

School Committee Meeting Minutes
In Person @ Milton High School Cable Access Studio and Via Zoom
March 20, 2024

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

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

Absent: Member Bao Qiu and Dr. Garth McKinney; Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Human Resources

1. **Approve March 20, 2024 Agenda**

Approved

2. **Citizen Speak (Policy BEDH-15 minutes)**

None

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

Dr. Burrows

- Discussed the implementation of the Priority Report in the last meeting
- Priority Report is going out to the community this week and in the monthly update
- Compiling all the data from the in service day with all staff on March 5th
 - Team effort of facilitating the data
 - Multi-year plan going forward
 - Help with the focus on what needs to be done
 - Simplified vision
- Policy Team have been doing great work
 - This includes Residency
 - Danielle Wetmore has been working with our registrar
 - Looking at other communities throughout the metro area to see what their policies look like and what changes we may want to make to our policies
 - In a future meeting we will share more information on the Residency Policy
- Kindergarten Enrollment
 - 349 students enrolled
 - Uptick of about 25 students
 - Will need to add another class

Dr. Carroll

- Asked where we are with the Pre K Program?
- Where are we with numbers and space?

Dr. Pavlicek

- We are working at looking at the spaces now in the schools

Member Loring

- Looking at the Kindergarten Classes of 349 students do we have a general sense of how many more will register from now until September?

Dr. Pavlicek

- We are already up 25 students from last year
- There will probably be a few more with registrations with families moving into town over the next few months
- Will have 16 kindergarten classes this year

a. Student Opportunity Act Plan - Slides Shared

Dr. Burrows

- The Student Opportunity Act Plan is a requirement to come before the School Committee for approval
- Required DESE Plan
- SOA plans aligns with what we have been talking about with our staff - MTSS Supports at all levels
- Monitor and evaluation progress - make changes to the system
- MTSS discussions happened during the Professional Development Day on March 5th

Dr. Pavlicek

- As part of the Student Opportunity Act - 3 years ago
 - Legislature put in the language that every district needs to have a Three Year SOA Plan
 - This is a rolling requirement
 - The plan format changed a little this year
 - Focused areas to choose from - choose 1-3 Focus Areas in the Metrics
 - We chose 2 around MTSS
 - Needs to be submitted by April 1, 2024

Dr. Carroll

- Appreciate the clarity of the presentation and we can stay focused on what has to be done

Member Varghese

- On Slide #11 it mentions hiring an additional Reading Interventionist in FY26?

Dr. Pavlicek

- This hire is hopefully in the needs based for FY25 but being optimistic

Member Loring made a motion to approve the Student Opportunity Act Plan as submitted.

Second: Dr. Carroll

Roll Call Vote:4-0-2

Member Bao Qiu and Member Beverly Ross Denny were absent during the vote.

b. Curriculum Update: Literacy - Presentation available on the MPS Website

Presentation shared by Cat DesRoche (Literacy Director K-8)

Member Loring

- Asked about the current curriculum - any updates/changes in the next year?

Cat DesRoche

- 2019 Ed Reports came out with Curriculum Reviews
- Partially meets their expectations
 - We implemented in 2016
 - Have other resources out there that can give us more streamlines
 - We have two strong buckets of need
 - K - 3rd Grade - Foundational Phonics
 - Grades 3-5 - Writing Piece

Member Loring

- In your assessment - can one curriculum fix all or you might try to use EL Instruction/Education for fiction/non-fiction, reading comprehension?
 - Different Curriculum for writing and for K-2?

Cat DesRoche

- Don't want to exclude any possibilities not haven met with teachers
- Through conversations with colleagues
 - It does get complicated when you bring in multiple resources when it comes to the foundation of the 6 components of the literacy block
 - Splitting them up is hard
 - It is an option but would take a lot of work on the front end of the school year

Member Loring

- A review and new implementation of a potential new ELA curriculum simultaneously with K-5/K-8 - would there be hope in FY26 rolling it out within a couple of grades, then a few grades the following year?

- What would a potential roll out plan be?

Cat DesRoche

- In 2016 the proposal was to do a K-2, then roll it up through the grades
- We were making a significant shift in resources
- It is a really big deal for a teacher to implement a curriculum
- Thinking through and leveraging the curriculum
 - How are we going to support the most people?
 - This is a real priority
 - Want to positively impact students

Dr. Burrows

- Historically move of this roll out has been done sporadically
- Has not been a coordinated centralized process - district wide
- That is the change we are moving towards
 - Going in with resources
 - Build an assessment system
 - Work to do across subjects areas
 - This work will come out in the implementation plan
 - Want to provide the support
 - Looking at teaching practices and the assessment system that is tied across all subject areas
 - Will be looking to have a long term plan in place

Member Loring

- How are we preparing and providing the resources to help with the implementation?

Cat DesRoche

- Need to front load the professional development
- Helpful to have a timeline

Member Varghese

- With the collected data you have, what are you seeing?

Cat DesRoche

- Data over the years
 - When we switched from Unit of Study we saw an uptick in performance across all subgroups in particular our lower performing subgroups
 - Pedagogy gave us an edge with the structure and balance
 - Covid did impact the data in a negative way
 - We have subgroups we are not supporting and not moving along the achievement lines as much
 - Do think it is training and access to professional development
 - Need time to collaborate with teachers and talk about best practices
 - What we can access for resources and collaborate with each other
 - We have strong talent

- Sharing the practices in the priority report has helped
- How can we structure these conversations with teachers?
- Curriculum tools has helped us to shift in a more powerful way
- Need the balance between how the teachers feel about the needs of the students and support the understanding behind the resources

Member Varghese

- What was behind the reasons for adding the two Reading Specialist positions in the budget?

Cat DesRoche

- Tier II in a General Ed Model
 - 1st and 2nd Grade Reading Specialist in each elementary school
 - Depending on the data, we shift what their caseload looks like
 - In the definition of equity, we take everyone's data and see where the need is
 - Talk with teachers and look at the data and make sure the resources are allocated in all buildings
 - 3rd grade - have 2 district Reading Specialists
 - Address the needs we see in the data
 - 4th-5th grade we do not have a formal Tier II
 - We have Tier II when it comes to classroom teachers
 - Work in small groups
 - No additional staff for that role
 - Pierce Middle School
 - Reading strategy class with a Reading Specialist
- We have implemented the 3rd grade Reading Specialist district wide
 - Families and teachers are asking why students are not receiving help and 4th and 5th grade
 - Reading Specialist training is different from a classroom teachers although most elementary teachers are strong ELA teachers
 - Examining our students and where their needs are
 - Due to Covid there has been a foundational gap

Member Varghese

- Appreciate you are prioritizing this now
- We want to support you in any way we can with providing you with resources
- Want to be sure this is successful

Beverly Ross Denny joined the School Committee Meeting.

Dr. Miranda

- What gets in the way of fidelity?
- Fidelity requires dedicated professionals development and attention to the data
- Thinking about communication
 - How do we make sure this doesn't get to the forefront just once a year?

Dr. Burrows

- What you are articulating is really important for all the work we are doing as we move ahead
- Data points we are assessing how we are doing year to year with reading scores
- Communicating this work in ways that everyone can understand
- Staff is the starting point
- This is not just buying the curricula and assume the curriculum with teach
- This is having a highly articulated structure system that allows teachers to bring their creativity, passion and inspiration
- MTSS - have supports in place
- Tier I setting in the classroom - when a student needs additional support they move to Tier II for extra support and intervention - then move back into Tier I
- Need to shift our outcomes
- Communicate and engaging the work

Cat DesRoche

- What we are talking about across district curriculum level in the content areas is with implementation report
 - How can we each continuously communicate updates to the community in a way that is accessible while evaluating the importance of the work
 - These conversations are happening and know the communication is needed

Dr. Carroll

- The alignment is obvious
- Thankful that Dr. Burrows had you come in for the presentation
- There have been questions from the community and this is valid information
- Hope people look at the recording and presentation
- Appreciate what is happening in Tier I and Tier II
- Timeline is important and appreciate the talk of front loading the professional development
- Your engagement outside of Milton is refreshing as well, looking at other districts and where they are successful
 - We can learn from other district and they can also learn from us
- Look forward to seeing the data and what teachers have shared with you
- Interested in understanding the relationship between the work you are describing and our French Immersion Program?
 - Understanding all students are accessing the phonemic awareness skills

Cat DesRoche

- Did share with the team last week
 - Zeina Hamada agreed this would be great for the French Immersion as well
 - Would be universal approach

Member Loring

- Is the Plan Curriculum Review just K-5?

Cat DesRoche replied yes.

Dr. Burrows

- A lot of different ways to look at the curriculum adoptions
- Something that needs to be talked about as a team, what is our vision?
- Development happens at all different times

Member Loring

- K-5 piece
 - With building the new school (lower middle school) would give teachers cross collaboration being in the same building - would be helpful
- What is the name of our Social Studies Curriculum?

Cat DesRoche replied Sovis.

Member Varghese

- How has the Middle School curriculum been going?

Cat DesRoche

- Teachers are implementing 3 to 5 units of study in each grade
- Over the last 3 years have selected novels to use in addition to
- Curriculum is Amplify ELA
- Highly rated on the reports
- Centered around grammatical units integrated both literary and informational text
- Typically higher than grade level text

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

- a. Superintendent's Evaluation - Discussion/Clarifying Questions
- b. Evaluation Committee – Timeline

Dr. Carroll

- Opened up for questions and discussion on the Superintendent Evaluation - based on the shared folder

The School Committee will continue to review the material in the folder

- No clarifying questions at this time

Dr. Carroll

- Have a lot of work to do as the evidence is processed
- Rubric template shared by Member Loring
- Encouraged the committee to read through the Mid Cycle Evaluation folder
- Asked the School Committee to complete the template by Sunday night and will review on Monday during the Evaluation Committee Meeting
- Will communicate back out after Monday's meeting
- Everyone's input will be incorporated along the way and will be discussed on April 2nd

5. **Committee Reports - Member Ross Denny**
 - a. Finance Subcommittee Report
 - i. FY25 Budget

Member Ross Denny made a motion to request that the Capital Planning Improvement Committee decrease their recommendation for School Technology Devices by \$200,000 and and remove the \$45,000 recommendation for Facilities – School (Floor Scrubbing and Cleaning) and that the Town Administrator and Select Board amend the FY25 Budget recommendation to allocate that \$245,000 of Free Cash to the School Department Operating Budget.

The School Committee discussed the motion with Dr. Pavlicek and Dr. Burrows clarifying adding an additional four positions with the funds.

Second: Member Loring
Roll Call Vote: 5-0-1
Member Bao Qiu was absent during the vote.

- ii. Approval of Vendor Warrants

Member Ross Denny made a motion to approve Vendor Warrant #35 in the amount of \$290,127.60 payable on 3/7/24.

Second: Member Loring
Roll Call Vote: 5-0-1
Member Bao Qiu was absent during the vote.

Member Ross Denny made a motion to approve Vendor Warrant #36 in the amount of \$627,551.83 payable on 3/14/24.

Second: Dr. Miranda
Roll Call Vote: 5-0-1
Member Bao Qiu was absent during the vote.

- b. Policy Subcommittee Report - Member Varghese
 - i. Second Reading for Policy AD, Mission Statement
 - ii. Second Reading for ADC, Tobacco-free Schools

Member Varghese made a motion to approve the Second Reading of:

- Policy AD, Mission Statement
- Policy ADC, Tobacco-free Schools

Second: Member Loring

Roll Call Vote:5-0-1

Member Bao Qiu was absent during the vote.

c. Facilities Advisory Committee Report - Member Loring

Member Loring

- Met earlier today
 - Thanked Chris Hayden for all of his work over the past year
 - Chris Hayden gave a report of projects completed over February break
 - Improvements discussed for the classrooms (shades/ceiling fans)
 - Help with temperature
 - Will be installed over the next four weeks
 - Discussed Cunningham 4th Construction
 - Proposals and walkthroughs of the space
 - Document storage work will be a big part of clearing out the space
 - Ideas of playground improvements done equitably across all the schools

6. **Approval of Minutes**

Dr. Carroll made a motion to approve the minutes of the Milton School Committee meeting of February 28, 2024 with an edit made by Dr. Carroll.

*remove link to Danielle Wetmore name/email address

Dr. Carroll made a motion to approve the minutes of the Milton School Committee meeting of March 6, 2024.

Second: Member Loring

Roll Call Vote:5-0-1

Member Bao Qiu was absent during the vote.

7. **Next Meeting Agenda Items**

Updated

8. **Adjourn**

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

Second: Member Ross Denny

Roll Call Vote: 5-0-1

Member Bao Qiu was absent during the vote.

Meeting adjourned at 9:05pm.