

MINUTES

Murfreesboro City School Board
6 p.m., Tuesday, November 15, 2016
Council Chambers

ATTENDANCE:

Chair Butch Campbell, Vice-Chair Nancy Rainier, Jared Barrett, Wesley Ballard, Phil King, Collier Smith (6:40) and David Settles

Staff: Dr. Linda Gilbert, Gary Anderson, Ralph Ringstaff, Lisa Trail, Kim Frank, Joe Marlin, Sandra Lindsey, Angela Fairchild, Rhonda Gore, Mary Orcutt, Tyra Murray, Shiloh Siegel, Laurie Offutt, Greg Lyles, Kelly Blanchard, Roxana Dove

Assistant City Attorney Kelley Baker

I. CALL TO ORDER BY BOARD CHAIR

Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Aiden Stone and Alex Judd, both first graders at Reeves Rogers Elementary. The Pledge was immediately followed by a moment of silence.

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Nancy Rainier moved to approve the agenda. Phil King seconded the motion. All approved by saying aye.

III. COMMUNICATIONS

Lisa Trail read the following communications:

Murfreesboro City Schools would like to thank the following individuals for their financial contributions toward our district-wide Family Game Night Initiative:

- Mitchell Bowman-Realtors With Results
- Ken & Doris Frizzell-Simply Sophisticated Home Staging
- Jim & Judy Smythe-J & J Smythe Family LLC

Congratulations to Mrs. Dianne Hall from Overall Creek Elementary for being named Girls on the Run (GOTR) Coach of the Year of Middle Tennessee. Mrs. Hall has been working very hard to fundraise and promote GOTR. Just this past month she ran her first marathon (during Fall Break) and then the next weekend participated in Murfreesboro's Middle Half to raise money for GOTR. Clearly Mrs. Hall is committed to her students and the girls of GOTR. Way to go Mrs. Hall!

Recycle Rutherford would like to thank all of the participants in our 2016 Postcard Contest. We received over 100 entries to judge which represented thousands of students who participated. While there were many postcard submissions from MCS teachers and students, Scales Elementary had the most participants and their efforts really paid off. Congratulations to Rachel Everett and Xan Lasco, both teachers at Scales, for being winners in our teacher participation drawing. They earned \$50 for their classroom use. See our website for the complete list of winners. Thank you and keep recycling!

MNS would like to thank the agents of Parks Realty for their generous donation. They stopped by to vote in our Pumpkin Decorating Contest. One penny = one vote. They cast LOTS of votes! We love having them as our community partners!

MNS would also like to thank Kroger at Georgetown Square for their donation of \$500.

Murfreesboro City Schools would like to congratulate the following individuals for completing the Leadership Academy:

Sandra Lindsey	Tamara Cosby
Pam Holden	Julie Parish
Christopher Young	Jennifer Clunie
Lisa Vancleave	Amy Miller
Shiloh Siegle	Dee Dee Potter
Alisha Herbison	Caleb Jones
Suzanne St. John	Tammy Pirtle
Mary Orcutt	Taylor Brown
Ava Jordan	Katie Nanney
Scott Campbell	Amanda Turnbo
Darlene Thomas	Jennifer DeFere
Kathleen Hunsicker	Stephanie Stump

This program covered a broad range of leadership topics which included personal leadership, interpersonal communication, team development skills, organizational change, and facilitative leadership.

Murfreesboro City Schools would like to thank Rack Room Shoes for their donation of \$2,212 to be used to purchase shoes and socks for students in need.

IV. CONSENT ITEMS

Minutes: October 25, 2016

Approval of Seven-Member Administrative Collaborative Conferencing Team: Ralph Ringstaff, Gary Anderson, Joe Marlin, Greg Lyles, Sheri Arnette, Jenny Ortiz, and Robin Newell

Approval of School Fees

Jared Barrett moved to approve the consent items, while Wesley Ballard seconded the motion. All approved by saying aye.

V. ACTION ITEMS

Board Policy 6.400 Promoting Student Wellness (second reading)

Dr. Gilbert presented Board Policy 6.400 Promoting Student Wellness to the board on the second reading with the requested change of each item being bulleted as TSBA's policy. Dr. Gilbert divided the policy into four categories: Community Engagement, Physical Activity, Nutrition, and Fostering Lifelong Habits. Jared Barrett thanked Dr. Gilbert for making the change that made the policy easier to read. Wesley Ballard asked if we were passing the approved staff recommended version, and Dr. Gilbert said yes.

David Settles made the motion to approve Board Policy 6.400 on the second reading. Jared Barrett seconded the motion. All approved by saying aye.

Resolution Opposing Vouchers

Dr. Gilbert presented the drafted resolution opposing vouchers for private schools. Jared Barrett said that he wanted this brought up because he felt it imperative that the Board take a stand on this. Dr. Gilbert thanked the Board for the stance on this issue.

The Board voted to approve the resolution. Mr. Wesley Ballard made the motion to approve the resolution, and Mrs. Nancy Rainier seconded. All approved by saying aye.

VI. REPORTS/INFORMATION

Director of Schools' Evaluation Results

Randall Bennett with TSBA gave the Board a copy of the completed results of Dr. Linda Gilbert's evaluation as Director of Schools. He thanked the Board for inviting TSBA and for involving them in Dr. Gilbert's evaluation. He explained each section of the evaluation. The Board requested that a section be added for Administrator's and Board's comments. The first appendix of the evaluation is the Administrators' perception of Dr. Gilbert's performance. The overall mean score for this appendix was 4.15 and will count as 15% of the overall score. Appendix B is the Board's assessment with an overall mean score of 4.28, which will count as 50% of the total evaluation score. Appendix C is the Annual Objectives portion of the evaluation. The total mean score for Appendix C is 4.40, and this section will count as 35% of the total evaluation. The final page included the percentages for the appendices and the weighted score with the overall weighted evaluation score was 4.30, which Mr. Bennett said was an excellent score. He did not know what last year's score was, but Mr. Phil King stated that it was 4.02. Mr. Bennett once again thanked the Board for the opportunity to work with them and asked if anyone had questions. Mr. Settles asked how the amount of weight for each appendix was derived. Dr. Gilbert explained that it matches the teachers and administrators' weighting. Mr. Ballard asked how

performance objectives are set with a metric that the director is judged by. Dr. Gilbert said that it's based on test scores.

Mr. Campbell said that this is a good evaluation. 4.30 out of 5.0 is great. Dr. Gilbert said that the Director of Schools is only as good as the people that work with her or him. Dr. Gilbert appreciates everyone in the district and the work that they do. She feels that this is a good school system, and everyone works together to make it that way. Mrs. Rainier stated that the credit needs to be given to Dr. Gilbert for assembling a good group of people, and she deserves the good evaluation that she received.

Mr. Campbell also thanked Mr. Bennett and TSBA for the job that they do for our system.

Leadership Academy

Mr. Ralph Ringstaff said that at the beginning of the school year, he was given a list of about 50 names of people recommended for the Leadership Academy. This is the first Leadership Academy that MCS has hosted in several years. Mr. Ringstaff sent out an email to those people and informed the group that the first 25 to respond to the email will be accepted. There were 6 sessions over the last few months. Mr. Vincent Windrow started off the Academy as a speaker on the first night and there were different presenters at each session.

Ralph Ringstaff introduced Sandra Lindsey, Shiloh Siegel, and Mary Orcutt, who told of their wonderful experience in the Leadership Academy and how they've grown after this experience. They thanked the Board for this opportunity.

Mr. Campbell stated that he had the privilege of attending the graduation, along with Mr. Ballard and Mr. King. Mr. Ballard said that it was very impressive. Mr. King also said that he was impressed by the different people from the different departments who all had the same vision. He would like for others to see the videos that were produced by each group. Mr. Campbell agreed with the others and applauded the 25 members and hoped that the program will benefit everyone involved. Dr. Gilbert stated that she appreciated MTSU and everyone that participated and made the program a success.

ACE's Grant

Kim Frank gave the Board an overview of the ACE's grant that MCS recently received. She gave the Board some handouts with information about ACE's. Mrs. Frank explained that for the last 4 years MCS has endeavored to create a multi-tiered model of support for children's behavior and their social-emotional development. Mrs. Frank explained that they have identified a group of children that struggle behaviorally, socially, and emotionally. They all have some things in common and those are adverse childhood experiences, such as family dysfunction, which includes divorce, incarcerated parents, addictions, seeing someone physically abused, or the child being physically, emotionally, or sexually abused. Research shows that children who experience any two of those things are more likely to become incarcerated, to have some addictions, diabetes, and/or heart disease. Children who experience any four of those things have a life expectancy that is twenty years shorter than normal. Tennessee data tells us that in Rutherford County alone, approximately 33% of our population has experienced two or more of those. In school, these children have more trouble focusing and controlling their emotions.

Mrs. Frank said that a grant was submitted to help children in MCS mitigate some of those adverse childhood experiences. Out of 72 grant applications, 13 were awarded, and MCS received one of those. She said that MCS received \$200,000.00, which was one of the largest grant recipients. Mrs. Frank told the Board that MCS intends to provide direct service to the students who are struggling. We will seek consent from parents to let the children participate in a ten-week program. The second part of the grant will provide parent support groups. We will also help teachers understand why these kids do the things they do. Then lastly, there is a community component that will help educate the city of Murfreesboro and Rutherford County to understand ACE's students so they can help support these families. Mrs. Frank stated that if we meet the obligations under the grant, we will be eligible for this grant for up to 5 years. If we have it for 5 years, we could have over a million dollars to spend on this initiative in MCS.

Dr. Gilbert said that Mrs. Frank has done a great job by writing the grant and also for the change that she has brought about in MCS. She also thanked her for tackling this ACE's program. Mr. Ballard thanked Kim for her hard work on this program. He asked once she realizes that there is a student living in a challenged home what would she do. Mrs. Frank said that with these funds, we were able to hire some trained mental health clinicians and they have been trained in ACE's. These clinicians will work one on one with the family, they will learn about the needs of the family and link them to community services.

Mr. Settles asked what the plan is to educate teachers on how to spot children in need of this service. He wanted to know if this was going to be a part of in-service. Mrs. Frank said that she is working with school counselors during staff meetings by presenting little bits of information at a time. Referrals go through the school counselor. Parents will receive a letter and a phone call. Social workers will also get involved. Mr. Settles asked if other personnel in schools such as janitors and cafeteria workers are being trained. Mrs. Frank said that the grant states that all MCS staff would be trained.

Jared Barrett thanked Mrs. Frank for starting this great program. He feels that this will help support students and parents that may be struggling.

Mr. King stated that this truly goes beyond the classroom and will make a lifelong impact on students and families. Mrs. Frank stated that if we teach them early, we can change Murfreesboro and the future of our children and let them know that they are not alone.

Mr. Campbell shared that the ACE's program was mentioned at the community meeting that was hosted by Central Office on November 14 with community leaders, educators, and central office staff. He felt that this was a good time to present it to make other agencies aware of the program.

Integrated Preschool

Angela Fairchild gave an update on the second year of the Integrated Preschool which is and will continue to grow. Integrated Preschool means that students with disabilities share a classroom with typically developing peer models. Mrs. Fairchild explained that we have nine integrated preschool classrooms, which is one more than last year. She explained that we are required by law to provide special education services for any child beginning at age three if they qualify. We let parents know that we provide these services by getting into the community. We call this Child Find. Kelly Blanchard,

MCS Preschool Social Worker, explained what Child Find means. There was more discussion about preschool and ways that parents are made aware of the program, and Angela also presented a Powerpoint with more details.

Mrs. Rainier said that she had seen ads in the paper for the Integrated Preschool Program. She asked when the Child Find big push is. Mrs. Fairchild explained that there are quarterly screening dates throughout the school year. Mrs. Rainier also stated that she thinks that it is wonderful that Kelly Blanchard gets to go into the homes.

Mr. Settles asked Ms. Blanchard how open are parents about having her come into their homes. Ms. Blanchard said that they are very open to home visits because it is easier for them. Mr. Settles also asked if we are doing anything with church nursery workers. Ms. Blanchard said that they do get referrals from church preschools. Mrs. Fairchild also explained that all therapists make home visits as well.

Mrs. Fairchild shared pictures of the preschool program with the Board and also introduced Roxana Dove, one of our preschool teachers. Mrs. Fairchild complimented the whole preschool department.

Mr. Campbell thanked Mrs. Fairchild for the report on the Integrated Preschool Program.

Employee Survey

Mr. Ballard said that he had done some homework regarding employee surveys since the last meeting, and he wanted to recant what he said about the survey being mandatory. He has since found out that may have a negative connotation and that is not what we want to do when asking for an employee satisfaction survey. There was much discussion regarding employee surveys and the information that Mr. Ballard had obtained from a national business that provides employee surveys. The cost for that company to do an employee survey was between \$10,000-15,000.

Mr. Ballard said that he would like to understand from Dr. Gilbert where she stands on the employee survey. Dr. Gilbert said that she feels that it is entirely up the Board. She said that we need to know the “why” behind doing the survey and what the Board wants to do with the information they receive because that will drive what the questions are. Mr. Ballard said that his intention with the survey is to hire and retain the best talent. Dr. Gilbert said that whatever kind of survey is designed, she hoped that it would be actionable. She said that if you want it to be actionable, you need to get school specific on what the needs are.

Mr. Campbell asked Mr. Ballard if this group has ever done a survey with educators. Mr. Ballard said yes they have, but he wasn’t sure that the survey questions could be tailored by school. Mr. Campbell said that the simpler the survey, the better. He didn’t feel that teachers would want to do a 33-question survey.

Mrs. Rainier said that if and when we decide on a survey, maybe the Board needs to go into a faculty meeting and explain why it is being done. Mrs. Rainier also agreed with Mr. Campbell that 33 questions would be way too many. Mrs. Rainier asked Dr. Gilbert when would be the best time to do a survey.

Mrs. Rainier also stated that it might be a good time for a retreat once the results are received. She also stated that if we do a survey this year, we might want to do it again in two years so that we would have a baseline. We would like to know from the survey what are we doing right, and what we could do better. She said to leave it open ended and let the teachers tell the Board what they think. Also, it would need to be school specific. Mr. Campbell said that he felt that if we try to do it school specific, we could get into trouble. The teachers would worry that someone would find out what they wrote.

Mr. Settles asked if we are reinventing the wheel or is there information that we can get from the surveys that we are already doing? He just feels that we might could pull from the information that we already have without having to do something else. He also asked if we do exit interviews on teachers that leave. He had some questions about the company that Mrs. Smith was looking at and the cost for that survey. He felt that it seemed a little open ended. Mrs. Smith explained that it was \$2000 plus \$300 for an on-line survey fee. He thought the way that it was worded, there may be some other out of pocket fees. He feels like the information that we want is already being gathered from other surveys, we just haven't gotten our hands on it. He also likes the idea of the Board going into schools so that teachers feel free to talk to them. There would be no cost to that.

Collier Smith stated that when the Board started talking about the employee survey, it was supposed to be a simple ten-question survey to reach out to teachers to get their input. She feels that teachers would need to list their school, but it would need to be anonymous per school. She feels that morale is different at different schools. Mrs. Smith also said that she loves what Mr. Ballard has to offer this group coming from the business world, but moneywise, she just couldn't vote on that. She also loved the idea of going into the schools and let them know that the survey is Board driven and the Board would just like teacher feedback.

Mr. Campbell said that he and Dr. Gilbert have discussed this with Luke Dickerson, MEA President. The question that Mr. Campbell has is that if he were to appoint a committee and also get with Luke Dickerson and he can appoint a committee of two or three and let those two groups come up with a survey, would that be acceptable to the Board? Mr. Settles asked would the committees put the questions together and develop the survey or would they outsource it to someone? Mr. Campbell said that either way would work.

Jared Barrett said that was a good idea to let these groups come up with questions and present them back to the Board.

Collier Smith said that she feels that we either need to let the committees come up with the questions and put the survey out or have one or two board members work with a survey company, but to go and work on a committee and then outsource would be a waste of time. Mr. Campbell felt that as a Board, he didn't feel that they could come to an agreement on a company to do the survey, so he felt that the committees that are put together between the Board and MEA could decide if they want an outside source to do the survey. If they choose an outside source, we have to decide where that money will come from. He also feels that it is a good idea for board members to visit the schools and present the surveys and collect them.

Mr. King likes the idea of a Board committee and MEA committee, but they need to get together to decide what the Board wants to know. He also likes the idea of hiring the group that Mrs. Smith spoke with, but he feels that the Board better know what they want if they only ask ten questions. He feels that the Board needs to let teachers know that there is no hurry on this. We need to listen to what MEA thinks about this, and let the two committees decide what the one or two topics will be and come up with ten questions to get the most out of the teachers.

Mrs. Rainier loves the idea of a committee of board members and MEA members, but she doesn't feel that the Board needs MEA's approval. The Board just needs guidance from them. She also feels that it might be important to know what new teachers are feeling as opposed to what seasoned teachers are feeling. She also wishes that the survey could be developed before January or February. Mr. Campbell said that he didn't think that would be possible because of the holidays.

Jared Barrett looked at the information that Mrs. Smith gave the Board regarding surveys, and he wondered who would administer, collect, and tabulate them.

Mr. Gary Anderson said that at this point, there is no money allocated in the budget to do a survey, but there is \$15,000.00 in the Board's training line that can be transferred, or a board resolution would have to be done.

Mr. Campbell said that he would get in touch with Mr. Dickerson and see what he thinks, and the Board could decide from that point. Mr. Campbell said that the Board could possibly discuss this again in March, but he would get the process started. This is the last Board meeting until January.

Revenue and Expenditure

Mr. Gary Anderson asked the Board to refer to the Revenue and Expenditure reports in the packet. He explained that we are in a better position than we were at this point last year on the expenditure part of the report. On the revenue part of the report, we are in the exact same spot as we were this time last year. Sales tax is up \$223,000.00 over last year at this time. We have no property tax collected yet. Mr. Anderson is watching utility usage on a daily basis. He stated that we are using 4% less electricity than we were last year at this time. He asked everyone to please shop locally.

Enrollment (PTR) Report

Mr. Anderson stated that it is the end of the third period, and we are up 43 students over the end of last year. We have to get to 80 to share in any of the growth money. He informed the Board of the current pupil-teacher ratio and said that our attendance rate is at 96%. Mr. Anderson also explained that on the report that the Board was given, it showed that we have 84 students in special ed PreK, and the ladies that did the report at this meeting said that we have 85, so we have grown since the report. If they are expecting 20 more over the next few months, we will be at 100 students in special ed PreK, and we ended last year in the 90's, so we know that the population is growing.

Personnel Report

VII. OTHER BUSINESS

Jared Barrett mentioned that the legislative session is coming up, and he would like to give brief updates at the January, February, and March meetings. Mr. Campbell said that would be fine.

Mr. Barrett also mentioned that the TSBA Convention was held in November at Opryland Hotel and he saw a great presentation on eMeetings. This is a service that TSBA offers, and it puts all board meetings on-line in the cloud, so there would not be a lot of paper handouts. A few great things about eMeetings is that it is a searchable database and the agenda can be updated at the last minute. It seemed like a one-stop shop for organizational purposes. It costs \$1500.00 and may need to be brought back up at budget time, but he just wanted to mention it. He had spoken with Mr. Gary Anderson and he knew that Williamson County uses it. He said that Ben Torres showed it at TSBA and would love to come and demonstrate it to the Board.

Mr. Campbell asked the advantage of eMeetings compared to what we do now. Mr. Barrett said that it is searchable, plus the fact that we would be able to update the agenda even right before the meeting. It also has secured log-ins and would get us into the 21st century more than we already are.

Mr. Campbell asked Kelley Baker if it would be acceptable to amend the agenda right before a meeting. Mrs. Baker said yes, if it is a regular meeting, the agenda can be amended, but not before a special called meeting.

Collier Smith also mentioned an interesting meeting that she and Dr. Gilbert attended during the TSBA Convention. Mrs. Smith explained that they learned about a program that Athens City Schools has where they own a rustic camp for children to learn how to survey, they learn how to measure things, and they learn about trees and irrigation systems. She said that it was a great alternative to learning in classrooms. Their budget for this camp is \$10,000.00, and they send all of their students through this camp. She would love to see something like this in MCS.

Mr. Campbell mentioned that he has been in conversation with the county school board chairman pertaining to the legislative session on December 12 at 5:00 p.m. at the County School Board office. Each board member is being asked to submit three questions that they would like to ask, and if there is a specific legislator that they'd like to ask a question, they need to indicate that by the question. Questions are to be specific. Seating will be prearranged and dress is casual. This will be a publicly televised meeting.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Jared Barrett made the motion to adjourn. David Settles seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 7:43 p.m.

Director of Schools