

MONROE COUNTY COMMUNITY SCHOOL CORPORATION
BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES
Regular Meeting, July 7, 2009

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, July 7, 2009, in the Large Group Room at Bloomington High School South, 1965 South Walnut Street, Bloomington.

Board members present:

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

Board member absent:

John Hamilton	Assistant Secretary
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Also present:

J.T. Coopman	Superintendent
Tim Thrasher	Comptroller
Peggy Chambers	Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources & Personnel
Mike Scherer	Director of Extended Services
Pam Lawrence Puls	Co-Director of Social Services
Janet Tupper	Administrative Assistant
Paul White	Principal, Batchelor Middle School
Chuck Holloway	Principal, Aurora Alternative High School
Andy Graham	Reporter, <i>The Herald-Times</i>

In addition to the above, a representative of the League of Women Voters 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, Jeannine Butler, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. **PUBLIC DIALOGUE** – There was no response to Dr. Butler’s invitation for public dialogue.

3. **SUPERINTENDENT’S COMMENTS**

Dr. Butler introduced Dr. John T. (J.T.) Coopman and welcomed him to his first Board meeting as Superintendent of Schools.

Dr. Coopman said he really appreciates the opportunity to serve this school district and the children who attend our schools. He said the central office staff has been wonderful as have principals and community members, which eased his transition and made him feel welcome. He said the six-month interim period between his appointment and now has seemed longer than six months since he has been anticipating the move to the Monroe County Community School Corporation (MCCSC).

Dr. Coopman said MCCSC is somewhat of a sleeping giant and it has all the pieces, tools and opportunities to become an even better school system. He said we have excellent people in place. He expressed thanks to Dr. (Tim) Hyland (interim superintendent). He said Dr. Hyland is an outstanding person and educator and we could not have asked for anyone to better set the stage for him. He said Dr. Hyland's commitment went well beyond what is expected of an interim superintendent. He thanked his assistant, Janet Tupper, and Donna Zink who has been a tremendous help to him and an asset to the Superintendent's office. He also commended Andy Graham, education reporter for *The Herald Times*, for covering this process – from interviews to selection to his first day on the job. He said Andy is responsible for what and how things are reported and we are fortunate to have an education reporter who is a supporter of education and of the community.

Mentioning that as more people present themselves in a variety of ways, Dr. Coopman said he finds that they care deeply about what happens in MCCSC. He said as he travels throughout the school system and in buildings – many under construction – he thinks this community should be proud of what this Board has done in committing resources to facilities. He said Board members should be commended for their vision. He extended appreciation to Mike Scherer and Tim Thrasher for keeping up with all that is going on. He added that the community and Board should be proud of the way the organizational chart was re-organized with an emphasis on curriculum and instruction. He said the addition of Directors of Elementary and Secondary Education indicates the focus is where it should be. He said that is our mission and our vision.

Dr. Coopman said his mission is to listen, observe and learn. He said he does not have a grand plan but after listening, observing and meeting with principals and staff, we will put together a plan for a world class school district. He believes it is important for him to establish who he is as an instructional leader and chief operating officer of the MCCSC. He expects that will consume his time for the first several months. He said we all feel Fairview and getting that school over AYP should be a point of emphasis. He said also really important is literacy development and skills, K-2 teaching to read and then reading to learn. He said is important to take a look at our drop-out rate; we can do better than 76% and we will move forward with initiatives to try to improve the graduation rate. He said given the news we have been given with budget, we will move forward with negotiations.

In conclusion, Dr. Coopman said he looks forward to serving this community for many years. He expressed thanks for this opportunity.

4. CONSENT AGENDA

Dr. Butler asked for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda: (a) approval of minutes of meetings held on June 2, June 10 and June 16, 2009; (b) donations and a field trip request; (c) Financial Report; and (d) Allowance of Claims. Dr. Sabo-Skelton so moved. Ms. Wanzer seconded the motion.

Ms. Merriam proposed corrections to the minutes of the June 2nd meeting: page 3 – third paragraph – should read “Ms. Merriam asked if the **middle school** programs were limited ...” Also on page 3, the seventh paragraph should read “**Ms. Streiff** indicated that her daughter ...” and “**Ms. Streiff** indicated that she thinks very highly...”

Dr. Coopman reviewed donations and details of the field trip request. He announced that late today we received word that we had received a Department of Education Teaching History grant. He thanked Pat Wilson, who in collaboration with Indiana University School of Education – particularly Dean Gonzales – for writing and submitting the grant application.

Ms. Merriam noted that the school system spent \$18,481 on contracted mowing for the month of June.

She said IVY Tech is opening a class in sheep herding. Ms. Wanzer said perhaps they will need fields/grassy areas for sheep grazing. Dr. Sabo-Skelton wanted to make sure we consider people keeping their jobs – even though these are contracted workers we need to stay cognizant of that as we look at expenses. Ms. Merriam clarified that her suggestions for using livestock were made with humor.

Mr. Thrasher responded to questions regarding negative cash balances. There were no other comments. Board members voted on the motion to approve the Consent Agenda as amended. Aye: Butler, Merriam, Muehling, Sabo-Skelton, Streiff, Wanzer. Motion carried.

5. **CONTRACTS**

Dr. Butler called for a motion to approve contracts as proposed, including: (a) Kirkwood Photo and BHS North; (b) Escrow Agreement – Performance Contracting, Inc. and Bank of New York Mellon Trust; (c) Toshiba Agreement for Copiers; (d) Change Orders for Current Building Projects; (e) Herff Jones Photography for Batchelor Pictures; (f) Herff Jones Photography for Batchelor Yearbook; and (g) Great American for Bachelor Fund Raiser. Ms. Merriam so moved. The motion was seconded by Mr. Muehling.

Mr. Thrasher responded to questions regarding various contracts and agreements presented for approval. Mr. White explained contracts for Batchelor photos, yearbook and fund raiser. In response to a question, he said assistance is provided for students who cannot afford to purchase a yearbook. Mr. Scherer reviewed change orders and explained that although there is no cost for many of the change orders, they are submitted so that all contractors will be informed of which alternates are chosen. He further explained that cost for the service and transportation buildings is still under the established budget of \$600,000. He said the Information Services building was not a part of the original plan; however, we are still under budget for the entire project.

Following a time for additional discussion, Board members voted on the motion to approve contracts and change orders. Aye: Butler, Merriam, Muehling, Sabo-Skelton, Streiff, Wanzer. Motion carried.

6. **PERSONNEL REPORT**

Dr. Sabo-Skelton moved approval of the Personnel Report as submitted. Ms. Wanzer seconded the motion.

Ms. Chambers noted that BHS North recommended the appointment of Donald ‘Tim’ Hudson as assistant principal. She mentioned that he previously served as assistant principal at Jackson Creek Middle School and was chosen from many excellent candidates for this position. She said one teacher is being recalled from the RIF (Reduction in Force) list. She would like to move forward with other recalls; however, it is difficult to recall because teachers are brought back by seniority and licensure and every attempt is made to bring people back to their original position. Ms. Chambers shared examples and said there is some stimulus money to hire within the school system and that will open some elementary positions. She is still concerned about a music position at this point but expects to have assignments confirmed by July 27.

Ms. Wanzer asked how many teachers are transferring to The Project School and stated her understanding that it is difficult because we must hold those positions for two years. Ms. Chambers confirmed that we must hold positions for two years for teachers who transfer to The Project School. She said two transferred last year and renewed their transfer for this year and four additional teachers have requested transfers. She said we also have an elementary teacher who wants to transfer to the Indianapolis Project School and we cannot grant it because it is out of our district.

In response to Mr. Muehling’s questions, Ms. Chambers said Statute assures teachers who transfer to The Project School may come back and if necessary we will have to RIF to comply. Ms. Streiff asked if there

is a deadline for teachers to request transfers to The Project School. Ms. Chambers said no, although that discussion is underway now with the Monroe County Education Association (MCEA). She explained that a teacher may ask for a transfer at any point and it is usually honored but we do not have to honor it; however, we are mandated to honor transfers to The Project School because of statute. She said if it creates problems for RIF, she is unsure how current procedures may change. She responded that if a teacher stays with The Project School for a third year, he/she relinquishes his/her right to a position with the MCCSC.

There was no further discussion and Board members voted on the motion to approve the Personnel Report as submitted. Aye: Butler, Merriam, Muehling, Sabo-Skelton, Streiff, Wanzer. Motion carried.

7. **APPROVE REVISIONS TO POLICY 5200 – Attendance**

Dr. Coopman said it was his understanding that discussion of these revisions with teachers had not occurred. He withdrew the recommendation for this meeting.

8. **TEXTBOOK ADOPTION – SAT Class**

Ms. Merriam moved approval of the adoption of a Workbook for Bloomington High School South's new SAT Prep Class as recommended. Ms. Wanzer seconded the motion. Mr. Thrasher confirmed that when a textbook adoption is approved it can be used at all high schools. There was no further discussion. Aye: Butler, Merriam, Muehling, Sabo-Skelton, Streiff, Wanzer. Motion carried.

9. **AUTHORIZE PARTICIPATION IN THE INDIANA BOND BANK'S HOOSIER EQUIPMENT LEASE PURCHASE PROGRAM USING REGIONS EQUIPMENT FINANCE CORPORATION**

Ms. Wanzer moved that the Board adopt the resolution to execute an equipment lease with Regions Equipment Finance Corporation through the Indiana Bond Bank's Hoosier Equipment Lease Purchase (HELP) Program as recommended. Dr. Sabo-Skelton seconded the motion.

Mr. Thrasher responded to questions regarding why we use the bond bank instead of a local bank, noting a better price on vehicles and other amenities of the program. Following discussion, Board members voted on the motion to approve. Aye: Butler, Merriam, Muehling, Sabo-Skelton, Streiff, Wanzer. Motion carried.

10. **INFORMATION, PROPOSALS OR COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC** – There was no response to Dr. Butler's invitation for public comments.

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

Mr. Muehling thanked Dr. Coopman for his comments and welcomed him to the district. He said it is good to have him here.

Ms. Streiff said this is one of three weeks that her children are in school system summer adventure programs and she is very impressed. She said the counselors are excellent and her children come home tired and happy.

Dr. Sabo-Skelton said she looks forward to an excellent start of the 2009-2010 school year. She said she thinks we are going to make some great educational strides.

Ms. Wanzer extended a welcome to Dr. Coopman and said she thinks it is going to be an exciting and

transforming time. She said she has spent time exploring where we are and where we are going. She read excerpts from Ellen Brantlinger's book [Dividing Classes: How the Middle Class Negotiates and Rationalizes School Advantage] on research about how school corporations cater to middle class desires. She said it is a great analysis and her study was based on our school corporation. Ms. Wanzer said she will recommit herself to look at how we reach and serve every child in our school system. She said it is exciting for us to get this quick start; she thanked Dr. Coopman for being here.

Ms. Wanzer expressed deep sadness at the passing of Greg Mongold, BHS North teacher and Math Department Chair. She said he was a great teacher and he will be missed.

Ms. Merriam welcomed Dr. Coopman and said she looks forward to a collaborative relationship. She said everything we do is for and about kids. She said two weeks ago she participated in Critical Friends training – all day for five days. She said it was very intense but very worthwhile. She said she drove by Fairview and is pleased with progress.

Ms. Merriam noted that we do not know what we will face in terms of budget but urban schools will get 1.9% (ours), rural schools will receive 3.5%, suburban schools will receive 4.9% and charter schools will receive 19.2%. She said a majority of charter schools are not passing so within five years of their charter who knows where they will be. She suggested this is a message to all of us what our government is trying to do with public education.

Dr. Butler said she has known Greg Mongold for many years and he is an outstanding and exemplary teacher. She said he was an inspiration for many students and those who spoke at his memorial gave a true picture of who he is. She said it is a great loss but he will live on through every student he taught. She shared that Greg never wrote a discipline referral; if he had problems with a student in his class his goal was to find a way to help the student be successful.

Dr. Butler welcomed Dr. Coopman and said she looks forward to a long and prosperous tenure with him and offered the Board's help. She agreed that the budget will be a challenge. She said some Board members will be missing meetings this summer and suggested that some issues that need to be discussed be held until summer travels are concluded to have at least six members present.

12. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, Dr. Butler declared the meeting to be adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Jeannine Butler, President

Valerie Merriam, Vice President

ABSENT

Victoria I. Streiff, Secretary

John Hamilton, Assistant Secretary

Jim Muehling, Member

Lois Sabo-Skelton, Member

Susan P. Wanzer, Member