

**Millbury School Committee Meeting
REGULAR SESSION
Minutes**

Date: September 25, 2013

Present: Mrs. Nietupski, Chairperson; Mrs. Vigneau; Mr. Corey;
Mr. Plante; Mrs. Hitchcock, Superintendent of Schools;
Mr. Bedard, Business Manager

Absent: Mr. Borowski, Vice Chairperson

Time: 7:00 p.m.

Location: Elmwood Street School Media Center

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A tour of the Elmwood Street School directed by Principal Sue Frederick was conducted prior to the meeting beginning at 6:30 p.m.

Mrs. Nietupski called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

1. Approval of Regular Session Meeting Minutes of 9/11/2013

Mrs. Nietupski asked for any changes, additions or deletions to the Regular Session Minutes of September 11, 2013

Mr. Corey made the motion to accept, seconded by Mrs. Vigneau. All in favor (4-0).

2. Student Council Report

Seniors Andrew Borus and Ryan Mercier will be addressing the School Committee at the next meeting scheduled for October 23, 2013, as members of the Student Advisory Council.

Seniors Robin Thornburg, Secretary of Student Council, and Gabriella Prominski, President of the Student Council, updated the committee on current events at the high school.

Mrs. Hitchcock asked Andrew to inform the Central Office the name of the staff member who will be working with the Student Advisory Council.

3. Report of the Administration

a. Approval of the Toronto, Canada Music Trip; May 2-5, 2014 – Vote Required

Mrs. Hitchcock informed the committee that Dan Ferreira is planning the fourth Music Trip to Toronto, Canada from May 2-5, 2014. This trip is alternated every other year. He is working with Suburban Tours, the same company from prior years.

Mrs. Hitchcock made the recommendation that the Music Trip to Toronto, Canada, from May 2-5, 2014 be approved. The staffing is appropriate with an administrator, four parent volunteers, a nurse, and teacher Ryan Sullivan.

Mrs. Vigneau questioned the possibility of alternating the Europe Trip and the Music Trip on a consistent basis in order that students can financially afford to go on both. Mrs. Hitchcock will investigate this further.

Mrs. Vigneau made the motion to approve the Music Trip to Toronto, seconded by Mr. Corey. All in favor (4-0).

b. MCAS District and School Accountability Data

Mrs. Hitchcock noted that the MCAS accountability data has been released. She provided an overview of the results, stating that school administrators will present the information in detail through a PowerPoint presentation at the October 23, 2013 meeting. This presentation will be done at the Millbury Junior Senior High School in order to provide it live for viewers.

Mrs. Hitchcock provided the Accountability Data in a condensed format for the committee by the three schools and district wide. She noted two important facts:

1. The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education sets individualized targets for each school in the Commonwealth.
2. DESE is categorizing every school into five levels, with Level 1 as the highest. Schools at Levels 4 and 5 are in need of restructuring.

She noted that it is becoming increasingly difficult to achieve greater results every year, since there is gradual improvement every year. Mrs. Hitchcock explained the new accountability information system that is different from Adequate Yearly Process (AYP), which was used in the past.

Elmwood Street School is now at Level 2, making some gains. Mrs. Hitchcock noted that future reports will read: "Met Target" or "Did Not Meet Target." Those targets are very high for each of the school buildings. The District Level is based upon the lowest level school in the district. The Shaw School remains at Level 1 status for the second year in a row. Millbury Junior/Senior High School was as Level 2 last year. Mrs. Hitchcock noted that Principal Mandy Vasil, her administrators and staff have all worked extremely hard to raise the high school to Level 1 status this year. The development of common planning time for grade levels and departments has helped with this result.

The district has begun to identify where students are struggling and the changes necessary for improvement.

Mrs. Nietupski questioned why all students, including those with Special Needs, Low Income, and ELL, are given the same target. Mrs. Hitchcock noted they are all following the general education curriculum with accommodations or specialized instruction for students with disabilities. However, the standards remain the same for all students.

Mr. Corey questioned if there has been a comparison made for the high school categories from Level 2 last year to Level 1 this year. Mrs. Hitchcock noted that the Leadership Team is in the process of doing just that. Mrs. Hitchcock will also look into the benchmark set for last year.

c. DESE Deputy Commissioner's Memo Regarding the Pace for Implementation of Reform Initiatives

Mrs. Hitchcock shared a memo from Dr. Alan Ingram, Deputy Commissioner of the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, outlining the adjustments made on reform initiatives. They have decided to rollback the implementation of several tasks for one year in response to recent concerns. For example, District Determined Measures (used as part of the new Teacher Evaluation System) will not be used and implemented to develop the ratings for the effectiveness of teachers and administrators until a year from now.

Mrs. Nietuspki questioned if this decision will have any effect on the Race to The Top funding. Mrs. Hitchcock noted that this is the last year to receive the Race to The Top funding, and that by taking part in the program, we received \$134,000 for professional development. Other districts who decided not to participate, will be implementing the Race to The Top program this year. She stated that there is approximately \$60,000 left that will be used for professional development.

d. Results of spring 2013 AP Scores

Mrs. Hitchcock reported on the AP Scores for 2013. She noted that European History and Microeconomics were new classes added this year. A total of 67 exams were taken. The greatest success was with English Literature and Composition, with 13 of 16 students scoring at level 3, 4 or 5. Anything under Level 3 is not acceptable. Students also did well in United States History, Calculus AB and Biology. Mrs. Nietuspki questioned if some of these courses are taught through the Virtual High School. Mrs. Vigneau asked if all of the slots were full in the Virtual High School. Mrs. Hitchcock will look into this with Principal Vasil.

4. Budget

5. Old Business

a. Approval of District Goals as Superintendent's Goals – Vote Required

Mrs. Nietuspki stated that the committee needs to take a vote to approve the District Goals presented at the prior meeting of 9/25/2013 as the Superintendent's Goals. Mr. Corey made the motion to approve, seconded by Mr. Plante. All in favor (4-0).

New Item:

- Mrs. Vigneau expressed her concern with the chalk writings on the side of school buildings, notably at the Elmwood and Shaw Schools. She suggested looking into putting a sign on the building to deter this action in the future.

6. New Business

a. Review/Approval of Anti-Bullying Plan Amendments – 1st Reading, Vote Required

Mrs. Hitchcock noted that during the 2014 budget approval process, the Legislature approved an amendment to the Anti-Bullying Regulations that protects students from being abused by school staff. She noted that in the approved Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan from last year, anything that is bolded and italicized is a result of the new regulation. The new language cites “The Plan applies to students *or a member of a school staff including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional*, engaging in acts of bullying or retaliation. She stated the important piece is not that the language is changed, but ensuring that the training takes place so that all those listed act accordingly or report any such behavior to an administrator. Mrs. Nietupski questioned if the plan includes volunteers; Mrs. Hitchcock noted it would be interpreted to include any adult.

Mrs. Nietupski asked for a motion to accept the First Reading of the Anti-Bullying Plan Amendments. Mr. Plante made the motion to approve, seconded by Mr. Corey. All in favor (4-0).

New Items:

- Mrs. Nietupski requested a congratulatory letter be sent to freshman Angie DiDomenica for setting a new Cross Country record.
- Mr. Corey stated that he received a phone call from a patron of a Friday night sporting event at the high school. The individual and his wife were not allowed to park in the back parking lot (Orchard Street parking lot). Mr. Corey was not aware of any policy preventing parking in the lot, and asked for clarification. Mrs. Hitchcock noted that she was aware of the situation, and she had spoken with Principal Vasil. Mrs. Vasil’s initial intent was to be “good neighbors” due to the amount of residents on Orchard Street. Her understanding was that this ban took place only during Saturday events at the high school.

Mr. Corey suggested monitoring the parking lot rather than placing a ban on parking. He is opposed to any ban of the Orchard Street parking lot. Mr. Plante noted that the confusion caused by blocking the parking lot created more havoc as no one then knew where to go. Mr. Corey stated that the Orchard Street lot has typically always been used by Millbury residents and that the out-of-town attendees use the high school lot. Mrs. Hitchcock did give credit to Mrs. Vasil and Mr. Mara for trying to be good neighbors, but will look into the situation further. Mr. Plante also noted that parents and students were asked to dump their coffee or beverage prior to coming into the gate. Mrs. Hitchcock will look into this as well.

- Mrs. Vigneau offered her assistance in reviewing and updating outdated policies in the district. Mrs. Hitchcock stated she is aware of the need, but other priorities from the DESE have prevented any action. She did note that changes required for compliance with the Coordinated Program Review in terms of Civil Rights, gender identity and homelessness as a protected class will be forthcoming in terms of services provided to students.
- Mrs. Nietupski noted that under the suggestion of the superintendent, there is not enough items to warrant a meeting on October 9, 2013. Mrs. Nietupski asked for a consensus from the committee to cancel the meeting. All in favor (4-0). The next scheduled meeting will be on October 23, 2013 at the High School Media Center.

7. Executive Session, if needed

8. Future Topics/Events

- District Enrollment**
- Presentation of 2013 MCAS Data**

9. Next Meeting: October 23, 2013 MHS Media Center 7:00 p.m.

10. Adjourn

Mrs. Nietupski asked for a motion to adjourn at 7:50 p.m. Mr. Corey made the motion, seconded by Mrs. Vigneau. All in favor (4-0).

Respectfully submitted,
Sandra Femino
 Sandra Femino
 Executive Assistant to the Superintendent

Approved:

Leslie M. Vigneau

Arthur H. Long

Joseph B. Nietupski

Kevin Shand

Items in Packet:

Draft of Regular Session Minutes of 9/11/2013

Millbury High School Music Department's Toronto Trip Spring 2014 Proposal

MCAS 2013 Accountability Data

Memo from Dr. Alan Ingram, Deputy Commissioner on Adjustments Made and Support to Districts – Pace of Implementation

AP Current Year Score Summary (2013)

Amendments to MPS Bullying Prevention and Intervention Plan

Thank You Letters (5)

Response from S. Hitchcock to Mrs. Gobron's letter of 9/18/2013

Copy of "The Reflector" Fall 2013