

**Millbury Public Schools
School Committee**

Regular Session
Meeting Minutes

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MILLBURY, MASS.

Date: February 1, 2023

Location: Millbury Memorial Jr./Sr. High School Library/Media Center

Members Present: Mrs. Jennifer Nietupski, Chairperson
Mrs. Julia Lagerholm, Member
Mr. Nicholas Lazzaro, Member
Mrs. Jessica Bristol, Member
Ms. Fatma Al-Bargash, Student Representative

Administrators Present: Mr. Richard G. Bedard Jr., Assistant Superintendent for Finance & Operations
Mr. Jeffrey Berthiaume, Director of Instructional Technology
Ms. Lizz Boutiette, Director of Curriculum and Instruction
Mr. Gregory Myers, Superintendent of Schools
Ms. Kate Ryan, Director of Pupil Services
Mr. Andrew Tuccio, Principal, R.E. Shaw School
Mr. Kofi Agyeman, Director of Facilities

Contributing Guests: Ms. Jennifer Earle
Ms. Joanne Hickey
Ms. Kim White-Oullette
Ms. Melissa Pomeroy

This meeting was recorded and broadcasted by Millbury's Public Access Channel.

Mrs. Nietupski called the meeting to order at 7:01 PM and held a moment of silence for Mr. David Roach, longtime Millbury superintendent, who passed away recently. Mrs. Nietupski then led the Committee in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes

Mrs. Lagerholm motioned to accept the regular session meeting minutes of January 11, 2023, seconded by Mr. Lazzaro. The motion passed (4-0).

Report of the Administration

a. Overview of Millbury's Special Education parent Advisory Council

Ms. Kate Ryan, Director of Pupil Services, provided an overview of the mission and purpose of Special Education Parent Advisory Councils and introduced the members of the newly formed SEPAC: Jennifer Earle, Kim White-Oullette, Melissa Pomeroy, and Joanne Hickey. SEPAC Councils are open to parents and caregivers of children with disabilities and all other interested parties and are designed to support families with children with disabilities and advocate to their district's school committee on matters that pertain to the education and safety of students with disabilities.

Finance and Operations

a. Discussion of Fiscal Year 2024 Programmatic and Capital Needs

Mr. Myers and Mr. Bedard answered questions about the FY'24 Proposed School Budget, including questions about technology/software, curriculum development, Special Education Summer School Program, elementary grade class sizes for FY23 and FY24, R.E. Shaw Enrichment Program, AA Transportation contract information, elevator maintenance, and the Dorothy Manor School. There will be a public hearing on February 22nd before the budget can be voted on.

b. Review of Proposed Fiscal Year 2024 Warrant Articles: Technology and School Facility Security

Mr. Jeff Berthiaume, Director of Informational Technology, provided an overview of the two proposed warrant articles for the Committee's consideration. The technology warrant will be used to replace old equipment and purchase needed technology for new courses. The school security warrant article will be used to install keyless entry systems at both Elmwood and the Jr./Sr. High School, replace twelve exterior doors at Elmwood and the Jr./Sr. High School that have been damaged by years of sand/salt exposure, install a two step entry system at the Jr./Sr. High School, and replace certain security cameras.

c. School Lunch Update

Mr. Bedard provided the Committee with an update on the school lunch department on behalf of Ms. Mandi Donaldson, Director of Food Services, regarding the receipt of new equipment grants, including a New England Dairy Turnkey Smoothie Kit, which includes funding for small wares and a commercial immersion blender. The second grant will be used to fund two new salad bars for the Jr./Sr. High School. The third grant, from Project Bread, will allow us to replace certain small wares that are old and worn out, purchase display shelving at the Jr./Sr. High School, and add a bowl cart for the Shaw School.

Breakfast and lunch participation is still very high at all schools (57% of students at each school are participating in breakfast and lunch).

Mrs. Nietupski asked if we could send a letter to Senator Moore urging them to continue with this program across the state.

Unfinished Business

a. Report on the Raymond E. Shaw Building Project

Mr. Myers reviewed the current status of both phases of the Shaw School building project, noting the playground area is almost complete, but not yet ready for students to use; the canopy cover for the school entrance has been delivered and will be installed in the coming days; the building committee is exploring options for widening the driveway where it turns by the ball field to improve traffic flow; and the turf fabric was delivered today.

b. School Choice Update: Current Class Size Averages

Mr. Myers presented current class size averages in grades PK-6 based on current student enrollment figures as part of the Committee's consideration of potential school choice admission for next year. Currently, we offer school choice for grades 9-12. There are a few elementary grade levels that have smaller class sizes that the committee had mentioned looking into possibly opening up a few spaces in those levels.

New Business

a. Preliminary Consideration of 6th Grade Field Trip to Nature's Classroom- *Vote Requested*

Mr. Tuccio asked the Committee to consider granting preliminary approval to begin planning a 6th grade field trip to Nature's Classroom in Charlton, MA from Tuesday, April 25-28, 2023. The four day, three night trip will have two options for students; full overnight sleep away or day time only participation. In previous years, sixth grade students used to attend Camp Bournedale. A survey was sent to parents and the students are interested in attendance. The option of day trips will allow for all students to partake in the field trip.

Ms. Bristol motioned to approve the preliminary consideration of the 6th grade field trip to Nature's Classroom, seconded by Mr. Lazzaro. The motion passed (4-0).

b. Proposed amendments to Policy AC (Non-Discrimination)- *Vote Requested*

Mr. Lazzaro provided the Committee with proposed updates to Policy AC, which addresses issues of discrimination. Proposed revisions include the addition of protected categories and definitions and requires the Superintendent to adopt a set of grievance procedures. These updates have been approved by the Committee's legal council.

Mr. Lazzaro motioned to adopt the proposed amendments to Policy AC, seconded by Ms. Bristol. The motion passed (4-0).

c. Proposed Establishment of Policy DJC (Purchasing Policy for Town Credit Card)- *Vote Requested*

Mr. Lazzaro provided the Committee with proposed new policy language designed to establish clear protocols for the use of a Town credit card that will be issued to the District later this winter. The Town is implementing a credit card purchasing option for instances when vendors are unable to accept purchase orders and to eliminate the need to reimburse employees for authorized purchases.

Mr. Lazzaro motioned to adopt the proposed establishment of Policy DJC, seconded by Mrs. Lagerholm. The motion passed (4-0).

d. **School Start Time- Review of Benefits/Challenges of Establishing Later Start Times for Adolescents**

Mr. Myers reviewed research on the impact that later school start times have on adolescent's well-being, academic performance, and behavior. He also summarized the challenges associated with such a change, which the Committee identified during its initial consideration of the topic. Transportation, families who depend on older siblings who are home to take care of their younger siblings, and the afterschool sports programs which are usually held directly after school.

Ms. Bristol asked to revisit Ms. Reno's research on this subject and would like to poll parents to get their feedback. Mrs. Lagerholm asked if it would be beneficial to change the lower grade levels' start time specifically stating that younger children need more hours of sleep. Our bordering town, Shrewsbury, has shifted to starting school by 20 minutes. We will be looking into polling other districts in the state to see who has changed the school start times.

Ms. Bristol asked about an update from MSBA in regards to funding for the roof at the high school and to discuss recess times for PK-6.

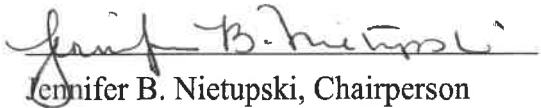
Executive Session

At 8:15, Mrs. Nietupski asked to moved into Executive Session in accordance with MGL Chapter 30A, §21(a)3 to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining with the SEIU Local 888 because an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the Committee's bargaining position and the Chair so declares. A roll call vote was taken. Mr. Lazzaro- yes, Ms. Bristol- yes, Mrs. Lagerholm- yes, Mrs. Nietupski- yes.

Adjourn

At 9:08, the Committee reconvened its regular session and without further discussion, Mr. Lazzaro motioned to adjourn, seconded by Mrs. Bristol. The motion passed, 4-0.

Approved:

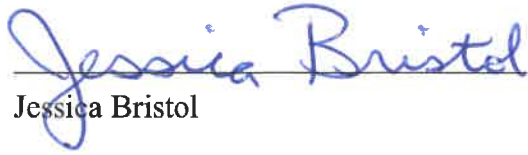

Jennifer B. Nietupski, Chairperson

Christopher J. Wilbur, Vice Chairperson

Julia Lagerholm



Nicholas Lazzaro



Jessica Bristol