

MINUTES

MURFREESBORO CITY BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL CALLED BOARD MEETING—
FY'13 BUDGET REVIEW SESSION
Wednesday, April 18, 2012
2:30 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, Karen Hawkins, Terry Jolley, Ralph Ringstaff, and Lisa Trail.

Others: Staff Attorney Kelley Baker and others.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

I. RECONVENE BOARD MEETING

Chair Wade reconvened the board meeting at approximately 2:35 p.m.

II. REVIEW OF FY'13 BUDGET

Mr. Anderson asked if the Board had any questions over the sections of the budget covered during the April 10 budget review session. Mrs. Smith asked Mr. Anderson to review the purchase of the storage. Mr. Anderson explained that the current storage will handle emails; however, the new storage will handle the security cameras (approximately 400) and the new Skyward program. He stressed that he does need the Board's permission to go ahead and purchase the storage from this year's budget through capital outlay, removing it from the FY'13 proposed budget. In order to have Skyward up and running by July 1, the system must move forward now. The servers and equipment are housed in a room that is air conditioned with walls that are 1.5 feet thick. Additional storage can be added as needed.

In response to Mrs. Smith's question, Dr. Gilbert explained that by 2014-15, students will take their TCAP tests on computers. The state has not given the specifics, so the system cannot move forward with the needed technology. It appears at this point that the system will bear the cost although the state had indicated the possibility that they would fund testing for first and second grades. The state is working with Apple at this point to see what they can work out. Mrs. Duggin noted that they are trying to come up with an Ipad that will work with the new testing requirements. Mrs. Phillips stated that it is still important for the system to plan ahead by adding to the technology reserves. Mrs. Duggin stated that it is important to be aware of the legislation that is proposed.

Mr. Ringstaff stated that information had been placed on the Board's desk regarding the cost to increase pay/add steps to certain categories of employees. He explained that increasing the pay of MDAs and placing them on the same pay grade as the part-time custodians will cost the system \$75,000. Increasing their pay lane to \$8.00-\$9.75 would cost \$32,000, but increasing their pay to a flat \$8.00 an hour would cost \$11,000. Dr. Gilbert noted that the current EA allocation is 113.67 and would increase to 114.34 next year. However, she noted that principals have the discretion to use the positions to best fit the needs of their school. She did review this information with principals and did not receive negative feedback. Principals are more concerned with maintaining teaching, intervention, ELL positions, etc.

Mrs. Phillips asked that steps be presented to employees in such a way that they do understand that it is a raise, an increase in pay. She is concerned about the impact eliminating the cap on experience, adding steps, and purchasing storage has had on the budget. Mrs. Smith stated that considering all of the information shared, she would prefer to increase MDA pay to \$8.00 per hour. Mr. Ringstaff noted that the intent is to place custodians and nurses on steps, which is comparable to what other systems are doing. Mrs. Smith stated that employees should be rewarded for doing a good job. Dr. Gilbert stated that Mrs. Trail will work on "recognition" for those employees. Mrs. Duggin suggested that employees receive benefit statements so that they are aware of the full cost to the system, recognize the impact of steps, and how retirement is handled. Mrs. Smith agreed as this would be an incentive for employees to remain in the system.

Mr. Anderson referred to the information provided regarding a rate increase for ESP. He explained that ESP has not had a rate increase in seven years. Dr. Gilbert referred to the sheet titled "Number of Children per Family," noting that 27 families have three or more children with 19 of the families paying full price, eight being employee's children, and several families receiving funding from DHS, grants, or are receiving a special rate. Mr. Jolley provided the Board with a document titled "MCS/ESP Accomplishments 2011/2012." ESP serves 1,700+ students. Additional professional development has been provided for staff, including implementing PLCs with site directors. Full-time site directors have time to work with teachers to determine what student needs are so they can design a program that supplements the academic day. Mrs. Phillips suggested that in the future Mr. Jolley provide a report to the Board at a regular meeting so this information can be shared with the public.

Mr. Anderson referred to page 57, noting that the Board will be asked to approve the budget's federal and state project revenues based on anticipated revenue due to the fact that it will be some time before the system knows what the actual revenue will be, giving the Director the latitude to adjust the expenditures related to the level of funding that the system ultimately receives. Dr. Gilbert explained that Title I involves teachers and EAs, Title II includes the technology coordinators, professional development, etc. and Title III includes ESL. Dr. Gilbert noted that the system spends all of its preschool allocation.

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She provided the Board with a listing of the 26 preschools classes and their funding source. In response to Mrs. Smith, Dr. Gilbert explained that Dr. Brooks and Dr. Grizzard are paid through Race to the Top, additional funding is provided for professional development, and Skyward funding. LETRS training was paid through RTTT and ELL teachers too. She also stated that our RTTT budget has been approved, and that budget did include paying salaries.

Mr. Anderson referred to the Cafeteria budgets and Food Cost and Other Calculations information noting that there would be no increase in the cost for meals or milk, and the Feds are allowing salad bars again. In response to Mr. Campbell's question, Mr. Anderson stated that other revenues for some schools resulted from their hosting meetings such as SACS, etc.

Mr. Ringstaff explained that the City will provide 3.5% raises, but the increased costs to employees for medical insurance will cover the cost of the raises to the City. Mr. Campbell asked where positions paid out of Jobs funding will be absorbed, how many positions systemwide will be lost. Dr. Gilbert stated that 21 positions are funded through Jobs, and all but the first two listed will be absorbed. Positions added are: one social worker, two EAs, and an ELL teacher. One art position and two guidance counselors will be eliminated. Schools will still have guidance counselors, and social workers will be assigned to two or three schools each. An additional physical education position has been added. Student enrollment is considered when a position is split between two schools or a position is added.

In response to Mr. Campbell, Mr. Anderson stated that when all is done, the Fund Balance will total \$5.5 million (having taken \$1.4 million out of the original \$6.9 million reserves to balance the budget). The fund balance is for items such as technology but amounts are not specified as it is really just one pot of money. Mr. Campbell asked if the administration should not request additional funding from the City in light of the impending needs of the system. Mrs. Phillips agreed. Mr. Anderson explained that the City provides funding to the operating budget but also provides funding for capital outlay projects such as Hobgood, Bradley, and the new school totaling some \$25 million. They have this year also provided funds for improvements to our tennis courts and parking lots. Mrs. Rainier asked if the administration had already presented the proposed budget to the City, would they suggest cuts to the budget, etc. Dr. Gilbert stated that she has talked with the City, but will meet with Rob Lyons to actually review this proposed budget. Mrs. Duggin stated that with the funding already committed by the City, she did not feel this year was the time to request additional funding. With specific needs that will have to be funded such as technology, additional buses, etc., it would be better to go to the Council when those needs are known. Dr. Andrews agreed with Mrs. Duggin. It was suggested that Mr. Lyons be made aware of the needs that will have to be funded in the future.

Dr. Gilbert explained the changes in staffing based on student enrollment at schools. Mrs. Phillips stated that she was concerned about sharing positions between two schools. Dr. Gilbert further explained that employees affected by the elimination of positions or changes in staffing could be absorbed through retirements, non-renewals, etc. In response to Mrs. Smith's question, Mr. Anderson stated that the proposed 2.5% raise is what will bring the Fund Balance down to \$5.5 million.

Mrs. Phillips stated that she had been told there is a possible fire hazard situation at Reeves-Rogers; Mr. Anderson stated that he would look into this.

Dr. Gilbert stated that she would like to add two positions to address the needs of gifted students, but has not developed the program enough to be proposed to the Board. The two positions are not included in the budget. This program would not affect The Discovery School, but would serve "gifted" students. She has asked Mrs. Hummel and Mrs. Van Tries to identify where our gifted students are attending and how they are progressing academically.

Mr. Anderson stated that if the county increases property taxes, the school system would benefit. Dr. Andrews stated that it is also beneficial to increase the fund balance prior to building a new school to cover various costs.

Dr. Gilbert stated that she appreciates the Board allowing her to make the necessary changes to assure an increase in student performance. Mrs. Phillips, Mr. Campbell, and Mr. Barrett (in attendance) were congratulated on being elected to serve the next four years on the Board. In addition, congratulations to Dr. Brown for his election to the Board. Mrs. Rainier thanked Mr. Anderson, Dr. Gilbert, Golena Bell, and other staff for their work on the budget.

Mr. Anderson asked if the Board would grant approval to purchase the storage so that the system can move forward with implementing Skyward. In response to Mrs. Smith's question, Mr. Anderson stated that they would not be required to bid the purchase as they can use the State bid, which is with Dell. Mrs. Duggin moved to approve the purchase of storage as presented; Dr. Andrews seconded the motion. The motion was approved by acclamation.

III. REVIEW OF APRIL 24, 2012 BOARD MEETING AGENDA

The Board reviewed the proposed April 24 agenda. Mrs. Duggin stated that she would like to provide the names of those appointed to be Math Core Coaches. No other changes were recommended to the agenda.

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IV. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Chair Wade adjourned the meeting at approximately 4:15 p.m.

Director of Schools

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