

RETREAT MINUTES  
Murfreesboro City School Board  
Administrative Offices  
1 p.m., Friday, August 28, 2015 and  
9 a.m. Saturday, August 29, 2015

ATTENDANCE

Chair Butch Campbell, Vice Chair Nancy Rainier, Jared Barrett, Andy Brown, Phil King, Nancy Phillips, Collier Smith.

Staff: Dr. Linda Gilbert, Gary Anderson, Joe Marlin, Lisa Trail, and Ralph Ringstaff.

Staff Attorney Kelley Baker.

**I. PLANNING**

**Master Plan**

Dr. Gilbert said the plan shows what we have done and where we are.

**GOAL 1:** We will educate the whole child to achieve their highest potential.

**Strategy 1:** Provide learner-centered environments equipped with technology and learning resources to meet the individual, diverse needs of all learners.

Dr. Gilbert reported that technology has gone well, and that we are preparing for completing technology at Overall Creek, but coming from where we were to where we are now is an improvement.

**Strategy 2:** Implement a comprehensive tiered instructional model, including differentiation in the content areas to maximize the academic learning of all children and a tiered behavioral model to meet their social and emotional needs. This means that the unique needs of all subgroups of children-regardless of their academic, socioeconomic, cultural, or ethnic demographic-are held to a high standard.

Dr. Gilbert said we are getting there but are not there completely. She said we are looking at involving parents and parent committees, adding that she would like to have Hispanic subgroup, gifted subgroup, have big groups, etc. She said she is happy with the gifted academy but need to expand that.

**Strategy 3:** Develop and utilize a data dashboard to improve decision making and inform instruction.

Dr. Gilbert said the State is coming out with a data dashboard so the district is holding off on that purchase. It is supposed to roll out in January, and it should be the complete picture of the child -

academic, behavior, health, etc. We have a lot of information with Skyward, but it needs to be refined.

**Strategy 4:** Increase opportunities for teachers to learn and collaborate in professional learning communities that develop and nurture staff in the study and use of research-based practices which accelerate student learning.

Dr. Gilbert said a lot has been done with professional learning communities. We have a committee writing scope and sequence which is rolling out right now. We are looking at ELA and will be rolling out next Thursday. There is great interest in meeting across the district and specific grade levels, and she is happy to see that collaboration.

**Strategy 5:** Implement research-based instructional practices that build creativity, critical thinking, problem-solving, and application.

Dr. Gilbert explained the STEAM training which integrates across science, math, and reading. She said the Leader in Me and Gifted Academy have been implemented but still need to work on application of learning but will get more with training.

**Strategy 6:** Encourage students and staff to be versatile, communicative, optimistic, global thinkers.

Dr. Gilbert said we encourage students and staff to be versatile, and the Outreach Department encourages students to participate in Club Marvel, Camp PRISM, etc. With the two visiting Chinese teachers, the expansion of the child's world comes into play. She said she hopes to engage teachers and principals. She said we are looking at Reeves-Rogers as an entrepreneurship school, and that we want to become a STEAM-centered district.

**Strategy 7:** Increase ESP program offerings and participation to augment student learning.

Dr. Gilbert noted that ESP now offers coding camps moving more into technology, and that a meeting was had with Beth Duffield at the Chamber of Commerce yesterday about that. Ms. Smith asked how STEAM training works. Dr. Gilbert said you develop standards so you have an essential question, and under that deeper thinking. It is deeper critical analysis than you would have if you were teaching science apart from reading, etc. More discussion on parts of students and more problem solving. Ms. Smith asked how teachers are getting STEAM training. Dr. Gilbert said some teachers already have training and MTSU is offering training. She said any time you have math training now you have STEAM training with it. Solving problems while learning content areas at the same time. She said if you were teaching a STEAM unit, for example, math - you want to design a football field that is going to accommodate so many people and certain temperatures. You are bringing in science, what materials to use, geographic location, and research and find out what temps are there. You are working on social studies, science, and math. Calculate the perimeter. For reading, you might write about how you did it or write a letter to the company you want to buy your turf from or write how the turf would feel. The idea is having a problem and seeing those standards.

Ms. Smith said she has been getting lots of calls about the writing scores. She has seen them and other parents have not seen them. Dr. Gilbert said she has not seen that yet. Ms. Smith said they

are attached to TCAP. Dr. Gilbert said the State today was talking about writing scores. The district had a long debate about whether to create a community of writers or whether you wanted to focus on capital letters, etc. She said they came up with own scope and sequence and it will be genre writing. She added that Shavon and parents may have gotten scores.

Ms. Smith said she is pleased to see on schedule meeting with every single grade this week. Had one teacher said she definitely had not incorporated enough writing in the past but was going to do that. Dr. Gilbert said it is either let your kids write and tell the story or it's about where to put the comma and the question marks. There are three types of writing - opinion, narrative, and argumentative. Student will have about 75 minutes of something they haven't been focusing on. There has to be 30 minutes of writing every day within that reading block and we've shown them how to put that in. They'll be doing genres; three days per week on narrative then two days will be focusing on content. What we've heard from teachers is that's what they need. Ms. Smith said that's great because it is needed.

Ms. Rainier asked if this is a specific grade level or every grade level. Dr. Gilbert said every grade level has a 90-minute block with 30 minutes of writing. Ms. Rainier agreed there was not enough focus on it. As you said, use the STEAM approach and put that content in there for writing. Dr. Gilbert said we are just starting that. Seeing teachers more interested in it.

Ms. Rainier asked what the Confucius Institute will be doing since there are only two of them and 12 schools. Dr. Gilbert asked Ms. Trail to talk about this. Ms. Trail said we have two teachers this year at no cost. These teachers have been teaching the last two years in Memphis. With all the changes in Memphis last year, they felt it was not a good situation to have teachers there so they reached out to MTSU, and MTSU reached out to us because of all the initiatives of Candy Clifford and Greg Lyles. Each teacher has six schools and will stay approximately six weeks per school working with librarians, art teachers, music teachers, social studies – supplementing teachers there. She said they would also be with ESP a couple days a week, and doing a lot of hands on initiatives. Ms. Rainier asked if they are teaching our standards or are they teaching about their cultures. Mr. Ringstaff said in ESP they are teachings about their culture. Ms. Trail said they are never in a classroom by themselves teaching. They are supplementing. She cited music as an example, looking at incorporating some of their music and dance styles. She said they are there to assist teachers. She said they are at Overall Creek and Scales right now and will move on at the end of September. Dr. Gilbert said they were very interested in seeing our schools and how they work.

Ms. Rainier asked if the Data Dashboard comes along will we no longer use Skyward. Dr. Gilbert said we will still use Skyward but the dashboard will pull the data together. Mr. Barrett said he assumes the State knows we use Skyward. Mr. Anderson said the State requires it.

**GOAL 2:** We will recruit, hire, train, evaluate, and retain high quality personnel.

**Strategy 1:** Build a pipeline of high quality teacher and administrator applicants from a variety of sources.

Dr. Gilbert said if we are hiring early then the cream of the crop is here. There is a whole lot of difference when we hire late. Mr. Ringstaff said we do what we can to hire early, and we are doing a better job at attracting experienced teachers. He said we did our first virtual job fair. One

of the questions asked is if I were to visit your classroom what would I see, and how would you describe your differentiated learning in your classroom; We are trying to attract more minority candidates adding that eight percent last year were minorities and that increased to 16 percent this year. Mr. Ringstaff added that MCS has an excellent reputation now as being a good place to work. He said that Ms. Newell has an interview panel with a student on the panel, and the student asked some of the toughest questions.

Dr. Gilbert said that a leadership academy has not been done in a couple of years, but in next couple of years may do that again. She said she is also interested in a future teachers program with the high schools. Ms. Phillips said it will be an all hands on deck marketing strategy to change the mind of the community to value teachers. Dr. Gilbert said Mr. Marlin has some ideas about that adding that we must have conversations with other organizations and we could be facing a teacher shortage.

**Strategy 2:** Dr. Gilbert said this strategy involves implementing an intensive mentoring program for teachers.

**Strategy 3:** Using peer collaboration, virtual resources, and pertinent educational authorities, implement a differentiated professional growth plan in which all staff learn how to differentiate and individualize the academic program. Dr. Gilbert said peer collaboration would be used to get an idea of developing what teachers need and implement a plan to meet those needs.

**Strategy 4:** We want to find out what's happening pretty consistently across the district, and are there things that are happening in the schools that are valid recognition programs that can become district-wide or shared with other schools. The retirement receptions are now bigger at the school level than what we do as a district. Mr. King asked about recognition of new hires and a way to celebrate them. Ms. Smith said the City Schools Foundation did that last year. Ms. Trail said the Teacher2Teacher program did it at Embassy Suites this year right after the United Way Summit. Mr. King suggested treating it like football signing day. Ms. Smith said that was a great idea, and it would be nice if the Board was part of a luncheon or something when all the teachers are together. Ms. Phillips said they used to do an in-service kickoff and the Board was invited. She said it was an exciting atmosphere, and the Board got to celebrate with teachers having one big meeting with a speaker before broke out in enrichment sections. Ms. Rainier said retired teachers have commented on mentoring and said they are very willing to be mentors. Dr. Gilbert said they could adopt a teacher and stay with them for the first two or three years.

**Strategy 5:** Dr. Gilbert said this strategy is helping teachers grow into leadership roles as more than just leadership as a title but as a shared value – developing and nurturing future leaders.

**GOAL 3:** We will have an ongoing focus on instructional technology.

**Strategy 1:** Encourage and train teachers and students to achieve digital literacy and accelerate student learning by integrating instructional technology into the academic content areas. Dr. Gilbert said the district has come a long way but we still have work to do.

**Strategy 2:** Allocate time, resources, and access to technology-based tools and digital resources to ensure ongoing professional growth in technology fluency and integration. We have added

Lexia across the district and Read 180. A lot more technology is used but has to get integrated more fully as a tool.

**Strategy 3:** Use technology to develop a bank of integrated lessons that are available for all teachers. Dr. Gilbert said there is work to be done, but she is very interested in seeing the district do this.

**Strategy 4:** Establish a student information system and data warehouse to augment the effectiveness of meeting the needs of the whole child. Dr. Gilbert said this speaks to the data dashboard that was previously discussed.

**Strategy 5:** Create awareness among students and employees of the vulnerability that is inherent in the internet and social media. Dr. Gilbert said this is one component that Olweus (anti-bullying) training has, but is an ongoing process with social media's continual rapid expansion. She said we constantly find new things to be aware of.

**GOAL 4:** We will maintain healthy, safe, clean, orderly and nurturing environment in which children and adults can work and learn.

**Strategy 1:** Establish procedures that create a welcoming environment while maximizing the safety of all occupants.

**Strategy 2:** Promote an environment of wellness and good health practices.

**Strategy 3:** Provide a variety of quality meal choices to encourage student participation in the school meal program while maintaining compliance with USDA regulations.

**Strategy 4:** Implement a research-based character education program with a tiered response system and positive behavior support.

Dr. Gilbert expressed satisfaction with strategies 1-4.

**Strategy 5:** Provide cultural awareness and other appropriate training for staff to create an inclusive environment. Dr. Gilbert said we need to do more intentional cultural awareness for staff noting that we celebrate diversity, but she thinks we need to be more intentional. Ms. Trail reported that 22 languages are spoken in the schools right now.

Ms. Rainier asked the status of filling custodial services positions. She said she was told sinks would only be cleaned a minimum time of one per week, classroom floors are not being swept and that schools are nasty or dirty. She said she does not want to break the budget but salaries may need to be increased. She said temporary services are not the way to go. Chair Campbell said he believes principals need to hire custodians, and that the teacher's job is to teach, not clean up.

Ms. Smith said she received a very serious criticism this year regarding breakfast in the classroom due to the amount of paperwork involved for teachers and that teachers are getting reported to head administrators in the building. Dr. Gilbert said she had a conversation at a

principals meeting, and we have to get the routine of what is required by federal law. Mr. Anderson said that if we do not comply with federal law, we have to pay federal dollars back.

**Strategy 6:** Conduct a school safety audit of every school each year. Dr. Gilbert said we will be hearing more about this.

**Strategy 7:** Develop and maintain a safety and crisis plan at each school, provide prescribed safety training in each school each year, and hold schools accountable for conducting all safety and crisis drills throughout the year. Dr. Gilbert said safety and crisis plans have been developed and are in use. She complimented the relationship between MCS and Murfreesboro Police Department in implementing both plans and training.

**GOAL 5:** We will provide clear and effective communications to support and promote our mission and goals.

**Strategy 1:** Develop and support communications among/between students, parents, staff, and the community, including languages other than English where practical. Dr. Gilbert said we are continually working on communications noting that one thing that needs to be done is to translate the parent handbook into Spanish.

**Strategy 2:** Develop accessible and interactive technology tools to facilitate effective and transparent internal and external communication. Dr. Gilbert said we are continually looking for methods to reach parents, teachers, etc. She said the schools love Peachjar, and it has reduced a lot of paperwork.

**Strategy 3:** Provide systematic avenues for feedback from students, parents, staff, and the community about programs and services, effectiveness of communications, effectiveness of student learning, and quality of facilities. Dr. Gilbert said we are looking at exit interviews as a way to get responses.

**Strategy 4:** Share district success stories with stakeholders. Dr. Gilbert said we have gotten excellent coverage on the CHOW bus, but that more communication of coverage is needed.

**Strategy 5:** Promote openness, access, and availability of information about Murfreesboro City Schools. Dr. Gilbert said we are pretty transparent with the community about what is going on in the schools but perhaps we could use videotaping to promote the district. Ms. Smith said that Peachjar is a great tool. She said she would like to see a link to the Channel 3 taping of board meetings put on the website. Ms. Smith said the Board should be invited to the PTO/PTA annual luncheons, and a way to share success stories. Ms. Smith suggested that MCS and RCS get a billboard promotion about top ranking for schools in Murfreesboro noting that if you provide the paper, Lamar will give the billboard spots.

**GOAL 6:** We will build strong partnerships with families and the community to enhance student learning.

**Strategy 1:** Develop parent and community involvement campaigns to maximize the level of parent and community participation in our schools in conjunction with celebrating all students.

**Strategy 2:** Partner with outside organizations to bring real world practitioners to the classroom to link students with the world of work. Dr. Gilbert said this is a service learning environment.

**Strategy 3:** Expand community service projects and service learning opportunities for students and staff. Dr. Gilbert said we have several projects already in place such as Hobgood's poinsettia project, the basketball food drive, participating in the Main Street tree lighting ceremony, and other projects, but we are always looking for opportunities.

**Strategy 4:** Develop and implement a plan to involve students, staff, parents, and community as partners in promoting Murfreesboro City Schools. Dr. Gilbert said we have idea and are actively talking about ways of engaging people.

**Strategy 5:** Communicate with parents regarding positive student behavior and achievement. Dr. Gilbert said the next step is to coordinate efforts across the district. The parent portal will be one way of achieving this.

**Strategy 6:** Enhance, add to, and improve web-based information at the district level and across schools. Dr. Gilbert said this is ongoing.

**Strategy 7:** Expand our cooperative partnership with the City Schools Foundation. Dr. Gilbert recognized the Excellence in Education Gala and the Foundation and Fashion Show as being tremendous successes adding that the Foundation offers many thousands of dollar in grants to teachers and schools. Ms. Trail said the monthly meetings are primarily focused on how to help schools and seeks input from schools about their needs.

**GOAL 7:** We will develop a comprehensive plan for operations, finances, and funding, facilities, transportation, and food service that supports student learning.

**Strategy 1:** Generate a plan for development and use of facilities based on growth projections and capacity analysis. Mr. Anderson said the Capital Improvement Plan has been developed for 2015-2019, and includes the Hobgood addition (2015), Black Fox addition (2016), land purchase and new school (2017), computer replacements, and renovations at Bradley. He said we will continue to monitor growth and adjust the plan as needed.

**Strategy 2:** Seek out non-traditional revenue sources and secure funding from these sources to improve or enhance educational achievement. Dr. Gilbert noted the Ben Carson Library that was acquired for Reeves-Rogers and Northfield as well as the Community Eligibility Grant, General Mills Grant, and several other collaborations. She said that ESP has acquired the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and LEAPS grants annually and receive matching funds for the tennis camps. She said the district will be seeking private funders in the future. Dr. Gilbert said that grant funding is not as much as it used to be because we are seeing funds going to private education or being disbursed between public and private noting a much stronger competition for dollars.

**Strategy 3:** Identify multiple-year budget needs and build responsible annual budgets that support educational measures which advance student learning. Dr. Gilbert said the Capital Improvement Plan is in place, and the textbook cycle has been reviewed. Technology needs are

developed each year, and we have begun cycling in the budget to accommodate technology replacement. Dr. Gilbert said there is a constant need to stay on top of legislative issues that may impact the budget.

**Strategy 4:** Develop a comprehensive energy efficiency strategy. Mr. Anderson said that a comprehensive energy efficiency strategy has been developed and presented to the City Manager in the Capital Improvement Plan. In addition, energy efficiency checklists have been given to each school to monitor.

**Strategy 5:** Annually review technology infrastructure and equipment needs and plan for technology hardware maintenance and replacement. Mr. Anderson said we feel good about where we are right now, but know that technology has to continually be replaced.

Ms. Phillips said that in looking at this complex puzzle that is a school system, do we have enough data to know which programs are working and which are not, and is there a strategy for gathering data to know what truly is working with these varied components. Dr. Gilbert said we can tell what things are working and focusing energy there.

Dr. Brown said a lot of goals and strategies have been covered, does someone at Central Office own all of these strategies - is there a name associated with each strategy. Dr. Gilbert said yes that each department and personnel are aware of the plan. Dr. Brown asked if they are aware that next year they should be green instead of yellow when the Board meets. Dr. Gilbert said yes and that some of these are ongoing and may not be completed by next year. Dr. Brown expressed that his fear is that someone doesn't know it's their responsibility it won't get done. Dr. Gilbert explained that with most of these things there is probably more than one person involved. Dr. Brown said he understands, but that one person has to be responsible.

### **AdvancEd Survey of Staff**

Ms. Phillips asked who actually answered the questions to the survey. Dr. Gilbert said the teachers did. Dr. Brown asked how the scores were derived. Dr. Gilbert said they are an average of all schools.

Ms. Rainier said she would still like to see a survey come from the Board - not Dr. Gilbert or administrators - to get feedback from teachers like what is going on in the system. She said the easiest thing to ask is what are we doing right and what are we doing wrong and allow it to be totally anonymous.

Mr. Anderson said Mark Mayer helped us put together an energy efficiency program, and Christopher Young in maintenance oversees it. Mr. Mayer explained that a meter was installed as something parents, teachers and kids can go to. He said teachers can use the map for lessons to integrate distance, age, construction, etc. He said Overall Creek is the most efficient by size. Mr. Anderson said this information helps us determine what we may need to do and that most of the schools energy efficient is affected by their mechanical system. There was some discussion about Northfield and the cost of the replacement unit there.

## **Enrollment History Information**

Mr. Anderson explained the current Pupil/Teacher Ratio report. He said the district has a lot of out-of-city applications, and we have 436 total students from outside the city limits. He noted that Board policy allows that, especially in these areas that are in litigation for annexation. Ms. Smith asked if out-of-zoners pay tuition. Mr. Anderson said that Board policy stopped tuition about six years ago. Discussion was held about costs, decision-making, etc.

## **II. BUDGET**

### **Dodge Summary Report:**

Mr. Anderson said we get this report every month from the City. He said you can see on the report where the economy tanked, and it hurt us, and you can see where it picked up again. He said we were caught off guard with Overall Creek because we didn't know there would be that many students and we used existing inventory, noting that Overall Creek is going to fill up quickly. He said we will probably have to close zone that school next year.

Mr. Marlin explained CDC class growth. He said that kids with severe needs cannot be put in a 20-student classroom. He said two classes have been added at Reeves-Rogers and two classes at Cason Lane because numbers keep growing. He said he expects that growth to continue. Ms. Smith asked if every building needs CDC options. Dr. Gilbert said ideally, every building needs CDC and pre-K. Mr. Marlin said some schools have opportunities for special needs kids while others do not. Ms. Rainier asked why not one of every two schools. Mr. Marlin said we are struggling with transportation. He said the main thing is if we give them really good care and education, parents are not opposed to them being outside of their school zone. Ms. Phillips said this is the most fragile of the student population. She said she is not opposed to a plan if we develop a philosophy we can stick to.

## **III. SALARY STUDY**

Dr. Gilbert said our system has a lot of people who carry a lot of different weights. Mr. Ringstaff thanked Ms. Phillips, Dr. Brown, Ms. Baker, Gary, and Dr. Gilbert for meeting to work on the salary study. He said there was an effort to get job titles close in each district although some are not exactly the same. Directing everyone to the study, he noted that Franklin Special District is above everyone else except Oak Ridge. He said Oak Ridge was included because they have a great reputation noting their teachers average \$61,000 which is about \$10,000 more than ours. Mr. Ringstaff said we are ranked in the top 15-20 in teacher pay in 136 school districts. For principals, he said some have 11-month contracts and some 12-month so he didn't differentiate but tried to compare apples to apples. Ms. Phillips and Dr. Brown suggested coming up with some school information to include at the bottom of the report along with student demographics. Mr. Ringstaff said Oak Ridge outsources nutrition and transportation. He explained that "N/A" on the report means that he couldn't find a comparable match for that category in other districts. Williamson County was the only district he could find with a true community outreach position. Mr. Barrett thanked committee members and said it's a good snapshot.

Dr. Brown said the next step is a discussion about how to use this information. He said our school system is a bit different than other school systems – major thing to remember is that we are competing with other school systems for the teachers; we have to think about that when we

look at salaries – technology, etc. As we move forward in the budget cycle next year we need to make some adjustments. We need to be more competitive over a period of time and make this a system where we can get the best and keep the best.

Dr. Gilbert said we lose our nurses to Rutherford County because they will get paid a teacher's salary.

#### **IV. SAFETY/DISASTER PLANS**

Dr. Gilbert talked about the Black Fox bomb threat noting that it was a hoax. She explained that a debriefing was held afterward with the police department. She said the bottom line is that we are going to listen to the police and follow their instructions. She said that our current emergency plans worked, but we learned we have some minor tweaking to do. She said as far as major disasters, we would follow TEMA's instruction at that time.

#### **SCORES:**

Dr. Gilbert said the State announced yesterday that in 2017 we are going to have a second grade achievement test. She said there is reading research and we know what we are doing with LETRS training. She said there are questions about new scope and sequence in reading. Dr. Gilbert said there is work to do with quality of teaching as well as decomposing the standards.

Ms. Rainier asked if, in the PLCs, second grade teachers are meeting with third grade teachers, etc. Dr. Gilbert said that is supposed to be happening in the schools, but thinks we need to look at that again. She said some of the best teachers were brought in to really lay out the standards. Ms. Rainier asked if there are ramifications with the State as to improvement status. Dr. Gilbert said none except to reputation. Dr. Brown said when he looks at the salary study and demographics of the school system, there are obvious challenges but to hear the words "we can't" is not acceptable. He said the message needs to be put out very clearly that the school board expects excellence.

Ms. Smith said Rutherford County scores are better, and asked what they are doing. Dr. Gilbert said we were closer to them in 2013, and that her disappointment was in the drop made this year and the year before. Ms. Smith noted that sixth grade did quite well with the exception of science, and that she was impressed with positive scores in sixth grade particularly in some schools that have a greater challenge. Ms. Smith said she has been getting calls from parents about scores and they are not happy. Ms. Phillips said there is an expectation of excellence, but she thinks we need to change the mentality of the school system whether we have a committee, a lobbyist, or hire somebody. She said we can't bemoan the state or pass the buck; we have to be accountable. She said she is asking for a can-do, will-do attitude to make significant and real change in our scores and most importantly our children learning. Dr. Brown said he encourages our people to talk to other school systems and see what they're doing. He added that we need to give our teachers what they need to be successful.

The Board Retreat adjourned at approximately 8:10 p.m., and will reconvene at 9 a.m. Saturday.

Saturday, August 29, 2015, 9 a.m.

## **V. SCHOOLS AND PARKS**

Dr. Gilbert said we are taking a comprehensive view at campuses to see what would make them more conducive to the communities as parks. She said we are probably going to see walking paths, basketball courts, etc. She said she has not heard from them directly but thinks it's going into the capital improvement plan. Ms. Phillips recommended an outdoor performance place for staging performances, etc. She said she supports sports but that there are a lot of kids who like music, dance, and performing. Ms. Baker indicated the plan has been dormant. Ms. Baker said neighborhood parks are part of the 2035 plans and this is part of that.

## **VI. POLICY DEVELOPMENT**

Dr. Gilbert asked the School Board to consider allowing TSBA to take over our policy writing and revising. She explained the volume of work that Ms. Baker does for the City in addition to the work for MCS, and explained that it would streamline the process. She noted that 112 of the 141 districts use TSBA for policies.

Dr. Brown moved to allow TSBA to take over the policy function. Ms. Rainier seconded. After some discussion about process, all approved by saying aye.

## **VII. LEGISLATIVE UPDATES AND ADVOCACY**

Ms. Baker explained that the Board has already been exposed to legislative updates through the various seminars, but she reviewed some of the legislation passed this year regarding school systems. She directed the Board to page 11 regarding special education vouchers. She said there is really no telling how this is going to impact us. Parents with an IEP can get a voucher to go outside of school system if they fall into one of these categories, whereas right now we provide services as part of an IEP. She said what she sees happen sometimes is a parent may get frustrated or parent may choose to homeschool children and use vouchers to get these services. Mr. Anderson said this is the first time for local dollars. He said state law says you have to educate to age 22, parents get a check, but there is no follow up to what they're doing. Guarantee parents are going to want that check until age 22 where right now the check stops if they leave school. Dr. Gilbert stated said to remember that all the bills that were presented for last year are still on the books for this year.

Mr. King proposed that the Board gives City Council members a bus tour of schools. He said it doesn't have to be every school, but at least some of the schools or select a particular aspect of each school. He said he firmly believes that when a business comes to Murfreesboro one of the top three things they look at is schools. Ms. Smith and Ms. Phillips volunteered to spearhead.

## **VIII. SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER HANDBOOK**

Mr. Barrett said the Board should be recognized as a professional government board and this is a step in doing that. He said he also sees this as a reference tool consolidating information into one spot for new members. Ms. Phillips said she does not like page 11 of Williamson County's handbook. Mr. Barrett said this starts the conversation on how we want to make our own and what we want to include. Ms. Baker said she could try to pull together what is already in place for the Board to review.

Chair Campbell noted that the School Board Member Handbook was the last item on the agenda. Ms. Rainier said there were some items she sent that she would like to address. She said she is concerned about teacher morale, and that she still hears about the overuses of testing. She asked if there is anything that can be done to reduce testing. Dr. Gilbert said we have to have all of those tests. She said we probably need to do more pre- and post-assessments, and that all we're doing as a district is what the state requires.

Ms. Rainier asked if Lisa could get the Board a list of upcoming activities so they can attend. Ms. Phillips said going to 12 different web sites is time consuming.

Ms. Rainier asked about the PLC paperwork and the infringement on planning time. Dr. Gilbert said state law requires 2.5 hours per week and principals are aware of that. She said we are giving them 45 minutes per day. Chair Campbell asked if teachers have the option of PLC meetings for planning time or after school. Dr. Gilbert said PLC meetings are held once per week, and they should be during planning time but that is up to that principal.

Ms. Rainier asked about communicating with staff directly if they have questions. Dr. Gilbert said she would prefer the Board come to her because she is the Board's employee. Ms. Baker noted that board policy BO13 says that Board communications to staff will be communicated to staff through the director. Dr. Gilbert said if it's Gary or Ralph or her, she has no problem, but anything else is a different level. Chair Campbell said they don't have to call Linda every time – they can call Gary or Ralph. He said that's part of being a good leader of hiring those people you can trust. Ms. Baker advised the Board that if they want to change the line of communication, we need to look at BO13. Chair Campbell said he thinks they need to revise that policy.

Ms. Rainier asked if they could get a report from Sandy Scheele at the next Board meeting about how many meals she served this summer.

Ms. Rainier asked about the custodial issue and would raises solve some of the problem. Mr. Anderson said the conundrum is paying custodians more than EAs and MDAs.

With no further items for discussion, the meeting adjourned at 11:16 a.m.

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Director of Schools