a group, the PAC rejects economic argument; we reject the elimination of English and a French-only solution. He urged the committee to act quickly on the proposed cap/lottery.

*** Note: Mary Kelly arrived at 7:35*

Topic Two: Members of the Milton High School Athletic Hall of Fame came to speak. Board members Dyanne Crowley and Margaret Gibbons, along with Chairman of the Board Michael Goodless wanted to let the community know that October 20th will be the induction and unveiling at Copeland Field House.

Topic Three: Milton High School Collaborative Time Subcommittee, which included Vice Principals Yolanda Beech and Michelle Kreuzer, teachers Dyanne Crowley, Tom Shaw, Cathy Queally and Vernon Nelson. The subcommittee talked about designated time for faculty and staff to work together to review curriculum, analyze data, share and enhance instructional practices and increase student achievement. Members of the subcommittee discuss the need to review grading practices and other collaborative efforts. There is currently not enough time in a formal setting to discuss this. Collaborative time will bring the sense that we're a team, working together towards a common goal.

It was also pointed out that NEASC made some time-related recommendations for Milton High School. The NEASC recommendation was that Milton High School would create collaborative time, with a deadline of February, 2013. Several proposals were shared, including a late start, early release dates. Most staff and PTFSO preferred Early Release. The original plan was to have seven sessions scheduled

during the school year, with three hours each. However, because the administration understands the need for time to communicate with families, so they can prepare, they are proposing five sessions for this year, beginning in January. There would be a total of 15 hours (not the 21 hours noted on chart.) The time for these sessions came from restructuring the Group Guidance period and Advisory period. The entire proposal can be viewed here:

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

School Committee members then asked questions about the proposal. Ms. Bagley Jones said she thought the proposal was great and it makes sense. She asked the committee to explain why Milton participates in NEASC accreditation. Mr. Jette replied that having the NEASC accreditation makes our students more competitive when applying to colleges. Ms. Padera asked about how students are matched with advisors and Mr. Jette replied that it is done alphabetically. Ms. Kelly asked for confirmation that instructional time would remain the same and was told that it would. Mr. Walker asked if this would have a direct and measurable impact on student achievement. If so, how will it be measured? Ms. Gormley mentioned the PSAT and the SATs as two assessments that could be used for this purpose. Mr. Walker said he would like to see how it impacts student achievement and teacher retention. He also asked for detail on Slide 6 of the presentation, which was a list of NEASC recommendations. He would like these prioritized and would like the School Committee to be part of the prioritization process. He would like that discussion before we get to the point when we're responding to NEASC in February. Ms. Kruezer noted that NEASC prioritizes the recommendations at the time they are submitted. Ms. Kelly said that the School Committee wants to review the recommendations and weigh in on them. For example, the category of "21st Century Learning Expectations," may or may not be in line with the School Committee's values. Also, she expressed concern that this proposal would be subject to collective bargaining. Margaret Gibbons, who was an audience member, was asked to speak on this issue. She reported that she supports the proposal and does not anticipate any contractual issues with the Collaborative Time proposal, but if necessary, an MOA could be drafted. Other issues surrounding this proposal included concerns about dismissing students halfway through the day and how that would impact sports and after-school clubs. Transportation in the form of late buses would be provided to East and West Milton.

*** Note*** Ms. Sheridan arrived at 8:57 pm.

Other comments on the Collaborative Time proposal included comparing other communities' solutions, and how to accommodate working parents. Mr. Walker made a motion to accept the Time Proposal #1, with the understanding that we will work to ensure transportation for students.

Move: Mr. Walker

Second: Ms. Bagley Jones

Discussion: Ms. Kelly said she would like to defer this issue to the next meeting to seek legal counsel and vote it at the next meeting. Mr. Pavlicek said he has no problem asking counsel, or taking the vote and having it nullified if it violates the contract.

Vote: 5-1-0 (Ms. Kelly voted No)

* Note: Ms. Kelly noted as a point of order that the meeting agenda does not include a vote. Mr. Pavlicek said he will consult counsel on both issues and if the committee needs to revote it, they will.

Topic Four: MCAS Data Update: Mr. Phelan made a presentation on new accountability status and the way data is presented. He announced that Milton, as a district, has achieved Level 1 status. This means that all six schools have achieved the highest level of accountability status. Only 25% of schools in the state have reached Level 1. In addition, Glover and Collicot Schools were Commended for High Progress and Narrowing Achievement Gap, respectively. He went through the presentation, outlining how each school performed, as well as each subgroup. A new category of "High Needs," encompasses some of the previous subgroup designations. The presentation can be viewed here:

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

School Committee members then asked questions and made comments on the presentation. Mr. Walker said he is proud that every school achieved Level 1, but he noted that African American students did not make the target and there has not been enough progress in closing the proficiency gap. Ms. Kelly noted that at some schools, low income student also did not make the target. Questions about the new subgroups categories and how best to interpret the data were asked.

Happenings: Ms. Gormley noted that Ms. Sheridan has been awarded the Community Volunteer of the Year by the Milton Rotary Club. In addition, Milton High School recently got a visit from Governor Deval Patrick, who came to celebrate the Farm to School initiative. Dates for upcoming Open Houses were given, and the Yom Kippur holiday was noted. Music lesson signup were very successful, with 150 students participating. The Milton Hospital Healthwalk was announced, as well as a "Save the Date" for Celebrate Milton on October 7th. The MFE's Monster Dash is upcoming, and the annual MPACE fundraising will be coming soon.

Enrollment Chart: Ms. Kelly asked to discuss the enrollment chart, as well as look at some of the higher-enrollment classrooms. She noted that English classes in Collicot in 4th grade are at 26 and 25 and asked for ways to address this. Mr. Phelan explained how the classes are assigned and how some classes might be as high as 26. The Tucker fifth-grade co-taught has 20 students, which Ms. Kelly also thought was high. Mr. Phelan explained that fifth-graders are mixed for 70% of the day, so the number may not be that high for the entire day.

Finance Subcommittee

Topic One: 4th Quarter Report and Year End Summary (Attachment) The chairman opted to hold this item for Monday's meeting. Ms. Gormley noted that Mr. Gillis was still working on this document and would like to hold this item for Finance Subcommittee on Monday morning.

Topic Two: Milton Public Schools Proposal to Capital Committee (Attachment) (Vote).

Ms. Kelly asked to defer this item, since there were many edits on this request. Mr. Gillis noted that the revisions have been reflected in the new document being presented tonight. Mr. Bill Ritchie, chair of the Consolidated Facilities department came to discuss the spreadsheet. As part of the town's Capital Improvement Planning Committee, a townwide capital plan is being developed. A spreadsheet listed the items requested by the schools, broken down into two categories, technology and facilities.

School Committee members noted that the list should be prioritized. There are approximately \$200,000 in capital requests. Among the items discussed was the administration of Brooks Field, which was installed in 2002 and has nearly exceeded its life expectancy. There is a request to repair/replace the field. In addition, security cameras are being requested for the elementary schools. Mr. Ritchie said he would prioritize Brooks Field, then roof work as the top two. Mr. Walker said he is comfortable with the entire Facilities list and moved to submit the list of \$200,000 to the Capital Committee.

Move: Mr. Walker

Ms. Kelly made a friendly amendment to recommend the entire five-year plan to the Capital Committee with the understanding that Mr. Walker would prioritize if necessary and it would continue to be reviewed by the School Committee in subsequent years. Mr. Walker accepted the amendment.

Second: Ms. Kelly

Vote: 6-0-0

Mr. Walker noted that would like to speak with Mr. Pattison about the technology portion of the budget and asked that he be invited to the Finance Subcommittee meeting.

Topic Three: FY14 Budget Calendar (Attachment) This item was removed from the agenda.

Chairman's Report (2:57:56 on the DVD)

Topic One: Elementary Program Assignment (Attachment) Mr. Pavlicek began by talking about the attachment and why some data was missing. The columns with a triple asterisk indicated that the data pool was too small to report. Also, the memo on national data on Immersion Programs was explained. Seven districts were profiled by Dr. Fisher with details on if and how they limit enrollment. Mr. Phelan explained how she did her research. 38 states have immersion programs; with 448 total schools; 151 school districts with immersion programs. (3:01:53)

i. Data (Attachment) Dr. Fisher

ii. Timeline (Attachment) This is a list of dates as to when things have happened on this topic and what is upcoming. Mr. P said we have offered either program or home school; now, we may get neither. Sibling preference needs to be debated. Enormous # of scenarios to play out. It's better to have a plan and not need it

than to need a plan and not have it. MK: would the admin be ready to present options for the next SC meeting. MG: yes. at least two options. MK: we should have forums to have feedback from the community. I would prefer to vote on this before december. by thanksgiving, to have this settled. Should we schedule forums? GP: our meetings are rather full. I think we should set aside some time to do it. We'll have to work it through. We'll get reaction once things are presented. People are going to want to weigh in with their preference. At least one Open Forum is good idea. LW: I think this has gone on much too long. We owed them a vote. The timeline is misleading. The Sup't recommended capping, but nothing we could vote on. I think Nov and Dec. is much too late. We should try to go for Oct. 3rd, but at the latest, Oct. 17th. We're doing everyone a disservice at this point. KBJ: people can use the regular channels. Let's get two concrete proposals. Not sure we need to have a meeting, or a forum. GP: once you get the details of a plan, people would have specific questions. I think this requires an opportunity. BP: we could address this on first grade night. LW: i did watch the sept 5th meeting. why are we asking for 2 scenarios? why not just a recommendation? MG: i have worked with central office and leadership team to work on a plan. I have one. I could do another. LW: Give us your best plan. MK: what is the plan intended to to? If too many people chose we have a system that from a classroom perspective, we don't have balanced classroom. make up classrooms with good demographics and equal class size. if you look at enrollment charts, the discrepancy is so large is like two different systems. I believe we should do no language immersion until 2nd grade. I think we owe it to every single student to make classrooms that are well balanced . that takes a lot. limiting how many classrooms of French. but, what does this need to be balanced? LW: we want balanced classrooms, we want equivalent performance. MK: just hearing and reading what's going on. I'm not sure everyone understands what the issue really is. It is that our system has been driven by parents making the choices, and not the educators. LW: this is a success story. we've created a program that's so popular. WE didn't anticipate the impact its popularity would have on other programs. MK: I have been sitting here for 10 years. . for 10 years, we've had this disparity. Because we haven't addressed it, it's gotten to this point. By letting parents choose, instead of educators, we are where we are. LW: how do we know that this has existed for 10 years? MK: when did the student assignment plan, we knew this. unfortunately... LW: we identified these gaps and chose to ignore thm? MK: we chose not to deal with them.

LW: can we defer sup't evaluation to next meeting?

KBJ: on the Fisher handout, how do we do this? Two enrollment periods? can we have more data? Can we do evaluation for those?

At our next meeting, are we going to vote? No, on the 3rd, we get the plan, on the 17th, we vote on it. When will the plan be distributed? MK: we should establish a timeline and abide by it.

MG: we will have a plan by Thursday. MK: Let's hear on the 3rd and vote on the 17th. Do we need a middle meeting to inform the public ? Let's hold the night of the 26th.

b. Revised School Committee Calendar (Attachment) WE have it, and we just revised it again. Add the 26th. LLS wanted to know if anything was changed prior to tonight. Charlene will check it and mail it.

c. Superintendent's Evaluation LW said let's move it to the 3rd.
Move: Walker
SEcond: MK

d. Strategic Plan: MG said XXXXX

e. Duct Work Bid Acceptance (Attachment) (Vote)
Mr. Ritchie alluded to this during his presentation. The bids were open and they came in within the parameters. This is a contract between us and the low bidder. Needs a motion to authorize SC to sign a contract with Cooling & Heating Specialist Inc. of Newton in the amount of \$544,007
Move: LLS
Second: LW
Matt Gillis noted that the only difference between this and the Glover/Pierce bigds is we hired an architect. Get work started in the fall and finish in the spring. MK asked for specifics on amount and ...
Vote: Unanimous.

Future agenda items: MK: asked if we need to put "Vote" next to items that are to be voted on. Is this a policy?

Topic One

Topic Two

DETAIL HERE

Facilities Subcommittee

New Business

The Next School Committee meeting is scheduled for DATE

Old Business:

Citizens Speak: Peter Keohane, came to talk about FI in July. He didn't like the idea of late start/early release. What about the possibilities? Why not start it at 2:30 and go to 6 pm? The other is to do an early release, throw a party in the gym until normal release time. Something on a lesser scale. Regarding capital expenditures, lights for vandals is a waste of money. Cameras help you catch them after the fact. Nothing happens with the police. Regarding FI, I strongly endorse the meeting on the 3rd, then a vote on the 17th to give people time to agenda. I would like to point out something that nobody said. Nobody said a single significant advantage to the English. Choose the superior program, which is the French program. There's no getting around the fact that FI students perform better academically, minority, low income. (does Milton have low income??? where are they?) There are plenty of bright kids in English, but what can we say about them? If they had been in FI, they would have shined brighter? No need to maintain a program that doesn't provide them with anything. It's interesting that after that meeting, took "hasty action" to revise the curriculum in English-only. STEM came up, and it's already been implemented. It's starting to sound a little "gimmicky" to me. Lego blocks is not engineering to me. If that program has merit, why should it be denied to FI program? The purpose of STEM is to get more parents to choose English. Give us a reason.

Mr. Vitti, in response to that testimony. I have a daughter with an intellectual disability. But she's as important a human being as anybody else. She walks, talks, laughs. The previous testimony is exclusionary, elitist, I pledge Allegiance..... libery and justice for all. Vote for Justice for All and support the PAC.

Adrienne Sullivan: This is in fact, a democracy in action. Wonderful opportunity to speak to the process. We have a K-12 environment that is absolutely fantastic. Keep in mind we have the 2010 language report. we have the administration recommendation. we also have the fiscal reality....it's hard to follow the paperwork. in terms of the timeline, this was a fiscal issue last year. if you combine this, fiscal, economic, social and political concerns.

Next Meeting Agenda Items

negotiations with power company. we could add this to exec session.

move to adjourn: GP.
second : kelly

The meeting adjourned at 10:53 pm.