

Milton School Committee Meeting  
Regular Meeting  
Milton High School Library  
Date: June 25, 2014

**Committee Present:** Leroy Walker, Chair, Michael Zullas, Vice Chair, Mary Kelly, Kristan Bagley-Jones, Becky Padera, Lynda-Lee Sheridan

**Staff Present:** Mary Gormley, Superintendent; Glenn Pavlicek, Assistant Superintendent for Business.

### **Call to Order**

The Chair called the June 25th meeting of the School Committee to order at 7:00pm.

### **Approve Agenda**

The committee approved the agenda after a discussion about whether or not there should be a vote on the job descriptions. Ms. Kelly thought these were new job positions and Mr. Walker said these jobs were created when we voted on the advancement budget positions.

### **Citizens Speak**

No one came forward for Citizen Speak

### **Superintendent's Report**

Topic One: Pre-School Pilot- FY15 Advancement Initiative (Attachment) Tucker Principal Dr. Elaine McNeil Girmai and Tucker Elementary Curriculum Coordinator Stephanie Nephew came to talk about building home-school partnership around literacy. They said when the district began to look at the data, they noticed across the board concerns of below-level literacy. Many students did not have access to formal preschool or care outside the home. They have been brainstorming solutions, with the goal of providing a preschool program to promote early literacy, connect families within and to the MPS by providing resources to families, and support students' learning.

Ms. Nephew explained that they will be targeting students entering kindergarten next year with support two days a week for two hours each day. They would like to have a parent/guardian connection and offer some seminars/workshops for families. Would like to offer three rounds of sessions and would like to ask families to commit to being there for at least two of them. Sara Truog, an MPL librarian, would like to be involved. Ms. Kelly said it's hard for working parents to volunteer the hours. Maybe at night? Also, what is the cost? Dr. McNeil-Girmai suggested using a part-time teacher, or do an internship proposal. Looking for a certified Preschool Teacher. Ms. Gormley said that the preschool advocates suggested providing day care on-site. They had a very valuable meeting with Susan Dolan of MECA. An issue town wide is identifying children who aren't in formal preschool. Ms. Sheridan asked if the pilot was making a

two-session requirement of the parent, and asked how to share the info with the parents? Putting on line? Ms. Nephew replied that having the parents be in the classroom is ideal.

Mr. Zullas asked about cost. For a .2, is that about \$10,000? The answer was yes. Any other additional costs? Ms. Nephew said there will be general needs as far as setting up the classroom. Dr. McNeil-Girmai said there is money in the budget (advancement) for this. Not the .2, but everything else. The district would have to find the resources for the teacher. Ms. Bagley-Jones said this is a great idea. Asked if the families with younger siblings can do this. Can we reach out to daycare providers to see if they can participate and pass this along to the children? Ms. Nephew said maybe we could "share" this program with playgroups around town, etc. Ms. Gormley said at K screening, we gave surveys to families about younger siblings. Secured great data on 320 students. Also, our K teachers know the children who have not been in formal preschool setting.

Mr. Walker thanked both Ms. Nephew and Dr. McNeil-Girmai. He said for three years, the notion of reaching out to preschool students is something that has only recently been discussed and it will change lives.

Ms. Kelly said that she would like to create some goals that are measurable. Dr. McNeil-Girmai said they are working on assessment tools. Ms. Kelly said she'd like assessment data as well as data on who participates, the number of families, etc. Next, Ms. Gormley asked for an update on Tucker Scholars and also for K students. Dr. McNeil-Girmai that, using data from K screening, we invited some additional students to come to Tucker Scholars.

Topic Two: New Discipline Rules, Chapter 222 of the Acts of 2012-603 CMR 53.00 Attorney Paige Tobin. The School Committee had asked to see new student discipline rules. This presentation was already given to the leadership team. It was thought by the state legislature that there was too much emphasis on zero tolerance, inconsistencies in the enforcement of discipline and a desire to find alternatives to long-term suspensions.

Attorney Tobin began by stating that with the exception of the bullying law, students can not be disciplined for actions that take place outside school or school-related events. Ms. Sheridan asked about suspensions that last a period of more than 10 days. We don't usually do that. Does this statute apply to less than 10 days? Ms. Kelly asked about a felony. Attorney Tobin said that if a student is charged with a felony AND the principal determines that the student is detrimental to the welfare of the school, you can exclude them. But you must provide services.

Ms. Gormley pointed out that in the past, those students on IEPs had to be given educational services during suspension. Under this new act, this applies to all students. Ms. Kelly said she doesn't understand the legal process. If someone is convicted of selling drugs, do we have to bring them back here? Attorney Tobin said no, but we have to have a plan. Tutoring in another location, online courses. Ms. Kelly asked what if an underage child is convicted of a felony, do they go to DYS? Attorney Tobin said yes.

Ms. Kelly said she thought the new law was "bizarre" and said this should be under the umbrella of DYS. The funding for all this comes from circuit breaker, but she thought it is not very likely that most of these services would reach the threshold for circuit breaker.

Ms. Sheridan asked, if a student is committed to DYS, they would get services from DYS? Attorney Tobin said Milton may need to provide funding. Ms. Sheridan clarified, for students on IEPs, if they're suspended for 10 days, they have to discuss whether they are being suspended because of their disability.

Ms. Padera asked three questions: #1. Will this change our policy on whether we CAN suspend/expel? Attorney Tobin replied that more due process rights will be given to students. #2. What if a student is expelled as a sophomore — do we have to educate them until they complete 12th grade? Or until they turn 18? Attorney Tobin said if they're SPED, it's age 22. She does not think there's an age in the law.

Attorney Tobin noted that you can no longer expel a student EXCEPT for drugs, weapons, assault on staff. Ms. Padera asked question #3: Who decides if the educational services are sufficient? Attorney Tobin said the law provides for students to be able to make sufficient academic progress. Ms. Bagley-Jones said the words exclusion/expulsion/suspension are interchangeable and asked for clarification. Attorney Tobin said that expulsion is permanent and suspension is temporary.

Mr. Zullas asked what if a student were convicted of a capital crime? We would have to educate them until what age? Attorney Tobin said there is no age defined. Ms. Kelly asked what about assault on another student? Attorney Tobin said if it results in a felony charge, you could expel on that grounds. However, if there is an assault on a student that does not result in a felony, the regular rules would apply. Ms. Kelly asked, what's the difference? Attorney Tobin replied that it's the statute.

Regarding 37H 1/2, she explained that the only change is that regular ed students get educational services, but everything else is the same. For 37H 3/4, they really want principals to look at other ways to impose discipline, look at extracurricular, or other alternatives. In order to suspend a student, there are significant procedural steps.

Mr. Walker then asked about page 11 - regarding the rules for a suspension. He asked about the waiting period for removal and Attorney Tobin explained there's a provision to remove the student for two days -- "emergency removal." Ms. Gormley asked if the Superintendent hears all the appeals and Attorney Tobin said yes. On page 16, Ms. Sheridan asked, regarding the list of alternative educational services, are these school-based? Attorney Tobin said yes. It would be best if all schools have the same plan. Ms. Gormley asked about School Committee policy and handbook policy. Attorney Tobin said she provided suggested language for the handbooks. Ms. Gormley said we need to discuss policy language further. Please review handbooks. At July meeting, we can read and approve. Ms. Gormley noted that, on behalf of the school district and the principals, this will take a lot of work at each level. Who will monitor the work? Who will get the work to a student? What is the plan? Online courses? Some kind of collaborative? Lots of discussions.

Attorney Tobin said that many systems have EdLine. Reinforce with teachers that those have to be up to date. That should provide enough info to keep students up to date for a day or two. Mr. Zullas asked, how many students are suspended, on average, for more than two days? Attorney Tobin said that it is not a common occurrence for a student to be suspended for 10 days. Those who are, it's because of drugs, weapons,

Topic Three: MPS End of Year Data Report. Ms. Gormley noted that three years ago, Mr. Walker asked to put all the data into one report. Moira Downes has worked on this report and included the most recent data. The School Committee had a presentation on 7/16, with internal data and include the summative data report. Also, athletic data (presented to CDM) at last meeting. Highlights from principals on successes within the schools. This year, we will add SPED data, Finance Report from Dr. Pavlicek, a report on Mentoring Program and a listing of all the PD options offered in district. After the meeting on the 16th, we'll do a final draft. Summary: diversity of staff has gone down a small percentage. Also, student enrollment has stayed constant. Also, the diversity in the district has been 29.9%. SPED population has decreased from 14.5 to 13.8 - Ms. Clasby will talk about this. We are working on adding internal assessments and the newest MCAS data, etc. Ms. Gormley asked School Committee members to send her any clarifying questions and she will get them answered before the next meeting. Mr. Walker said this has become a data-rich report. We would like to see information and demographics on French and English students and achievement. Also, make sure that achievement data is current. Ms. Kelly said she would also like to see climate/discipline data. Ms. Gormley said we have to report this to the state in the next two weeks. Ms. Sheridan said this is an exorbitant amount of info you've presented to us. In discussions with the coordinators, the most powerful remark is that it empowers the classroom teacher.

Topic Four: FY15 Advancement Job Descriptions. Ms. Gormley said these are not final. We can wait to have these finalized for the next meeting. Mr. Walker said to send edits to Ms. Gormley. Ms. Kelly said, we have to provide some sort of focus. Let's not water down this position (Parent Liaison) to the point it's no longer effective. Ms. Bagley-Jones noted that she made many edits. Mr. Walker asked School Committee members to send edits to Ms. Gormley.

### **Chairmans' Report**

Follow up List: Mr. Walker said that the Science report timeline was excellent. He would still like info on metrics, closing SPED proficiency gap, and would like timeline and strategy. Also, must address how to address Common Core competency. Finalized FY advancement spending. Regarding the partnership with Milton Public Library on Pre-K literacy, Mr. Walker said that Ms. Nephew and Dr. McNeil-Girmai started this, but he thought that Ms. Padera had a summer program in mind. Also, regarding the Mental Health Services requirement -- Ms. Bagley-Jones has this on list. Transition can come off the list. Mr. Walker asked for a report on how extensive EdLine is, and how up to date this is? Ms. Kelly said one problem with EdLine is that in the past, users could log on to each school, but now you can't. Please look into this. Also, please add to follow up the implications of new discipline policy. What will this cost? Ms. Gormley asked to add Transportation Analysis and the Five Year plan on the running list.

### **Finance Subcommittee**

Topic One: Approval of Vendor Warrants. Dr. Pavlicek presented Warrant #52 in the amount of \$323, 765.09. The chair entertained a motion to approve.

**Move:** Ms. Kelly

**Second:** Ms. Bagley-Jones

Discussion: Mr. Zullas asked, has anyone signed? Three have signed.

**Vote:** 4-2-0 (Ms. Bagley-Jones and Ms. Kelly abstained)

Topic Two: FY 15 Advancement Positions. Ms. Kelly asked if we have the running sheet. There was a brief discussion as to why this is on the agenda. Ms. Gormley explained that in the original proposal, these positions were half time (.5) We discussed at finance subcommittee and looked at other districts and realized that Instructional Technology Coordinator is usually a full time position. For the family outreach liaison, we changed the title, added more detail to job description. Also, for the Data Analyst, there has been a good deal of data being requested and we need to evaluate the use of these funds. Ms. Gormley is recommending that each of them be a full-time position. At Finance Subcommittee, there was an analysis of what the increases would be.

Dr. Pavlicek explained that moving the Instructional Technology position to full-time would add \$37,000, and making the Parent Liaison full time would add \$27,000. Together it would cost \$64,000. Ms. Kelly asked for the total increased cost. Dr. Pavlicek said as of two weeks ago, they have identified funds to make this revenue neutral. Ms. Kelly noted that this is a highly needed position. The chair entertained a motion to increase the Advancement Positions from half-time to full-time.

**Move:** Ms. Padera

**Second:** Ms. Sheridan

**Vote:** 6-0-0

Ms. Sheridan suggested that based on summer vacation schedules, members could take turns signing the warrant and could use signup sheets.

**Old Business:** Ms. Sheridan thanked the community for coming out for two days of We Are Milton's great events. 2,000 people on Saturday. On Sunday, 1,500 for Celtic Sunday.

The Chair entertained a motion to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing Negotiation Strategy for Non-Union Personnel and to adjourn directly from Executive Session and not return to Open Session.

**Move:** Ms. Kelly

**Second:** Mr. Zullas

**Roll Call Vote:** unanimous.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:47 pm.