

Minutes of the School Committee  
Regular Meeting  
Milton High Library  
April 1, 2015

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

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

**Student Reps:** Audrey Erickson, Spencer Torres and Matt McCarthy.

**Call to Order:** The Chair called the April 1st meeting of the School Committee to order at 7:02pm

The chair began by thanking the Milton Police Department and the Milton High School staff for their work this week in helping to prevent an unauthorized access to the building this week.

### **Approve Agenda:**

Mr. Walker removed the June 11th minutes from the agenda, moved Item 7b (Full Day Kindergarten) higher up in the agenda to the Superintendent's Report. He removed Item 8 (Health and Wellness Subcommittee Report) and Item 10a (Second Reading Policy GCCD, Domestic Violence Leave Policy.)

Ms. Sheridan asked for a moment of silence for Steve Wilkie, a friend of Milton High School Hockey who recently passed away.

### **Citizens Speak**

Frank Schroth came to announce the upcoming candidate's debate. All three School Committee candidates will be attending and the public invited to attend. The MHS debate team will be helping to organize this event, to be held at Fuller Village on Saturday, April 11th at 1pm. Also, the extended a "thank you," to Ms. Sheridan and Ms. Kelly for their years of service to the town.

### **Superintendent's Report**

Ms. Gormley announced the Milton High School students who have won the Boston Globe Scholastic art competition. Ms. Hughes spoke about each of the students who have won recent art competitions and brought some of her students' winning artwork. Mairead Dambrusch, Michael Wyatt, Maia Adley and Josh Kery all spoke to School

Committee members about their interest in art. Mr. Walker praised Ms. Hughes for her work and her students' work.

Topic One: Data Analyst Vy Vu Introduction. Ms. Gormley introduced the district's new Data Analyst. In the past, curriculum coordinators and department heads had to assist with data presentations, but due to the Advancement Budget, a new position was created. Ms. Gormley said this position will drive instruction, which will also drive student achievement. Ms. Vu said she has been working in Milton for one month. She is helping to give an overview of the data. She introduced Amy Gale, elementary curriculum coordinator; Dr. Spaulding, principal of Pierce Middle School; and Michelle Kreuzer, assistant principal of Milton High School.

Topic Two: Internal Assessment Data Presentation. Cunningham/Collicot Elementary Coordinator Amy Gale, MHS assistant principal Michelle Kreuzer, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Human Resources Janet Sheehan; Pierce Middle School Principal Dr. Karen Spaulding; and Data Analyst Vy Vu came to give a PowerPoint presentation, which included an overview of assessments, the landscape of Milton Public School Internal Assessments, a Report on Progress for the Elementary, Middle and High School. Ms. Vu outlined the district challenges and looked at the next steps. Ms. Sheridan asked how the information is disseminated among the curriculum coordinators. Ms. Gale spoke to this issue at the elementary level. She said grade-level facilitators work together with curriculum coordinators on this. Dr. Spaulding said the structure to disseminate data at middle school is common planning times. Ms. Kreuzer said that department heads meet with Ms. Kreuzer regarding data. Mr. Zullas asked, how much of students' time is spent on testing, is it the right amount, and why? Ms. Gale said there are a variety of assessment throughout the year -- literacy is 3 or 4 times a year. Common unit assessments at the end of every math unit are done at the end of each unit. These are both formative and summative. About 11 tests in addition to pre-test, mid-year and post-year. She said that over-testing children is not best for them and asserted that everything we do is useful for them and their children. Dr. Spaulding said that well-designed assessments are instructive in and of themselves. Ms. Kelly remarked about how far the system has come. Ms. Gormley talked about how we can look district-wide at data and see how to redeploy reading specialists, etc. based on the data. Ms. Kelly asked if other districts have a tool they use for this -- how do other districts do this? Ms. Vu said that she can speak to Boston. Other districts are struggling with the same issue. There are so many sources of data to draw from -- which is the most valuable to use? Ms. Gormley said results of PARCC will not be out until September or October. Mr. Walker said, after the presentation, he has a better understanding of how data is gathered, etc. It's important for parents to hear what we have learned from the data, and how has this changed teaching and learning.

Topic Three: Edited FY 15-16 School Year Calendar and Survey Results (Attachment) (Vote) Ms. Gormley explained that the district conducted a snow day survey regarding Yom Kippur and Good Friday. The results were that 71.8% of parents/staff said "yes" -- they would rather go to school on those two days and get out earlier in June. The PTO presidents are on board with this. On these days, although there will be school, no tests

or long-term assignments can be given. Ms. Gormley submitted the revised calendar for approval. The revised last day of school will be June 16th. Ms. Padera asked what the religious leaders' outlook was on this? Ms. Gormley said she had met with Rabbi Benjamin years ago about adding Yom Kippur as a day off. The MPS has had this on the calendar for many years. With the potential change, she continued to have conversations with the rabbi about this issue. Ms. Sheridan asked about the union negotiation regarding their days off and Ms. Gormley noted that she had discussed this with the MEA. Mr. Zullas asked if the survey had gone differently, would Ms. Gormley's recommendation have gone differently? She said yes, with the understanding that this was also made because of educational reasons. Ms. Gormley explained that on these religious holidays, even though there will be school, there should not be long-term assignments or tests. Mr. Zullas is not prepared to vote for the change. Will vote against it. The chair entertained a motion to approve.

**Move:** Ms. Kelly

**Second:** Ms. Bagley Jones

**Vote:** 4-0-2 (Zullas and Padera voted no)

Topic Four: Special Education Program Evaluation - Update. Two proposals were given to finance subcommittee. They created an RFP and as of this morning, nine proposals have come in, which is a good indicator. The RFP will go through May 1st, so this will push the SPED evaluation into the fall.

Happenings: Mr. Walker asked Matt McCarthy (student rep) about his future plans. He will play rugby at St. Bonaventure. Mr. McCarthy then gave an update on the MHS rugby team, which will be holding a yard sale and tulip sale. He also talked about the MHS Student Leaders, who mentor freshman and help with orientation. This group is now fundraising for New England Homeless Veterans. Also, there have been 110 nominations for Teacher of the Year. On April 30th, the MFE will recognize the six teachers. On April 16th, Dr. Maria Trozzi will be speaking at Milton High School. Also, the Challenger League is starting up again for spring. Dr. Fischer's "Francophonie," was explained by Ms. Sheehan. The names of those students who will be going to FPS as an individual were read.

Topic Five: Full Day Kindergarten Grant Update (Attachment). Dr. Pavlicek noted that Ms. Rosmarin drafted a letter to parents, urging them to contact their legislators about the funding problem for FDK. Milton gets \$150,000 each year. It's an important part of funding the program. If you don't charge tuition, you may receive additional money, but not enough to cover the loss from tuition. There are Chapter 70 issues. The legislative meetings are next week.

## **Chairman's Report**

Topic One: Stone Turn Audit Report. Last August, the Superintendent reported that a former MPS employee was accused of misappropriating school funds. The district then hired a firm to conduct a cash management audit. This audit has been concluded.

Topic Two: Administrator of Pupil Personnel Services Appointment (Attachment) (Vote)  
This position has an annual salary of \$105,000. The candidate was interviewed by two screening committees and Ms. Tracy Grandeau was named. The SEPAC chair supports the recommendation, as do all of the principals. Pending the school committee vote, Ms. Grandeau will begin on July 1st. The chair entertained a motion to accept the recommendation of the screening committee. Mr. Walker made a motion to appoint Tracy Grandeau the administrator of PPS at annual salary of \$105,000 effective July 1st. Ms. Kelly asked if it was a Unit B position and Mr. Walker said no. Ms. Kelly asked if a contract will follow this appointment and Mr. Walker said yes.

**Move:** Mr. Walker

**Second:** Ms. Padera

**Vote:** 6-0-0

Budget update -- the warrant committee voted to restore \$120,000 at the last meeting. Based on restoration priorities, this will allow the district to put back all the art, music and chorus positions. Hopefully, with more funds, we can add back other positions. That was the good news. At same meeting, took \$186,000 which had been allocated for iPads to help pay for this winter's snow and ice. Mr. Walker also noted that if the Pickens override is approved, some additional money may be restored.

### **Approval of Minutes**

The chair entertained a motion to approve the June 25th minutes.

**Move:** Mr. Zullas

**Second:** Ms. Padera

Edits: Two edits

**Vote:** 6-0-0

### **Finance Subcommittee Report**

Topic One: Approval of Vendor Warrants. #52 in the amount of \$249,007.60

Move: Ms. Kelly

Second: Mr. Zullas

Vote: 4-0-1 (Ms. Kelly)

### **Transportation and Traffic Safety Subcommittee Report**

Topic One: Survey Update. Mr. Zullas said his survey on travel "went live" on March 30th and will stay active through April 17th. The survey will also go home in backpacks. The group is still collecting info on safety. Mr. Zullas also noted that May 6th is Walk & Bike to School Day. He would like to work with schools to generate publicity.

## **Next Meeting Agenda Items**

The FY 15-16 goals for the MPS Family Liaison.

Professional Development for ELL

Ms. Sheridan asked for a Facilities Subcommittee Update at the next meeting.

The chair entertained a motion to go into executive session, not to return to open session, for the purpose of negotiation strategy for AFSCME and also for the purpose of negotiation strategy for non-union contracts, collective bargaining for AFSCME and a parent letter to the School Committee.

**Move:** Ms. Sheridan

**Second:** Mr. Zullas

**Roll Call Vote:** Unanimous.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:36pm.

MD