

REVISED MINUTES

MURFREESBORO CITY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Tuesday, November 17, 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: Interim Director Dr. Carolyn B. Tucker, Gary Anderson, Crystal Farris, Cheryl Harris, Michelle Hummel, Danielle Kaminsky, and Priscilla Van Tries.

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. Mr. Lee Wilkerson 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 Dr. Andrews, the agenda was approved as presented.

III. COMMUNICATIONS

- Dr. Tucker congratulated Chair Mary Wade for having received her Level V Boardmanship pin from TSBA.
- Congratulations to Madison Loux who won at the state level in the National Association of Insurance Women Essay Contest and received a plaque and \$100. Ms. Loux was an Erma Siegel fifth-grade student in Mrs. Ruby Little's class when she won the award. She currently attends Siegel Middle School.
- Congratulations to the following MCS City Hall Art Winners listed by grade level: K—Annie Thomas, 1st—Camryn Adcock, 2nd—Camilo Barzola (John Pittard Elementary Students); 3rd—Cora Luper, 4th—Sabin Sanders, 5th—Alexis Radke, 6th—Suhaila El-Othman (Northfield Elementary Students). Best in Show Winner—Sabin Sanders.

Board Meeting Minutes

Page 2

November 17, 2009 (6:30 p.m.)

- Thanks to Dr. Bob and Paula Jones for their donation of \$2,640 to John Pittard Elementary for the purchase of the IXL math software site license and for their donation of the good citizen t-shirts for the tenth year.

IV. CONSENT ITEMS

On motion by Mr. Hopper and second by Mr. Campbell, the minutes as presented were approved.

- A. Minutes of the November 10, 2009 Special Called Board Meeting/Work Session

V. ACTION ITEMS

- A. Notice of Charges Against Tenured Teacher

The Board was provided with a copy of the Notice of Charges of unprofessional conduct against a tenured teacher which are incorporated herein to these minutes. Mrs. Baker referred to such Notice of Charges of unprofessional conduct against a tenured teacher advising the Board that they must either approve or disapprove such Notice of Charges. Dr. Andrews moved to approve the Notice of Charges; Mr. Hopper seconded the motion.

On roll call: Andrews—yes; Butrum—yes; Campbell—yes; Duggin—yes; Hopper—yes; Phillips—yes; Wade—yes. The motion carried.

VI. REPORTS/INFORMATION

- A. FY'09 Audit Report – Mr. Larry Felts/Crosslin & Associates

Mr. Anderson stated that the completed audit reports for the General Fund and Activity (school-based) funds have been provided to the Board. He thanked Golena Bell, Finance Manager, and the entire Finance Department staff for the work with the audit process. He introduced Mr. Larry Felts, Principal, Crosslin & Associates.

Mr. Felts referred to the correspondence required as indicated on page 1 verifying they had met their responsibilities under U.S. generally accepted auditing standards and OMB Circular A-133 and also governmental standards. There were no deficiencies identified with internal controls, testing and evaluating compliance. The result of the compliance procedures and audit were clean opinions with no significant deficiencies and no material weaknesses in internal controls. There were no major changes in the accounting policies as they were found to be acceptable and appropriate. There were no significant

transactions that occurred for which there was not an appropriate basis. There was a sound basis found in the management's estimates and judgments. Management provided a letter indicating they have provided all information necessary for the audit to be conducted. No fraudulent acts were identified. On the activity funds, there was a slight increase in the number of students, 65, and a small increase of about \$2,000. Expenditures increased by about \$193,000, much of which was because two of the schools accumulated significant balances and were asked to spend down the funds. Each school was visited looking at the controls and found the overall controls and monitoring by the central office to be good. The expenditures were for appropriate purposes. The MCS net assets increased about 4.6% as a result of operational activities and pay down of debt on properties of schools. Mr. Felts reviewed the revenue and expenditures for compliance of programs and had no exceptions or reports in those areas. In response to Mr. Hopper's question, Mr. Felts stated that they realize the importance of reserves and that they are not all expendable although they are crucial as income is received over a period of time.

B. 2009 Report Card (Tab 1)

~Report Card Overview – Dr. Connie Smith

Dr. Tucker stated that she is truly honored to have the Assistant Commissioner of the Department of Education, Dr. Connie Smith, who is over the Division of Accountability and Teacher and Learning. She will share the information relative to the state and the report card.

Dr. Smith stated that she is familiar with and has been associated with Dr. Tucker over twenty years, and congratulated the Board on selecting her as the Interim Director of Schools.

Dr. Smith stated that she would be speaking on two aspects—achievement and value added. She provided a copy of the Powerpoint she would be presenting. (A copy is enclosed in the official minutes notebook.) She stated that what the Board sees in the report card is a snapshot in time. The baseline has been reset from which we will proceed with new standards, more rigorous and relevant. The baseline was set when No Child Left Behind came into place in 2001-2002 and based that on the 1998 report card set of achievement and value added. Because of a new set of standards, the baseline had to be set. The same thing has been done this year. This school year the more NAEP-like standards are being taught. Dr. Smith referred to the Powerpoint she provided the Board referencing the system profile and pointing out that there are nine subgroups that school systems are held accountable for. Tennessee pre-empted No Child Left Behind in 1998 with its own accountability model. Data was looked at in aggregate rather than by sub-

Board Meeting Minutes

Page 4

November 17, 2009 (6:30 p.m.)

group so masked that performance. NCLB advocates for all children. MCS is in a high priority status, meaning it has failed in two consecutive years, K-8, on one of the 72 variables and one of the nine sub-groups as far as federal benchmarks moving the system into system improvement. Last year, MCS met the federal benchmarks for all of the subgroups moving into an improving status. Now the system has to make the second year to move off the high priority list.

In response to Dr. Butrum, Dr. Smith stated there really will not be a comparison as this report card is a one-year snapshot so you will make it or not based on this year's performance. We have to reset the definition of proficiency. We will administer the assessment in the spring, then in the summer bring in a group of practitioners and others to discuss what students need to know to be proficient, called a bookmarking. We have asked the U.S. Department of Education to delay our assignment of status until about September or October, but we have not heard from the yet. The way you move a school or system to proficiency is one student at a time identifying all of those who are below or teetering on the proficiency line. However, a dip in improvement is expected. It is going to be more difficult to be proficient across the board. She noted that this is a restart of the baseline and the data on page 5 is for a fixed transition point; you cannot compare it to previous years. The system received Math—B, Reading/Language—B; Social Studies—B; Science—B; 5th grade writing--A. Baseline and cut scores will be determined this summer. A comparison of subgroups indicate the percent proficient such as African-American—13% to 12%, a positive move; Hispanic—18% to 10%; white 4% to 4%; Economically Disadvantaged—13% to 11%; Students with Disabilities—30% to 24%; Limited English Proficient—22% to 14%. Dr. Smith stated that these are positives and something to get excited about. The system is moving all subgroups upward. She pointed out the scores as listed on page 8 comparing the trends in Reading/Language plus Writing. On page 9, she pointed out one school was targeted. Bradley has moved from Good Standing to Target, meaning a red flag. They failed one or more of the federal benchmarks. Dr. Smith pointed out that the state provides assistance and recognized Mrs. Carol Stinson who has been assigned to MCS.

Dr. Smith stated that Value-Added is something unique to Tennessee. Value added shows student progress from the beginning of the school year to the end of the school year. Administrators can see if you are closing the gap. This is a noncomparable piece of information which cannot be compared to last year due to the restarting of the baseline. This is the baseline with the new standards. This report card reflects last year. For this particular year, this is not derived on a three-year period. This will impact teacher effect data. The C is a maintenance, not a close the gap, variable. Look at this against the state. Math and science are focal areas for moving students forward. She noted that textbooks being used adopted some time ago are likely not in line with the new standards. A pattern such as this may be a professional development, resources or materials, or

Board Meeting Minutes

Page 5

November 17, 2009 (6:30 p.m.)

organization of the school day issue. The system looks strong in reading/language arts and social studies but math and science should be looked at. But you cannot compare this year to the previous year. An achievement and value-added dip is anticipated with the changes. Mr. Hopper noted that for some time, it appears science and math have been problems across the state, and wondered if the teachers coming into this profession just didn't have the inclination for these subjects. Dr. Smith stated that in the training one math methodology class had been offered, so the concern is getting the training out there on how to teach these programs, for example algebra in grades 6-8. The same would be true of science. In response to Mrs. Phillips, Dr. Smith responded that the state is working with the Board of Regents on a program called Teacher Quality Initiative, looking at revising the preparation of teachers. They suggested that the university concentrate on the content courses, more so than the philosophy, etc. Also, Dr. Smith stated that she has looked at textbook adoptions and find they are not in alignment with the standards to be taught this year. Dr. Butrum noted that these snapshots are reflective of 3-6 grade students in achievement and 4-6 grades in value added. Dr. Smith stated that value added is, for example, a measure of test to retest from third to fourth grade. But that measure of value added is reflective of cumulative knowledge from student learning from kindergarten, first, and second grades. All contribute to the value added. K-3 will make or break a child. She reviewed the issue with fourth grade math stating that principals hold all prior teachers accountable for that grade. When an improving pattern is found, there are variables as to why this happens. Fifth and sixth grade is making up for issues in grades K-4 so grades K-4 need to be looked at. Reading and language arts have a declining pattern reflective of a K-3 influence. Everybody has to work together. Great improvement in fifth and sixth so look at the teaching and learning process. Dr. Butrum stated that this is just an increase, an NCE for each child, and averaged for the whole school and class that gives you your growth standard. Dr. Smith stated that the calculations are the same but the standards have changed. Mr. Campbell stated that looking at value added, for example in math, fourth grade -2, you don't look in 2007-08 at fourth grade as much as you would look at the fifth grade to see the progress that has been made from a -2 to a +1.3 and then follow the same group in grade six. Discrepancies could be because of standards, textbooks, or the teacher not doing what the textbook shows. He stated he hopes the teachers will divert from textbooks in that case and do what is needed to teach the new standards. Dr. Smith stated that social studies in fourth grade has a positive trend, fifth grade a teepee trend, and sixth the same so this should be looked at. Science in 2006, 2007, 2008 good things were going on in the fourth grade. Something happened in 2008-09 so look to see what is going on in the fourth and fifth grade. The system has a positive sixth grade trend. Value Added is diagnostic. Dr. Smith reviewed on pages 13-14 what school improvement 1 and 2 are and the statistics across the state.

Board Meeting Minutes

Page 6

November 17, 2009 (6:30 p.m.)

Mr. Hopper stated that Dr. Smith had provided the best information regarding value added that he has heard thus far. Dr. Tucker thanked Dr. Smith for sharing the information.

~Report Card Data – Mrs. Danielle Kaminsky

Mrs. Kaminsky reported that this year's report card demonstrates fundamental changes to the calculations of Value Added and Achievement scores. The method for calculating scores and the scale used to determine letter grades have been revised to allow for a transition to the new standards and assessments required by the Tennessee Diploma Project.

As Dr. Smith noted, there are two major changes that have been implemented in the calculation of the Report Card scores. First, the baseline year for comparing student achievement has been reset using 2009 test scores. Secondly, a new grade scale has been developed. This baseline provides a fixed transition point and therefore 2009 scores and all grades connected with these scores are considered the new baseline. This change prohibits comparisons to previous years' data for reporting including state, district, and school-level grades. For the 2009 year, the most appropriate comparison is to that of State level data. Murfreesboro City Schools has above average student academic achievement scores. Achievement scores are consistently above state scores. Writing scores are considered exemplary. Six of our schools met or exceeded the state's performance level in Reading/Language Arts and five of our schools met or exceeded the state's performance in mathematics. On average, we are above the state in science and social studies.

The District met adequate yearly progress in all subgroup areas in reading and mathematics and all grade levels performed above the state in every subject area and grade level. While the district's status remains "High Priority," we are moving off the list based on our subgroup performance in math and reading. Our achievement results and scores are the scores that are used to determine the status of the district.

Value-added measures a student's progress within a grade and subject area demonstrating the influence of in-school factors on the student's performance. This information is meant for use by educators as an instructional tool for meeting the needs of all students.

This tool is designed to assist educators with implementing instruction based on common strengths and needs. The information should be used to address the needs of all of our students as our mission statement says assuring academic and personal success for each child. The system's value-added scores of "C" in all areas are consistent with performance noted at the state level. Although there are some variances in math and science numerical scores, these differences are considered negligible. In summary:

Board Meeting Minutes

Page 7

November 17, 2009 (6:30 p.m.)

- Murfreesboro City Schools has above average student academic achievement scores. Achievement scores are consistently above state scores. Writing scores are considered exemplary.
- 4 schools earned all A's and B's in the area of achievement.
- Murfreesboro City Schools has "Maintained the State Growth Standard" in all areas.
- Value-added growth in Reading/Language Arts and Social Studies maintained the state mean gain.
- All subgroups made adequate yearly progress on the 2009 TCAP.

In response to Mr. Campbell's questions and Dr. Butrum's followup, Mrs. Kaminsky stated that teachers are allowed to divert from textbooks to teach the new standards. Math workshops were offered, and teachers received the flash-drive Dr. Smith talked about. A variety of materials are presented and teachers are asked to align the standards to the materials. The Championship Playbooks have been offered. Teachers are provided a variety of materials.

Mrs. Phillips thanked Mrs. Kaminsky, Mrs. Van Tries, teachers and others for the progress and efforts made. Mrs. Kaminsky stated teachers deserve the credit, and the instructional staff members are here to provide support. In response to Mrs. Duggin's question, Mrs. Kaminsky stated that she and principals, and the TCSPP committee, have talked about the readjustment of the baseline, but she has not rolled them through the extensive regression analysis Powerpoint. Dr. Andrews followed up that it is hard for teachers to meet the needs in all areas, all subgroups, but teachers have done a lot more than is evident in the scores. Mrs. Kaminsky stated collaboration takes place between grade levels. The early grades are critical to our success also. Mr. Hopper complimented Mrs. Kaminsky for the improvement and job she has done. Mrs. Duggin asked how many additional people have been hired regarding RTI to give those students additional time, doing Tier 2 and Tier 3. Mrs. Kaminsky stated that she will get that information to Mrs. Duggin. The system is learning with RTI and dialog is taking place, as it is critical to improvement. She is proud of the teacher collaboration taking place. Mrs. Duggin asked if the math and science coaches are modeling. Mrs. Kaminsky stated they are doing staff development, providing support, and providing shoulder-to-shoulder coaching. Response to intervention is a process we go through to help children who may need extra assistance with help in the regular classroom. Children are identified through screeners, a list is developed, and a multi-disciplinary team meets to discuss each child. The team develops strategies. The parent is brought in to provide assistance also. Monitoring takes place to see if interventions and strategies are working, moving from

Tier 1, 2 or 3. In response to Dr. Butrum, Mrs. Kaminsky stated that according to Veronica McDonald at the state, it was not necessary to use the 5-Tier model. Dr. Tucker stated that she has also had meetings with principals to look at the data and at the strengths and weaknesses to determine what needs to be done to do better.

C. Proposed New Board Policies (Tab 2)

BO 41—Registered Sex Offenders

STU 55—Educational Records as Evidence Act—Subpoenas for
Education Records

Mrs. Baker presented two new board policies for the Board to review which will be brought back for approval at the next meeting.

BO 41—Registered Sex Offenders will be helpful to both principals and those identified as sex offenders on what the legal limitations are. No registered sex offender whose victim was a minor can come within 1,000 of school property. No registered sex offender or violent sex offender can be on school premises where there are children under 18, can sit, stand idly by, whether or not in a vehicle, within 1,000 feet of a school building or be in any conveyance owned, leased or contracted by a school if there are children under 18 present. The exception to the statute is if a parent is a sex offender that parent may attend a conference or other scheduled activity with school officials present provided they are participating in that conference or school activity because of their child in our school. They can also drop off or pick up their child. If that parent is coming to the school for a conference or planned activity, they must check in at the office and an official of the school must take that parent to the conference or activity they are there for. The information is kept confidential for the benefit of the child. In response to Mrs. Duggin's question, Mrs. Baker stated that the principal and teacher aware of this information should schedule the conferences at an appropriate time. In response to Mr. Hopper, Mrs. Baker stated that she first presents the policy to the Director to be sure that it is shared with the appropriate staff members and to assure the policy can be implemented.

Mrs. Baker provided STU 55—Educational Records to assist principals and staff by letting them know what steps to follow and that she should be contacted immediately when subpoenas are received. There are specific ways the records are to be presented to the courts. Parents have to be notified when a subpoena is received unless it is mandated that they cannot. Dr. Andrews asked that the policy list those steps in a clear and step-by-step approach for teachers. It might need to be in administrative directive instead of board policy. Mrs. Baker stated that the principals are deemed as the custodian of the records. The last sentence in *I. Purpose* has been revised to state: "contact their

supervisor and the attorney for MCS.” Dr. Tucker added that at principals’ staff meeting, it was emphasized that Mrs. Baker be contacted, and she will work with Mrs. Baker to provide a fact sheet including steps. But once the teacher notifies the principal, the principal will take over.

D. Personnel Update

Dr. Tucker shared the following personnel information:

1. Persons Completing Ninety Days:

Lori Cantrell	E.A.	Black Fox
Kathy Farrer	Special Ed E.A.	John Pittard
Jonathan Fitzpatrick	Groundskeeper	Maintenance
Hope Jones	Special Ed E.A.	Bradley
Angela Tremmel	Special Ed E.A.	Scales

E. Monthly Revenue and Expenditure Report (Tab 3)

Mr. Anderson stated that we are at the four-month mark, 33 1/3% completion of the year. The net income is \$4 million in deficit, but this is normal until property taxes come in. We operate on the fund balance or depend on the City for an advance to cover expenses. In response to Dr. Butrum, Mr. Anderson stated that we have been more conservative. We are \$100,000 more behind in sales tax collections than anticipated even though the projection had been conservative. Revenue collection is at 23% at one-third through the year. Last year, sales tax revenue was down \$600,00 but property tax was up \$300,000 to offset some of the loss. On the expenditure side, the system is at 30.8%. The capital outlay account is over due to the reroofing at Black Fox.

F. Attendance Report

Mr. Anderson reported that the system is down four students over last month but up 37 students over our budgeted amount. We are at 6,927 and 56 students over what the enrollment was at this time last year. The trend goes up and down. Attendance percentage is at 95% that is above the state amount. The K-3 pupil:teacher ratio is 19.05; the 4-6 pupil:teacher ratio is 20.3. The systemwide licensed personnel:student ratio is 13.49.

Board Meeting Minutes

Page 10

November 17, 2009 (6:30 p.m.)

VII. OTHER BUSINESS

Mrs. Baker announced that a special meeting is scheduled for Thursday evening, November 19, 7 p.m. to interview Dr. Linda Gilbert. A special meeting is scheduled for Friday, November 20, beginning with an interview with Mrs. Beth M. Wright at 4 p.m., and followed with an interview with Dr. Lela Bridges at 6:45 p.m. The Board will hold a special meeting on Saturday, November 21, at 8:00 a.m. to determine two finalists. This meeting had originally been scheduled for 9:00 a.m.

Mrs. Phillips thanked Mrs. Baker for her leadership with working with the consultant and Board.

Mrs. Phillips suggested that if anyone had information they learned at TSBA's conference and convention, they might wish to report that at the next Board meeting.

Mrs. Wade reminded everyone that the best way to get the word out about the great things going on in our school system would be for us to get out there and tell our own story.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chair Wade adjourned the board meeting at approximately 8:30 p.m.

Dr. Carolyn Baldwin Tucker, Interim Director of Schools

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