

Milton School Committee Meeting Minutes
Milton High School Cable Access Studio and Via Zoom
January 3, 2024

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

Absent: Vice Chair; Dr. Celina Miranda

Staff Present: Dr. Peter Burrows; Superintendent, Dr. Glenn Pavlicek, Assistant Superintendent of Finance and Operations

Absent: Dr. Garth McKinney; Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Human Resources

1. **Call to order** - 7:04pm
2. **Approve January 3, 2024 Agenda**
Updated and approved
3. **Citizen Speak (Policy BEDH-15 minutes)**
None
4. **Superintendent's Report** - Dr. Burrows

Dr. Burrows

- Working on the Priority Report hoping to have ready by the end of the month
- a. Superintendent's Mid-Cycle Evaluation
 - Shared the midterm evaluation form
 - Using the form was a good place to start to talk about the things that have been done relative to each goal
 - Wanted to ask the School Committee how they want to go about discussing the evaluation?

Dr. Carroll

- Just reminding anyone in the community this is the second of three times that School Committee will be discussing this process in an open meeting
- This is considered a formative check in
- Touch base about the progress and ask questions
- Informal discussion now and in a couple of months will go through the formal evaluation process
- Appreciated Dr. Burrows collecting updates and evidence
- Can open up for a discussion now

Dr. Burrows

- A lot of this information has been given in the Superintendent updates and in the communications to families
- Information has been articulated in the entry plan, this mid term evaluation has more detail

Member Loring

- Looking at the Goals
 - Data collection, relationship building and learning - all the things to build the foundational steps
- Appreciated all of these efforts you have gone through to immerse yourself into the community, you have learned about the local context, understand the players that are within Milton to broadening an understanding of our system and the needs of the various stakeholders

Member Ross Denny

- The work that you are doing around Equity with the Leadership Team, Student Advisory Team as well as the Milton Coalition
 - Hope that whether it's in your presentation in January or February, you can share what some of those insights are and decisions made

Dr. Burrows

- Looking at our six schools and how students are involved and not involved in decisions
 - A lot of structural things we can look at to put students in that space more as collaborators in terms of their education

Member Ross Denny

- Looking at what is the root cause of the data?
- If you are able to document in your presentation some of those conclusions, that would be helpful

Dr. Burrows

- Believe those are really important for both staff and community for building this picture of where we are
- We don't look at root cause enough
- Need to look at the whole system, which is really happening in year one
 - And happening in the implementation phase in the spring
 - Help people be part of the development and to see the system

Dr. Carroll

- Just wanted to highlight
 - Under the first district improvement goal which involves a lot of collaborative work with the School Committee and the Superintendent
 - I know the way you framed that goal it is collaborative process for us to work together

- Got off to a strong start
- Several valid reasons - we have not been able to advance some of that work as much as hoped
 - As far as the governance protocols and establishing ourselves as a School Committee - clarity and how we work together with the Superintendent
- Timing for this feels helpful, our next Governance Retreat is happening on January 31st
 - Committing to helping with the leg work between now and then to pick up where we left off
 - Member Ross Denny and Dr. Miranda have done a really helpful job identifying ideas based on many examples you have shared with us
 - Going to work on compiling and moving it along so we have something on the 31st to look at together
 - Continue to appreciate that you set this as a goal
 - Not only up to you to deliver on that work, we can work together

Dr. Burrows

- Doing that work one time is helpful but continuing to do the work together and grow together as a team is really important

Member Varghese

- Seeing all the work you have done since July 1st is really impressive
- Appreciate the amount of work you have done helping us, building and improving working relationship with each other
- Can see the leg work and all the improvements fall into place as we go through this process
- Have noticed even in the school updates that we receive the changes that have been made
- Thanked Dr. Burrows for his work

Dr. Carroll

- Are there particular areas that you are focusing on over the next few months?

Dr. Burrows

- Not thinking much about the mid year timeline as much as what is requirement work
- We are going to take the next Professional Development day in March and use to engage with everybody
 - Talk about the future together
 - All staff will come together in the auditorium similar to the first day of school
 - Will give an opportunity to present the priority report
 - Really want to engage with staff and reflect on the findings
 - Want the staff to be a part of the process of moving forward
 - Don't want any false clarity

Member Ross Denny

- Complexity of Public Education
- Need to have tough discussions
- Important to have someone with a vision to want to be part of the team but not always have to lead
- Need a healthy foundation and I think your staff are excited to see your plan

Dr. Burrows

- Plan is to finish the Priority Report, share it, attend school visits and connect with staff
- Would like to have concrete feedback from staff

Dr. Carroll

- Your plan for presenting to the Community, will there be opportunities for process and engagement?

Dr. Burrows

- Appreciated the forums and having time to talk with community members
 - Interested in having more in the spring
- Thanked School Committee for their work

b. 2024-2025 School Year Calendar -

Dr. Burrows

- Charlene Roche reached out to school districts regarding their procedures for building the school calendar
- Most had committees in place (calendar review committee, district calendar committee)
- Provided an overview of the religious school calendar
- Provided takeaways after talking to other districts

Dr. Carroll

- Thanked Charlene Roche for all of her time and effort on this topic
- Substantial amount of work
- Other key piece included was the contractual requirements
 - We do have a lot of limitations in terms of changes of being able to make to the calendar
- Do have vote on the agenda tonight but we do not need to vote this evening
 - May consider postponing

School Committee discussed the other district calendar

Dr. Carroll

- Can identify committees that would create a process, not just an approval of new additions to the calendar but staying updated
- If we were to consider creating a committee, there is time before the next bargaining cycle to allow a committee to investigate and present findings that do represent the community

- Then inform goals for bargaining and changes to be negotiated
- No big changes can take place for next year
- Would we seek to make an incremental change to our calendar for next year?
- Would we choose to keep the calendar more or less as is in order to invest time in a comprehensive process?
 - This would reflect the 2025-2026 calendar year

Member Loring

- We excuse absences for religious and cultural holidays, don't know if we have any language that states anything related to assignments or tests?

Dr. Burrows

- Students would be excused from the homework, would not be penalized and would have extra time to complete

Dr. Carroll

- In our policy, we quote the Mass General Law
 - "Shall be excused from any such examination or study or work requirement"
 - "Shall be provided an opportunity to make up such examination"
- Would have the opportunity to make up the work

The School Committee discussed the other district calendars and calendar tiers.

Dr. Carroll

- Do you agree on principle if we were going to choose to create this committee which would be an agenda item for a future meeting to vote upon that as a decision?
 - If we did move forward with that idea, do you agree not to move forward with any substantial changes?
 - Meaning the addition of a day for next year?

Member Qiu

- Agreed, makes more sense to create a committee
- Maybe send out a survey to the staff and the families in the community to collect data
- Makes sense to keep the calendar the same until we have the final decision

Member Varghese

- Think we can decide that at our next meeting when Dr. Miranda is back
- Like the idea of having a process of how we move forward
 - Received a request of a community member and now the discussion
- Nice to see what all the other districts have done and all the details

Dr. Carroll

- Appreciate the community members that have been in touch with us
- Especially Milton Muslim Neighbors, they have really sustained the conversation over the years
- Meaningful sharing process
- We can keep talking about it and move to approve to vote on the calendar at the next meeting

Member Qiu

- Asked about Christmas break next year and how it would affect the Milton Community Schools camp?

Dr. Pavlicek

- Usually offered 4 days between the Christmas and New Year's holiday
- Next year most likely Thursday/Friday after Christmas and Monday/Tuesday before New Years

Member Loring

- Does the calendar provided offer Principals, Leadership Team and staff opportunities for Professional Development for team building engagement?

Dr. Burrows

- Replied yes, but we have done a few tweaks and will dig deeper to look at needs
- Have some internal work to do and will continue to look at it

Dr. Carroll

- We as a School Committee and district bargaining team will look at proposing some changes to the calendar to meet the needs of students and families
- That is a goal we all share across the district

The School Committee discussed the design and format of the calendar.

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

a. Finance Subcommittee Report

i. Approval of Vendor Warrants

Member Ross Denny made a motion to approve Vendor Warrant #26 payable on 1/4/24 in the amount of \$252,735.65.

Second: Dr. Carroll

Roll Call Vote: 4-1-0

Dr. Miranda was absent during the vote.

Member Ross Denny abstained from the vote.

ii. FY25 Budget

Dr. Pavlicek

- Have finished the Second Quarter Report and will have to share at the next meeting
- Looking at the fee chart for next year
 - Will be proposing a few fee changes
 - Rental categories where have not altered the fees in a while
- Minor increase of Preschool Tuition Rates
 - Have not been raised in about 5 years
- Welcome to Middle School Program
 - Cost about \$75,000 to run the program
 - Only collect about \$45,000 in fees
 - Is there another model to look at for a better transition?
 - Do not have a proposal for that just yet, talking about possibly eliminating that fee
 - Look at a different schedule, need to see what works with the Middle School
- None of these things should affect our budget/needs based
- Have reached out to the Warrant Committee to start looking at timelines - when will we be presenting to them?
 - Have done budget binders in the past
 - Looking at a different format moving forward perhaps share the pdf
- Looking at dual enrollment fees
 - Looking to expand the dual enrollment classes
- Meeting with Curry College again to talk about the Preschool space
 - Need to look at the staffing
 - Still lots to be determined

8. **Next Meeting Agenda Items**

Updated

9. **Adjourn**

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

Second: Member Ross Denny

Roll Call Vote: 5-0-0

Dr. Miranda was absent during the vote.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30pm.