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Milford Board of Education

Meeting Minutes
March 10, 2014

Board members present:

Tracy Casey
Michael DeGrego arrived 7:13 p.m.
John DeRosa
Suzanne DiBiase
Laura Fucci
Dr. Heidi Gold-Dworkin arrived 7:09 p.m.
Susan Glennon, Chair
Anthony Piselli – by phone left at 7:50 p.m.
Christopher Saley
Earl Whiskeyman

Administration present:

Dr. Elizabeth Feser
Michael Cummings
James Richetelli
Susan Kelleher
Wendy Kopazna

I. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Glennon called the Business Meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. with the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. STUDENT RECOGNITION

The first recognition of the evening was given to Giovanni and Gavin Winters, twins that attend Orange Avenue. The brothers were recognized for raising money for the Neonatal Ward at Yale Hospital. The boys raised a little more than \$260. Dr. Feser thanked them for their act of kindness.

She then recognized eleventh grader, Shaina Arsenault from Foran High School. Shaina is an accomplished ballet dancer who began teaching ballet to children with special needs when she was just 11. She has received many awards for her volunteerism.

Dr. Feser and the Board congratulated all of the recipients.

III. STUDENT REPORTS

Michelle Novak and Gabe Salles presented Jonathan Law's report. Erin Dunn and Andrew Jones presented for Joseph A. Foran High School. The reports are on file.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

Cathy Berni – 96 Centennial Drive – Mrs. Berni cautioned the board to keep potential new housing developments in mind when planning long term.

Kathy Gage – 47 Pond Street – She voiced her support for neighborhood schools. She emphasized the changes in the school system should be for the children.

Ed Vanchot – 858 New Haven Avenue – Mr. Vanchot expressed his concerns with the East Shore renovations, Milone and MacBroom and the Long Range Planning Committee. He also asked the Board to look at Southington school district relative to the state testing scores. He concluded by stating the statistics have shown that intradistrict magnet schools have been proven to fail.

V. CHAIRS REPORT

Ms. Glennon called for the liaison reports.

Ms. DiBiase reported on the Milord Prevention Council meeting. Three programs that will be rolled out in the coming months: Rachel's Challenge, Senior University and Alcohol.edu.

Mr. DeRosa reported on the Board of Aldermen meeting. There was much discussion on opening up the charter. However, the motion to open the charter did not pass.

Ms. Fucci reported on the Health Department meeting she attended.

Mrs. Casey updated the Board on the upcoming 375th Anniversary celebration. She will serve as the chair for the Board of Education and is working with Kathy Bonetti to insure the school system is well represented.

Mr. Saley reported on the Public Schools Facilities Building Committee. The East Shore project is moving forward. The hope is to have this phase done by June 2014.

Ms. Glennon reminded the Board the Long Range Planning Committee will meet tomorrow, March 11th. The information, based on the outcome of the meeting may be in the media prior to the Committee of the Whole meeting.

She then updated the Board members of the upcoming events.

Governance Process 6 Chair's Role

Ms. Glennon recapped the policy changes were brought forward at the request of Mr. DeRosa.

She then asked for a motion.

Mrs. Fucci made a motion to approve the policy revision to GP-6.1.3 Chair's Role calling special meetings as presented. Mr. DeRosa seconded. By a roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously (10-0).

VI. SUPERINTENDENTS REPORT

Calendar

Dr. Feser spoke to the calendar that was presented at the February meeting. As requested by the Board, the parent conferences and early dismissal days were reflected in the draft calendar to be reviewed. The 2014-15 calendar mirrors the 2013-14 calendar with the tentative last day of June 8, 2015.

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Mrs. Casey raised a question relative the recent contract negotiations and the parent conferences. However, Mr. Cummings explained that after seeking the advice from counsel, it was decided to keep them the same as they were in the past.

Mr. Saley feels August 27 is a little early. He would prefer to start after Labor Day, as the schools are hot in August.

Mr. DeRosa deferred to Dr. Feser regarding the regional calendar.

Dr. Feser explained the state will be presenting a “regional calendar” for the 2015-16 school year. The school districts will be asked to follow suit. She then said the first day of school on that calendar will be before Labor Day. In addition, she added that Wallingford school district began school after Labor Day and due to school cancellations, will be in session until June 30 this year. The state law dictates that school district’s not to go beyond June 30.

Dr. Gold-Dworkin also feels school should start after Labor Day. People take vacation and the schools are hot.

Mr. Whiskeyman noted there will be hot days in June and in August. He also reminded the Board most schools have air-conditioning or air-conditioned areas.

Mr. Richetelli reminded the Board a temperature study was conducted in the schools for the months of June and August. The temperatures were very similar at the end of each month.

Mrs. Fucci supports school beginning before Labor Day. It provides the students a nice transition getting back to the routine.

Dr. Feser noted the last day of schools for the 2014-15 school year would not go beyond June 19th.

Mrs. Fucci made a motion to adopt the 2014-15 Academic Calendar as presented. Mr. DeRosa seconded. The motion passed 9-1 No (Gold-Dworkin).

East Shore Calendar Make Up Days

Dr. Feser requested that the Board waive the calendar rule “the last day not to go beyond June 20th”, for East Shore Middle School only. She explained that if there were any more snow days they would need to deduct days from April vacation for East Shore only, according to the calendar stipulation.

Mrs. Casey stated she thinks the Board should continue to uphold the policy language in the calendar.

Mrs. Fucci noted this case was not expected when the calendar was adopted last year. The East Shore families should not have to change their vacation plans for April.

After additional discussion, Ms. Glennon called for a motion.

Mrs. Fucci made a motion to approve waiving the June 20th calendar stipulation for East Shore Middle School and permit East Shore Middle School to make up snow days through June 25th if needed. Mr. DeRosa seconded. The motion passed unanimously 9-0 (Absent-Piselli).

Graduation Requirements (P6146) Policy Revision

Mr. Cummings explained the changes to the Policy 6146 would allow the middle school students to earn up to three high school credits. He also reported there will be more substantial changes in the fall including a robust version of course of studies.

A Board discussion ensued.

Following the discussion, Ms. Glennon told the Board the policy would be presented for action at the April business meeting.

Mr. DeRosa asked for recess.

Ms. Glennon called for a recess at 8:40 p.m.

Ms. Glennon called the meeting back in session at 8:48 p.m.

Food Service Financial Report 2013-14

Mr. Richetelli reminded the Board the Food Service is a self-sustaining program. He then turned the meeting over to Ms. Faustich.

Mrs. Faustich reported the program has been holding its own. The meals were down in the beginning of the year. However, when the kitchen was opened at East Shore, the sales increased.

She reported the district currently participates in the Healthy Food Program. The state reimburses 10 cents per meal that is sold. The state has currently reimbursed the district \$47,000 which is approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ of the total reimbursement.

Ms. DiBiase voiced a concern with the limitations of choices. Mrs. Casey commented on how good her the school lunch is, and how many choices there were.

Mrs. Faustich noted the program does offer many choices. She then told the Board the program participates with the Department of Defense Produce to purchase as much local produce as practical. The healthy food act will restrict the school from selling certain foods during school hours.

Healthy Foods Certification

Mrs. Faustich explained the Milford Public Schools participated in the Healthy Food Certification program for the 2nd year. School year 2014/15, will be the first year of National Regulations for all foods sold on campus will be mandated and determined by the USDA for all schools who participate in the School Meal Programs. Since CT Nutrition Standards are stricter than National Standards, by participating in Healthy Food Certification the Milford Public Schools will benefit from the program in the following ways: 1) a healthier school nutrition environment will support student learning, 2) financial incentive will support the

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food service program, and 3) the provision to exempt foods at events will minimize the negative financial impact on the school fundraising and other programs.

Mrs. Faustich then referred to Public Act 10-215f of the Connecticut General Statutes. The Healthy Food Certification (HFC) requires boards of education to certify annually whether they will follow the Connecticut Nutrition Standards published annually by the Connecticut Department of Education. The statute provides financial incentive for the Milford Public Schools. The Milford Food Service Program will receive 10 cents per lunch, based on the total number of reimbursable lunches served in the district in the prior school year. The additional income will help offset the USDA School Breakfast Requirements that will increase our food costs next year.

Some members of the Board requested the guidelines for the school lunch meal plans.

Ms. Glennon asked for a motion.

Mrs. Fucci made a motion that the Milford Board of Education approve the participation in the Healthy Food Certification and certify that all food items offered for sale to students in the school(s) under our jurisdiction, and not exempted from the Connecticut Nutrition Standards published by the Connecticut State Department of Education, will meet said standards during the period July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015. Such certification shall include all food offered for sale to student separately from reimbursable meals at all times and from all sources, including but not limited to, school stores, vending machines, school cafeterias, and any fundraising activities on school premises whether or not school sponsored. Mr. DeRosa seconded. The motion passed 8-1 (No-DiBiase/Absent-Piselli).

Mrs. Fucci made a motion that the Milford Board of Education approve the exclusion from certification food items that do not meet the Connecticut Nutrition Standards, provided that (1) such food is sold in connection with an event occurring after the end of the regular school day or on the weekend, (2) such sale is at the location of the event, and (3) such food is not sold from a vending machine or school store. Mr. DeRosa seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Human Resources Report

Mrs. Kopazna reviewed the Human Resources Report as well as stipend positions.

Mr. Saley questioned why the Ski Club stipend had been eliminated at East Shore. He suggested possibly East Shore teaming up with West Shore or Harborside so all children could participate in the Ski Club.

VII. CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

Mrs. Fucci made a motion to approve Consent Agenda items 1-2.

1. Disbursement Report
2. Consideration of Minutes
 - a. February 10, 2014 Business Meeting
 - b. February 24, 2014 Committee of the Whole Meeting

Mr. DeRosa seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

None.

X. BOARD COMMENT

Mr. DeGrego announced he participated in a criminal justice class at Law. He assisted the teacher's in teaching students how to lift finger prints. He attended a PTA meeting at Mathewson Elementary School.

Mr. Saley told the Board he had an opportunity to talk to teachers about their concerns regarding SBAC as they are uncomfortable speaking at a Board of Education meeting. They feel as if many students are not well versed with the computers. They would encourage more technology teachers be hired to teach children technology, and less music teachers.

Ms. Glennon reminded him that during budget discussions two proposed media aides who would have provided students with computer assistance relating to SBAC were eliminated.

Mrs. Fucci reminded the Board that music, strings and choral skills help with math. Additionally, the school district must teach to the abilities and needs of all students.

Mr. Whiskeyman added he recalls when all programmers were musicians and the need to have well rounded students.

Mrs. Casey commented that Milford is not alone relative to SBAC. Also, teachers should be going to administration with their concerns.

Mr. DeRosa asked what materials the Board will receive before the Committee of the Whole meeting on March 24th.

Ms. Glennon told him the board would be receiving the packet. However, she was not sure of the materials at this time. She will be in communication with the Board.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Mrs. Fucci made a motion to adjourn. Mr. DeRosa seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Mrs. Pam Griffin
Recording Secretary

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Ms. Laura Fucci
Corresponding Secretary