

Minutes of the School Committee
Regular Meeting
Milton High Library
Date: November 10th, 2014

Committee Present: Leroy Walker, Chair; Michael Zullas Vice Chair; 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.

Call to Order

The Chair called the November 10th meeting of the School Committee to order at 7:00.

Two elementary students spoke about what Veteran's Day means to them. Ms. Sheridan asked to observe a moment of silence for Ms Dianne Gosling, former principal of Tucker School, who recently passed away.

Approve Agenda

The committee approved the agenda as submitted.

Citizens Speak

Several people came forward for Citizen Speak. Heather Montgomery, Jane Green, Margie Skeer, Kerry Kelly and Rose Rhodes all came to speak about the fact that residents of East Milton Square deserve a discounted rate on the bus fees because of the dangerous intersections. They requested the School Committee continue to offer the discounted rate of \$225.

Superintendent's Report

Topic One: The Tucker Elementary School Site Council came to give a presentation. Tucker Principal Dr. Elaine McNeil Girmai spoke, along with Teacher representatives Kirsten Driscoll, Elizabeth Spitz and Parent representatives Steve Paxhia, Kari McHugh, Terry Shields and Oliver Truog. The group reviewed 2014 MCAS data, the Tucker school improvement plan, advancement initiatives at the Tucker and shared "celebrating success" examples. The presentation highlighted the fact that early literacy data reflects high percentages of grade 2 and 3 children reading on or above grade level; and all Grade 3 students are offered the opportunity to attend Saturday Academy. They also discussed the Kindergarten Readiness Pilot. To view the presentation, click here:

<http://www.miltonps.org/documents/TuckerSchoolSIPSCPresentation11614FINAL.pdf> School Committee members asked questions of the Site Council members. Ms. Padera asked about how to tackle the challenge of improving MCAS writing scores. She also asked about PARCC preparedness. Dr. McNeil Girmai talked about the work of Ms. Doherty, who is the Tucker instructional technology teacher. Mr. Zullas asked about whether additional funding is needed for the new or current strategies. Dr. McNeil Girmai said there may be some additional requirements. Mr. Zullas also asked whether we are over-testing students and Dr. McNeil Girmai

said that is something they keep an eye on and she does not think this is the case. Ms. Bagley Jones asked what do they do for the whole child at Tucker.

Topic Two: Milton High School Participation Analysis. Mr. Rooney made a presentation about the racial and ethnic participation in sports, as well as overall participation. The data shows an increase in minority participation in sports. Ms. Sheridan asked if this mirrors the high school population and Mr. Jette said that it does. He also noted that we have a high percentage of students who are on free/reduced lunch **who** participate in sports. Ms. Bagley Jones asked if there are payment plans for those who do not qualify for free/reduced lunch, but still need help. Mr. Rooney said there are payment plans, etc for those students who need it. Ms. Bagley Jones asked if Guidance keeps an eye out for these students. Mr. Jette said that many people in the building look out for these students. Mr. Rooney identified several sports where he would like to increase minority participation. They talked about challenges to increase participation, including early exposure to various sports, enhancement of middle school sports programs, transportation, family obligations, athletic fees, etc. Ms. Padera asked whether Mr. Rooney has looked to see if the same participation rates for minorities occur in youth sports. Ms. Padera asked if there were any intramural avenues for athletes who get cut from Freshman teams. Mr. Rooney said he would love to have opportunities for students to play intramural sports, but one factor is lack of gym space. Ms. Bagley Jones asked about other towns' Parks & Rec programs and whether they have programs to increase participation. Mr. Rooney outlined the various facilities Milton High School athletes use. He also discussed student athlete expectations, which include the academic partnership, commitment, responsibility, punctuality, self-advocacy, respect and self-discipline. Dr. Pavlicek discussed the athletic budget and outlined expenditures. Ms. Kelly asked why there was additional spending in 2013-14 in the athletic budget. The different types of fundraisers were discussed. Ms. Padera asked what sports might be added to the Pierce Middle School. Mr. Rooney said it may be soccer. In addition, 8th graders are allowed to participate on the High School swim, ski and hockey teams. To view the entire presentation, click here: <http://www.miltonps.org/documents/MHSATHLETICSMPPSSCMEETING1110.pdf>

* Mr. Walker re-arranged the agenda at this point. He moved Item 5b (Transportation & Traffic Safety Subcommittee Update) up on the agenda to then return to the Superintendent's Report.

Chairman's Report

Topic One Transportation & Traffic Safety Subcommittee Update. Ms. Bagley Jones updated the Committee on the reasons for formation of the Subcommittee. Ms. Padera added that there has been a request for better notification from the bus companies when buses may be late or cancelled. Mr. Zullas talked about the subcommittee being formed and asked if the PTO presidents could help with the process for identifying parent subcommittee participants.

Finance Subcommittee:

Topic One: Dr. Pavlicek introduced Warrant #20 for Nov 13th in the amount of \$548,639.76.

Move: Ms. Kelly

Second: Mr. Zullas

Vote: 4-0-2 (Mr. Walker and Ms. Kelly abstained)

Topic Two: Fee Schedule for FY16. (Attachment) (Vote) Dr. Pavlicek outlined the new fees for FY16, including the higher bus fee for East Milton, slight increases to music lesson fees and building rental fees. Ms. Kelly moved for approval.

Move: Ms. Kelly

Second: Mr. Zullas

Discussion: Ms. Padera moved to divide the question and take the bus fee vote separately. Ms. Kelly said this should be a friendly amendment.

Ms. Kelly amended the motion to move all the fee recommendations with the exception of all transportation fees.

Move: Ms. Kelly

Second: Mr. Zullas

Vote: 6-0-0

On the transportation fees:

Move: Ms. Kelly

Second: Mr. Zullas

Discussion: Ms. Padera asked to add a friendly amendment the motion to make the individual fee \$325 and the family cap \$750. Ms. Kelly did not accept the friendly amendment. She asked Ms. Padera to explain. Ms. Padera said we are eliminating the East Milton shuttle, but raising the bus fee about 10%. Milton Public Schools fees are high in comparison to other communities. She advocated lowering the fee to \$325. She thinks the family cap is too high and thinks a lower cap of \$750 is better. Dr. Pavlicek said he thinks this proposal will result in a \$4,000 loss of revenue without lowering the family cap. Lowering the cap also may result in a \$6,000 to \$7,000 loss. Ms. Bagley Jones said it is important that the rate is equalized. She asked for installment payment options and Dr. Pavlicek said that is possible. Ms. Kelly said fees are unfortunate, but money spent on transportation is not money spent on teachers. She is in favor of the rate increase. Ms. Sheridan suggested an individual fee of \$350. She would also like to lower the family cap. Ms. Padera reiterated that her motion was to amend the fee to \$325 and the family max to \$750.

Move: Ms. Padera

Second: Ms. Sheridan

Vote: 2-4-0 -- 2 in favor (Ms. Padera and Ms. Sheridan) and four opposed. Motion failed.

Original motion: To accept the superintendent's recommendation for FY16 transportation fees.

Discussion: Ms. Sheridan made a friendly amendment to change the fee to \$350 across the board. It was not accepted by Ms. Kelly. Then, Ms. Sheridan made a motion to equalize the bus fees and lower it to \$350 per child.

Move: Ms. Sheridan

Second: Ms. Bagley Jones

Vote: 3 in favor (Ms. Bagley Jones, Ms. Sheridan and Ms. Padera); and 3 opposed (Mr. Walker, Ms. Kelly, Mr. Zullas.) The motion did not carry.

Original motion is still on the table.

Discussion: Ms. Sheridan moved an amendment to keep the individual fee at \$375 and reduce the family cap from \$900 to \$750.

Vote: 3 in favor: (Ms. Bagley Jones, Ms. Sheridan and Ms. Padera); and 3 opposed (Mr. Walker, Ms. Kelly, Mr. Zullas.) The motion did not carry.

Original motion now voted on.

Vote: 3 in favor: (Mr. Walker, Ms. Kelly, Mr. Zullas) and 3 opposed: (Ms. Bagley Jones, Ms. Sheridan and Ms. Padera). The motion did not carry.

Ms. Kelly proposed one other option, which would be to make this a two-year increase. Have the East Milton shuttle increase in two steps. Ms. Kelly said it's going to be a tough budget year and we should try to save every penny we can.

Mr. Walker asked someone on the prevailing side to move to reconsider. Then, Mr. Walker moved to reconsider the previous vote of \$375 and a \$750 family cap.

Vote: 6-0-0 (on the motion to reconsider)

Mr. Walker then moved the motion itself for \$375 individual, with family cap of \$750.

Discussion: Mr. Zullas asked about the implications for Warrant Committee. Ms. Bagley Jones asked if we could publicize the payment plan. Dr. Pavlicek said the Administration makes every effort to work with the families. Ms. Bagley Jones made a friendly amendment to be clear that there be an effort on the part of the administration to publicize the financial assistance. The friendly amendment was accepted.

Vote: 5-0-1 (Ms. Kelly voted no)

*Mr. Zullas noted that this fee applies across town, to all riders. **

Topic Two: FY16 Advancement Budget. Ms. Gormley outlined the Advancement Budget Initiatives as follows:

1. Emphasizing Early Literacy Achievement (Pre-K-3)
2. Closing the Proficiency Gap (PreK-12)
3. Advancing Science and STEM Initiatives (Prek-12)

She talked about the history of the Advancement Initiatives, working with the Finance Subcommittee and the School Committee in making collaborative recommendations. The Initiative is currently in Year Two. She talked about the research to support each of these initiatives and the budget needs for each of these. Ms. Sheehan gave detailed information on the budgetary needs of closing proficiency gaps and Dr. Pavlicek discussed the data and detail on the third initiative -- Advancing Science and STEM Initiatives. Ms. Sheridan asked for a total for each column on the last slide. Ms. Padera said the presentation was fantastic. She would like to know, at what point, do we address increasing enrollment at the elementary schools. She would

like to see increased leadership positions at this level and is concerned about principals being overworked. She asked if there is a space issue for the Pre-K. Ms. Gormley said there is a space issue in all the elementary schools. There was discussion about updating the biotech lab and the expense involved.

Topic Three: **(should be under “Superintendent’s Report”)** Annual Report. Ms. Gormley asked for School Committee members to send in their edits.

Mr. Walker asked to move the MASC update to the next meeting. He also would like to move the Facilities Subcommittee Review to the next meeting.

Ms. Gormley asked for SPED subcommittee to next agenda.

Next Meeting Agenda Items: Facilities Subcommittee Review and MASC Update.

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: Mr. Zullas

Second: Ms. Sheridan

Roll Call Vote: Unanimous.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:45pm.