

1 MILFORD SCHOOL BOARD
2 MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 6, 2017 MEETING
3 MILFORD HIGH SCHOOL, LECTURE HALL #182, 7:00 PM
4

5 1. Call to Order

6 Chairman Paul Dargie called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM in Lecture Hall room #182
7 at Milford High School. Board members present were Mr. Ron Carvell, Mr. Len Mannino,
8 Mr. Bob Willette and Board Vice-Chair Mr. Kevin Drew. Also in attendance were
9 Superintendent Robert Marquis and Business Administrator Jennifer Burk. The recording
10 secretary was Dana Laviano.
11

12 2. Board Member Comments

13 Mr. Dargie noted that the deliberative session will be held on February 9, 2017 at 7:00
14 PM in the Milford High School cafeteria. He stated that this will be an opportunity for
15 the public to discuss the budget and warrant articles, and to make amendments to the
16 articles if desired.
17

18 Mr. Dargie said he received an email from Mike McInerney from the town IT
19 department saying that the microphones that are used to record the board meetings
20 are fragile and that some of them have broken. He asked that everyone be careful
21 when adjusting the microphones to minimize the forces that are placed on them during
22 use.
23

24 Mr. Dargie said that he is preparing to write the Voters Guide and asked if any Board
25 Members had an objection to his doing this. No Board Members objected. He asked if
26 any Board Members would be submitting any minority opinions. There were no
27 requests to write a minority position for the Voters Guide. Mr. Dargie reminded the
28 public that the Voters Guide will have space for photos and short bios of all School
29 Board candidates and anyone running for the two available seats on the Board should
30 submit their photo and write-up for inclusion in the Guide to Janice French at the
31 Milford SAU40 office.
32

33 3. Public Comments (for items not on the agenda)

34 There were no public comments.
35

36 4. Reports and Presentations

37 a. Superintendent's Report

38 Mr. Marquis began his report with congratulations to the winners at the Middle School
39 of the recent Spelling Bee, Geography Bee and Scholastic Art Awards.
40

41 On February 2, 2017, there was a screening of the documentary "Screenagers" at
42 Milford High School which was very successful. Roughly 175-200 parents and students
43 attended the showing. Thank you to Director of Curriculum and Instruction Mike
44 Tenters and Middle School Principal Tony DeMarco for their work in making the evening

45 happen. The video gave plenty to think about with regards to the effect of screen use on
46 developing minds.

47
48 Congratulations to high school students Zoe Daudier, Alice Danas, and Matt Hannon
49 who recently qualified for the state championship swim meet. Congratulations as well to
50 Alex Matsis who won the two-mile race at the East Coast Invitational in Providence, RI.

51
52 On February 1, 2017, the 4th and 5th grade students at the Heron Pond School enjoyed a
53 very successful STEM (Science, Engineering, Technology, and Math) evening. The
54 students worked in groups to solve challenges like containing an oil spill with cotton
55 swabs and paper towels, or programming a small vehicle to work its way through a
56 maze to pick up a magic marker. Mr. Marquis said the rooms were buzzing with energy
57 and the enthusiasm of the kids. He thanked Mr. Tenters, High School Teacher Frank
58 Xydias, Director of Technical Studies Don Jalbert, Heron Pond School Principal Chantal
59 Alcox and her staff, as well as the “STEMbassadors” from the University of New
60 Hampshire who helped to make the evening so successful.

61
62 Also at Heron Pond School, a generous donation from the Tierney Fund made the
63 purchase of 75 books for the library possible. Titles in history, live sports, outdoor
64 activities and inspirational biographies were added to the collection.

65
66 Students at the Jacques Memorial School recently participated in the Nationwide Great
67 Kindness Challenge. Each class had a kindness checklist with the goal of getting through
68 as many challenges as possible. The challenges included greeting friends with a smile
69 and helping someone up when they had fallen.

70
71 At Project Drive in the Bales School, cyberbullying has been a recent focus as well as a
72 schoolwide science project that included the creation of a volcano.

73
74 For the benefit of the Board and the public, Mr. Marquis has posted on the district
75 website some research on the benefits of full-day kindergarten. As of now, 65 parents
76 have picked up registration packets for next fall and 51 of these have been returned. Of
77 these, 16 have requested full day kindergarten and of these, 3 have requested a tuition
78 waiver.

79
80 Mr. Marquis received a letter from Mary Bubnis of the Department of Education who
81 conducted an onsite visit to evaluate and assess our Title I Program. In her letter to Mr.
82 Marquis, she cited no compliance issues and commented that “this is a model program;
83 very creative and responsive to changing needs.” Mr. Marquis said that the success of
84 our program is a direct result of the efforts of Meg Peterson, our Title I Coordinator. He
85 said that her passion, commitment, and professionalism are outstanding.

86
87 4b. Technology Plan – Director of Computer Technology Jerry Stajduhar, and Director of
88 Curriculum and Instruction Mike Tenters

89 Mr. Stajduhar introduced two documents submitted to the Board, outlining the Draft
90 Technology Plan and the Chrome Device Deployment Plan (SEE EXHIBIT). The draft plan
91 that was presented was an abbreviated version of the complete plan, as the complete
92 plan contains a lot of details that are not relevant for an overview of the program. The
93 full version is being reviewed by the Technology Committee right now and once it is
94 approved by the committee, will be presented to the Board for final approval. The
95 abbreviated draft plan discusses six goals with action steps, a proposed budget, and a
96 timeline for implementation. The Chrome Device Deployment Plan outlines the
97 deployment plan for the next four years with the number of Chromebooks referenced
98 being cumulative over the four years. (SEE EXHIBIT)

99
100 Mr. Willette asked if and why the devices are assigned to subject areas and not per
101 student. Mr. Stajduhar said that for now, they are not looking at a 1:1 Chromebook to
102 Student ratio. This might change over time and the plan can be amended to reflect that.
103 For now, the deployment is based on students sharing the devices and the devices being
104 moved into subject classrooms via carts. Mr. Tenters pointed out that the numbers
105 referenced on the Deployment Plan also reflect Chrome Box Labs as well. Mr. Stajduhar
106 said they will be moving away from a lab environment (where the students go to a
107 computer lab to use the machines) and plan to use carts instead to bring the devices to
108 the classrooms. He mentioned a software program called "Neverware" which can be
109 installed to make an old PC a Chrome device. That would allow for repurposing old
110 computers for continued use in the classrooms and to increase the lifetime of old
111 inventory.

112
113 Mr. Dargie said that in his view, the goal will ultimately be 1:1 deployment, perhaps in
114 the 2020-2021 school year. Until then, they will be deployed by subject area since there
115 will not be enough Chromebooks available to satisfy the 1:1 requirements. The
116 transition to Google School sets us up nicely for a 1:1 ratio implementation. Mr. Tenters
117 said that they will continue to evaluate this over the next few years as there is a lot to
118 consider with the idea of potentially sending these devices home with students, which
119 means that issues such as insurance and liability need to be reviewed. There will be a
120 technology component across all curriculum areas which encourages the full 1:1
121 deployment of devices.

122
123 The Deployment Plan that was shown covers the next four years. The life cycle of
124 Chromebooks is thought to be about five years. Mr. Stajduhar referred the Board to the
125 last sentence of the draft technology plan which states "Begin replacement of
126 Chromebooks from initial implementation year (300-400 per year)." (SEE EXHIBIT) This
127 will impact budgeting going forward.

128
129 Mr. Willette asked how the life expectancy of the devices was determined. Mr.
130 Stajduhar explained that Google developed these devices for ease of use and to be at a
131 low price point. No one knows the actual longevity but we have seen some limited
132 failures after about three years of use, with an example being keyboard problems. He

133 said that the five year estimate is realistic. Any devices still working after five years
134 would be kept; they would not automatically be retired if they are still functioning. Mr.
135 Dargie said that Chromebooks are relatively simple devices with few potential failure
136 mechanisms, and that the only problems he would anticipate with the lifecycle of the
137 devices would be if Google made a major software change that would require that the
138 devices have an increased minimum specification requirement that was greater than the
139 current devices. For example, this might take the form of a software upgrade that
140 needs more installed RAM than is available on the current devices.

141
142 Mr. Tenters explained what the Technology Plan contains, and that it follows the state
143 template. The plan includes a lot for professional development as teachers need to be
144 trained and on board to make good use of the devices. For example, 19 staff members
145 are signed up over February vacation to become Google Apps certified.

146
147 Public Comments:
148 Ms. Jennifer Siegrist asked what the plans are for technology in the first grade. Mr.
149 Stajduhar replied that there is no formal plan for that grade at this time. He said that
150 using the “Neverware” software would work well there but any use of technology at
151 that level must fit into the curriculum. Mr. Tenters said they had been looking at
152 different things like the use of tablets at that level. There are some skills needed from
153 3rd grade and up, like typing, but Chromebooks might not be the right fit. Mr. Dargie
154 asked about the proposed cart of Chromebooks at the Jacques Memorial School, but
155 Ms. Burk said that the Chromebook cart was removed from the budget.

156
157 Mr. George Hoyt asked the Board to address the issue of student privacy in terms of
158 Google School. Mr. Stajduhar said that Google states they will never index data unless
159 we request them to. We will be asking them to do this but it is very restricted and
160 accessible by only one password which he (Mr. Stajduhar) possesses. All data is
161 reviewed only for things like spell check. Mr. Hoyt also asked about studies that indicate
162 that handwriting is better for note taking than typing. Mr. Tenters said that the goal for
163 technology use in the classroom is a “blended environment” where students are still
164 using traditional pen and paper for some of their work. He said that it is likely that the
165 Chromebooks would eventually replace textbooks in certain curriculum areas as online,
166 free resources are available so we should see a huge decrease in the number of
167 textbooks purchased over the next four years.

168
169 5. New Business
170 5a. Review of Progress toward District Goals
171 Superintendent Bob Marquis had submitted a memo to the Board outlining the progress
172 of the District toward its five established goals. (SEE EXHIBIT)
173 1. Begin looking at competencies by July 2017 and decide whether to choose to
174 adopt the Department of Education competencies or develop our own: the committee
175 has met 2-3 times and is leaning toward going with the state competencies.

176

177 Mr. Mannino asked if the School Board Association or anyone in the district is
178 monitoring legislation that might impact this work. Mr. Marquis said that his sense is we
179 will have greater local control. Common Core standards are embedded so it makes
180 sense for us to stay our current course. He said that teachers' flexibility to teach comes
181 as a result of their mastery of the common core standards and evaluations.

182
183 Mr. Willette asked what is meant by the statement in the memo, "to be in line with
184 Common Core State Standards". He said he voted for Common Core (CC) when he was
185 in the state legislature because it is a minimum standard but that is not good enough for
186 Milford. We should do better.

187
188 Mr. Marquis said that CC was developed to create consistency across states. It also
189 includes competencies as well as standards which vary by grade level. He said that in his
190 experience no teacher is ever satisfied with how the students are doing. They always
191 review the data and adjust their instruction to make improvements. Mr. Marquis said
192 we will always strive to improve on what we have accomplished. He also explained that
193 we need to be able to compare ourselves with other states because our students will be
194 competing with students from other states for jobs and college entrance. He noted that
195 just looking at ourselves and how we are doing would do the students a disservice.

196
197 Mr. Dargie said that when we transitioned to CC, it was with the understanding that the
198 CC standards were more rigorous than what was previously used in NH. Mr. Willette
199 disagreed. Mr. Dargie said that CC simply has a different way of doing things, such as CC
200 has an emphasis on nonfiction reading instead of the fiction sources that were common
201 in the previous state standards. He also said that CC allows for student learning
202 objectives to allow for individualizing education. If a student is outstanding, the
203 expectations for him are greater. If a student is struggling, then the expectations are
204 lowered. It does not stop at a minimum level. Mr. Willette reiterated his point that CC is
205 a minimum standard and that by aligning us with other states we risk being aligned with
206 states that are worse than NH.

207
208 Public Comments:

209 Mr. Hoyt said that as a student he sees that teachers are "teaching to the test." Kids lose
210 recess to prep for standardized tests. He said we should set the bar higher than CC
211 standards so we can compete internationally. Mr. Marquis said that students are not
212 taken out of recess to prep for tests. Students are taught how to analyze, problem solve
213 and do critical reading and thinking that would prepare them to do better on the test
214 items that demand these skills

215
216 Mr. Carvell said that the committee working on this goal is made up of all good people
217 who will make good recommendations.

218
219 2. The second goal is curriculum and instruction (SEE EXHIBIT). Mr. Marquis
220 reviewed how data from the Smarter Balanced and NWEA (Northwest Evaluation

221 Association) assessments has been mined by teachers and staff to improve their
222 instructional strategies. He reviewed the charts included with his memo. (SEE EXHIBIT)
223 The “same group” charts show that students are improving consistently and that
224 teachers are effectively tailoring their instruction in response to the data.
225

226 Mr. Mannino asked how best practices in the classroom are determined. Mr. Marquis
227 explained that teachers share and discuss their strategies which move the whole thing
228 forward. Mr. Mannino asked if there was any correlation between years of teaching
229 experience and improvements on assessments. Mr. Marquis said that has not been
230 studied. Mr. Dargie said that individual teacher effectiveness can be very hard to
231 determine because both teachers and students vary. Mr. Mannino also asked if it would
232 be possible to study, as part of the technology plan, if students with access to the
233 Chromebooks do better on assessments than students without access. Mr. Dargie said
234 that would be impossible to show statistically relevant populations within the district
235 due to small sample sizes. Mr. Carvell expressed his congratulations to Superintendent
236 Marquis, the teachers and staff on the results showed in the graphs. He said the best
237 part is these teams are working on the data and showing good progress. The graphs are
238 a “good snapshot of their hard work.”
239

240 Mr. Hoyt asked about the NECAP Science data and about high school students taking
241 NWEA. Mr. Marquis said NWEA testing for 6th – 9th grades was not done this year
242 because of budget cuts. The only grade at the high school being assessed was the 11th
243 grade for the SATs.
244

245 3. The 3rd goal is the technology plan which should be finalized by year’s end.
246 There were no additional public comments or questions.
247

248 4. The 4th goal outlines reprioritizing the Capital Improvement Plan. (SEE EXHIBIT)
249 Mr. Marquis reported that this goal has been met, as the revised CIP was presented.
250 Options regarding Project DRIVE and the use of the Bales school were dismissed due to
251 a lack of suitable sites in town, as there were no available facilities with the roughly
252 15,000 square feet that is needed to host the program. There were no public comments
253 or questions.
254

255 5. The 5th goal is regarding use of resources and the successful collective
256 bargaining agreements that have been reached and which will be voted on by the
257 community. There were no public comments or questions.
258

259 5b. Financial Forecast – Mid Year

260 Ms. Burk, Business Administrator, submitted a memo to the Board outlining the current,
261 midyear financial forecast. (SEE EXHIBIT) She reviewed this for the Board. Mr. Carvell
262 asked what the cause of the increase in Medicaid numbers was. Ms. Burk said it was due
263 to a change in IEPs at the start of the year. Mr. Dargie said that the \$190K budget was a
264 conservative number and that has been changed for next year’s budget to \$250K. Mr.

265 Dargie made a motion to change the \$200K fund balance estimate for this year that is
266 currently in the operating budget warrant article, to \$264K based on this memo. Mr.
267 Drew seconded the motion. Mr. Dargie said that change would decrease the tax impact
268 by approximately \$0.04 per \$1000 of assessed valuation. If the motion passes that
269 would be changed in both the default budget and proposed budget in time for the
270 deliberative session.

271
272 Mr. Carvell asked how this would affect the contingency fund and if it prevents the next
273 Board from using the money. Ms. Burk said it did not. That it is a separate line item.
274 Motion passed 5-0.

275
276 There were no public comments.

277
278 6. Old Business
279 Mr. Carvell asked for an update on the O'Connor athletic trust fund. Mr. Dargie said that
280 he had just received an email from Ms. Janet Spaulding, the Chairman of Trustees of the
281 Trust Funds. He said it was hard to understand on a brief reading. Mr. Carvell said he
282 had read the email as well and that it was not what was requested from the trustees. He
283 said we have still not received the requested documents from them. Mr. Carvell asked
284 for a motion to put this request on the trustees' agenda for their meeting on
285 Wednesday February 8, 2017. He said we need to draft a formal letter to request the
286 documents which can be read into their minutes. Ms. Burk explained that she had
287 requested the documents but continually either got no response or this email which was
288 not what we were looking for. Mr. Marquis offered to call and have it placed on the
289 agenda. Mr. Marquis said he can draft the letter and can attend the meeting as well.

290
291 7. Housekeeping items
292 7a. Approval of Minutes from 01/17/2017: Mr. Drew moved and Mr. Carvell seconded a
293 motion to approve the minutes. Motion passed 5-0.

294
295 7b. Approval of Budget Hearing Minutes from 01/17/2017: Mr. Drew moved and Mr.
296 Carvell seconded a motion to approve the minutes. Motion passed 5-0.

297
298 7c. Approval of Bond Hearing Minutes from 01/17/2017: Mr. Drew moved and Mr.
299 Carvell seconded a motion to approve the minutes. Motion passed 5-0.

300
301 7d. Approval of Manifests 18, 19, 20, 1081, 1082, 1083, 1084, 1085, 1086, 1087, 1088,
302 1089, 1090, 1091, 1092, 1093, 1094: Mr. Willette moved and Mr. Dargie seconded a
303 motion to approve the manifests as listed in the agenda. Motion passed 5-0.

304
305 8. There were no public comments.

306
307 9. There was no need to enter into nonpublic session.
308

309 10. Mr. Willette moved and Mr. Drew seconded a motion to adjourn. Motion passed 5-
310 0. The meeting of the School Board was adjourned at 8:50 PM.

311
312
313

School Board Chair

Date of Approval

315

316 Note: If there is a "DRAFT" watermark on this document, then it is an unapproved version of
317 the document and it is subject to change. If there is no "DRAFT" watermark then this
318 version has been approved by the school board, and it is a copy of the approved final
319 version of the document. The original signed copy of the minutes is stored in the SAU 40
320 office at the rear (northeast corner) of Milford High School, 100 West St, Milford, NH 03055.