

Minutes of the School Committee
Regular Meeting
Milton High Library
November 28th, 2012

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

Not Present: 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 November 28th meeting of the School Committee to order at 7:02 pm. He asked for a moment of silence for former MHS principal Roger Connor.

Approve Agenda

The committee approved the agenda. Mr. Walker proposed deferring the discussion of Superintendent's goals until Ms. Kelly is present. He also proposed deferring both Executive Session items. Remove 6g and Item 12 from the agenda.

Citizens Speak

Mr. Hugh Stringer came to speak about an article in the Milton Times, which addressed the achievement gap. He would like to eliminate the terminology, which he said had racial overtones. Michael Maholchic with the Rotary Club of Milton spoke about two opportunities for MPS students -- the International Exchange and the Rotary Youth Leadership Awards Conference. Cynthia Guise and Chris Navin spoke on behalf of the Citizens for a Diverse Milton, also to express their views on the achievement gap issue. They agreed with Mr. Stringer that students of color should be compared to the students with whom they are sharing the classroom.

** note: Ms. Bagley Jones arrived at 7:11 pm ***

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Pavlicek entertained a motion to approve the following minutes of the Milton School Committee.

Minutes of October 3, 2012

Move: Ms. Sheridan

Second: Mr. Walker

Discussion: Ms. Sheridan asked for an edit of the October 3rd minutes. She asked for the word "if" on third page should be changed to "it." Also, Mr. Padera noted that the speaker at Citizens Speak was "Mulligan," not "Sullivan."

Vote: 5-0-0

Minutes of November 7th, 2012

Move: Ms. Sheridan

Second: Ms. Padera

Vote: 4-0-1 (Ms. Bagley Jones abstained)

Minutes of October 16th, 2012

Move: Mr. Walker

Second: Ms. Sheridan

Comments: Ms. Sheridan noted that the 16th was a regular meeting, but wondered if there might be too much detail in the minutes. Ms. Bagley Jones pointed out that if a Citizen felt they were being misquoted, there was no recourse. Ms. Padera noted that speaker's remarks at Citizens Speak are always summarized in the minutes.

Vote: 5-0-0

Superintendent's Report

Topic One: Milton Library Foundation Competitive Grant (Attachment). Lori Henry, MPS Elementary School Librarian and Elaine Weischedel, Milton Public Library Children's Librarian, came to discuss a recent collaboration between the Milton Library Foundation and the Milton Public Schools. Ms. Henry and Ms. Weischedel are working to ensure that every student receives a MPL card and subsequent instruction from both Ms. Henry and Ms. Weischedel. Ms. Henry has delivered more than 400 applications to the MPL. Close to 2,000 students got applications and there have been 400 responses. School committee members congratulated the librarians for their efforts.

Topic Two: Milton Foundation for Education's Celebration for Education Co-Chairs Anacristina Kenney and Anne Gatnik spoke to the School Committee about this year's event. The theme is "Live Wire," -- and the event will be held on March 9th, 2013 at the Boston Marriott/Quincy. All proceeds from the event will go toward technology needs for the Milton Public Schools. Also, the co-chairs talked about a raffle which is currently underway. School Committee members thanked the women for their work.

Happenings The superintendent reported that Milton High School's football team beat Braintree on Thanksgiving Day, and concluded their first winning season in 11 years. Pierce will hold Information Night on December 4th; Milton High will hold Financial Aid night for parents on Wednesday, December 5th, which is also School Committee; Pierce will hold Shopping Night on Friday, December 7th; and there will be a small reception on Saturday, December 8th for the donors who helped to install the granite signage at the entrances to Milton High School.

Chairman's Report

Topic One: Approval of the Revised 2012-2013 School Year Calendar (Attachment) to reflect the new half-days. (Vote) The chairman entertained a motion to approve the new, updated school calendar.

Move: Mr. Walker

Second: Ms. Sheridan

Discussion: Ms. Sheridan wants to know if the end date is correct. We have already used a day. Last day will be June 18th as of now. Ms. Bagley Jones wants to be sure that parents don't forget about the early release dates and asked for future reminders. Ms. Padera wants to clarify the dismissal time.

Vote: 5-0-0

Topic Two Request for Qualifications Update. School Committee Member Leroy Walker got 13 responses from law firms. Would like to conduct a closer review to decide on a number to interview. He would like to present 2,3 firms to full committee to interview, along with packages they submitted.

Topic Three: MASC/MASS Conference Update. School Committee Member Becky Padera updated the committee on the recent conference. Each of the resolutions passed, although there was some discussion on the last item. Attendees discussed health care resolutions, and there was a report on how schools prepare their budgets. Ms. Padera spoke about the Future Problem Solvers club and its offshoot, Community Problem Solving. Also, she learned about a new tool to identify low income students, a federal website called "Virtual Gateway," which helps this group to self-identify.

Topic Four: Annual Report (Attachment). A copy of the annual report was included in the School Committee members' packets. The chairman asked members to send corrections and/or additions for Charlene Roche.

Topic Five: Superintendent's Evaluation FY12. The chairman reminded the members that at the last meeting, each member took a turn reading their evaluation of the Superintendent, and Ms. Bagley Jones, who was not at the meeting, submitted her comments in writing. He summarized the comments and prepared a document for review. He then entertained a motion to approve the document.

Move: Ms. Bagley Jones

Second: Ms. Sheridan

Discussion: Mr. Walker would like to include a section for "areas of improvement," and brought a memo with details to add to this section. School committee members discussed how and whether to include Mr. Walker's memo into the evaluation. It was decided that Mr. Pavlicek would work to incorporate Mr. Walker's memo into the main evaluation document and return with the edited version at the next meeting. By unanimous consent, the matter was tabled until the next School Committee meeting.

Topic Six: Proficiency Gap Task Force Update (Attachments). Assistant Superintendent John Phelan discussed two handouts regarding this topic. Members of the Task Force include Marcia Uretsky, Tucker Principal; Life Legeros, Pierce Assistant Principal/Math Coordinator; Courtney Walsh, MiltonHigh Math/Technology Department Head; and John Phelan, Assistant Superintendent. The goal of this task force is to examine and report out to the Superintendent regarding the proficiency gap in the Milton Public Schools. The seven objectives were detailed. In summary:

To identify students in MPS who are in the Failing and/or Needs Improvement MCAS categories.

To analyze data for these students in order to identify trends
To examine the list of students with building principals and analyze interventions in place
To conduct a review of targeted interventions at both building and district levels
To solicit teacher representation on the Task Force
To make recommendations to the Superintendent on the initiatives that would narrow the achievement gap for those students identified as not proficient.
Mr. Walker asked for a timeline on the work of the task force, which Mr. Phelan provided. Ms. Padera noted that it is important to reach the students who are not currently receiving services. Ms. Bagley Jones asked for data on class size, and comparisons of student growth data.

Topic Seven: Superintendent's Goals FY13 (Attachments) -- deleted from agenda

Finance Subcommittee:

Topic One: FY14 Full Day Kindergarten Grant Update. The chairman informed the committee that Ada Rosmarin contacted him regarding the change in formula for Full Day Kindergarten grant money. He noted that removing that grant from the equation would have a significant impact on the tuitions charged by the Milton Public Schools. Mr. Gillis explained that if Milton does not continue to receive the grant money, FDK tuition could rise by approximately \$700 to \$800 per child. School committee members discussed the importance of informing the public in as timely a manner as possible. It was also agreed that a letter would be drafted to the DOE to let them know what impact losing the grant money would have on Milton and what the benefits are of FDK.

Policy Subcommittee:

Policy BAA, Evaluation of School Committee Operational Procedures. Ms. Sheridan made a proposal to eliminate this policy, as it is no longer necessary. Moved to eliminate.

Move: Ms. Sheridan

Second: Mr. Walker

Vote: 5-0-0

Next, Ms. Sheridan recommended approving policies B-F below, and approving as a group. She said there were no changes made to policies.

Move: Ms. Sheridan

Second: Mr. Walker

Discussion: Ms. Bagley Jones noted in Policy BCA, there is no requirement to resign if there is determined to be an ethical violation and wondered if this should be a requirement. The chair noted that this might not be legal.

Vote: 5-0-0

- b. Policy BB, School Committee Legal Status and Authority, Re-approval
- c. Policy BBB, School Committee Membership and Term Office, Re-approval

- d. Policy BBBC/BBBE, School Committee Member Resignation, Vacancies, Extended Absences and Unexpired Term Fulfillment, Re-approval
- e. Policy BCA, School Committee Member Ethics, Re-approval
- f. Policy BDA, School Committee Organizational Meeting, Re-approval

Next, for policy “g” (Policy CBI) there were edits made in order to align the policy with the DESE recommendations. This policy was drafted by MASC Attorney Stephen Finnegan and was submitted for the first reading.

- g. Policy CBI, Superintendent’s Evaluation, 1st Reading

The last policy on the list, JGA, is a new policy. It was read aloud by Ms. Sheridan as the first reading. Comments should be sent to the Policy Subcommittee.

- h. Policy JGA, Grade One Assignment Policy, 1st Reading.

New Business

The Next School Committee meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 5th.

Next Meeting Agenda Items

The chair noted there would be some additional policy items and also the agenda items that were moved off tonight’s agenda. Mr. Walker requested inviting the football team to congratulate them for their winning season. Also, it was suggested to invite the music and chorus students who recently won awards. The Collicot site council was added, and a report from the Health & Wellness subcommittee.

Citizen’s Speak (Round Two): No speakers

The chairman entertained a motion to adjourn.

Move: Walker

Second: Sheridan

Vote: 5-0-0

The meeting was adjourned at 9:01 pm