

Milton School Committee Meeting Minutes
November 15, 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 November 15, 2023 Agenda**
Updated
3. **Citizen Speak (Policy BEDH-15 minutes)**
None
4. **Superintendent's Report - Dr. Burrows**

Dr. Burrows

- Update on the budget
 - Working with Principals to come together, look at the process- moving forward with what the needs are district wide
 - What does this budget represent?
 - Principals are excited about the work being done
- Meeting coming up regarding putting together a Website Team
 - Website Resigned
 - This is overdue
 - Overall communication and clarity
 - Modernizing
 - Plan to this work over the next month and beginning over the summer
 - Looking at a Logo redesign
 - Community activity engagement
- Last night the Select Board approved the ARPA Funding
 - Dr. Pavlicek is working with First Student (Bus Company) figuring out the best way to get students off the waitlist
 - Communicating with families to let them know
- Calendar development is underway
 - Conversations with Curriculum Leadership and Central Office Leadership
 - Talking about current calendar pros and cons
 - What are the needs of the Professional Development

- Doing the work of the Strategic Plan we need time with staff
 - Looking for a balance
- Dates Reminders
 - PreSchool Information Night - January 11, 2024
 - Kindergarten Information Night - January 25, 2024
 - High School School Play - November 16th - November 18th
- a. [Tucker Elementary School Site Council](#)
 - b. [Site Council Members](#) - Presentation slides shared
- Dr. William Carter, Principal
- Caroline Morton, Assistant Principal/Curriculum Coordinator
- Justine Novak, 5th Grade Teacher

Member Qiu

- Thank you for your presentation
- My children were both lucky enough to participate in the full day pre-k program at Tucker
- Curious about the student support team model, how does it work?
 - Is it just 3rd through 5th grade? Are the students tutoring each other?
 - Wondering if it could be happening in other schools?

Caroline Morton

- Tucker Tutoring Program
 - Implemented last year, through Title I Funding
 - Continuing this year and it is done with Tucker Teachers working with students
 - The students are identified through classroom teachers who would benefit from after school tutoring or homework help
 - Will continue the model of working with 3rd, 4th and 5th grade students
- Talking about implementing a mentoring program for students next year as well

Member Qiu

- The Student Support Team is different from the Tutoring Program correct?
- How does the Student Support Team work?

Dr. Carter

- As teachers are going through their daily routines with students - if they find a student that may need extra support or any concerns - they can recommend the student be viewed through the student support
- We have a group of educators and interventionist that come around to figure out what extra support are needed
- Use Tier I and Tier II supports to make improvements
- Student may eventually need IEP testing

- The goal and power of the Student Support is before recommend students for IEPs
- We use this to see what else can we be doing to provide support that will benefit the student without having to go into the Special Education System
- Provide extra math and reading support - could be a 6 to 8 week process and then review did it help is it working?

Member Qiu

- Both programs are teachers to students?

Dr. Carter

- Correct, the educators are providing the support

Caroline Morton

- The process is chaired by our Inclusion Specialist Maureen Butler
- This is a uniform process through all four elementary schools

Member Qiu

- This is a very effective way to help our students before outsourcing
- Great to see the dramatic test results due to the work you are doing
- Great job

Dr. Miranda

- Trying to understand the MCAS Data
- Can you walk me through the data?

Caroline Morton

- 2nd grade - the red line shown is the data that shows the student who tested below the benchmark
- Yellow is the data of the students that are approaching testing below the benchmark
 - The Red and Yellow would have access to our Tier II Reading Specialist
 - Composite Score between a few test
 - Those test are done individually 1:1 with a Reading Specialist at the beginning of the year
 - Then one test on the computer that the 2nd grade student complete individually
 - This score was used to form the Tier II support

Dr. Miranda

- Can you confirm the total number of students tested was 46?

Caroline Morton

- For 2nd grade - yes
 - French Immersion Students do not take the MCAS Screener

- They have a separate screener

Dr. Miranda

- Would you say that the 35% are receiving the specialized targeted intervention?

Caroline Morton

- Replied yes

Dr. Carter

- There is clearly a discrepancy between grade 2 and the other grades
- Reading development - these students were in Kindergarten during Covid
- Can see it was a hybrid or mixed year
- Covid has affected our students in different ways

Member Varghese

- Thank you for the presentation
- Impression by your Personalized Learning and the examples you shared
- Student Choice is phenomenal and to see the student engagement has increased
- How do you balance a student who says I'm going to do an illustration for this assignment - how are you ensuring that they are learning how to write?

Justine Novak

- This particular assignment had an individual component - did their group work where they came up with their brainstorming
- 2nd part is more individualized which was writing an essay
- Often provide opportunities where I could have a conversation with a student, some students may like to provide a oral description
- Talking to each student and group, looking over their shoulder and assessing the students

Dr. Carter

- Teachers have the agency what the aspects will be provide choice for
- Certain aspects are non negotiable but some parts of the lessons can be a choice of learning

Dr. Carroll

- Thank you all and all of the staff at Tucker
- Proud and grateful to be apart of the Tucker family
- My kids love going to school every day
- Have had a great experience there
- Appreciate the support your described, that sense of community
- Heard in different presentations of the concept of the trusted adult
- I know that my kids have numerous trusted adults at Tucker

- Feeling of a sense of belonging and learn a great deal that continues to impress me

Caroline Morton

- Just to add that we sent out a survey to our staff and students asking what the one thing they love about the Tucker School?
 - Students cited their teachers and friends as what they loved about Tucker
- Students learn best when they feel comfortable, happy and safe in their environment

Member Ross Denny

- Pleasure to be at the community events and to see the Tucker Teachers there
 - Last weekend there was a Regional Taekwondo Event at the high School
 - And a number of Tucker teachers were there
- The investment made in and outside school is visible for anyone to see

Dr. Carter

- Great reflections to hear from you as parents
- It is exceptional, defines Tucker Community, committed and loving educators
- Students are seen and heard

c. Enrollment Report - Dr. Burrows

- Presentation Slides Shared
 - Flat overall enrollment trend
 - Data is very consistent
 - Have we always had an overcrowding issue?
 - Our schools were not designed for education in 2023
 - Were not designed to serve all students
 - They were designed for students who could be successful in a general education classroom
 - Programs have changed - a lot of space needs have changed
 - Schools have taken on health and human services
 - Commitment to equity and serving all students
 - Not sending a student to another town or program
 - Biggest impact on our enrollment is the programming that we are committed to is that all students can be successful in Milton
 - Predicted enrollment increase due to development activity we don't believe is part of the NESDEC slide
 - NESDEC have not taken into account the zoning changes happening and the 40b's
 - We will see an uptick in enrollment
 - We need to create a school for 2023
 - Discussed the slides and data
- Increase in programming to meet an educational program that serves all students
- Predicted enrollment increase due to development activity

Dr. Miranda

- Another way I would see the data is that we are experiencing quite the space challenge
- As we look forward in building the new school it makes me feel good and confident that we will be address the space crunch
- I'm reassured with the data that we will have better accommodations
- The need of how we educate our students are different

Dr. Burrows

- The conversations we are having right now are space and classrooms is our preschool program has become bigger
 - Primary Special Ed Program
 - Numbers have grown
 - As those students age out of preschool, how do you meet the student needs?
- Working with Daniell Wetmore - how can we provide the most services in every school?

Member Ross Denny

- If you have seen the building presentations from Sean O'Rourke
 - One of the charts demonstrates our total capacity
 - Trend has been consistent it has also been consistently beyond the capacity of our building

Dr. Carroll

- Slight but notable increase across years
- When you have adapted to measures that cope with tight schools it really doesn't take many more students to put you over the tipping point
- Wondering if that is what we are experiencing?
- Even just a small number of students makes an impact

Dr. Burrows

- Part of crossing the line is losing intervention space
 - And spaces for specialist/students and faculty to plan

Member Ross Denny

- Dr. Pavlicek was the one that had the data back when my children were very little had the first enrollment showing data going up
- I remember the plans of craving up different spaces and utilizing different spaces
- The public started to notice and asked how we didn't know
- But we have been saying this for years
- Accommodating the increase of enrollment
- We are at the tipping point

Dr. Burrows

- When someone looks at the enrollment data they look at at the number of students

- Looking at the numbers alone is only one factor, need to look at how many classrooms you have, how large are they and for specific program how many students can fit into that space

Member Ross Denny

- We are in the process of talking moving beyond the Land Swap which was passed
- What is on the table?

Dr. Burrows

- That information is coming in Chris Hayden's presentation next

Member Loring

- Short/medium term - we talked about in every Facility meeting
- A lot of people want to know what are the short terms solutions because they care about the schools
- Dr. Pavlicek and others have been implementing short term solutions year after year for the past five years
- We are somewhat at the end of the rope of those cheaper and easier decisions, now it's the more expensive or expansive choices that have been discussed like the remodel of the 4th floor of Cunningham - how do we manage this?
 - Who ends up in the spaces and which school gets the spaces?
 - All schools have desires and needs to support their students
- Long term project will be presented by the School Building Committee
 - Project should be able to support across all sites
 - Support the needs of the campus
- Space demands are really significant

Dr. Pavlicek

- Going back six years to now, 30% increase of students on IEPs
- 50% increase on our nursing staff
- We can do statistics that like that show it's the programs not the number people
- 30% more Occupational Therapist
- There growth over the past five years
- Reflects the demographics of our students

5. Chair's Report - Dr. Carroll

a. FY25 Capital Requests, Technology and Facilities

Chris Hayden, Consolidated Facilities Director

- Provided the Capital Budget a few weeks ago
- Has been a change for the Cunningham Attic Build-out Space - \$2,000,000
 - Spoke with design consultants regarding the space
 - Construction cost \$450/\$500 per square foot
 - Maximize the space of 4,000 square feet

Dr. Burrows

- Some ideas in terms of how the space can be used
- Art, music, classroom space and support services

Chris Hayden

- Helps to alleviate the space issue
- Remaining Capital Projects Report for the district shared
- Looking at an outline of replacement cost of equipment
- Looking to sit with an engineering consultant to look at how to prioritize 150 pieces of equipment and make it budget friendly for the next 10 years
- Complete walkthroughs with Principals

Dr. Miranda

- When you compare this to the modular option it seems much more cost effective

Member Loring

- From the Facility Advisory perspective we took a vote on this, it was an unanimous decision to recommend this to the School Committee
- Help impact two buildings
- Extra cohort Kindergarten class
- This is an urgent priority of the town, and this could be a solution

Member Varghese

- It was really helpful for us when we did the tours to see that 4th floor space and the potential
- Going back to the conversations we had earlier, there were a lot of spaces that had to be reconfigured, lost storage and the library
- Remember walking up to the 4th floor and seeing the space
- Appreciate you getting the numbers to us and we can see this happening
- We have to look at something long term

Member Ross Denny

- Had a questions about the Technology piece of the Capital Request
- The hardware - noticed there were chromebooks in the memo - also feedback about PC and laptops?

Dr. Pavlicek

- Using fewer PC's than we used to

- Special Education students tend to use iPads instead of chromebooks
- Bob Pattison when putting this together was trying to be more generic in the labels for flexibility
- Some of the hardware in previous request have been taken off, we have virtualized a lot of our storage instead of onsite servers

Member Loring

- Chromebooks K-10 grade? - Will grades 11 and 12 not receive a chromebook?

Member Ross Denny

- High School students are allowed/encouraged to use their own devices
- Not automatically provided in 11th and 12th grade but will be provided if you do not have your own device

Member Loring

- Do we provide all staff with laptops?

Dr. Pavlicek

- Not necessarily
 - They are provided a device
 - Some use chromebooks, iPads - depends on the students and faculty members

Member Ross Denny

- In the absence of knowing the breakdown
 - Maybe this is a conversation for another day, there has been a request by faculty to use laptops
 - Chromebooks are appropriate for children but maybe not adults

Member Loring

- Would be interested in knowing the PC/Laptop policy

Dr. Pavlicek

- It used to be that all staff were using PC's and students were using chromebooks
- We found that fewer and fewer staff wanted to use PC's
- Lower grades staff were using chromebooks because their students were using chromebooks - easier to interface with them
- We do get request for laptop from our service providers

- Don't have the breakdown of PC's and Laptops at this time
- Buy 20 to 30 laptops a year verse 1,000 chromebooks
- 5,000-6,000 chromebooks that are only good for 5 years
- Probably only 20% of faculty using laptops

Member Ross Denny and Member Loring stated they would like to know the exact numbers.

Dr. McKinney

- A lot of teachers have a desktop connected to a presentation station/smart board in the classroom
- Teachers bring their own devices (laptops) to use when they attend meetings and move around the buildings

Dr. Miranda

- Maybe it is something we need to think about - providing laptops for the teachers

Member Loring

- Most IT protocol - limit the number of outside devices to access your network
- May create a security risk
- If we have the additional data on the staff - laptop and chromebook would be helpful

Member Ross Denny

- It is worth having the conversation as we going into the budget process
- Present to the town what we believe it would take to implement the vision we have
 - Devices would be part of that
- If there is any data to be had to inform that process - we can present as a trade off

Dr. Carroll

- Are we comfortable moving forward on the vote with the motion?

Member Loring

- Do we use E-Rate Funding?

Dr. Pavlicek

- Replied yes
- E-Rate Funding now you qualify and they pay directly (does not pass through our budget)
- Our storage cost is paid through E-Rate

- Easy to use with the direct pay

Member Ross Denny

- Asked if it would be better to separate the Facilities from the hardware and give another opportunity to better understand the devices?
- Rolling schedule that overtime to get people on more efficient devices
- Instead of just approving tonight and then figuring it out

Dr. Pavlicek

- We are using some of the ESSER funds this year to buy equipment
- With this, Bob Pattison would have some flexibility
- We can analysis the network logins so see how many are using their personal devices

Dr. Burrows

- Most people that bring their own devices are MAC users and we can not start with two separate systems
- In conversations I have had - there are different philosophies around laptop and chromebooks
- Bob Pattison I believe is comfortable with where we are and have not heard complaints from staff

Member Ross Denny

- I have heard complaints about using a chromebook

Dr. Burrows

- I have talked with people who absolutely don't want a chromebook and some that do
- There are preferences

Member Loring

- Is there time enough to take a pause on this before we vote?

Member Ross Denny

- One of the thing learning going through the budget process is allowing the engagement in conversations
- Allowing the people to say yes or taking the trade off
- If we don't give people the information that we can't have this discussion

Dr. Burrows

- From what I have gathered - IT staffing maybe more of a paying point than the hardware

Member Loring made a motion to approve the FY25 Capital Requests for Technology and Facilities.

Second: Dr. Miranda

Vote: 6-0-0

Facilities Advisory Committee - Member Loring

- Talked about the Capital Budget - voted unanimously to support the recommendation
- Excited for all the work that was done
- Looked at the enrollment data - had discussions
- Shared an update on the work around MATV - who provides us with this great space
 - Services held within schools
 - As well as discussing options of space, could the Central Office be moved?
- Discussed short term space needs

Member Varghese

- Revisiting what has been looked at in the past
- Have a fresh perspective and new member has been really helpful
- Completed site survey
- Collecting information to make good informative decisions
- Communicate out to the community
- Explore all options

Dr. Carroll

- Thank you for thinking outside of the box and bringing that energy
- This has been a lot of work for you

b. Report from MASC Conference - Dr. Carroll

- MACS and MASS joint conference (attended with Dr. Burrows)
- Robust agenda
- It was a three day conference, attended the first two days
- Dr. Burrows attended the third day of the conference
- Attended a session on the role of the Chair of School Committee
 - Led by MACS
 - Affirmed a lot of the direction that Dr. Burrows has helped us with take
 - Working around governance
 - Ways we work together collaboratively as a team
 - Encountered so many colleagues from districts around the commonwealth that not in not as good of place that we are

- As far as their ability to work together as a School Committee and the Administration of their district
 - Felt positive about what we are doing here - and at the same time received practical information
- We both attended a session on “Getting the Message Right in a Crisis”
 - It was a helpful communication session led by professionals, School Committee Members and Superintendents who reflected on examples
 - What they have learned through experiences
 - A lot of practical ideas
 - On how to be proactive and how to respond
- Attended a session called “Communities Divided”
 - How to navigate polarizing issues
 - Helpful session - how we focus on being able to bring our community together
 - Bringing people along with the work being done in the district
- In all of these sessions there are fellow School Committee Members and Superintendents mixed together asking questions and sharing examples from their districts
- Attended a session that showcased - System Approach to Supporting Equity in Chelsea Public School
 - Interesting because it cross functional
 - Discussed ways they are all working towards their goals around equity
- Attended a session on Legal Issue
 - Ran by lawyers
 - Brief on recent court cases in Massachusetts and the implications for districts in regards to policy and laws
- Lastly attended the delegate assembly
 - 4 or 5 hours long
 - Discussed a lot of business about electing offices for MASC for next year
 - Voted on the various resolutions
 - METCO Resolution - Passed
 - Transportation Bidding Process - Passed
 - Regional Transportation - a lot of debate and did not pass
 - Were able to hear the difference perspective
 - Want to hold the state accountable for funding
 - DEI Resolution - was tabled after a great deal of discussion
 - MSBA Resolution - Passed
 - School Bus Resolution - was also tabled because of the implementation of law enforcement not factored in
 - MCAS Resolutions - also tabled
 - Safe Storage of FireArm - Pass with an amendment
 - Keynote from Commissioner Riley
 - Expressed concern about social media

- It was nice to attend and make connections with people
- Attended a Legal Presentation which was helpful
- Overview of Chapter 70
- Quality of the sessions was above average

Member Loring

- Asked what happened with the by-laws?

Dr. Carroll

- Replied straight full book keeping
- A lot of commitment from people from other districts and MACS

6. Committee Reports

a. Finance Subcommittee Report

Member Ross Denny

- Brief overview of today's meeting
- Dr. Burrows and Dr. Pavlicek presented a compressed budget timeline
 - Greater discussion with the Leadership Team and goals were highlighted
 - Presented as a cohesive plan across the district
 - Discussions around priorities and alignment
 - Would add more dates to discuss the dialog around the proposal
 - Brief discussion of closing out the Q4 report
 - Review the Q1 report
 - Voted on the substitute staff raises - will add to the next School Committee Meeting to vote

b. Policy Subcommittee Report

Member Varghese

- Spent most of the meeting discussing the process of tackling our policies
- Some are outdated
- Wanted to create a process with Dr. Burrows, how can we move forward with the process?
- Want to establish on how to address and rewrite policies

c. Student Representatives Report

Member Qiu

- Met last Tuesday
- Dr. Burrows brought up a good point of what School Committee's boundaries are
- What questions we have, and what issues should and should not go to School Committee
- Students brainstormed how to get involved in the School Committee meetings and events
- Meeting again on December 19th

- Great discussion

Dr. Burrows

- Great groups of students
- Think they are excited about talking about the role of coming back together
- How to engage with the students that is meaningful to them
- This work is really important, think we could do a lot more

i. School Building Committee

Member Loring

- Met on Monday, voted to recommend to the Select Board Contract for the new Project Manager
- Draft was approved by the committee
- Select Board voted on it last night and accepted it
- We have a new Project Manager on board
- Discussed services of an architect
 - Working on the timeline
- Want to have good information for Town Meeting
- Need a firm plan of communication and relationship building

Dr. Miranda

- Land Swap Legislation is still being worked on
- Vote was passed here but there is still a special Legislation that needs to be approved
- Probably won't be voted on until July

Member Varghese

- Are we still pushing forward with the Building Authority funding?

Member Loring

- We are still on hold with MSBA, have not heard anything

Member Varghese

- In terms of the architect - do they propose different plans for the site?
- What is the selection process for that?

Member Loring

- Qualification based selection
- Shared portfolio and experiences with the program designs and site issues
- Depends on the Warrant Article being approved

7. Approval of Minutes

Dr. Carroll made a motion to approve the School Committee Minutes dated November 1, 2023.

Second: Member Ross Denny

Vote: 6-0-0

8. Next Meeting Agenda Items

Updated

9. Adjourn

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

Second: Member Ross Denny

Vote: 6-0-0

Meeting was adjourned at 9:45pm.