

Milton School Committee Meeting Minutes
September 20, 2023
7pm

Committee Present: Chair, Dr. Elizabeth Carroll, Vice Chair; Dr. Celina Miranda, Mark Loring, Bao Qiu, Beverly Ross Denny, Anna Varghese

Staff Present: Dr. Peter Burrows; Superintendent, Dr. Garth McKinney; Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Human Resources, Dr. Glenn Pavlicek, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations

1. **Call to Order** - 7pm
2. **Approve September 20, 2023 Agenda**
Updated
3. **Citizen Speak**

Ethan Case

- Students attend Milton High School, Pierce Middle School and Collicot elementary
- Address the bus situation in Milton
- Family and I are extremely disappointed in the fact that Milton can not provide transportation and actively denies bus passes to students
- It is an essential service
- By not providing buses, it forces more vehicles on the road, forces 16 year olds who are not ready to do the daily commute onto the road, creates environmental and safety issues
- Puts a tremendous strain and stress on the families of Milton
- A community such as ours, should not every have to worry about getting their kids to schools
- No other similar communities have this issue
- This issue is extremely predictable, you know how many students attend and how many buses - you chose not to provide the buses
- This is extremely disappointing and inexcusable
- It is a failure of the administration, School Committee and the transportation department
- No one in Milton should have to worry about getting their kids to school
- A lot of effort these days to help working families
- This problem is only going to get worse as the classes starting in 6th and 7th grade are large and will only get larger
- In the soccer community there are so many kids in the system, we are bursting at the seams
- We need to add another bus even if its only for the middle and high school
- Unfair to the students and families
- Needs to be a top priority

Dr. Carroll

- Per our policy, we do not respond to individual Citizens Speak
- We will continue to provide transportation status in our updates
- We can talk about it more heading into the next year with our budget process

4. Superintendent's Report - Dr. Burrows

a. MCAS Results

- Wanted to share our MCAS results
- Spent a couple of days digging into the results
- Spent time on a call with DESE
- Will share some helpful information from the state
- Will bring back in two weeks for our first Curriculum presentation
- Will be talking with our Directors who are leading all this work
- Will look at the connections at the results and the kind of work we are doing
- Look at what is happening in the classroom
- How to bring everyone into and the understanding why we are doing what we are doing and how it is impacting the data
- Giving the reasons for our priorities and our outcomes will change

Dr. McKinney and Vy Vu provided a presentation on the MCAS Data and

- MCAS Data - Slide show presentation available on the MPS website

Dr. Carroll

- Thanked Dr. McKinney and Vy Vu for the updates
- Will be good to dig into the data over the next few weeks

Member Ross Denny

- Appreciated that fact that you were pull this together
- Nice to see the changes to curriculum to math
- We looked at the alignment of the ELA curriculum, relative to the MCAS and we are seeing a turn around
- Something to celebrate
- Appreciate all the hard work that went behind the numbers

Superintendent Updates - Dr. Burrows

- Listening and Learning Forum on Monday at Pierce Middle School
 - Great to listen and learn from people
 - Different activities working in small groups
 - Talked about what needs to be focused on
 - Talked about schooling, what the conceptions are

- Informative and nice to hear the different perspectives
- Look forward to continue with the forums

b. 2023-2024 Superintendent's Goals - Dr. Burrows

- Working on the goals - provided/shared in the packet
- Language comes from Entry Plan
- Three District Improvement goals outline
 - School Governance Goal
 - Make sure putting enough energy in to support
 - Listening and Learning portion
 - Current needs
 - Fixing problems and future planning
 - Writing up Priority Report
 - Building implementation plan
 - What are the steps taken as a district to meet the objectives and pillars of the Strategic Plan?
- Professional Practice Goal
 - What's important is getting connected to the metro area and the community, agencies and other Superintendents
 - all the things that will help be successful
 - Bringing the connections
 - Attended a presentation as a panelist at MPDE (Massachusetts Partnership of Diversity in Education)
 - Presented on the work that we are doing around equity
 - Taking opportunities when I can to connect with people and bring resources back to Milton
- Student Learning Goal
 - Understanding the current strengths, making sure we have systems in place to make sure all students are performing at their highest level
 - Working with Danielle Wetmore and her entry plan (provided a report)
 - Tying in Special Education with Regular Education, all working together

Member Ross Denny

- Thank you for putting together thoughtful goals that reflect what you have learned so far
- In your District Improvement Goal #1, want to make sure we are doing this with you and that we are all on the same page
 - (Develop a strong relationship with the Milton School Committee and establish a governance structure that is able to support the needs of students, staff and the Milton Community. Establish clear communication protocols and determine the structure of the evaluation process for the Superintendent).
- Professional Practice Goal - What is the evidence that we will be used?
 - One of the challenges we have had prior, we have not previously determined what would be used as evidence to show success?
 - Worth while to look at in more detail as a group maybe at our next retreat
 - Should be sure we are all in agreement of what the evidence will be
- For those who participated in the Finance Committee/SubCommittee/Select Board Committee
 - Learned Town Administrator's 5 year plan
 - Superintendent 5 year plan - this will require a significant amount time and planning and want to make sure it reflects in the goals
 - Expectation to what the 5 year plan will be so that the town does not under fund the district
 - Maybe it can be listed here that we are doing this together
 - Right now we only have next year fiscal year plan

Dr. Miranda

- How do we differentiate between what the School Committee would hold accountable (Finance Committee) under the partnership with Dr. Burrows?
 - Maybe we can piece that out a little bit more

Member Ross Denny

- When we created our goals as a School Committee it predated the conversation with the Town Administrator, we will need to revisit our goals
- Equally our responsibility
- Our responsibility is to add to our goals
 - Effort that we are doing with Dr. Burrows and Dr. Pavlicek
- Make sure we are not dropping the ball
- Discussion or where to add
 - Perhaps into the Strategic Plan

Dr. Carroll

- We can add The School Committee goals to another agenda/meeting

Dr. Miranda

- Comment on Dr. Burrows goals - like how the goals are falling in line with your entry plan
- Priorities are set for the School Committee and the district

Dr. Carroll

- As we embark on this process, appreciate how you have taken the DESE Rubric and have made that our tool
- District Improvement Goal #3 - Member Ross Denny made a concrete suggestion of naming the 5 year plan, if agreed we can add in the update to the Superintendent Goals

Dr. Burrows

- Agrees with the change of naming the 5 year plan

Dr. Carroll made a motion to approve the 2023-2024 Superintendent's Goals.

Second: Member Loring

Vote: 6-0-0

5. **Chair's Report - Dr. Carroll**

- 2023-2024 Subcommittee/Advisory Committees
- School Committee Operating Procedures and Onboarding

Dr. Carroll

- Created and shared a new document of all the full descriptions
- Layout what are the Subcommittee/Advisory Committees are and the assignments
- Subcommittees
 - Have been in operation since the beginning of the summer
 - Last meeting we approved the concept of the Superintendent Evaluation Subcommittee
 - Making sure we are all in agreement on the work and responsibilities

Member Ross Denny

- Noticed the Operating Protocol Advisory Committee is not listed

Dr. Burrows

- It is listed at the bottom under Operating Protocol - Task Force

Dr. Carroll

- We have to talk about that, what are we calling it?
- Looking for 2 volunteers to work with Dr. Burrows
- Can call it a Task Force - seems appropriate
- Any other comments on the Evaluation piece?
 - All is based on what we talked about last time
 - Used the DESE Guidance
 - What is this Subcommittee responsible for and what will the full School Committee be responsible for?

Member Loring

- Suggested adding a 4th bullet
 - Vote on the final performance writing recommendation
- Aligns to what was discussed last week
- Has us all involved in the important work in providing Superintendent feedback

Dr. Carroll

- Need to determine who is chairing the Superintendent Evaluation Committee
 - All agreed Dr. Carroll will Chair

Dr. Carroll

- Advisory Committees - shared
- Anyone have recommendations or comments?

Member Loring

- Can we craft small descriptions - the goal and purpose of the Advisory Committee
- Provided reports from the School Committee Representatives

Dr. Carroll

- Agreed with Member Loring
- Can be a discussion under the Governance Goal - pertains to the layers of the work we are doing
- Refer back to the full descriptions of the committees
- Implications of the changes, will need to follow up with the members of the committees, making sure everyone is aware of what the work will look like this year

Member Loring

- Health and Wellness Advisory Committee
 - No longer Chaired by the School Committee
 - Would no longer consider this an Advisory Committee?

Dr. Burrows

- Would still be a Advisory Committee with community and School Committee members

Dr. Miranda

- Curriculum and Instruction Advisory Committee
 - Important body to still remain
 - The charge should be clear
 - We have continuity of membership- what is the purpose of the Advisory Committee?
 - Applies to all of them

Member Ross Denny

- This document shared are notes from the retreat, if you select the link it gives you the charge and the description

Dr. Carroll

- Health and Wellness - we are making a concrete change
- Other Advisories we are tweaking the purpose or positions - depending on the scale of the change
- Need to figure this out as we go, we are striving for a level of coherence that was not there before

Dr. Burrows

- The real analogy of the work within the district right now is connecting our quarterly curriculum reports to what is happening in the Curriculum Subcommittee
 - Having there be a sense of all these pieces fitting together
 - Sometimes will have to come back to discuss at a School Committee Meeting, this would be meaningful and impactful
- Have the same thing happening across the district, we have lots of committees that overlap
- Need to determine how we can work together and bring coherence in our structure

Dr. Carroll

- Student Service Task force will be revisited at a later date
 - Danielle Wetmore is working on creating a Task Force that will include representation of the School Committee and community members
- Operating Protocol - Discussion
 - Are we adding to this document?
 - How do we want to approach this piece?
 - Need a subset of us to dig into this model
 - Should it be called a task force?

Dr. Miranda

- Is it time limited?

Dr. Carroll

- It is time limited, ideally it would be people that are able to bring something to the October 26th (Retreat Meeting)
- Hopefully we can get two volunteers to meet between now and October 26th to bring something that we can work with on October 26th

Member Ross Denny

- Volunteered

Dr. Miranda

- Volunteered

Dr. Carroll

- Confirmed with the remaining School Committee members that they were ok with Member Ross Denny and Dr. Miranda volunteering for the Operating Protocol

Members agreed

Member Qiu

- Asked about the Student Liaison Advisory Committee
- Have not met the Student Representative, do we know who the students are yet?

Dr. Carroll

- Asked Dr. Burrows and Member Qiu to work together to reach out to student government advisors to see who the student representative will be

Dr. Carroll

- Did hear from Lisa Troy who is our representative from the Climate Action Advisory Committee
- Hopefully she will join one of our meeting and provide us with an update

Member Loring

- Looking back to our goals, crafting a task force to help us with our Governance Goals
 - Created one for the Superintendent Evaluation
 - Student Academic Well Being
 - Financial Fiscal Resources
 - Community Engagement
- Are we discussing as a whole group or Subcommittees?

Dr. Burrows

- What outcomes are we looking for?
 - Is the Subcommittee putting something together?
 - Is the Subcommittee doing the thinking then coming back quarterly to Governance Meetings?
 - When there is an issue, often times the first response is to form a committee to work on it
 - Can still generate that small group thinking and bring it back to discuss with the larger group

Member Ross Denny

- Is it a staff role?
- Want to support your efforts to communicate with the public so that people feel as though they are brought along in this process, always aware of what is happening
 - Especially with the budget cycle
- Talked about consistency and what our responses are
 - What is the format?

Dr. Burrows

- If School Committee is talking about School Committee communications - falls under School Committee
- If the School Committee is talking about District communications, that falls to the Superintendent
 - In terms within the district we will work with our Communication Coordinator

Dr. Carroll

- We put this in our goals recognizing we have work to do as a School Committee in this Community Engagement work
- Communication strategy as a group
- Can add to our next agenda as a full School Committee conversation
- Forming Task Force roles - a first step is collecting best practices from other places

Dr. Miranda

- Can we take Dr. Burrows suggestions of having two of us having conversations around Operationalizing?
 - Then bringing back for a deeper conversation for the Retreat (Oct. 26th)
 - Then it can be shared at the following meeting (Nov. 1st) what the plan is and how we are going to meet this goal
- Rather than setting a formal task force

Dr. Carroll

- Agreed with Dr. Miranda
- We can follow up to see who is willing to work on this (looking for 2 people)

Member Ross Denny made a motion to approve the Revised 2023-2024 Milton School Committee Subcommittee/Advisory Committees and Task Force.

Second: Member Loring

Vote: 6-0-0

6. Finance Subcommittee Report - Member Ross Denny

a. Approval of Vendor Warrants

Member Ross Denny made a motion to approve the Vendor Warrant #10 in the amount of \$379,435.05 payable on September 14, 2023.

Second: Member Loring

Vote: 6-0-0

7. School Building Committee Update - Dr. Miranda & Member Loring

Dr. Miranda

- Met on September 12, 2023
- Request for a Project Manager is still out
 - Steps are being taken to select a Project Manager
- Also looking at the architectural services that we need for the Gile Road Project
- Received an update on the land swap
 - There is work being done to draft a piece of legislative language around the land swap
- Discussed the timeline of all these moving pieces, how to do we make sure that we advance as much of possible in preparation for December and Spring Town Meetings
- Received an update on the communication we have had with MSBA
 - Will not know until December if we were approved
- In order to select a Project Manager, we needed to establish a Review Committee (subset of the Building Committee Members)
 - We did do that
 - We are ready for the proposals to come in

Member Loring

- Another thing discussed was the funding and limited funding
 - How money was allocated back in the May Town Meeting
 - What needs to be done and discussed the timeline
 - 60 million School Building Project - Architectural cost are around 10%
 - Are we spending money wisely?
 - How are we thinking about the allocations to get us as far as possible?

8. **Policy Subcommittee** - Member Varghese

Member Varghese

- Met last Thursday, Sep 14, 2023
- Good discussion about the school year calendar and the calendar policy
 - Will continue to discuss in the October Meeting
- Reviewed the Communication Policy
 - Dr. Burrows suggested looking at this as more of a procedure instead of a policy
 - Looked at the additional policies and streamlined, get rid of the ones that are outdated and not needed

Dr. Burrows

- Creating a chart of the MASC required policies, recommended policies and what we currently hold

9. **Approval of Minutes**

Dr. Carroll made a motion to approve the revised Milton School Committee Minutes dated August 23, 2023.

Second: Member Qiu

Vote: 4-0-2

Dr. Miranda and Member Ross Denny abstained from the vote (absent during the August 23, 2023 meeting).

Dr. Carroll made a motion to approve the revised Milton School Committee Minutes dated September 6, 2023.

Second: Member Loring

Vote: 6-0-0

10. **Next Meeting Agenda**
 Reviewed and updated

Member Ross Denny made a motion to adjourn from the School Committee meeting.

Second: Member Loring

Vote: 6-0-0

Meeting adjourned at 8:30pm.