

Milton School Committee Meeting Minutes
Tucker Elementary School
February 27, 2019
Time: 7 pm

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

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

Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 7:06 pm.

Approve February 27, 2018 Agenda

The agenda was approved with the deletion of item 11, Approval of Minutes; and the deletion of item 8, Health and Wellness Advisory Committee Report.

Citizens Speak

No items.

Superintendent's Report

Topic One: Tucker Elementary School Site Council Presentation (Attachment).

- Tucker School Goal 1: As part of the district's improvement plan for high academic achievement for all students, we will work to increase the number of students scoring in the meeting and exceeding category on state assessments in all three subgroups. At this time, 90% of students are meeting targets in tested areas. The school has the second highest science goals in the district. They will continue to work on progress in the academics. In addition, there have been multiple enrichment programs integrated into the curriculum and these were itemized (morning math leagues, Rising Stars program, FOSS Pre-K kits, etc.).
- Tucker School Goal 2: We will work towards 85% of our students reading at or above grade level by the end of grade 3 and all students K-5 will be able to read and respond to text(s) across the curriculum as measures by Reach for Reading Assessments and the MCAS assessments in Grades 3-5. Reach for Reaching was a large investment and we are seeing great results. Last year we adopted this program in all grades within the school. We are currently in year two and we are going deeper into the implementation of Reach for Reading programing. We added a 1.5 instructional support position and we have seen increases in achievement and engagement. Additional measures of progress include book clubs for grades 3-5, author visits to the school, and the posting of a 0.5 Reading Specialist in fifth grade.
- Tucker School Goal 3: Tucker School will develop a community of respect, collaboration, and achievement amongst all stakeholders to ensure the optimal learning environment for student

success. Multiple activities and initiatives have been launched including Tucker Talks, community service events, and a community supper. These slides were reviewed.

The remainder of the Superintendent's Report was deferred until after the public forum.

Milton School Committee Public Forum on Space

Dr. Donahue explained the purpose of the public forum, which is to give the community a chance to share their thoughts on the current space issue and potential solutions.

Sarah Callahan of 11 Elm Street expressed her concern with the construction of a free standing building to house pre-K and K students. She hopes this does not happen and hopes a new elementary school can be considered as a solution instead. She commented that Milton lacks large spaces where the community can come together. She is involved with the Youth Task Force and believes this sense of community is vital. She also shared her observation of the positive impact on her son after attending pre-K within the elementary school. She is also a Town Meeting member. She believes a separate campus is not a prudent choice.

Ms. Varela polled the audience and discovered much of the audience has not yet seen all the details of the NESDEC study. The document was accessed and placed on the screen and a brief summary of the space needs survey was reviewed and shared with the audience.

Dr. Donahue explained that the district's four schools currently house the population of five elementary schools. As a result, classroom space had been repurposed for the last several years to accommodate this increase in school population. Many of these spaces were formerly art and music rooms. There are additional spaces that can be converted but these spaces are running out as we are reaching maximum capacity within these four schools.

We will need another 26 elementary classrooms – which is the equivalent of another elementary school.

NESDEC offered a list of potential solutions to add the needed classroom space. These options were reviewed with the audience.

Eve Lyons of Randolph Avenue expressed her concern about any new construction and the impact this will have on current students. She commented that the construction of a free standing pre K and K building may be a less disruptive option unless there is another option that would also achieve fewer disruptions as well.

Alejandro Moran, of Canton Avenue, asked for more details about the formation of the school building committee and what they will be charged with.

Dr. Donahue explained that this will be determined over the next several weeks. The establishment of a School Building Committee was just approved last night.

Ms. Varela added that we hope to have the committee in place as soon as possible.

Dr. Donahue added that their timeline for identifying one solution and completing the project is very aggressive and optimistic. However, this is needed given the numbers of incoming students and current assessment of space.

Kate Deeb of St. Mary's Road asked whether the School Building Committee will also be charged with short term solution as well.

Dr. Donahue replied that the determination of short term solutions will remain under the purview of the School Committee.

Ms. Deeb also expressed concern with the effects over overcrowding if there is additional construction on existing school sites in regarding the lunch, recess, and traffic.

The School Committee members also added that in addition, the town is also considering construction of the new fire station, which is another project that requires a large amount of capital.

Ms. Rosmarin asked that any town members with architectural expertise consider volunteering for the School Building Committee.

Colleen McCarthy of Gulliver Street asked if the School Building Committee will be restricted to the consideration of certain options.

Dr. Donahue replied they will not. He also encouraged the audience to share their views at Town Meeting.

Colleen also asked about the previous sale of town land. She asked why the town did not anticipate needing this space before the land was sold.

Dr. Donahue replied that there was discussion at the time to build a school, but he is not certain of why the sale of the property was determined the best solution in the end. The land was sold to a developer and there are homes are being built on that property.

The proceeds from the sale of the property were used to benefit the town.

Colleen then inquired about the makeup of School Building Committee.

Dr. Donahue replied that there will be two School Committee members, two Selectmen, and then other members who can apply to participate.

Whitney Leach of Elm Street shared her concerns regarding parking at the high school. She noticed this is at capacity and expressed her concern for how this will be managed if another building is constructed on this property.

The public forum was adjourned.

Superintendent's Report

Topic Two: 2019-2020 Academic Calendar (Revised) (Attachment) (Vote).

Dr. Donahue moved to approve the revised 2019-2020 academic calendar.

Second: S. Varela

Vote 6-0-0

Topic Three: Happenings.

Ms. Gormley presented the Happenings:

- The First Grade Information Night will be held on Monday March 4th.
- The next Parent Series will be held on 3/5, and the topic will be on Healthy Eating.
- The next School Committee meeting will be held on 3/6/19.
- Milton boys' basketball will advance to the next round of the MIAA tournament.
- The Cross country team participated in the Eastern Massachusetts Championships
- The Wrestling team won Division 2 Sectional Championship and their coach was awarded Coach of The Year.

Chair's Report

Topic One: Ethics Disclosure for Laurie Stillman.

Laurie Stillman applied for a \$10,000 grant that is to be distributed over five years. This was deemed not so substantial as to affect the integrity of the grant writing services. This disclosure is noted.

Finance Subcommittee Report

Dr. Craghead presented the Finance Subcommittee Report. The committee is trying to reshape the previous budget requests after being informed that the Town has a \$2.8M shortfall. We have been told we need to make up for 65% of that. We have met with the members of the select board finance subcommittee, the town administrator, and the town accountant. We are discussing where and how reductions may be made. It is clear that this will not only eliminate our "asks" but will results in cuts being made

Topic One: Camp Cunningham FY20 Tuition Fee (Attachment) (Vote).

Dr. Craghead made a motion to approve the Camp Cunningham tuition be increased from \$250/week to \$280/week for FY 2020.

Second: Donahue

Vote: 6-0-0

Topic Two: Approval of Vendor Warrants (Vote).

Dr. Craghead made a motion to approve Vendor warrant #32, dated 2/14/19, in the amount of \$588,536.90.

Second: Varela

Vote: 6-0-0

Facilities Advisory Committee Report

Ms. Rosmarin presented the Facilities Advisory Report. The establishment of a School Building Committee was approved at Town Meeting. Next steps will include determining how the committee will be formed. They will reach out to the town moderator to discuss these details.

Policy Subcommittee Report

Topic One: Second Reading, Policy ILD, Student Submission to Education Surveys and Research (Attachment).

Ms. Eberhardt explained that this is a new policy and therefore this would be a first approval. The policy is regarding our informing parents regarding our responsibility and their rights regarding their children's participation.

Ms. Eberhardt made a motion to approve the first reading of Policy ILD, Student Submission to Education Surveys and Research

Second: K. Donahue

Vote: 6-0-0

Topic Two: Second Reading, Policy IHBG, Home Schooling (Attachment).

Ms. Eberhardt made a motion to re-approve Policy IHBG, Home Schooling.

Second: K. Donahue

Vote: 6-0-0

Topic Three, Policy IFC, Diversity Policy.

Ms. Eberhardt made a motion approve Policy IFC, Diversity Policy, as revised.

Second: E. Craghead

Vote: 6-0-0

Old Business

None

Citizen Speak Topic Response

None

Next Meeting Agenda Items

The School Committee will meet with the select Board on 3/6/19. They will also be part of the executive session.

Citizen Speak

None

Meeting Adjourned

Dr. Donahue put forth a motion that the meeting be adjourned to the Executive Session, not to return to the open session, for the purpose of review of minutes, as well as for discussion of negotiation strategy for union and nonunion personnel.

Second: S. Varela

Roll Call Vote: 6-0-0

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 pm.