

“Information is the currency of democracy.”

—Thomas Jefferson

Across the Board



Reporting on the BOE Meeting of November 13, 2007

The Milford Board of Education

Cindy Kopazna, Chair
Pamela Staneski, Maj. Leader
David Amendola, Min. Leader
Michael Cavallaro
David Hourigan
Scott Marlow
Deborah Mead
Catherine Nihart
Joanne Rohrig
Dr. Mark Stapleton

Upcoming Dates

Nov. 19: City of Milford Inauguration, Parsons Auditorium, 7:00 p.m.

Nov. 26: Board of Education Organizational Meeting, Parsons BOE Meeting Room, 6:00 p.m.

Nov. 26: Milford Education Funding Committee Public Forum, City Hall, 7:00 p.m.

Dec. 10: Board of Education Regular Business Meeting, Parsons, 7:00 p.m.

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CHAIR'S REPORT

Board Chair **Cindy Kopazna** offered her thanks to the outgoing Board members for their years of service to the district and the entire Milford community.

She further reported several members of the new 2007-2009 Board of Education would be attending the Connecticut Association of Boards of Education (CABE) conference in Mystic, Connecticut that weekend.

In closing, Chair Kopazna announced several upcoming dates for which events had been planned. These included the City of Milford Inauguration ceremonies (11/19), Board of Ed organizational meeting (11/26), the Milford Educational Funding Committee Forum (11/26), and the CABE New Board Member Orientation (12/5).

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

◆ Recognition of Board Member Service

Dr. Harvey B. Polansky began the Superintendent's Report by acknowledging the contributions and service to the community of the six outgoing Board members. He praised the work of **Paul Beckwith, Mike Cavallaro, Scott Marlow, Debbie Mead, Cathy Nihart, and Mark Stapleton**. An enthusiastic round of applause followed.

◆ “Change Leadership” Book Discussion Conducted

Dr. Polansky reported that all school building administrators had participated in a special book discussion on Saturday, Nov. 3rd. In the weeks leading up to the program, administrators had been asked to read the book, *Change Leadership: A Practical Guide to Transforming our Schools*¹. Co-author **Richard W. Lemons**² was also on hand to

¹Wagner, Tony; Kegan, Robert; Lahey, Lisa; Lemons, Richard; Garnier, Jude; Helsing, Deborah; Howell, Annie; and Rasmussen, Harriette. *Change Leadership: A Practical Guide to Transforming our Schools*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2006

²Richard Lemons is the associate director of the Change Leadership Group at the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

lead portions of the discussion that took place during the program. **Dr. Polansky** said the event was very interesting and offered a chance for some great dialogue amongst the group.

OPERATIONS REPORT

◆ Personnel Activity in Good Shape

HR Director **Wendy Kopazna** reported that most of the recent interview and application screening activity was for substitute teachers, with only a few positions open at the time.

◆ October Budget Report

Deputy Superintendent **Philip Russell** reported that approximately 93% of the current funds available for the 07-08 fiscal year had been encumbered or expended. He believes the strong negotiations conducted earlier in the year allowed the district to ‘lock in’ on excellent oil, fuel, and electricity prices. He reported this will be extremely helpful in keeping these costs contained.

◆ Enumeration Cards Continue to Come In

Mr. Russell said approximately 50% of the cards had been received relating to the enumeration survey. He offered his thanks to employees **Marty Merk** and **Ina Geller** for the excellent job they did in entering all the information received thus far.

◆ Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) Unveiled (2008-2013)

Mr. Russell discussed the proposed items that have been collected and prioritized for the 2008-2013 Capital Improvement Plan. He explained that the items appearing on the list address the most necessary improvements. Priority was given to items that involved health and safety issues, building preservation, and other code requirements.

In answer to a question that had been posed during the public comment portion of the meeting, **Mr. Russell** explained some of the finer points about building reimbursements from the state for large-scale school building projects. He reported that all schools are

connections

There is a wealth of information contained on the Milford Board of Education Website. Go to www.milforded.org and the following helpful documents can be found there:

Milford Public Schools Event Calendar

Want to know what's going on in the Milford Public Schools? Go to the website and click on About our District. From there, click on School District Calendar and you will see ALL of the events entered throughout the district. If you happen to plan events for other organizations, this tool may be extremely helpful!

Bridges to the Board

Answers are provided within 24 hours to questions asked by members of the public during Board of Ed meetings. Check it out!

Board of Education Meeting Minutes

You don't have to visit the City Clerk's office to get copies of minutes -- they are right on the web!

Across the Board

Past issues; these meeting recaps provide a quick overview of what's happening in education in Milford.

able to apply for building project reimbursement and that the current reimbursable rate is 44.93%. He noted this is a flexible rate and he personally has seen it fluctuate between 39% and 48% over the duration of his career.

The concept of 'renovate as new' was discussed, as it has often been presented as an alternative funding method for remodeling our schools. **Mr. Russell** explained that 'renovate as new' is a bona fide category for building projects and requires much more rehabilitative work to be done in order to qualify. Although the reimbursable percent from the state for 'renovate as new' projects is the same as for regular building projects, 44.93%, **Mr. Russell** explained that only certain items are eligible through this model.

Mr. Russell also reminded the Board that the priority list for the projects is always flexible, in case an item on the list becomes more urgent as time passes.

The Board unanimously voted to approve the proposed 2008-2013 CIP as submitted. The next step will be for the Board of

Education to forward the CIP to the Mayor's office for presentation and approval by the Board of Aldermen.

CONSENT AGENDA

The MBOE approved the following consent agenda items.

a) Voucher list disbursements; b) Joseph A. Foran Choir trip to New York City from March 29-31, 2008; c) Formal acceptance of the Jonathan Law High School Phase I project; and d) Formal acceptance of the Pumpkin Delight School Window project.

NEXT MEETING

The next regular Board meeting is slated for December 10 at the Parsons Complex in the Board of Education Meeting Room, beginning at 7:00 p.m. All are welcome.

Last but not least, the administration and staff of the Milford Public Schools and the elected officials of the Milford Board of Education offer their wishes to you for a happy, healthy, and peaceful holiday season.