

## **Milford Board of Education**

### **Meeting Minutes**

September 15, 2015

**Board members present:**

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

**Administration present:**

Dr. Elizabeth Feser  
Jeffrey Burt  
Jim Richetelli  
Wendy Kopazna

#### **I. CALL TO ORDER**

Ms. Glennon called the business meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Board of Education Room. She then asked that everyone join in the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. Glennon notified the Board that Mr. DeRosa would be attending by phone. She noted the meeting was not live and thanked Mr. Tom Dillon, Foran teacher, and two students from his audio visual class, Gabby Benoit and Casey Glennon for taping the meeting to be televised at a later time.

#### **II. INTRODUCTION OF NEW ADMINISTRATORS**

Dr. Feser introduced four new administrators to the Board. They were:

Mr. Paul Cavanna, Principal of West Shore Middle School  
Mr. Kenneth Hayes, Assistant Principal of West Shore Middle School  
Mr. Joshua Marko, Assistant Principal of Jonathan Law High School, and  
Mr. Eric Paredes, Supervisor Special Education, High School

#### **III. STAFF AND STUDENT RECOGNITION**

Dr. Feser recognized Mrs. Michele Haramis, guidance counselor, Jonathan Law High School for being selected as the 2015 Yale Educator Award recipient. The Educator Award recognizes elite educators who support and inspire their students to perform at high levels and achieve excellence. Raeven Grant, a former student at Jonathan Law, who currently attends Yale, nominated Mrs. Haramis her for this prestigious award. Dr. Feser read the essay that was submitted by Raeven.

#### **IV. STUDENT REPORTS**

Ms. Glennon welcomed the student liaisons.

David Patrick and Emily Carroll presented the student report for Jonathan Law. Lindsey Carlson and Joe Barton presented the report for Joseph A. Foran.

Ms. Glennon thanked the students for the update. She then read the Public Comment statement.

#### **V. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Andrea Feher – 179 Rivercliff Drive – Mrs. Feher asked the Board to reconsider the walking distances for students. She gave an example of two recent incidents where children were approached by a man in a car, and the construction work that is to begin on Naugatuck Avenue.

Susan Krushinsky – 60 Crescent Drive – Mrs. Krushinsky offered comments regarding the lack of grammar skills being taught to students. She feels there is too much time spent on subjects that are used for assessment testing. She then raised concern with the walking distances. She told the Board the students are expected to carry heavy backpacks through the snow while walking forty minutes. She emphasized the Board is not supporting its mission of ensuring that students are prepared to learn. She encouraged the Board to revisit the walking distances.

Joanne Poffenberger – 50 Green Street – Mrs. Poffenberger is a teacher in West Haven. She has seen firsthand of students who walk up to two miles. Those are the students who choose not to come to school on days where there is bad weather. She asked the Board to reconsider the walking distances. She then told the Board that her son is in the advanced Math class in middle school. His class has 28 students. She asked the Board to put the proper resources in place to assist the students. Mrs. Poffenberger also asked the Board to eliminate SBA and replace it with SAT to reduce the amount of time testing.

Mrs. Cathy Betz – 17 Eastern Parkway – Mrs. Betz asked the Board to walk or drive the distance for walkers. She assured them it would not be easy. She is very concerned about the walking distance and the construction that is to begin on Naugatuck Avenue.

Susan Feher – 343 Housatonic Drive – She thanked the Board for re-examining the walking distances. She believes it is a safety issue for many.

#### **VI. CHAIR'S REPORT**

Ms. Glennon notified the Board of the change of the liaison to the Permanent School Building Facilities Committee. Mr. DeGrego has resigned from the committee, and has been replaced by Suzanne DiBiase for the duration of the term.

Ms. Glennon reported she continues to have conversations with MGAT about the live coverage of Board meetings. She reported that MGAT will now air the meetings on YouTube.

Ms. Glennon turned the meeting over to Dr. Feser for the Superintendent's Report.

## **VII. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

### **Back to School Report**

Dr. Feser briefed the Board on the Opening Convocation that was held on August 26<sup>th</sup> at Jonathan Law. She talked about the reconfiguration, how smoothly it went and thanked all members of staff who were involved. She then reported on numerous areas of school operations.

Mr. DeRosa asked if fans could be put in the multipurpose rooms that are not equipped with them to make the rooms more comfortable.

Mr. Richetelli explained there are many fans throughout the schools and for the short time frame where heat is an issue, equipping all rooms with fans would be difficult logistically, and cost-wise. He acknowledged the challenges with teaching and learning in hot weather and indicated the district follows the guidelines prepared by the Health department on how to handle hot weather.

Mrs. Federico asked administration to provide the Board the costs for transportation with respect to the reconfiguration. Mr. Richetelli indicated a full transportation report would be provided in October.

### **Enrollment Report**

Dr. Feser noted that a corrected enrollment grid was being distributed to the Board. Since the May 26<sup>th</sup> Board meeting, the Administration has added five sections of elementary classrooms. Mathewson and Meadowside have added one each kindergarten, Calf Pen Meadow has added one grade three, and two grade four classes have been added, one at Meadowside and one at Pumpkin. The current elementary enrollment is 2,597, which is very close to the projection made by Milone and MacBroom of 2,581.

### **Grades 4 and 5 Departmentalization**

Mr. Burt noted that as part of the reconfiguration a decision was made to departmentalize grades four and five. He then provided a brief synopsis of departmentalization, stating that Social Studies, and Science now have specific dedicated time each school day. Students switch teachers for subjects. Mr. Burt then introduced Dr. Barbierio and Ms. LaSala, who delivered a presentation on the benefits of departmentalization.

The presentation placed emphasis on four major benefits. These include: guaranteed time is spent in subject areas and teachers become experts in those subject areas. It engages students in Common Core. Common Core standards include a greater emphasis on

informational text which can be better explored through Science and Social Studies. The team structure of the departmentalization enables teachers to know all students in the grade, and thus supports student learning.

**Proposed 2016-17 Budget Priorities and Assumptions**

Dr. Feser presented the first reading of the priorities and assumptions associated with the 2016-17 budget. She reminded the Board the priorities reflect global areas of importance to be used in decision making as the budget process begins. Assumptions provide some financial forecasting and other factors that may impact the budget. They will be brought back to the Board for a second reading and approval at its October business meeting.

Mrs. Federico referenced the last bullet “Supporting implementation in 2016-17 of two 6-12 career pathways to be phased in over three years.” She referenced the board’s directive last October to begin exploring advanced programming K-12 and said she wanted to make sure that does not get lost in the shuffle. Dr. Feser indicated the departmentalization of 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade is a step towards college and career pathways and that administration remains cognizant of the priority.

Dr. Gold-Dworkin requested the class size guidelines. Dr. Feser indicated she recalls them to be 18-20 in K-2 and 20-24 in grades 3-5, however, she will confirm the numbers. In addition, she asked how many classrooms are empty at the elementary level and how will they be used. The information is to be provided at a later time.

Dr. Feser reviewed the Assumptions. They are more specific and provide financial forecasting, constraints and other factors which are estimates for a budget that will not go into effect until July 1, 2016.

**Human Resources Report**

Mrs. Kopazna gave the human resources report. She gave the Board a breakdown of how many teachers were hired or moved for the 2015-16 school year. In total, 44 new teachers were hired.

Mr. Whiskeyman asked for the total number of employees, and was given an approximate number of 1,290.

Mrs. Federico asked for an explanation of the Guidance stipend. Mrs. Kopazna explained it was compensation for extra days the Guidance Counselors work during the summer.

**VIII. CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS**

Mr. Satti made a motion that the Milford Board of Education approves the consent agenda items:

1. Disbursement Report
2. Consideration of Minutes
  - a. August 24, 2015

Approved

Ms. DiBiase seconded the motion. By a roll call vote of 10-0, the motion passed unanimously.

## **IX. NEW BUSINESS**

Mr. Satti made a motion that the Milford Board of Education approves the Working Agreement between the Milford Board of Education and the Milford Association of School Administrators for the period commencing July 1, 2016 and ending through to and including June 30, 2019. Ms. DiBiase seconded. By a roll call vote of 9-0 (DeRosa abstain), the motion passed.

## **X. BOARD COMMENT**

Mr. DeGrego offered comments on the many activities that occurred at Law on Friday in remembrance of 9/11. He spent the entire day talking to the history classes about the events of 9/11 and what he endured as a rescue worker.

Mrs. Federico told the Board she attended the August 25<sup>th</sup> Meet and Greet at Meadowside as a parent. She commented on how well the school looked. She was impressed with the event and would like to see it continued.

Ms. Glennon mentioned that she has had some conversations with Dr. Feser about how to thank the personnel for their dedication and efforts to ensure the flawless opening of school. She will start by sending a letter of gratitude on behalf of the Board.

## **XI. ADJOURNMENT**

Being no further business, Ms. Glennon asked for a motion to adjourn.

Mr. Satti made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Piselli seconded. By a roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Recording Secretary: \_\_\_\_\_  
Pam Griffin

Corresponding Secretary: \_\_\_\_\_  
C. Robert Satti, Jr.