

MONROE COUNTY COMMUNITY SCHOOL CORPORATION
BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES
Regular Meeting, April 15, 2008

MINUTES

The Board of School Trustees of the Monroe County Community School Corporation met in a regular meeting at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 15, 2008, in the Board Room at the Administration Center, 315 E. North Drive, Bloomington.

Board members present:

Valerie Merriam	Secretary
Sue Wanzer	Assistant Secretary
Susan Daniels	Member
Lois Sabo-Skelton	Member
Jim Muehling	Member

Board members absent:

Teresa Grossi	President
Jeannine Butler	Vice President

Also present:

James Harvey	Superintendent of Schools
Tim Thrasher	Comptroller
Peggy Chambers	Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources & Personnel
Mary Lovejoy	Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction
Kathleen Hugo	Director of Special Education
Mike Scherer	Director of Extended Services
Karen Portle	Director of Information Services
Janet Tupper	Administrative Assistant
Ed Brown	Director, Hoosier Hills Career Center
Mercedes Rodriquez	Reporter, <i>The Herald-Times</i>

In addition to the above, 37 citizens signed the visitor list (which is included as a part of the official record of this meeting) and two representatives of Bloomington Community Access TV were present.

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Secretary of the Board, Valerie Merriam, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. She noted that Teresa Grossi and Jeannine Butler, President and Vice President respectively, were out of the state.

2. **FACES OF EDUCATION**

Ms. Merriam explained that at every Board meeting an employee or volunteer is recognized for outstanding accomplishments. She introduced Connie Hall, Secretary in the Counseling Department at Bloomington High School South, who was nominated by BHS South Counselor Roger Perry. She said Connie's career at BHS South began on October 30, 1978, and when she graduated from Bloomington High School in 1967 she would not have predicted that she would have come back to work there for nearly 30 years. In his nomination, Mr. Perry states that Connie Hall is the 'bedrock' of the Guidance Department. He said she has an excellent rapport with students and staff and has the ability to join people together – she is a bridge. When asked about what she enjoys about her job, she said the counselors are great to work with and she enjoys interaction with the students. She said that 30 years brought a lot of changes but the students are about the same; they are still just kids. Ms. Merriam said Ms. Hall's

dedication to BHS South and to our students has made her more than deserving of this recognition. She said it is the Board's pleasure to recognize Connie Hall as one of the school system's shining *Faces of Education*. Ms. Hall accepted the award and expressed appreciation to Mr. Perry for the nomination and to the Board for this honor. She also thanked BHS South principal Mark Fletcher for setting the tone in the building for a fun and caring place to work.

3. **PUBLIC DIALOGUE**

Claire Tafoya, Binford parent, said she was present with a group of parents who are concerned about our children's bus ride and they want to improve that experience. She said most children are well behaved but there are some who have major behavioral issues. She believes that the AAA Safety Patrol Program will help. She said this program is a way for us to train our 5th and 6th graders to help, i.e. older students to supervise younger students. She said to form the program the school system would partnership with AAA (an operations manual is available), law enforcement, etc. and the PTO would fund equipment, training and a recognition program.

Explaining how the program works, Ms. Tafoya said principals would appoint teachers to supervise the Patrol and the principal and teachers would appoint students. She said law enforcement is an advisor to the Patrol and would support the program by coming to meetings to provide training. Insofar as community involvement, she said a civic organization would provide recognition. She proposed that there would be three Patrols per bus, sitting in the front, middle and back of the bus to monitor noise and behavior. She said at each bus stop the front seat Patrol acts as a crossing guard and lines up students for boarding the bus after school, etc. Patrols can also escort kindergarten students to and from the bus.

Ms. Tafoya said her children grew up just outside Washington, D.C. and when they moved here last year her daughter came home daily with reports of discipline problems on the buses. She said that she found the reporting policy ineffective in that the student must request a private interview with the principal and provide names and if there is follow-up the student must go through the process again. She understands that the bus driver cannot hear what is being said or see what is going on and cannot enforce rules because s/he is busy. She suggested that we could support bus drivers with well-trained student safety patrols. She provided a hand-out to School Board members and mentioned an example of a behavior problem that happened on a bus last week. She said her goal is to eliminate behavior problems and to eliminate actions on the bus as well as train students in lifeskills.

Ms. Merriam said this was an idea she would like to take to a work session and discuss with all Board members. Mr. Harvey advised that there is a committee that has been meeting to discuss bus behavior and he knew that she (Ms. Tafoya) had been invited to their next meeting. He noted that this program involves a lot of 'buy-in' on the part of a lot of people. He said it would also need to involve bus drivers. He added that he thinks a lot of our drivers do a good job and many of our students are well behaved. He said a lot of the materials from AAA are coming from CPI. He said he looks forward to having Ms. Tafoya come to the meeting and having conversation about this.

At 7:15 p.m., the Board moved to the next item on the agenda.

4. **SCHOOL SHOWCASE: Hoosier Hills Career Center**

Ed Brown, Hoosier Hills Career Center (HHCC) Director, introduced their presentation, noting that it included information from the past, present and future of HHCC. The past was reviewed via power point presentation that included on-the-job photos and comments from former HHCC students.

During the slide presentation, student leaders (Miriam Lewis, Marcassa Goodwin, Eddie Allman and Danielle 'Dee' O'Neal) shared information about student organizations and activities available at HHCC.

Miriam explained that they have two Student Council chapters – one for morning students and one for afternoon. She talked about some of the activities of these groups. Marcassa said that FFA is an organization that is an integral part of the agriculture education program. She noted that 38% of FFA members come from urban areas and there are over 7,000 FFA chapters. Eddie shared information about activities of the Business Professionals of America where students learn a lot about technology and business careers. Dee, who is state president of HOSA students of America, said HOSA educates students about health field careers. She said this year they sponsored a walk for autism awareness. She said as state president she goes to schools over Indiana four or five times a year.

HHCC instructors Troy Anderson and Tony Feller presented the HHCC ‘future’ by introducing Jimmy Doyle who served as pilot for the robot demonstration. They noted that the HHCC robotics team qualified to go to international competition in Los Angeles. They are trying to get another robot ready for competition because of you have a good team you place higher in competition.

The finale of the presentation was a tiered cake prepared and displayed by two students in Hermann Serfling’s Culinary Arts and Professional Baking class. The students, Lauren Tabereaux and Justin Ayres had baked and decorated the cake. Mr. Serfling explained that this was a small sample of some of the things they do in the Culinary Arts and Professional Baking class. He mentioned that the *Dew Drop Inn* in-school dining room was established over thirty years ago and serves lunch on Thursdays from 11 to 1 p.m. He said this allows students to create and execute menus as well as serve and cashier. He said seniors are eligible for internships at the end of the year and those experiences often lead to jobs.

Board members thanked the students and teachers for sharing this informative report.

5. **SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT**

Mr. Harvey congratulated BHS South senior Ashley Larason who was named a 2008 Lilly Scholar and BHS North senior Erika Anderson who was selected as a 2008 Indiana Academic All-Star. He commended the BHS North Science Olympiad Team – students and coaches – for placing first at the State Science Olympiad contest on March 29 and extended best wishes for success in national competition in Washington, D.C. on May 30-31.

Mr. Harvey announced that the Middle School Task Force has asked for more time to complete their work and is now planning to have recommendations to the Board by the end of the first semester of the 2008-2009 school year.

6. **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

Dr. Lovejoy provided an update regarding the staff development committee. She said the committee started last year with a need brought forward that there was no coordinating committee to oversee professional development for teachers and staff. As Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, she is responsible for coordinating and planning professional development. She said the committee has been meeting since the beginning of this school year and it has been responsible for developing plans for before-school orientation and meeting corporation-wide professional development goals. She said the committee includes six teachers, representing all grade levels, two elementary principals, two secondary principals (one middle school and one high school), Mr. Shipman and Ms. Chambers. She said after determining what type of professional development was needed, they created an on-line professional development calendar which all staff may access to see what activities are taking place each month.

Noting there is an application for teachers to complete if they are interested in developing a professional

development activity, Dr. Lovejoy said we feel we need to make better use of our own experts. She said the committee also reviewed school-wide plans developed by schools to support their PL 221 plans. In response to questions, Dr. Lovejoy said teachers on the committee were chosen by the MCEA and administrators volunteered to serve. She said sessions have not been recorded this year to start a video library. She explained that if it is an in-house workshop, there is no problem. However, if we have paid for the workshop recording it is sometimes more problematic.

7. **2007-2008 AYP/PL 221 RESULTS**

Mr. Shipman presented a comprehensive report of 2007-2008 AYP/PL 221 results. He noted that No Child Left Behind began in 2002-2003 and PL 221 started in 1999. (A copy of his presentation is included with the official record of this meeting and is posted on the school system web site.) Following his presentation, Mr. Shipman responded to questions. During ensuing discussion, Mr. Shipman said eleven schools made AYP but the corporation as a total did not make AYP due to one factor. Ms. Wanzer said she would like to have this included in a future work session and for the Board to talk about future plans. Mr. Harvey agreed that it is important and could be added to a work session agenda during the summer.

Mr. Shipman said the Board should be aware that next year is 'double testing' year – the fall will be accountability for the 2007-2008 school year and in March we will be testing for accountability for the 2008-2009 year for elementary schools. He confirmed that all school corporations are struggling with the same issues, especially large school systems that have a lot of break-out groups.

8. **CONSENT AGENDA**

Mr. Harvey withdrew two Early College High School contracts from consideration at this time. Ms. Merriam called for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda: (a) donations and field trip; (b) Contracts as amended; (c) Personnel matters; and (d) Allowance of Claims. Mr. Muehling so moved. Dr. Sabo-Skelton seconded the motion.

Ms. Merriam pointed out that more than \$15,500.00 in cash and grants have been donated to our schools in the last two weeks. Board members joined her in thanking the community for such generosity. In response to questions, Aurora High School teachers reviewed plans for their field trip. Becky Rupert said all students are encouraged to go on the trip but some have children of their own and have to work. She said no one is left behind because they cannot afford to participate.

Mr. Harvey explained contracts to provide tutoring for students at Pinnacle School. He said federal law requires school systems to offer Title I services to private schools and Pinnacle School chose to provide tutoring with their money. He noted that we have similar arrangements with St. Charles and Harmony Schools.

Regarding the Personnel Report, Ms. Chambers acknowledged the contributions of retirees Candice Cazzell, who is completing 32 years in education, and Bruce Ricklin who began his tenure with MCCSC in 1987.

Mr. Muehling announced that a reception honoring all retirees is scheduled to be held at BHS North at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, May 21.

Board members voted unanimously to approve the Consent Agenda.

9. **BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS**

Mr. Harvey reviewed and recommended that the Board approve program additions and expansion for the 2008-2009 school year and beyond as included in his report. Ms. Wanzer so moved. Ms. Daniels seconded the motion.

In her absence, Ms. Merriam read a statement from Dr. Grossi in which she stated that she would like to take time to thank all faculty and committee members who worked on the Graduation Work Group for the last few years. She thanked the principals and faculty at Aurora, Hoosier Hills Career Center, BHS North and BHS South who have worked to transform schools to meet the needs of students. She said she believes the budget considerations show we are moving forward and she looks forward to this time next year when we see results of implementation.

Mr. Muehling expressed encouragement for support of elementary literacy groups, which he thinks are critical for student success. Mr. Harvey agreed, noting that two of our elementary schools that made significant growth are Clear Creek and Lakeview. He said as we move forward he hopes that we can put some of these programs in place for pre-school and primary. Ms. Merriam noted that as schools improved they lost funding so we are trying to help schools continue programs without funding assistance. Mr. Harvey confirmed that we lost about \$40,000.00 of remediation monies this year.

There were no additional questions or comments. Aye: Daniels, Merriam, Muehling, Sabo-Skelton, Wanzer. Motion carried.

10. **AWARD CONTRACT(S) FOR PROPERTY CASUALTY AND WORKER COMPENSATION INSURANCE COVERAGE EFFECTIVE APRIL 30, 2008**

Based on the lowest quotation meeting specifications, Mr. Thrasher recommended that the contracts for all lines of coverage except worker compensation insurance be awarded to Hanover Insurance through The Hylant Group, as agent. He further recommended that the contract for worker compensation coverage be awarded to FCCI, again through The Hylant Group, as agent. Mr. Muehling so moved. Dr. Sabo-Skelton seconded the motion. Following a time for comments and questions, Board members voted on the motion to award insurance coverage as recommended. Aye: Daniels, Merriam, Muehling, Sabo-Skelton, Wanzer. Motion carried.

11. **CONTRACT BUS ROUTE BIDS**

Mr. Scherer said that he and Mr. Harvey met after the Board's work session on April 4 and went through the routes per the Board's instructions. He noted that two routes received bids below the recommended 'cap' and those were assigned first. He said that left route 126 vacant and for the rest of the routes the lowest bidder was contacted and asked if they would accept the route at the 'cap' amount. He said all agreed except for route 197, which leaves it vacant. He recommended that the Board award bids for the contract bus routes as listed and that the administration be authorized to negotiate with the six unsuccessful bidders for the two vacant routes. Dr. Sabo-Skelton so moved. Ms. Daniels seconded the motion.

In response to a question regarding route 126, Mr. Scherer said he went to the next lowest bidder after other people were eliminated because they received another route.

Ms. Wanzer acknowledged that this is an uncomfortable process. She said she really did not understand who would be considered for a route because she misunderstood who were the next lowest bidders. She said she knows we did the best we could and she thinks we will do it better the next time.

Mr. Muehling agreed that hindsight is 20/20 and in retrospect he would have thrown out all the bids and put a cap on all of them before re-bidding. He said in the future he thinks we should figure out what we

can afford and if we have some empty routes, go from there.

Ms. Daniels recalled that was her initial thought all along in that she was uncomfortable with certain aspects of the process. She said she veered from proper procedure by asking for input from bidders; however, she felt the input was that they were comfortable with the decision made. Ms. Merriam agreed with her assessment that it would be much better to take a different angle next time.

There were no additional comments from the Board or public. Aye: Daniels, Merriam, Muehling, Sabo-Skelton, Wanzer. Motion carried.

12. **INFORMATION, PROPOSALS OR COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC** – There was no response to Ms. Merriam’s invitation for public comments.

13. **COMMITTEE REPORTS AND PROPOSALS FROM BOARD MEMBERS**

Ms. Merriam noted that a part of the Personnel consent agenda included twenty-two people on a reduction-in-force list. She noted that in the past we have been able to bring everybody back but it is important for the public to understand why we have these reductions. Ms. Chambers agreed that there were several staff members included on this list and explained that every year we have to consider reduction-in-force – but not because of job performance. She said sometimes notices are given to reserve positions for teachers who are assigned to federal programs in case funding is discontinued and that may not be known until May or June. She said we also must accommodate people returning from leave. Ms. Chambers said the situation is compounded because state guidelines and our agreement tell us that we have to make notification in a certain way. She said as people retire and leave the corporation, then positions become available. She added that as she personally delivered each individual notice she was impressed with how these teachers are vibrant and dedicated. She confirmed that they will be brought back as quickly as possible. Ms. Chambers concluded that as traumatic as it seems it is in the best interest of the corporation to act as we have this year and she is confident that many if not all of these teachers will be called back.

Mr. Muehling congratulated Grier Werner for 400 wins with the BHS South baseball team.

Ms. Daniels said she really enjoys the school presentations and added that the one presented by Hoosier Hills Career Center tonight was great.

Ms. Wanzer said after what transpired with contract bus drivers, she is reminded that transportation and our buses will become more and more difficult to fund. She noted that we also have corporation drivers and our own buses to support financially. She said we have a number of transportation systems in the city – Indiana University, city, county shuttle, Head Start, etc. She proposed that we could start talking with people and try to find mutual benefit for all bus systems so that we do not have to increase the walk-in zone. She proposed that a task force be formed with the community and led by MCCSC.

Ms. Merriam referred to an editorial in last week’s *The Herald-Times* which suggested that perhaps we need to make a choice between transportation and educating children. She explained that these are two different pots of money and there is money for transportation only. She said she would hate to think what our attendance rates would be if we did not transport students.

Dr. Sabo-Skelton said she does not measure our schools by numbers but by the quality of what we see and we have seen wonderful presentations. She said we have seen the most remarkable talent in every area.

Mr. Harvey said he would pursue the suggestion to create a transportation task force. He said as we

worked on a long-term facilities plan we have had discussions with Bloomington Transit and with Indiana University. He said Bloomington Transit is restricted to the city so riding is limited. He said Ivy Tech Community College has a contract with Rural Transit, although it is not rural. He said the point is well taken as our transportation dollars become dearer. He said routes that the school corporation will run next year will be denser. He expressed sympathy with the parent who spoke regarding student conduct on buses but noted that is often a consequence when you have more students on buses for longer periods of time. He said there is no easy solution. He said we have a lot of students who also ride the city transit.

Ms. Merriam reminded everyone that this is the time for all the different music productions at schools. She suggested that they check each school's web site to view a calendar of activities. She added that the school system web site is being upgraded and is becoming easier to navigate.

14. **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Board, Ms. Merriam declared the meeting to be adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

ABSENT

Teresa Grossi, President

Valerie Merriam, Secretary

Susan Daniels, Member

Jim Muehling, Member

ABSENT

Jeannine Butler, Vice President

Susan P. Wanzer, Assistant Secretary

Lois Sabo-Skelton, Member