

MINUTES
MURFREESBORO CITY SCHOOL BOARD
Tuesday, January 24, 2012
6:30 p.m.—Council Chambers

ATTENDANCE

Board: Chair Mary Wade, Susan Andrews, Butch Campbell, Nancy Duggin, Nancy Phillips, Collier Smith, and Council Liaison Ron Washington.

Staff: Director Linda Gilbert, Gary Anderson, Caresa Brooks, Crystal Farris, Tammy Grizzard, Karen Hawkins, Ralph Ringstaff, Lisa Trail, and Priscilla Van Tries.

Others: Staff Attorney Kelley Baker, Councilwoman Madeline Harris, *Daily News Journal* Reporter Mealand Ragland-Hudgins and others.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

I. CALL TO ORDER BY BOARD CHAIR

Chair Mary Wade called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. followed the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence in remembrance of School Board member Dennis Rainier.

OPENING CEREMONY

Mayor Tommy Bragg presented to the Board a Proclamation in Recognition of School Board Appreciation Week in Tennessee, January 22-28, 2012, thanking them for their service and dedication to the education of the children of our community. Board members voiced their appreciation for the notes, posters, and books donated to school libraries on their behalf.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

On motion by Mrs. Duggin and second by Mr. Campbell, the agenda was approved as presented by acclamation.

III. COMMUNICATIONS

- Japanese Friendship Project—Dr. Jane Williams, MTSU, introduced Professor Yumiko Ono and Professor Gerard Marchesseau, from Naruto University of Education, Naruto, Japan. Dr. Williams explained that students from these two universities visit the other's university. Professor Ono shared with the Board that two of their education students were visiting schools, currently Scales, sharing ideas with our teachers and learning from each other.
- Congratulations to the Discovery School at Reeves-Rogers on their nomination as a "Blue Ribbon School."
- In the competition sponsored by TETA, Discovery School teacher Kristy Mall won the teacher division for her video "What Tennessee Means to Me," and

her student Gayle Manasca won first place for her story about moving to Tennessee.

- Ms. Deborah Paschal with the Murfreesboro Parks and Recreation Department received a \$47,787 grant for the F.U.N.N. Project, Phase II. Dr. Gilbert explained that this project strives to eliminate child obesity and nature deficits and will be expanded to add Cason Lane and Black Fox to the existing schools it serves, Mitchell-Neilson Schools and Bradley.

IV. CONSENT ITEMS (Tab 1)

On motion by Dr. Andrews and second by Mrs. Phillips, the consent agenda items were approved as presented by acclamation.

A. Minutes of the November 29, 2011 Board Meeting and January 10, 2012 Special Called Board Meeting—Policy Work Session

B. School Fees

C. Board Policies—Second Reading

BO 10—Board Policy Development (*Revision*)

(Combined BO 10 and duplicate Board Policy BO 42—Policy Development/eliminate BO 42)

FM 1—Petty Cash Accounts (*Revised*)

FM 2—Annual Operating Budget (*Revised*)

FM 5—Accounting System, Financial Reports and Records (*Revised*)

FM 8—Purchasing Authority (*Revised*)

FM 9—Sales Calls, Demonstrations and Vendor Relations (*Revised*)

FM 12—Authorized Signatures and Expenditure of Funds (*Revised*)

FM 16—Purchase Requisitions and Purchase Orders (*New*)

FM 17—Payroll Procedures (*New*)

V. ACTION ITEMS

A. Approval of 2012-2013 School Year Calendar (Tab 2)

Dr. Gilbert thanked MEA President Natalie Hopkins and the association members for their great partnership in developing the calendar. Dr. Gilbert noted that a revised version of the 2012-2013 calendar was placed on the Board's desk. Mr. Campbell asked why the PLCs are scheduled on the dates indicated. Dr. Gilbert explained that the City Schools student half-day PLCs were scheduled to coincide with the County Schools calendar. Although the calendar varies on a few dates from the County Schools calendar, every effort is made to coincide with the county. On motion by Mrs. Smith and second by Dr. Andrews, the 2012-2013 School Year Calendar was approved by acclamation. Mrs. Phillips thanked everyone for their work on the calendar.

B. Approval of District-wide Initiatives and to Request Funding from the City Council (Tab 3)

1. New West Murfreesboro Elementary School

Mr. Anderson explained that enrollment has increased 237 students over last year as indicated on the fourth month attendance report. Enrollment is 189 students above what was projected which reflects that MCS is a growing district. In response to Mrs. Smith, he explained that the request is to construct a new 800-student capacity school (similar to Black Fox and Northfield but with more core space) in the western part of the county to open for the 2014-2015 school year. This project is in the City Council's improvement plan. In response to Mr. Campbell's question, Mr. Anderson stated that the administration will look for land in the western part of the county due to Scales's enrollment at 1,000+ and Cason Lane almost at capacity. Over 800 lots in that area have been approved by the city. Mrs. Duggin stated that this project has been discussed for over a two year period, and noted that the system has looked at all available resources and options including rezoning and feels now is the time to move forward with the new school. Mrs. Phillips stated that she is proud MCS is being proactive to address growth. On motion by Dr. Andrews and second by Mr. Campbell, the Board approved by acclamation to request funding from City Council to build a new school in the western portion of the county at an estimated cost of \$20,950,000.

2. Hobgood Addition and Renovation

Mr. Anderson explained that Hobgood has reached capacity in every class and special area. He is requesting in Phase I the addition of four classrooms and one teacher work area and partial dining room renovation with a scheduled completion date of August 2012. In Phase II, he is requesting a new building entrance to include an office suite, media center, meeting rooms, new kitchen, renovation of existing media center to two classrooms, finalize the dining room renovation, upgrade the HVAC system to VRF HVAC, new parking drives and site lighting to be completed by August 2013. The estimated cost of the project would be \$4,314,440. Mrs. Duggin moved to approve the recommended Hobgood Addition and Renovation as presented; Dr. Andrews seconded the motion. On roll call: Andrews—yes; Campbell—yes; Duggin—yes; Phillips—yes; Smith—yes; Wade—yes. The motion carried.

3. Bradley Elevator

Mr. Anderson explained that Bradley has a second floor; currently, if a student or faculty member are injured or have a disability that prevents them from using the stairs, the entire classroom must be moved to the first floor. With the elevator, Bradley would be ADA compliant. Mr. Anderson met with Johnson and Bailey architects and the company representatives that does this to determine the best location, which would be at the back of the building. The cost of \$250,000 is partially due to the fact that the elevator is commercial grade and the building/grounds area has to be retrofitted. In response to Mr. Campbell, Mr. Anderson stated that he will come back to the Board for approval of

Johnson and Bailey, Architects, for these projects as they have served the system for many years and have extensive knowledge and information from prior projects for MCS. For any project over \$50,000, an architect is required. The system is not required to bid for the architect as it is a professional service. The architect would handle the bidding process for the project itself. Dr. Andrews stated that Johnson and Bailey have been on call and a great resource for the City Schools, offering advice on many occasions at no cost. Mr. Campbell moved for approval to install an elevator at Bradley as presented; Dr. Andrews seconded the motion. The motion carried by acclamation.

4. Scales Portable Classrooms

Mr. Anderson requested approval to lease four portable classrooms for two academic years to be installed at Scales Elementary to address the overcrowding until a new school is built. This would eliminate rezoning students for two years, and then having to move students again when the new school opens. Two locations have been identified that would be adequate for this, the right side of the gym or at the back of the building at the circular drive. They would be placed on concrete and be close to a doorway to the building for easy access to restroom facilities. New and used portables are available but the leasing cost is similar. The buildings will be the same size as our existing classrooms, be made ADA compliant, fire alarm installed, communication technology installed, etc. With the expectation of increased enrollment, this will likely result in hiring more teachers, but the core facility will be able to handle the additional students. Mrs. Smith, Mrs. Phillips, and Mrs. Duggin noted that they are opposed as a rule to portables, concerned about tornadoes, etc., but they understand the necessity to address the overcrowding for the next two years. Mrs. Wade stated that she has faith that the administration will be able to provide the students with a safe learning environment. Mrs. Phillips moved to approve leasing four portable classrooms for two years to be placed on the Scales campus; Dr. Andrews seconded the motion. On roll call: Andrews—yes; Campbell—yes; Duggin—yes; Phillips—yes; Smith—yes; Wade—yes. The motion carried.

C. Approval of Board Policies – *First Reading* (Tab 4)

IS 1—Professional Development and Growth (*Revised*)

Mrs. Baker explained that “Coordinator of Curriculum” was placed on line 3, deleting “Department of Instruction.” On motion by Dr. Andrews and second by Mrs. Phillips, IS 1 was approved as presented by acclamation.

IS 2—Curriculum Development (*Revised*)

Mrs. Baker pointed out the corrections to IS 2 indicated in bold, noting lines 13-14: *Tennessee Curriculum is available on the State Department website, and teachers will be provided inservice on accessing its content.* In response to Mrs. Phillips’ question, Dr. Gilbert assured the Board that teachers are able to access the standards electronically. On motion by Mrs. Duggin and second by Mr. Campbell, IS 2 was approved as presented by acclamation.

IS 3—Basic Instructional Program (*Revised*)

Mrs. Baker pointed out that on line 3, “and the Tennessee State Board of Education” was added as were arts and science as indicated in bold. On line 17, the words “research-based instructional” strategies were added. On motion by Dr. Andrews and second by Mrs. Smith, IS 3 was approved as presented by acclamation.

IS 4—Education of Children with Disabilities (*Revised*)

Mrs. Baker noted the various changes indicated in bold were to update the language, as well as the renaming of the policy to “*Special Education*.” On motion by Mrs. Duggin and second by Mr. Campbell, IS 4 was approved as presented by acclamation.

IS 5—Instructional Resources (*Revised*)

Mrs. Hawkins explained that the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools have merged with AdvancEd, so AdvancEd is the organization that now accredits schools. In response to Mrs. Duggin’s question, Mrs. Baker explained that the regulations are adopted by both the Tennessee Department of Education and State Board of Education but the Commissioner has the authority to implement regulations in addition to the Board. Mrs. Hawkins explained that AdvancEd now looks at much broader standards so it is important to adhere to the regulations of the Department of Education. Dr. Gilbert stated that the system will undergo the systemwide accreditation process next year. On motion by Mrs. Duggin and second by Mrs. Smith, IS 5 was approved as presented by acclamation.

IS 10—Community Resource Persons (*Revised*)

Mrs. Baker noted that lines 6-7 were revised to include the sentence: *The administrative staff shall collaborate with each principal on the utilization of community resources*. In response to Mrs. Smith, Dr. Gilbert stated that this policy will help to assure that different schools don’t go to the same sources for support. Mrs. Hawkins stated that the original policy put the burden on the schools to find community resources, but with a collaboration with the administration would allow the administration to open doors for more opportunities. Mr. Campbell asked if the resource persons must first be approved by the principal. Dr. Gilbert stated that she assumes that would be the case, although it is not currently in an administrative directive. The principal is ultimately the one that would be responsible for the school, so would need to be notified of visitors invited to speak in classrooms. If this becomes burdensome, she will help the principal, but this policy is not intended to prevent principals from accessing resources. The key is that there must be supervision by the professional staff. Mr. Campbell stated that regardless of who the person is, the principal should be made aware of visitors in the classroom or building. Dr. Andrews pointed out that the policy specifies that all community resources must be approved by the principal... After further discussion, it was decided that following approval on first reading, Mrs. Baker would clarify at the next policy meeting who is actually a “resource” person (i.e., would that include a parent coming to speak to a classroom). Mrs. Baker clarified that the safety issue is addressed in the safety policy. She is in the process of developing a procedure for volunteers, perhaps distinguishing volunteers at different levels such as a parent, community resource person, etc.

The policy encourages principals and the administration to reach out to the community for resources to supplement the curriculum and information provided to the students. She believes this policy envisions resource persons to be attorneys, health care professionals, etc. who come into the classroom to share information regarding their profession rather than a parent coming to help in the classroom. She stated that possibly this policy can be revised to more clearly define who is envisioned as a “community resource” person. Mr. Campbell moved that the policy be approved on first reading, but with additional review before approval at second reading; Mrs. Phillips seconded the motion. The motion carried by acclamation.

IS 13—A Statement of Homework Policy (*Revised*)

Mrs. Hawkins explained that the revision “academic feedback” means that the teacher would reference the standard they are working toward and help students make the next step to improve that product. Academic feedback could be a grade or just information about the assignment to give them feedback. In addition, they did not want to require reference materials not readily available in most homes. Teachers could make accommodation for long-term projects so students are not penalized for a lack of available resources. Mrs. Duggin moved to approve IS 13; Dr. Andrews seconded the motion. The motion carried by acclamation.

IS 14—Promotion and Retention (*Revised*)

Mrs. Hawkins explained that this is a complete rewrite of the original policy. The intent is to make sure that as a school district everything possible has been done for students before resorting to retention. The policy spells out what would be considered: 1) Mastery of essential competencies, 2) Conduct, 3) Previous retention, 4) Teacher input, 5) Documentation, and 6) Grade level guidelines, 7) Retention Reporting/Appeal, and 8) Retention Followup. It is important to document what we are doing and what should be done/changed for the student the next year. She also noted that TCA §49-6-3115 has been addressed regarding the fact that “*students in third grade will not be promoted to the next grade level unless they have shown a basic understanding of curriculum and ability to perform the skills required in the subject of reading as demonstrated by the student’s grades or standardized test results. However, the student may be promoted if the student participates in an LEA approved research-based intervention prior to the beginning of the next school year. This does not apply to students who have IEPs pursuant to 20 U.S.C. §1400 et seq.*”

Mrs. Phillips asked that parental/guardian input be placed in the policy. Dr. Andrews pointed out that this is addressed in number 6. Mrs. Phillips asked that this be fleshed out more clearly for the parent/guardian. Dr. Andrews noted that parents are also addressed in lines 38-42 regarding parent notification if retention is being considered followed by a conference with additional notification at least nine weeks before the end of the school year, which she felt was adequate. Mr. Campbell asked if this is not Tennessee Code Annotated; Mrs. Hawkins stated that the final decision rests within the school. Mrs.

Smith asked if an italicized heading titled “Parent Involvement” could be included. Mrs. Phillips moved that this policy would be brought back to the next policy session; Dr. Andrews seconded the motion. The motion carried by acclamation.

VI. REPORTS/INFORMATION

A. Communications Update – Lisa Trail

Lisa Trail, Director of Communications, shared with the Board activities that have taken place or will take place in the school district:

- ~Basketball Championships: Boys—Bradley Academy (undefeated year); Girls--Cason Lane Academy
- ~Murfreesboro City Schools Arts Competition sponsored by the City Arts Commission, February 14-March 24, with artwork displayed in the rotunda. The Mayor’s celebration of this event is March 1st.
- ~Greenhouse Life Skills through outreach team and Greenhouse Ministries provides parents with a four-week series of classes for women held in five locations throughout the district.
- ~MTSU Baseball Clinic—over 100 students participated with MTSU players and coaches. The partnership with MTSU and the Athletic Department continues to grow.
- ~The Soccer Clinic had over 200 of our students participating. The clinic was offered through a partnership with MTSU and the Hispanic Soccer League. The City Schools’ Coordinated School Health Department works hard to offer activities on weekdays and weekends to help keep children healthy.
- ~MTSU’s sports players have adopted a school with all schools have at least one or more sports teams as their adoptors.
- ~The African-American Cultural Events will be held at Bellwood on February 23 and at Bradley on February 24. The event is led by parents and the system’s outreach team and is open to the community.
- ~The City Schools Foundation has just awarded \$30,000 in parity grants to Hobgood, Mitchell-Neilson, Black Fox and Pittard. Teachers receive grants, such as Ms. Mall for robotics. Another grant regarding school health, how the heart works, understanding heart disease, the impact of exercise, etc. is being awarded.

Mrs. Trail shared that the Board and public are invited to attend the Excellence in Education Celebration to be held February 10 honoring John Hood in a roast emceed by Andy Womack. This event is the primary fundraiser for the Foundation. (NOTE: Contact Ms. Trail at 615-893-2313 or lisa.trail@cityschools.net for information.) Mrs. Smith thanked Ms. Trail and Leslie Eatherly for their work and thanked the sponsors for their support. The City Schools Foundation has provided approximately \$300,000 to the city’s schools in the last six years.

B. Inclement Weather Communication – Lisa Trail

Mrs. Trail explained that the inclement weather policy's purpose is to assure student safety with notifications made to parents as early as possible. The administration watches weather reports, contacts the Police Department, etc. Dr. Gilbert and Maintenance Supervisor Larry Willeford also drive the streets early in the morning to try to determine the condition of main and side streets. Mr. Willeford and his crew look at parking lots and sidewalks to determine if they are safe, de-icing where necessary. Mrs. Trail stated that when the decision is made to close schools, she initiates an all-call to parents notifying them. She contacts all media, including City Channel 3, so parents are assured of a way to determine if schools are closed. The ESP Department has changed its policy in that when schools are out for inclement weather, ESP sites are combined. ESP parents have been provided this information which is also on the system's website. Mrs. Smith asked that when the county schools are closed but the city schools are open, that Channel 3 run it across their screen that the City Schools are open. Mrs. Trail stated that Channel 3 did this the last time, and she feels certain will continue to do so.

C. Personnel Update (Tab 5)

1. Licensed Personnel Hired
2. Leaves of Absence—Instructional Personnel
3. Interim Instructional Personnel
4. Resignations
5. Classified Personnel Hired

D. Monthly Revenue and Expenditure Report (Tab 6)

Mr. Anderson reported that sales tax and property tax revenue is lagging behind a little, but this report reflects revenue through October, so does not reflect anticipated revenue from the holiday season. The system has completed 50% of the fiscal year with revenue at 40% and expenditures at 48.5%, so the system is in good shape. Line 72310—Board of Education looks high, but this is due to the worker's compensation bill that was received earlier this year. 76100—Regular Capital Outlay reflects the energy efficiency school initiative's matching money for the grant which had to be shown as an expense first.

E. Attendance Report (Tab 7)

The system has increased 237 students over this time last year; the report reflects enrollment through December 7. Enrollment is up 189 students over the budgeted amount. Total system enrollment is at 7,039, not including pre-k enrollment. Pupil:teacher ratios are: K-3: 18.89; 4-6: 20.82; and, overall at 19.60. Attendance is 95.7%, which is also on target.

Mrs. Duggin thanked Dr. Gilbert and Mr. Anderson for meeting with Senator Jim Tracy and Representative Joe Carr regarding the legislation that proposes raising class size.

Everyone needs to be aware that this is a great concern and would have a direct and tremendous negative impact on funding. Our pupil:teacher ratios are very good here. If these ratios were raised, it would be difficult to continue financially to do that.

Mr. Anderson noted that the Board has been provided an audit report for their review. The auditors will provide a full report at the February board meeting.

VII. OTHER BUSINESS

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chair Wade adjourned the Board meeting at approximately 7:55 p.m.

Director of Schools

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