

Approved

Milford Board of Education

Virtual Committee of the Whole Meeting; Live Streamed on YouTube

Meeting Minutes

February 22, 2021

I. Call to Order

Ms. Glennon called the virtual board meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

II. Attendance

By roll call, nine Board members were present. Ms. Glennon then led the Board in the reciting of the Pledge of Allegiance.

Board members present

Adam De Young
Andrew Fowler
Susan Glennon (Chair)
Rita Hennessey
Emily McDonough Souza
Warren Pawlowski
Betsy Ratner
Nicole Wasson
Cindy Wolfe Boynton

Board members absent

Una Petroske (excused)

Administration present

Dr. Anna Cutaia
Dr. Amy Fedigan
Wendy Kopazna
James Richetelli
Chris Brown
Annaliese Spaziano
Sean Smyth

III. Parent Involvement Report and Presentation (Mr. Sean Smyth, Mrs. Annaliese Spaziano)

Mrs. Annaliese Spaziano (Instructional Supervisor of Student Development and Wellness, 6-12) and Mr. Sean Smyth (Instructional Supervisor of Student Development and Wellness, PK-5) delivered the annual Parent Engagement report to the board. The slide presentation was crafted as a timeline over the past year in order to highlight the ways the district sought to support parent engagement and collect parent input. The presentation also featured the lessons learned regarding the impact of COVID-19 on the community.

Mrs. Spaziano pointed to last year's annual report and explained that the strengths identified in the 2019 Parent Survey helped to carry us through the pandemic thus far. The slide presentation then featured the many ways the district and individual schools worked to provide support and care to our community.

Mr. Smyth spoke about the planning work that had been conducted over the summer for ReStart 2020-21. While this expansive and intensive work was underway to ensure a smooth return to school in the fall, the district continued to address social-emotional needs across the community throughout July and August. Activities, workshops, and virtual outreach all played a significant role in keeping student/family wellness intact.

At the end of the summer, a Parent Survey was distributed to learn more about family experiences, both for continued learning and for social/emotional support needed. The findings of the survey indicated that parent engagement and home-school communication was, and continues to be, strong. Parental participation in their child's education has increased significantly and school outreach to families continues to be a priority. Although work will still continue, this annual report confirms progress is being made, even amid a global pandemic.

IV. COVID-19 Budget Update (Mr. James Richetelli)

Mr. James Richetelli presented an update on the *COVID-19 Budget: Revenue and Expenditures*. He identified the two types of grants that are available to us and how they may be used. The original ESSER grant was intended for the purchase of items and to secure staffing that would help school districts re-open safely. The ESSER II grant (projected \$2,347,456) is intended to be used primarily for education recovery and will be available through 9/30/2023. Mr. Richetelli noted that the grant monies generated from the foodservice department in their current curbside/in-person meal programming is greatly helping. There is an overall projected deficit of \$1.3 million for the year. Spending freezes that have been implemented and savings that have been realized in some areas will help cover the deficit.

V. MPS District Goals (Dr. Anna Cutaia)

Dr. Cutaia delivered a report on the progress that had been made since the last board meeting presentation on the MPS District Goals by building upon the slide presentation that has been delivered in the past. Using the *Vision of the Learner*, the *Relationships Framework*, and the *Model for High Quality Instruction* as the cornerstones for this work, Dr. Cutaia presented a draft of seven proposed MPS Priorities. She explained the wording used was intentionally similar to the foundational documents, giving coherence, consistency and alignment across all 7 major areas of work in the district. After reviewing the priorities, Dr. Cutaia asked the board if the word *Priorities* was accurate. Some suggestions offered were *Beliefs* or *Commitments*. Discussion followed with the board indicating a preference for the word *Commitments*. Dr. Cutaia said she would weave that word into the slides for the next review. She asked that board members continue to reflect on tonight's discussion and share additional comments through Ms. Glennon.

Dr. Cutaia then introduced four suggested MPS Goals, suggesting they mirror the language of the Vision of the Learner document. She provided some background on the development of them and suggested the board consider possible sub-items for each goal intended to help stretch the district's current work. Board members again mentioned they liked the continued coherence and alignment found in the statements.

Dr. Cutaia announced that additional presentations are scheduled for the near future that will help inform the proposed goals and help board members develop them more fully. In March, work will center on **Race, Equity, and Social Justice** (RESJ). In April, we will touch on **Metrics**.

VI. Board Policies for a First Reading (Dr. Anna Cutaia)

Dr. Cutaia asked to re-order the policy listings (asking for **Food Allergy** to be discussed first); the board agreed. Before addressing the policies on the agenda, Dr. Cutaia began by explaining the importance of keeping formal policies broad while reserving the details on how to implement the policy for the accompanying regulation. She explained that the policies for review at this meeting would highlight why this is good practice in all policy work.

Policy #5141.25: Food Allergy (Presented with a new proposed title: *Students with Special Health Care Needs*)

Dr. Cutaia presented Policy #5141.25 to the board for a first reading. Mrs. Eileen Faustich, MPS Foodservice Director, joined the meeting virtually, to provide additional insight to the proposed revision. Mrs. Faustich stated that the issues covered under this policy are complex, although it predominantly addresses **food allergies** and **glycogen storage disease**. She supported Dr. Cutaia's earlier statement about keeping policy language broad with the corresponding regulations containing the details of how to implement them. One point of note, however, was the board's recommendation to use the phrase '**food allergies and glycogen storage disease**' in the revised title, to make it clear what the policy covered.

Policy #4118.5/#4218.5: Acceptable Use of Computers/Technology (Staff)

Dr. Cutaia presented Policy #4118.5/#4218.5 to the board for a first reading. The policy revision ensures compliance with recent legislation and governs the acceptable use of technology/devices by staff. She indicated some revisions and re-organization that would be made based on initial suggestions by members of the board regarding word choice to bring the content to more current phrasing. Questions were raised by a board member regarding limitations connected to the use of social media by staff.

Policy #6141.321: Acceptable Use of Computers/Technology (Students)

Dr. Cutaia presented Policy #6141.321 to the board for a first reading. The policy revision ensures our compliance with recent legislation and governs the acceptable use of technology/devices by students. She reviewed similar revisions as the previous

policy. It was agreed that for both Acceptable Use policies the term email would replace the phrase electronic mail throughout. Dr. Cutaia will clarify language relating to students' use of district devices at home.

Policy #5132: Dress and Grooming

Dr. Cutaia presented Policy #5132 to the board for a first reading. Dr. Amy Fedigan assisted in presenting the background information on how the revision was developed. There was discussion around terms which might be subjective and how they are interpreted. As with earlier policies reviewed, the guiding theme was to keep the policy language broad while infusing the accompanying regulation with details. The board supported the concept.

Ms. Glennon reminded the board that the 4 policies would be on the March business meeting agenda with the discussed changes.

VII. PUBLIC COMMENT

Jeannine Minort-Kale, 150 Penn Common, Milford (06460). Ms. Minort-Kale indicated appreciation that the district adjusted the annual survey to reflect the needs related to the pandemic but expressed concern the district has not regularly sought feedback throughout the year on the effectiveness of the academic structure. She believes the amount of time students spend in In-Person instruction is not enough and is concerned there are standards that will not be covered. She urged the district to collect more data via assessments.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Fowler made a motion adjourn. Mr. Pawlowski seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 9:22 p.m.

Recording Secretary: _____
Mrs. Kathy Bonetti

Corresponding Secretary: _____
Mr. Andrew Fowler