

Minutes of the School Committee
Regular Meeting
Milton High Library
October 3rd, 2012

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

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 October 3rd meeting of the School Committee to order at 7:01 pm.

Approve Agenda

The committee approved the agenda after requesting the following edits: The chairman requested a 350th Anniversary Committee update be added as Item 6e. Ms. Sheridan requested the committee move up item 7a earlier in the meeting and the chairman also requested to move up the Rick Neely presentation (6c). In addition, Item 8b was moved to 10/17. During the meeting, they deleted 6d (Sup't Eval) and moved to table the minutes of August 14th. They requested edits to the Wellness Policy, which will be brought back for another reading at a later date. They also moved the Capital Committee/Technology proposal to Finance Subcommittee, and later, the 10/17 SC meeting. Item 8d was pulled, e was pulled, and f was tabled. Item 9i needs to come back with edits.

Citizens Speak:

Gerry Vitti came to speak on behalf of the PAC. He reminded the committee that the First Grade Assignment is an issue for all children, including those with disabilities. Asked SC to consider these children when making decision about programming.

Gary Kelly came to speak as president of MHS Boosters. He wanted the public to know about the most important fundraiser of the year, on October 23rd. Swing for Sports. The fundraiser will be held at Wollaston Golf Club. Golf Tournament and Tennis Round-Robin.

Mike Drosdick, the father of two children came to talk about the proposed cap to French Immersion. He described himself as a "straddle family" with one older sibling in French and a younger sibling who hasn't entered the program yet. Opposed to the cap, or allow for sibling preference.

Stanford Brown, a parent of a current kindergarten student, and he feels he was promised access to FI program. Asked for a "phase-in" plan for capping. Also felt that Minority, Low Income, IEP and Gender subsets should be given preference.

Approval of Minutes

August 15th School Committee Retreat:

Move: Ms. Bagley Jones

Second: Ms. Kelly

Discussion: On page 4, instead of "proposed putting science teachers in the classroom," Ms. Sheridan clarified that she mentioned that other districts do this. She did not propose that Milton should do it. Ms. Kelly said the last page seemed unclear, with two motions for the same item. She moved to table the minutes of August 15 until the next meeting.

No Vote

Superintendents Report:

Topic One: Grade One Assignment Plan (Attachment) Ms. Gormley presented her proposal for First Grade Assignment as follows:

Institute a cap starting with 2013-14 school year with the following steps:

1. Each year determine the level of interest in the Grade 1 English and French programs
2. Accommodate and assign all student to Grade 1 English who select English
3. Hold School-based lotteries for FI seats
4. Determine the number of Grade One English and French Immersion sections and class sizes at each school.
5. Assign students to FI classes via school-based lottery system.

Ms. Gormley then went through each step and gave detail at to how to implement. It was noted that on Item #5, there would be no sibling preference. Also, a wait-list will be created at each school.

Outcomes: The plan for a "lottery/capping" for the FI program recommended by the Superintendent will drive the enrollment numbers toward optimal learning environments for all students. The plan will increase enrollment numbers in the English program; eliminate single strands in English; increase options for inclusion programs; increase the pool of role models for co-taught classrooms; and increase the flexibility of classroom assignment. The complete plan is posted at:

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

After the presentation, the chairman asked for comments/questions. Committee members asked about building configurations and how many students are in Grade One (330); to explain why FI classrooms start at 26 in Grade 1. Ms. Kelly asked if class size in Grade One FI could be lowered to 24 or 25. There was discussion about the legality

of a “weighted lottery,” which would give preference to certain subsets. It was agreed that FI classes should remain at 26 and it would be reassessed in future years. It was determined that the 15th section of first grade, known as the “auxiliary class” would be either French or English, to be determined by the Superintendent, dependent on enrollment. There was further discussion and rationale behind the decision not to grandfather current K classes; or offer sibling preference. Ms. Kelly said she was not in favor of holding a separate lottery for non-MPS kindergarten students. It was noted that waitlists would be maintained throughout the summer, but would end on the first day of school. Mr. Walker asked if members should vote on the proposal, but it was decided that citizens should have the opportunity to weigh in on the plan, and he agreed to delay the vote.

Topic Two: (moved up from Chairman’s Report) Town Government Study Update. Rick Neely, chairman of the Town Government Study, came to present an update. This group was appointed by the selectmen and the town moderator and were charged with exploring the various aspects of town government, including regionalization; consolidation of services; creation of a town manger position; and combining town services. Mr. Neely also outlined a program offered by the DOR’s Bureau of Local Services which will assist towns in conducting a financial review of all departments and asked for the School Committee’s participation.

Topic Three: (moved up from Policy Subcom Report) Policy IHAMD, Wellness Policy. Jackie Morgan, Food Service Director, came to discuss the re-approval of this policy, which is mandated by the state. She outlined certain legislative changes made over the summer and how the MPS will enact those changes. In addition, the Wellness Committee made some changes to this policy. School districts must now restrict what can be sold or offered to students not only during the school day, but 30 minutes before and 30 minutes after school. There was some discussion about whether bake sales would still be allowed and Ms. Morgan said they would be permitted, but the products cannot be sold to children, only to adults. Mr. Pavlicek asked Ms. Morgan to rework the policy with several edits. It would be given a second reading at the next meeting.

Topic Four: MCAS/PPI Presentation. Assistant Superintendent John Phelan and Milton High School Math Department Head Courtney Walsh made a presentation on the new reporting data from MCAS testing. Among the changes:

- AYP is being replaced with a new value called PPI: Progress & Performance Index.
- NCLB goal of 100 percent proficient replaced with new goal of reducing proficiency gaps by half by 2017
- Schools and districts categorized by Level 1-5 instead of NCLB categories (e.g., Needs Improvement, etc.)
- PPI calculation includes student growth (in ELA and math) along w/ achievement (CPI)
- Achievement (CPI) portion includes science!
- Measures for a new “High Needs” subgroup will be calculated
- PPI calculation now gives credit for increasing the percentage of students in Advanced (CPI calculation provides no points for this)

Mr. Phelan explained how the new data is collected and analyzed and described how districts can earn “extra credit” in two ways, by either decreasing the percent of students in Warning/Failing category by 10 percent; or by increasing the percent of students scoring Advanced by ten percent.

Also, the subgroup category has been reconfigured. Among the changes is a new subgroup, “High Needs,” which combines groups of students from some of the previous subgroups and includes students with disabilities; English language learners or former English language learners; and economically disadvantaged students.

The entire presentation is posted online:

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

Members of the School Committee asked questions about the new reporting system, including why Milton didn’t get the top score of 100 for our graduation/dropout rate. Mr. Phelan explained that if you average the last four years, Milton’s score is 93, which is well above state expectations. Ms. Sheridan asked how long English Language Learners stay in the system and Ms. Kelly asked questions about how the CPI is calculated.

Topic Five (moved up from Finance Subcommittee Report) Bob Pattison, Technology Director came to discuss the Capital Committee Proposal for Technology needs. Among the needs of the technology department are replacing the servers, upgrading network storage, adding wireless capabilities to all six schools, upgrading the phone system, adding software updates and the replacement of several PCs. Mr. Pattison also submitted estimates for a program to introduce iPads for elementary, middle and high school students, at a total cost of \$1.8 million. He explained that this is the next generation of delivering educational content. It is an easier and more versatile path to achieving 1:1 computing and requires less infrastructure.

School committee members asked about PARC testing, which is the state’s plan to replace the MCAS in the next few years. It is hoped that the PARC test will be administered electronically, so the move to tablet-based computing would fit with these expectations. Mr. Pattison was asked to prioritize the needs for technology. Maintaining the classroom computers at a high level is a priority and beginning the process of installing wifi in every building is important for the immediate future. In general, the priority would be wifi and tablets. The discussion then turned to Smartboards and whether every classroom is now equipped. There are still some classrooms at each level without Smartboards. Mr. Walker suggested the district should commit to finishing the Smartboard project. Ms. Gormley said the finance subcommittee meeting should be moved to the evening of October 15th and Mr. Pattison could attend to give more information on the technology needs.

Topic Six: Happenings. Registration for Adult Ed is taking place this week and the brochure is available online. No school on Friday or Monday for Columbus Day. Eighth-Grade Info night will be held October 11th. The Athletic Hall of Fame ceremony will be held October 20th and Swing for Sports will be held October 23rd. Hairspray will be performed on the 26th and 27th. The next School Committee meeting will be held October 17th. Celebrate Milton will be held on October 6th. Special town meeting on October 22nd, and Monster Dash on October 28th. The Milton Public Library’s annual

gala will be held on October 18th. Also, the Chris Herren event will be held October 18th.

Chairman's Report

Topic One: Revised School Committee Calendar. The chairman recommended the IT proposal be moved to October 17th. Ms. Sheridan suggested the agenda items be prioritized for the next meeting.

Topic Two: Request for Qualifications, Legal Counsel (Attachment) (Vote) The chairman entertained a motion to issue an RFQ to examine the contract with the school counsel. The cost to post this RFQ in Lawyer's Weekly is \$400 per week. Mr. Gillis said there is an item in the budget to advertise job postings. He entertained a motion to issue a RFQ to examine the contract with school counsel. Mr. Pavlicek said the committee should create a screening committee to give their recommendation to the full School Committee.

Move: Mr. Walker

Second: Ms. Sheridan

Discussion: Mr. Walker recommended the ad be run for a three week period. Ms. Kelly suggested an edit to the ad, using the term "two-year contract," rather than setting specific dates. Ms. Sheridan reiterated that the committee is not issuing an RFQ because it is unhappy with the present counsel. Ms. Kelly said that MASC recommends this process be done periodically. Ms. Sheridan asked that, since the RFQ process would bring us to the end of November/beginning of December, close to the time when teacher contract negotiations begin, would this impact deliberations? Ms. Kelly said it should not impact and it makes sense to move forward. It was decided to issue the RFQ for three weeks.

Vote: 6-0-0

The chairman decided to move the Superintendent's Evaluation to the October 17th.

Topic Three: Update on 350th Anniversary celebrations. Ms. Sheridan said the Anniversary Horse Show was a great event and there were 19 different equestrian classes.

Health & Wellness Subcommittee Report

Topic One: Approval of June 8, 2012 minutes (Attachment) (Vote) The chairman noted that the minutes only need to be submitted, not accepted or voted for approval.

Finance Subcommittee Report

Topic One: Fourth Quarter Report and Year End Summary (Attachment) Ms. Kelly asked the committee to accept them as year end statements. The chairman moved to accept the report as their year-end statements as written.

Move: Ms. Sheridan
Second: Ms. Bagley Jones
Vote: 6-0-0

Topic Two: Budget Calendar. She noted that the committee needs a cohesive advancement budget. Mr. Walker said they are deciding on how to frame the advancement budget for warrant committee. It is still being worked on.

Topic Three: The FY12 EOY Report (Attachment) The chair noted that this was just an informative handout, but the committee needs to authorize the chair to sign it. Ms. Gormley said members should review it and send questions to Mr. Gillis. It will be discussed on October 15th. It was decided that members should review it and it would be voted on October 17th.

Topic Four: Negotiations with Power Company/Solar Panels. Ms. Kelly said, as a point of order, she does not like seeing the word “negotiations” on the agenda for Open Session meetings. Mr. Pavlicek said it does not fall within the parameters of Executive Session. Mr. Walker noted there may be a potential litigation aspect to this issue. The chair noted that there must be pending litigation to cause an executive session discussion. Ms. Kelly moved to table this discussion and regroup.

Policy Subcommittee Report

The following policies were submitted for a vote. It was noted that the first three are coming back to the committee because of new gender anti-discrimination laws, which became effective July 2, 2012.

- a. Policy AC, Non-Discrimination, Re-approval, (Attachment) (Vote)
- b. Policy ACA, Non-Discrimination on the Basis of Sex, Re-approval, (Attachment) (Vote)
- c. Policy ACE, Non-Discrimination on the Basis of Disability, 1st Reading, (Attachment) (Vote)
- d. Policy GB, Equal Employment Opportunities, Re-approval, (Attachment) (Vote)
- e. Policy GCF, Professional Staff Hiring, Re-approval, (Attachment) (Vote)
- f. Policy IIB, Instructional Materials, Re-approval, (Attachment) (Vote)
- g. Policy JB, Equal Education Opportunities, Re-approval, (Attachment) (Vote)
- h. Policy JFBB, School Choice, Re-approval, (Attachment) (Vote)

It was necessary to add the phrase “gender identity” to the policies, which are otherwise unchanged. There was a motion to vote policies a, b, d, e, f, g and h, all of which read “re-approval.” Not to include “c” (Policy ACE)

Move: Ms. Bagley Jones
Second: Ms. Sheridan
Vote: 6-0-0

The chair then entertained a motion to adopt policy c (ACE).

Move: Ms. Sheridan

Second: Ms. Bagley Jones

Discussion: Ms. Kelly questioned why there were blank lines for the name and address of a grievance officer in this policy. Ms. Sheridan explained that a coordinator must be named, but it was left blank because the name of the person in this position could change. Mr. Walker said as long as the committee satisfies the requirement that the name is provided to the public, it would be okay. He suggested taking the signature lines off of Page 2 and the top of Page 3. He moved to approve the policy with the modifications suggested by Ms. Kelly. (3 lines stricken)

Vote: 6-0-0

Citizen Speak Topic Response: None

Citizen Speak (Round 2)

James Mulligan got up to speak and thank the Glover staff. His child is having a wonderful year. He also spoke about the Grade One Assignment proposal and supported the no-sibling rule. He said he would like more information on the STEM program.

Jerry Vitti returned to speak and thank the committee and the administration for their work.

The chair entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Move: Mr. Walker

Second: Ms. Sheridan

Role Call Vote: unanimous.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:15 pm.