

Milton School Committee Meeting Minutes  
December 6, 2023

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 December 6, 2023 Agenda**  
Approved
3. **Citizen Speak (Policy BEDH-15 minutes)**  
None
4. **Superintendent's Report**

Dr. Burrows

- Lots of the activities and events happening in the schools
- Football Team won the Superbowl
  - So much excitement around the team and the parade
- Music Concert last night (strings/band and the choir)
- Budget Process - Update will be given later tonight
  - Making progress
- Important positions available
  - Extended the timeline for the Tucker Principal
    - Process of putting together a screening committee
  - Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations position is also available and being posted
  - Director of DEIB will be posted and more information to follow
- Talking about bringing an equity lens to our hiring process
  - Engaging with principals
    - All across the schools and all the positions
  - Looking at all the structures in place
  - Looking to do the bulk of our hiring between now and March/April
- Priority Report
  - Have been working together in the central office
  - Looking at the findings from the survey
  - This will be a valuable foundation document
  - Plan to have the first part, to focus on the Listening and Learning
  - The value of this is to assess where we are and have it be reflective to our community
  - Understanding what are needs are and what the data reflects (gaps/holes)

- Engaging with people and understanding the why
- Looking forward to finishing, this could be 80-90 pages if we wanted it to be but we are trying to find the middle ground and to focus
- This document is for the staff and the community
- We all have to work together
- Expect to finish mid January

a. Quarterly Curriculum Review - #2 update

Dr. Burrows

- These Curriculum updates are a working progress in terms of getting to a place where we can share a cohesive picture
- Reflects work we are looking at the Curriculum in a different way

**Presentation Slides Shared** - link is available on the MPS Website

Zakia Jarrett - Interim Director of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging

[Danielle Wetmore](#) - Director of Student Services

Dr. [Garth McKinney](#) - Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Human Resources

Member Ross Denny

- How is this different from what we did last year?
- The second piece around the Professional Development which is absolutely necessary - what is the follow up for our teachers when they have completed professional development?
  - What does that look like in our schools?

Dr. Burrows

- When you look at the list of the things we are doing and the best practices
  - The challenge we have - how do we build this culture we are talking about?
  - To be sure the teachers feel as though they have everything they need and know what to do in all learning situations
  - Continuing support around the teachers
  - Connecting and engaging in conversations
  - Need a process and connections in place
  - Need the time and engagement with staff
  - Principals have to be front and center as instructional leaders
  - Have to be a single system to work together
  - Working towards the expectation and clarity

Assistant Superintendent McKinney

- At the elementary level the math piece is in good shape
  - iReady in place
  - More personnel/Math Interventionist
- K-8 Literacy Advisory Team in place
  - Taken action plan toward the curriculum

Member Ross Denny

- In terms of the review cycle to track the progress of the interventions
  - What does it look like? Is it a 6 week cycle?
  - What is the time period we assess progress for these individual students?

Assistant Superintendent McKinney

- Three times a year during the fall, winter and spring
- Can also happen in between based on the interventionist and program director
- Thankful to the additional personnel we have

Dr. Carroll

- Appreciate hearing about the work underway
- Have had conversations with parents whose children are not being challenged and as we look at this data, it's great to see a lot of students mid or above grade level
- Can you speak to what is in place to support teachers in identifying students who need to be challenged everyday and remain engaged?

Danielle Wetmore

- This process can be used either way not just for struggling students
- Heard today that there is a kindergarten student reading at the 4th grade level - we are looking at what support we have in place to help this student to progress?
- Using methods in place to support all students
- There is still work to be done in this area - want to be able to push students

Assistant Superintendent McKinney

- We look at what are the opportunities of enrichment
- Working with all grade levels

Dr. Carroll

- Requires a lot of work for teachers to support all levels of the students
- Appreciate the effort

Dr. Burrows

- This is where our Personalized Learning pillar came from
  - Desire to be able to differentiate in a way that require lesson planning for every student
  - One teacher cannot manage that
  - Engage to where the students are
  - Provide support
- Parent and student perspective is important

Member Loring

- MCAS - iReady Math - Is it internal correlation work being done or the provider testing?

Assistant Superintendent McKinney

- Provide the curriculum associates - the publisher

- The high correlation rate between the curriculum framework with MCAS and iReady performance
- The probability if you perform well in iReady you will perform well on MCAS

Member Loring

- Is this true for the iReady Reading as well?

Assistant Superintendent McKinney

- Replied yes

Member Loring

- Are you seeing any target areas across the grade levels?
- Are we excelling in a particular skill or standards?

Assistant Superintendent McKinney

- Made adjustments to the elementary math based on the data
- ELA side - looking at the curriculum in place for a while and the assessments - and made some adjustments that we will put in place by the spring

Dr. Miranda

- When should we expect the next update?
- And will assessments be done by the next update?

Dr. Burrows

- It is listed in our annual calendar

Dr. Carroll

- Looks like it is down for February 28th

Member Loring

- DIBELS
  - Is this data being shared with parents?
  - Do we have access to this?

Assistant Superintendent McKinney

- It is a talking point
- Certainly if a parent wanted a report we would provide the information
- Teachers are skilled and able to show parents during conferences
  - Comfortable communicating with parents

[Danielle Wetmore](#)

- Helpful to present in conferences instead of just sending out reports without information in the numbers
- Helpful to have the teacher perspective
- Gives other data - how kids learn and tools needed
- Should talk through with parents

Dr. Burrows

- Working together to provide parents with the information
- Communication and what does that look like?
- What information is needed to be given?
- Want to have consistency between all schools to provide communication

Dr. Miranda

- 10 minutes conference may not be the best time to review data, may not be enough time

Member Loring

- How do we leverage these systems in place to make it easier for teachers in their capacity to communicate?

Assistant Superintendent McKinney

- Next year we are looking to roll out a new elementary report card
- Provide supporting documents to help parents understand what the report cards will look like
- Delayed it a year since switched to PowerSchool this year

Member Qiu

- I have used PowerSchool before as a teacher
- It is different from a parent standpoint
- It would be nice to be able to fully utilize the program
- Centralized all the communications for parents and students

Dr. Carroll

- These kinds are the topics discussed during the contract negotiations
- Wondering if the timing of the contract negotiations will take place?

Dr. Burrows

- Replied next year the negotiations will begin

[Danielle Wetmore](#)

- Ideally having everything in one place would be helpful for the educators as well
- Expand on how we communicate with parents
- Working toward streamlining tools

Member Loring

- Is IDAPEL assessment in development?
- Reason why we choose this assessment?

Dr. Burrows

- Zeina Hamada said this was the right assessment for the French Program

Member Qiu

- How do the teachers feel about all the assessment tools?
- French and English have tools in place, is there one for Spanish?

Assistant Superintendent McKinney

- There is a Spanish Tool in place, I will get back to you on the name of the program

Dr. Burrows

- Teachers mostly communicate with the Directors/Unit B members
- Working with teams and problem solving - is it effective
- Having conversations directly with teachers and teams
- Doing the research and providing the information

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

a. Draft FY25 School Year Calendar

- School Committee Members discussed implementation process of adding religious and cultural holidays/days off to the school calendar
- Discussed Profession Development
- Will continue the discussion in Policy Sub Committee Meetings and will come back to discuss again in open session
- Need to review teacher's contract
- Will be voting on the calendar in January 2024

b. Discussion of recording of School Committee Meetings - Article 6

Dr. Carroll

- Would like to be prepared to provide an opinion of where the School Committee stands
- Letter shared from the member of the community (asking for support of Article 6 which requires all 10 elected bodies to record most of their meetings)
- We already record our School Committee Meetings with the exception of our the School Committee Retreats

Dr. Carroll made a motion to support the Warrant Committee recommendation to refer back to the Select Board.

Second: Member Loring (for the purpose of discussion)

Member Loring

- Would need to remain on Town Property in order to be recorded
- Enjoy the Retreats not for making decisions but figuring out how we are working together productively
- Looking for more clarity from the Boards
- Warrant Committee's decision of sending back because of not including the Sub Committee's
  - Not sure I would support the recording of all the sub committee's that would be a lot
  - But understanding the Finance Sub Committee is one that they are interested in recording
- Would not support the motion to send it back to the Select Board

Member Varghese

- Logistically how would all the meetings be recorded?

Dr. Pavlicek

- Zoom Meetings is an act of Legislature to allow Zoom Meetings - only authorized for another year and a half
- Some of the meetings are held on the same night and there would be conflicts with time
- Public Access TV would have difficulty

Dr. Burrows

- Have heard capacity is an issue

Member Ross Denny

- Would they have to provide staff for the recording and the town would the town have to pay for it?

Dr. Carroll

- Would also include audio and or video

Member Varghese

- How would you record all the meetings if Milton Access staff is not able to do so?

Member Loring

- Was discussed to buy a number of Owls to record
- Milton Access said the initial Language of the Article was feasible
  - But the Sub Committees would be a step too far

Member Qiu

- All meeting agendas are posting online
- People have the option to attend the meeting if they have concerns
- The minutes are approved and posted

Member Miranda

- Think the question is why are some meetings recorded and some are not
- Should be a standard expectation
- Getting into the Sub Committee's that would be different

Member Loring

- Don't watch all the Warrant Committee meetings but do enjoy the option to watch at a later date
- There is a wide variety of quality in meeting minutes provided from Committees

Member Varghese

- Does the Board of Health not record due to personal health information that comes up?

Dr. Carroll

- If there are privacy issues they should be using executive session to have those discussions
- Executive Sessions are not recorded

Member Varghese

- They could post an Executive Session if they knew their topic in advance

Dr. Carroll

- Members that are not used to running meeting that are recorded they could make a careful shift
- Every Board would need to navigate that for themselves

Motion is already on the table.

Dr. Carroll made a motion to support the Warrant Committee's recommendation to refer back to the Select Board.

Vote: 0-6-0

Dr. Carroll made a motion to recommend that the Town approve Article 6 as written.

Second: Member Loring

Vote: 4-0-2

Two votes abstained.

## **6. Committee Reports - Member Ross Denny**

### **a. Finance Subcommittee Report**

#### **i. Approval of Vendor Warrants**

Member Ross Denny made a motion approve Vendor Warrant #21 in the amount of \$447,372.20 payable on 11/30/23.

Second: Dr. Carroll

Vote: 6-0-0

Member Ross Denny made a motion to approve Vendor Warrant #22 in the amount of \$560,515.73 payable on 12/07/23.

Second: Dr. Miranda

Vote: 6-0-0

#### **ii. FY25 Budget - Member Ross Denny**

- Received a refined presentation from Dr. Burrows and Dr. Pavlicek to what was presented last week
- Minor edits
- Removing some of the requested staff and adding some to reflect the asks by the Select Board and the Town Administrator



- Likelihood that we will need an override
- Updated that they are meeting regularly with the Town Administrator
- Sharing information and receiving feedback on our proposal
- Discussed our transportation needs
- Behavioral Specialist - whether or not to remove from the previous ask
- Opportunity to subsidized the dual enrollment to reflect advance placement price for our families
- One more request for an ELL presentation
- Question about class sizes as it relates to French Immersion

Dr. Burrows

- Also waiting on economic data from the High School

iii. Substitute Pay Rate

Member Ross Denny made a motion to approve the increase to the substitute rates. Rates will be as follows:

- Daily Substitute: \$125/day
- Building Substitute: \$165/day
- Long Term Substitute: \$205/day
- Retired Teacher Substitute: \$135/day
- Daily Substitute Nurse: \$240/day

Second: Dr. Miranda

Vote: 6-0-0

- b. School Committee Representative Report - Dr. Miranda
- iv. School Building Committee

Dr. Miranda

- Met on November 29th
- Update from the consultants that the contracts have been executed
  - Great level of support that the School Building Committee appreciates
  - Have the additional support to keep things moving
- Update on the Land Swap that we are still waiting on the analysis to be completed
- Still have not heard from Mass Building Authority - no update as of yet
- Approved the architectural services that we need

## 7. Approval of Minutes

Member Loring made a motion to approve the Milton School Committee meeting minutes dated November 15, 2023.

Second: Dr. Miranda

Vote: 6-0-0

**8. Next Meeting Agenda Items**

Discussed and updated

**9. Adjourn**

Dr. Carroll made a motion to adjourn the School Committee Meeting.

Second: Dr. Miranda

Vote: 6-0-0

Meeting adjourned at 9:45pm.