

MINUTES

MURFREESBORO CITY BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL CALLED BOARD MEETING--
POLICY WORK SESSION
Tuesday, April 16— 11:00 a.m.
Central Administration Building
(Continuance of Previous Meeting of
Tuesday, April 9, 2013)

ORDER OF BUSINESS

ATTENDANCE

Board: Chair Mary Wade, Jared Barrett, Andy Brown, Butch Campbell, Nancy Phillips, Nancy Rainier, and Collier Smith. Absent: Council Liaison Ron Washington.

Staff: Director Linda Gilbert, Gary Anderson, Dan Boshers, Caresa Brooks, Kim Frank, Xavier Hamler, Karen Hawkins, Ava Jordan, Patty Kennedy, Greg Lyles, Beth Prater, and Ralph Ringstaff, and Lisa Trail.

Others: Staff Attorney Kelley Baker, *Daily News Journal* Reporter Mealand Hudgins-Ragland.

I. CALL TO ORDER BY BOARD CHAIR

Chair Wade called the meeting to order at approximately 11:00 a.m. followed by a moment of silence in memory of the Boston Marathon bombing casualties.

II. FY'14 BUDGET REVIEW

Mr. Anderson provided the Board with a document detailing the costs for association fees. Dr. Gilbert stated that she believes the membership to AASA can be discontinued.

Mrs. Phillips asked for an explanation of the positions in ESP. Mr. Hamler explained the ESP staffing and general responsibilities. Dr. Gilbert explained that ESP is self-sufficient and is not a part of the General Purpose budget. Mr. Barrett asked if the ESP budget could cover some expenses such as the basketball program as many ESP students participate in the program. Mr. Ringstaff explained that the basketball program is now considered a district-wide program, not a program offered through ESP. Head coaches receive a \$1,000 supplement, assistant coaches \$500, and cheerleading coaches \$500.

Mr. Anderson explained that the district contracts services for yard work and has kept the same company for approximately seven years as they have not increased the cost to the

district. In response to questions regarding insurance, he explained that the district is self-insured with the City. In response to Mr. Barrett's question, Mr. Anderson stated that the figures for utilities include the additional cost due to the expansion at Hobgood, and he has estimated in such a manner as to cover unforeseen costs that might occur as the district has had two mild winters. In response to Mrs. Phillips, Mrs. Jordan stated that the persons hired to cut grass at schools do have background checks. Mr. Anderson explained that we do have some custodians employed by the district and in addition we bid custodial services out. The district uses Verizon for cell phone service and maintenance uses Sprint. Cell phones are provided to those employees who would need them in an emergency situation. In response to Mrs. Rainier's and Mrs. Phillips' concern regarding tennis courts, Dr. Gilbert stated that she would contact the Parks and Recreation Department regarding needed repairs. Mr. Anderson explained that copier contracts are done through the state bid.

Mr. Anderson explained that the Board has approved the purchase of three buses, which he can take from fund balance this fiscal year, or put in the budget after July 1 for FY'14. The Board agreed to take this expense from FY'13 with the purchase of additional buses next year taken from FY'14 if it is determined they are needed. Mr. Anderson was asked about the expenses for field trips, regular transportation costs, etc., and asked if he could break the costs for field trips down. He also explained that some bus drivers are part-time and may drive a morning or an afternoon route while others are full-time driving both morning and afternoon. The position of bus driver is a hard to fill position, and the district tries to keep good bus drivers.

Mr. Boshers explained the improvements that have been made in technology including the new technology area at central office, the vault containing system servers, added A/C for servers, etc. Mrs. Rainier referenced a school that may need additional A/C due to concerns about that server overheating. Mr. Anderson stated that the district does not have backup generators, but has an alarm that will allow them 30 minutes to shut the system down if needed. Mr. Boshers noted that an increase in expenditures was made due to the new school and for load balance, getting ready for PARCC testing, etc. He also explained that Apple no longer supports websites so the district has contracted for the services of an outside company, Sharp School.

Mrs. Phillips asked about the responsibilities of the Communications Director, her assistant, and Mr. Lyles. Dr. Gilbert explained that Mrs. Trail deals with the communications, Foundation, etc. Ms. Eatherly has experience from her previous employment at State Farm and is instrumental in handling the district's recognition, celebrations, etc. as well as providing support to Mrs. Trail and to Mr. Lyles. Mr. Lyles works with community partners, handles home school and homebound and will now be

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involved with virtual school, the district's backpack program, etc. He supervises the district's outreach employees, Candy Clifford, Marisela Tapia, Dimas Espinoza, and also the Franklin Heights Resource Center, Linda Rowland and Artesia Hart. Mr. Barrett stated that the district's PR events have been great and are great for getting the district's message out. Mrs. Rainier stated that the district does seem top heavy, and she is concerned when the district has to absorb the two positions currently paid through Race to the Top.

Dr. Gilbert explained that currently Meri-Leigh Smith and Cathrine Gordon are writing/administering grants for the district although grants run through Lisa Trail. After discussion, Mrs. Smith stated that she would like to see more grant writing for the district.

Dr. Gilbert explained that the district has 26 preschool classrooms: 12 lottery, 4 local, 3 Title, 7 special ed.

Mr. Anderson referred the Board to the Capital Outlay document explaining each item listed for the various schools. He noted that he is typically not comfortable going into Fund Balance, but with the savings to fund balance over the past several years, the district has this one-year window in which they can do this. The district can go into fund balance or cut personnel to balance the budget. Personnel make up 85% of the district's expense. Dr. Gilbert pointed out that professional development costs have increased due to PD required for common core. Principals have asked for more help with instructional coaching. Mrs. Phillips stated that she is concerned with the sustainability of the expenditures. Mrs. Smith asked that he revisit the cost of resurfacing the Erma Siegel playground looking at the expense to use rubberized coating versus using mulch. Mr. Anderson stated that he has not included growth money in the budget as there is no clear indication of how much if any the districts will receive.

Mr. Anderson provided the Board with a document "Fund Balance Analysis." He noted that the cost of an across-the-board raise has not been included in the budget, but the proposed budget does include the BEP revenue for proposed raises.

Mr. Anderson noted that the district can apply for e-rate funds in the amount of \$1,125,000 if the district designates \$250,000 in the budget for technology/improvements. This funding if received would pay for new phone systems district-wide as well as replace the old intercom systems currently in the schools.

Mr. Anderson reviewed staffing standards. Mrs. Rainier stated that she would like to see Bradley and MNP have an MDA for the media center. Dr. Gilbert stated that these

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positions are allocated to the school, and the principals have the discretion to assign them as they determine the needs of their school. Mrs. Smith asked that the administration consider providing a full-time art teacher for each school (Hobgood and Discovery). Mr. Anderson explained how these classes are scheduled, and noted that scheduling has to be considered. Dr. Gilbert added that physical education has to be provided twice a week, music is currently offered twice a week, and art once a week.

Mr. Anderson reviewed the salary schedules, explaining the changes to the principals' pay scale to achieve equity relative to the size of the school, staff and students. He also explained that step increases are included in the budget.

Mr. Anderson stated that ESP is self-sufficient. Mr. Barrett asked if some expenses, such as basketball, could be taken from the ESP surplus. Mr. Anderson stated that he believes that the funds raised for ESP must be spent on that program, but he will look into the possibility.

Mr. Anderson pointed out that federal revenue is not known until late summer, therefore the Board will be asked to approve the budget with current figures with the stipulation that the Director stay within final federal funding. Mrs. Farris stated that the final federal budget is not due until October.

Mr. Anderson pointed out that the Food Service program is self-sustaining, and shows a loss of \$125,396. The district plans to implement the breakfast in the classroom program. Mrs. Phillips and Mrs. Smith voiced a concern about the mess. Dr. Gilbert shared that she, Mr. Anderson, Mrs. Scheele and others from the district had visited a school that offered this program and were told that this had not been a problem. Mrs. Smith stated that she would prefer the food service fund balance be put into the food. Mrs. Wade asked that the administration bring more information back to the Board, and if needed, perhaps schedule a visit for them to view a program.

Mr. Anderson pointed out the cost of a 1% raise as indicated in the Appendix.

Mrs. Phillips voiced a concern regarding adding the three new positions. Mrs. Rainier pointed out that the cost would be \$212,937. Dr. Gilbert stated that with the state mandates, the district would benefit greatly from the data analyst position, psychologists need the help of the testing coordinator, and the district is required to have a gifted coordinator. In response to Mrs. Phillips, she replied that the gifted coordinator could be part-time, but she believes the district would be better served by having a full-time person in that position. Mrs. Baker explained that according to an administrative directive the district should post certified positions.

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Mrs. Smith inquired about the cost for Genesis to serve four students. Dr. Gilbert stated that there are no other companies locally that provide the service, and Mrs. Kennedy stated that Genesis does not just provide academic services but also psychological/mental help as these students have severe issues. Mrs. Smith asked that Mr. Anderson look at a less costly way to address the Erma Siegel playground issues, and perhaps hold off on fencing in the bus/maintenance area. She stated that she would also like to see the communications office work towards obtaining more grants.

Dr. Brown stated that the administration should carefully consider whether to add three new personnel positions, becoming top heavy. He also asked that the administration continue to look at health insurance increases and look into consolidating the phone service/bills.

Mr. Campbell asked if the 1% raise is included in the budget. Mr. Anderson stated that the revenue from BEP is already included in the projected budget, but the expenditure for a raise is not included. If that is added, it would affect the fund balance. The state has indicated a 1.5% raise, but BEP revenue is only provided for the BEP positions the state recognizes and then only at a percentage of the total cost, and bases the increase on an average salary of \$40,000. The district's average salary is \$49,000. The district absorbs the cost of the raise to the rest of the employees, certified and classified, etc. Dr. Brown stated that with a daughter teaching in the system, he would recuse himself from discussing raises at this point.

Mrs. Rainier stated that she would recommend the administration look into providing the MDA's for the media centers, a full-time art teacher for Discovery, and a 1.5% raise. Dr. Gilbert stated that steps are actually raises so some teachers would receive 2%, or 3-4%; however, teachers do not view step increases as raises.

Mrs. Phillips stated that the universities need to know how much additional support/reteaching has to be provided to teachers. She noted that gifted numbers are deceptive as only a small number are actually identified as gifted; however, when our students enter the county middle school, more are identified. Mrs. Rainier explained that the Department of Education had previously stated that the district over-identified gifted students, so MCS had backed off some. Mrs. Smith stated that she can see the need for a full-time gifted coordinator.

Mr. Barrett asked if the administration could look into decreasing the utilities budget by about \$50,000.

III. BOARD POLICY REVIEW

For Discussion:

STU 59—Physical Management of Aggressive Behavior (*New Policy*)
(Will be provided prior to meeting.)

Mrs. Baker provided the Board with a proposed policy titled “Special Education Behavioral Support” and also a proposed policy titled “Safe Relocation of Students.” She explained that the Special Education Behavioral Support policy provides more protection for students and for staff. She recommended that she revise this policy so that it would cover both special ed and general ed students. Mrs. Frank explained that the first paragraph was added as a statement of the district’s philosophy. She added that a team of trained personnel are located at each school who know the safe way to deal with a student in crisis. Some ESP staff have also been trained. After discussion, Mrs. Wade moved that Mrs. Baker revise the special education support proposed policy to include both special ed and general ed students and bring the policy back to the Board for approval on first reading; Mrs. Rainier seconded the motion. The motion carried by acclamation.

BO 47—Naming a School (*New Policy*)

Mrs. Baker reviewed the changes as indicated to BO 47—Naming a School. Mrs. Phillips moved to approve the policy with the indicated revisions to be brought back to the Board for approval on first reading; Mrs. Smith seconded the motion. The motion carried by acclamation.

IV. DISCUSSION OF TELEVISIONING SPECIAL CALLED/POLICY WORK SESSIONS

Mrs. Wade stated that it had been brought to her attention that it would be beneficial for the Board to hold special meetings in Council Chambers so that meetings could be televised. She stated that she preferred the convenience of meeting at central office. Mrs. Smith stated that she like the informality of meeting at central office. Mrs. Phillips stated that she preferred to have special meetings televised so that the public has easy access to view them. Dr. Brown stated that the meetings are advertised and the public can attend the meetings held at the central office; he also prefers the informality of meeting at central office. Mrs. Rainier also stated that the meetings are advertised, and she also prefers the informality of meeting at central office. Mr. Barrett stated that although he sees both sides, he can see the need of televising the meetings to be more

accessible to the public. Mr. Campbell stated that he prefers the informality of meeting at central office. Mrs. Wade asked that this item be added to the May policy review agenda for further discussion.

V. REVIEW OF APRIL 23, 2013 DRAFT AGENDA

There were no recommended revisions.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

The Board agreed to call a special meeting to be held at 3 p.m. on Sunday, April 21, at the central administration building to continue discussion on the proposed FY'14 budget. Dr. Gilbert stated that it is her understanding that the Board is asking the administration to: add an MDA position to the Media Center, look at decreasing the proposed utility expenditures, cut some professional development, review personnel needs, and add a 1.5% across-the-board raise. Mrs. Phillips noted that she still believes the system can do without the three additional personnel positions. Mrs. Rainier stated that if the assistant principal at Discovery is moved to a full-time gifted coordinator position, that would be the third new assistant principal placed at Discovery in a row. Mr. Barrett stated that he agreed about the bus expenditures.

Chair Wade adjourned the meeting at approximately 5:05 p.m.

Director of Schools

MISSION STATEMENT

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