

MINUTES

MURFREESBORO CITY BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL CALLED BOARD MEETING--
POLICY WORK SESSION
Tuesday, March 8, 2011
6:30 p.m.—Central Administration Building

ATTENDANCE

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

Staff: Director Linda Gilbert, Gary Anderson, Caresa Brooks, Karen Hawkins, Priscilla Van Tries, and Ralph Ringstaff.

Others: City Staff Attorney Kelley Baker.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

I. CALL TO ORDER BY BOARD CHAIR

Vice Chair Nancy Duggin called the meeting to order at approximately 6:35 p.m. Mr. Rainier moved to dispense with the Pledge of Allegiance and moment of silence; Dr. Butrum seconded the motion. The motion carried by acclamation.

II. BOARD POLICY REVIEW

Passed on First Reading

BO 15—Responsibility, Authority, and Rights of Negotiating Team

No recommended changes; will be brought to Board for approval on second reading.

Mrs. Duggin commented on current legislation regarding negotiations with the teachers' organizations. Mrs. Baker explained that pursuant to Tennessee state law only gives two groups of governmental employees have authority to enter into collective bargaining with their governmental employer, teachers and transit workers. Other contracts or memorandums of understanding between governmental employers and government employee organizations or associations are void and not legally enforceable. If negotiations and collective bargaining power is deleted, the school system could not enter into a legally binding contract with the teachers' organization. Mrs. Duggin noted that the Franklin Special School District does not negotiate, but they work with the teachers to hear their voice. Ms. Baker explained that such a change in the law would not infringe on governmental employees from having the right of association which stems from the Constitution so the association could still speak for their group, but they would not have formal or legal collective bargaining power. The status of the current MEA contract would depend on the specific language of the legislation that is passed regarding this topic.

Mr. Rainier stated that he is very upset and disappointed with the legislature and the direction in which they have gone. Dr. Butrum explained that Superintendent Harry Gill and the School Board had sent out an email to the county schools' employees stating that they wish to continue to have good, open communication. The confusion began when negotiations were halted. The Director and Board did not wish to enter into negotiations/contract that essentially might become void if the proposed legislation passes. Mr. Rainier asked that Dr. Gilbert write a letter for she and the Board to sign that assures our teachers' organization that they do wish to continue open communication. Mrs. Duggin asked that once the legislation has passed, that Mrs. Baker explain the legislation to the teachers.

For Discussion

BO 13—Board/Staff Communications (*For Discussion*)

Mrs. Baker noted that Mrs. Phillips had asked that lines 6 and 7 be reviewed to determine if clarification is needed. Mrs. Baker stated that she does not recommend a revision at this time, and Mrs. Phillips has not contacted her with any recommendations. The policy will be designated as reviewed.

BO 25—Public Relations Program (*Proposed Revision*)

No further changes were recommended; will be presented for final approval under Consent Agenda. Dr. Gilbert noted that the teacher handbook referenced in this policy needs to be updated.

BO 26—Education Agency Relations Goals (*No Change*)

BO 27—Relations with Parent Organizations (*No Change*)

BO 28—Public Gifts to Schools (Individual/Group Gifts) (*No Change*)

BO 29—School Visitors (*Proposed Revision*)

Mr. Campbell recommended that it be noted in the policy that visitors must also sign out when they leave the building. He strongly recommended that all visitors be required to present a photo I.D. Mrs. Baker presented the scenario of how this would be addressed with assemblies, holiday luncheons, etc. when a large number of visitors would arrive at the schools. Dr. Butrum stated that at Barfield extra tables are set up for sign in and sign out, and also that employees are stationed in the hall for extra support. Mrs. Duggin stated that in Williamson County, a visitor's driver's license is scanned. Mr. Anderson stated that a similar system was piloted at John Pittard Elementary, but the administration at the school did not like the procedure so ceased to use it. Mrs. Duggin asked that the administration look further into these security procedures. Dr. Gilbert stated that principals have asked for consistency across the system on procedures used with different situations, so she will take this policy to the principals for their input and then bring the policy back to the Board for review.

BO 30—Use of School Facilities (*No Change*)

BO 31—Fund Raising (*Proposed Change*)

Mr. Ringstaff explained the difference between active and passive fundraisers—active being those conducted during the instructional part of the school day and passive being those conducted during a non-instructional period of the school day or outside of school hours. Mrs. Duggin asked that book fairs be moved to the active fundraiser category as she is familiar with book fairs held in school libraries that students visit throughout the school day. It was clarified that “each school is limited to four (4) active fundraisers per school year, **inclusive of the PTA/PTO fundraisers.**” After discussion, it was also recommended that #3 on page two be reworded to emphasize that the school system does not endorse door-to-door sales. Dr. Gilbert will take this policy back to principals for their review and input.

BO 32—Solicitations (Charitable, Cultural, Civic) (*Proposed Change*)

Mr. Ringstaff explained that the major change to this policy is to clarify that: ***These charitable, cultural, and/or civic organizations must be registered with the Tennessee Secretary of State’s office as being eligible to solicit and receive monetary funds.***

BO 33—Special Interest Materials (*No Change*)

BO 34—Gifts and Gratuities (*No Change*)

BO 35—Employment of Director of Schools (*Proposed Change*)

No additional revisions recommended; will be brought to the Board for final approval under Consent agenda.

BO 36—Use of Personal Information (*No Change*)

BO 37—School System Planning (*No Change*)

The Board was provided a copy of the legal reference TRR/MS 0520-1-3-.03(16) that specified the expectations of the Board in terms of school system planning. It was recommended that the policy not be revised to repeat law; Mrs. Duggin stated she was satisfied with the existing policy based on this recommendation.

BO 38—School Board Accountability Standards (*No Change*)

BO 39—School Board Organizations (*No Change*)

BO 40—Code of Ethics (*No Change*)

BO 41—Registered Sex Offenders (*No Change*)

BO 42—Policy Development (*Proposed Change*)

No additional revisions recommended; will be brought to the Board for final approval under Consent agenda.

A "Proposed Schedule for Policies/Evaluations" was provided to the Board. Mrs. Baker stated that this schedule will be helpful to the Board so they have ample time to provide to her recommendations for policy changes before they are scheduled for review.

In response to Mr. Rainier's question, Dr. Gilbert stated that as a result of the meeting between she, Mrs. Wade, Harry Gill, and Mark Byrnes, the two school systems are collaborating mainly on professional development, instruction, etc. through committee. At this point, a joint meeting of the two school boards has not been requested or deemed as needed. She pointed out that a joint professional development workshop is being planned, and a middle school Open House for sixth grade students, including MCS sixth graders, will be held on May 3. Mr. Rainier stated that he is pleased with the open line of communication between the two systems. Mrs. Hawkins explained that the two textbook selection committees communicated and is pleased that both school systems will be adopting the same math textbooks.

The Board will meet in retreat on Saturday, April 30, 8 a.m. until noon, at the central office. Dr. Tammy Grissom will facilitate the evaluation of the Director of Schools, and the Board will review the results of the Board's self-assessment.

III. REVIEW OF DRAFT MARCH 29, 2011 BOARD MEETING AGENDA

Dr. Gilbert explained that holes exist in the system's reading program. Teachers have received training such as LETRS but do not have a solid reading series. Mrs. Hawkins explained that the system is not due for a new reading adoption for two more years, but has been granted permission to go ahead and purchase a new textbook series that they will then keep for eight instead of six years. The textbook company must enter into an agreement with the system to provide the materials and updates that will be contained in the new edition of the reading series in two years. The system can piggyback on the series purchased by North Carolina. The cost of the adoption will be approximately \$600,000. Mr. Anderson stated that this will come from the fund balance. Mrs. Hawkins stated that with a new math and a new reading adoption, the focus next year will be to support teachers.

Mr. Rainier stated that since we have taken various items from fund balance (buses, energy efficient grant, etc.), he would like to see a breakdown of what has been taken from fund balance and what will remain in fund balance. The state requires that a system maintain 3% of its total budget in reserves. Mr. Anderson stated that in actuality this would not be enough to meet a payroll; he feels comfortable with maintaining \$6.5 million in fund balance.

In response to Mr. Rainier's question, Mr. Ringstaff reported that to date three people have taken advantage of the early retirement incentive with three others voicing an interest.

Mr. Campbell shared that a school system in Missouri has dealt with their geese problem by distributing wooden cut-outs of coyotes on the property, and this solution appears to be working.

IV. DISCUSSION—BOARD SELF ASSESSMENT PROCESS

Mrs. Wade has requested that the Board receive hard copies of the board self-assessment instrument through U.S. mail from TSBA. These will be sent to the Board on March 28 with a return date to TSBA of April 11.

V. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Vice Chair Nancy Duggin adjourned the meeting at approximately 8:13 p.m.

Director of Schools

MISSION STATEMENT

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