

Milton School Committee Meeting Minutes  
Meeting via Zoom  
January 5, 2022

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; Janet Sheehan, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Human Resources

Absent: Amy Dexter, Assistant Superintendent for Business

**1. Call to Order - 7:15pm**

Delay due to difficulties with link for the community to sign into the meeting.

**2. Superintendent's Report**

a. Response to Assessment of District Performance

- i. Director of Data and Analytics Vy Vu
- ii. K-8 Literacy Director Catherine DesRoche
- iii. K-12 Math Director Brian Selig
- iv. K-8 Science Curriculum Coordinator Christie Chiappetta
- v. MHS Science Department Head Amy Tom

**Discussion - Data Presentation Follow Up Questions from School Committee**

**January 2022**

**Advanced Placement**

**1) Slide 27:**

**a. What courses are 10<sup>th</sup> graders eligible to take?**

Vice Principal Ben Kelly replied:

- 10 graders are eligible to take Micro/Macroeconomics
- Computer Science
- Statistics

**b. How are these students prepared to engage in AP work?**

Vice Principal Ben Kelly replied:

- 10th grade students would not be prepared to participate in most of AP courses
- Most AP courses are offered to Juniors and Seniors after they have completed 9th and 10th grade courses
- Most areas require prerequisites in order to give them the foundation and knowledge they need to be successful in those courses
- Ambitious 10th graders with strong backgrounds in order to complete the courses

Ms. Ross Denny

- Address the slide regarding the low percentage of 10th graders receiving the AP college credit

Superintendent Jette

- The low percentage was due to the data showing all 10th graders not just the (27) 10th graders taking AP courses
- Want to expose students to rigorous work
- Offer AP open enrollment to students
- Opportunity to sign up and go through process
- Require students to attend AP meetings and sign contracts
- Information provided at 8th grade information night and Program of Studies
- The chart was clarified and explained

## 2) Slide 28:

**a. What percentage of African-American and Hispanic students receive a recommendation for at least one AP class before graduation?**

Ben Kelly replied:

- Course recommendation data from last year
- There is a course selection process, teachers do not recommend elective courses
- Music, Art and Tech Course do not receive recommendation because it is student choice
- 701 teacher recommendations from last year to take an AP course, 161 (23%) were for non-white students, 5% were African American students. 328 recommended students, 81 students (25%) were non-white students

Ms. Ross Denny

- Lower portionality opting in to take AP Courses
- Why are there lower rates of participation
- Ask to break down for African American and Hispanic students

Ben Kelly replied:

- Recommendation for AP Courses, African American out of 701 students, 5% were African American Students
- Students for at least one course is about 8%

- Hispanic Students recommendations 3%, number of students with at one recommendation is about 3.5%

**b. If all of these students were to take an AP class, are there sufficient seats?**

Ben Kelly replied:

- Yes, develop course selection process
- Create an appropriate section number
- Developed the schedule based on the request received

**c. What communication do we provide families to explain AP, the value/ importance of the work?**

Ben Kelly

- 8th grade information night, build in an AP information
- Program of Studies and course selection website
- Department Heads meet with Guidance Counselors
- Guidance Counselors visit classrooms to review the Program of Studies and course recommendations
- Ask teachers to discuss courses to take
- AP meetings take place in May and June, AP contract is reviewed and summer work expectations

Dr. Craghead

- When informational meetings take place for students, do you explain to families what the fees are and discuss who cannot afford the cost

Ben Kelly replied

- Cost has been reduced over the past 3 years; family can pay a lower rate as low as \$40 fee
- Free and reduced lunch can are eligible to pay \$20
- Work with students and families for arrangements
- Do our best to make this work for our students

**d. How do we support students to be successful (i.e., study habits throughout the course, earn a benchmark score)?**

Brian Selig

- AP teachers give additional time to support students, offer extra help sessions
- As the exam approaches, offer study sessions on weekends
- Willingness to provide opportunities of support needed, similar to coach and athlete relationship
- Calculus Project, opportunity offering support over the summer
  - Offered support throughout the school year
  - Ms. Guarino, Ms. Ritten and Ms. Conaty monitor progress and attendance of students
  - Offer tutoring for all members

Ms. Ross Denny

- Thanked Mr. Kelly and Mr. Selig for their thorough understanding of what is happening
- Getting more teacher recommendations for African American students as well as support while in AP, encourage families to take the AP classes
- Parents trust the teachers and would give the students the confidence they need

Amy Tom

- College Board added an online component to all of the course work that has increased accessibility and allowed more of the teachers collaboration
- Teachers work with the students and prepare them for the exam

SAT

### 3) Slide 33:

**a. Do we know whether or not colleges and universities will permanently discontinue the SAT requirement?**

Ben Kelly

- There are a ton of conversations and advocates to get rid of SAT's at the schools
- A lot of schools have gone test optional
- We are waiting anxiously as well to see what the colleges/universities will do with the SAT's
- It is up to the schools to see what the trend will be

**b. Would you please share what supports are available to students interested in taking the SAT?**

Superintendent Jette

- Special thanks to the Copland Family Foundation for their generosity
- Grant provided to pay for the PSAT's, and we encourage all sophomores to take

the PSAT's

- Support students and providing SAT's during the school day

Ben Kelly

- PSAT's scores help target practice for the SAT's
- Khan Academy preparations
- Set up a College Board account and work on skills that will help personalize SAT prep
- SAT Prep Course has been offered in previous years, (Math and English) unfortunately this course did not run this year
- SAT Prep sessions offered on Saturdays once test centers are up and running again with SAT's (stopped due to Covid)
- Offer SAT's on the same day of PSAT's is a great options for seniors

**c. Looking at this data with a lens towards equity, it looks like the black and Hispanic students and those requiring a fee waiver need differentiated support. Do we recommend or provide any preparation services (e.g., MPS led or 3<sup>rd</sup> party service providers) to students?**

Ben Kelly

- Fee waiver is no longer needed when offered on the school day (can work with the student internally)
- Lot of case by case scenarios, creative ways to make sure all students can take the SAT's

Ms. Ross Denny

- Recognize that this year is tough due to staffing
- Wondering if the district will consider a pilot program starting maybe Freshman or Sophomore year so that the student has practice with the content of the test
- Test taking strategies options for students that need the practice
- Think it would be worth the try and willing to help

Ben Kelly

- Agreed the pilot would be a great idea, perhaps start the fall of sophomore year

Cora Redmond (Student Representative)

- Took the PSAT's this fall
- Commented that her friends did not know they needed a College Board account to view their scores
- There has been a lack of communication there

**4) Slide 38: Based on the Lexia Rapid, it looks like our younger students are struggling**

**more. Do we know how many students in grade 5 and younger attended summer enrichment (Universal Program)? Is there a way to disaggregate this data to determine whether or not they are performing better?**

Cat DesRoche

- Universal Summer Program was to offer students, an extra month of instruction with their peers
- Academics were the focus
- Data collection platform, Growth Data was not the main focus
- K-2 grades program materials (different sub test) depending on what grade the student is in
- Saw a huge deficit with the students learning
- Fall and winter data will be collected and reviewed
- Confident and optimistic that our students will improve
- 

Ms. White

- Can you comment on the enrollment on the Universal Program

Cat DesRoche

- We anticipated more kids but only had 250 students attend the program

Ms. Ross Denny

- Dr. Spaulding surveyed families who would join the program
- No resources were wasted

Brian Selig

- Beyond the Bell Program in planning progress
- Students rely heavily on Lexia Rapid and IReady
- Resources that are teacher led will benefit of the student
- Program will offer additional learning experiences
- With the investment of money and resources we should aspire to make sure we are delivering the best learning experience possible for our students

Assistant Superintendent Sheehan

- Excited to offer students the opportunity, a communication email will be sent out to parents that will be invitation only program over the school vacation
- Still developing the program
- Waiting for the winter data and excited about the program

Chair Eberhardt

- One type of tool that can be used would be to improve the social emotional learning

skills

- Attending the program with their peers over the summer
- Skills development leads to long term academic success
- Benefits will play out over time

Cat DesRoche

- Maureen McClain who ran the Universal Program did report that student and teachers ran into the building excited to be there over the summer

**1) Can we please get a presentation that outlines the COVID-relief funded positions that are interventions for unfinished learning? (perhaps in context of a larger update on all the buckets of funding)**

Superintendent Jette replied yes.

**2) Can we please get an update in future from Brian Selig re. status of math curriculum and how the upcoming review will address in targeted ways our students' needs in Math, both in terms of unfinished learning and achievement gaps?**

Superintendent Jette replied yes.

**3) Can we please ask James, Janet and Somaly to explore how investment in PD on implicit bias could target the disproportionalities in discipline/special ed, as well as teacher referrals to AP courses?**

Superintendent Jette replied:

- Susan Maselli talked about the PD of Restorative Justice
- Ben Kelly talked about the AP tonight
- Student Rep Cora Redmond talked about College Board

**Can you describe the interventions currently being implemented to address learning loss for students?**

Christie Chiappetta

- Science is tested in grades 5 and grade 8
- Interesting data, not showing any learning loss at the middle school level
- Lower level was different because they were not offered the same hands-on experience/materials due to the online learning

- K-2 focus is having the student do the science, less worried about learning loss and more focused on targeting the science
- Able to identify which standards are addressed more frequently, we can prioritize those at this time
- Middle School we have more time for assessments, can identify the building blocks needed to be ready for High School

Dr. Carroll

- Can we perhaps have all of these interventions in one report so that people can see all the responses in a clear way
- Can this be prepared offline in a helpful way to communicate
- This could be in a summary for all to read, helping to see everyone see the snapshot

**I've been thinking more about the 25-35% of our 3rd graders who still do not meet MCAS reading expectations. This has been a challenge in Milton for many years and made worse by the pandemic. Is there a way we can analyze which of our students participated in a MPS preschool program? I'd be very interested to know if we are seeing a positive impact from those programs and whether there is a "dosage" that makes more of a difference- eg. number of days per week and hours per day.**

Cat DesRoche

- Strong positive correlation between high quality Pre-K engagement programs and early literacy and beyond skills
- Go back to the last 5 years of MCAS data
- Able to hire a 3rd grade district wide reading specialist, working with all four elementary schools
- Next year looking to strengthen skills with early intervention
- Will continue to use targeting support in the classroom

Vy Vu

- All the gains made over the past three years have been absorbed by the pandemic
- The environment has changed so much due to the pandemic
- We have been focusing on the current data but can go back and look at previous data with the students in PreK

Ms. Rosmarin

- Totally understand a lot has happened since the 3rd grade students were in Pre-K
- Believe it is worth keeping an eye on
- Tracking the reading scores, in particular those who are not proficient by 3rd grade



- Moving forward investing more in quality preschool programs to serve more children
- Parent involvement in programs is so important

Chair Eberhardt

- A lot of the research shows that the gains students show academically even out after 3rd and 4th grade
- Long term of benefit of preschool programs shows up in later in life
- Lifetime benefit of the preschool programs

Brian Selig - Update on Dual Enrollment update

- Quincy College
- Surveyed 90 current honor students
- Describe the program to the students
- Followed up with an email to the families providing information
- Solicited their feedback from the survey
- Out of the 76 responses, there were 50 students that they were very likely or likely to participate in the dual enrollment program
- 18 of the 76 that were unsure they were participate due to the concern that their colleges they were applying would accept the credit
- 8 of the 76 reported they were unlikely to participate in the program
- Provided financial support information

Ms. Ross Denny

- Would you be comfortable asking for a tuition waiver from Quincy College for at least 10% of the students applying?

Brian Selig replied

- Would be comfortable asking but not sure Quincy is willing to offer a tuition waiver
- But remembers from the previous meeting that a tuition waiver was not an option due to the contracts

Dr. Craghead

- Agreed with Brian Selig that Quincy did not seem willing to negotiate the contract of reducing the tuition
- Certainly worth asking for the free seats

Dr. Carroll

- Has Curry been explored similarly or are we focusing on Quincy College?

Brian Selig

- Not sure about Curry College at this time since it is a Social Studies Class

Chair Eberhardt

- Approval of the Dual Enrollment will take place at the Feb 2, 2022 meeting

Superintendent Jette - MPS Covid Update

- Presentation/information link will be in the Superintendent Blog

Ms. White

- DPW reported 1,400 Covid Tests last Sunday
- Highest positivity rate as well

### **3. Citizen Speak (Policy BEDH-15 Minutes)**

Mona Abo-Vena

- Parent of a sophomore, it was interesting to hear all the information regarding the AP courses this evening
- Thankful for all of your contributions
- Wanted to talk about the calendar, they can be inclusive and equitable
- Practicing Muslim, remembering feeling left out as a child
- Talked about the importance of inclusive language, recognizing all not just on the calendar

### **4. Chair's Report - Chair Eberhardt**

#### **a. Revised Draft 2022-2023 School Year Calendar**

- Calendar has been updated with additional information at the bottom of the page

Ms. Rosmarin

- Thanked Charlene Roche for reformatting the calendar
- Listing of important dates are very helpful for parents
- Listing additional Religious and Cultural Holidays, reminding teachers to be mindful of students
- We should think about how to accommodate religious practices
- Topics are more than just a date on the calendar
- Perhaps discuss at the Policy Subcommittee Meeting
- Maybe just vote on the date of the first day of school and come back at a later time to vote on the calendar

Chair Eberhardt

- The calendar vote can take place at the next School Committee meeting

Dr. Carroll

- Suggested a process to solicit information from the community regarding the calendar
- Revise the calendar year by year, checking with families

## 5. Finance Subcommittee Report

### a. Approval of Vendor Warrants

Dr. Craghead made a motion to approve Vendor Warrant 26 payable 12/23/21 in the amount of \$243,233.74.

Dr. Craghead made a motion to approve Vendor Warrant 28 payable 1/6/22 in the amount of \$288,512.54.

Second: Ms. White  
Roll Call Vote: 6-0-0

Dr. Craghead left the meeting due to an early scheduled meeting related to the School Committee.

## 6. Policy Subcommittee Report - Dr. Carroll

### a. 2nd Reading of Policy GCF, Professional Staff Hiring - shared Redline below:

**Redlined DRAFT revisions to be reviewed at Policy Subcommittee 12/13/21**  
GCF

### PROFESSIONAL STAFF HIRING

Through its employment policies, the Milton Public Schools will strive to attract, secure, and hold the highest qualified personnel for all professional positions. The selection process will be based upon the hiring of candidates who will devote themselves to the education and welfare of the children attending the Milton Public Schools.

It is the responsibility of the Superintendent ~~or designee, and of persons to whom they/he/she delegates this responsibility,~~ to determine the personnel needs of the Milton Public Schools and to locate suitable candidates. No position may be created without the approval of the School Committee. The district's goal is to employ and retain personnel who are motivated, will strive always to do their best, and are committed to providing the best educational environment for the children.

It will be the duty of the Superintendent to see that persons considered for employment in the schools meet all certification requirements and the requirements of the Committee for the type of position for which the nomination is made.

The following guidelines will be used in the selection of personnel:

1. There will be no discrimination in the hiring process due to race, color, creed, religion, gender, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, gender conformity, gender variance, gender transition, transgender status, national origin, age, genetic information, disability, pregnancy, or veteran status;
2. Attention will be given to staff diversity;
3. The quality of instruction is enhanced by a staff with a wide variation in background, educational preparation, and previous experience; and

4. The School Committee is responsible for hiring the Superintendent. Upon the recommendation of the Superintendent, the School Committee may appoint the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum— and Human Resources, Assistant Superintendent for Business Affairs and fix their compensation. The School Committee has the authority to approve or disapprove the Superintendent's recommendation; however, the Committee shall not unreasonably withhold its approval and will provide an explanation for its disapproval if the Superintendent so requests. For the positions of Superintendent and Assistant Superintendents, finalists shall participate in public interviews with the School Committee.

**54.** The administrator responsible for the hiring of staff members for school system-wide positions, and for the position of Principal, is the Superintendent. The administrator responsible for building based personnel is the Principal, subject to the approval of the Superintendent. The

**Redlined DRAFT revisions to be reviewed at Policy Subcommittee 12/13/21**

administrator responsible for hiring is directed to establish a representative screening process for. This process may, and for Principal and district-wide Director level positions. and Assistant Principal Positions shall, include a representative screening committee. Upon the formation of a representative screening committee, members will receive an orientation that includes anti-bias training and explanation of the standards for confidentiality of the screening process. If the District utilizes a screening committee for hiring an administrator, the members of the committee will receive training on the interview selection process. The purpose of the screening committee is to assist in screening applicants in order to identify a pool of qualified finalists; the role of the screening committee concludes upon presenting the unranked list of finalists to the Superintendent, the role of the screening committee concludes. The Superintendent administrator has the final say in determining who will be hired but it is expected that the screening committee's input will be a factor in the decision. The School Committee can request an executive session report from the Superintendent pertaining to any district-wide or Principal hiring decision that includes information about the process used for hiring (e.g. interview rubrics) and/or factors in the decision, including, for example, agreement or disagreement with screening committee recommendations. If the School Committee has questions concerning the hiring process, the Committee may inquire of the Superintendent.

The Milton Public School system is an equal opportunity employer. In addition to federal law requirements, the Milton Public School system complies with applicable state and local laws governing nondiscrimination in employment in every location in which the District has facilities. We will not discriminate and will take affirmative action measures to ensure against discrimination in all terms and conditions of employment, including recruiting, hiring, placement, promotion, termination, layoff, recall, transfer, leaves of absence, compensation and training. The Milton Public Schools expressly prohibit any form of workplace harassment based on race, color, creed, religion, gender, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, gender conformity, gender variance, gender transition, transgender status, national origin, age, genetic information, disability, pregnancy, or veteran status. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Human Resources, 25 Gile Road, Milton, MA 02186, Phone: 617-696- 4812.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 69:6; 71:38; 71:38G; 71:39; 71:45; 71:59B

Massachusetts Board of Education Requirements for Certification of Teachers, Principals, Supervisors, Directors, Superintendents and Assistant Superintendents in the Public Schools of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, revised 1994

BESE 603 CMR 7:00, 26:00, and 44:00

REC'D: NESDEC

Original Adoption: October 5, 2005

Readopted: November 9, 2016

**Redlined DRAFT revisions to be reviewed at Policy Subcommittee 12/13/21**

First and Second Reading for Reapproval: August 13, 2018

Dr. Carroll made a motion to approve the second reading of Policy GCF, Professional Staff Hiring with the amended changes.

Second: Ms. Rosmarin  
Roll Call Vote: 5-0-0

Dr. Craghead was absent during the vote.

## **7. Curriculum and Instruction Advisory Committee Report**

Ms. Ross Denny

- Met on December 13, 2021 at 8:30am
- Vy Vu spoke about the data around disproportionality especially at the high school level
- Susan Maselli received a grant, MPS has hired a Restorative Justice Coach funded by the grant
- Unfinished learning, there are more learning gaps in Math than ELA
- I-Ready and Lexia Rapid will be monitoring the students
- Update on the Anti-Racism Curriculum
- Surveyed teachers at the elementary schools on the topic of race

## **8. Old Business**

Ms. Ross Denny asked if there were any updates on the reporting system.

Superintendent Jette replied:

- The reporting website is up and running

## **9. Next Meeting Agenda Items**

Updated

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

Second: Ms. Rosmarin

Roll Call Vote: 5-0-0

Dr. Craghead was absent during the vote.

The School Committee adjourned at 10:20pm.