

**Milton School Committee Meeting Minutes**  
**November 1, 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

Absent: Dr. Glenn Pavlicek, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations

1. **Call to order** - 7pm
2. **Approve November 1, 2023 Agenda**  
Updated
3. **Citizen Speak (Policy BEDH-15 minutes)**  
None
4. **Committee Reports - Member Ross Denny**
  - a. Finance Subcommittee Report
    - i. Approval of Vendor Warrants

Member Ross Denny made a motion to approve Vendor Warrant #16 in the amount of \$533,872.04 payable on October 26, 2023.

Member Ross Denny made a motion to approve Vendor Warrant #17 in the amount of \$393,305.80 payable on 11/02/2023.

Second: Member Qiu

Roll Call Vote: 6-0-0

**5. Superintendent's Report - Dr. Burrows**

Updates

- Great to see some of the School Committee members at Monster Dash
  - Great event to celebrate the schools and the community
- Transportation Update
  - Had a conversation with Nick Milano, Town Administrator
  - Talked about the high number of students still on the waiting list
  - Current plan right now is to go to the Town Finance Subcommittee next week to discuss and then to the Select Board on the 14th
    - To request ARPA Funds for an additional bus
  - Have a route creating software, will go back and look at what we can do- won't be able to recreate all the routes
  - As we look to next year, we will look at the current numbers and plan

- Will be talking about transportation during the budget process
- Excited that those funds will be potentially available
- Will continue to work on this and have will provide another update on the 15th

Member Loring

- ARPA Funds are one time use of funds
  - Allow for the current school year
  - In order to meet the need for the town for next year and future school years, we need to incorporate this into the budget
- Are the students on the waitlist currently all Pierce students or High School students?

Dr. Burrows

- It's a combination of both
- Have a large amount in one area on the waitlist, believe in the East Milton area

Dr. Burrows

- Phase I of entry plan is complete
- Today is officially Phase II
- Still work to do and finalize surveys
  - Hoping for more of a student response
  - Talked to high school and middle school in terms of advisory periods for potential place for students to have access to the surveys
  - Survey will go out Friday in communications to parents
- Beginning to plan with the team to consolidate all the data from the survey's
  - Do an assessment of where we are
  - Would like to use this opportunity to do a deep needs assessment of the district
  - Set the platforms for the conversations
  - Talk about what this all means to us and how can we build forward
- Continuing to work on the short term space needs
  - Working on the Capital Request with Chris Hayden
  - What could we do with this current budget?
  - Continuing working on the Capital Request, will bring forward on November 15th to the School Committee meeting
- Thanked all the Town Officials for hosting a coffee meet and greet
- Enrollment Update
  - Report will be provided at the next meeting
- MHS Marching Band
  - Received a silver medal at Marching Band State Final
- MHS Seussical
  - November 16th at 7pm
  - November 18th at 2pm & 7pm
  - November 19th at 2pm

Member Ross Denny

- Asked a questions about transportation
  - The additional cost, is it the FTE's?

Dr. Burrows

- The cost of the bus would be the driver and the bus
- Purchase the services of the driver and use of the bus
- All tentative for one school year

a. Preliminary Field Trip Approval, Music Department trip to Philadelphia, PA  
April 5-7, 2024

Preliminary Request Memo shared below:

Emily Bohlin - High School Senior

- Live in the music department
- Drum Major for the Milton Wildcats Marching Band
- Secretary for Tri-M Honor Society
- Librarian of the Concert Band

Karen Hughes - Director of Fine Arts and Music

- Student Group Participants: Milton High School Music Ensembles
- Cost is \$900 and we will be doing a lot of fundraising
- Will address students' financial needs and have worked out a timeline of payments
- There will be various fundraisers through the time of the payments being due
- Discussed the fundraising events
- In the past the trip was completely covered by the fundraising

Music Department Field Trip Proposal

Field Trip Coordinator: Karen Hughes / Rebecca Damiani

- Student Group Participants: Milton High School Music Ensembles
- Music Department Field Trip Proposal
- Date of Trip: Friday, April 5- Sunday, April 7, 2024
- 1 Missed school day- Friday 4/5/2024
- Destination: Philadelphia, PA

1. Educational Objectives of the Field Trip:

This trip is intended to provide a cultural experience for Music students and accomplish the following:

- Cultivate interest and engagement in the fine and performing arts through the attendance of high quality performances, and tours of world class, historic performance venues.
- Provide students with a clearer perspective about their own practice in the fine and performing arts.

- Impart greater appreciation and understanding for differing points of view as can be demonstrated through the fine and performing arts.
2. Description of How the Safety of all Students will be Maintained:
- Student groupings will be assigned to and supervised by a teacher or parent chaperone.
  - Group communication will be through Google Classroom or Remind. Students will have contact information for their assigned chaperone, as well.
  - When in a structured environment and permitted by the chaperone to leave the group and chaperone, students will be required to remain with at least one other participant, and have the contact information for the assigned chaperone.
  - Chaperones will conduct room checks prior to night hours. During this time, students will be required to remain in their hotel room (between the hours of 11:00PM-6:00AM).
  - In addition there will be two overnight security guards assigned specifically to our group between the nightly hours of 10:00PM - 4:00AM.
3. Proposed Budget:
- The cost per student will be \$900.00. This includes all costs for bus transportation, tour guides, overnight security guard, hotel accommodation, meals, performances, and activities.
  - To defray the cost for the trip, students may elect to participate in various department-sponsored fundraisers. These will include a Citrus fruit sale, Cabaret performance, Fair Trade Caravan and Candy Bar Sale. Funds earned by each student will be directly deducted from the individual's trip fee. In addition, our past practices have found students were able to fundraise the entire cost of their trip through our fundraising efforts and opportunities.
  - We will fundraise not only with the Milton High School community but offer our Citrus Fruit Sale to the entire district to cover the cost for students in need of financial assistance.
4. Estimated Number of Participants:
- Students: 100
  - Chaperones: 10 (1 chaperone per 10 students)
5. General Plan or Schedule for the Field Trip (Including Number of School Days Missed):
- One school day missed
  - [Milton High School Music Department \(3\) \(1\).pdf](#)  
[Link: Proposal Ready!](#)

This proposal includes the following:

- Round-trip motor coach transportation
  - Hotel accommodations
  - Admission to all attractions
  - All meals while in town
  - 2 Overnight security guards designated to only your students
  - 2 Dedicated Landmark Tour Manager to handle trip logistics
  - Landmark water bottle and backpack for each participant
  - All taxes, tips, and gratuities
6. Procedures for Emergency Notification to Superintendent and Parent/Guardian in the Event an Emergency Should Occur:
- In the event of an emergency, students will be contacted by their chaperone for instructions.
  - Director will contact the Superintendent and Principal via telephone.
  - Superintendent & Principal will advise regarding following protocols and moving forward what are next steps and procedures.
  - Director will contact the families of student/students.
7. Procedure for Students to use if Separated from Group
- Should a student become separated from the group, they will be instructed to contact their chaperone via telephone or text message. If this is not possible, they will return to the last known location of the group.
8. Nursing Services for All Students Less than High School Age
- Student health information will be obtained from MHS Nurse prior to the trip.
  - Medical forms will be kept on file for every student throughout the trip duration.
  - We will have a Spreadsheet indicating medications for each student and medications will be kept secure for each student to distribute to every student as directed.
  - Should students require medical attention during the trip, we will call the parent/guardian to inform them what the needs are.

Member Varghese

- Please keep us posted on the fundraising events so we can help out in any way we can

Dr. Miranda

- Do you keep the ratio 10:1?

Karen Hughes replied yes.

Dr. Miranda

- Can you speak to the security?

Karen Hughes

- Landmark (company organizing the field trip) provides hotel security
- Faculty will put tape on the doors and do room checks at 10pm

Dr. Carroll

- Thank you for sharing and for coming to speak to School Committee
  - [Glover Elementary School Site Council](#)
  - Glover Site Council Members shared the presentation slides

Member Ross Denny left the meeting for an event.

Member Loring

- Referenced the Support and Resource Slide
  - What are the numbers listed?

Principal McDavitt

- Number of students referred by classroom teachers

Member Loring

- Your data is strong
- Your attendance data improvement is great
- Is the VOCAL survey done across the district?
  - Would be interesting in seeing the survey

Principal McDavitt

- Yes the survey is done in all the schools and across the commonwealth
- It is definitely an unutilized tool
  - Kids have to do it in order to complete the MCAS

Dr. Miranda

- Great job going deep on all three goals
- Safe and Supportive Schools is not just a goal by itself but how is it showing up
- Personalized Learning you are focusing on not only the students but what are the teachers doing to internalize these approaches
- Great work shows in the data

Member Varghese

- Nice to receive the information around the goals
- Hearing about the PD you had today was really helpful to understand how Personalized Learning works
- Great job

Dr. Burrows

- I was at Glover all day on Monday
  - What is very special about Glover is the culture that has been developed
  - Looking at the Three Pillars and thinking about the pragmatic things happening
  - Something this Leadership brings - a lot of heart to the community
  - Structure and operations systems in place support their work

Dr. Miranda

- Soft Signs - data points on Safe and Supportive Schools
  - Are there other schools collecting that data?

Principal McDavitt

- Depending on where they are in the school improvement cycle
- Best practices is at the end of our cycle to survey all stakeholders
- We are at our 23 or 26 cycle at Glover
- Most helpful are the open ended questions in the survey
- What are we doing well and what can we do better?

Dr. Carroll

- Thank you for your presentation
- Congratulations on the recognition, it is a lot to celebrate
- Thanked Mr. McMurray for what you contributed and how you shared tonight
  - Insightful to hear your experience of the professional development
- Lantern Walk brings the community and kids together

## **6. Chair's Report - Dr. Carroll**

Dr. Carroll

- Tucker Principal search
  - Looking for one School Committee Member to join the search committee
  - Will make sure Member Ross Denny receives the message
  - If you are interested, please contact me - would need to attend all the meeting dates
  - Will work together to choose a member
  - Will send an email with the dates of the interviews

### **a. MASC Resolutions**

Resolutions shared with the School Committee.

Dr. Carroll made a motion to approve Resolution 1: Full Stable Funding for METCO.

Second: Member Loring

Vote: 5-0-1

Member Ross Denny was absent during the vote.

Member Loring

- Milton does not participate in Metco
- Have there been previous discussions?

- Highly successful program, results have been fantastic
- Milton has space constraint issue already

Dr. Burrows

- Districts that participate in Metco do not jump in and out, long term commitment
- Dr. Pavlicek will be able to provide answers upon his return

Dr. Carroll

- We are asked to support the Resolution even if we are not Metco

Dr. Carroll made a motion to approve Resolution 2: Regarding Investigations and Recommendations for Transportation Bidding Procedures.

Second: Member Loring

Vote: 5-0-1

Member Ross Denny was absent during the vote.

Dr. Carroll made a motion to approve Resolution 3: Regional Transportation.

Second: Dr. Miranda

Vote: 5-0-1

Member Ross Denny was absent during the vote.

Dr. Carroll made a motion to approve Resolution 4: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

Second: Dr. Miranda

Vote: 5-0-1

Member Ross Denny was absent during the vote.

Member Varghese

- What is Division X?

Dr. Carroll

- Agreed it was a good question
- Believe it is an entity of MESC but not certain

Dr. Burrows

- Read from the website what Division X was
  - A group of representatives of MASC
  - A task force

Dr. Carroll made a motion to approve Resolution 5: MA School Building Authority.

Second: Dr. Miranda

Vote: 5-0-1

Member Ross Denny was absent during the vote.

Dr. Carroll made a motion to approve Resolution 6: School Bus Stop Arm Surveillance Act and Enforcement and Penalties.

Second: Member Qiu



Vote: 5-0-1

Member Ross Denny was absent during the vote.

Member Loring

- Massachusetts is one of the states that don't have traffic light to provide automatic ticketing

Dr. Carroll made a motion to approve Resolution 7: Related to MCAS.

Second: Dr. Miranda

Vote: 0-5-1

Member Ross Denny was absent during the vote.

Dr. Miranda

- It is not to get rid of MCAS all together just yet?
- Is it to explore alternatives?

Dr. Carroll

- It would be effective immediately
- I agree what it is urging us to develop
- I will not be supporting this Resolution
- Raising important concerns

Member Varghese

- There needs to be something else that replaces it if we end up going that route
- I don't want to stop MACS, it is helpful to see - compare grades to the data

Dr. Miranda

- The hard part for me is that it does raise a lot of concerns
- Has negatively impacted groups of students and districts
- Before the data we didn't have the information of what the kids needed for interventions
- Not in support without having an alternative
- Too many kids will be left behind

Dr. Carroll made a motion to approve Resolution 8: Safe Storage of Firearms.

Second: Member Loring

Vote: 5-0-1

Member Ross Denny was absent during the vote.

Dr. Burrows

- Directs the Superintendent to communicate with the community
- Wonder in our community who is the right person to share this information?
- Typically not something that comes from the School District
- Normally from the Police Department or Public Health
- Part of the message would make sense to come from the school but not sure about the joint message with some other entity
- The government body should be sharing the information

- School District drilling down on fire code and sharing information with family

Dr. Carroll

- Particular concerns of this is the safety of the children and teens
- Could be a joint communication
- Viewing through accidentally deaths in children

Member Loring

- Utilizing the schools to communicate with families vs. getting something in the mail that may end up in the trash
- Schools are able to communicate with families
- The message itself would come from Public Health and the Police Department (Resources/reminders for example- Firearms Safety Month) flier could be sent to the schools and would be emailed to families

Dr. Carroll

- If this passes, then maybe they can develop a model communication

Member Varghese

- We have a safety and security team
- We could discuss it with them

Dr. Burrows

- Certainly a problem
  - In the Globe today there was an recent incident
- Schools are increasingly becoming the social center

Dr. Miranda

- Sad that the schools are facing the need to be another voice
- It is important

Member Loring

- Do we need to vote on the Proposal to Amend the MASC By-laws?

Dr. Carroll made a motion to support the Proposal to Amend the MASC By-laws as written.

Second: Dr. Miranda

Member Loring

- What is the current By-law?
- Is it replacing current language or adding language?
- Have some context missing, otherwise I don't see any issues with this

Dr. Carroll withdrew the motion to support the Proposal to Amend the MASC By-laws as written.

Member Loring made a motion to delegate the voting on this to Dr. Carroll as the representative. To make the decision when more information is learned.

Second: Dr. Miranda

Vote: 5-0-1

Member Ross Denny was absent during the vote.

b. Policy Subcommittee Report

Member Varghese

- Discussed a reset and clean up of all of our policies
- Dr. Burrows and the central office team went through all of our current policies and did a comparison of what MASC has
- Working through the process right now
- Continued our conversation on the calendar policy, we invited a member of the community
  - And the community member joined the School Committee and spoke at Citizen Speak
- Great initial discussion to recognize Eid on the school calendar
- Given us an opportunity to discuss and look at our school calendar and continue our work to be more inclusive as a district where all of our students are seen

c. Calendar Approval Procedure (Discussion)

Dr. Carroll

- When we decided to put this on our agenda as a discussion topic it was to think through taking a step back from this particular request that has been brought to our by a group of members of the community to add a day off for Eid
- Has been in process for several years now
- Think about what would be a process, not under policy, it is pertaining as our role as a full School Committee in approving the school year calendar
- What would make sense for us as a process/procedure?
- How do we approach this request?
- We recognize there will probably be another request in the future to add another holiday then what would we do with that?
- We do have a time frame to figure this out
- Next year's calendar will be developed over the next couple of months

Dr. Burrows

- Adding a holiday adds an additional school day to the calendar
- Number of student and staff days remain the same
  - Contractual and state requirements
- Potential in the development of the calendar to swap days and have school on those days
- Day before labor day is not a national holiday but it is traditional day that people appreciate
- Are important and big decisions, doing them with real clarity is important

Member Loring

- Do we have a list of days currently on the calendar that are not days off based upon contract or state law?

Dr. Burrows

- There is not a list but we can look at the calendar and determine

Dr. Carroll

- Do you look to add a day or swap out?
- Friday before Labor Day seems to be the only day that is not a PD day of holiday

Member Loring

- Other religious holidays (Yom Kippur, Good Friday) not state or federal requirement to take those days off

Dr. Carroll

- That was part of the rationale that was brought to us by the community member
  - Not equitable
  - Not just the number of families in town but the teachers
  - Shared other districts that have added Eid as a day off
- Continue to look at the factors to lead us to add a holiday as a day off
- One thing is that a request is made by stakeholders from the community
- Group of people behind this request
- Where does this fit in relations to other holidays
- Other districts have not added holidays but not given test or homework requirements on those days
- Other districts decided to no longer have the holiday/holy days off- way to be equitable

Dr. Burrows

- Some districts do have three days off on Thanksgiving week, not just two
- Wednesday is not required

Dr. Miranda

- In terms of the research presented
  - When we heard it in the school committee meeting, it was referenced those who have adopted the day off
  - I wonder if we know more about what those conversations were with those districts?
  - If we could do some more digging into the conversations
  - Need to educate ourselves a little bit more

Dr. Burrows

- Stated he could contact those Superintendents easily and have those conversations

Member Loring

- Do we have any data on how many of our students?

- Don't want to force students come to school that they are not going to come for religious/cultural/ societal reasons

Dr. Burrows

- Don't believe we carry that data
- Heard from the community member that was it 300 students

Member Loring

- We have attendance data on those days for the past years
- You assume the population is large enough that you would see the decrease

Dr. Carroll

- That does bring up a challenging questions
  - How many students and families would need to be impacted for us to act?
  - Would that be an arbitrary thing to decided
  - What was presented to us was the significance of the holiday, not only about supporting the holiday but to raise awareness of this holiday and our Muslim neighbors in Milton
  - Provides an opportunities to raise awareness destigmatizing among non Muslim students and families
  - The way she hopes our days off for Jewish High Holiday or a Christian Holiday provides that opportunity

Member Loring

- Completely agree with the statement the numbers should not be the whole factor
- How do we not make this arbitrary?
- Struggle with any of these decisions, it will always be somewhat arbitrary
- Don't necessarily agree with giving a day off of school will increase culture awareness
- What would increase cultural awareness would be a conversation by the district led by adults
- Look at the bottom of the calendar where all the religious cultural holidays are listed, how do we pick this one and not the others?

Member Varghese

- That is the challenge I have with it
- It is hard to say the major are celebrating and then there is one student celebrating a holiday and we are not recognizing that student
- Our goal as a district to make sure all of our students are seen
- It is a challenge to look at all the culture holidays that are represented, how do we make sure we are fair to everyone in the community?
- How do we get that message across to our students to they are more aware of the holidays their classmates are celebrating

Dr. Miranda

- Would love to hear more from other districts
- It is a complex decisions

Dr. Burrows

- There is a lot of tension
- Have experienced and witness this previously and have never seen one template that a districts uses that is easy and makes total sense
- Some districts can make decisions quickly and others have become large political groups coming together to talk about the importance
- Becomes a very large community conversation
- Probably won't learn any new perfect ways, but learning from others and what makes sense
- Like Member Loring said, we can look at the attendance

Dr. Carroll

- As we pull the attendance, parents still send their kids to school even though they wished they didn't have to but felt pressured
- We can do more research with other districts
- What would it look like to create a policy around this?
- Still open to that as an idea
- Need to keep exploring and add to our agenda for the next meeting
- Would like to get this clarified

Member Varghese

- I can share the data that I collected for the policy meeting last summer
- Several districts have added several holidays instead of just one
- Can look at all the data

Member Qiu

- Have heard from families that they are not happy with the 9 half days, not sure how they would feel with the additional days off
- Do like the idea of swapping the days off

Dr. Carroll

- At some point can we add to our agenda a report from Zakia Jarrett around the bigger question, it is the Safe and Supportive Schools and the Equity pillars around belonging in our schools for our multicultural community
- Would love to be able to have that conversation
- We have families that don't feel like they belong and feel like their cultures are not celebrated
- This is an area for growth and there's so much that you all are doing

Member Varghese

- Need to figure out ways to support our families

Dr. Burrows

- Looking at the Unit A contract, the language states that there will be no school or professional development on the Friday before Labor Day

Dr. Carroll

- Can be negotiated and discussed
- Thank you all for the discussion

d. Superintendent Evaluation Subcommittee Report

Dr. Carroll

- Thanked Anna, Mark and Peter for the meeting
- Proposed timeline shared
- Asking for feedback or input from the School Committee members
- The bulk of the work would take place in March
- Can look to change the timeline next year

**7. Approval of Minutes**

Dr. Carroll made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 18, 2023 Milton School Committee meeting.

Second: Member Qiu

Vote: 5-0-1

Member Ross Denny was absent during the vote.

**8. Next Meeting Agenda Items**  
Updated

**9. Adjourn**

Dr. Carroll made a motion to adjourn from the School Committee meeting.

Second: Member Loring

Vote: 5-0-1

Member Ross Denny was absent during the vote.

Meeting adjourned at 9:25pm.