

MONROE COUNTY COMMUNITY SCHOOL CORPORATION
BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES
Regular Meeting, August 19, 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, August 19, 2008, in the Board Room at Bloomington High School South, 1965 S. Walnut Street, Bloomington.

Board members present:

Teresa Grossi	President
Jeannine Butler	Vice President
Valerie Merriam	Secretary
Sue Wanzer	Assistant Secretary
Jim Muehling	Member
Lois Sabo-Skelton	Member
Vicki Streiff	Member

Also present:

James Harvey	Superintendent of Schools
Tim Thrasher	Comptroller
Mary Lovejoy	Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction
Mike Shipman	Director of Assessment and School Operations
Mike Scherer	Director of Extended Services
Lou Johnson	Director of Food Services
Ed Brown	Director of Hoosier Hills Career Center
Janet Tupper	Administrative Assistant

In addition to the above, six 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**

President of the Board, Teresa Grossi, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. **FACES OF EDUCATION**

Dr. Grossi explained that at every Board meeting an employee or volunteer is recognized for outstanding accomplishments. She introduced Larry Axsom, mail courier for the school system. She said Mr. Axsom was nominated by Superintendent James Harvey and Janet Tupper, Administrative Assistant. She said he began working for the school system in 1971 and worked at BHS South and at the Service Building as a utility worker prior to assuming his present position. He was nominated for his dependability, loyalty and terrific attitude. The Superintendent referred to him as *one of our treasures*. Dr. Grossi expressed appreciation to Mr. Axsom for his years of service to MCCSC and for going the extra mile to carry out his duties. She said it is the Board's pleasure to recognize Larry Axsom as one of the school system's shining *Faces of Education*. Mr. Axsom said he appreciates all of his co-workers. He accepted the award and expressed appreciation for this honor.

3. **PUBLIC DIALOGUE**

On behalf of the Board, Dr. Grossi extended sincere and deepest sympathy to the families of Elena Veach and Alan Veach and to their BHS South family. She said Elena Veach has touched the lives of hundreds of students as well as family members and teachers and she will be missed.

Todd Lindley, Grandview parent, talked about his experiences when enrolling his child in kindergarten four years ago. He said this year they have another child in kindergarten. He said they went to a meeting thirty-six hours before the start of school and they could not tell them who their child's teacher would be or if a substitute would be there for a few weeks. He said their frustration was very high in that they were told up until a few days ago that there may be a one-half day kindergarten class for their child. Mr. Lindley said their child has an IEP that suggests he should be in a half-day kindergarten so he is going to Highland Park because they do not want to put him into such an uncertain situation.

The child's other parent, Rhonda Grove, explained their son's background and said they want as few transitions as possible for him and they are disappointed that he could not go to school with his sister. She said he went to Highland Park for pre-school and they asked if he could be with a teacher that he knew for some consistency but the request was denied. She said they love Grandview and want their child there.

Mr. Harvey said he is aware of some of their frustration, noting that similar situations exist at other schools as well. He said generally most people are aware that the State of Indiana has implemented full day kindergarten but it is not fully funded, i.e. parents pay for most of the cost of the other half day. He said some school corporations have designated schools that have half-day programs and he anticipates that we will soon no longer offer one-half day kindergarten in every school. He said we actually have a decrease in kindergarten enrollment and several planned half-day programs were collapsed. Mr. Harvey reported that another school did not have enough students for a full day class until last Wednesday and when that happened students who wanted to be in the half-day program had to be moved to another school. He agreed that it is very frustrating.

While further explaining the dilemma, Mr. Harvey said we have two registrations for kindergarten – one that ends in June and one in August. Since kindergarten is not mandatory, it is difficult to determine enrollments, particularly in Title I schools and the second lottery was held on August 4. He said in many cases we have to wait until we get the number of students so that we can justify another class financially. He said in the future this will be problematic for families who want a half-day program and it is a problem for us and for other school corporations across the state. He said we have some work to do in this area and will try to do a better job next year.

Mr. Lindley said if enrollment is down then he thinks there should be a job search for 5.5 kindergarten teachers instead of 6. Mr. Shipman explained that we do not have a non-posting period; therefore, when teachers left kindergarten for other grade levels it left kindergarten openings and they were posted. Mr. Harvey said we were concerned all summer that we were overstaffed for kindergarten and when openings occur in the corporation those jobs have to be posted for any teacher in the corporation to apply. He said in the past the contract allowed a period of time that we could move teachers instead of posting but now we do not have that latitude. In response to Ms. Grove's question, Mr. Harvey said a one-half time teacher may have opted for a full time position and that created a vacancy.

At 7:20 p.m., the Board moved to the next item on the agenda.

4. **FOR INFORMATION: 2009 BUDGET APPROVAL PROCESS**

Information on the budget approval process was included on the agenda with other documents for this meeting. Mr. Thrasher commented briefly and said the budget approval process is slowed down because of the need to assess the reduction of homestead credit. He stated that trying to assess to what extent the circuit breaker is a problem may be an issue for us. He said we need to assess the new legislation.

5. **CONSENT AGENDA**

Dr. Grossi called for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda: (a) donations, field trip requests and disposal of surplus school bus; (b) Contracts, including: Lifetouch Yearbook Publications, American Red Cross, MCCSC Food Service and Hoosier Hills, MCCSC Food Service and Head Start, MCCSC Food Service and St. Charles, SCCAP Head Start, Indiana University for BHS North Athletic Trainers, Bloomington Hospital for Middle School Athletic Trainers, and Ivy Tech Community College and Hoosier Hills; (c) Personnel matters; and (d) Allowance of Claims. Ms. Wanzer so moved. Dr. Butler seconded the motion. Mr. Harvey proposed an addition to the contracts – an agreement between MCCSC and Theraplay for physical therapy services that arrived this afternoon. Ms. Wanzer amended her motion to include this additional contract. Dr. Butler seconded the motion as amended.

In response to questions, Ms. Johnson explained the various MCCSC Food Service contracts. She said they price meals to cover our cost and the cost of transportation. She said the meals for St. Charles are prepared at Binford and taken to St. Charles. She said their students are also allowed to receive free and reduced meals and they are in our profile in the Indiana Department of Education. She added that we also receive federal dollars back for free and reduced meals served to these students. Ms. Johnson said the same is true for Head Start except we cannot claim federal reimbursement. She said they have smaller portions but we have to provide enough food if their children want more so their prices are higher.

Mr. Muehling asked about quantity and quality, particularly in high school, and what programs they are trying to implement. Ms. Johnson said there are no changes in the federal guidelines this year for the first time in a long time. She said we have adopted guidelines for Healthy Americans as it relates to snacks and beverages. For example, beverages were reduced to 12 ounces or less; all juices are 100% fruit with no added sugar or water (which is the same for elementary schools). She said high schools have many entrees every day, including salads all the time. She said they only fry French fries and last year they switched to fat free oil. Ms. Johnson said sometimes people do not understand the program and the funding and perhaps we should do more advertising. She said they are posting nutritional content this year and plan to add it to the website. She noted that a few years ago we addressed vending machine issues as Indiana complied with USDA requirements.

Mr. Thrasher responded to questions regarding athletic trainer contracts. He said the middle school contract is through the Bloomington Hospital Rebound and has been in place for five years with a stable price. He said we were notified this year that there would be an increase in cost for the contract with Indiana University for high school athletic trainers in order to attract people to the program. He said we are looking at other options. He said Mark Fletcher, BHS South principal, went in a different direction in that two staff members have training so they are using a stipend to pay those people. He said we will continue to look at more cost effective ways to maintain the program; he said we must have services available.

In response to questions, Mr. Harvey said he believes that all positions are filled at this time. Referring to comments during public dialogue, he said we discovered that with the posting period changes school opened with substitutes. He added that principals were trying to have the person who they hoped to recommend be the substitute but that is not always possible.

Dr. Butler noted that the Board approved a half-time assistant director for Hoosier Hills Career Center (HHCC) and she assumed the other half of the recommended full time appointment will be paid with grant money. Mr. Brown confirmed that is the case and said that Alan Dafoe has a good background for the position. In response to another question, Mr. Brown explained that some HHCC classes are taught at other sites and such is the case with Joann Novak's assignment to Bloomington New Tech High School. He added that we receive more money by putting her in a tech school program. Following a time for additional comments, Board members voted on the motion to approve the Consent

Agenda as presented. Aye: Butler, Grossi, Merriam, Muehling, Sabo-Skelton, Streiff, Wanzer. Motion carried.

6. **REVISION TO POLICY 3432, SICK LEAVE BANK**

Mr. Harvey explained that this was presented by Peggy Chambers as part of an information report to the Board on August 5. He said changes in the policy had been approved by the Monroe County Education Association (MCEA) in the form of a Memorandum of Understanding. Specifically, the policy allows teachers to donate days to the Sick Leave Bank when they retire. That was added as number 5 in the guidelines and eliminates the need for a Memorandum of Understanding. Mr. Harvey said this is one of the 'frozen' policies that can be changed only by agreement by the Board and MCEA. He recommended approval of revisions to Policy 3432 as proposed. Mr. Muehling so moved. Ms. Streiff seconded the motion. Following time for comments, Board members voted on the motion to approve revisions to policy 3432. Aye: Butler, Grossi, Merriam, Muehling, Sabo-Skelton, Streiff, Wanzer. Motion carried.

7. **REINSTATE DIRECTOR OF TITLE I POSITION, SET TERMS AND CONDITIONS AND AUTHORIZE POSTING AND FILLING POSITION**

Mr. Harvey said this is an old position and the job description had changed over the years to Director of Literacy and then proposed to be Director of Learning. He said the last two years a teacher has fulfilled that role with a stipend and he recommended reinstatement of the Director of Title I position as proposed. Ms. Merriam so moved. Ms. Wanzer seconded the motion, noting that she was doing so to allow discussion.

Ms. Wanzer said she was confused in that she did not realize we were not going to fill the Director of Learning position. Mr. Harvey said after discussion with the Board regarding the Director of Learning and how that was resolved, he talked with Dr. Lovejoy and made a decision that we would not proceed with the Director of Learning so it was a matter of looking at responsibilities in the instruction department that need to be done with Title I. He said there are a host of things needed this year and given the fact that our school corporation did not make AYP (Average Yearly Progress), the recommendation is that we not add another position but simply go back to a previous administrative structure and reinstate this position. He confirmed that the position would be posted.

Ms. Wanzer said she supported the Director of Learning but feels if we are going to have to post a position and hire, why are we not posting the Director of Learning. Mr. Harvey said it was his perception that we did not have candidates that were qualified and given the time of the year it is not a good time to find people to move from outside the district. Ms. Wanzer said her concern was to re-write the job description to match candidates.

Dr. Butler recalled that we passed a different set of guidelines for that position to meet a more broad variety of people. She said she did not know that this was forthcoming; she agreed that Dr. Lovejoy needs some help but she was not sure this is the way we need to go. She voiced concern that the Board did not have conversation prior to this recommendation coming. She believed that the Board approved the Director of Learning position and thought going back to Director of Title I may be construed to imply that change was to keep others from applying. Dr. Grossi suggested the Board table this matter and bring it back. In response to Ms. Wanzer's question, Mr. Harvey said there is someone coordinating the Title I program.

Ms. Wanzer moved to table this recommendation. Dr. Butler seconded the motion. Aye: Butler, Grossi, Muehling, Sabo-Skelton, Streiff, Wanzer. Nay: Merriam. Motion carried.

8. **APPOINT SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT ADMINISTRATOR**

Mr. Harvey recommended that retired teacher and Principal Kim Sechler be appointed as School Improvement Administrator with terms of employment as outlined. Ms. Merriam so moved. Dr. Sabo-Skelton seconded the motion. Aye: Butler, Grossi, Merriam, Muehling, Sabo-Skelton, Streiff, Wanzer. Motion carried.

9. **APPOINT INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS**

Dr. Grossi proposed that the Board appoint Timothy F. Hyland as Interim Superintendent, effective September 1, 2008 through June 30, 2009, unless a Superintendent is in place before that time. Mr. Muehling so moved. Ms. Streiff seconded the motion. Aye: Butler, Grossi, Merriam, Muehling, Sabo-Skelton, Streiff, Wanzer. Motion carried.

10. **APPROVE FULL DAY KINDERGARTEN FEE FOR THE 2008-2009 SCHOOL YEAR**

Mr. Thrasher recommended that fee for participation in the full day kindergarten program for the 2008-2009 school year is set at \$7.23 per day enrolled. Ms. Wanzer so moved. Dr. Butler seconded the motion.

During ensuing discussion Mr. Harvey said parents were told that the fee for the year would be \$1,800; however, once the state knows how many kindergarten students are enrolled statewide, they will give an estimate of what the reimbursement will be. He said the appropriation is considerably more than last year so we anticipate we will receive a larger reimbursement, which will be passed along to parents.

Mr. Thrasher said families who are on free and reduced lunch do not pay; the one-half day kindergarten program is free. Mr. Shipman explained that because of federal regulations the Food Service Department cannot share information; therefore, parents have to tell us if they qualify for free or reduced lunch. He said letters will be sent to notify parents of the new fee structure and ask them to let us know if they qualify. He said we have a Safe Haven grant and another small grant but not a great deal of money to assist families that do not qualify for free or reduced lunch. Mr. Harvey noted that the fee amounts to about \$145 per month and they can pay monthly. He reiterated that if we get additional state support it would reduce this amount and people will be advised as soon as that is known. Regarding enrolling students in half-day programs in another school, he said we offer one-way transportation to that school from the home school but parents are still responsible for picking up their child at the end of the half-day session. However, children ended up further away from their home school.

Bret Hammond said they were forced to give up the one-half day assignment even though they registered in the spring. He said on Thursday before school started they were informed that there would be a one-half day kindergarten class and then on the second day of school they were informed that the class would be dissolved and they would be forced to pay \$180 per month fee or shift their child to Highland Park for a half-day program. He said apparently his child would be twenty to twenty-five minutes late for school every day because of busing time. He said there are no fees assessed for grades 1 through 12 and it seems to him that this should have been funded rather than implemented and then funded. Mr. Harvey agreed, adding that the state created a program for full day kindergarten that did not include funding.

Mr. Hammond said he was under the impression that this was optional. He objected to waiting until the second day of school to tell them that they were going to change the policy and there was no option. Ms. Merriam said she was sorry that he was not present during the beginning of the meeting because Mr. Harvey responded to questions about funding, etc. during discussion at that time. She explained that kindergarten is not mandated in the state of Indiana and because of that parents often enroll children at the last minute. She said the number of kindergarten students is down from last year and we cannot justify nor

can we afford offering half-day classes at each school for five or six students. Mr. Hammond asked why there is not an option for them to enroll in a full day program and then take their child home at noon. Dr. Butler agreed that it is not appropriate for his child to be late daily. Mr. Shipman said he received assurance that children would arrive by 9:05 or 9:10 at the latest. Dr. Grossi suggested that Mr. Hammond meet with Dr. Lovejoy. Dr. Lovejoy said they have spoken and she recognizes some changes need to be made. She said this is one of her goals this year, to make certain that this type of thing does not occur. Dr. Grossi confirmed that for the last two years we have struggled with the kindergarten piece and we are trying to do something about it.

There was no further discussion. Aye: Butler, Grossi, Merriam, Muehling, Sabo-Skelton, Streiff, Wanzer. Motion carried.

11. **INFORMATION, PROPOSALS OR COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

Megan Parmenter, first year first grade teacher at Fairview, introduced herself to the Board. She said she is excited to be a part of the Fairview staff. Board members welcomed her to Fairview and to the MCCSC.

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

Noting this is Mr. Harvey's last Board meeting, Dr. Grossi repeated a portion of her comments from the opening day of school meeting. She said, "He saw, he came, he gave, he healed, he continued, he initiated, he renewed." On behalf of the Board, she thanked him for his leadership during the past two years.

Mr. Muehling extended sincere condolences to the Veach family. Board members noted various memorial services and scholarships being established in memory of Elena Veach.

13. **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Board, Dr. Grossi declared the meeting to be adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Teresa Grossi, President

Jeannine Butler, Vice President

Valerie Merriam, Secretary

Susan P. Wanzer, Assistant Secretary

Jim Muehling, Member

Lois Sabo-Skelton, Member

Vicki Streiff, Member