

MINUTES

MURFREESBORO CITY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Tuesday, February 28, 2012
6:30 p.m.—City Council Chambers

ORDER OF BUSINESS

ATTENDANCE

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

Staff: Director Linda Gilbert, Gary Anderson, Caresa Brooks, Karen Hawkins, Greg Lyles, Ralph Ringstaff, and Lisa Trail.

Others: Staff Attorney Kelley Baker, MEA President Natalie Hopkins, *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 approximately 6:30 p.m. followed by a moment of silence.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

On motion by Nancy Phillips and second by Nancy Duggin, the agenda was approved as presented by acclamation.

III. COMMUNICATIONS

- Dr. Gilbert shared that MCS's TVAAS composite scores for content areas (overall literacy, numeracy, and those combined) for the past three years, teachers have scored solid fives, with the scores actually doubling or tripling in some areas. MCS has outstanding teachers, and she is proud to present the following outstanding teachers. Mrs. Trail explained that building level teachers of the year are selected by their peers. School Level Teachers of the Year (Program sponsored by the Council of Chief State Officers) were recognized (as listed on the attached sheet). Dr. Gilbert congratulated the system level Teachers of the Year, Mrs. Sherri Arnette, Level K-4, and Mrs. Stacy Burt, Level 5-6, who will now compete on the regional level. An awards reception will be held on March 6 at the Oaklands Mansion from 4:30-6:00 p.m.
- Mrs. Lisa Trail provided the Board with an update on the very successful Excellence in Education Celebration, thanking Board member Collier Smith who is a trustee of the Foundation and other trustees for their work on the

Celebration and support of the school system. The Foundation has provided approximately \$300,000 to MCS since its inception. The Foundation supports math and science (STEM) projects and also provides parity funds to assist schools that are not able to raise as much with their fundraising projects as other schools. Scales Elementary, the featured school, worked very hard and did a wonderful job. Dr. Gilbert thanked Honoree John Hood and Emcee Andy Womack for their willingness to take part in the Celebration.

- Principal Roseann Barton would like to acknowledge Belle Aire Baptist Church for the programs “I-MOMS” and “ALL PRO DADS” conducted for John Pittard Elementary parents throughout this year, and their generosity in providing lunch for JPE staff on January 24.
- TVA has communicated that MCS will be receiving the \$40,339 Energy Right Solutions for Business incentive for EESI lighting project that was completed this past summer.
- Thanks to the Charity Circle for their \$1,000 donation to the City Schools Foundation which will be used to support the Franklin Heights Learning and Family Resource Center.
- Rachel Kirk, an MTSU librarian, received an \$800 Public Service Grant to set up a small library system at the Franklin Heights Learning and Resource Center, through which students will be able to access books online through an information licensing service.
- Read Across America—Friday, March 2, 2012
- Congratulations to Board Member Butch Campbell on his induction into the TSSAA Hall of Fame. The ceremony will take place at The Embassy Suites on April 21, with lunch beginning at 11:00 a.m.

IV. CONSENT ITEMS (Tab 1)

On motion by Dr. Andrews and second by Mrs. Duggin, the following consent agenda items were approved by acclamation:

- Minutes of the regularly scheduled board meeting of January 24, 2012, and the February 14, 2012 Special Called Board Meeting—Policy Work Session.
- Funding from United Way for the Family Resource Center Tutoring Program (\$10,000)
- School Fees
- Board Policies—Second Reading

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

IS 2—Curriculum Development (*Revised*)

IS 3—Basic Instructional Program (*Revised*)

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

IS 5—Instructional Resources (*Revised*)
IS 13—A Statement of Homework Policy (*Revised*)
IS 14—Promotion and Retention (*Revised*)

No Recommended Revisions:

IS 19—Changes in Instruction
PER 1—Faculty Meetings
PER 7—Conflict of Interest
PER 10—Payroll Deductions
PER 11—Anticipation of Advanced Degree
PER 15—Job Sharing
PER 19—Extended Leave
PER 28—Staff Complaints
PER 33—Seasonal Employees
PER 42—Nepotism

V. ACTION ITEMS

A. Approval of Board Policies (*First Reading*) (Tab 2)

IS 9—Field Trips (*Revised—Complete Rewrite*)

Mrs. Baker stated that field trips have been defined in the three categories: Field Trip—taken within the same day and limited to a radius of 150 miles requiring an approved Off-Campus Trip approval form; Competitions/Performances—trips taken on a scheduled basis and integral to the ongoing operation of an authorized program, would receive blanket approval if within a 150-mile radius and do not involve an overnight stay; and, Excursions—trips that involve overnight stays and/or are in excess of 150 miles, and requires the Off-Campus Approval Form and a notarized Travel Permission Form and Emergency Medical Release Form. Mrs. Baker recommended that the title to the policy be changed to “School Trips.”

Mrs. Baker reviewed each section of the policy including factors for field trip selection, guidelines for planning and conducting field trips and excursions, overnight or out-of-state field trips, and after-school-hours trips pointing out what is required for various trips. She emphasized that trips must have the approval of the Director or Director’s designee to be Board approved trips. By September 15, each school shall submit to the Director a listing of proposed overnight or out-of-state trips. Mrs. Baker emphasized that trips planned by parents or teachers during after-school hours which have not been approved by the principal and the Director shall not be MCS Board approved field trips, even if the information concerning the trip refers to the school by name or is made available in a school.

Mrs. Phillips asked about the two-trip limit. Dr. Gilbert pointed out that lines 56-57 indicated that additional trips can be authorized by the principal if it is determined they

support the curriculum; i.e., partnerships with MTSU, etc. Principals have approved additional trips and recognize the value of local trips to organizations with which we have partnerships. Mrs. Phillips asked that the administration assure that parents are not arbitrarily denied the privilege of chaperoning on their child's field trip. Mrs. Smith stated that she is also concerned with stating that there is a two-trip limit, and would not wish for local trips such as MTSU to count as one of the two trips. Dr. Gilbert stated that the policy does indicate that principals can approve additional trips but will revisit this with principals in terms of the number of trips authorized, how local trips are counted, etc. Dr. Andrews stated that the trips are an expense to parents and there is much required to be accomplished in the academic day, so this has been the reasoning behind the two-trip limit, which also assures consistency across the system. Mrs. Rainier asked that in lines 72-73, "in the vicinity" be clarified so that teachers are aware of the requirements for those trips and that permission forms should still be required for those trips.

Mrs. Baker pointed out that as indicated in Board Policy SS 10, Student Fees and Fines, all students must be permitted to participate in field trips taken during the academic day regardless of their ability to pay. Mr. Anderson explained that schools are not charged for gas but are charged for the driver. The recently passed state law requires that the Board approve fees charged for field trips. If a student cannot pay for the trip, the schools are responsible. Individual schools handle this differently with some obtaining funds from organizations such as PTOs, or fundraising for sixth-grade environmental trips, etc. Mrs. Smith added that the Foundation provides parity funds to schools whose fundraisers do not provide as much additional funding as other schools, and has also provided funding for sixth-grade trips. Mrs. Baker stated that the two-trip limit has been in the policy since 1999. Mrs. Duggin stated that when she taught, the two-trip limit was not a problem as additional field trips had been approved. MCS owns the buses so the use of buses has to be considered as well as the cost of gas. Dr. Andrews pointed out that chaperones on these trips would need to follow the volunteer policy so this policy should be referenced. The Foundation helps in two ways: donations for a particular field trip from generous donors and through the parity money. Principals have the responsibility for the use of this money. Mrs. Phillips stated that the two-trip limit does provide a guideline, with flexibility to approve additional trips. Mrs. Rainier suggested that lines 56-67 could be revised to read: *Circumstances may exist when a principal agrees to authorize more than two (2) school trips per class group during a given academic school year.* The policy will be brought back to the Board's policy review meeting with the recommended revisions.

On motion by Mrs. Duggin and second by Mrs. Phillips, the policy was approved on first reading by acclamation.

IS 10—School Volunteers (*Replaces existing Community Resource Persons*)

Mr. Ringstaff explained that the purpose of this policy is to ensure the safety of our students. He provided the proposed administrative directive, School Volunteer Approval Procedure, that would be put in place to support this policy. He reviewed the three tiers

for volunteers: 1) occasional volunteer activity in a highly public setting, 2) regular volunteer activity and volunteer activity with student contact taking place under constant supervision by a MCS employee, and 3) volunteer activity that involves unsupervised contact with students on or off campus. Most volunteers would fall in the first or second tier. Mrs. Duggin asked if background checks from other agencies would be accepted, and Mr. Ringstaff replied yes if TBI/FBI generated. Mrs. Smith stated that although at first she thought the policy was very strict, but after talking with other people, she agrees it is important to the safety of the children. In response to Mrs. Smith, Mr. Ringstaff stated that this application would be required at the beginning of the year. Mrs. Phillips asked that FERPA be explained so that parents understand what it requires. Mrs. Duggin moved to approve IS 10—School Volunteers on first reading; Dr. Andrews seconded the motion. The motion carried by acclamation.

IS 16—Relations with Accrediting Agencies (*Revised*)

Mrs. Baker stated that changing SACS to AdvancEd is the only revision to this policy. Dr. Andrews moved that IS 16 be approved on first reading as presented; Mrs. Rainier seconded the motion. The motion carried by acclamation.

IS 17—Relations with Education Research and Service Centers (*Revised*)

Mrs. Baker pointed out that number six has been deleted and in number seven approval by the Institutional Review Board was added. Mrs. Phillips moved to approve IS 17 on first reading as presented; Mrs. Duggin seconded the motion. The motion carried by acclamation.

IS 18—Student Teaching, Internships, and Practicums (*Revised*)

Mrs. Baker stated that on line five, interns and practicum students have been added to include interns in the fields of school counselors, social workers, nurses, etc., and an agreement must be signed between the school system and the university. The following language was added, taken from state statute: *A student teacher shall be accorded the same protection of the laws as a certified teacher and shall comply with all rules and regulations of the Board and observed all duties of teachers as set forth in state statute.* Mrs. Duggin moved to approve IS 18 on first reading as presented; Mrs. Rainier seconded the motion. The motion carried by acclamation.

B. Approval of Construction Bids for Discovery School's HVAC System

Mr. Anderson explained that this project is part of the \$1 million interest-free loan received from the State of Tennessee. The bid received for the HVAC system for Discovery School came in low, so the Board is being asked to approve the low bidder for this part of the project. After bids come in, he hopes to expand the scope of the project to include the cafeteria and gymnasium, which could mean he comes back to the Board in a month for approval with this additional work to begin this summer, too. Dr. Andrews

moved to approve the low bidder as presented; Mrs. Rainier seconded the motion. The motion carried by acclamation.

VI. REPORTS/INFORMATION

A. Audit Report Update

Mr. Anderson thanked Golena Bell for her leadership with the audit and the work of her staff. Mr. Larry Felts, principal of Crosslin & Associates, provided a communication to the Board booklet outlining the process/procedures taken in the FY'11 audit. With assets of over \$80 million, capital outlay assets of \$60 million, and \$70 million in revenue annually, the accounting team has done an outstanding job. He reviewed the communication document, reporting there were no material weaknesses in internal controls, no uncorrected misstatements, no disagreements with management, found no fraudulent activities, and had received complete cooperation of financial staff, and found sound implementation of policies. Financial disclosures were clear and concise. Mr. Felts thanked Dr. Gilbert and Mr. Anderson; he also commended Mrs. Bell for her leadership during the audit. In response to Mrs. Phillips, Mr. Anderson stated that the audit covers ESP and School Nutrition as well as school activity funds. Mr. Felts noted that with the \$5 million added in federal recovery funding, the responsibilities of the financial staff had increased; but the system's special programs were well controlled. Dr. Gilbert added her thanks to Mr. Anderson, Mrs. Bell, and other financial staff members for their work. It was noted that Mrs. Bell has been with MCS for over 30 years.

B. Personnel Update (Tab 3)

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

C. Monthly Revenue and Expenditure Report (Tab 4)

Mr. Anderson pointed out that the financial status is improving, and sales and property taxes be reflected beginning the end of February. The system has completed 58.3% of the fiscal year. Sales tax revenue was up \$20,000 but is less than anticipated. Property tax revenue is down \$160,000, but this is a timing issue. Expenditures are at 55.7% of anticipated expenditures so the system is in a good position. Timing was an issue with the early receipt of the worker's compensation bill. Regular capital outlay is over due to fund balance accruals for grants and the matching energy efficiency schools grant. Dr. Andrews asked what government funding would be lost next year. Mr. Anderson responded that Race to the Top has two more years. The JOBS Bill funding ends this year, funds that will need to be replaced or will require adjustments to be made to reduce the system's expenditures. Mrs. Duggin asked that the Board be given a detailed

accounting of those specific funds that will need to be replaced at the Board's budget meeting.

D. Attendance Report (Tab 5)

Mr. Anderson reported that enrollment is 7,006 students, which is 229 more than last year and 151 students over the budgeted enrollment. Pupil:teacher ratios are: K-3, 18.90; 4-6, 20.55; and overall districtwide is 19.51. Attendance is 95.7%, which is very good.

Dr. Andrews thanked Dr. Gilbert for her efforts, and for the Board's resolution to legislators, to assure that pupil:teacher ratios remain low, as small classes allow teachers to teach to the individual child.

VII. OTHER BUSINESS

Chair Wade welcomed Mrs. Rainier to her second official board meeting but first televised board meeting.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Wade adjourned the Board meeting at approximately 8:00 p.m.

Director of Schools

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