

Milford Board of Education

Meeting Minutes

April 27, 2015

Board members present:

Claire Casey
Michael DeGrego
John DeRosa
Suzanne DiBiase
Jennifer Federico
Susan Glennon, Chair
Dr. Heidi Gold-Dworkin (7:05)
Anthony Piselli
C. Robert Satti, Jr.
Earl Whiskeyman

Administration present:

Dr. Elizabeth Feser
Mike Cummings
Wendy Kopazna
Jim Richetelli
Susan Kelleher

I. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Glennon called the business meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. in the Board of Education Room. She welcomed the fifth grade students from Pumpkin Delight Elementary School. She then asked them to lead in the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. Glennon turned the meeting over to Dr. Feser.

II. PUMPKIN DELIGHT STUDENT LEADERSHIP TEAM

Dr. Feser introduced Mrs. Keramis, Principal of Pumpkin Delight, and Teacher Leader Ms. Ramey, who, with a group of student leaders from Pumpkin Delight would give a presentation on the Student Leadership Program.

Mrs. Keramis explained the program was established in 2013 as a way to build a stronger school community. Any student has the ability to be a student leader. They are nominated by classmates, building personnel or a teacher. One student from each class is selected to participate in the program. Once nominated, the students participate in monthly meetings with their advisors to discuss ideas to disseminate throughout the school community to improve the school culture. In addition, all students participated in a conference held at Sacred Heart University to learn strategies on how to become better leaders.

Mrs. Keramis then turned the meeting over to the fifth grade students, who shared individual statements of ideas that have been implemented. Some of the ways to

improve the school safety include the formation of hall monitors and bus monitors. Suggestion boxes were scattered about to give everyone a voice with anonymity. Notes of kindness were created to make people feel special, and a bench was turned into a buddy bench to offer to students a place to sit and reflect when sad or in need of some quiet time. A lunch award, *Light's Out*, was created to encourage students to follow the rules of the lunchroom. Students, or classes, earn the award, worth points, for being quiet during lights out time. A class earns a reward when it reaches ten points. This award was put in place this year and the students have quickly caught on. The team also coordinated fundraisers and projects with the specific purpose of helping others. These are just some of the great things the team has put into place at Pumpkin Delight.

Following the presentation, the students answered questions from the Board.

Ms. Glennon thanked the students for the presentation.

Dr. Feser turned the meeting over to Mr. Cummings.

III. MINOR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS TO ORANGE AVENUE PRE-K FACILITIES

Mr. Cummings reported on the recent grant award of \$70,000. The grant will be used for minor capital facility improvements to the pre-kindergarten space at Orange Avenue Elementary School. The administration had applied for the funds in October 2014. At that time, Orange Avenue was the only location to house pre-kindergarten for the district. A requirement of the grant was that the funds be used for an existing pre-k program; therefore, they could not be used for future locations. Funds would be used for a rolling gate to provide parking lot safety, a protective cover for the playscape area and modifications to the restrooms. The Board was asked to approve those funds.

Dr. Gold-Dworkin asked why administration only applied for funds for Orange Avenue. Mr. Cummings repeated, at the time of the grant, Orange Avenue was only school that had pre-kindergarten. There was specific language that the grant could only be used for existing pre-kindergarten programs.

Ms. Glennon asked if the protective cover for the playscape had padded poles. Mr. Cummings did not know, but would look into it.

Ms. Glennon asked for a motion.

Mr. Satti made a motion that the Milford Board of Education authorizes the acceptance of a Grant for facility improvements and minor capital repairs from the State of Connecticut Department of Education, in consultation with the Office of Early Childhood in the amount of \$70,000 and further authorizes that Elizabeth E. Feser, Superintendent of Schools, is empowered and authorized to execute and deliver the Agreement for Grant Award and take all steps necessary to effectuate said agreement. Mr. DeRosa seconded.

Ms. Glennon called for discussion.

Mr. DeRosa asked the administration to follow up on the padding of the poles on the protective cover.

Being no further discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

IV. MILFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY PLAN

Mr. St. Germain updated the Board on the changes to the Technology Plan. He reported the state no longer requires districts to submit their plan every three years. This is a result of the change to the eligibility requirements for federal e-rate funds. It is recommended that district's continue this practice for planning purposes. The district has a group comprised of teachers, Literacy/Math coaches, library media specialists, administrators, leaders from IT and Pupil Personnel Services who are part of the Milford Technology Advisory Group (MTAG). The MTAG is responsible for updating the plan and communications throughout the district.

Mr. St. Germain then highlighted some of the significant changes to the plan, mainly due to the district converting to Google Apps and the use of Chromebooks in the district. The district currently has 600 Chromebooks, which were funded by grant funds. With the transition to Google Apps, members of MTAG served as advisors to teachers to assist with the rollout of the application. The Milford Public Schools website has been overhauled to showcase students. The Data Portal is still work in progress, and is used a storage spot for student assessment data.

Mr. St. Germain assured the Board Milford is ahead of other districts, however, the plan is a living document. Technology is constantly changing. There are many things that have been done in the district that were not in the prior plan. The work continues. K-12 technology benchmarks need to be defined. A technology embedded curriculum needs to be implemented. Professional development and policies need to be created.

Mr. Whiskeyman asked about the capacity management for the infrastructure behind the scenes. Mr. St. Germain applauded Goggle Apps for offering unlimited storage space.

Dr. Gold-Dworkin suggested the Science supervisor be added to the committee.

Mr. Satti asked administration if there is a plan in place for privacy issues. Mr. St. Germain told him the district needs to work on tightening up the process. Mr. Satti also asked if there is a plan in place if the internet goes down? Mr. Cummings assured the Board there is a back-up plan in place.

There was discussion regarding one to one where every student has a tablet to use. Both Mr. St. Germain and Mr. Cummings indicated it is extremely important to have

curriculum and professional development in place before taking that step so that the technology is appropriately used.

Mr. DeRosa made a comment about Microsoft Office being the preferred software outside of high school. However, Mr. St. Germain explained the intent is to teach students how to create a spreadsheet, not a program. The district is keeping its Microsoft licensing. Which program might be used depends on the application.

Mrs. Federico asked if there is language relative to social media in the plan. She was told the policy may need to be updated.

Mrs. Federico made a reference to keyboarding. Has it been implemented? She was told a keyboarding program has been implemented in grades three through five. Information has also gone home to parents.

Ms. Glennon referred to the list of current computers. She questioned how the district will assure parity when the schools convert to kindergarten through grade five. Mr. Cummings told the Board this work will take place over the summer. Current grade three through five desktop leases are up this summer.

Dr. Gold-Dworkin made a request of how many Chromebooks are need for all students to have one.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT

Cathy Berni – 96 Centennial Drive – Mrs. Berni noted there are two things her daughter’s school does that Milford should consider. Every student is required to have a flash drive and students can bring their own mouse to use with computers.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Satti made a motion to adjourn. Mr. DeRosa seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Glennon adjourned the meeting at 8:29 p.m.

Recording Secretary: _____
Pam Griffin

Corresponding Secretary: _____
C. Robert Satti, Jr.