

Minutes of the School Committee
Regular Meeting
Milton High Auditorium
Date: November 6, 2013

Committee Present: Lynda-Lee Sheridan, Chair; Leroy Walker, Vice Chair; Mary Kelly, Kristan Bagley-Jones, Becky Padera, Mike Zullas. Student Reps: Audrey Erickson, Matt McCarthy and Evvie Oliverio.

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

Call to Order

The Chair called the November 6th, 2013 School Committee meeting to order at 7:05 pm

Approve Agenda

The chair informed the committee that they would approved the agenda later in the evening.

Citizens Speak

Margaret Gibbons, director of nurses, and MEA president spoke first. She said that contract negotiations have been ongoing since March. It has been 8 months and 14 bargaining sessions. This is over 100 hours of bargaining with no contract. She asked the school committee to drive by any school building in Milton after school hours and see the number of cars there. She said there have been many discussions about predictable and defensible salary schedule and said, "We believe our salary structure is totally predictable and defensible." She claimed the salary structure on the table would result in loss of thousands of dollars for some members. She said on two separate occasions, the teacher's union have deferred or given back raises. The MEA has done this, even though no other unions in town have done this.

April Allegrezza from Collicot Elementary School. Music teacher for 27 years. Serves as a member of the mentor leadership team. She talked about the salary structure.

Owen McIlhenney from Pierce Middle School. Has been almost 20 years teaching. He talked about community building, He said he hopes that the contract negotiations can be resolved in the spirit of community.

Maureen McClaine voiced her strong support for the bargaining team. She mentioned the generous grants from Donors Choose and MFE.

Rich Guarino, Guidance Counselor and Drivers Ed instructor at MHS, asked for the School Committee to continue to invest in education.

Amy Tom, Science Teacher at Milton High School noted that Milton's AP science scores, the success of the Robotics Club and asked for continued support for teachers.

Nick Fitzgerald, English teacher at MHS, talked about student achievement, MCAS scores, AP scores and offerings. He said Milton High is the "flagship," school.

Laura Horowitz from Tucker Elementary School, Peg Turner of the Glover School, Erin Power of the Cunningham School, Leslie Pullia from Pierce Middle School and Sheila Walsh of Milton High School read a statement of support for the MEA bargaining team, signed by MEA members of those schools.

At the conclusion of Citizens Speak, the chair moved to take a brief recess and resume the meeting in the Milton High School library. She called for a recess at 8:04 pm.

Approval of Agenda

The committee approved the agenda for November 6, 2013 after the following edits:

Move Item 4a (approval of minutes) to next meeting

Move Item 5b (Diversity Report) to next meeting

Move Item 6a (Residency/Restitution) to the first item of Superintendent's Report

Move Item 6c (Superintendent's Evaluation) to a later meeting.

Move Item 7a (First Quarter Report) to the next meeting

Move Item 7b (FY Advancement) to Superintendent's Report (Item 5b)

Move Item 8 (Health & Wellness report) to next meeting

Add "Negotiation Strategy for Non-Union Employees" to Item 12 (12d)

Approval of Minutes

Approval of the minutes of the October 16th, 2013 meeting was postponed to a later meeting.

Superintendent's Report

Topic One: Residency/Restitution of Tuition (Attachment) (Vote). Attorney Paige Tobin with the firm of Murphy, Lamere & Murphy, came to respond to some questions posed by School Committee members.

She outlined the Mass General Law with respect to residency, then addressed whether the Milton School Committee policy adhered to the law. She confirmed that it does. She then discussed what MGL says regarding restitution and compared it to the Milton School Committee policy's wording on restitution. She said it comes down to cost analysis when deciding whether to pursue restitution. She estimated the cost of a recent Swampscott case to be approximately \$10,000 in legal fees. Ms. Tobin said the key is in not being discriminatory in how the Milton Public Schools apply the policy. Mr. Walker said he thinks it's important for the School Committee to confirm these policies. He suggested that the School Committee continue to make decisions on whether to pursue

restitution on a case by case basis and leave that decision to administration and legal counsel.

Topic Two: MCAS presentation: Linking Data to Action. Janet Sheehan, Jonathan Redden, Sheila Kukstis, Elaine McNeil-Girmai, Karen Spaulding and James Jette came to collectively present the most recent MCAS data. To view this presentation in its entirety, click here:

<http://www.miltonps.org/documents/RevisedMPSSchoolBasedMCASPres110413222PM.pdf>

The presentation included observations about the most recent MCAS data, noting that at the elementary level, the district outperformed the state on all achievement levels. On subgroups, it was reported that there is a significant gap between the High Needs subgroup and Non-High Needs students in grades 3-5 in both ELA and Math, although the gap decreased in grade 5. For Pierce Middle School, the aggregate data observation showed that achievement in ELA and Math is consistently above the state, but has remained flat for the last three years. Science (STE) remains below performance levels of ELA and Math. In the Pierce subgroup, there exists an achievement gap for low income, African American/Black and students with disabilities subgroup, although both the subgroup and counterpart have gained over time. At Milton High School, achievement in ELA and Math in grade 10 is consistently above the state; the percentage of students in each of the four achievement level categories is continuing to move in a positive trend. Achievement in biology has consistently remained slightly above the state average, and median Student Growth Percentiles remain in the upper end of the typical range.

Mr. Phelan thanked all the principals who presented the data. School Committee members thanked them for their work and said there were many “good news stories,” within the report. Ms. Bagley Jones said she liked the consistency of the data from school to school. Ms. Padera said she asked if the administration has thought about additional “advanced” classes for students who are high achievers. She also asked if the district is looking for a full time data specialist who will work in-house, or someone to work in-district. Ms. Gormley explained that this is a common position in many school districts and she would want someone to work in-house. Mr. Walker said he was impressed with the presentation. There was some discussion about “flipping the classroom,” with several MHS teachers trying this method. Ms. Kelly said she wonders how to include parents in the data conversation. She also asked if time management and study skills could be taught at every grade level.

Topic Three: FY15 Advancement Budget Initiatives (Attachment)

Ms. Gormley outlined the recommendations for the Advancement Budget. She talked about how each three areas would be addressed: Early Literacy, Closing the Proficiency Gap and Science/STEM expansion to grade three. To view the entire presentation, click here: <http://www.miltonps.org/documents/BudgetProposalAdvancement20.pdf>

The report included timeline information and outlined the difference between Advancement Initiatives 1.0 and 2.0. This year’s initiatives will expand the support for

all three areas by hiring a district-wide data specialist and hiring a parent outreach/family liaison position.

Happenings: The "Milton Books for Milton Families," book drive will be held on November 7th.

Chairman's Report

Topic One: Town/School Consolidation Committee. Mr. Zullas expressed interest in starting a subcommittee to look at this. Ms. Kelly asked if there would be a focus on technology. Mr. Zullas said he would like to start with the business functions, and would include IT directors on the joint committee. Ms. Kelly asked if this would be a subcommittee of the school committee, or would there be members of the Board of Selectmen involved as well on this? Mr. Walker said he thinks the BOS is interested in this issue, with the three areas under consideration being IT, Human Resources and the Business Office. There was some discussion of what the IT strategy is for the Milton Public Schools, and how that should be defined before consolidation. The chair asked if those who are interested in serving on this committee would let her know. She said they should come up with a "charge" for this subcommittee and approach the BOS.

Next Meeting Agenda Items

The Chair entertained a motion to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing contract negotiations for collective bargaining with AFSCME; discussing contract negotiations for collective bargaining with MEA; and the deployment of security personnel. The committee would adjourn directly from Executive Session and not return to Open Session.

Move: Mr. Walker

Second: Ms. Padera

Vote: 6-0-0

The Next School Committee meeting is scheduled for November 20th, 2013.

The meeting adjourned at 10:35