

Approved

Milford Board of Education

Meeting Minutes
May 27, 2014

Board members present:

Michael DeGrego
John DeRosa
Suzanne DiBiase
Laura Fucci
George Gensure
Susan Glennon, Chair
Anthony Piselli
Earl Whiskeyman

Administration present:

Dr. Elizabeth Feser
Michael Cummings
Susan Kelleher
Jim Richetelli

Absent:

Tracy Casey
Dr. Heidi Gold-Dworkin

I. CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Glennon called the Committee of the Whole meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. in the Board of Education room at the Parsons complex. She then led the Board in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. Glennon called for a motion to move agenda item “Innovation Grant”.

Mrs. Fucci made a motion to move agenda item III. Innovation Grant Application Proposal for Development of 3-D Design Projects to agenda item II. Mr. DeRosa seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Glennon turned the meeting over to Mr. Cummings.

II. INNOVATION GRANT APPLICATION PROPOSAL

Mr. Cummings stated the Innovation Grant offers high schools the ability to offer 3-D design courses. He then turned the meeting over to Ms. LaSala.

Ms. LaSala explained the Carl Perkins Innovation Grant allows districts to apply for six innovation models. Milford will pursue the development of 3-D design. The grant itself will fund all equipment needs and will replace an out of date course, specifically videography. She further stated no added space or staff will be required at this time. If approved, the new course would begin in the 2015-16 school year. The costs involved in the approval would involve .2 FTE teachers at each high school.

Following a brief discussion, Ms. Glennon called for a motion.

Mrs. Fucci made a motion that the Board of Education authorize administration to apply for the Innovation Grant and commit to continue initiatives developed with the grant reward. Mr. DeRosa seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

III. 2014-15 BOARD OF EDUCATION BUDGET ADOPTION

Dr. Feser reported the aldermen voted to reduce \$300,000 from the budget. She then asked Mr. Cummings to provide the Board with the plan to capture 12.2 staffing reductions in the original budget that was approved by the Board.

Mr. Cummings shared the staffing changes with the Board. Those changes include:

- Reduction of 7.0 positions with the reduction in grade level sections at:
 - Meadowside, grade 5 (2 positions)
 - Orchard Hills, grade 5
 - Pumpkin Delight, grade 3
 - Live Oaks, grade 1
 - Mathewson, grade 1, and
 - John F. Kennedy, kindergarten
- 5.0 positions would be reduced by the elimination of one team at West Shore Middle School. There will be one 7th grade team, one 8th grade team and one combined 7th & 8th grade team consisting of two 7th grade homerooms and three 8th grade homerooms.
- 2.0 Elementary Specialist positions (art, music, physical education) would be reduced due to fewer classroom sections. The reduction will be spread across the district. Retirements and voluntarily reductions of time worked will account for the 2.0 reductions.
- A middle school physical education position would be reduced due to fewer classroom sections needed.
- 0.2 high school (Foran) FTE would be reduced from other course reductions by eliminating an English section (7 sections instead of 8 sections) while keeping within the recommended class size averaging 21 students per class.

The proposed budget also calls for the addition of 1.0 Strings teacher due to expected increases of enrollment at the high school level, and 2.0 Preschool teachers to expand the preschool program.

Dr. Feser underscored the administration met its obligation with the respect to reduce 12.2 staff as presented in January. She then distributed the following chart which offers administrations' recommendations to address the \$300,000 budget reduction made by the aldermen.

Further explanation was provided by administration:

.25 strings teacher (one section at each high school) would be retained

While the IT Director position will be eliminated, the current arrangement of having the 3 current IT staff members split the Director's duties has been working well. Those funds would be transferred to the salary account and their salaries would increase accordingly. They have been receiving a stipend for the extra work. Those funds would be transferred to the salary account and their salaries would increase accordingly and the arrangement will be made permanent for a net savings of \$25,000.

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Mr. Whiskeyman cautioned administration of the elimination of the position. His experience has been the need will arise at some point and then you would have to add the position back into the budget.

Dr. Feser explained administration had just been notified that Peggy Kelly had received a grant for the pre-school program. Specifics could not be released until formally announced, however verbal notification had been given. 4 paraprofessional positions can be removed from the Board's budget and funded by the grant.

Mr. Whiskeyman cautioned administration with the use of grant funds. Dr. Feser told him the grant prohibits districts from using the funds for teacher positions only.

Dr. Feser asked Mr. Richetelli to speak to the facilities reductions. Mr. Richetelli reminded the Board the items being eliminated are needed; however, the work will be delayed by a year.

Mr. Cummings spoke to the reductions in the Instructional and Professional Development areas. The Supplies account was reduced by 18,500 by shifting that expense to the pre-school grant. A reduction of \$20,000 from the equipment account will be offset by the grant funds from the technology grant. The Professional Development account will be reduced by \$20,000. He further added at the high school level, the curriculum work schedule is being revised.

Mrs. Fucci called attention to the average class size being 24 in third grade at Pumpkin Delight. Mr. Cummings noted the enrollment is monitored and a class would need to be added if enrollment exceeded the average of 25 per class.

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

Mrs. Fucci made a motion to adopt the budget for 2014-2015 as proposed by the Superintendent in the amount of \$89,213,231. Mr. DeRosa seconded.

Ms. Glennon called for further discussion.

Mr. Gensure said he is disappointed with the cut of professional development and curriculum.

Dr. Feser agreed with him. She told the Board the administration worked very hard to make the reductions without eliminating staff, and without affecting student learning.

Mr. DeRosa told the Board they made a concerted effort to propose a lean budget. However, the aldermen made the decision to reduce the budget. He too is disappointed in the cuts.

Mrs. Fucci asked administration how the cut will impact the students.

Dr. Feser responded some curriculum work will be delayed. However, Mr. Cummings stated the work will need to be reprioritized.

Being no further discussion, Ms. Glennon called for the vote. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

Andrea Feher – 179 River Cliff Drive – Mrs. Feher referenced the enrollment at West Shore as being higher than the other middle schools. She does not support the elimination of 5 teachers at West Shore which result in the combination of a 7th and 8th grade team.

Mr. Cummings reviewed the expected enrollment at the three middle schools, noting, of the three, West Shore will have the smallest class size in grade 6 and comparable class sizes in grades 7 and 8. Mr. Cummings also noted he considered implementing the combined grade 7/8 team at Harborside but the large size of the 8th grade class made it impossible this year.

V. BOARD COMMENT

Mr. DeGrego noted the events he attended over the past couple weeks.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

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

Meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Mrs. Pam Griffin
Recording Secretary

Ms. Laura Fucci
Corresponding Secretary