

**Milton School Committee Minutes
Milton Access Cable Studio
Public Participation via Remote Access
November 4, 2020**

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

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

(Conducted pursuant to the Executive Order dated March 12, 2020 suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, Gen. L. c. 30A §20 et seq. and 940 CMR 29.01 et seq.)

1. Call to order - 7:04pm

2. Approve November 4, 2020 Agenda

Updated and approved

3. Chair's Report - Chair Varela welcomed the new student representatives.

a. Student Advisory Council Members

- i. Anderson Korman, Junior Representative
- ii. Jayme Lo, Sophomore Representative

b. Update on permanent Superintendent search - Ms. Eberhardt reported:

- Next steps would be to reach out to the community with a survey for everyone.
 - Will be one survey, you will be asked to indicate what your role is in the community
- Results will be provided at a School Committee Meeting
- Community meetings to talk about what the community is looking for in a Superintendent
- In January another School Committee meeting will take place to discuss the plan with moving forward

4. Superintendent's Report - Superintendent Jette

a. Pierce Middle School Site Council Presentation (link of the presentation slides provided below)

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1n0S7JlzaFRXGbefHSOoOzG6xhLqd_Cn4yX7XN6b6kX4/edit

The School Committee thanked the Pierce Middle School Site Council for their hard work and for their presentation. Stated looking forward to the future updates with Pierce Middle School.

- b. Update on Remote/Hybrid Learning - Superintendent Jette shared his presentation slides (link below of the presentation)

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1f5Aj953aqOWGf_HkQRHWtP91vkOQ3_t3G7x_Mc0doGs/edit

Chair Varela asked Superintendent Jette about the next steps, in January will there be another assessment done to discuss what is working and could change happen depending on the virus. Chair Varela stated that MPS would not be able to return as a district in full at this time because of the enrollment issue. Chair Varela stated that MPS is legally mandated to transport students K-6, it is a requirement so the bus would also be an issue financially. Even with fundraising it would not cover the cost of buses. Chair Varela commented she was grateful for Superintendent Jette's presentation.

Superintendent Jette said an assessment is done almost every day because the virus is changing daily, shutting down a class and at times schools.

- c. Update on Anti-Racism Initiatives - Superintendent Jette
 - meeting with the committees
 - narrowing down our focus
 - looking for experts to navigate and provide guidance
- d. Update on Senior Director of Educational Equity -Superintendent Jette
 - 2 final candidates will be interviewed this week
 - looking forward to the interviews

Superintendent Jette reminded the community that Assistant Superintendent for Business Dr. Glenn Pavlicek will be retiring on December 11th.

- Opened the discussion on the appointment of Amy Dexter with the School Committee

Dr. Pavlicek updated the committee on Amy Dexter's qualifications.

- Town of Milton Account for 10 years
- CPA
- Certified Government Accountant
- Worked together on the school and town budget
- Town finance
- Knows the system and the players involved
- Confident it would be an smooth transition

Chair Varela asked when Amy Dexter would be able to start if the School Committee approves the appointment.

Superintendent Jette said he was not certain at this time, hoping two week but will know for sure over the next few days.

Chair Varela stated that the School Committee is familiar with Amy Dexter with the budget and the municipal government and finances and that is key in this position.

Ms. Rosmarin stated she fully supports offering this position to Amy Dexter. She questioned the job description, what about the transportation and facilities?

Superintendent Jette responded that the job description has been discussed with Dr. Pavlicek and Dr. Spaulding and is looking to share and remove responsibilities.

Chair Varela made a recommendation to the School Committee to vote in approval of Superintendent Jette's recommendation of the appointment of Amy Dexter to the position of Assistant Superintendent of Business pending the final contractual negotiations.

Second: Ms. White

Vote: 6-0-0

5. Citizen Speak (Policy BEDH-25 Minutes)

John Helmuth - 214 Edgehill Road

- what can we do to get back to the baseline of learning

Mrs. Shlay - 65 Ridge Road

- 2 students at Glover
- Concerned that there is not a long term plan to get the children back into the building
- Concerned about the learning process
- This reality needs to be consider with the children back to school on a full time basis
- Need a plan to begin to explore options
- We as a community need to work together to safely reopen

Melissa Sweeney - Brook Road

- concerned about the protocol and practices
- increasing conservative protocols with cases/quarantining
- teachers are working hard
- appreciate Superintendent Jette's slides but how many students have lost in person learning due to the conservative protocols
- half days of education is not enough for the students

- some students have the option to stream in when others do not, wonder why and concerned about the equity
- barriers are being set up
- Governor Baker agrees that students need to be in school

Bonnie Bates - Pleasant Street

- asking you to consider a plan to bring back to the students
- students do not have the attention span to be online
- if not everyday perhaps full days every other day
- establishing a fund raising task force and going back to take a fresh look at the plan
- other towns are coming up with plans and making it work

Sarah Skillin - Central Ave

- 2 children at Glover
- commend everyone for all of their hard work
- encouraged School Committee to not think of the funding issue as a barrier, there are a lot of resources in the town and people are willing to help
- we should be able to overcome the financial obstacles

Kristen Kociol - Standish Road

- Thankful for Superintendent Jette stepping up to take over the interim role
- Husband served on the Return to School Task Force
- Advocated for full day with lunch
- Milton needs to use the resources they have to keep the students in school
- As a nurse, would have volunteered to help with the Covid testing
- Daughter has recovered from Cancer, and asked her daughter's doctor if it was safe for her daughter to return to school. The doctor's response was that it would not be safe to keep her home.

Pony Stacpoole - Brook Hill Road

- 2 Glover Students
- High need student
- Teacher, both in person and remote
- Seen the negative effects of the Hybrid Model
- Teachers are working twice as hard
- Over 550 parents/community members involved
- MPS would receive a D for its effort with the return to the school
- Know so much more now about the virus
- Children need to be back in school
- Follow the science, we need to do better for our students

Mrs. Matthews -

- Recommendation of Assistant Superintendent just happened?
- Only discussed for few minutes
- Concerned about the process for a senior level position

Regine Jean Charles - 70 Sumner Street

- Equity Audit, appreciated the commitment but disappointment that only one bid was given
- Should consider the extension of timeline
- Excited to hear about the 2 finalist for the Equity Officer

Ana Frega - Winthrop Street

- Voice a different opinion about the return to school
- Thanked MPS for providing safety for our children
- Large support of parents for the Hybrid Model
- Nurse Coughlin is working long days and hours to provide information to families
- Commend all the teachers
- Acknowledge this is a terrible year, need to accept what is happening, we are in a pandemic
- Thanked Mr. Jette, all the nurses and teachers

Kerry Curley - 294 EdgeHill Road

- Grateful to Mr. Jette and all the principals
- Not creating this group to be disrespectful
- A teacher and proud of her profession
- Don't want these kids not to be educated
- Asked if substitutes are not available, offered to substitute to help
- Unacceptable not to have a list of teachers of available for our students

Michele Serpa - Robbins Street

- Thanked all the teachers and principals
- Need to advocate for my child
- Daughter is in remission, immune system is strong and doing well
- Not working being at home
- Need structure, friends and teachers
- Mental health and side effects are very real
- Suggest to review a full return especially for our youngest children
- Will be facing a mental health pandemic if we keep forcing our children to stay at home

Karen Harris -

- Number of days and hours are not enough
- There will be negative long term effects
- Can parents speak and get a response

- Talk about finances but School Committee just voted on an Assistant Superintendent within a few minutes
- Students are struggling with the technology therefore are not doing well in school
- Teachers do deserve appreciation but we need to advocate for our children

6. Response to Citizen Speak

Dr. Donahue

- Thanked all the parents that called in and spoke
- Also have 4 elementary school aged children and it is difficult
- MPS has a profound over enrollment crisis, need another elementary school in town
- Reminding people that this is not a little problem Milton has, this problem will not go away. We need a new building.
- Truly wished everyone continues to be safe

Ms. Eberhardt

- Thanked parents for speaking
- Also teach young children
- Exhausting and wonderful opportunity to teach children
- Do not take lightly asking people to come to work
- Appreciate all the efforts
- Need to be safe
- Running 5 schools in 4 buildings, have an enrollment issue
- Equity issue is large
- Give educators and community an A+

Dr. Craghead

- Over enrollment is an issue
- Request to building a new school, have looked at additional spaces
- Too many students to bring back full time during this pandemic
- Assistant Superintendent of Finance position is essential
 - Need an experienced person to have the smooth transition
 - Amy Dexter has the knowledge of the town of Milton
- Appreciate all of the parents speaking
- It is a challenge, nobody wants to be in this situation
- Anyone is allowed to attend Finance Meetings, they are posted

Chair Varela

- If you want to learn about the budget and how we build it, Finance meetings are posted and all are welcome to attend
- Pandemic makes everything rise to the top
- Select board is already saying not to look for an override due to the pandemic
- Please don't dismiss that we are not advocating and working hard

Ms. Rosmarin

- Thanked all the parents for speaking
- So many challenges that we are all facing
- School Committee is doing everything to address all the issues
- Health and Safety is at the top of the list and to provide equitable access to education
- Need to stay safe and we will do our best to keep our schools open
- Perhaps in January, survey all parents and staff to see how things have been going
 - look for constructive suggestions
- Finances are a challenge, state and town budgets have been hit hard from the pandemic

Ms. White

- Hear the worry and concern from families
- Students are struggling, it is a very difficult time
- Health Pandemic, need community safety
- Every day is a challenge for the entire community
- Schools are doing a tremendous job
- Try to be patience while we approach the winter months

Superintendent Jette

- Thanked parents for speaking
- Agree with the parents 100% just need to be safe
- All staff want to be back in the building
- We are following the CDC guidelines
- We need to come together for our students

7. Finance Subcommittee Report

a. FY22 Budget

- Working on building out the FY22 budget
- Heard from all the principals and their needs and the Directors of Technology, Community Schools, Pupil Personnel Services and Consolidated Facilities
- Next step is the Superintendent and the leadership team to bring back the recommendations of asks

b. Equity Audit Contract - vendor only provided one audit review

- Superintendent Jette replied that we do not have the answers right now hopefully to know for sure tomorrow
- Chair Varela asked if the vote should be postponed until an audit review is presented
- Dr. Craghead stated she was hesitant to vote because the material requested was not provided
- Understand people are busy but should be able to see something to make our decision
- Now believe \$50,000 is fair

Ms. Eberhardt

- Reviewed the RFP with Ms. Rosmarin and the actual bid submission
- Timeline/commitment
- Round out the responsibility, should definitely receive what was asked for in the audit
- Want to see the results

Ms. Rosmarin

- Need to find out if the company is still available at a later date
- Suggest approving pending receipt of receiving items requested
- Perhaps address looking to put the bid back out there as suggested by Dr. Jean Charles

Chair Varela

- Don't think we should vote this week, need to address in Finance

Dr. Craghead agreed and stated The Equity Audit would be addressed and added to the next School Committee meeting.

c. Approval of Vendor Warrants

Dr. Craghead made a motion to approve Vendor Warrant #17 in the amount of \$268,117.35 payable on October 29, 2020.

Dr. Craghead made a motion to approve Vendor Warrant #17A (refunds only) in the amount of \$19,568.80 payable on October 29, 2020.

Dr. Craghead made a motion to approve Vendor Warrant #18 in the amount of \$262,890.58 payable on November 5, 2020.

Dr. Craghead made a motion to approve Vendor Warrant #18A (refunds only) in the amount of \$23,040.04 payable on November 5, 2020.

Second: Chair Varela

Roll Call Vote: 6-0-0

8. Strategic Planning Advisory Committee Update - Ms. Rosmarin

- Last meeting on October 22nd
- Went through all 6 goals
- Common themes
- Each goal has their own task force
- All have been enhanced and emerged with the return to the school
- We don't have MCAS results to work with, Data goal is a challenge
- Internal assessments, look to get a better sense of how students are doing
- Great teams working together across the district

- Cultural Competency goal, Educators of Color Group, revised the vision statement
 - MESCA
- Technology Goal, how personal learning can help meet our goals
- Supporting the work of Vy Vu on the data

9. School Building Committee Update - Ms. Rosmarin and Ms. White

- Phone meeting with Massachusetts School Building Authority back in October
 - Asked if still interested in receiving funding
 - Yes Milton is still interested
 - Exciting to hear back from them
 - Wanted to do a Site visit
 - Wanted to join a Milton Town Meeting
 - No formal word but have a good sense of being invited into the next round which is the reliability round
 - Very Optimistic
 - Adding School Building members, Educational Profile, Enrollment Projection
- Kerry Hurley as Chair needed to step down but will still remain a member. Sean O'Rourke has agreed to step up to Chair.

10. Approval of Minutes

Chair Varela put forth a motion to approve School Committee Minutes of October 7, 2020.

Second: Dr. Craghead

Roll Call Vote: 6-0-0

11. Next Meeting Agenda Items

Updated and approved

12. Executive Session

Chair Varela moved to adjourn to go into Executive Session not to return to open session for the purpose of discussion:

- a. To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation with Milton Educators Association (Units A, B and D) and with AFSCME Council 93 if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the Chair so declares
- b. Approval of Minutes

Second: Dr. Craghead

Vote: 6-0-0

Meeting adjourned at 10:32pm.