

**Milford Board of Education**

Meeting Minutes  
May 14, 2012

**Board members present:**

Tracy Casey  
Suzanne DiBiase  
George Gensure  
Susan Glennon  
Dora Kubek  
James Maroney  
Beverley Pierson  
Christopher Saley  
Earl Whiskeyman

**Administration present:**

Dr. Elizabeth Feser  
Michael Cummings  
Wendy Kopazna  
James Richetelli

**Board members absent:**

Mark Stapleton

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The Milford Board of Education held a business meeting on Monday May 14, 2012 in the Board Room in the Parsons Complex. Mrs. Casey called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. with the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance immediately following.

**II. STUDENT AND STAFF RECOGNITION**

Dr. Feser began by recognizing the Jonathan Law Unified Sports Program. Unified Sports, a registered program of Special Olympics International, combines individuals with disabilities and peer athletes on sports teams for training and competition. The Unified Sports program pairs an athlete with a partner of similar age and athletic ability.

The Jonathan Law Unified Sports Program was recognized for their participation. Recognized were:

James Vaccaro	Student Athlete
Ryan Riordan	Student Athlete
Korinne Cavallaro	Student Partner
Kaleigh Kozek	Student Partner
Gail White	Volunteer Coach
Fran Holden	Volunteer Coach
Pat Daniels	Special Education Teacher and Unified Sports Head Coach

Dr. Feser then recognized the winners of the Save the Sound artwork contest. They were two first graders from Mathewson Elementary School:

Jack Aliberti	1 <sup>st</sup> Grader
Ankita Mallik	1 <sup>st</sup> Grader

The next recognition of the evening went to LaWelden Warren, a 12<sup>th</sup> grader at Foran for creating BEAST, a student group. Beast stands for “Bullying Elimination Alliance of Students and Teachers”. The message

LaWelden spreads is one of respect and understanding to all people and the cruelty racism can play in our lives if we let it. Thank you!

The final recognition went to Isabella Basic, a fourth grader at Meadowside. Isabella saved the Milford National Lou Gehrig Little League Opening Day by rushing to the field and belting out the Star Spangled Banner when the sound system failed. There were hundreds of people in attendance. In addition to being recognized by the board, the commissioner of the league presented her with a plaque!

### **III. STUDENT REPORTS**

Gabrielle Novak and Matthew Ouellette presented the report for Jonathan Law High School. Tess Gildea and Thomas Bassine reported on the latest activity and upcoming events occurring at Joseph A. Foran High School. Both reports are on file.

### **IV. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Cathy Berni – 96 Centennial Drive – Ms. Berni recommended that the Board of Education put a policy in place for transitioning students from one school to the next. Some schools are offering orientations while others are not. She told the board that many parents in the community are complaining to her. She told the board the communication channels are broken as is the transparency.

### **V. CHAIR'S REPORT**

Chair Casey told the board and the public there are many events going on at the schools. She then asked the board members to provide their graduation/closing ceremonies attendance plans to Mrs. Griffin.

Dr. Stapleton is absent from the meeting. She then told the board there will be a non-meeting to discuss MASA negotiations at 6:00 p.m. on May 29<sup>th</sup>. CABA will hold a workshop on “Collective Bargaining” on June 7<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Saley, Mr. Richetelli and Chair Casey will attend the workshop.

Chair Casey explained the Vision statement had been finished and is ready to be uploaded to the website. The vision statement will help guide the district. She then read the Vision statement.

“Milford Public Schools will be a progressive school district in which students are prepared to achieve at their highest level, surrounded by an engaged community that is proud of its educational system.”

Chair Casey reported that the *Request for Proposals* relative to the long range planning consultant is closed. Eight firms have responded. The committee will meet very soon to review the RFPs.

### **VI. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

Dr. Feser asked Chair Casey to read the Teacher's Proclamation to honor Teacher's Week. The Teacher Proclamation is on file in the Superintendent's office.

#### **Foran Physics Presentation**

Dr. Feser introduced Mr. Benedetti, Foran Physics teacher to the board. Mr. Benedetti, with the assistance of some students shared experiences they had by taking his class. One instance in particular was how they read several articles from the New York Times regarding the experiments and discussed the implications of

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the CERN experiments. Ultimately, the CERN scientists discovered flaws in the experimental equipment and thus retracted their results, but they as well as others are continuing to measure the neutrino's flight time.

Students engaged in a video conference with Professor Alvaro de Rujula. Students also engaged in research of CERN, Professor Alvaro de Rujula, and the ramifications of Einstein's theory of relativity if it were to be disproved.

### **District Continuous Plan**

Dr. Feser began by giving background that the administration previously brought forth a plan in April. In addition the Board was given information about the development of the District Continuous Improvement Plan (DCIP) which is aligned to use the mandates of the legislation, systemic strategies, and coherent action steps as a means of improving student achievement. More specifically, the DCIP is designed to achieve the Board's three year goals. Milestones have added to keep in alignment to the benchmark targets, which are tied to the board's objectives.

A discussion ensued regarding "continuous improvement". Administration feels within the plan, continuous improvement does not necessarily have end points while the board believes it should.

Mr. Whiskeyman told administration that project management refers to an event that has an end date. He feels that something that is continuous improvement would not be considered a milestone.

Chair Casey told administration that you need to have a way to measure the progress. Milestones were to be check in points.

Dr. Feser explained that some dates could be tied to the milestones.

Mr. Cummings suggested a bi-annual status report could be a way to review the progress.

Mr. Whiskeyman gave an example of building rocket ships. He told the board that there were steps along the way.

Chair Casey told administration that it is very important to have a sense of measurement of the work. She doesn't feel there is anything supporting the indicators, which is critical.

Chair Casey called for a recess at 8:50 p.m.

The meeting was called back in session at 9:00 p.m.

### **Three Year Technology Plan**

Mrs. Krois explained to the board that every three years the State Department of Education requires school districts to develop a plan that shows how the district will integrate educational technology within the district. She then reviewed the process involved with the development of the plan. The plan has been reviewed by ACES and is now ready to be approved by the board and submitted to the State Department of Education.

Mr. Maroney made a motion to approve the Educational Technology Plan 2012-2015 as presented by administration. Ms. DiBiase seconded the motion. The motion passed.

### **Capital Improvement Plan**

Mr. Richetelli reviewed the Capital Improvement Plan with the board. He told the board after the board approves the plan it is forwarded to mayor for approval. Upon the mayor's approval it is forwarded to the Planning and Zoning committee and then to the Board of Aldermen for final approval.

Mr. Richetelli explained that administration reviewed the needs of the school system. The plan prioritizes what projects are to occur and when they are to occur. However, he told them the plan is fluid.

Mr. Saley asked that the East Shore project be moved up. He does not understand why you would risk the safety of children, for example the East Shore drop off area. Why not wait to do Eels Hill? He is concerned because the district will eventually lose 1,000 children based on the enrollment projections. He is very disturbed that East Shore has been redesigned twice already. He feels that waiting six years to update the music rooms at West Shore is too long. The choir and music rooms do not have windows. This is unacceptable. It would be easy to put a second floor above the cafeteria at West Shore. He further said that steel was installed during the cafeteria addition. It would be an inexpensive project to build up and it would create more square footage.

Mr. Richetelli explained that the school system has used Eels Hill as a storage facility for many years. The building is rapidly deteriorating. The files need to be secure and with the flooding and such, the files become in jeopardy. He also reminded Mr. Saley that the East Shore Project is in the Capital Improvement Plan.

Chair Casey asked Mr. Richetelli when the Capital Improvement Plan needed to be submitted to the Board of Finance. Mr. Saley feels that it is not being handled correctly. It doesn't make sense to go to the state four times.

Chair Casey reminded Mr. Saley that you need to factor in the history.

Mr. Saley was adamant about knowing true savings. He doesn't feel that administrations recommendations are good business decisions. How can you make good decisions without knowing the price?

**Chair Casey asked the board if there was any interest in directing administration to seek pricing of turf fields versus grass field before submitting the plan.**

Mr. Richetelli explained that it is driven by state reimbursement. It is a snapshot in time.

Chair Casey tabled the vote until after the non-lapsing discussion.

### **Non-Lapsing Account**

Mr. Richetelli explained that the state has passed a new law that entitles school districts to put savings into an account to be used on projects rather than returning it to the City. It is not to exceed 1% of the total budget. Mr. Richetelli then explained that \$450,000 would be placed into the account with the intent of using the fund to replace the turf fields at Jonathan Law and Foran High Schools.

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A conversation ensued.

Mr. Saley wants to know the pricing of projects before he commits to a project. For example, how much will the turf fields cost? Why replace the turf fields with turf? Football is going back to grass.

Chair Casey asked Mr. Richetelli why the board would not use the funds for East Shore. She was told the East Shore project is part of the Capital Improvement Plan. The commitment is on the City of Milford to fund it. The funds have been bonded.

Mr. Saley feels that East Shore's safety concerns are more important than the turf fields.

Chair Casey called for a vote.

Mr. Maroney made a motion to request that the City Board of Finance deposit into a dedicated non-lapsing account the amount of \$450,000 in accordance with CGS Sec. 10-248a for the purpose of replacement of the artificial turf surface on the playing fields at Jonathan Law and Foran High Schools or other such future extraordinary expenditures which may be necessary yet otherwise not budgeted for. Ms. DiBiase seconded the motion. The vote passed 9-0.

Chair Casey asked for the Capital Improvement Plan to be placed back on the floor.

Mr. Maroney made a motion to approve the 2012-2017 Capital Improvement Plan and forward the plan to the Mayor for consideration and funding. Ms. DiBiase seconded. The motion passed 8-1 (Saley).

### **Human Resources Report**

Mrs. Kopazna shared the personnel report with the board.

Ms. Glennon asked administration to give an update on the behaviorist position. Mrs. Kelleher told her that she continues to meet with candidates. She is pursuing a strong candidate at the current time.

Chair Casey asked if the administration is projecting any layoffs.

Mr. Cummings told her that due to enrollment, fewer teachers at the elementary level could be needed than projected.

## **VII. CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS**

Mr. Maroney made a motion to approve the consent agenda items 1-3.

1. Consideration of Minutes
  - a. April 2, 2012 Workshop
  - b. April 9, 2012 Meeting
  - c. April 25, 2012 Meeting
  - d. April 25, 2012 Workshop
2. Disbursement Report

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Ms. DiBiase seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

**IX. NEW BUSINESS**

None.

**X. BOARD COMMENT:**

Chair Casey told the board she attended the school strings concert. It was amazing. She would love to see strings added to the high schools.

**XI. ADJOURNMENT:**

Mr. Maroney made a motion to adjourn. Ms. DiBiase seconded the motion. The motion passed.

Meeting adjourned at 11:00 p.m.

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James Maroney  
Corresponding Secretary

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Pam Griffin  
Recording Secretary