

MILFORD BOARD OF EDUCATION
Committee of the Whole Meeting
November 24, 2008

The Milford Board of Education held a meeting on Monday, November 24, 2008 in the Board of Education Meeting Room of the Parsons Complex. Board Chairman, David Hourigan called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m. asking everyone to join him in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Board Members Present

Mr. D. Amendola
Mrs. T. Casey
Chairman D. Hourigan
Mrs. C. Kopazna
Mr. J. Quish
Mrs. J. Rohrig
Mr. J. Santa Barbara
Mrs. P. Staneski
Mr. D. Steinlauf
Mrs. G. Stanford

Administration Present

Dr. H. Polansky
Mr. M. Cummings
Mr. P. Russell

Chairman Hourigan turned the meeting over to Dr. Polansky for the Milford: 21st Century presentation.

Dr. Polansky then told the board the meeting will be split in three presentations. 1. An overview of the Technology and how two very separate departments are in the process of merging as one, and 2. Milford 2020 – What do we want the facilities alignment and schools to look like 10 to 20 years from now. 3. rollout of the Strategic Roadmap. He then asked Mr. Cummings to share a technology presentation with the board.

Mr. Cummings explained how the Information Technology departments were two separate departments in November 2007. One was dedicated to instruction and the other to management. Administration is in the process of bringing to two departments together and they will be integrated into one department by November, 2009. He then explained the functional organizational chart of the department. He explained the different roles of both the instruction side as well as the management. Instruction handles software and hardware for instruction such as Smartboards, Teacher Web and SME, while management is responsible for overall district software such as SASI, Sage and Destiny.

Mr. Cummings then gave examples of the programs hosted by instruction and management.

Mrs. Staneski asked if students would be allowed to bring in laptops from home. Mr. Cummings said yes. Administration will need to determine the best approach to eliminate security breaches of our servers and programs.

Dr. Polansky told the board there are intricate firewalls that will protect the integrity. Breaches do occur, but the products are becoming much better to protect against it.

Mrs. Zikaras explained how the technology would work to eliminate hacking. Colleges have very intricate software, but it is expensive. Omni is researching the cost for administration.

Dr. Polansky told the board the State at one time was going to fund this effort. It was called information highway. However, the State was not able to do it. The cost is now on the districts.

In conclusion, Mr. Cummings told the board that integrated technology is the future. However, the changes come with a price. The integration of the departments will need to be done over time.

Milford 20/20

Dr. Polansky then told the board following the meeting in June, he prepared an input vehicle which contained the boards ideas broken out by alignment, resources, choice and state law mandates. He told the board this work is not new. Boards in the past have struggled with this. There has been a sentiment to put a task force together and have a discussion with community members. He then said the he would propose the next step be hiring a consultant to prioritize and notify the board of the different simulations and costs. He recommended NESDEC do this.

Mr. Santa Barbara asked if the taskforce would assemble the options.

Dr. Polansky suggested that NESDEC assemble the list. This has been discussed by previous boards and he would recommend a consultant draft a list. They would look at the capacity, enrollment, costs to build, costs to reuse, age of buildings, etc.

Mr. Steinlauf asked how long the consultant would be employed.

Dr. Polansky said he believed there could be a working document in the spring of 2009. The board and the public would then be involved with reviewing the document.

Mrs. Rohrig suggested a taskforce look at the ideas and prioritize the options before giving it to NESDEC. Dr. Polansky said NESDEC would assemble the

taskforce and it would include the public. They would have the expertise in this field.

Mrs. Kopazna asked how it would benefit to have NESDEC do the work opposed to the board. Dr. Polansky said they would take into account building capacity, costs, age and size of buildings, etc.

Mrs. Kopazna then asked for the cost and she was told it is not known at this time.

Several Board members suggested the board meet and prioritize the list before sending it to an outside consultant.

Dr. Polansky recommended the board meet sometime in February or March to discuss options and priorities. There is a workshop scheduled in February.

Mr. Amendola said that some board members have already experienced strategic design, a similar approach and the community's feedback is necessary.

Mrs. Staneski and Mrs. Kopazna both agreed and feel the board should prioritize the scenarios, not the consultant.

Chairman Hourigan stated the board would need to have a workshop and invite the public, aldermen and the planning and zoning board in March. He also asked Dr. Polansky to get a price from NESDEC.

Mr. Quish asked the board to commit to directing Dr. Polansky to coordinate the workshop.

Mr. Santa Barbara asked for clarification of the directive of Dr. Polansky to the consultant.

Dr. Polansky said the consultant would most likely be willing to work for one day at little or no cost. Milford Public Schools has worked with them for years.

Strategic Roadmap

Dr. Polansky explained how the strategic roadmap will move the district forward. The roadmap consists of six critical areas of focus which encompasses the districts mission, core values and vision, as well as the strategic direction of the school systems. The academic benchmarks are measurable and interconnected to the district's Ends Policies currently in place.

Mr. Cummings then shared a PowerPoint with the board.

Dr. Polansky told the board student data would be collected and reported to the board. The board would then rate the data at a future workshop.

Mrs. Kopazna asked Dr. Polansky when the board would be scoring.

Dr. Polansky told the board there would be a mid-year report at a regular board meeting and then the final report at the retreat in June. Administration is in the process of determining data points because this is the first year.

Public Comment

Mike Taylor – 340 Wolf Harbor Road – His children are not heard of NovaNet. Is it available in all disciplines? What type of staff buy-in is there? Open gradebook? It is only good if someone uses it. Is this a staffing issue? Be careful with the integrated technology. How does Cablevision help us as a district?

Mr. Cummings told him NovaNet began this year and the focus has been on the 9th grader. He recommended that Mr. Taylor talk to the guidance counselor. The gradebook issue is the Essembler program. The district planned to roll that out until Pearson dropped SAS which uses the Essembler program. The district is now going to use Power School. Integrated technology – security is paramount. Vendors are very aware. Cablevision - we have received 32 boxes and they are being installed.

Ray Vitali – 48 Founders Way – He is the liaison to the Board of Aldermen – You need to listen and look at the budget. You have already put 5M in the high schools. The sooner you meet the better. You need to look at how much we will be spending. You are already looking at a million dollar project at East Shore and multi-million dollar projects at the high schools.

Sue Glennon – 99 Carlson Drive – The Milford 20/20 discussion has been discussed in the past. She feels there is no cogent document because changes keep happening, i.e. superintendent and board members. You need to put a plan together with what you have now and work within that framework.

Board Comment

Mr. J. Quish – Echoed Mr. Vitali. Planning is already underway and jobs are out to bid. He urged the board that if there is time to meet earlier, it would be wise.

Mrs. Staneski passed out a “Path to Success” document that was referenced at the November business meeting. This program is great for children’s self esteem. She thanked Mrs. Garagliano for providing her with the information.

Mrs. Stanford reported on her attendance at the recent CABA conference. Highlights were: Good teachers are what matters. She also attended a workshop that confirmed that board should not be involved in the day to day operations. And she also attended a workshop on negotiations which dealt with issues in salaries and healthcare goals.

Mrs. Staneski asked Mrs. Stanford if there were any novel ideas. Mrs. Stanford told her there were many consortiums. However, many districts did not participate.

Chairman Hourigan reported there will be a board grievance on Monday, December 1st at 6:30. He too attend the recent CABA conference as learned the State will not be funding ECS.

Being no further business to discuss, a motion to adjourn was made by Mrs. Rohrig and seconded by Mrs. Stanford. The motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Greta Stanford
Majority Leader

Recorded by:

Pam Griffin