

Minutes of the School Committee
Regular Meeting
Milton High Library
May 21st, 2014

Committee Present: Leroy Walker, Chair; Michael Zullas, Vice Chair; Lynda Lee Sheridan,(arrived late), Mary Kelly, Kristan Bagley Jones, Becky Padera. Student Reps: Matt McCarthy, Audrey Erickson and Amanda Delconte.

Not Present:

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

Call to Order: The chairman called the meeting to order at 7:04pm.

Approve Agenda: The chair entertained a motion to approve the agenda for the May 21st School Committee Meeting, with the deletion of Item 9 (Facilities Subcommittee); Item 1 of the first Executive Session (Collective Bargaining Strategy - AFSCME); the addition of a vote to Item 6c (AFSCME Memorandum of Agreement); and the addition of Item 6d (update on Assistant Superintendent Appointment.) With those edits, the agenda was approved.

Citizens Speak: Rachel Schewe and Margaret Eberhardt came to discuss the success of this year's Celebration for Education. A total of \$171,000 was raised this year. School Committee members thanked the pair for coming and congratulated them on another successful event. Next, Pat Latimore, co-chair of Citizens for Diverse Milton, came to thank John Phelan for his work with this group. She wished him luck in his new position.

Approval of Minutes Mr. Walker entertained a motion to approve the May 14th School Choice Hearing minutes of the Milton School Committee.

Move: Mr. Zullas

Second: Ms. Padera

Discussion: There were no edits suggested.

Vote: 3-0-2

Superintendent's Report

Topic One: Pierce Curiosity Awards. These annual awards are given out by the Cambridge Science Festival, in conjunction with MIT. This year, 11 students from Pierce won awards, out of 2,600 entries. Dr. Karen Spaulding introduced the students and talked about how they went to a ceremony at MIT. School Committee members asked the students about their interest in science and congratulated them on this accomplishment.

*Note: Ms. Sheridan arrived at 7:18pm.

Topic Two: Globe Scholastic Art Awards. Karen Hughes, Milton High School art teacher, explained to the committee that this year, 19 students were recognized by the Boston Globe Scholastic Art contest. This is the largest group of winners, ever. She introduced seven of the winners who were in attendance and

presented the artwork of all 19 winners. She thanked the School Committee for supporting visual art, in elementary, middle and high school.

Topic Three: Common Core Curriculum. Ms. Gormley introduced Pierce Middle School Math Curriculum Coordinator Life Legeros and informed the School Committee members that he just completed a doctoral degree. Dr. Legeros then gave a presentation on the Common Core Curriculum. He began by explaining the history of Common Core, and how it moved through the DOE. Many of the slides are available on www.doe.mass.edu Dr. Legeros listed those states where Common Core standards have been adopted. The primary intent is to define the knowledge and skills that students must master to be college and career ready by the end of high school. He explained the difference between the ELA/Literacy frameworks and the Mathematics frameworks. He cited evidence for the math standards, noting that Common Core uses standards from high-performing countries and states. He also outlined the changes in practice, including focus, coherence, clarity and rigor. For the ELA standards, he noted the key idea, including an emphasis on the students' ability to read and comprehend increasingly complex text. Dr. Legeros explained how PARCC testing will take place and noted that DESE made next year a pilot year, where districts can decide between MCAS and PARCC. After the presentation, Mr. Zullas asked if Common Core has a political bent. Also, does it focus more on testing and thereby create anxiety? Dr. Legeros said that he has seen no evidence of a political bent so far. Regarding test anxiety, he said, they try to separate the standards from the testing and accountability. Dr. Pavlicek noted that the alleged politicization of the test may be due to the fact that change is inherently uncomfortable, different is sometimes thought of as bizarre. Ms. Kelly asked what the consequences of such a dramatic change might be. Dr. Legeros said these changes put more pressure on the system to get it right at each grade level.

Topic Four: PARCC (Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College & Careers). John Phelan, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Personnel, gave a presentation on PARCC. First, he discussed a timeline for PARCC and how it was created. Milton piloted this testing in each of its elementary school. In the next school year, districts will have to choose between PARCC and MCAS. In Milton, nearly 1,000 students took part in the assessments. The End of Year assessment will also take place. Here in Milton, when we piloted PARCC, all 6 schools participated. Total tested in Milton: 170 at MHS, 250 at middle, 200 in elementary -- in both Math and ELA.

Mr. Phelan noted that the student growth data will be maintained and will be "seamless." In 2015, students in grades 3-8 will take PARCC. Ms. Gormley noted that Milton was the only district that asked to add schools into the PARCC pilot. Ms. Padera asked if we can use PARCC results to see how students are progressing. Ms. Bagley Jones asked about implementation. Mr. Phelan said the state will decide whether it is going to be PARCC or MCAS eventually. Mr. Walker noted that two of our Advancement goals are related to MCAS data and performance. He said he would like to make sure that data continues to be available and this needs to happen without any gap in availability.

Happenings: Next weeks, the kindergarten screening appointments will begin. Also, on Monday, June 9th, rising First Graders and their families will be invited to an Open House to see both Elementary programs (French Immersion and Innovation Pathway). Tuesday night is Senior Awards night, Wednesday night is Boosters. Friday Night is Jr/Sr Prom. Next Thursday and Friday, Tom Sawyer will be performed at the Pierce Middle School. There was a recap of Rugby Team results. Relay for Life raised \$21,000.

Chairman's Report

Topic One: Approval of Vendor Warrants: Since the last meeting, two vendor warrants now need approval. #46 of May 15 in the amount of \$538, 524.10 and #47 of May 22 in the amount of \$262,244.46

Move: Ms. Sheridan

Second: Ms. Padera

Vote: 3-0-2 abstained (Ms. Kelly & Mr. Walker) --KBJ was out of the room

Topic Two: School Committee Subcommittees (Attachment) (Vote) Mr. Walker read through all the committees. Suggested edits were: Move the Facilities Subcommittee to Standing Committee. Eliminate Consolidated Facilities Liaison. After these edits, Mr. Walker entertained a motion to approve the list.

Move: Ms. Kelly

Second: Mr. Zullas

Vote: 5-0-0 (Ms. Bagley Jones was out of room)

Topic Three: ASCME Memorandum of Agreement (Vote) Mr. Walker asked Mr. Zullas to highlight this MOA. Mr. Zullas explained that there will be a wage increase along the lines of MEA. The union agreed to Consolidated Facilities language and approved use of non-union personnel in case of absences of five or more days. The chair entertained motion to approve and said this was a good effort by the bargaining team.

Move: Mr. Zullas

Second: Ms. Padera

Vote: 4-1 (Ms. Kelly against, Ms. Bagley Jones out of room)

Topic Four: Regarding the Assistant Superintendent for Business position, Mr. Walker explained that originally, we did not think that the School Committee had authority to appoint this position, but we have since learned that this is incorrect. The School Committee is responsible for all appointments of assistant superintendents. This is relevant, since we are now interviewing for Assistant Superintendent jobs. Mr. Walker said he got this opinion from MASC. Ms. Gormley asked to clarify, whether this appointment would be at the recommendation of the Superintendent and Mr. Walker said yes. He clarified that the Superintendent recommends, and the School Committee appoints.

Finance Subcommittee:

Topic One: Town's Five Year Financial Plan Committee. Ms. Kelly asked Dr. Pavlicek to summarize. He talked about this group being formed in September. Ms. Kelly said the Warrant Committee has criticized the School Committee in the past for not being prepared, budget-wise. This has changed, however. Mr. Walker asked, what do we think the deliverable is and Dr. Pavlicek said he thinks it is the expected rate of growth. Mr. Walker suggested this committee come up with a charge and suggested they consider this at an upcoming meeting.

Topic Two: Third Quarter Report (Attachment) Dr. Pavlicek noted that this report was dated April 4th. We went through an exercise in business office this week and are still comfortable with where we are for the year. Salary is in line with the budget, we just received last payment of Circuit Breaker funds. Ms. Kelly said this is good news and she moved to accept the Third Quarter report and post this on the website.

Move: Ms. Kelly

Second: Kristan Bagley Jones

Discussion: Dr. Pavlicek was asked to clarify #2. He explained how teachers can be paid on different schedules. They get the July and August salary all at once or spread it out through the year.

Vote: 6-0-0

*Ms.Kelly asked to post the cover sheet along with the report online.

Policy Subcommittee Report

Mr. Zullas gave an update on the policy subcommittee. They are working on new Anti-bullying Policy. The Governor signed into law an updated anti bullying law. We should ensure that our policy complies with this law. He asked to put this first reading on the agenda for the next meeting. Mr. Zullas noted that the state has also put into place legislation to require fingerprint-based national background checks. In order to comply with this new statute, we need to look at our Background Check policy. He said the MASC has offered a template for fingerprint policies. He asked to put first reading of this policy on the next agenda, also. The Policy Subcommittee has also begun to look at entrance age policy. They are not ready for a first read on this, but Mr. Zullas suggested we look at this over the next month. Finally, a long-term project has begun to go through and match up the existing policies to updated policies. Ms. Bagley Jones said we have done a lot of work with the BPAC (Anti-Bullying group) and asked if it would make sense to involve them. She also said in 2015, there will be a statute that all schools have to have mental health services and suggested the Policy Subcommittee start working on this now.

Old Business: Citizens Speak Topic Response.

Next Meeting Agenda Items

Mr. Walker would like to add "follow-up" as a category under Chairman's Report starting on June 4th. Also, he'd like to talk about retreat format and the School Committee schedule for 2015. Also, Mr. Walker would like to add the anti bullying and background check policies. Ms. Sheridan would like to propose that we add an MASC award nomination for this year.

* Ms. Sheridan asked to speak about "We Are Milton" festivities. These will be held on Saturday, June 21st at Hutchinson Field. Starting at 6 pm, there will be group karaoke singing, face painting, etc. On Sunday afternoon, there will be a Celtic Festival. This is all funded by the Copeland Family Foundation.

Citizens Speak Round Two

The chairman made a motion to adjourn to executive session, not to return to Open Session, for the purpose of discussion negotiation strategy for non-union personnel.

Move: Mr. Zullas

Second: Ms. Padera

Roll Call Vote: unanimous.

Meeting adjourned at 9:39 pm.

(*note: MD did not take minutes for Executive Session.)