

Milton School Committee Meeting Minutes
Meeting via Zoom
August 25, 2021

Committee Present: Chair Margaret Eberhardt, Vice Chair Ada Rosmarin, Dr. Elizabeth Carroll, Dr. Elaine Craghead, Beverly Ross Denny, Betty White

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

1. Call to Order - 7:05pm

2. Approval of Agenda

Updated and approved

3. Superintendent's Report - Superintendent Jette

- a. Back to School Update - Presentation link on the MPS website

Ms. Rosmarin

- Question about not having medical waiting rooms? How will MPS be handling students who are symptomatic?
 - Superintendent Jette replied it is due to the tight spaces
 - have to open up all spaces for classrooms due to our overcrowding
 - maybe have to section off the gym while waiting for results
 - Kim Coughlin
 - looked at the DESE guidance, medical waiting rooms are no longer necessary
 - surrounding towns are doing the same
 - working with Principals on space options
 - team effort from the community, if a student doesn't feel well, stay home

Ms. Beverly Ross-Denny

- Questioned if DESE has given guidance on transitioning to a remote option in the event of positive cases rising
 - Superintendent Jette replied that no guidance has been given regarding transitioning to remote learning or hybrid
 - talked about vaccinations and testing

- Superintendent's have been asking especially for the concern at the elementary level
 - wearing mask is for safety for our students and staff
 - no authority to change to remote
- Ms. Ross Denny believes as a School Committee there should be a discussion at some point about remote learning plans
- May need to be proactive and to reach out to DESE

Dr. Elizabeth Carroll

- Questions about testing, additional guidance mentioned in the presentation
- Continue to test students with mild symptoms, if negative will remain in school
 - Kim Coughlin, Head Nurse - will need parental and guidance consent before testing the students with mild students
 - Pool testing not be offered, Test and Stay was a better option

Ms. White

- Questioned the current Covid numbers in Milton?
 - Kim Coughlin
 - Have not heard from the Board of Health with recent numbers
 - Since August 5th the numbers have risen but do not have the exact numbers at this time of the student data

Chair Eberhardt

- Plan to return to school in full, in mask and social distancing when possible
- using outdoor spaces
- Test and Stay programs
- how are parents signing permission slips for the testing
 - Superintendent Jette replied once the nurses are trained a form/link will be sent out

Chair Eberhardt

- Applied and granted a Test and Stay program, looking for additional support
 - Superintendent Jette replied that addition people will be needed, training and additional support
 - Caution the public not to just watch the numbers in Milton because a number of staff and faculty do not live in Milton
- Vaccination Clinics will be available
- mask mandate

- no remote option right now
- talk about hydration and mask breaks
- excited to go back to school in person

b. Enrollment Update - Presentation Enrollment Trend link on the MPS website and the Superintendent Blog.

Ms. Rosmarin

- Enrollment is continuing to go up
- where do we stand with the resources/funds for converted spaces
- are there any funds left for more constructions

Dr. Craghead

- funds were approved by the Capital Planning Committee
- enrollment has been an issue over the past 6 years
- all spaces have been utilized

Superintendent Jette

- do not have the total cost at this time
- lots of items have been delayed due to the pandemic
- 40b units are going to be built which will mean more families will be moving in
- will continue to grow

Chair Eberhardt

- need to look at portable classrooms
- we are at a capacity issue
- renting spaces did not work out

Superintendent Jette

- MPS Transportation slides/link available on the MPS website

Ms. White

- What is the actual cost of a bus for the district, what portion do the parents pay?

Assistant Superintendent Dexter

- One bus cost about \$75,000 a year
- fees is \$275 for the year, large majority fall into the free transportation guidelines

- challenging at the middle and high school level because we cannot fit as many as elementary students

Dr. Craghead

- this is an enrollment crisis issue
- do not know if we can find the money to fund and extra bus
- it will be at the top of the budget list

Chair Eberhardt

- always been advocated for transportation
- talked about Charlie Card options but parents were not interested in the option
- working on solutions and brainstorming

Ms. Rosmarin

- mention of shuttle busses, can somebody explain how the shuttle buses would work

Assistant Superintendent Dexter

- High and middle school add an extra early run and a late bus after school
- thought in the beginning would be a good solution but will need to look into it further for next year because it would get students to school too early

Superintendent Jette

- Enrollment grew causing more of an issue, cannot predict what will be needed months before school starts

c. Appointment of School Physician

Dr. Joel Hudgins - resume overview read to the community by Chair Eberhardt

Chair Eberhardt made a motion to approve the appointment of the Milton Public School Physician Dr. Joel Hudgins for one academic year.

Second: Ms. White

Roll Call Vote:6-0-0

d. Approval of 2021-2022 Handbooks

i. Staff Handbook

- ii. MPS Elementary Handbook
- iii. Pierce Middle School Handbook
- iv. Milton High School Handbook

Chair Eberhardt made a motion to approve the 2021-2022 Staff Handbooks.

Second: Dr. Craghead

Roll Call Vote:

6-0-0

Chair Eberhardt made a motion to approve the 2021-2022 MPS Elementary Handbooks.

Second: Ms. White

Roll Call Vote: 6-0-0

Ms. Rosmarin

- Questioned Health and Wellness was listed all in red, is it new language related to Covid?
 - Superintendent Jette stated that yes it is new language to the Handbook.

Chair Eberhardt made a motion to approve the 2021-2022 Pierce School Handbooks.

Second: Ms. White

Roll Call Vote: 6-0-0

Dr. Carroll

- will the data be included on disproportionate discipline from the Equity Audit
- look into the policies
- need to address the disproportionate issues

Ms. Ross Denny

- Restorative Justice, waiting on the update
- love to know where is the plan is for Restorative Justice
- How will the discipline policy change
- working and trusting our teachers and Administrators on making these changes

Chair Eberhardt made a motion to approve the 2021-2022 Milton High School Handbooks.

Second: Dr. Craghead

Roll Call Vote: 6-0-0

4. Citizen Speak (Policy BEDH-15 Minutes)

Rachel Gomes

- Had a question about the lockers at Pierce
- Son will need the storage for his locker
- Would be more sanitary to use the lockers instead of putting bags on the ground

Robert Burke

- Milton has about 50% male students in the Milton Public Schools, why don't we have 50% male teachers in the Milton Public Schools?
- Wouldn't that be equitable
- Looking for an answer?
- Thinks that males should teach males
- Over 65% of the budget is controlled by School Committee
- School Committee is the HR department for Mass Teachers Union
- Appreciate your time
- Can't wait to see you face to face

5. **Chair's Report - Chair Eberhardt**

- a. School Committee Goals/School Committee Retreat
 - Update on the School Committee Retreat
 - met on August 3rd and 4th
 - Open meeting and one community member attended
 - Productive meeting
 - looked at the goals
 - talked about the Superintendent evaluation process
 - ways to engage with the community
 - next School Committee meeting a presentation will be given about the goals
 - this year is the year to reset
 - looking forward to presentation and discussing as a group
- b. Vaccination Discussion
 - Discussion about vaccination for Milton Public School employees
 - looking for an open discussion

Dr. Craghead

- The Union that supports the Mass Teachers Union has supported the mandate of vaccinations for his members and so has the National Education Association.
- Makes good sense to support the vaccinations
- Support recommendations by the CDC
- Support the vaccination mandate

Ms. Ross Denny

- Appreciation that the discussion is taking place
- Younger children will not be vaccinated

- Would be at great risk if people are not vaccinated
- Best interest of the vaccine requirement with the exception of health conditions/concerns

Ms. White

- Support the mandate of the vaccination for staff
- Need to do everything possible to protect our children

Ms. Rosmarin

- Also support the vaccination mandate in Milton
- We know the vaccine protects
- Decreases the virus and mutations
- FDA has approved the Pfizer Vaccine
- Delta variant is a concern
- elementary level students are vulnerable and need to keep the students and staff

Dr. Carroll

- We are in agreement
- Top priority is to maintain safe in person learning
- Social distancing is challenging due to our enrollment
- In support of the vaccine mandate

Chair Eberhardt

- In order to have a vaccine requirement a vote will be needed
- Then negotiated with the union
- Work with a timeline
- All in agreement supporting a vaccine requirement
- Make a motion to have a vaccine mandate

Chair Eberhardt made the motion to have a vaccine mandate for Milton Public School employees with provisions and responsible accommodations negotiated through collective bargaining.

Second: Ms. Rosmarin

Roll Call Vote: 6-0-0

Superintendent Jette

- MEA has advocated for the vaccination mandate as well
- MPS has held vaccine clinics

6. **Policy Subcommittee Report**

Dr. Carroll met on Aug 11, 2021

- covered a lot of ground

- post a second public meeting on August 16th
 - a. Policy ECFA, Face Covering Policy
 - have had Face Covering Policy continuing in place from last year
 - along with DESE mandates
 - Superintendent Jette has communicated, there are some revisions
 - considered this policy on August 11th, voted to proceed with indoor masking
 - key update the change is that mask are optional outdoors
 - expectations will be made for students
 - changes will be reviewed bi-monthly
 - voting on the expedited reading of the policies

Chair Eberhardt made a motion to approve Policy ECFA, Face Covering Policy.

Second: Ms. White

Roll Call Vote: 6-0-0

Ms. Ross Denny

- Commented Superintendent Jette shared many of our teachers don't live in the town
- Consider the faculty and the state of the Covid status at the time of reviewing bi-monthly

Ms. Rosmarin

- bottom on the policy, originally policy approved should be updated to 2021
- questioned the deleted sections about the face mask covering, the ones that are encouraged and the ones that are not

Dr. Carroll

- clarified, that text is pasted in from the existing policy
- body of the text is updated to the August 2021 recommendations
- discussed inserting the masking definition, what counts as a mask and what doesn't
- language will not be deleted is will be retained

b. Policy IJNDD, Social Networking Policy

Dr. Carroll

- Social Networking Policy
- Minor edit, would add Tik-Toc, Instagram and SnapChat to the platforms listed under staff use under Social Networking

Dr. Carroll made a motion to approve Policy IJNDD, Social Networking Policy.

Second: Dr. Craghead

Roll Call Vote: 6-0-0

Dr. Craghead

- happy MPS is keeping up with the times

c. Policy JFAA, Residency Policy

Dr. Carroll

- Residency Policy was less detailed than other districts in the area
- researched other district
- provide clarity
- discussed proposed exceptions
- currently there are no exceptions, unless homeless students
- Revised Policy - hoping to focus on the top three
 - McKinney-Vento Act- consistent with existing policy
 - Students that may move out of the district after April 1st - may have the option to complete that one school year, but will need to provide their own transportation
 - Rising seniors, that may move right before or at the beginning of the school year would be able to complete their senior year but would also need to provide their own transportation
 - remaining two should be postponed to discuss at another time (would be the recommendation)

Dr. Carroll made a motion to expedite the approval Policy JFAA, Residency Policy with the three exceptions mentioned as written.

Second: Dr. Craghead

Roll Call Vote: 6-0-0

Dr. Craghead

- just wanted to clarify that the three are all at the discretion of the Superintendent

Ms. White

- questioned other exceptions that may come up would be considered at another time
- support decisions to be made at the Superintendent discretion

Ms. Rosmarin

- Clarify: is this policy being expedited?
 - Dr. Carroll replied yes

d. Policy JLCB, Immunization Policy

Dr. Carroll made a motion to adopt Policy JLCB, Immunization Policy.

Second: Chair Eberhardt

Roll Call Vote: 6-0-0

Another expedited vote from the School Committee

- adding Meningitis to the list of vaccinations
- removing the language requiring the flu vaccine because the Mass Department of Public Health had removed that requirement last year

e. Policy JLCF, COVID Pandemic Policy

Dr. Carroll

- Minor edits from last year
- Policy in place for the 21-22 Academic Year
- Expire in July 2022
- Minor edit would be to remove sentence approving changes between educational models
- Operating in a in person model

Chair Eberhardt made a motion to approve Policy JLCF, COVID Pandemic Policy.

Second: Dr. Craghead

Roll Call Vote: 6-0-0

7. Finance Subcommittee Report - Dr. Craghead

- Spent time at the Finance Subcommittee meeting talking about transportation which was discussed earlier in the evenings
- Other topics to discussed were the Cares Act Funds remaining and the Esser Funds
 - School allocation from the Town of Milton Cares Act, the amount given was 1.1 million and needs to be spent by December 31, 2021. The remaining amount is about \$117,000 and will be spent.
 - 3 pots/buckets of money - Esser Funds
 - Esser I - Deadline September 30, 2022 - about \$90,000 remaining

- Esser II - Deadline September 30, 2023- \$433,000 have not spent yet
- Esser III - Dead September 30, 2024 - 951,690 have not spent yet
- Funds have to be spent related to/impacted by the pandemic/ COVID Funds

- also discussed at the Finance Subcommittee
 - moving forward looking at the FY23 budget
 - next meeting to discuss dates and deadlines
 - bus/transportation

8. School Building Committee Update - Ms. Rosmarin

- Update images provided of a new school building site - Milton High School neighborhood
- South side of Gile Road /Blue Hill Parkway
- Conservation Land/Town Land
- Wanted to attend the Fall Town Meeting but was told that the parcels needed to be surveyed and deeds properly recorded
- Looking to swap the conservation and recreation land
- 6+acres
- Excited about the possibility of the plan but still a lot of work to do
- Looking to attend the Winter Town Meeting
- Reaching out to neighbors to begin conversations about the plan and how to work together to keep the neighbors happy with the plan

Ms. Ross Denny

- Appreciated Ms. Rosmarin, her persistence and leadership

9. Approval of Minutes

Chair Eberhardt made a motion to approve The School Committee minutes dated July 6, 2021.

Second: Dr. Carroll

Roll Call Vote: 4-0-2

Absent during the July 6th meeting: Dr. Craghead and Ms. Rosmarin.

Chair Eberhardt made a motion to approve The School Committee minutes dated July 21, 2021.

Second: Dr. Craghead

Roll Call Vote: 5-0-1

Absent during the July 21st meeting: Ms. Rosmarin.

10. Old Business

Updated and approved

11. Next Meeting Agenda Items

Updated and approved

Chair Eberhardt made a motion to adjourn the School Committee Meeting.

Second: Ms. Ross Denny

Roll Call Vote: 6-0-0

Meeting adjourned 9:48pm.