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## **Milford Board of Education**

Meeting Minutes  
July 8, 2013

### **Board members present:**

Tracy Casey  
Michael DeGrego  
Suzanne DiBiase  
Laura Fetter  
George Gensure  
Susan Glennon  
Dora Kubek  
Beverley Pierson  
Christopher Saley  
Earl Whiskeyman

### **Administration present:**

Dr. Elizabeth Feser  
Michael Cummings  
James Richetelli  
Susan Kelleher

## **I. CALL TO ORDER**

The Milford Board of Education held a meeting on Monday, July 8, 2013 in the Board Room in the Parsons Complex. Mrs. Casey called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. with the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance.

## **II. STUDENT AND STAFF RECOGNITION**

Dr. Feser recognized Mr. Jay Rowe for his dedication and continued support of the Milford Public Schools music program. Mr. Jay Rowe is an accomplished jazz musician who, 11 years ago, held a concert as a way of giving back to the Milford Public Schools. The event was so successful it became an annual event titled *Smooth Jazz for Scholars*. To date, Mr. Rowe has donated over \$54,000 to the Milford Public Schools music program.

Mr. Rowe offered remarks of gratitude to his sponsors, teachers and fellow musicians for their support. He then presented Chairman Casey and Dr. Feser with a check in the amount of \$8,000. Dr. Feser thanked Mr. Rowe for his commitment to our students and his generosity.

Dr. Feser then introduced two new administrators to the board.

Mr. Steve Gottlieb will replace Mr. Gordon Beinstein and serve as the Principal of Harborside Middle School. Mr. Gottlieb comes to our district from Torrington, where he has served on the administrative team at Torrington Middle School for the past five years, first as an Assistant Principal and then as Principal.

Prior to his work in Torrington, Mr. Gottlieb taught at the elementary level in Stamford for eight years, grades 3-5, and at the middle school in language arts for three years. Mr. Gottlieb began July 1<sup>st</sup>.

Ms. Jennifer Sinal replaces Mrs. Carol Scaramella, who recently retired as the Supervisor of English/Language Arts. Ms. Sinal spent the last nine years working in the Newtown Public School district as a middle school language arts teacher and as Assistant Principal at Sandy Hook Elementary School and

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Reed Intermediate School. Ms. Sinal began her career as an English teacher at Haddam-Killingworth High School. As both a teacher and administrator she has worked side-by-side with teachers in strengthening reading and writing instruction, aligning the literacy program between the elementary and middle school, utilizing data to address needs in instructional practices and more. Ms. Sinal began on July 1, 2013.

Mr. Gottlieb and Ms. Sinal were welcomed by the Board.

### **III. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Gary Tobin – 29 Thompson Street – Mr. Tobin read from a prepared statement.

Susmitha Attota – Mrs. Attota is a parent of a son at Mathewson Elementary School. Her son does not have enough time to eat his lunch at school. She asked if an accommodation could be made to allow him more time to finish his lunch. She would also like the aftercare program at the school to be extended to 5:30 p.m.

Mr. Raymond Vitali approached the Board and offered to relinquish his time so Mr. Tobin could finish his remarks.

Mrs. Casey asked for a recess at 7:26 p.m. and requested that Board leadership, Superintendent Feser, Assistant Superintendent of Teaching and Learning and Chief Operating Officer Richetelli meet.

The Board reconvened at 7:35 p.m.

Mrs. Casey explained that the Board is interested in hearing all comments from the public. However, Board policy does not allow people to speak more than three minutes nor does it allow others to relinquish time to another individual. She then stated that Mr. Tobin could submit comments to the Board in writing, or return to a future Board of Education meeting to make additional comments. This policy is applied consistently for all speakers.

### **IV. CHAIR'S REPORT**

Mrs. Casey thanked the Board members who attended the graduations. She commented it was nice to be able to attend both high school graduations.

Mrs. Casey reported that the Long Range Planning Committee has begun its work with the goal of educating kids in a progressive system. A site has been created under the Board of Education tab of the Milford Public Schools website. All materials will be uploaded to the site. Although meetings will be open to the public, there will not be an opportunity for Public Comment, as it is a Committee meeting.

### **V. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

Dr. Feser introduced the first agenda item, explaining that the administration wished to share the impact of two elementary support programs that the Board approved. She turned the meeting over to Mr. Cummings to provide the details.

### **1. Impact of Two Elementary Academic Support Programs**

Mr. Cummings began his report by sharing a PowerPoint that showed the literacy growth of students in grades 3 and 5 who participated in the Extended Day Program held at Kennedy and Pumpkin Delight. The program was held at those schools because that is where the greatest needs are. The students were identified by the DRA assessments they had taken throughout the year. Most students reached or exceeded the Goal reading level. There was a small percentage that did not meet the expectation. The students who did not meet the district expectations will be offered the opportunity to attend the summer program.

In response to a question by the Board, administration will look at the needs and related costs for expanding the program at the other elementary schools.

Mr. Cummings then gave an update on the Summer Academy Program. The program helps students become prepared for the rigorous curriculum in September and maintains school socialization skills. It is a four-week program with the focus on literacy and numeracy. The program has been well received by the students, parents and teachers. Looking ahead, the program will be linked to the Readers Workshop that is happening in the schools. In addition, the district will consider transportation challenges and seek the support from the parent community. Conversations will occur in the fall during budget planning.

At the close of the Mr. Cummings' report, the Board asked to be provided with the costs involved with the Extended Day Program and the Summer Academy Program.

### **2. Simon Lake Materials Center**

Mr. Cummings reported on the status of the Materials Resource Center located at the Simon Lake school building. He reminded the Board what the purpose of the center is. To help the Board understand, he focused on science materials. He began with a demonstration of what one science kit contains, by grade and topic. He explained that every kit is cleaned and restocked, and finally, stored at the end of every school year. He shared pictures of what the science kits looked before a materials clerk was hired to manage the inventory. He then shared pictures of stored kits one year later. The kits were organized, complete, clean and easily found. Over 1,000 science kits are used in the elementary schools. Teachers were responsible for the upkeep of the kits prior to hiring the clerk. Mr. Cummings spoke to costs this year and potential savings in the future. Looking ahead, the kits will need to be altered to align with the new Common Core Standards. By having an employee managing them, the kits can be placed on rotation by only purchasing a third, thus, saving the district money.

### **3. End of Year Financials**

Mr. Richetelli reported that at the end of the year surplus monies are transferred into accounts according to the most needs. At this year's end, there is a surplus in the amount of \$169,084.03 in the following accounts:

- Certified Teachers Salaries (1111) in the amount of \$81,869.89 due to teacher vacancies, staff turnover savings and unpaid leaves of absence;
- Retirements – Certified (1130) in the amount of \$45,602.20 due to one less administrative retirement than was anticipated and budgeted.
- Education Reimbursement (2008) \$15,263.03 due to fewer requests for tuition reimbursement than were anticipated and budgeted.
- Transportation Field Trips (5106) in the amount of \$14,452.45 due to fewer field trips than anticipated.

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- Student Activities (8200) in the amount of \$11,896.46 due to funds unused from various schools. These funds will be transferred to:
- Contracted Services (3306) - \$80,555.58 to cover shortfalls due to costs related to the winter blizzard
- Grounds Projects (4305) - \$48,353.31 to fund summer projects including tennis court replacement at Law
- Computers (7350) - \$40,175.14 to purchase computers for the enhancements to the Tech Ed classrooms at J. Law and Foran.

Ms. Glennon made a motion to approve the 2012-2013 final budget transfers in the amount of \$169,084.03 as presented by administration. Ms. DiBiase seconded. The motion passed.

### **4. Policy 6172 Online Learning Policy**

Dr. Feser brought forth for a second reading this policy. She pointed out the changes made stemming from the June Board of Education meeting, specifically who pays fees. There was also revised language to give greater clarity.

The Board reviewed the changes and offered a few more recommended language changes.

Ms. Glennon made a motion to approve Policy 6172 Online Learning Policy with the recommended changes. Ms. DiBiase seconded. The motion passed.

### **5. Human Resources Report**

Mrs. Kopazna gave the Human Resources Report for the month of June. She reported there have been 13 new teachers hired. Staffing continues to be the priority.

## **VI. CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS**

Ms. Glennon made a motion to approve Consent Agenda items 1-2 Ms. DiBiase seconded.

1. Disbursement Report
2. Consideration of Minutes
  - a. May 13, 2013 Business Meeting
  - b. June 10, 2013 Business Meeting

The motion passed unanimously.

## **VII. NEW BUSINESS**

None.

## **VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

None.

## **IX. BOARD COMMENT**

None.

**X. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Ms. Glennon made a motion to adjourn to executive session for the purpose of discussion of salaries of the Assistant Superintendent and the Chief Operations Officer. Dr. Feser was invited into the session. Ms. DiBiase seconded. The motion passed.

Mrs. Casey had to leave the meeting at 9:28 p.m. due to an emergency phone call.

Mrs. Glennon called the meeting back into session at 9:30 p.m.

A motion was made by Ms. DiBiase to approve salary increases for 2013-14 in the amount of a 2.95% raise for Michael Cummings and 1.75% raise for James Richetelli, Jr. Ms. Kubek seconded. The motion passed. (9-0 Casey absent).

**X. ADJOURNMENT**

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

Meeting adjourned at 9:33 p.m.

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Pam Griffin  
Recording Secretary

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Ms. Susan Glennon  
Corresponding Secretary