

Milton School Committee Meeting Agenda
Milton Access Cable Studio
Milton High School
November 20, 2019
7pm

Committee Present: Sheila Varela, Chair; Dr. Elaine Craghead, Vice Chair, Betty White, Dr. Kevin Donahue, Ada Rosmarin, Margaret Eberhardt

Staff Present: Mary Gormley, Superintendent of Schools; Dr. Karen Spaulding, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Human Resources; Dr. Glenn Pavlicek, Assistant Superintendent for Business

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:02

2. Approve November 20, 2019 Agenda

Updated and Approved

3. Citizen Speak (Policy BEDH - 15 minutes)

None

4. Superintendent's Report, Superintendent Mary Gormley

a. Final Approval of Pierce Middle School Washington Field Trip

Superintendent Gormley invited Principal of Pierce Middle School Bill Fish and Assistant Principal Janice Mazzola to speak on behalf of the Washington Field Trip. Principal Bill Fish confirmed that the students would be flying instead of the bus and fundraising is under way.

- \$1039 would be the cost per student
- Includes flights, hotel, tours and meals

Chair Varela put forth a motion to approve the Pierce Middle School Washington Field Trip.

Second: Dr. Craghead

Vote: 6-0-0

b. Preschool Presentation

- Administrator of Pupil Personnel Services Susan Maselli
- Preschool Team Chair Jayme Szymczak

- Nicole Davis, Integrated Preschool Teacher
- Marissa Stancato, Cunningham Sub-Separate Preschool Teacher
- Osayi Erhabor, Parent
- Eric Huang and Krystal Lu, Parents

Preschool Mission Statement

- Our Milton Public Schools Preschool Team believes that each child has individual needs. We believe that children need varied and rich learning opportunities that are developmentally appropriate, built upon success and are provided in a nurturing and safe environment.
- Milton Public Schools Preschool is a dynamic and respectful inclusive learning community that values diversity fosters critical and creative thinking challenges students to reach their learning potential, and prepares them to succeed in and contribute to a changing world.
- We believe in the Provision of rich opportunities to increase children’s language, social skills, play, motor, and academic readiness.
- Maintenance of close communication and collaboration with families/guardians and the greater community.
-

Things Our Staff Love About Our Programs:

- “Every day is a new day”
- “Sharing first time experiences with students is so exciting”
- “Seeing first time friendships develop and blossom is priceless”
- Our diverse students share experiences during large group, which allows each student a peek into different cultures”
- “A child first teacher is special; you have strong relationships with families so that they are comfortable leaving their young child with you. Having these relationships with families and watching the development of the children during these early years is very rewarding”

Things Our Parents Love About Their Child’s Programs:

- “We very much appreciate the supportive environment, open communication, and flexibility that the school provides to us and our children”
- We like knowing that our children’s well-being and progress is entrusted to people who genuinely care for them and use the best tools and strategies in order to get our boys to succeed. We feel like the school is more than just a school; it is an extended part of our family”

- “My daughter Sara is a sweet 4 year old who has a communication disorder. I had some apprehension coming in to her first year of preschool as her primary way to communicate was through sign language. I get teary thinking about how much time and kindness the preschool team dedicated to my Sara during the transition to school. They gave her the space and time she needed to bond with and feel connected with her aides and teachers. The experience exceeded my expectation. To watch my Sara light up with smiles as she heads off to school each morning is a true gift”
- “When our son initially transitioned to the integrated preschool pram at Cunningham, we were hesitant about sending him into a new environment with providers and teachers we did not know. The educators and staff far exceeded any expectation we had. The teachers are warm, but firm and just seem to understand who my child is and how to help manage his developmental needs”
- “I am not going to lie. It is truly hard leaving my precious “cargo” in the care of their pre-school teachers for the first time. I had this magical time bonding and getting to know them.”

Thankful:

- Partnership with Historic new England for monthly program using artifacts as it ties to curriculum units
- Partnership with Boston University to Provide Cultural Competency Professional development to Pre-school teachers
- Milton Foundation for Education for printing ink for students who require visuals
- STEM Grant for consumables and math materials.

Program Options

- 5 Full day Advancement at Tucker Elementary School
- 3 Full Day Learning Lab at Milton High School
- 5 morning and afternoon half day integrated at Tucker Elementary School
- 5 morning and afternoon half day integrated at Cunningham Elementary School
- Full Day Sub-Separate at Cunningham Elementary School (2) classrooms

Preschool Current Enrollment

- 15 students at Milton High School
- 18 students at Tucker full day
- 11 students at Tucker morning half day
- 10 students at Tucker afternoon half day
- 40 students at Cunningham morning half day integrated (3 classes)

- 31 students at Cunningham afternoon half day integrated (3 classes)
- 6 students at Cunningham morning Sub-Separate (class 1)
- 8 students at Cunningham morning Sub-Separate (class 2)

Evaluations and Enrollment Data

Our enrollment changes as the needs of students with special education supports are implemented.

- Walk ins: 8
- Eligibility Evaluations in Process: 20 (8 not scheduled for meeting yet)
- Eligibility Evaluations completed: 15
- Anticipated early Intervention referrals remaining through June 2020: approx 25
- Students who qualified so far this year: 10
 - Program 7
 - Walk in 2
 - Parental withdrew request 1
 - 1 no special needs

Screening and Student Find

- Student (Child) Find
- Screening Numbers last year
 - Qualified: 30
 - Didn't qualify: 9
- Screening: 2 referred to full evaluation
- Didn't qualify: 4

Cultural Competency

- Through in person and online modules designed and facilitated by Boston University faculty, we are increasing our cultural competence by
 - Learning the tenets of culturally responsive pedagogy
 - Creating community and support across the preschool team from 3 campus locations
 - Ensuring practices are inclusive and thus increasing academic outcomes for all students
 - Reflecting on our work with a cultural lens and refining it to ensure inclusive practice and to welcome engagement of all families

Current Initiatives

- Continue to develop program model by updating
 - Current entrance and exit criteria
 - Program placement
 - Walk in services
- Program model aligned with Least Restrictive Setting
- Examine practices related to assessment and provision of IEP services
- Continue to build stronger coherent preschool experience
- Continue community partnership with outside agencies
- Enhance experience for students with dual language
- Revisit and enhance report card

Next Steps

- Update district web site with preschool supports
- Continue to refine classroom curriculum models to support needs of increasingly more complex students
 - Screening and identification
 - Early literacy and math development
 - Building independence and school routines
 - Social emotional growth
 - Competency related to health complexities

District Preschool Information Night

- January 9, 2020 6:30pm at Milton High School
- Learn about program options, dates for registration, and fee (if applicable)

Margaret Eberhardt thanked the all for the Preschool Presentation. Asked if the High School Program was an inclusive classroom as well? Susan Maselli replied no, it is a larger class with a capacity of 18 students. Margaret Eberhardt asked if there was any thought of changing the class? Susan replied not at this time, currently not set up with support services.

Margaret Eberhardt also commented that Susan Dolan from the SFCE would be a great resource. She has empowered parents, provides support to families and Grants. Susan Maselli replied yes, Susan Dolan has been a great resource and has been very helpful. Marti McKenna our Family Outreach Liaison has been networking with Susan Dolan as well.

Ada Rosmarin thanked the team for the presentation, wonderful to hear from families. Ms. Rosmarin asked about the report cards, with the creative curriculum, how have the report cards changed? Jayme Szymczak replied reports are new to the program. The preschool Team

developing and recognizing the achievements. The report cards are still a work in progress; we have to address the needs of everyone.

Dr. Craghead also thanked the Preschool Team for sharing. Really appreciated the parent stories, shows what a great job the teachers, administrators and central office are doing for our Preschool Program.

Superintendent Gormley commented that the Preschool is like our 7th school in the district. Thanked parents and faculty for the presentation and remarks.

Chair Varela thanked the team for coming out and for the detailed overview. Stated it was great to see where we are, also thanked the team for the great success of the program.

e. **Happenings**

- Superintendent Gormley announced that Margaret Gibbons has been our head nurse and with the Milton Public Schools for 37 years. She has decided to retire and we have gone through a screening process to hire a new head nurse. Kim Coughlin our current High School nurse will take on the new position and also remain the Milton High School nurse.
- Diversity Information Night took place on November 21, 2019 at Milton High School
- Dr. Spaulding and Elaine McNeil-Girmai have a partnership with Curry College for teachers to take classes at a reduce rate
- Kindergarten Information Night will take place on January 23, 2020
- 1st Grade Information Night will take place on February 25, 2019
- National Honors Society and Student of the Quarter took place at Milton High School on November 13, 2019

5. **Chair's Report**

a. **Report from MASC Annual Meeting**

Chair Varela commented that she attending the MASC with Dr. Craghead, Superintendent Gormley, Dr. Pavlicek, and Dr. Spaulding. Chair Varela stated that the conference was one of the best. Included:

- Relevant topics
- Great sessions
- Municipal/school collaborations
- Great to see what we are doing and what everyone else is doing
- Session on School Committee
- Self Evaluation

- Goal Setting
- Guest speaker, spoke about diversity in the 21st century
- Student transportation, all districts are facing similar challenges across the commonwealth

Dr. Craghead commented that the Resolutions were also voted upon. And all but one were voted the same as the School Committee did a few weeks back. The Resolution #2 regarding the MTEL did pass by a close vote. Dr. Craghead stated she did speak up to support keeping the MTEL exam. Eliminating the MTEL is not fixing the problem. This was the only Resolution that was a heated debate and did require a hand vote. This Resolution does not mean that the MTEL Exam has been eliminated, it is just to urge the legislature do something about the MTEL.

b. **Student Advisory Council**

Student Advisory Council spoke about the cost of clubs and after school activities.

- Alisa Lorden, Senior Class
- Kevin Harvell, Junior Class

Students are concerned about the cost of the clubs. We understand student pay for sports because it is expensive. But paying for clubs and activities is new over the past few years. Students are not able to join clubs because of the cost. Clubs are part of the high school culture and there have been times where students have signed up for a club and later kicked up for not being able to pay.

Dr. Craghead commented that she sympathized with the students a great deal. With the override we had a few years ago we were able to decrease the cost of the sport programs and clubs by half. Unfortunately unless we have another override we will probably end up raising the cost of the clubs because we wouldn't be able to afford to run the programs. School Committee wished there was another way we could reduce the cost because MPS wants all students to participate. Dr. Craghead said this issue will be discussed with the Finance Sub Committee as well.

Chair Varela commented that perhaps the students could fundraise to help raise money for clubs. Suggested to Student Government to collaborate and come back to School Committee in January to readdress the issues.

Superintendent Gormley stated that maybe having no freshman pay for a club so they can be involved and have the experience is a creative idea. Superintendent Gormley asked if Student Government created a survey or is this a concern by most students. Alisa Lorden replied that no

survey was completed just an overall concern that students talk about at lunch and throughout the day.

Superintendent Gormley last year the clubs and activities took a budget cut of 31,000. Mr. Jette understood how important the clubs and activities were to the students. He reached out to parents and the communities for donations. Mr. Jette was able to raise the money to keep the clubs but he unfortunately cannot do this every year.

Margaret Eberhardt thanked the students for bringing this concern to the School Committee. We understand clubs and activities are very important to the students, and how important it is to keep the clubs in the budget. Hearing the concerns from the students is a powerful statement.

6. **Finance Subcommittee Report - Dr. Craghead**

a. **FY21 Budget**

Dr. Craghead stated there are two budget proposals.

Option One - FY21 Budget Proposal would be:

- Increase of \$2 million
- No additions
- Simple roll over with contractual salary raises
- Utilities

This is with nothing including no teacher at the elementary level which we have to have and not restoring anything that we lost this year.

Option Two - FY21 Budget Proposal would be:

Finance Subcommittee voted to recommend that we would adopt the 2.7 million dollar budget. One that we would bring forward to the warrant committee. Talked about our obligations of members of the school Committee to put forward what the district needs to operate. We recognize that this looks like an override and now that there is no real talk or appetite for an override by the select board. However the items listed below are what the district needs to deliver a quality education to the students in the Milton Public Schools. Enrollment was a concern last year now is a dire situation and class sizes at the Middle and High School are too high. The list below is needed and enrollment driven.

- Increase \$2.7 million
- Elementary Teacher
- Restore Club and Activities (\$31,000)
- Three full time teachers at the High School in the core classes

- 4 Recess Aids at the elementary school for safety reasons, current ratio is about 1:100
- Pierce Middle School Guidance Counselor, average case load is 350 per counselor
- World Language Teacher
- Add a bus
- Instructional Technology Teacher at the Elementary Schools
- Assistant Director of Special Education

Betty White commented that School Committee really need to advocate for our students. Our enrollment just keeps growing and we need to meet the needs for all the schools.

Ada Rosmarin commented that she supported the second option. School Committee wouldn't be doing their job if they did not advocate for the students. The numbers are through the roof.

Dr. Donahue agreed with all on the enrollment issues. Enrollment levels are concerning, having up to 30 students in a class is hard on the staff and the students. Susan Maselli needs support, she is wearing many hats and can make her job very challenging.

Margaret Eberhardt thanked Dr. Craghead for budget proposal. Our obligation is to give the district what it needs. School Committee needs to advocate for what is needed or else we are not doing what we were elected to do.

Chair Varela made a motion to approve the FY21 Budget.

Second: Betty White

Vote: 6-0-0

b. **Approval of Vendor Warrants**

Dr. Craghead put forth a motion to approve Vendor Warrants:

Vendor Warrant number #20, dated November 14, 2019 in the amount of \$274,254.74 and

Vendor Warrant number #21, dated November 21, 2019 in the amount of \$368,356.34.

Second: Chair Varela

Vote: 5-0-1

7. **Facilities Advisory Committee Report**

Ada Rosmarin stated that the Facilities Advisory Committee has discussed ways of making our classrooms more flexible and to enhance the learning.

- Low budget Changes
- Rearrangement of classrooms with furnishings
- Provided space for the needs of the students
- Seen a lot of changes already at the elementary level
- Pilot at the Middle and High School
- MFE have supported the additions to the classroom

Ada Rosmarin also reported that the Green Space Project is moving along in a positive way. Committee has met with the architects and reviewed the drawings. Great to actually see what the outdoor space can look like. Also met with the abutting neighbors and shared the plans and received positive feedback. On December 18th School Committee will receive the Green Space Proposal.

School Committee and Administration expressed appreciated for all the hard work the Facilities Advisory Committee has done and look forward to the proposal.

8. **School Building Committee Report**

Ada Rosmarin reported they have been meeting over the past few months.

- Reviewed enrollment data
- Looked into the real estate trends and comparison with enrollment
- We are overcrowded in our schools and need to make a change
- Beginning to look at possible sites in town
- Can possible qualify for funding due to the overcrowding

9. **Policy Subcommittee Report –**

- **First Reading Policy JGA, Grade One Assignment Policy**

- Dr. Donahue commented that the Grade One Policy is still being cleaned up and a copy will be provided at the next School Committee Meeting.

- **First Reading, Policy EFD, Meal Charging Policy**

- Dr. Donahue reported that any student whose school meal account has a zero or negative balance will be allowed to charge a reimbursable meal/milk/water.

10. **Approval of Minutes**

Chair Varela made a motion to approve School Committee Meeting Minutes dated October 2, 2019.

Second: Dr. Donahue

Vote: 6-0-0

11 **Old Business**

None

12. **Citizen Speak Topic Response**

None

13. **Next Meeting Agenda Items**

Next meeting agenda was edited and updated to be provided at the next meeting.

14. **Citizen Speak (Policy BEDH - 15 minutes)**

None

15. **Executive Session**

Chair Varela moved to adjourn to go into executive session not to return to the open session for the purpose of discussion of Negotiation Strategy for Union Personnel, AFSCME, MEA and approval of minutes.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:01pm.