

MINUTES

MURFREESBORO CITY BOARD OF EDUCATION

May 26, 2009

6:30 p.m.—Central Administration Building

ATTENDANCE

Board: Chair Mary Wade, Susan Andrews, Ray Butrum, Butch Campbell, Nancy Duggin, David Hopper, Nancy Phillips, and Council Liaison Ron Washington.

Staff: Director Marilyn Mathis, Gary Anderson, Crystal Farris, Michelle Hummel, Danielle Kaminsky, Priscilla Van Tries, and Lee Wilkerson.

Others: City Staff Attorney Kelley Baker, MEA President Debbie Hickerson, principals, and others.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

I. CALL TO ORDER BY BOARD CHAIR

Chair Mary Wade called the Murfreesboro City School Board meeting to order at approximately 6:37 p.m. Principal Gene Loyd led the Board and audience in the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a moment of silence.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

On motion by Mr. Campbell and second by Mr. Hopper, the Board unanimously approved the agenda as presented.

III. COMMUNICATIONS

- Art teacher Ken Vanek presented the Dr. Lon Nuell memorial mural produced by MCS art teachers in recognition of his dedication to MCS art instruction. Mr. Vanek explained that the artwork was a combination of tiles placed together based on techniques he taught to his fellow art teachers.
- Congratulations and best wishes to the retiring employees who were honored at a dinner held at Stones River Country Club on May 19.
- Thanks to Bob Roberts with Middle Tennessee Realtors Association for their donation of a tree for planting to all MNE fourth grade students in recognition of Arbor Day. Thanks also to Deborah Malone, Crye-Leike Realty, for coordinating the activity.
- Congratulations to Mrs. Georgia Moore's fifth-grade class at MNE who submitted the winning name of Middle Tennessee Medical Center's new

robot—RALPH (Robotic Assisted Laparoscopic Prostatectomy Healer). The class will receive \$250 and a pizza party. Mrs. Courtney Brown's third grade class was one of the five finalists in the contest.

- Congratulations to the following Siegel third grade students in Jennifer Carper's classroom who were winners in the Harry and David's "Pear-fect Poetry" contest: 1st place—Jonathan Smith; 2nd Place—Lainey Margetjak; 3rd Place—Jazmin Anderson.
- Thanks to the following for contributions made to Bellwood-Bowdoin Preschool: Maple Street Grill--\$1,300; Murfreesboro Breakfast Rotary Club--\$500; John Peavey-- \$250; Rogers Group Inc.--\$250; and Steven Dix--\$100.
- Congratulations to MNP kindergarten teacher Donna Hill whose article entitled "Which One Doesn't Belong" was published in the May edition of *Mailbox* magazine.
- Cason Lane Academy has been selected to be a part of Cracker Barrel's "Rockin Reader" program as a result of a grant submitted by Gretta McRee. The school will receive books, bookshelves, and rocking chairs to establish a center where volunteers can read to students.
- MNE and Principal Greg Lyles thanks volunteers Van Cooke, Josh Honey, and Cela Honey for the many hours they spent beautifying MNE's landscaping.
- Chair Wade congratulated Board member Butch Campbell on his upcoming retirement from the Rutherford County School System.

IV. CONSENT ITEMS (Tab 1)

On motion by Mrs. Duggin and second by Dr. Butrum, the Board unanimously approved the following consent agenda item:

A. Minutes of the April 28, 2009 Board Meeting

V. ACTION ITEMS

VI. REPORTS/INFORMATION

A. Staff Development Report—Danielle Kaminsky

Mrs. Kaminsky presented to the Board a listing of approximately 850 workshops provided to the teachers in the system noting she is proud of their initiatives such as shoulder-to-shoulder classroom modeling through instructional coaches, the technology

integration study group, professional residency, new teacher induction programs, the leadership academy, parenting workshops which are a part of community outreach, literacy and lunch bunch sessions. She also listed examples of professional development workshops that were offered.

Mrs. Phillips thanked her for the variety of offerings and information shared. Dr. Andrews complimented the teachers for earning more than the required inservice hours. Mrs. Kaminsky stated that teachers earn more than the twelve required inservice hours as they are dedicated and strive for continuous improvement.

B. Discussion of Funding Sources for Certified Personnel—Ray Butrum

Dr. Butrum: I had asked for a printout that would be a little easier to understand than our budget document so that at a glance we could look at each school and see exactly what extra positions had been given to schools. And maybe with the free and reduced lunch numbers, minority numbers, and special programs at each school kind of help us as a Board see where our general purpose funds are being spent. I did have a question as I was looking through the budget, to notice that we are still having a lot of inequity in how we are putting specific positions in different schools, but I thought if we could get this and maybe table it to discuss it at our retreat, it would give all the Board members an opportunity to look at the individual positions. I know we received a printout on Friday that had each school, and then I had asked Mr. Anderson to send us a copy of the free and reduced percentages. I think if you will write those down on each page and then look at the total number and look at the school licensed personnel to student ratio, those are significant numbers that we might look at and see how the position was funded last year, how it will be funded this year, whether they were a Title school, and whether we are using Title money to the greatest extent in our Title schools. It will give everybody an opportunity to look at it and discuss that at our June retreat.

Mrs. Duggin: What is EIS?

Mrs. Kaminsky: Early Intervening Services.

Dr. Butrum: Is that state or federal funds?

Mrs. Mathis: It is federal through state. It is another federal grant that comes through the state.

Dr. Butrum: So it is a single grant that we are paying for a reading recovery teacher on? Is it a grant written for one specific position, and we are paying for that position, or is it part of a grant that we might pull money from?

Mrs. Kaminsky: Early intervening services is 15% the state allows us to use out of IDEA money to prevent students from going into special education.

Dr. Butrum: What is that figure?

Mrs. Kaminsky: I don't know that figure off the top of my head.

Dr. Butrum: Is there a possibility that there could be more than just one teacher's salary out of that?

Mrs. Kaminsky: There is more than one teacher's salary out of that, correct Mr. Anderson?

Mr. Anderson: Yes.

Dr. Butrum: I only saw it listed under one.

Mrs. Kaminsky: It was funding one of the literacy coordinators who resigned mid-year and is also funding our response to intervention coordinator, Dena Oneal, out of central office.

Dr. Butrum: If you could explain Title I and IIA, I think that would help everyone understand a little bit about funds coming from this year's budget and next year's budget, whether we will have those or not.

Mrs. Kaminsky: Title I goes directly to schools receiving federal funds and federal dollars based on their free and reduced lunch numbers. Title IIA is really for the use of staff development and could be used for something called class size reduction, although, we do not take class size reduction.

Dr. Butrum: So do we have teachers, a reading recovery teacher under Title IIA?

Mrs. Kaminsky: I don't believe we have a reading recovery teacher under Title IIA.

Dr. Butrum: Black Fox.

Mrs. Kaminsky: There is a Teacher Leader for reading recovery that does continuing contact and staff development for reading recovery. They do training and staff development. They also support the reading recovery program, and you can do that in two ways. One is through an in-house trained teacher leader or the other is through contracting outside the school district.

Dr. Butrum: And you do have that listed under Title I. This year we have a reading recovery teacher that was...

Mrs. Kaminsky: Teacher leader that does training.

Dr. Butrum: So that is the same person that is retiring?

Mrs. Kaminsky: Yes, she is retiring at the end of the year.

Dr. Butrum: Okay. So as we look through, if we notice where funding comes from Title IIA this year and goes to Title I...

Mrs. Kaminsky: The reason that particular fund is moving to Title I is that we will be able to contract for our continuing contact and training services through Williamson County once the teacher leader retires, so that will work well for us.

Dr. Butrum: Are there any disproportionate numbers where you think we might have students who are on free and reduced, higher percentages at schools, that may not be receiving the services another school might have with lower percentages? Have we looked at any?

Mrs. Kaminsky: If you are talking Title I, you know we are required to spiral from the school with the greatest needs down, and we do follow those guidelines so our schools are ranked on the percentages of free and reduced lunch students in the building.

Dr. Butrum: Unless they are a Title I program.

Mrs. Kaminsky: If they are a Title I program, we are required to spiral down.

Dr. Butrum: School-wide?

Mrs. Kaminsky: Any Title I school works that way; you have to spiral the program. You get an allocation from the federal government, and then you work the budget so that the school with the greatest need, the greatest number of free and reduced lunch percentages, receives the greatest amount of money.

Dr. Butrum: Right. And do we know how many schools will be going through the Title I study next year?

Mrs. Kaminsky: All of our Title schools are working to become school-wide.

Dr. Butrum: Right.

Mr. Campbell: Mrs. Kaminsky, being as we are going Title I schools next year, can you explain to me the educational assistants, the mid-day assistants--those who have to take and pass the test? Am I correct in stating that this is for those people who are directly involved with instruction? If it were an attendance person or secretary, they don't take the test. Am I correct?

Mrs. Kaminsky: Yes, anybody who is directly involved in the instruction in a school-wide Title I program must be highly qualified which requires two years of college or passing of a basic skills Praxis exam, reading, writing, and math. We do have some principals, as you know, who move their educational assistants and staff around; so, some principals are asking their office staff to take the Praxis as well in an effort to make sure we maintain our highly qualified status under the rules.

Mrs. Duggin: Have our para-pros, educational assistants, who will be taking the Praxis in June, have they had an opportunity to have any study sessions or any guidance? Sometimes when you have been out of school for a while, you get a little antsy about taking math tests, in particular. I know we have some phenomenal paraprofessionals, so what are we doing to help prepare them for this exam?

Mrs. Kaminsky: We have provided our schools with study guides, and we are encouraging them. In many of our schools, teachers are tutoring which is really nice to help the para-pros or EAs. It is a nice bonding experience, and we are trying to calm everyone down and reduce the testing anxiety, as we know it is anxiety producing for folks who have been out of school for a long time. But so many of our folks work with children, and I think they are going to find they are going to do just fine on this exam.

C. Personnel Update (Tab 2)

Mr. Wilkerson recognized Jo Lasater for her dedication and service to the Murfreesboro City Schools and to the Department of Human Resources, specifically as one of those people you do not want to do without. Mr. Wilkerson shared the following personnel information behind Tab 2:

1. Completion of Ninety Days:
LaToya Beard ESP Site Director Bellwood-Bowdoin
2. Retirements, Resignations, and Non-Renewals 2008-09
3. New Teachers Hired for 2008-09
4. Interim Teachers Hired for 2008-09
5. Tentative Assignment Lists

D. 2009-2010 Board Meeting Dates (Tab 3)

Mrs. Mathis stated that the listing of next year's board meetings is a tentative list for the Board's information.

E. Monthly Revenue and Expenditure Report (Tab 4)

Mrs. Mathis pointed out that the system has completed 83% of the school year with a net income of about \$3.3 million. This income will not increase as the system has received most of its tax revenue and will not receive a payment from the state in the month of June. Revenue is slightly behind last year's, but expenditures are behind percent-wise as well, so we are in excellent shape considering the state of the economy. She attributed this to the finance department and everybody working with Mr. Anderson to make sure that we are not over spending in areas that can be controlled. Dr. Andrews stated that with the tough climate, she appreciates their efforts. In response to her question, Mr. Anderson stated that he feels the projections for revenue for next year are good but will continue to look at the situation throughout the year to see if any adjustments are needed, although, a lot depends on what the state does. The state has received stimulus money and will keep the BEP funding whole.

F. Attendance Report (Tab 5)

Mrs. Mathis reported that K-6 student enrollment is 6,921, an increase of 20 students over last month's report. The system has 364 preschool students enrolled. It is difficult to predict movement in the system; CLA increased by nine students, Scales increased by eight students, John Pittard increased by seven students, and MNE decreased by six students.

VII. OTHER BUSINESS

Mrs. Duggin asked if writing scores have been received; Mrs. Mathis responded that they have been received but are embargoed, and it may be a month before it is known when the embargo will be lifted. There is a possibility the embargo on these scores will not be lifted until the July 4 date that TCAP scores are released to the school system.

Mrs. Duggin asked that principals be polled to ask their feelings about the Board possibly sending a letter to the state department to reconsider when TCAP tests are given, as the date seems to be getting earlier each year. With new state standards, higher rigor with the tests, and new tests, a request to the state for a later testing date, perhaps even in May, would be beneficial to all. Mrs. Mathis stated that in a meeting with a state official recently, that topic did come up and the answer given to moving the testing date up was

because of the norms and time needed to get the tests back. Mrs. Mathis stated however that it would be beneficial for them to hear the request. Mrs. Duggin stated that pressure should be applied to find out why when the tests are machine-scored that it takes so long, and they are paid a great deal of money to handle the scoring of the tests. Mrs. Mathis agreed and stated that the principals would likely agree and will be polled.

Mrs. Wade asked that any items that a Board member would like to suggest to be placed on the June 19 board retreat agenda should be forwarded to Mrs. Mathis. Dr. Butrum suggested that with the retreat to be held on June 19 that the regularly scheduled June 23 board meeting be cancelled, and perhaps a July board meeting then be added to the calendar. Mrs. Wade stated that she did not see a problem with the June 23 meeting being cancelled; however, in the past if there were no business items there was no need for a July board meeting, and she would not want to meet just to meet. Also, the Board and administrators would have that time to schedule vacations, etc. After discussion, it was decided to replace the June 23 board meeting with the June 19 board retreat. At the conclusion of the retreat, the Board could determine if as a result of the retreat, items for discussion or action would result in the need for the Board to vote on the recommendation for a July board meeting. Mrs. Mathis stated that there is one action item that will need board action in June, but that item could be added to the June 19 board retreat agenda eliminating the need for the regular June 23 board meeting.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Campbell moved to adjourn the meeting; Dr. Butrum seconded the motion. The motion carried, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Director of Schools

MISSION STATEMENT
*To assure academic and personal success
for each child.*