

Approved

Milford Board of Education

Meeting Minutes
May 5, 2014

Board members present:

Tracy Casey
Michael DeGrego
John DeRosa
Suzanne DiBiase
Laura Fucci
George Gensure
Dr. Heidi Gold-Dworkin arrived 7:05 p.m.
Susan Glennon, Chair
Anthony Piselli
Earl Whiskeyman

Administration present:

Dr. Elizabeth Feser
Michael Cummings
Susan Kelleher

I. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Glennon called the Committee of the Whole meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. in the Media Center of Orange Avenue Elementary School. She then led those present in the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by a moment of silence for Maren Sanchez and the Sanchez family.

II. PROGRAM OVERVIEW OF MILFORD PUBLIC SCHOOLS' PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS

Mr. Cummings introduced Mrs. Christine Kennedy, Supervisor, Special Education (PreK-Elementary), Mrs. Andrea Giannattasio, Special Services Teacher and Mrs. Peggy Kelly, Director, Family Resource Center to assist him in the presentation. He stated the purpose of the presentation was to give an overview of the two PreK programs offered in the Milford Public Schools.

Mrs. Kennedy began with the explanation of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), a Federal law that requires public school districts to provide an education to children who have been identified with special needs by their 3rd birthday. The Milford Public School Preschool Program is a special education program which offers a range of services for students with identified disabilities and students who are at risk at no cost to the student. In an effort to provide a balanced program that reflects the general population as well as to offer a high quality early childhood program in an integrated setting, students who are considered typical are included in the program for a fee based on a sliding scale.

Mrs. Kennedy and Mrs. Giannattasio then gave an overview of the program, how it is monitored and measured. The preschool program is presently housed at Orange Avenue Elementary School. Currently there are morning and afternoon sessions. They spoke about the limitations of enrollment, funding and transportation. It was noted the program usually attracts typical students primarily from the school area in which the program is housed.

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Mrs. Kelly then provided an overview of the Ready to Learn program. The program is funded by state grants, Milford Public Schools and a participant fee based on a sliding scale. This program is considered a full day program with before and after care available. Children can arrive at 7:15 a.m. and stay until 6:15 p.m. The students in the program have not been identified with special needs.

The two programs work cooperatively and provide outreach to local private preschools and daycare centers.

There was some discussion about the decentralization of the preschool program. The Long Range Planning Committee as well as the District Management Council has recommended it to the administration. Children who attend quality preschool programs are better prepared for Kindergarten which in turn, helps close the achievement gap. However, the administration believes there are many issues that need to be discussed and considered in the planning process and should be part of the larger long range planning discussions.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

Kathy Gage – 47 Pond Street - Mrs. Gage applauded the programs. She told the Board the staff does a wonderful job. She commended them for their time and support.

IV. ADJOURNMENT

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

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

The Board toured some of the preschool classrooms following the meeting.

Mrs. Pam Griffin
Recording Secretary

Ms. Laura Fucci
Corresponding Secretary