

Minutes of the School Committee
Regular Meeting
Milton High School Cable Access Studio
Date: July 26, 2017

Committee Present: Dr. Kevin Donahue, Chair, Sheila Varela, Vice Chair, Margaret Eberhardt, Dr. Elaine Craghead, Ada Rosmarin, Betty White.

Staff Present: Mary Gormley, Superintendent of Schools; Glenn Pavlicek, Assistant Superintendent for Business, Janet Sheehan, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Human Resources

Call to Order

The Chair called the July 26th meeting of the School Committee to order at 7:03pm

Approve Agenda

The committee approved the agenda after eliminating Item 5b (FY Budget)

Citizens Speak: None.

Superintendent's Report

Topic One: Class Rank Elimination (Attachment) Milton High School Principal James Jette and Guidance Director Karen Cahill came to discuss the possibility of eliminating class rank when reporting student transcripts to colleges. Mr. Jette said that providing class rank may not help student in the college application progress. In 2017, 41 students earned a 4.0 or higher, which means that a student with a 4.0 could be #41 in class rank, whereas at other high schools, that same GPA could put you in the top 5. He showed which districts do not provide class rank to colleges. Ms. Cahill explained how providing class rank could potentially hurt the student. She outlined what information is typically sent to colleges/universities. Dr. Craghead asked how a weighted GPA works and also asked if not reporting the top ten students might hurt those students. Ms. Varela asked, if we voted to agree, is it an all or nothing situation? Mr. Jette said if you report students from #11 in class rank on, this hurts them. Ms. Eberhardt asked, are you trying to force colleges to look at the whole student? Mr. Jette said that "force" is the wrong word, but he agreed they would "strongly encourage" colleges to look at the whole student. Dr. Donahue would like to give the high school administration the tools to report class rank when it's helpful to the student, and not report when it's not. Mr. Jette said the only ones this might hurt is for #3-10. Ms. Cahill said if the School Committee wants them to report the rank for top 5% or top 15%, that is possible. Some districts only report rank for the #1 and #2 student. Ms. Varela said if we only report the rank of the top 10, then everybody else is lumped together. Dr. Craghead added that colleges know that Milton High is a high profile, high achieving school. Colleges take that into account when considering applications. Ms. Rosmarin said allowing some students to report and some to not report defeats the purpose. The advantages to eliminating class rank are persuasive. Ms. White said giving class rank will hurt more students

than it will help. Ms. Eberhardt said this is an important decision. She feels uncomfortable that they are making a decision with very little time to make it. This should be all or nothing. We can't make this decision in July and implement it in September. Ms. Varela said she supports this idea, and it will benefit more students than it will hurt, but this is a very high-performing, competitive district and people will be upset. Ms. Gormley said we have been talking about this for years at site councils, etc. Ms. Gormley agreed that the rollout in the summer is not the right time. Dr. Craghead said that she thinks this concept helps a great number of students; it also hurts some students who have worked very hard. It's the wrong message that #1 and #2 count and nobody else does. The administration should tweak this proposal and revise it. Dr. Craghead said she would not vote for the #1 and #2 to be recognized and nobody else counts. She thinks that it is not fair. Dr. Donahue said the top 10%, who do get a benefit from their class rank, would not be recognized for that hard work. It's depriving them of this. Dr. Donahue would support something along the lines that we should recognize more than 1 and 2. Ms. Varela said she agrees with Dr. Craghead's point and asked, are there any towns who do not supply rank for anyone, not even #1 and #2? Ms. Cahill said some towns don't supply rank for anyone, just announce the valedictorian and salutatorian right before graduation. Dr. Donahue thanked Ms. Cahill and Mr. Jette for coming.

* the chair skipped to Item 5a here

Chair's Report

Topic One: Green Communities Competitive Grants. Consolidated Facilities Director William Ritchie explained that his office is moving from Town Hall to the DPW this week. In 2010, Milton became a Green Community. Once a town becomes a green community, every year you have to achieve a 20% reduction. Also, the town is required to produce an annual report. He estimates that he spends about 100 hours a year in order to get recertified. Mr. Ritchie announced that he received several grants recently. This will amount to about approximately \$220,000 per year in savings. About six projects will be funded with these grants. Lighting will be switched to LEDs throughout town. He explained all the improvements to be made regarding energy improvements. He said that 170 towns are competing for grants. Dr. Craghead asked if Cu/Co building has solar panels and was told they do. Ms. Varela thanked Mr. Ritchie for his work. Mr. Ritchie expressed that he would like to see more consolidation throughout town. Ms. Gormley congratulated Mr. Ritchie for his hard work. Ms. Eberhardt said that Mr. Ritchie is helpful to young people in the town. Among this year's projects, Mr. Ritchie listed the following: Refinishing the track at MHS, repairing/replacing the roof at Pierce and a paving project at Pierce Middle School.

Superintendent's Report (continued)

Topic Two: Draft Handbooks (Attachment) (Vote) Ms. Gormley said these handbooks are important tools for the district. Ms. Eberhardt suggested a few edits, and Dr. Donahue asked for further edits to be submitted to him as soon as possible. Final copies will be available at the August Meetings for final approval. Dr. Donahue moved acceptance of draft form of all six schools' handbooks.

Move: Dr. Donahue

Second: Dr. Craghead

Discussion: Ms. Eberhardt asked about the Pierce and HS handbooks. She said there should be additional information regarding health services, and there is no info about substance abuse screening. Should we add this to the handbooks? Ms. Gormley these topics were withheld, pending funding, but they will be added.

Vote: 6-0-0

Topic Three: Override New Positions, Assistant Superintendent for Business Dr. Glenn Pavlicek discussed the status of these positions. Ms. Gormley said these were all outlined in the E-blast. Dr. Pavlicek worked through the list of Override-Funded Positions. (see Attachment) Dr. Pavlicek noted the non-contingent budget positions as well.

Topic Four: K-5 Elementary Literacy Program Implementation. Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Human Resources Janet Sheehan spoke about the new program. A group of administrators attended a literacy conference last year. As part of his initiative, they surveyed district staff about their needs. Priorities included model lessons, ability for parents to access the student materials from home once the school year begins. Ms. Eberhardt said this is a large roll-out in a short period of time and congratulated Ms. Sheehan on its success so far. Dr. Craghead said it's great that they're doing K-5 at once. She asked how much is online and how much is hand-held books and was told there are both components. Dr. Donahue applauded Ms. Sheehan for being responsive to the needs of the district.

Happenings: Ms. Gormley announced that World Language Director Dr. Martine Fisher has been awarded the Palmes Academice. Ceremony in September. Milton Summer Enrichment's last day is tomorrow. Programs ran seamlessly. Ms. Gormley reminded families that many still need to re-establish residency. So far, 35% of families who are required to do so have reestablished. Ms. McKenna and MECA have been hosting Summer Reading sessions, the most recent of which was held at Tucker. This is a result of funding the family liaison person. New teachers will arrive for orientation on August 21st.

Chairman's Report (continued)

Topic Two: Draft 2017-18 School Committee Schedule (Attachment) (Vote) Dr. Donahue noted that Site Council presentations have been moved up. He added a Curriculum Review Discussion later in the year to talk about curriculum. Dr. Donahue then moved acceptance of the calendar.

Dr. Craghead noted that Sept 20th is first night of Rosh Hashanah and November 1st is the beginning of the MASC conference and asked if these meetings could be moved one week earlier or later? Dr. Donahue then moved approval of the calendar with exception of the dates of September 20th and November 1st, which will be amended.

Move: Dr. Donahue

Second: Ms. Varela

Vote: 6-0-0

Topic Three: Non Union Staff Salary Adjustments. Dr. Donahue noted that in Executive Session over the past weeks, there have been salary adjustments. He reported 2% adjustments for non-union staff.

Topic Four: Capital Committee Representative (Vote) At the last meeting, there was no representative to the Capital Committee. Dr. Donahue nominated himself to this position.

Move: Dr. Donahue

Second: Ms. Varela

Vote: 6-0-0

Topic Five: South Shore Educational Collaborative Representative (Attachment) (Vote) Dr. Donahue asked for a representative to serve on the Collaborative. Ms. Gormley said it is customary for Superintendents to represent their own district. Dr. Donahue nominated Ms. Gormley.

Move: Dr. Donahue

Second: Ms. Varela

Vote: 6-0-0

Topic Six: Retreat Update. Dr. Donahue reported that the committee worked over goals from past years and this year. He is looking forward to bringing goals out at the next meeting.

Finance Subcommittee:

Topic One: Progress on End of Year Closing. Dr. Craghead said she has been assured by Dr. Pavlicek that the year is all but closed out.

Topic Two: Stoneturn Letter. Dr. Craghead said we received a report from Stoneturn, who reviewed MPS use of purchase orders and gave us some recommendations:

- Require a higher level of authorization for non-purchase-order purchases
- Utilize blanket purchase orders for utilities
- Utilize blanket purchase orders for business and office supplies postage, printing.

Dr. Donahue asked if any matters identified in this report needed to be referred to the Policy Subcommittee for the purpose of revising policies. Dr. Pavlicek and Ms. Gormley indicated that there were no such matters and the recommendations could be implemented by the Administration without the need to revise School Committee policies.

Topic Three: Fourth Quarter Report (Attachment) (Vote) Dr. Pavlicek said that this year was the first year with the new financial software. Because it's a new system and we re-coded transactions, we found some improper coding from the past. We have a cleaner charter of accounts than last year. SPED transportation had large overages. The district spent \$1.1 million on SPED transport. This is something that is required and it's expensive and exempt from Chapter 30B bid laws. Another cost was for a Facilities Study with a 20 year look ahead. This cost \$75,000. We also had a \$20,000 storm water bill, unbudgeted at start of year. However, we still ended the year in balance. In the revolving fund sheet, the total balance did go down. Ms. Eberhardt asked about going over \$60K for athletic budget. Student activities also went over budget. Dr. Pavlicek said the Athletics budget comes from general fund, gate receipts, student fees, etc. If some teams do well in post-season, that costs more. Athletics fluctuates. There is a separate revolving fund which is the student athletic fundraising accounts. Also, the Boosters contribute an amount every year. We can't budget for this, because we don't know what it is. The account is \$50K over what was anticipated. Also, there were some unplanned purchases last year. Student Activity Funds are also fluctuating. Due to the new accounting system, we are tracking things better. Ms. Gormley said we should know what it really costs to run the athletic program. We will work with the new leadership of the Boosters to determine the true cost, without Boosters and without student fundraising. Ms. Varela asked if we should cushion this budget a bit more. Debate teams, for example, going to nationals or other unanticipated expenses.

Dr. Donahue moved acceptance of fourth quarter report.

Move: Dr. Donahue

Second: Ms. Varela

Vote: 6-0-0

Topic Four: Approval of Vendor Warrants (Vote)

Dr. Craghead moved to approve Vendor Warrant #51 dated June 22, 2017 in the amount of \$360,305.94.

Move: Dr. Craghead

Second: Ms. Rosmarin

Vote: 5-0-1 (Ms. White abstained)

Dr. Craghead moved to approve Vendor Warrant #52 dated June 29, 2017 in the amount of \$473,162.45

Move: Dr. Craghead
Second: Ms. Rosmarin
Vote: 5-0-1 (Ms. White abstained)

Dr. Craghead moved to approve Vendor Warrant #53 dated June 30th in the amount of \$420,104.61

Move: Dr. Craghead
Second: Dr. Donahue
Vote: 5-0-1 (Ms. White abstained)

Dr. Craghead moved to approve Vendor Warrant #54 dated June 28, 2017 in the amount of \$36,035.28

Move: Dr. Craghead
Second: Ms. Rosmarin
Vote: 5-0-1 (Ms. White abstained)

Dr. Craghead moved to approve Vendor Warrant #4 dated July 27, 2017 in the amount of \$210,569.21

Move: Dr. Craghead
Second: Ms. Varela
Vote: 5-0-1 (Ms. White abstained)

Strategic Planning Advisory Subcommittee Report

Topic One: Report. Ms. Rosmarin presented a report on the Subcommittee's work. See packet.

Policy Subcommittee Report

Topic One: Discussion of Rights of Undocumented Students and Protocols for ICE and Access to Schools. Ms. Eberhardt said she submitted two items, the Undocumented Policy and the Directory Information Policy. But the second item is not here on the agenda. She explained that place of birth should not be released this info. The district will not release info about immigration status. This would also give the ability to opt out. This is an important piece of info that should have been included in tonight's meeting. Dr. Donahue said he will look at it and make edits. Ms. Eberhardt said using the info that Ms. Kessler gave to the committee, we were able to draft a resolution on undocumented students. She would like to sign this as a committee and put this into the record. This would also provide training for staff to follow certain protocols regarding access, etc. The goal is to read this, ask questions, then vote at next meeting and move into the school year. Ms. Varela said this is the first time she's worked on a resolution and not a policy. Do we just sign it and then it becomes part of the school file? Ms. Eberhardt said there were many examples in the file that Ms. Kessler gave us and they are

available for review. Dr. Craghead asked, regarding #4, which states that Immigration Personnel would be refused entry without a warrant. Are we allowed to refuse access to a student, even if they have a Warrant signed by a judge, but if the student is a minor? Ms. Eberhardt said there is a protocol. A principal cannot give access. It must be cleared through the superintendent. And the parents must be notified. Ms. Gormley said Attorney Tobin speaks to the staff at the start of school. Dr. Craghead would like to see the memo. Ms. Eberhardt would like to act on the Directory Information Policy as soon as possible.

Topic Two: Update on Policy Review. Ms. Eberhardt noted that, after reading newsletter from MASC, we are on a tight deadline to review them all. She will bring for review and approval. Section B and Section C. Ms. Varela said it's great to let the viewing audience know that Ms. Eberhardt has taken the initiative to review School Committee procedures.

Ms. Eberhardt said that she has reviewed the letter regarding airplane noise. She has heard from parents about cell phones and students. She will review those policies about what can and cannot be done with student cell phones.

Approval of Minutes

Dr. Donahue asked if there are any edits to the submitted minutes. Hearing none, he made an omnibus motion to approve the following minutes:

January 4, 2017
January 18, 2017
February 15, 2017
March 1, 2017
March 15, 2017
March 29, 2017
April 12, 2017

Move: Dr. Donahue

Second: Dr. Craghead

Vote: 4-0-2 (AR and BW abstained)

Move to approve minutes of February 1, 2017

Move: Dr. Donahue

Second: Ms. Varela

Vote: 3-0-3 (KD, BW and AR abstained)

Next Meeting Agenda Items

Transportation Subcommittee Report, School Committee goals.

The Chair entertained a motion to adjourn.

Move: Dr. Donahue
Second: Ms. Varela
Roll Call Vote: 6-0-0

The Next School Committee meeting is scheduled for August 23rd.

The meeting adjourned at 9:34pm.