

MONROE COUNTY COMMUNITY SCHOOL CORPORATION
BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES
Work Session, April 1, 2008

MEMORANDA

The Board of School Trustees of the Monroe County Community School Corporation met in work session, for which proper notice had been given, at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 1, 2008, at the School Administration Center, 315 E. North Drive, Bloomington, Indiana.

Board members present: Jeannine Butler, Susan Daniels, Teresa Grossi, Valerie Merriam, Jim Muehling, Lois Sabo-Skelton and Sue Wanzer

Also present: James Harvey, Superintendent; Tim Thrasher, Comptroller; Peggy Chambers, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources and Personnel; Mary Lovejoy, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction; Mike Shipman, Director of Assessment and School Operations; Mike Scherer, Director of Extended Services; Janet Tupper, Administrative Assistant; Linda Richardson, MCEA President; and Mercedes Rodriguez, Reporter for *The Herald-Times*.

President of the Board, Teresa Grossi, called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. Dr. Grossi noted that this meeting was scheduled for the Board to discuss budget considerations. She shared with the Board a revised schedule of topics for upcoming work sessions. Fairview restructuring will be discussed on May 7 and since P.L. 221 Plans are due to the state on June 1, they will be included for discussion on May 7 and May 20.

Budget Considerations – Dr. Grossi thanked Mr. Harvey for providing additional information to the Board on this topic. Mr. Harvey said based on previous conversations, he talked to all Board members and principals and tried to work through budget considerations. Prior to discussion, he reviewed each section of the document and reviewed reasons why each item and the amount needed was or was not included. [A copy of budget considerations, priorities and proposals shared with the Board is included with the official record of this meeting.]

In response to Ms. Merriam's question regarding new money, is it sustainable and if not where would cuts be made, Mr. Thrasher reviewed efforts made to recover/increase the operating balance. He said the \$420,000 removed to pay former superintendent John Maloy will soon be recovered and that expense will end with the next budget. He noted that our budget is 90% personnel costs; therefore, if cuts are made personnel would definitely be the major recipient. Mr. Harvey explained the budget breakdown for years 2008, 2009 and 2010 included on page one and referred to supporting information on separate pages in the document.

Dr. Butler said she is in agreement with retaining a fourth assistant principal at BHS South and is concerned that there is only a half-time social worker for 1700 students. Mr. Harvey explained that years ago the corporation made a decision that counseling in elementary schools would be delivered by social workers and that services for secondary schools would be divided by counselors with minimal support from social workers. He said for budget considerations he had to look at the bottom line.

Ms. Wanzer said at one time we wanted to talk about eliminating an assistant principal at each high school. She said realizes that she is in a minority but she would like to see that money go elsewhere. She noted that principals had been asked to set priorities and this was what they recommended.

Dr. Grossi said after spending two years with the Graduation Work Group it frustrates her that what we are saying is we are paying a lot of money for a principal and teachers that are self-selective. She thinks the students will be successful because they are self-selective. She said she feels sad that we are saying 'good luck' to 20 to 30 percent of our kids. Ms. Wanzer said she was not suggesting taking away resources from schools. Dr. Grossi said when we look at research and models one thing they said was smaller learning communities made a difference. Mr. Harvey reiterated that the recommendations presented are from principals. Dr. Sabo-Skelton noted that we will never be able to afford all we want to provide but she thinks

this has been clarified and the important points covered. She said if the principals are comfortable then she thinks the Board should move forward.

Regarding the recommendation for Hoosier Hills Career Center, Mr. Harvey said Mr. Brown recommended the addition of a half-time position and it could be a counselor/assistant director. He noted that if students enroll in programs at the career center, the staff will follow. He said a shuttle now runs twice a day to and from HHCC. Ms. Merriam voiced support for adding a counselor for the 500+ students enrolled at HHCC. Mr. Harvey agreed; however, he pointed out that the 500+ students spend one-half day at their home school where they have access to a counselor. Ms. Merriam believes that most of those students need specialized counseling. Mr. Harvey agreed that HHCC is an anomaly in that most of the discipline is done at the home school and the school day is not extended for extracurricular activities, etc. so you cannot make a direct comparison to other high schools. He added that a lot of counseling at HHCC goes on between the instructors and the students; they are small classes so there is a lot of positive interaction between the teachers and students.

In response to Dr. Butler's questions, Mr. Thrasher said we get about 30% of the money for HHCC from other school corporations because about 30% of the students come from those schools. Mr. Harvey said we get payments but we do not pro-rate it. He said he is a little concerned because of upcoming renovation.

Regarding budget considerations for elementary literacy groups, Mr. Shipman said this would be a supplement to remediation funds that come in from the state. He said non-Title I schools requested an increase in literacy group funds and they are all operating under different models. He said they looked at Clear Creek's estimate and tried to come up with a generalized model and the goal is to get enough funds to operate each school's model and to do that would require an overall increase in the budget of about \$60,000. He noted that we would have to allocate General Fund dollars across the school corporation and Title I dollars would be used to supplement Title I buildings. He explained that the school corporation cannot give General Fund money to non-Title I schools and then put Title I money into Title I schools. Therefore, remediation dollars must be distributed as evenly as possible. In response to a question, Mr. Shipman said schools are required to provide remediation although it may not be through literacy groups. Mr. Harvey added that some schools were using remediation money for literacy groups. He said the Foundation has agreed to receive donations for schools to support literacy groups. Mr. Shipman mentioned that it is also possible that remediation funds will increase.

Dr. Lovejoy said Title I wants to make certain that we do not have a program in all schools that we think is necessary and we pay for it in Title I funds in some schools and with General Fund money in other schools since that is supplanting. Mr. Harvey said the problem comes with schools that were Title I but improved and no longer qualify for those funds. He said by the same token, remediation is school based and it is not the same across the school system.

Referring to recommendations for Aurora, Mr. Harvey confirmed Dr. Butler's assumption that if enrollment increases then the teaching staff will be expanded.

Noting that the Board would be receiving an information report on Early College High School (ECHS), Dr. Grossi asked if professional development is going on now. Dr. Lovejoy said yes and there are stipends, paid from an ECHS grant, for teachers who attend professional development during the summer. Dr. Grossi asked about transportation for ECHS students. Mr. Harvey said transportation to Ivy Tech and Indiana University will come later since this is not an issue for the first year.

In response to Dr. Butler's questions, Mr. Harvey said the model we are using is the same as for the AVID program. Dr. Lovejoy said we are working with partners on most of the pieces. She said teachers are being

trained by Ivy Tech and our teachers are teaching Ivy 101. She said tutorial opportunities will be included in Ivy 101 – there will be support in language arts and math. She said there will be expenses down-the-road but we need to do this for a year or two. Mr. Harvey said the grant is from the Governor's Association which is operating New Tech and Early College. He noted that we had \$50,000 for Early College and it will increase.

Mr. Harvey said the amount listed for the Intern-Mentor Program is estimated stipends for the 2008-2009 school year and the recommendation is for this year only. He said this will be bargained in 2009 and 2010 since this is a state mandate but the state does not fund it. He said until we see where it goes in bargaining, he is not willing to commit beyond the next school year. He added that teachers would like to receive a lot more than \$600 per mentor. In response to a question regarding how much time a mentor spends throughout the year, Ms. Chambers said they are developing a survey and that is one of the questions. She believes that mentors are putting in a lot of time. She said they go through 40 hours of training to be a mentor; they have five days of training for which they are not paid. She said the second year the teachers have to do portfolios and they receive \$600 regardless of the number of mentors. She said they are going to try to develop mentor teams in the buildings.

During ensuing discussion, Ms. Chambers said we have an MCCSC training program that is state approved and this year we had one person in the corporation who is also a state certified specialist. She said she met with her once a week so we are training within. She said two others have been in the process of training and those three are working on a training program. Dr. Butler said she understands the significance of portfolio requirements and noted that it is very extensive. Mr. Harvey said it is a shame that the state took away the money. He said in another school system teachers said they would not do it without pay and the superintendent said they will pay when they get money from the state and the state said teachers are on their own. He said that is not how we want to treat teachers. He reiterated that this will need to be bargained and it may become a part of the co-curricular schedule.

Mr. Harvey said there was a deficit in the Bradford Woods account this year because some schools adopted the attitude that we are a poor school so we do not have to pay. He said he thinks the social workers are on top of this and it should not be a problem in years to come since schools will use different mechanisms to pay in the future. However, now there is no choice but to pay this deficit. Dr. Butler commented that she would hate to lose this experience for our kids.

Explaining the budget consideration for positive behavior support (PBS), Mr. Shipman said since 2003-2004 we have been working with the center on disabilities at Indiana University and with individual buildings to provide consulting services. He said we have implemented a couple of schools each year and in 2008-2009 we will bring on board two elementary schools and Bloomington New Tech High School. He said at that time we will have to decide what the maintenance mode is. Mr. Harvey said through this year this has been supported by the Special Education Department. He said when Dr. (Kathleen) Hugo came we decided it is really a general education initiative and made a decision to move it from special education to school operations. Therefore, this is no longer a part of the Special Education Department, thus a change in funding; funds will come from staff development for the next three years and that will free up some money for special education. Mr. Shipman said we will have some additional days for existing team members and to meet with smaller groups. In response to Dr. Butler's questions, Mr. Harvey said we are in the process of signing a contract with the (Indiana University) Institute. Mr. Shipman said the cost is \$70 plus benefits and \$80 per sub; stipends are \$100 per day – about what a sub costs. He said the teams meet after school.

In response to additional questions, Mr. Shipman explained that they start with a team and determine where issues are occurring and then they meet with the entire staff in order to develop a plan. He said they teach the kids the plan and then utilize supporting mechanisms. He said it is a very proactive way of looking at discipline in our schools. He said it is amazing the difference you see when you walk into a building that is on

PBS. Mr. Harvey added that common meeting times will allow teachers at different buildings to talk about how it is working in their buildings. He said we need to have conversations across the district and schools have school improvement money they can use for staff development. Mr. Shipman added that we are also going to implement a corporation-wide committee.

Regarding budget considerations for Fairview restructuring, Dr. Grossi noted that this will be discussed in more detail at a work session on May 7.

During discussion regarding the cost for adding middle school pom coaches, Dr. Sabo-Skelton said any time you have one-on-one with kids you can add another mentor. She said the coach becomes their friend and a group they can belong to. She believes it is worth this amount of money. Ms. Wanzer said she was confused because we pay a lot of coaches. She agreed that it is very little money to cover the extra request. Mr. Harvey said we have a stipend but the Board controls the number of positions. Ms. Merriam said if it comes down to deleting programs, her support would be for programs rather than ECA. Dr. Butler agreed that we do have a lot of different opportunities for middle school students to participate. She said she is also concerned about the possibility of cutting programs. Mr. Muehling said if we can put one more adult with kids after school it will help. Mr. Harvey said the figure noted is the impact for 2008; the additional amount in 2009 is \$230 because we already paid part of it in 2008 and \$240 is the continuing amount. He said this will be revisited after December 31, 2008.

Opening discussion regarding CAPE, Mr. Harvey said the CAPE grant runs out at the end of the 2008-2009 school year; however, there will be about \$60,000 a year available from an endowment split between the MCCSC and Richland-Bean Blossom schools. He expects \$40,000 to \$45,000 to be available for MCCSC. He confirmed that \$48,000 in the 2010 budget considerations column would be for a system-wide coordinator.

Dr. Grossi asked for comments regarding items not recommended at this time.

Dr. Butler said she understands figures on reduction in class size, but she still thinks that 28 to one is too high for intermediate grades. She said philosophically she believes it is difficult to reach kids in grades 4-6 with 28 in a class. Yet she realizes this is the same class size for high school and middle school and there is a limited amount of money. Ms. Merriam said it is good to pull out information about cost. Dr. Butler said to lower class size by one in grades 4-6 would cost about \$150,000. She reiterated that she is not happy that we cannot do it.

Ms. Merriam asked do we have a contingency plan or a committee to talk about a contingency plan if the state says all school corporations are getting a 5% cut. She noted we are talking about adding these monies and asked if the state cuts funding what do we do with these commitments. Mr. Harvey said to some extent you have to do this on a year-by-year basis so you can see where you are. He said if the Governor said tomorrow we are cutting budgets by 5% we will be borrowing money since statutory deadlines for notifying teachers are passed.

In response to Dr. Grossi's question, Mr. Harvey said based on what he has heard during this discussion, the next step is that he will need to formulate a recommendation to present to the Board for action. He said there is timeliness to posting positions – an example is the assistant principal at BHS South. He said he needs to present this for action on April 15 since this will impact our reduction-in-force and our ability to get into the job market. He said if we wait beyond April 15 the Board will not meet again until May 7. Board members agreed that they do not need more discussion and although two or three members will be absent for the April 15 meeting there will be a quorum and this should be included as proposed for action.

Ms. Merriam said she was confused about student-teacher ratios in high schools with seniors and special

education students. Mr. Shipman explained that those students are not counted because they are not scheduled into classes during the second semester. He said when students ordinarily would have 15 choices and they are going to graduate after the second trimester, for example, that student is not choosing classes for the third trimester and the school is staffed based on the number of choices students make. He said students in self-contained classes are not counted in the regular staffing ratio because they are 100% with special education teachers. However, students who are identified as learning disabled are counted 100% although they may have resource classes. Dr. Butler surmised that teachers have larger classes during the first semester since the FTE (full time equivalency) number is reduced because we do not count students who come in the door but by the number of classes they select. Mr. Harvey said even though fewer classes are selected some teachers at BHS South are on contract for first and second trimester while at BHS North they are on contract for the entire year.

Board members agreed to meet in work session at 9:00 a.m. on Friday, April 4, 2008, to discuss contract bus route bids. They also agreed to meet in executive session at 10:00 a.m. on the same date.

The work session adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Teresa Grossi, President

Jeannine Butler, Vice President

Valerie Merriam, Secretary

Susan P. Wanzer, Assistant Secretary

Susan Daniels, Member

Jim Muehling, Member

Lois Sabo-Skelton, Member