

Milford Board of Education

Committee of the Whole Meeting
March 28, 2016

Board members present:

Claire Casey
Michael DeGrego
Suzanne DiBiase
Jennifer Federico
Susan Glennon, Chair
Dr. Jess Gregory
Walter Hagedorn
Tom Jagodzinski
Susan Krushinsky
Earl Whiskeyman

Administration present:

Dr. Elizabeth Feser
Jeffrey Burt
Jim Richetelli

I. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Glennon called the Committee of the Whole meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. with the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. Glennon asked if there were any objections to reordering the agenda to move Item V. Request to close schools on April 26, 2016 to the next agenda item to accommodate the schedules of Mrs. Rowland and Mrs. Fellenbaum, Registrars of Voters. There were no objections.

II. REQUEST TO CLOSE SCHOOLS APRIL 26, 2016 FOR PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY

Mrs. Rowland and Mrs. Fellenbaum shared with the Board several reasons that prompted their request to close schools on April 26, 2016, the day of the Presidential Preference Primary.

Ms. Glennon asked administration for their view on the decision to close schools.

Dr. Feser shared her concern relating to the safety of the students and staff, being that the doors are completely open to the public all day and evening. The day would have to be added to the end of the school calendar year.

Being no further discussion, Ms. Glennon called for a motion.

Ms. DiBiase made a motion to close schools on April 26, 2016 for the Presidential Preference Primary and to add a day to the school calendar. Ms. Federico seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

III. APPROVAL OF MARCH 14, 2016 BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES

Ms. DiBiase made a motion that the Milford Board of Education approves the minutes from the March 14, 2016 Business meeting. Mrs. Federico seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. STANDARDS BASED REPORT CARD UPDATE

Mr. Burt delivered a PowerPoint (on file) which updated the Board on the phase in of the standards based report card. A committee made up of administrators and teachers have been working on this concept for two years. It has been implemented in kindergarten and in grades four and five. The report card will be implemented in grades one through three in the next school year. The previous report card did not communicate clear expectations as to what students should know and be able to do at each grade level. A standards based report card allows students, staff and parents to more clearly understand a student's achievement in specific areas of each subject and his/her growth. It uses a grading scale for each skill; Exceeding, Meeting, Approaching, Not Meeting. All elementary grades will be using this report card in the 2016-17 school year.

V. REVISION TO POLICY 5117

Dr. Feser reviewed the revisions requested by the Board at the March 14, 2016 meeting.

Dr. Feser explained a section from the current policy had been omitted from the first draft of the revision. It has been added as Section III. Requirements/Criteria to Remain in Good Standing At the Out of Attendance School.

A Board discussion ensued.

Following the discussion, Administration was asked to bring forth additional variations to the proposed policy. Changes were requested in the Exceptions – Section 1:

Exceptions – Section I

B. 1. Add “except as stated in Item V & VII.”

B. 8. The statement is conflicting with Item C. Change language to be more clear.

Policy Variations Include:

Change in Residence – Section V

1. After first marking period of freshmen year, the student can remain to finish high school years

2. After first marking period to include 6th grade and kindergarten

Grandfathering - Section VII

1. Expand the grandfathering for families with siblings in middle and high school through 2019-2020, for one year overall.

2. Allow overlapping siblings to be grandfathered to go onto same schools – So they can be at the same level at the same time.

3. Grandfathering current 5th and 8th graders who may be counting on this option, since this revision is being proposed late in the year

Administration reviewed the historical data and trends relating to out of attendance area placements and the number of current requests that have been submitted to date for next year.

Approved

Mr. Burt offered information on UCONN's ECE courses vs AP courses and explained there is a wide variation of how universities look at the two. An ECE Director and an admissions officer at UCONN both indicated that UCONN looks at ECE and AP equally on the college application for acceptance into UCONN.

Mr. Richetelli reported of the 46 students from the Law district who attend Foran, 23 participate in sports, 6 of them play football. Of the 35 students who reside in the Foran district but attend Law, 17 participate in sports, 2 of them play football.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Glennon read the Public Comment statement.

Wendy Barry – 603 West River Street – Opposes the change. The reconfiguration and redistricting has already affected many families. She also said that all programs and/or courses should be offered at both high schools.

Lara Edmondson – 881 West River Street – Mrs. Edmondson asked the Board to consider grandfathering of siblings. The parent/school participation would be a challenge if siblings attend different high schools.

Mark Manning – 217 Merwin Avenue – Mr. Manning said the two high schools should offer the same programs to be equitable. He believes students should be able to choose which high school to attend.

Mike Scagliarini – 18 Paddock Place – Mr. Scagliarini told the Board to do what is in the best interest of the child.

Jim Esposito – 102 Loomis Street – Mr. Esposito supports students making the choice of which high school to attend.

Daniel Paul – 54 Terrace Road – Mr. Paul supports children making the choice of which school to attend, and what community they want to be a part of. The tax dollars are the same.

Paul Goglia – 27 River Highlands Drive – Mr. Goglia has a freshman at Law and a junior at Foran. His children chose which school would be the best fit for them. He referenced the Board's vision statement.

Kevin Barry – 603 West River Street – Mr. Barry supports the current policy without any changes. If a change is needed, phase it in. Siblings should be grandfathered for the entire family. His children shadowed at both high schools and chose what was best for them.

Kevin Long – 85 Tulip Tree Court – Mr. Long is a football coach at Foran. He assured the Board that the recruitment myths are not true. He encouraged the Board to do what's best for the kids.

Jeff Edmondson – 881 West River Street – Mr. Edmondson said the policy should start at the lower grade levels if that's where the issue is. There should be sound reasons why a child can't attend a school of choice such as overcrowding or budgetary.

Deb McKenna – 94 Seaside Avenue – Opposes the change. Wanted her children to attend the school where their father teaches.

Approved

Dave Hulme – 4 Calloway Drive – He has a sophomore at Law who lives in Foran district. Dispel the myth of why people choose one school over another.

Steve MacDonald - 23 Wesport Place – His daughter is one of the 15 hoping to go to Foran next year. She felt more comfortable at Foran and it should be her choice and it was nice that she had a choice other than private school.

VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION TO DISCUSS PENDING LITIGATION

Ms. DiBiase made a motion to adjourn to Executive Session to discuss matters pertaining to pending litigation. Dr. Feser and Attorney Tallberg were invited into the session. Mrs. Federico seconded. The motion passed unanimously. (8:48 p.m.)

The meeting reconvened into Public Session at 9:22 p.m.

Ms. Glennon stated for the record that the executive session dealt with pending litigation specific to the estate of Maren Sanchez.

VIII. ADJOURN

Ms. Glennon asked for a motion to adjourn.

Ms. DiBiase made a motion to adjourn. Mrs. Federico seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 9:22 p.m.

Mrs. Pam Griffin
Recording Secretary

Ms. Suzanne DiBiase.
Corresponding Secretary