

Minutes of the School Committee
Regular Meeting
Milton High Library
Date: June 24, 2015

Committee Present: Michael Zullas, Chair; Becky Padera, Vice Chair; Kristan Bagley-Jones, Leroy Walker, Sheila Varela, Kevin Donahue.

Staff Present: Mary Gormley, Superintendent; Janet Sheehan, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Human Resources; Dr. Glenn Pavlicek, Assistant Superintendent for Business.

Call to Order : The Chair called the June 24th meeting of the School Committee to order at 7pm.

Approve Agenda: The committee approved the agenda after removing Item 5c (Facilities Subcommittee Appointments/Charge) to defer to the next meeting.

Citizens Speak

Meg Kastor of the MFE came to speak about the MFE grants and to mention the upcoming Jeep Raffle and the Red Apple program, a new way to honor teachers.

Michelle Connolly, president of the Special Education PAC, came to update the committee on the work of the SEPAC. She would like the committee to look at providing summer services for all students who need it.

Superintendent's Report

Topic One: Milton High School Student Athletes/Spring Tournament Play. First, the Rugby team was presented with coaches Ned Corcoran and Joe Dolan. Also, captain Matt McCarthy spoke. Ms. Bagley Jones and Mr. Walker both spoke to the rugby team and congratulated them on their season. Tennis teams, along with Coach Paul Ajemian, came next. Coach Ajemian introduced both girls and boys tennis teams. Coach Chuck Ajemian spoke next, and introduced both boys and girls Outdoor Track teams. Captain Hannah Shepherd also spoke on behalf of the team.

Topic Two: End of Year Report/Internal Assessments. Data Specialist Vy Vu gave a comprehensive data presentation. The report included revisiting District Next Steps, she introduced District Data Dashboards, which provide an overall look at the demographic profile of Milton Public Schools. She also reviewed enrollment, SPED, ELL, Low Income, Race, French Immersion, Staff demographics, College matriculation, Athletics, Standardized Assessments, including MCAS, PSAT, SAT and AP.

To view the presentation, visit this

site: <http://www.miltonps.org/documents/EndofYearDistrictDataPresentationFINAL6-23-15.pdf>

At the end of the presentation, School Committee members asked questions about the data. Ms.

Bagley Jones found the presentation to be very easy to read and useful. Dr. Donahue said he found the editorial comments to be very helpful. Wanted to be sure that teachers have access to this without being overwhelmed. Ms. Varela asked for the definition between low income and economically disadvantaged. Ms. Padera commended Ms. Vu on her work and asked about AP scores. Mr. Walker would like to schedule time to discuss this in follow-up meetings. He feels its important to give Ms. Vu direction as to what data the School Committee needs. Mr. Zullas asked who has access to the dashboards, and if someone has access, do you get access to them all? Ms. Vu said she has not differentiated who has access to what. Ms. Gormley noted that the curriculum coordinators have been instrumental in the preparation of this report.

Topic Three: Edline Update. Technology Administrator Dr. Angela Burke came to give an update on this program. Ms. Gormley noted that Ms. Kelly and Mr. Walker have asked for an Edline update and this is in response to that. Dr. Burke said the purpose of Edline was a tool for communication between home and school, using technology. She discussed whether it would be feasible for Edline to be phased out. Teachers would like a more efficient way of communicating. She said the district could use one of three options: Admin Plus (addition of parent portal); MPS website; and Google Classroom. She talked about how user-friendly each of these platforms would be. Ms. Varela asked, what would the cost savings be if we eliminated Edline? Also, she asked if teachers are up to speed on the other platforms. How much more training would they need? How much more money would it cost to implement Google Classrooms or Admin Plus? Dr. Burke asked Dr. Pavlicek about the cost of Edline, which is estimated as “several thousand.” Regarding training, Dr. Burke said that a two-hour training session could be enough to get teachers started. Ms. Padera asked for an explanation of the difference between Google Plus and Admin Plus and whether different teachers would use different platforms. Dr. Burke said all teachers would be expected to use Admin Plus. Ms. Bagley Jones asked how teachers can post assignments and Dr. Burke explained this. Ms. Gormley said that getting Edline to be more user friendly is the goal and one of the district priorities. Mr. Walker said that it’s important for parents to have a single place where they can go to get assignments and communicate with their children’s teachers. Ms. Varela also pointed out that teacher compliance is an issue. Ms. Padera said it’s important to improve communication from both parents and teachers. Mr. Zullas asked about a timeline and Dr. Burke said it is not fully developed yet. To view the entire presentation, visit this website: <http://www.miltonps.org/documents/EdlinePresentation1JS.pdf>

Topic Four: Special Education Program Review Contract Award. Dr. Pavlicek said there have been five bids on this contract since the end of March. They selected a vendor and conducted reference checks. PCG Education was the second-lowest bid, but submitted a better-rated proposal. The total is \$38,180.00. Asked for approval for this bid. Mr. Walker moved to authorize the Superintendent accept the contract.

Move: Mr. Walker

Second: Ms. Padera

Discussion: Ms. Bagley Jones asked what the review will cover. Ms. Grandeau explained the factors reviewed which include students, programs, interviews with stakeholders, etc. Mr. Zullas supports the recommendation, but is discomforted by the vague funding source for the additional \$13,000. Dr. Pavlicek said they have collected some tuition for an out-of-district student, money

in the Medicaid fund. Both are reasonable places to draw the funding from. Mr. Walker suggested using Special Education contracted services. Ms. Gormley agreed this is where the funding should come from. Mr. Walker accepted a friendly amendment to his motion — that the funding should come from Special Ed Contracted Services. Dr. Donahue asked that the SEPAC be more involved in the process going forward.

Vote: 6-0-0

Happenings: Ms. Gormley recognized the recent retirees from the MPS, who were honored in a ceremony prior to the School Committee meeting. She noted the “ZipTrip” show being aired on Fox-25 featuring the town of Milton. She talked about the launch of the MSE summer program. There will be the 3rd Annual “We Are Milton,” music festival and fireworks this week.

Chairman's Report

Topic One: FY16 School Year Calendar - Follow Up Discussion. Mr. Zullas said this is an issue that will be with the School Committee for years. We should give the Policy Subcommittee a “broad swath” to look at issues related to the School Calendar and report back to the full School Committee on April 1st, 2016. Mr. Walker said he thinks this falls under the Superintendent’s responsibilities. There are more pressing issues for the policy subcommittee. As examples, he listed the Evaluation of the Superintendent policy is out of date. He also mentioned the Sexual Harassment Policy, the Diversity Policy, the Hazing Policy, the Weapons in School Policy, the Cash Management policy, the Student Fundraising and the Bullying Policy as examples of other policies that can be updated and/or reviewed. Ms. Bagley Jones does not think the calendar belongs in the Policy Subcommittee. Ms. Padera says the issue is looking at the calendar as a whole. It does come to the attention of the school committee and they vote on it, so they should study the issue. Ms. Varela said more research needs to be done on the school calendar, whether by the administration or by the school committee. Ms. Gormley said it’s fine for this to go to Policy. However, this school calendar issue did go to several PTO meetings, they did a great deal of research on the topic before changing the calendar. Ms. Varela agreed that the PTO leaders were consulted, but she now thinks a more thorough survey should have been done in advance of the calendar change. Dr. Donahue said it makes sense to permit the administration to look into this issue and come back to Policy Subcommittee with thoughts. There are 8 months before next spring. Mr. Walker moved that School Committee direct the superintendent to do research related to the school calendar, as requested by the School Committee, regarding what type of outreach, and the superintendent should report back to policy subcommittee with the result of that research by March 1. Mr. Zullas asked that the Policy Subcommittee then report to the full School Committee with a recommendation. Mr. Walker said the policy subcommittee should determine whether it needs to revise the superintendent’s recommendation or accept them. Mr. Zullas added: “then, after receiving the review, the policy subcommittee should then report to the full committee with the recommendation, if any by April 1st”

Move: Mr. Walker

Second: Mr Zullas

Vote: 6-0-0

Topic Two: Strategic Issues Committee Package: Mr. Zullas reported that there is no package, but he asked Dr. Donahue to give a brief report. At the next meeting, there will be a recommendation on membership. Dr. Donahue talked about the charge to the subcommittee, and the composition of the subcommittee and who to appoint. He said they are looking for a diversity of background and a diversity of field for candidates. Mr. Zullas read the original charge from the last meeting, which had been voted on. He said this will be put up for discussion and vote at the next meeting.

Policy Subcommittee Report

Topic One: First Reading Policy JFAA Residency Policy Addendum (Attachment) (Vote)
Ms. Gormley explained that the idea to ask MPS families to re-establish residency is a good one and she thinks implementing this now would be appropriate. Many other districts do this. We will be asking parents to re-establish residency for rising 6th and 9th graders, as well as those who attends schools outside of the district. Mr. Zullas noted the third sentence in the policy, which he found “too restrictive.” He would like to work more on the language. He would like to know, how critical is it that we approve this tonight? Ms. Gormley noted that this policy was written by the district’s legal counsel, and it would be okay to vote this at the next meeting. Mr. Walker agreed that the language is too restrictive and would also like the new language. Ms. Varela agreed that the language surrounding residency is too vague. Mr. Zullas will redline the policy and they plan to vote on this for the July 8th reading.

Finance Subcommittee:

Topic One: Approval of Vendor Warrants (Vote). Dr. Pavlicek said there are three warrants. Warrant #50 of June 11, \$93,546.12. Warrant #51 of June 18, for \$442,177.14. Warrant #52 dated June 25 in the amount of \$315,908.20.

Mr. Walker moved to approve Warrant #50

Move: Mr. Walker
Second: Mr. Zullas
Vote: 6-0-0

Mr. Walker moved to approve Warrant #51

Move: Mr. Walker
Second: Mr. Zullas
Vote: 6-0-0

Mr. Walker moved to approve Warrant #52

Move: Mr. Walker
Second: Ms. Padera
Vote: 5-0-1 (Mr. Zullas abstained)

Topic Two: K-12 Math Director (Attachment) Vote Mr. Walker noted that we lost the high school math department head, and we lost the middle school math coordinator this year. The solution has been to create K-12 math director which will fill both vacancies and will coordinate with curriculum coordinators. This will result in a net savings in terms of salary. This requires a vote because they are asking for approval of a new title and new position. Mr. Walker moved to approve this title and position.

Move: Mr. Walker

Second: Ms. Padera

Discussion: Ms. Varela asked if other disciplines had K-12 directors. Ms. Gormley said that many of them do. Dr. Donahue asked if the current positions are being eliminated? Mr. Walker said we keep them in order to retain them for collective bargaining.

Vote: 6-0-0

Topic Three: Full Day K Update: Dr. Pavlicek said not much has changed, saying this may take longer than expected.

Approval of Minutes: Mr. Zullas asked to move minutes to next meeting. There was no objection.

Next Meeting Agenda Items: None were suggested.

The Chair entertained a motion to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing Negotiation Strategy for both non-union personnel and the MEA, the discussion of which in open session would have a detrimental effect, and to adjourn directly from Executive Session and not return to Open Session.

Move: Mr. Zullas

Second: Mr. Walker

Roll Call Vote: 6-0-0

The Next School Committee meeting is scheduled for July 8, 2015.

The meeting adjourned at 10:45pm.