

**Milton School Committee
Regular Meeting
Milton High School Library
February 9, 2009**

Committee Present: Lynda-Lee Sheridan, Chair, Glenn Pavlicek, Vice Chair, Beirne Lovely, Chris Huban, Mary Kelly and Kristan Bagley-Jones

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 February 9, 2010 Agenda**

Ms. Kelly requested that the Committee discuss the NESDEC projections for proposed housing at the Temple Shalom site. This will be discussed as part of the Finance Subcommittee report. With the Committee's consent, Mrs. Sheridan approved the agenda for February 9, 2010 with this addition.

3. **Citizen Speak (Policy BEDH-Residents may speak for up to 3 minutes)**

No one came forward to speak.

4. **Approval of Minutes**

The minutes of the January 19, 2010 School Committee meeting were approved.

Move: C. Huban

Second: G. Pavlicek

Vote: 4-0-0*

*Ms. Bagley-Jones and Mr. Lovely were not present for voting.

5. **Superintendent's Report**

Ms. Gormley stated that there will be school tomorrow. A half-day had been previously scheduled for parent/teacher conferences; however, due to predicted inclement weather conferences will be canceled as well as all afternoon and evening activities. Parents will be contacted regarding re-scheduling conferences. An Email Blast was sent making this announcement and Ms. Gormley encouraged families to update their email information if they did not receive this communication.

Milton Foundation for Education

Representatives from the Milton Foundation for Education (MFE) present this evening included parent representative Leslie Collins, Assistant Principal Dr. Karen Spaulding, Pierce Grade 8 Science teacher Jennifer Gilbert and Pierce Grade 8 Science teacher Kathleen Bertrand. Ms. Collins also acts as the Chair of the MFE grant program and she explained this process to the School Committee. Ms. Collins stated that grants are only possible due to the ongoing support of donors and sponsors. The grant program provides small grants (on average \$1,000) to those teachers whose applications have been approved by the MFE. Per Ms. Collins, the grant application is a three-page document detailing what the teacher would like to do with the grant and how the grant will enrich the classroom. The grant applications are reviewed by representatives of the MFE as well as peer teachers from the Milton Public Schools. Grants are awarded twice per year and approximately \$10,000-\$20,000 is given each time depending on the number of applications. In the fall of 2009, 24 grants were awarded across the six schools totaling \$20,075. Ms. Collins provided the Committee with a list of grants that were awarded. This list can be found on the Foundation's website, www.miltonfoundationforeducation.org. When asked by Mr. Huban what percentage of the money raised by the MFE in a given year is awarded in

grants, Ms. Collins replied that the goal is to give out \$40,000 (\$20,000 in both the spring and the fall); however, the percentage depends on the success of the fundraising. The MFE also funds the grant writer for the Milton Public Schools. Mrs. Sheridan pointed out that in addition to donations from parents and community members, the MFE also has an annual pledge drive and raises funds at the annual Monster Dash. Dr. Spaulding reiterated that the generosity of the MFE, donors, and sponsors is greatly appreciated. She feels that giving teachers the opportunity to be part of the grant writing process helps them to develop professionally and gives them a level of confidence in having their grant awarded. Dr. Spaulding reviewed the grant awarded this year for 8th grade Science. She explained that “*Hairy’s Inheritance*” will be used to enhance the genetics unit of the Science curriculum. Ms. Gilbert added that the 8th grade Science teachers are excited about this. Ms. Gilbert explained that the genetics unit gets difficult and this grant will provide students the opportunity to collect authentic data via their work with Wisconsin Fast Plants. The Committee and the Administration thanked the MFE for its generosity and also thanked the teachers and administrators who work hard to obtain these grants.

Technology Plan, Network Administrator – Bob Pattison

Mr. Pattison provided the Committee with a copy of the 2010-2013 Technology Plan for the Milton Public Schools and explained that this plan was designed to align with the benchmarks from the state and with the district’s Improvement Plan. Mr. Pattison also discussed the Technology Plan Update and explained that this is a state-level report which covers the status of the Technology Plan and its implementation for the past year. The Technology Plan Update was filed last week. Mr. Pattison highlighted some items covered in the Technology Plan. A copy of this presentation can be found at <http://www.miltonps.org/documents/schoolcommitteeslideshow.pdf>. Some questions and or comments resulting from this presentation included:

- With regard to staffing for technology integration, Ms. Gormley stated that Holly Concannon, the new Elementary Math and K-8 Technology Director will be attending an upcoming School Committee meeting. Ms. Concannon will work with teachers on technology-related matters and will make sure professional development is offered and that technology is integrated system-wide. At the High School, technology was added to the responsibility of the Math department head. There are also several talented staff members within the school system who share their computer/technology expertise by offering professional development.
- Mr. Pattison stated that \$107,094 of the \$201,530 level funded budget for technology goes toward recurring, contractual items (internet access, antivirus software, firewall service and updates, email archival service, program renewals, etc.).
- Mr. Pattison and Mr. Phelan discussed the new software program being piloted this year for Milton High School’s Guidance Department. This software program will enable students to have an account set up under their name that will include all the necessary material needed to complete the college application process. When applying to a college, all items can be uploaded and sent electronically. This program gives students, Guidance staff and parents the ability to monitor that all documents have been successfully received by the college. Ms. Gormley thanked Mr. Phelan and Mr. Pattison for making this happen.
- The School Committee and the Administration publicly acknowledged Mr. Pattison, Joe Thomas and Julius Ramirez for the work they do in keeping all of the systems up and running for the Milton Public Schools.
- Within the last several years, the increase in technology for the Milton Public Schools has been significant. For example, Mr. Pattison stated that there are approximately 1,200 computers, 140 printers, 12 servers and 550 email accounts.
- When asked if Edline and Smart Boards are frequently used, Mr. Pattison replied that he receives many questions regarding both Edline and Smart Boards although he does not track usage. As

far as training on the use of Smart Boards, there is professional development for this and there are also links to the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks within the software that can be downloaded. Mr. Pattison feels that Edline is widely used. Ms. Gormley added that it is the responsibility of the department heads and building administrators to make sure that teachers are using Edline.

- Mr. Pattison was asked to follow up on the exact number of Smart Boards within the district.
- Mr. Pattison was asked to email a copy of this presentation to School Committee members.

The School Committee and the Administration thanked Mr. Pattison for this presentation.

Before completing the Superintendent's Report, Ms. Gormley updated the Committee and the public on the winter sports program as Mr. Huban had requested at the last School Committee meeting. Some upcoming events within the schools include:

- A Comedy Night will be held Friday, February 12, 2010 at the Milton Hoosic Club. This event is sponsored by the Boosters and tickets are \$40. The funds raised from this event will go directly to the Boosters for Milton High School athletics.
- "A Celtic Crossing" featuring Pauline Wells will take place on February 26, 2010 in the Charles Winchester Auditorium at Milton High School at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$25 and can be purchased at the Council on Aging or at the Milton Police Station.
- The Program of Studies Night for parents of students in grades 8-11 will be held in the Charles Winchester Auditorium at Milton High School on Wednesday, February 10, 2010 at 7:00 p.m.

Ms. Gormley reported that the Kindergarten registration was successful. 280 students have pre-registered for Kindergarten. This week parents will be coming in to register their child and will meet in a private setting with a school secretary, a school nurse, and a financial person to establish what the full-day Kindergarten fee will be. Parents have a deadline of April 30, 2010 to submit paperwork for Kindergarten registration and Ms. Gormley encouraged families to call the Superintendent's office if they have not yet scheduled an appointment (call Sean Walsh @ 617-696-4811 or 4812). In May, letters will be sent out with school assignments and the tuition amount. Kindergarten screenings will be held in June and teacher assignments will go out at the end of August.

The 1st Grade Information Night was equally as successful and parents were given information on the English and French Immersion programs as well as the work being done by the World Language review team. Classroom visits are scheduled for February 23rd and February 24th at Tucker School for any parent who wants to view our 1st grade program. There will be a registration process in March and parents will be updated on the results of the World Language review.

Ms. Gormley reported that the screening committees are in place for the Glover principal and the Director of Pupil Personnel positions. Mrs. Sheridan will represent the School Committee for the Glover principal screening committee and Ms. Bagley-Jones will represent the School Committee for the Director of Pupil Personnel screening committee. Dr. John Drottar will lead the screening committee for the Math Department Head position.

Mr. Phelan discussed the Saturday enrichment program being piloted this year for four consecutive Saturdays in March (March 6th, 13th, 20th and 27th) thanks to the generosity of the Milton Foundation for Education. At this year's Celebration for Education over \$7,000 was raised as part of the live auction to help support this program. This pilot program will be for students in grades 4-7 and will be held at Pierce Middle School. Parents of students in these grades were sent an email about this and a booklet detailing the range of opportunities for students will be mailed this week. Mr. Phelan thanked the Chairs of this year's Celebration for Education, Margaret Eberhardt, Denise Queally and Erika Donahue, and also thanked Principal James Jette and Stephanie Nephew for the work they have done coordinating this program. A copy of the booklet will be sent to School Committee members. This Saturday program will offer support sessions in Math and English in addition to enrichment activities. There will be a fee of \$100 for the four Saturdays (\$25 per Saturday) and the sessions will run for four hours. In addition to this program, Mr. Phelan stated that the Milton Public Schools offer before school sessions at Tucker as part of the Title 1 program. Steve Shapiro, along with Milton High School students also offer free tutoring sessions at Tucker. Mr. Lovely asked if there were scholarships available for those who cannot afford the fee. Ms. Gormley replied that the packet sent out will contain information about the free and reduced lunch program. She encouraged families to contact her office if they need assistance. Mr. Lovely also asked if the teachers' contract would permit them to donate their service if they so desired and, if so, had the teachers been asked to waive the stipend they receive for participating in this program. Ms. Gormley replied that they could pose that question to teachers. Ms. Gormley assured the Committee that they will work closely with teachers and principals to reach out to all families. Also, contact information will be added to the brochure so families know where to call if they do need assistance.

6. Chairman's Report

Mrs. Sheridan reported that the Committee has a policy to approve the school calendar on an annual basis. The 2010-2011 School Calendar shows that school will begin September 1, 2010 and the last day of school will be June 15, 2010 (1/2 day). This calendar will be sent home with students and will be posted on the website.

Motion was made to approve the 2010-2011 School Calendar.

Move: C. Huban

Second: B. Lovely

Vote: 6-0-0

Mrs. Sheridan discussed some changes to the School Committee calendar. Due to the February Town Meeting, the February 23rd and the March 2nd School Committee meetings will be canceled. The Committee is posted to meet prior to Town Meeting on February 22nd and February 23rd, March 1st and March 2nd. The Committee will hold a regular meeting on March 9th (Food Service Report, Facilities Report and Science Curriculum Report moved to this date); the open budget hearing is scheduled for March 16th (not a regular meeting); and a regular meeting will be held on March 30th. Mrs. Sheridan asked that Holly Concannon be invited to the next scheduled School Committee meeting. Committee members were asked to get back to Mrs. Sheridan regarding their availability for March 9th. Mrs. Sheridan also stated that in December the Committee should have voted to approve the Program of Studies. She asked that this be added to the School Committee calendar. The Committee members accepted these changes to the School Committee calendar.

In light of the recent news regarding bullying and cyber-bullying, Mrs. Sheridan asked that the Policy Subcommittee research a bullying policy for the Milton Public Schools. Mr. Lovely agreed that this is a good idea since bullying is in high visibility status across the nation. Ms. Gormley stated that she has

networked with other school superintendents and with the school attorney regarding this matter. She has several samples policies available for the Policy Subcommittee to review. The Policy Subcommittee will schedule a meeting and will report back to the full Committee at a later date.

7. School Building Subcommittee Report

Mr. Pavlicek reported that final inspection will be done at Cunningham/Collicot this week. Last week a contract was signed for portable tanks for the roof and confirmation was received for a weather station on that roof as well. The last bid is for duct work on the Milton High School roof and that will be advertised this week. The historical data for the auditoriums at Milton High School and Pierce Middle School is complete and the hope is to have the historical data up at the Milton High School auditorium before spring Town Meeting. The School Building Committee is in the process of cross-checking everything and Mr. Pavlicek and Mr. Cichello will then meet with the Town Accountant to finalize the project.

**8. Finance Subcommittee Report
Second Quarter Financial Update**

Mr. Gillis reviewed the memorandum he provided to School Committee members that summarized the school department's financial picture through January, 2010. This memorandum included the status of the general fund, revolving funds and grants. Ms. Kelly commended Mr. Gillis for providing this detailed update and for providing the written description of the school's financial status. She asked that the first and second quarter financial reports be posted on the website.

Ms. Kelly discussed the article for Town Meeting which involves decreasing the present appropriations of various town department budgets. Ms. Gormley stated that the Warrant Committee had asked the School Department to present a level funded budget and this information was presented at the last School Committee meeting. Ms. Gormley reported that the Warrant Committee has since voted to withhold \$240,000 (divided among all departments) from the FY10 budget; the School Department's portion is \$151,000. Ms. Gormley reported that stimulus funds will be used for this \$151,000. If stimulus funds had not been available, the Milton Public Schools would have to make mid-year cuts equivalent to that amount. In the event of a level funded budget for FY11, Ms. Kelly pointed out that the cuts we are able to defer by using stimulus funds now will have to be added to the cut list presented at the last School Committee meeting. The Finance Subcommittee will meet on February 17th in the morning and will meet with the Warrant Committee that evening. Ms. Kelly reported that the budget binders have been sent to the Warrant Committee. In preparation of the meeting with the Warrant Committee, the Finance Subcommittee asked that all questions from the Warrant Committee regarding the budget be funneled through Leroy Walker. Mr. Walker will be invited to attend the February 17th Finance Subcommittee meeting.

Ms. Gormley reported that Mr. Gillis has created a budget presentation and will send this to the Finance Subcommittee. Bev Quinn will send PTO meeting dates to School Committee members to determine what meetings they are able to attend with the Administration to make this budget presentation.

Mr. Gillis reviewed the presentation given at the last School Committee meeting. Mr. Gillis stated that the \$151,000 deduction discussed this evening will take the FY11 level funded budget down to approximately \$32,825,000. Ms. Gormley and Mr. Phelan reviewed the 24.4 FTEs that will be cut in the event of a level funded budget and discussed the impact this will have on the Milton Public Schools. In summary, this will include 12.8 FTEs at the Elementary level; 2.0 FTEs at the Middle School; 2.0 FTEs at the High School; and 7.6 FTEs district-wide. Ms. Gormley stated that if the additional

\$151,000 cut to the FY10 budget is necessary, the Administration will work with the Finance Subcommittee to cut three additional positions for next year. Ms. Kelly asked that a copy of the presentation the Administration is preparing for the Warrant Committee meeting be sent to all School Committee members for review. Any edits/comments can be sent to Bev Quinn.

Mr. Pavlicek reported that he recently attended a meeting with the Suburban Coalition which is a collection of towns that get together for lobbying the Legislature. At this meeting a presentation was given on the Governor's proposed budget for fiscal 2011. Based on local aid figures, the Governor's budget proposal would put Milton in a position not to have to level fund all the town departments. It could actually give Milton \$1,000,000 above level funding. Questions were raised as to how likely it is that these numbers will hold and how likely it will be that towns go along with other items contained in the Governor's budget proposal (such as new taxes). The legislators present at this meeting stressed the importance of hearing from cities and towns regarding the proposal to hold local aid harmless. It was suggested to have Mr. Pavlicek write something up explaining the importance of this and to have this information put on the website in addition to contact information for our local representatives. Mr. Pavlicek stated that townspeople can write, call or fax the local representatives. Ms. Kelly suggested that the Board of Selectmen should discuss this matter at their meeting. This information can also be shared at upcoming PTO meetings.

Ms. Kelly discussed the rezoning article involving the Temple Shalom site. One alternative being discussed for this site is a 40-B housing development. Ms. Kelly informed Committee members that on the Planning Board's website there is a report from NESDEC (the company that does the School Department's enrollment projections) indicating the number of potential new students to the Milton Public Schools if either individual housing or rental apartments were to be built on the Temple Shalom site. The report indicates the possible increase of 29 students to the Milton Public Schools for individual housing and a possible increase of 13-15 students if it were to be rental apartments. In order for voters to make a knowledgeable decision, Ms. Kelly wanted to clear the perception that the Milton Public Schools would be inundated with new students if such housing was developed.

8. Next Meeting Agenda Items

- Class size update

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: C. Huban

Second: B. Lovely

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.

The meeting adjourned at 9:20 p.m.