

MONROE COUNTY COMMUNITY SCHOOL CORPORATION
BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES
Work Session, April 15, 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 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 15, 2008, at the School Administration Center, 315 E. North Drive, Bloomington, Indiana.

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

Board members absent: Jeannine Butler and Teresa Grossi

Also present: James Harvey, Superintendent; Tim Thrasher, Comptroller; Peggy Chambers, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources & Personnel; Mary Lovejoy, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction; Mike Shipman, Director of Assessment and School Operations; Mike Scherer, Director of Extended Services; Karen Portle, Director of Information Services; Janet Tupper, Administrative Assistant; Carl Zager, Instructional Technology Coordinator; Lou Johnson, Director of Food Services; and Mercedes Rodriquez, Reporter for *The Herald-Times*. One visitor was present for the food services discussion.

In the absence of the President and Vice President, Secretary of the Board, Valerie Merriam, called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Board members received information about and discussed the following topics.

1. **Web Page Design** – Mr. Zager reviewed and shared an update on the new ‘drop down’ menu format for the school system’s web page design. He revealed what the public will see and how they will access information if they do not have the 7.0 version of Internet Explorer. He noted that we are now trying to include photos of students and stories as well as information on schools to highlight on the home page. He said the focus has been on getting every department and school and general information up-to-date. Mr. Zager explained that the home page in the new format requires a lot of code and they are looking for a coding system that will be more compatible with earlier versions of Internet Explorer.

Ms. Portle responded to questions regarding the expense incurred to add more space. She said it normally would not be very expensive until we talk about backing up and how many copies to keep, etc. and then that adds considerably to the cost. Mr. Zager added that the big difference is there is not a lot of code behind individual pages that will link to the home page and that saves on use of memory. Ms. Portle said another concern for adding this system to every page is the required load time.

In response to a question about including a ‘search’ feature on our web site, Ms. Portle agreed that would be a nice feature to add. She said we would just have to buy a search application. During ensuing discussion, Mr. Zager said having cross-referenced menus is one way to do it. He said at one time we had search engines and eventually a lot of advertising appeared and we ran into problems with Board policy regarding advertising. He and Ms. Portle will look into some search engine options without advertising.

Regarding research to see how easy our web site is to use, Mr. Zager said he currently asks for feedback from media specialists. He believes that it would be helpful to include some community groups for feedback. Board members agreed that Mr. Zager should move forward with implementing the new design.

2. **Food Service Sanitation Programs and Supplies:** Ms. Johnson discussed with the Board results when schools piloted three vendor sanitation programs and supplies. She said for awhile everyone tried something new and then she sent out a survey about the new program they tried. She reviewed the results of those surveys and noted that of the three systems tried, Gordon, Labtek and Smart Systems, by far the

preference is for Smart Systems; however, they are also the most expensive.

Ms. Johnson noted that the cost for using Smart Systems and Gordon's has increased since last year's quotes were received while the cost for LabTek has decreased. In response to questions, she discussed advantages for choosing Smart Systems. She said their products are color coded and come in individual packets so that there is no question about which and how much of a product to use. She believes that this portion control method will save money because there is often a tendency to add more than needed if the product is stored in a gallon container. She said school food service is different from other food service and Smart Systems stays on top of what is going on in schools since they do not service any other business except schools.

During ensuing discussion, Mr. Harvey confirmed that the original recommendation for this program and supplies was withdrawn and a decision was made to do a pilot with various companies. He said schools did the pilots for one semester and this information report was prepared as a follow-up. He said since these are quotes, not bids, a separate recommendation does not need to be made to the Board except it would be included with contracts.

In response to questions, Ms. Johnson said the Food Service Department is self-sufficient and the federal government does provide some reimbursement for all students. She said we 'buy' commodities allotted for the school system; this amounted to \$214,000 this year. She confirmed that there had been some FDA recalls this year but she had been alerted to that three weeks prior to when the beef recall was publicized.

Regarding details about Smart Systems, Ms. Johnson said their headquarters is in Chicago and many school systems in Indiana (including South Bend) use their program. She said the service technician serving this area lives in Indianapolis and the headquarters for this region is in Mishawaka.

With the increase in food prices, Mr. Scherer said they had been discussing the possible need for increasing the cost of meals at the elementary level. However, they will not be making that request. Ms. Johnson explained that rather than ask for an increase, she thinks that some adjustments can be made. These adjustments include: (1) changes in staffing; (2) some entrée items that are more pricy will appear less often on the menu; and (3) adjustments in the way commodities are allocated will allow her to use all commodity dollars.

Ms. Johnson confirmed that portions are the same throughout the grade levels because it is easier to do that and because it is difficult to determine a student's grade level unless each grade level eats at a different time. She noted that grade level may not determine how much a child eats. She said small portions are only given to pre-school children. She said it is not a problem if children want to go back for additional portions unless the parent says no.

Ms. Johnson shared information about a \$2,000 grant award recently received from Hidden Valley Dressing. The grant was written by Jennifer Staab and will fund a salad bar at Fairview as well as a gift certificate for fruits and vegetables from Bloomingfoods. She reported that one school corporation per state received a grant.

The work session adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

ABSENT

Teresa Grossi, President

Valerie Merriam, Secretary

Susan Daniels, Member

Lois Sabo-Skelton, Member

ABSENT

Jeannine Butler, Vice President

Susan P. Wanzer, Assistant Secretary

Jim Muehling, Member