

Minutes of the School Committee

Regular Meeting

Milton High Library

June 12th, 2013

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

Not Present:

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

Call to Order

The Chair called the June 12th meeting of the School Committee to order at 7:04 pm

Approve Agenda

The committee approved the agenda.

Approval of Minutes

Subcommittee Minutes from May 21st, 2013

Mr. Zullas asked the word "with" on Page 1 to be changed to "without." Ms. Bagley Jones noted that there was nothing that says this is a Finance Subcommittee, instead of a regular School Committee meeting.

Move: Ms. Bagley Jones

Second: Ms. Padera

Vote: 4-0-2 (Ms. Bagley Jones and Padera Abstained)

Superintendent's Report

Topic One: Educational Committee updates were presented for the following groups: Proficiency Gap Task Force, Science and STEM; and Educational Technology Committee. To view these presentations in their entirety, visit this site:

<http://www.miltonps.org/documents/SCPresentation6-12-13.pdf>

A. Proficiency Gap Task Force: Mr. Phelan presented a Powerpoint on the work of this group. The objectives completed to date include:

Identify every individual student in the Milton Public Schools at each level who is in the Failing and/ or Needs Improvement in one or more categories of MCAS via their 2012 testing.

Analyze data of non-proficiency students to clearly identify any trends in student demographic groups, by level and content area.

Examine the list of students with each building principal to review and analyze the interventions in place for each student.

Conduct a review of current targeted interventions at the building and district level for effectiveness

Solicit teacher feedback on effectiveness of Task Force from each level of the district.

Mr. Phelan then outlined the next steps for this task force, which would be to review additional research on the topic and make recommendations to the superintendent.

B. Science & STEM update: Dr. Spaulding, Marilyn Decker and John Phelan worked on this committee. The goal was to provide a scope and sequence and/or pathway of STEM programmatic offerings to students K-12 that is linked to the new

Science frameworks. So far, they have advertised and interviewed people for the Elementary Science Coordinator, reviewed and revised middle school curriculum, and identified science materials, supplies and modules for the middle school. Mr. Phelan went through "next Steps" for the whole packet. Ms. Padera asked if anything is done with Summer Enrichment, to introduce kids to STEM. K-3 Mr. Phelan replied that "Bricks for Kids" will be offered.

C. Educational Technology Committee Update. Comprised of Jonathan Redden, Cunningham School Principal, Holly Concannon, Glover School Principal and Elementary Math & K-8 Technology Coordinator, Michelle Kreuzer, High School Vice Principal and Amy Gale, Middle School Assistant Principal/Curriculum Coordinator.

Mr. Phelan talked about the objectives completed to date, which includes all the technology currently being used in the schools. Next steps include the plan to review and analyze current Technology Pilot programs; develop a three-year purchasing plan for technology devices, etc. They reviewed plans to purchase technology devices and software/memberships for the 2013-14 school year that enhance instruction in the classroom.

Ms. Bagley Jones asked if there are any opportunities for students to be involved on this committee, and also asked what computer classes are being offered to students at Milton High. Ms. Padera asked if the Summer Enrichment program is being used to pilot any new STEM or technology courses.

Mr. Phelan replied that they are offering STEM courses, but currently have no plans to pilot new technology as part of the Summer Enrichment. Mr. Zullas asked if we should we anticipate a product or a long-term plan for the use of technology in the classroom? Mr. Phelan said yes, the purchasing should be and what will be used in classroom. They are working on a report which will be ready in Fall of 2013. The committee is just finishing Year One. Ms. Kelly thanked everyone for their work and asked for an update on Smartboards. numbers. She also asked, is there PD for every teacher? Is all the technology being used? She noted that there was an effort to put Smartboards in every classroom...is this still the case? Also, she said she is concerned about equity. All elementary schools should have equitable technology exposure. Our role is to be sure it's balanced. Mr. Phelan said the goal is to have equity across school and across level. He noted that Pierce does not have a Smartboard in each classroom. The devices, etc, revolve around the "hub" for the Smartboards. The administration took inventory of every school to see where there were "holes" to see what we need to fill, before we start to purchase other devices. Regarding PD, Mr. Phelan said the committee met with a group that specializes in technology at "MassQ." The discussion was on how to bring teachers up to a skill level on technology. Ms. Sheridan noted that she participated in some of those meetings. She said you could feel the excitement in the air and compared it to "show and tell." She said she thinks it is wonderful that the committee is talking about piloting these things, and not just jumping in. She noted that the commitment the MFE is unprecedented -- they committed two years of fundraising to one topic -- technology. They've identified a need and they're flying with it. Also, she noted that finding ways to better utilize the technologies is a goal. Mr. Walker said that this is important work

which will support the advancement issues we've identified. He asked, where is the prep work for the early literacy campaign? He also said that the next steps on Proficiency Gap might lead one to believe that we're in the recommendation year, but this year's performance goals do include some progress. We are looking to make progress. Mr. Walker asked, on the STEM program, regarding summer enrichment, do we have something for those first-graders who have completed one year of STEM? He said he'd like to see continuity in the program. Mr. Phelan replied that they would like to install STEM opportunities for all students K-12 over the next few years. Mr. Walker said that regarding technology, we have a number of opportunities there. He asked if the committee had thought about looking at other districts who might be ahead of us in terms of best practices, use of technology and incorporate them into our committee? He also said he'd like to see a more robust and detailed discussion of PD. We have some uneven levels of proficiency among our staff. He would like to be sure that this wealth of technology gets used in the most effective manner. Mr. Phelan replied to the question about PD by explaining how the district implements technology training for the faculty.

Ms. Gormley gave credit to Mr. Phelan for working with first and second grade teacher to develop a plan for consistency across the district, with agreement on a program that emphasizes phonics. She noted there is a plan for every teacher and support in place for next year. The goal is for every student by the end of Grade 3 to be advanced or proficient in reading. Ms. Bagley Jones asked about differentiated instruction -- how is that going? How engaged are our kids in reading? She noted that the iSTEM program was only offered to kids who scored Advanced. What about the kids who are struggling? Are we really addressing all the social/emotional needs of students? Mr. Phelan replied that he thinks we do very good work with those students, as well. We have student support teams in every school. There are many avenues to help struggling students as well as those with social, emotional and behavioral issues. Ms. Padera commented on the proficiency gap. She asked if for the two targeted groups, are you identifying which students in the "Needs Improvements" or "Failing" are transfer students OR students who have not gone to pre-school. Ms. Padera said that Ms. Rosmarin had talked about doing home visits with some of the incoming students. Can this be implemented? Ms. Gormley noted that the Tucker Title One summer program is moving to 100% attendance. Administrators noticed that if it takes place in the Tucker building, there is better attendance. Ms. Kelly asked how many students who have been identified as being in the Failing category -- how many of those students are transfers? Also, she asked, where they're "gapping," is it true that they get an evaluation or program similar to an IEP.? Ms. Kelly commented that, regarding STEM, the lines seem to be blurred regarding program. It sounds like everyone is getting STEM. Both English, in French? The lines need to be very clear and parents need to be very aware of the differences. Mr. Phelan explained that the science curriculum from the state includes STEM standards. The English students in the Innovation Pathways have activities that will accentuate the experience with robotics. That's the separating difference. Mr. Phelan explained that the confusion could be that French teachers teach some science classes that involve

STEM standards. Ms. Gormley noted that now, with the MFE funds, we can equalize both programs.

Topic Two: Kindergarten and First Grade Update. Ms. Gormley thanked Sean Walsh, our Human Resource Specialist, for his work on this project. The goal is to have families placed as early as possible. This year, the K assignments were sent out in early June (last Friday afternoon.) Mr. Phelan said the classes are full at Cu/Co and Glover, with a maximum of 22 students. That is capacity. He said there are still three families waiting to register and who have incomplete packets. Right now, there are only four students in the K half-day program. He said they are watching the K numbers very carefully. Ms. Bagley Jones asked, if five more students move into the Cunningham area, where do they go? Mr. Phelan answered that any students who enroll right now will go to Tucker school, where there are open seats. Ms. Bagley Jones then asked, what do you do once Tucker gets full? Mr. Phelan answered that they are looking to see what the trend is with that. He said they have never had as many folders complete as early as we have this year. He credited Sean Walsh and Jane Barrett for meeting earlier deadlines. Mr. Zullas said, speaking from personal experience, the K registration process was great. Ms. Padera asked about the logistics of counting the half-day K students.

Mr. Phelan then reviewed the projections for 2013-14 for Grade One. He said the 9 families who were put in English, but who requested French are currently on waiting lists for individual schools and are also in an aggregate waiting list for the district. He noted there is a maximum of 26 in French. He said that Marilyn Decker and the STEM program deserve credit for helping to stabilize the numbers. Ms. Sheridan noted there are 155 students in English and 165 in French -- and out of 320 students, only nine did not get their choice. We are ending the second phase at the end of June. Ms. Kelly asked about the SPED programs at Cu/Co and wanted to know if those students in substantially separate classrooms? Mr. Phelan replied that they are in their own classroom, but they join the English-only classrooms for part of the day, right.

Happenings: Ms. Gormley reported that on Monday night at 6 pm at the Milton Public Library, (June 17th), there will be a publishing party. Amy Gale has coordinated with Boomwriter, a program started by a Milton parent. Also, she reported that the new Tucker principal came from NY and visited the Tucker and on Tuesday met with fellow principals. As far as the Glover principal search, Ms. Gormley said it is still active. She also notified the committee that Steve Traister is resigning and going to Dedham. We will be posting the position. Also, they will be convening a screening committee. Parents/teachers/coaches and a student will be on committee. Ms. Gormley noted that Charlie Paris is retiring after 30 years with the Milton Police Department. She said, on behalf of the Milton Public Schools, she wishes him well in his retirement. She also noted that Tanya Walsh is one of three finalists for excellence in math teaching and the announcement is tomorrow for Mass. Teacher of the Year. Holly Concannon and Dr. Karen Spaulding have both been involved and they are both presenters. She also noted that before this school committee meeting, they recognized our volunteers. Ms. Gormley also reminded parents and guardians to look for summer reading packets. The last day of school is

Monday, June 24th, which is a half -day. Also, to update members, the warrant will be available to be signed during the week. The business office will let you know when to see the warrant. It's at MPD most of the time, and on Wednesdays, moves here.

Ms. Sheridan asked if Nancy Mearn could provide times/ dates for warrant to be at MPD. Clear parameters. Ms. Kelly said she would prefer it to be at MHS over the weekend. Going forward, she would like that to be the plan.

Chairman's Report

Topic One: Ms. Sheridan explained that they would begin with an interview for Assistant Superintendent for Business. Mr. Zullas spoke next and said that before the committee moves forward, he would like to reiterate that both he and Ms. Padera will be recusing themselves. Less than two months ago, he said, both of their election campaigns received financial contributions from Mr. Pavlicek. It's important to note that, there was no awareness that he was applying for this position. However, in order to avoid the appearance of a conflict, and in order to avoid any taint that could be applied to Mr. Pavlicek, or to the School Committee, we will not participate in the discussion and we will abstain from voting. He said he thinks this is the appropriate course. Also, for the purpose of this interview, in order to avoid confusion, we will step away from the table.

**** Mr. Zullas and Ms. Padera left the table at this point. **** (8:36 pm)

Ms. Sheridan asked for a recommendation. Ms. Gormley said she recommended Glenn Pavlicek for the Assistant Superintendent for Business. Ms. Gormley explained that as background information, she formed a search committee for this position. The search committee brainstorms what they're looking for, comes up with a list of questions. Every application submitted is distributed to everybody on the screening committee. Matt Gillis, our Assistant Superintendent for Business, took a job in Hull and left mid-year. The search began to fill this position on Feb. 15th.

March 8th was the application deadline. The Search Committee met and gave feedback. There was another meeting on March 15th. Then, on March 19th, they interviewed six individuals. On March 21st, there was a second round of interviews and final interviews followed. Mr. Walker and Ms. Kelly interviewed candidates along with Ms. Gormley on April 4th. There were discussions with this candidate, he was offered the job, and he declined. The practice is to go back to the screening committee. The job was re-posted on May 1st. On May 28th, the committee selected new semi-finalists and interviewed two. At this point, Ms. Gormley said she put forward the name of Glenn Pavlicek as a candidate. The posting did not close until May 31st. She said she should have waited until May 31st. Since May 14th, the committee had not received any more applications. Ms. Gormley put forward Dr. Pavlicek's name. He has been a professor at Bridgewater State College. He's very familiar with NEASC accreditation program. In addition, he has served on School Building Committee; Finance Subcommittee, he has 15 years of experience, four of which were on the Warrant Committee. He served on the Master Planning Committee. As chair of the Warrant Committee, he worked on budgets, attended conferences at MASC and other groups. His professional experience is vast and varied. The response from the screening committee was positive. He has the skill set, the leadership skills, and the temperament. Ms. Gormley said she enthusiastically

recommends Glenn Pavlicek for the position of Assistant Superintendent for Business.

Mr. Walker said he would like to bring up one small point of order. The reason we are here and this is on the agenda is because this position is an appointment of the School Committee. When Ms. Gormley said "I offered him the position and he declined." I think she should have worded that differently. Ms. Gormley thanked Mr. Walker for pointing that out. She said it is important to note, for all positions, she communicates with the School Committee. Ms. Sheridan said the School Committee would like to interview the final candidate in public at a School Committee meeting. We asked Glenn Cootcher, head of MASC, about the process used in other communities. Many other towns conduct the interview in public session and the School Committee decided to do the same. At this point, they invited Dr. Pavlicek to have a seat at the table.

Dr. Pavlicek came to the table at this point. Mr. Walker began the interview by asking what he considered most important responsibility of this job. Mr. Pavlicek responded that he considered the budget as the most important. Ms. Bagley Jones asked him to talk about his experience and any qualifications that make him an outstanding candidate. Mr. Pavlicek replied that budgeting is something he knows a lot about. For six years, he's been the treasurer of a labor union. Ms. Sheridan asked him what he considers the strengths/weaknesses in the current school budget. He replied that the strength is that we are moving towards a more integrated system with the town. In the past, this has led to trouble. The efforts to consolidate are a major strength. Also, Consolidated Facilities has been great. There's a lot more collaboration between the towns and the schools. A weaknesses would be the inherent unpredictability of what we do. Ms Gormley asked Dr. Pavlicek to describe his management and supervisory experience. Dr. Pavlicek replied that he is in charge of 21 employees now. He has had to let people go. He has had to devise plans to help employees improve and give them the development they've needed. He said the people he manages are in different places around the state. He sits on the board of trustees for a Health & Welfare Trust Fund. In that capacity, he doesn't manage people, but manages the fund. He also has some experience in benefits. Mr. Walker asked Dr. Pavlicek to talk about state laws that govern School Committee budgets. Dr. Pavlicek said that over the years, he has read a lot about these regulations. He is familiar with chapter 70 and 71 and knows about 30D and procurement laws, bid laws, etc. Through negotiations, he has worked with lots of these issues. Also, he is familiar with benefits laws and is familiar with lot of aspects of Mass. General Laws as it applies to school budgeting. Ms. Bagley Jones asked how would you use technology to make things more efficient? Dr. Pavlicek said it is important to use technology. He said he is not afraid to jump into technology. He uses plenty of software in his current job. He said it's important to ensure that the systems do what we want. Ms. Kelly asked if Dr. Pavlicek could describe his understanding of the budget proces. Dr. Pavlicek said he would reinforce the notion that this comes up from the schools and the site councils. He thinks it is important to know the bottom-up nature of it. I think the most effective thing we can do is encourage that. He believes in empowering them, and the principals, to come forward with school-based budget that feeds into system-based budget. Mr. Pavlicek

said that refining the warrant committee/school committee/town meeting process should be a priority. Ms. Sheridan asked how Dr. Pavlicek might improve the budget process. He responded that his principle improvement would not be to submit the budget to the Warrant Committee quite so early. However, the timing of the town is not flexible. He said he would like to see a way we could have an ongoing process and not be starting over at zero every year. He would like to develop long-range goals for budget. Ms. Sheridan asked what would be key priorities in first year? Dr. Pavlicek said the first year of any job is getting into the details of how things work. Ms. Sheridan asked if Mr. Pavlicek had anything to add. He answered that if, six weeks ago, anyone asked him where he expected to be tonight, this wouldn't be on the list. He said that he called the Ethics board to see if there was anything to prevent him from accepting this position, and the response was that there is nothing to say "no." Upon reflection, he said he wasn't looking for a career change. If it was any town other than Milton, he said he wouldn't be here. He decided to throw his hat in and see what happens. He has a job and said he likes his job. He told the committee that it is their appointment to make. If they think this is a good opportunity, then he's with them. If you decide it's not, that's okay, too. He said he's loved being a teacher for 30 years.

Mr. Walker said he'd like to thank Dr. Pavlicek and the Superintendent for being willing to think outside the box. Ms. Gormley and I have been talking about succession planning. This is exactly what we need to do. Thanks for being willing to do that. Ms. Sheridan asked for a motion.

Mr. Walker said that Dr. Pavlicek alluded to his consultation with the Ethics Commission. We have also sought an opinion and there is no conflict.

Move: Mr. Walker moved to appoint Glenn Pavlicek as Assistant Superintendent for Business contingent upon a favorable opinion from the Ethics Commission. Ms. Sheridan made a friendly amendment to include the words, "in writing." It was accepted.

Second: Ms. Bagley Jones.

Ms. Kelly added another friendly amendment to read: "pending successful contract negotiations." Ms. Sheridan restated the motion to appoint Glenn Pavlicek to this position contingent upon favorable written opinion from Ethics Commission and pending a successful contract negotiations.

Ms. Bagley Jones said that when Ms. Gormley first brought up this idea, she thought it was outside the box. She thinks it's a great fit and a key time to move forward with this. She would enthusiastically like to bring him in.

Ms. Kelly said that Dr. Pavlicek has been an outstanding citizen of Milton. All the work for his community and the skills he brings to this job are a great fit, and would be a great asset to MPS. Some members have talked about having spoken with Ethics Board. Milton goes above the recommendation of the ethics board. Ms. Kelly said she has an issue, not with who the candidate is, but where he just stepped off of. She thinks there should be time between leaving the SC and taking this job. Ms. Kelly said she will be voting against this appointment, not because of who the individual is, but because of the position he just left. Mr. Walker said he agrees with Ms. Kelly that there should be a policy dealing with this. In this particular case, we don't have a

policy, so for that reason, we should rely on the opinion of the Ethics Commission. Ms. Sheridan said that Mr. Pavlcek will be a wonderful addition to our leadership team. He is respected across town.

Vote: 3-1-2 (Ms. Kelly voted no; Ms. Padera and Mr. Zullas abstained.)

Ms. Sheridan then noted that the School Committee retreat has been rescheduled. Mr. Zullas asked how long the retreat lasts and Ms. Sheridan said it's usually a few hours.

Ms. Kelly said she would like to have it as early in the summer as possible. Mr. Walker agreed, saying he'd rather do it sooner, in order to discuss the Superintendent's Goals. Ms. Bagley Jones asked if June 26th would work, and Ms. Padera said she would not be available. There was discussion about when MCAS results will be out in mid-June. Mr. Walker said that August is too late. We need to say where we hit the target and where we missed the target. Ms. Kelly asked if we use embargoed test results, and Mr. Phelan said he's not sure if we can use embargoed results. He will check on this.

Finance Subcommittee:

It was reported that they have been monitoring bills. The good news is that Full Day Kindergarten has been spared a drastic cut funding this year. However, it will be coming. There has been a pull-back in terms of funding. Mr. Walker updated that they have RFPs underway for the strategic plan. We've indicated that we will be guided by the expertise of the consultant.

The Chair entertained a motion to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing contract negotiations for Assistant Superintendent for Business and Collective Bargaining with MEA and to adjourn directly from Executive Session and not return to Open Session.

Move: Ms. Bagley Jones

Second: Ms. Padera

Roll Call Vote: Unanimous

The meeting adjourned at 9:34 pm.