

**Milford Board of Education**

Special Meeting Minutes  
January 21, 2015

**Board members present:**

Michael DeGrego  
John DeRosa  
Suzanne DiBiase  
Jennifer Federico  
Dr. Heidi Gold-Dworkin  
Susan Glennon, Chair  
Anthony Piselli  
C. Robert Satti, Jr.  
Earl Whiskeyman

**Administration present:**

Dr. Elizabeth Feser  
Michael Cummings  
James Richetelli  
Susan Kelleher

**Board members absent:**

Laura Fucci

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Ms. Glennon called the special meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. with the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. Glennon informed the Board that Mrs. Fucci has submitted her letter of resignation, which cannot be formally announced until our next regular meeting. Mr. Satti has been assigned to the position of majority leader.

Ms. Glennon moved to Public Comment.

**II. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Lisa Biagione – 70 Sentinel Hill Road – Ms. Biagione told the Board that student achievement was never mentioned during the budget discussion. She expressed her disappointment that the special education budget continues to be cut back significantly. The focus should be student achievement.

Ms. Glennon asked if there were any further questions of the Board. Being none, she asked for a motion.

Mr. Satti moved that the Board of Education accept the 2015-2016 budget as presented in the amount of \$91,170,638, and direct administration to send it to the mayor. Mr. Whiskeyman seconded.

Ms. Glennon called for discussion.

Mr. Satti stated the budget is a fair budget. The Board agreed to reconfigure the schools. He asked the Board to accept the motion.

Mr. DeRosa made an amendment to the main motion to remove the teacher leaders from the budget (account 1111) in the amount of \$280,000. Mr. Piselli seconded.

## Approved

Mr. DeRosa explained with the information provided and the comments from the Superintendent about the administration being top heavy, it would be better postponed.

Dr. Feser clarified she had said the principals need to be instructional leaders not building managers.

Mr. Piselli believes it is too soon to get valuable feedback, for example, school improvement. He supports delaying until the administration has more concrete information.

Dr. Feser stated the question asked was if the teacher leader position had improved the student performance. The answer was it was too soon to tell.

Mrs. Federico stated the addition of teacher leaders will help raise academic improvement. Equity and fairness is important to the Board. There will be an imbalance if the positions are not added. The Board should trust in the administration.

Mr. Piselli told the Board he is looking at it from a scientific standpoint.

Mr. Satti told the Board they cannot wait. He asked them to support the teacher leaders.

By a roll call vote 4 yes (DeGrego/DeRosa/DiBiase/Piselli) 4 no (Federico/Satti/Whiskeyman/Glennon) 1 abstain (Gold-Dworkin), the motion failed.

Mr. DeRosa made a motion to amend the main motion to eliminate 4 full time media aides (account 1124) with a reduction of \$100,000 and add \$40,000 back in for 4 part time media aides. Mr. Piselli seconded.

Mr. DeRosa does not believe the value of the position is any more than assisting with the SBAC testing.

Mr. Piselli told the Board he did not notice much value watching the presentation.

Mrs. Federico disagreed. It is not only to assist with the Smart Board or other technology. It is also to help teach keyboarding. She also expressed the need for equity in the schools.

The Board recessed at 7:37 p.m.

Ms. Glennon called the meeting back to order at 7:55 p.m.

By a roll call vote 5 yes (DeGrego/DeRosa/DiBiase/Gold-Dworkin/Piselli) 4 no (Federico/Satti/Whiskeyman/Glennon) the motion passed.

Mr. DeRosa made a motion to amend the main motion to reduce the IT temporary help/Central Registration Secretary (1128) from \$40,000 to \$20,000. Mr. Piselli seconded.

Mr. DeRosa suggested the IT help be offered to high school students in in the form of community service hours.

Mr. Piselli agreed with the concept of giving back to the community.

## Approved

Mrs. Federico reminded the Board of the expectation to move forward with the K-5 configuration. This is needed for a smooth transition.

Mr. Cummings disagreed with using high school students for the work. He reminded the Board of the money that has been spent in recent years improving our technology infrastructure. He felt relying on high school volunteers to do this work was risky. He indicated the move to K-5 over the summer is a huge task that must be completed on time.

Additional discussion ensued.

Mr. Satti called the question.

Mr. DeGrego asked for a recess at 8:20 p.m.

Ms. Glennon called the meeting back to order at 8:35 p.m.

By a roll call vote 8 No – 1 Yes (DeRosa) the motion failed.

Mr. DeRosa made a motion to amend the main motion to eliminate 2 academic support specialists (1111) by \$120,000. Mr. Piselli seconded.

Mr. DeRosa suggested that two positions serve as a liaison and serve both schools.

Mr. Piselli feels that a student should be mature enough to ask for help.

Mrs. Federico reminded the Board that academic achievement is a priority. This would help students who are slipping.

Ms. Glennon indicated, while she agrees personal responsibility is important, there are many reasons why a high school student might not seek extra help on his own. It's the Board's responsibility to provide the necessary services to give every student a chance to succeed. It will assist in raising academic achievement.

Mr. Whiskeyman fully supports the position. He recalled a learning experience he had in school.

Mr. DeGrego expressed concern that a child assigned to the Academic Support Center would receive a cut for not attending.

Mr. Cummings explained this would be built into the student's schedule so if they do not show up it is considered a class cut. Also, the intent is for the teacher to be involved with coordination of the students plan. The class would not replicate long term supports in place. The position was part of the recommendation by the District Management Council Opportunities Review.

Dr. Gold-Dworkin asked why science was not on the list of subjects that would be addressed.

Mr. Cummings responded the district will start with the two most critical areas which are English and Math.

## Approved

Mr. DeRosa told the Board teachers need to be held accountable. Guidance counselor should work with the student. This is a repeat function.

Mrs. Federico told him it is about raising academic achievement for the whole school system.

Mr. Piselli told the Board to put the dynamics back on the teachers.

By a roll call vote 5 No (Federico/Gold-Dworkin/Satti/Whiskeyman/Glennon) 4 Yes DeGrego/DeRosa/DiBiase/Piselli) the motion failed.

Dr. Gold-Dworkin made a motion to amend the main motion to eliminate the security coordinator position (1122) in the amount of \$70,000. There was not a second.

Ms. Glennon asked Mr. Satti to repeat the main motion with the amendments.

Mr. Satti made a motion that the Board accept the 2015-16 budget as amended reducing the media aides account (1124) by \$60,000, in the amount of **\$91,110,638** and direct administration to send it to the Mayor. Mr. DeRosa seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

## IV. ADJOURNMENT

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

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Mrs. Pam Griffin  
Recording Secretary

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Mr. C. Robert Satti, Jr.  
Corresponding Secretary