

Approved

**Milford Board of Education**

Meeting Minutes  
April 21, 2014

**Board members present:**

Tracy Casey (arrived 7:10 p.m.)  
Michael DeGrego  
John DeRosa  
Suzanne DiBiase  
Laura Fucci  
George Gensure  
Dr. Heidi Gold-Dworkin  
Susan Glennon, Chair  
Anthony Piselli  
Earl Whiskeyman

**Administration present:**

Dr. Elizabeth Feser  
Michael Cummings  
James Richetelli  
Susan Kelleher  
Wendy Kopazna

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Ms. Glennon called the Business Meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. with the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. Glennon then announced the resignation of Mr. Christopher Saley of the 3<sup>rd</sup> District, effective April 14, 2014. She has received a letter from the Democratic Town Committee Chair recommending that Mr. George Gensure fill the vacancy.

Ms. Glennon asked for a motion.

Mrs. Fucci made a motion that the Board of Education approve Mr. George Gensure as the replacement for the 3<sup>rd</sup> District Board of Education Member, ~~of~~ Mr. Christopher Saley and to complete the remainder of the term through November 2015. Mr. DeRosa seconded. The motion passed unanimously (9-0 Casey was not present for the vote).

**II. STUDENT RECOGNITION**

The first recognition of the evening was given to two students from Live Oaks Elementary School. CAS, through its Elementary Celebration of the Arts Festival, honors annually two outstanding students in the highest grade level of each of the elementary schools in our State. Recognized were: Ellen Pan, who plays the piano, and Reilly Gramesty, who has an exceptional singing voice.

The final recognition was given to the DECA club from Foran High School. DECA helps students develop skills and competence for marketing careers, build self-esteem, experience leadership and practice community service. The DECA club participated in a conference where they had to prepare a marketing plan and present their project to a panel of business executives. Of the 970 who participated, Foran had six winners!

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Shania Arsenault is an 11th grader and placed 1st in the Hospitality and Tourism Professional Selling event.

Sarah Dunn is a 12th grader and placed 2nd in the Professional Selling event.

TJ Stewart, grade 10, and Megan McCaskill, grade 12, took 2nd place in the Sports and Entertainment Promotion team event.

Sarah DeLuke, 12th grade and Julia Laslett, grade 11, teamed up and placed 4th in the Advertising Campaign event.

Dr. Feser and the Board congratulated all of the recipients.

### **III. STUDENT REPORTS**

Andrew Jones presented Joseph A. Foran's report. Michelle Novak presented for Jonathan Law High School. The reports are on file.

### **IV. PUBLIC COMMENT**

None.

### **V. CHAIRS REPORT**

Ms. Glennon reviewed the upcoming meetings for May with the Board and told the members to anticipate meetings to be added as the Board moves into the long range planning process. She reminded board members off Mondays would be the first choice for additional meetings and asked board members to reserve them. She also asked members to forward any vacation plans to her for planning purposes.

Mr. Gensure will replace Mr. Saley on the Permanent School Building Committee.

Ms. Glennon called for the liaison reports.

Mrs. Casey gave a report on the Milford Education Foundation. The MEF held its "Minds in Motion" event on the same day as the St. Patrick's Day parade, and still had a great turn out. The Connecticut Invention Convention was held on April 5<sup>th</sup>. No report yet. They will hold a charity auction raffling off 12 chairs that are to be painted by Milford children.

Mr. Whiskeyman notified the Board of Dr. Edmondson's plans to retire in June. He then told the Board ACES published two versions of their regional calendar. Milford's calendar is similar.

Mrs. Fucci reported on the Health Department. The focus of the recent meeting was a dental program in the schools and how it can be enhanced.

Ms. DiBiase reported on the Milford Prevention Council. April is Alcohol Awareness Month.

### **VI. SUPERINTENDENTS REPORT**

#### **Graduation Requirements (P6146) Policy Revision**

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Dr. Feser reported Policy 6146, Graduation Requirements is being submitted as a second reading for approval by the Board.

Mr. Cummings explained the policy changes will allow middle school students to earn three high school credits beginning in the 2015-16 school year.

Several questions were asked and Mr. Cummings explained that additional changes will be needed to this policy in the future as more direction is received from the state.

Following the discussion, Ms. Glennon asked for a motion.

Mrs. Fucci made a motion that the Board of Education approve the revised Policy 6146 Graduation Requirements. Mr. DeRosa seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Instructional Update – Model U.N.**

Ms. Burns and Mr. Evanko, both social studies teachers at Jonathan Law High School, gave an overview of how the Model United Nations club was formed at Jonathan Law. They explained the primary goal of the club was to discuss global problems and concerns.

Ms. Burns called upon students Josh Paton and Salma Almidani to share their experience at a recent trip to the General Assembly in New York City participating in the National High School Model United Nations Conference. Student delegations from 25 states and 28 foreign countries participated in the conference. Students were provided with an opportunity to sit in the actual General Assembly seats. They further explained the students represented Benin, a West African nation. They sat on committees debating and advocating for solutions from the perspective of Benin.

Information was also shared on the potential to offer this at Foran next year as well.

### **High School Graduation Date(s)**

Dr. Feser explained to be compliant with State law; boards are not allowed to vote on high school graduation until after April 1<sup>st</sup>. She further said the recommendation is to have high school graduations on June 16<sup>th</sup> and June 17<sup>th</sup>. Foran will graduate on June 16<sup>th</sup> and Law on the 17<sup>th</sup>. Graduations will be held at 5:15 p.m.

Mrs. Fucci made a motion that the Board of Education establishes a graduation date of Monday, June 16 and Tuesday, June 17 for the senior classes of Foran and Law High Schools, respectively. Graduation ceremonies should begin at 5:15 p.m. for both. Mr. DeRosa seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Transportation Update – Report from Traffic Safety Expert**

Mr. Richetelli provided the Board with background on what had transpired relative to the transportation needs of the district. A transportation audit was conducted in 2013. The goal of the audit was to review the efficiency of our system. Upon completion of the audit, a plan was presented to the Board in November, 2013. The study found there are a number of students, who live within the walking distance of their schools, but are being provided bus transportation. The study suggested looking at why this was the case. It was found some of these instances are for safety reasons, some have no reason, some could be converted to

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walkers if a cross walk, a sidewalk or a crossing guard were added to deem the route a safe walking route. Another suggestion was combine some bus stops when there are several in close proximity.

Mr. DeRosa asked what the savings of not bussing those students is. Mr. Richetelli indicated that is hard to determine at this time.

Ms. Glennon reminded the Board two busses were eliminated by the Board in the 2014-15 budget.

Mr. Richetelli further explained the affected parents will be notified by letter over the next two weeks. The parents can then request an appeal before the Board.

Mrs. Fucci noted that she raised concerns about parents driving their children with the elimination of busses in January. The school drop off points will become more congested. She also noted her safety concerns for the walkers who carry musical instruments, athletic equipment and heavy book bags. Extreme weather conditions should also play a factor.

Ms. Glennon explained the purpose is to enforce currently policy uniformly across the district.

Mrs. Fucci restated her concerns relative to safety. The students need to arrive to school ready to learn. She feels the children cannot do that if they need to walk in severe conditions with heavy book bags, athletic equipment etc.

Ms. Glennon reminded the Board the policy follows the state guidelines. No changes have been made to the walking distance or safety hazards.

Further discussion ensued.

Ms. Glennon called for a motion.

Mrs. Casey made a motion that the Milford Board of Education authorize administration to move forward with the notification to parents of students whose transportation will be eliminated beginning in the 2014-15 school year. Mr. DeRosa seconded. The motion passed. 9-1 (Fucci).

### **Quarterly Budget Report**

Mr. Richetelli reported on the financials. He noted the overage in the overtime account due to the inordinate snow fall this year. Transfers will need to be made to balance out some accounts.

There were two questions of the Board that required further follow-up. They were:

1. What is included in Security Services #3305? Provide what the remaining funds will be used for.
2. What is included in the MIS #3308? Provide what the remaining funds will be used for.

### **Human Resources Report**

Mrs. Kopazna gave the highlights of the Human Resources Report.

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Mrs. Casey requested the stipend dollar amount's as well as the role of each director of summer school position.

Ms. Glennon called for a recess at 8:52 p.m.

Ms. Glennon called the meeting back to order at 9:07 p.m.

### **VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

#### **Long Range Planning - Board of Education Feedback on Long Range Planning Committee Recommendations and Beginning of Consensus Building**

Ms. Glennon asked the members to share their initial reaction to the recommendation.

Mrs. Casey stated that while she was happy to get the report, she was disappointed. She was expecting a cost breakdown of the facilities. Mrs. Casey believed the charge was broader than the recommendations presented. She cannot feasibly vote on a recommendation without the cost breakdown. She also expressed concerns over inconsistencies.

Mr. DeRosa agreed with Mrs. Casey. He feels the focus was not on education. In addition, a timeframe has not been set.

Mr. Piselli felt the presentation was well done. However, the consultants missed the mark. The focus was on buildings and not programs.

Mrs. Fucci agrees there should not be any changes made in the 2014-15 school year. She also agreed that redistricting was necessary to ensure school and class size balance; a 3 tiered transition was beneficial. Her concerns were with the attention given to specialty programs and not to the standard programs which serve more children. She also shared that there was no focus on program changes with special education students. The administration needs to share how the special education audit will work with the long range plan. She also stated the need to have appropriate resources for the social-emotional well-being of all students so they are available to learn and can cope with the rigor that is expected of them.

Mr. Whiskeyman thought the nature and character of the presentation was good. However, he had concerns with the enrollment data presented. Redistricting is very important to the equity of the city. It will have to be done in conjunction with the changes that will be made.

Dr. Gold-Dworkin said she missed the presentation. However, she agrees that the focus should be on best practices and programs.

Mr. DeGrego placed emphasis on the Board taking the time needed to do it right.

Ms. Glennon said she sat on the committee. Focus on facilities is a necessary part of the process because that is where the efficiencies will be found. She is concerned with dedicating Harborside as a specialty K-8 school because of the nature of its location. She vocalized this during the committee process. She also realizes there is a lot of work to be done. However, the purpose of this discussion is to get a consensus of

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what the Board believes they should be working on. She has had a meeting with Mayor Blake where she was able to ascertain that a parking garage will not be built behind Harborside. She further said that she believes the consensus of the Board is to move away from the K-2/3-5 configuration.

Mrs. Casey brought up the costs of buildings again. If there is to be a consensus of the Board, the costs need to be provided. For example, the cost of running one high school opposed to two. As of now, everything is on the table.

Mr. Gensure said the Board will need to make a sound fiscal decision for the community. He too would like to see the information.

Mr. DeRosa said he requested the cost information in January.

Dr. Feser told the Board the data could be compiled, but it would take time to produce the data. She then told the Board she felt as if the committee is being criticized for their work. The committee worked hard and over many months and did make significant recommendations. The committee recommended the reduction of the number of transitions within the elementary experience the need for redistricting and suggestions for a short-term and long-term approach.

Ms. DiBiase agreed with Dr. Feser. The plan is a long range plan. There were many ideas, but everyone knew they would not be immediate.

Ms. Glennon reiterated the need to find a “starting point”. She asked if the Board was in agreement we would end the K-2/3-5 structure, have no changes to the elementary levels in the 2014-15 school year and that redistricting would be necessary? There were no stated objections.

She then suggested the Board plan for a meeting on May 19<sup>th</sup>? Administration should have the costs for the facilities on the 19<sup>th</sup>. Mr. DeRosa requested the meeting be a work session and ideas could be posted visually to enhance discussion and outcomes for consensus.

Mr. DeRosa asked for the costs to be provided in an Excel spreadsheet so he could work with the document.

Ms. Glennon called for a motion.

Mrs. Fucci made a motion that the Milford Board of Education Reaffirm the Budget Priority to keep the current configuration (K-2/3-5) for the 2014-15 academic school year. Mr. DeRosa seconded. The motion passed 8-2 No (Gold-Dworkin/DeRosa).

### **VIII. CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS**

Mrs. Fucci made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda Items 1, 2a, b and c.

1. Disbursement Report
2. Consideration of Minutes
  - a. March 10, 2014 Business Meeting
  - b. March 22, 2014 Board Retreat
  - c. March 24, 2014 Committee of Whole Meeting

## Approved

Move to approve Consent Agenda Item 3 a.

1. That the Milford Board of Education approve the Educational Specifications for the Hazardous Material Abatement project at Joseph A. Foran High School and authorize the Superintendent to apply for State reimbursement from the State Department of Education Bureau of School Facilities Unit.
2. That the Milford Board of Education approve the Plans, Specifications and Estimates for the Hazardous Material Abatement Project at Joseph A. Foran High School.

Move to approve Consent Agenda Item 3b

1. That the Milford Board of Education approve the Educational Specifications for the Hazardous Material Abatement project at John F. Kennedy Elementary School and authorize the Superintendent to apply for State reimbursement from the State Department of Education Bureau of School Facilities Unit.
2. That the Milford Board of Education approve the Plans, Specifications and Estimates for the Hazardous Material Abatement Project at John F. Kennedy Elementary School.

Move to approve Consent Agenda Item 3c

1. That the Milford Board of Education approve the Educational Specifications for the Hazardous Material Abatement project at West Shore Middle School and authorize the Superintendent to apply for State reimbursement from the State Department of Education Bureau of School Facilities Unit.
2. That the Milford Board of Education approve the Plans, Specifications and Estimates for the Hazardous Material Abatement Project at West Shore Middle School.

Mr. DeRosa seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

### **IX. NEW BUSINESS**

None.

### **X. BOARD COMMENT**

Mr. DeGrego told the Board he had the opportunity to attend the Kids Count Breakfast and he participated in the Milford Prevention Council Walk on the 12<sup>th</sup>. He is looking forward to reading to the students on April 24<sup>th</sup> to celebrate “Read Out Loud Day.”

Mrs. Casey welcomed George Gensure back to the Board. She then told the Board and administration that it was not her intent to discredit the work of the Long Range Planning Committee. However, the Board needs to look at the plan holistically.

Mrs. Fucci stated that April is Autism Awareness Month.

Mr. Gensure told the Board he is looking forward to working with them.

### **XI. ADJOURNMENT**

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

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Meeting adjourned at 10:15 p.m.

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Mrs. Pam Griffin  
Recording Secretary

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Mrs. Laura Fucci  
Corresponding Secretary