

MINUTES

MURFREESBORO CITY BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL CALLED BOARD MEETING—POLICY REVIEW/
FY'13 BUDGET REVIEW SESSION
Tuesday, April 10, 2012
5:00 p.m.—Central Administration Building

ATTENDANCE

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

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

Others: Staff Attorney Kelley Baker and others.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Mary Wade called the meeting to order at approximately 5:08 p.m.

II. APPOINTMENT OF SCHOOL BOARD LIAISON TO CITY SCHOOLS FOUNDATION

Mrs. Trail stated that the City Schools Foundation needs a liaison from the Board to serve on the Foundation. Dr. Andrews moved to appoint Collier Smith to serve in that capacity; Mrs. Phillips seconded the motion. The motion carried by acclamation.

III. CONSENT AGENDA—Policies Passed on First Reading

Mrs. Baker stated that the following policies had been brought before the Board and passed on first reading. Mrs. Phillips asked that PER 8—Credit for Teaching Experience be removed for discussion. On motion by Mrs. Rainier and second by Mr. Campbell the remaining Consent Agenda policies listed below were approved as presented by acclamation. Mrs. Baker stated that the policies will be brought back to the Board for approval on second reading.

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

SS 9—Child Nutrition Management (*Revised*)

IS 20—T.C.A.P Security (*Revised—Complete Rewrite*)

PER 5—Equal Opportunity Employment (*Revised*)

PER 6—Staff Rights and Responsibilities (*Revised*)

PER 8—Credit for Teaching Experience

PER 23—Employee Names and Addresses (*Revised*)
PER 24—Substitute Teachers (*Revised*)
PER 27—Tennessee Consolidated Retirement System (*Revised*)
PER 35—Discrimination/Harassment of Employees (*Revised*)
PER 41—Non-Renewal of Non-Tenured Employees (*Revised*)

PER 8—Credit for Teaching Experience

Mrs. Phillips referred to the previous concern that Mrs. Duggin had voiced that by removing the cap, teachers hired in the past based on the cap would be upset. Mrs. Duggin stated that she had talked with teachers, and they had responded that the system has needed to do this for some time, so she does not have that concern now. Mrs. Rainier stated that she believed this was the right thing to do. Mrs. Phillips stated that she still had concerns and would have supported a gradual increase instead of removing the cap. In response to her question, Mr. Ringstaff stated that two years ago the financial impact would have been \$19,000 and last year \$11,000. Dr. Gilbert stated that she did not foresee a high number of people being hired that would cause a great financial impact and if she saw a negative impact could say no to the hirings that would cause that impact.

On motion by Dr. Andrews and second by Mrs. Smith, PER 8—Credit for Teaching Experience was approved as presented.

For Further Discussion

PER 32—Drug-Free Workplace (*Revised*)

Mrs. Baker stated that the Board had requested revisions to PER 32 at the last board meeting. The policy as presented reflects those revisions. The policy will be brought back to the Board for approval on second reading.

IV. FY '13 BUDGET REVIEW

Dr. Gilbert stated that she has taken a district-wide approach to the budget this year with a focus on the infrastructure and technology, making changes to assure that the system is meeting the needs of students.

Mr. Anderson referred to the budget highlights noting that the budget is based on an enrollment of 7,185 students, an increase of 172 students. The budget uses \$212,932 from fund balance and also addressed the loss of \$800,000 in Jobs money. The budget does not include raises. Revenue is anticipated to increase by 3.12% or \$1,623,663. Expenditures are anticipated to increase by 2.71% or \$1,425,356. State retirement costs dropped, but health insurance will probably increase.

Mr. Anderson stated he had received today the first BEP estimate which is more than estimated. The BEP estimate is \$719,000 more than anticipated which can offset the

\$317,000 that was budgeted from reserves. The additional \$402,000 can be used for raises. Although the state has indicated a 2.5% raise for licensed employees, the state only funds approximately 73.69% of the system's cost to provide those raises to all certified and classified personnel, or an additional cost to the system of \$589,166. He provided the document "Fund Balance Analysis" noting that the anticipated total fund balance with all known factors would be adjusted. It is anticipated that the City will provide the same funding of \$4,810,103.

The Board was provided a sheet breaking down the positions funded through Jobs. Dr. Gilbert stated she is requesting one additional ELL teacher and an additional physical education teacher. The system has absorbed 8.5 teaching positions, seven E.A.s and one MDA from Jobs. On page 17, Mr. Anderson pointed out that nurses have been moved from IDEA and placed in this line item. Page 18 reflects a \$48,933 increase. Dr. Gilbert stated that they are looking at adding a social worker and bringing in two from Jobs. Principals agree that there is a great need for social workers in the system. Mr. Campbell inquired about losing a guidance counselor, but Dr. Gilbert explained that a social worker will serve Scales and Cason Lane, and another will serve Erma Siegel and Pittard. Tonya Hobbs will oversee the social workers and continue her work at The Discovery School and Bellwood. Mrs. Duggin stated that the system should look into hiring retired teachers to fill part-time positions.

Page 19 reflects a decrease of \$36,324 in Student Support Services. On page 10, Mr. Anderson pointed out that Assistant principals' salaries were removed from Student Support Services—Special Education Instruction and placed in Administrative Support—Office of Principal, due to the fact that school psychologists are now handling the IEP paperwork and attending IEP meetings. Mrs. Smith asked if the system could provide a full-time assistant principal for each school. Dr. Gilbert stated that at this time she is comfortable with the way assistant principals have been assigned; but if at a later date, she sees a need to make adjustments, she would come back before the Board with that recommendation. Mrs. Duggin suggested that the position of Lead Teacher at Bellwood-Bowdoin Preschool be moved to the same 10.5-month schedule as assistant principals.

Dr. Gilbert explained that she has added an additional assistant principal due to the needs of Scales and John Pittard. Assignment of AP's is based on enrollment and staff. In response to Mrs. Phillips' question, Dr. Gilbert stated that she would revisit the assignment of AP's after the new school is built and students are redistributed.

The Board was provided a proposed MCS Principal Salary Scale. Dr. Gilbert stated that in the past the principals have remained on the pay scale at which they began their position, even when they moved to a smaller school. The proposed scale would correct this. The Principals Current Pay New Pay Scale reflects how this would be achieved

when comparing current pay to what their pay would be under the new proposed schedule. Mr. Ringstaff added that the proposed 2.5% raise is not included.

Mr. Anderson pointed out on page 24, Fiscal Services, that one position was split between IDEA and Title. On page 25, Support Service—Personnel, the reduction is reflected mainly in line items 121 and 162.

Mr. Anderson stated that the reduction reflected under “Operation of Plant” on page 26, is mainly due to reduced costs for natural gas. Detail regarding capital outlay projects includes work to be done at Bradley, Cason Lane, MNE, and Scales, as well as district-wide projects (i.e., painting). Mr. Anderson stated that under Maintenance of Plant, page 27, Mr. Willeford does an excellent job of managing those funds and that department.

Mr. Anderson stated that the Transportation Department, page 28, is running efficiently. In response to Board questions, he stated that the system is able to purchase gas from the City at their contracted price. On occasion, the system must use an outside source for repairs. The system will need to purchase four buses in the next couple of years.

Mr. Anderson stated that the system will add an additional technician and promote one technician to handle increased needs/demands in Technology. During discussion of data storage, Dr. Gilbert noted that Skyward had asked for \$36,000 to backup our data; however, our Technology Department can handle that backup. Mr. Anderson added that the system does have off-site backup (redundancy). Mrs. Phillips emphasized that the system must plan ahead for the technology that will be needed by 2014 in terms of the testing that will take place so should continue to put money into the technology reserves. Mrs. Duggin stated that she is glad the system did not purchase Ipads as they are not what will be needed to accomplish this. It will be difficult to move ahead until the Department of Education clarifies what the testing process/requirements. In response to Mrs. Smith’s question regarding the technology purchase of “storage,” Mr. Anderson explained that by Federal law, the system must store communications (such as emails) and with our improved technology, new Skyward program, etc., the system will require more storage. Mrs. Baker explained that it depends on the information, but some information must be stored for at least seven years.

Dr. Andrews suggested that the administration ask the City to increase their allocation as it has not increased over several years. Mrs. Duggin noted that this might not be the best time to do this as City Council has just approved funding for the Hobgood renovations, and the new school will be the next major project. The system will be asking for additional funding at that time.

Mr. Anderson explained that some of the increase in community service was due to the annualization of two employees’ salaries. In response to Mr. Campbell’s question, Dr. Gilbert explained that the support position in the Community Service department is not

the typical secretary, as that person has had public relations experience and closely supports Mrs. Trail.

Mr. Anderson explained that the basketball program is not a part of ESP. The schools run the programs. Coaches receive a \$1,000 supplement, assistant coaches \$500, and cheerleading sponsors \$500. Ticket sales support uniforms, referees, and other costs. Concession proceeds go to the schools. Some schools use these funds for field trips, LBL, etc. Schools have more buy-in when their program is run in house. In response to Mrs. Wade's question regarding support provided to the Foundation, Dr. Gilbert stated that Mrs. Trail and Ms. Eatherly work closely with the Foundation, but she is kept apprized of the needs of the Foundation from the school system.

On page 31, Early Childhood Education, Mr. Anderson explained that part of the Supervisor/Director's salary is paid through a pre-k grant. Staffing changes are made during the year due to the fact that the preschool program accepts children on their fourth birthday. In response to Mrs. Smith's question, Dr. Gilbert explained that the system has six locally funded pre-k classes and 11 voluntary (lottery) funded classes. Dr. Gilbert will provide for Nancy Rainier the locations of each class. In response to Mr. Campbell, Dr. Gilbert stated that she does not anticipate any additional funding from the state for pre-k classes.

The Board was provided a sheet titled "Educational Assistants and Mid-Day Assistants Earned for 2012-2013." Mr. Anderson explained that Media Educational Assistant positions will be replaced with MDAs. He noted that each MDA will provide four hours of service, and the system will save by not providing benefits. EAs are allocated based on enrollment. Looking at the chart, you will note that "Currently Have Employed Per School" indicates the number of regular education EAs, Media EAs, and Office EAs with the total allocation of 113.67 positions. At the top of the page, Mr. Anderson reviewed how the proposed breakdown affects each school in terms of positions. Mrs. Phillips stated that she knows that Northfield has had a media EA in that position for years, and she sees value in the continuity of that person knowing the students, what they need, etc. Mrs. Rainier stated that although she sees the benefits budget-wise, she is concerned, too. Dr. Gilbert stated that Mrs. Barton at JPE changed her media EA to MDAs so will speak to her about why she decided this was the best way to fill the position. Mr. Anderson pointed out on page 19, line item 163, the use of MDAs in this position will save the system \$47,896. Dr. Gilbert stated that she is meeting with principals and will discuss the level of service needed and gather input from the principals.

Mrs. Rainier stated that her concern is that if MDAs are used in the Media Center, they should not be pulled to do cafeteria duty during lunch as that is a time when students frequent the Media Center. Mrs. Duggin agreed. Mr. Ringstaff explained that MDAs are paid the same rate. In response to Mrs. Smith's question, Dr. Gilbert stated that being bilingual is not a requirement, but Mrs. Hawkins noted that the system does have two bilingual EAs that have been helpful. Mrs. Phillips stated that she does not want to see

any employee lose their job. She did want the person helping students in the library to have the level of education to be able to do the job. Mrs. Rainier stated that an MDA could do the job. Dr. Gilbert noted that the principals will be allocated their number of EA/MDA positions, and they have the flexibility to assign them to best meet the needs of the students. Mrs. Rainier stated that she feels a full-time EA would have more ownership and commitment to the job so would like to see the system keep as many EA positions as possible. However, if the system cannot give raises due to that, she would go with MDAs.

Mr. Ringstaff stated that the system would like to give the full-time and part-time custodial and nursing positions steps. Mrs. Rainier asked if custodians are being paid more than EAs. Mr. Campbell and Mrs. Smith noted that the custodians have duties that no one wants to do. Dr. Andrews asked if the hourly rate for MDAs could be increased. Mr. Anderson stated that steps top out at seven years. Mr. Ringstaff stated that he could bring back the cost factor for adding steps the Educational Assistant positions. He noted that nurses are on salary, but to comply with the Wage and Hour Law, the system has to be consistent. The Board does not have to do steps. The classified positions will be hourly. Mrs. Baker stated that for overtime, the system has to calculate the hourly wage. Mrs. Rainier said that the hourly rate for MDAs could be increased since the system will not be paying benefits for those employees. Dr. Andrews stated that it would be beneficial to see the proposal for step increases for MDAs. Mrs. Phillips stated that she does not want employees to see steps as not being raises, they are an increase in pay so are raises. Mr. Campbell stated that the system could look at the cost for custodians and MDAs to receive steps.

Mrs. Duggin thanked Dr. Andrews for her service as this would be her last meeting. Mrs. Phillips stated that Dr. Andrews has always kept foremost in mind what is best for children while serving on the Board.

V. BOARD POLICIES -- *For Discussion*

PER 39—Suspension/Dismissal of Tenured Teachers

Mrs. Baker stated that the revisions reflect T.C.A. code and definitions for further clarity. Mrs. Rainier stated that the timelines indicated in the policy (30 days, 10 days, 145 days) equate to approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ of the school year, so an employee on leave without pay should realize the seriousness of committing these crimes. In response to Mr. Campbell's question, Mrs. Baker stated that typically employees have been placed on leave without pay. Mr. Ringstaff stated that incidences are reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Mrs. Baker stated that some systems do suspend with pay, but then if the employee is convicted, the system must try to recoup that pay, which can be difficult. The Director decides whether the suspension is with or without pay. Mr. Ringstaff added there is a law currently under review that would limit an appeal for those suspended for three days or less. Dr. Andrews stated that it is important to note that we have a school system where

these cases rarely come up. Mrs. Duggin asked that new or revised policies be shared with all employees for a clear understanding. The policy will be brought back to the Board for approval on first reading.

STU 5—Assignment of Students to Schools and Class

Dr. Gilbert explained that by law the principal is responsible for the school. She asked for a policy to be brought to the Board that specifically states that “principals have the sole authority and responsibility for assigning students to the individual classrooms.” Mr. Anderson noted that a student attending a school on zone waiver should not be sent back to the student’s zoned school without first notifying the Director or Director’s designee. It is important to first determine if the zoned school can provide the services required for the student. Mrs. Phillips stated that she was uncomfortable that parents do not feel they have anyone to go to if there is a concern with the placement. After discussion, Mrs. Baker was asked to strike the word “sole” from the policy. The policy will be brought back to the Board for approval on first reading.

Mrs. Duggin noted that when she was attending a meeting at the State Department of Education, Karen Moody could not say enough good things about the teachers in MCS and was very complimentary of Dr. Gilbert. Mrs. Duggin stated that she is very proud of the teachers for their professionalism and of MCS.

VI. REVIEW OF DRAFT APRIL 24, 2012 BOARD MEETING AGENDA

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Wade recessed the meeting at approximately 8:40 p.m. with the continuation of the budget review to take place on Wednesday, April 18, 2:30 p.m., at the central administration building.

Director of Schools

