

MINUTES

MURFREESBORO CITY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Tuesday, August 25, 2009

6:30 p.m.—Central Administration Building

ATTENDANCE

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

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

Others: City Staff Attorney Kelley Baker, *Daily News Journal* reporter Chasity Gunn, 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 6:30 p.m. Principal Roseann Barton led the Board and audience in the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a moment of silence.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

On motion by Mrs. Phillips and second by Mrs. Duggin, the Board unanimously approved the agenda as presented.

III. COMMUNICATIONS

- Congratulations to City Schools Foundation recipients of grants totaling in excess of \$24,400. (List enclosed)
- Congratulations to MCS's Child Nutrition Program that has been awarded a \$20,000 grant from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. The funds are earmarked for the purchase of a dish machine for Hobgood Elementary.
- The Tennessee Department of Agriculture and Health presented the system's School Nutrition Program with the "Local Foods for Local Schools 2009 Recognition Award" for the system's commitment of allowing the community's farmers an opportunity to be a part of the school nutrition plan and in providing Tennessee students fresh and healthy food choices.

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- Thanks to the American Heart Association 2008 Heart Ball organizers for their donation of eight new AED's to the school system in memory of Matt Lovejoy.
- The Vestry and Outreach Committee of St. Paul's Episcopal Church has donated \$2,000 to the Family Resource Center in support of the FRC and Connie Middleton's efforts to provide food, shelter, and medical care to the community.
- Congratulations to The Discovery School students: Rachel Massaro (Cindy Jones' classroom) who won first place in her age group in the GJCC Memorial Day Triathlon; Shannon Miller (Lora Taylor's classroom) who won First Place in the State of Tennessee in the "Invest Write" writing contest; and, Jack Luo (Kristen McKnight's classroom) who had a story published in MeddyBemps Young Writers Workshop, an online writing forum.

IV. CONSENT ITEMS (Tab 1)

Mrs. Duggin moved to approve the following consent agenda items; Mr. Campbell seconded the motion.

Mrs. Duggin asked why Mr. Anderson is not listed as a member of the management team. Mrs. Mathis explained that Mr. Anderson is a member of her in-house management team, but as specified in T.C.A. 49-5-602, the Board-approved management team consists of professional employees licensed by the State Department of Education.

“Management personnel” means those professional employees certified by the board of education to represent it in the negotiating process. “Professional employee” includes any person employed by a local board of education in a position which requires a license issued by the department of education for service in public and elementary and secondary schools of Tennessee supported, in whole or in part, by local, state or federal funds, but shall not include a retired teacher who is employed as a teacher in accordance with the provisions of title 8, chapter 36, part 8.

Mr. Campbell inquired as to why Mrs. Kaminsky's title had been changed from Coordinator of Instruction to Director of Instruction. Mrs. Mathis explained that prior to Mrs. Kaminsky being hired, the title had always been Director of Instruction. At the time of her hiring, Mrs. Mathis changed the title to “coordinator” to allow the person who was placed in that position the opportunity to earn that title. Mrs. Mathis stated that Mrs. Kaminsky has certainly earned the title of “Director of Instruction.” The change in title did not include any monetary change.

The following consent agenda items were unanimously approved by acclamation:

- A. Minutes of the August 11, 2009 Special Called Board Meeting
- B. Designation of Coordinator of School Health as the individual who is responsible for coordination of all training/communications on HIV/AIDS and OSHA's Bloodborne Pathogens Standard
- C. The 2009-10 Management Team: Lee Wilkerson, Human Resources Director; Danielle Kaminsky, Director of Instruction; Michelle Hummel, Educational Specialist; Crystal Farris, Supervisor of Extended School Programs & Community Education; and, Priscilla Van Tries, Special Education Supervisor
- D. The ESP Advisory Board

V. ACTION ITEMS

- A. Approval of Revisions to the FY'10 General Purpose Budget (Tab 2)

Mrs. Mathis explained that the state has required that the system meet the "maintenance of effort" test, and to do this they suggested that the system budget additional revenue. Mr. Anderson quoted that "maintenance of effort prevents local governments from reducing funding for education from one year to the next." In developing the budget, an attempt had been made to adjust to what the true economy was. The Board is being asked to move \$102,498 to the county tax area to meet the maintenance of effort. The system anticipates additional property tax revenue of \$303,000 and anticipates less sales tax revenue by \$200,595, for a different of \$102,498. In response to Mr. Hopper, Mr. Anderson stated that we are not receiving more revenue from the state. The adjustment is being made in anticipation of more revenue but if this is not received, it would not be spent.

Mrs. Phillips moved to approve the revisions to the FY'10 General Purpose budget as presented; Mrs. Duggin seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved by acclamation.

- B. Approval of Revisions to the 2009-2010 Traditional and Alternative Calendars (Tab 3)

Mrs. Mathis stated that she had, at the request of the Board, written a letter with input from the principals and instructional staff to the state requesting that the TCAP testing window be changed to a later date. The state listened to our plea and to the responses of 107 school systems. The testing window is for five weeks now; our system is

recommending that we schedule the tests at the latest dates possible (six consecutive days) or from March 22-April 9 to April 15-22. To do this, the system would need to change spring break on the traditional calendar to March 22-26 from April 12-16 and on the alternative calendar to March 22-April 2 from April 12-23 . The county has already made the adjustment, and our system's spring break coincides with the county's break.

Mrs. Duggin moved to approve the revised 2009-2010 Traditional and Alternative calendars as presented; Mr. Campbell seconded the motion. Mrs. Duggin expressed her thanks to the administration for following up on this request as it will provide teachers more instructional time before testing. She encouraged the administration and Board to continue to petition the State Department as she would like to see the dates moved to the end of April/first of May. The motion was unanimously approved by acclamation.

Mr. Campbell asked if there is a move to begin school after Labor Day. Mrs. Mathis replied that there is, but by approving the calendar, the Board has approved a beginning date before Labor Day.

VI. REPORTS/INFORMATION

A. 2009 AYP Results (Tab 4)

Mrs. Mathis stated that she is pleased to report the system's adequate yearly progress and referred to the media release stating:

Murfreesboro City School System has had another banner year of TCAP testing results for students in grades three through six as measured by No Child Left Behind benchmarks. 93% of the students achieved proficient or advanced results in both Reading/Language Arts and Writing, and 93% of the students achieved proficient or advanced results in Math subtests on the 2009 TCAP assessment administered this past spring. The benchmark for reading is 89% and for Math is 86%. The greatest success was measured in gains across subgroups in both Reading/Language Arts and Math. The system is also pleased to announce that adequate yearly progress was attained in all subgroups and as a district in 2009.

The system is moving in the right direction and is classified as improving relative to the high priority status. It sends a mixed message to have so many children performing at a proficient and advanced level, but if you leave one subgroup behind, you can move to the high priority list. Mrs. Mathis stated that "*Our students continue to make exceptional gains and as a group have exceeded the NCLB benchmarks every year since federal guidelines have been in existence. I am very proud of the successes of our students and thank them for learning what their teachers do such a great job teaching. We all owe a*

tremendous amount of thanks to all of our teachers for their desire to continually hone their teaching skills in order to meet the diverse needs of their students; our teachers go above and beyond the staff development requirements, above and beyond in applying for and receiving grants as witnessed tonight, and I believe their willingness to give their all to help children is evidenced in our system's gains." She stated that after hearing Mrs. Kaminsky's report of their outstanding progress that she hopes the Board will take the time to give a standing ovation to the teachers and students.

Mrs. Kaminsky referred to the data provided behind Tab 4 pointing out that the district attained advanced and proficient levels in each subject and grade level and is above the state performance level. Fifth grade writing assessment results are about the same as last year with an average of 4.2 on a 6.0 scale. The goal for the coming year is to achieve more 5's, and the system will benchmark three times during the year prior to the writing assessment. She reviewed that the Reading/Language Arts AYP results indicate that the system hit all of the benchmarks in the major subgroups except in Hispanic (86%) made annual yearly progress through the confidence interval as a result of being close to the benchmark. The economically disadvantaged subgroup made 88% that is a passing rate through the confidence interval. ELL made an 81% passing rate making AYP through safe harbor which means they improved by 19%. The special education subgroup achieved 80% passing rate achieving AYP through safe harbor. In math all subgroups achieved the 86% benchmark with the exception of the special ed subgroup that made a 76% passing rate but still achieving AYP through safe harbor. The following six pages show the breakdown of Hispanic, ELL, and special ed subgroups by subject area and subgroup by school. The subgroups targeted in the past have been studied very carefully. Buildings with less than 45 students in a subgroup cannot be targeted; however, all of the students impact the district AYP level. It is important that every building focus on making sure no child is left behind so we have focused on each subgroup and each student all year long to determine where we need to provide more intervention and support. In response to Mr. Hopper's question, Mrs. Kaminsky stated that if a student indicates on their registration card that they speak a language other than English, a state-mandated English proficiency test (TELPA) is administered to see if that student is to receive services. Some students who have registered do not speak any English.

Dr. Butrum noted that the Board received a SCORE report that provides information regarding student performance. Mrs. Kaminsky stated that value added is embargoed, and the state has adjusted the benchmarks to match the more rigorous standards so she cannot discuss it. The Board will receive a report on value added scores when the state releases the report card. She stated that the system is looking closely at that. Achievement gains refer to annual yearly progress, but that impacts our value added gains and vice versa which means these scores should impact each other. If you look at

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each child individually, you should see gains in value added as well as AYP. The system is definitely seeing movement in AYP and movement over time in our subgroups as indicated on the graphs. The system will continue to work on value added gains.

The last chart indicates performance as a district on AYP goals. MCS made AYP in all subgroups in all subject areas. Last year, the system had two areas that placed us on the high priority list. ELL in math last year was 78%, but this year we achieved the passing rate and state benchmark of 86%. The other area that the system was targeted in was the Hispanic subgroup in Reading/Language Arts at an 82% proficiency rate; this increased this year to 86% with the state benchmark being 89%, and the system achieved AYP through the confidence interval.

Mrs. Kaminsky asked that the principals, instructional support personnel, and administration stand to be recognized for their hard work in assuring that students succeed. She noted that everyone is aware that the system must achieve AYP again this school year to get off the high priority list, and all are willing to work to achieve this goal even though this will be a tough year with a new test, higher proficiency rates, and new standards. As a district, principals, teachers, central office staff, we need the Board of Education's support as we strive to achieve our goals as no one in this district wants to stay on the list.

Mrs. Kaminsky reviewed some of the action steps put in place last year and what has occurred to help the system move forward. An academic profile was developed on each student in the MCS district, K-6. Students were screened three times and benchmarked using the ThinkLink and Aimsweb benchmark assessments that were incorporated into an academic profile. Building and data teams work together on this and meet with the central office team three times a year to insure that interventions are going directly to the students who need help. Students who perform below the tenth percentile on the screening instruments are referred to the Response to Intervention team (RTI). Using the team's recommendation, some students scoring up to the 25th percentile are recommended for assistance. The RTI team provides ongoing research-based interventions and modifications in an effort to increase student achievement. A second RTI coordinator has been added to the team so that more intervention and support occurs at the building level. A district master list of students that fall within the NCLB benchmark subgroups is compiled, and each student is tracked on the list. An academic intervention plan is developed for each of the students, and students are worked with individually. The community outreach coordinators reach out to all parents of students who hit the AYP list to assure parental support. Four parenting centers were established, parent coffees were held, home visits were held, and teachers made referrals for additional help. Extensive efforts are made to help the Hispanic community for translation and support. A

consultant who specializes in research-based, best practice instruction for the second language learner provided and will continue to provide embedded professional development for both general education and ESL teachers. Teachers have begun to incorporate the new state standards, and the Championship Playbooks have been revised to incorporate more practical strategies. An Extended School Program has been developed for “at risk” students. A consultant who specializes in research-based, best practice instruction in math will provide embedded professional development with a focus this year on the Algebra and Geometry standards and on the integration of science and math standards with the use of instructional coaches. Professional development has been provided on the Tennessee Academic Vocabulary, and “Lunch Bunch” sessions will take place to continue to provide strategies. Family math and literacy nights were held throughout the year to educate families. This year, additional initiatives will include three writing prompt benchmark assessments for fourth and fifth grade students and a consultant from the Education Consumers Group will conduct an analysis of our value-added data and will provide the instructional team and building principals with practical suggestions for increasing value-added gains. The system will continue to receive support from STAT member Carol Stinson, Dr. Connie Smith, Dr. Gwen Watson, and the State Department of Education. The focus will be closing the achievement gap for all students in all subgroups and meeting the new standards of performance on a new test.

Mrs. Phillips thanked Mrs. Mathis for her leadership pointing out that having 93% of the students performing at a proficient or advanced level is quite an accomplishment. She thanked teachers, parents, and students for all of their efforts. She congratulated Mrs. Kaminsky for earning the title “Director of Instruction.”

B. Personnel Update (Tab 5)

Mrs. Mathis shared the following information with the Board and noted that a full report of new hires would be presented at the September 22 board meeting.

1. Completion of 90 Days: Susan Stoner/Nursing Supervisor Systemwide
2. Licensed Personnel—Resignations, Retirements, Leaves of Absence

C. Monthly Revenue and Expenditure Report (Tab 6)

Mr. Anderson stated that the report indicates a negative \$2,863,045 balance (no revenue is received during July); the system will not catch up until February or March. This is why the system must maintain a fund balance. The system has completed 8.3% of the fiscal year, has received 8% of the anticipated revenue, and has expenditures totaling 6.3%. The system has not yet received approval for the plan regarding ARRA funds. He pointed out that the \$44,000 technology expenditure was transferred into regular

instruction after the report was printed; also, with a short window before the alternative calendar schools open in the summer, an attempt has been made to complete as many capital outlay projects as possible during the summer break which explains the higher percentage of expenditures during the first part of the school year. An allocation from fund balance for Technology is still being made in the amount of approximately \$500,000.

D. Attendance Update

Mrs. Mathis pointed out that total Pre-K – 6 enrollment is 6,882 students, an increase of 24 students since the end of the last school year. The projected enrollment for this year was 6,890, and the system will surely reach that number. Students in the district are mobile, and enrollment numbers fluctuate throughout the school year. She commended teachers who face this challenge with students moving in and out of the classroom. Mrs. Mathis pointed out that the class sizes are being monitored and kept as close to the desired number as possible and thanked principals, Mr. Wilkerson, and Mr. Anderson for working closely together to achieve this. She stated that it is unfortunate but cannot be helped when enrollment numbers require that a teacher be moved. In response to Mrs. Phillips' question, Mrs. Mathis stated that the system does still receive growth money.

VII. OTHER BUSINESS

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

On motion by Mrs. Duggin and second by Dr. Butrum, Mrs. Wade adjourned the board meeting at approximately 7:30 p.m.

Director of Schools

MISSION STATEMENT

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