

**MONROE COUNTY COMMUNITY SCHOOL CORPORATION**  
**BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES**  
**Regular Meeting, October 6, 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, October 6, 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
John Hamilton	Assistant Secretary
Jim Muehling	Member
Lois Sabo-Skelton	Member [left meeting when indicated in minutes]
Sue Wanzer	Member

Also present:

J.T. Coopman	Superintendent
Tim Thrasher	Comptroller
Kathleen Hugo	Director of Special Education
Cameron Rains	Director of Elementary Education
Jan Bergeson	Director of Secondary Education
Mike Scherer	Director of Extended Services
John Carter	Director of Planning
Janet Tupper	Administrative Assistant
Tina Peterson	Executive Director, MCCA Foundation
Jennifer Staab	Healthy Schools Coordinator
Andy Graham	Reporter, <i>The Herald-Times</i>

In addition to the above, fourteen (14) individuals 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 7:05 p.m.

2. **FACES OF EDUCATION**

Dr. Butler explained that at every Board meeting an employee or volunteer is recognized for outstanding accomplishments. She introduced Kathryn “Kathy” Heise who was honored for cultivating her students’ appreciation for music while supporting their academic and building character. She was nominated for this honor by Fairview Principal Karen Adams and Assistant Principal Trudy Litz. Ms. Heise was appointed music teacher at Marlin in 2004 and moved to Fairview in 2005. Ms. Litz said she engages students and they will do things that surprise them! Ms. Adams added that Kathy gives generously of her time to benefit children. In addition to teaching music to each classroom, she teaches drumming and choir during the students’ lunch recess. She has written numerous grants to fund Fairview’s after school CODA music program, which she created and developed for students in grades 4-6 to have lessons and use of the instrument of their choice at no cost. She was commended for being a maestro who gives her all. Ms. Heise responded that she is blessed to work with extremely talented, warm and supportive staff and administrators; she loves the kids at Fairview and has the good fortune of watching them grow every year.

Board members commended Ms. Heise for providing students with the musical knowledge and support they need to grow.

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

4. **SCHOOL SHOWCASE: Clear Creek Elementary – Read 180**

Liz Prieboy and Veronica Allen, teachers at Clear Creek, shared an informative report about the school’s *Read 180* Program. Principal Tammy Miller said *Read 180* has been a successful program at Clear Creek for three years; it is funded by a private donor through the MCCS Foundation for intermediate students struggling to read. Logan Shaw, a former *Read 180* student at Clear Creek and now a 7<sup>th</sup> grader at Batchelor, talked about his continued success in reading. He is one of three students nationally recognized for his accomplishments.

5. **FOR INFORMATION: Youth Philharmonic Trip to France**

Jane Gouker, orchestra and Youth Philharmonic instructor, and parent Kathy Essex reported on the group’s trip to France this summer. BHSN and BHSS students participated. Ms. Gouker said performing in France was wonderful and life changing. She thanked the Board for continued support and for approving this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for these students. [Dr. Sabo-Skelton left the meeting.]

6. **FOR INFORMATION: Foundation of MCCS**

Executive Director Tina Peterson encouraged educators and community members to attend a presentation on October 13<sup>th</sup> at BHS North from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. Dr. Robert Barr will be speaking about *Creating High Achieving Schools*. She announced that MCCSC educators have submitted grant requests in excess of \$100,000 in the last 30 days. A grant has already been awarded to allow all MCCSC middle school teachers to attend the National Middle Schools Conference in Indianapolis next month. Finally, she reminded the audience that the school foundation receives \$18.75 for every Garfield Education License Plate purchased by an MCCSC supporter.

7. **FOR INFORMATION: National Middle School Conference**

Jan Bergeson thanked the MCCS Foundation for a grant for all middle school teachers to attend the National Middle School Conference in Indianapolis on November 6, 2009. She said this will give our staff members a chance to hear nationally known presenters and to collaborate about solutions and interventions supporting our current improvement plans and strategies. Middle school students will not attend school on November 6.

8. **FOR INFORMATION: ISTEP Results**

Cameron Rains and Jan Bergeson shared a report on ISTEP results. They reviewed comparative data for MCCSC vs. State for all areas that were tested as well as the percent passing Algebra I, Biology I and English 11. This and more details of ISTEP results are available at [www.doe.in.state.us](http://www.doe.in.state.us)

9. **SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT**

Dr. Coopman thanked Mr. Rains, Ms. Bergeson, our leadership team and teaching staff who are looking at issues such as alignment, articulation, mapping and differentiated instruction for better results for our kids. He said MCCSC had several people in attendance at the *Drop Out Prevention* summit and we now need to develop an action plan.

Four Board members attended the Indiana School Boards Association conference in September and Dr. Coopman said our Board members were recognized for their professional development efforts. He said the program also included a presentation from Bloomington New Tech High School.

A celebration at Fairview held on October 1 included breakfast served to faculty, ice cream served to students in the afternoon and Board members read to students during the day. Dr. Coopman thanked the Fairview faculty, staff and students for allowing the administration to recognize their gain in ISTEP scores.

Dr. Coopman said BHSN and BHSS are accredited by the North Central Association/AdvancED and all schools are considering this rigorous accreditation. He said this may be one way of developing a strategic plan in that many stakeholders will be involved in the process.

Reporting that our enrollment is down by 277 students this year, Dr. Coopman said this equates to loss of revenue. He said fortunately we have an excellent comptroller, but he wanted the Board and community to know that we will have some difficult financial decisions to make this year and in subsequent years. He noted that salaries and benefits are 91% of our General Fund budget.

#### 10. **SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER RESIGNATION**

Although this was not an item included on the agenda for this meeting, Dr. Butler announced that John Hamilton will be resigning his position on the Board.

Mr. Hamilton said when he decided to seek election for the School Board he was seeing good things happening in schools but knew that does not happen automatically. He said the Board's role is to try to make that 'magic' happen in the classroom. He said he has been on the Board for ten months and the biggest decision made during that time was hiring Dr. Coopman as superintendent. He said building a new Fairview and historic changes to public education are exciting.

Mr. Hamilton said that is all terrific but he did not plan that his family circumstances would change and those changes in his wife's employment prospects have prompted him to let his fellow Board members know that he intends to resign his seat on the Board. He said he had to balance the difficulty of family circumstances compared to his love for service on the School Board. He sees wonderful things coming and he thinks this Board will be setting vision and goals for what should be done and what we want to look like in ten years. He said there is nothing more important than the public school system; it is the lifeblood of this community and the job of this Board is to try to let that flourish.

Noting that the Board had talked about student achievement and how important that is, Mr. Hamilton said he also wonders about students experiencing the magic. He said he will miss that but enjoyed the time he worked with all of his colleagues. He said it is a privilege to be on this Board and the reason he was a member is because one person persuaded him this was a good thing to do. He said we need to work on finding the right person to fill the vacancy. He thanked Board members for the opportunity and extended his best wishes for times ahead.

#### 11. **CONSENT AGENDA**

Dr. Coopman reviewed donations and recommended approval of the Consent Agenda: (a) minutes of previous meetings on April 7, September 1 and September 15, 2009; (b) donations, ECA expenditures and field trips; (c) Financial Report; (d) Appropriation Balance Report and (e) Allowance of Claims. Mr. Muehling so moved. Ms. Merriam seconded the motion. Aye: Butler, Hamilton, Merriam, Muehling,

Streiff, Wanzer. Motion carried.

## 12. **CONTRACTS**

Mr. Thrasher recommended approval of contracts as proposed, including: (a) HY VENTURE Partnership Agreement; (b) Bloomington Hospital Agreement for Teen Parents Program at Aurora; (c) Agreement for Stay-in-School Coordinator at Aurora; (d) Boys Town Pilot Project at Clear Creek; (e) Fairview United Methodist Church Agreement for Parking; (f) Cheryl Christen Educational Consulting Agreement; (g) E. Joseph Ehlers, Jr. Independent Assessment Proposal; and (h) School Datebooks Contract Tri-North. Ms. Wanzer so moved. The motion was seconded by Mr. Muehling.

Following a time for discussion, Board members voted on the motion to approve contracts as proposed. Aye: Butler, Hamilton, Merriam, Muehling, Streiff, Wanzer. Motion carried.

## 13. **PERSONNEL REPORT**

Mr. Thrasher recommended approval of personnel matters as presented. Mr. Muehling so moved. Ms. Wanzer seconded the motion. Batchelor Interim Principal Eric Gilpin introduced Brenten Baker whose appointment as Batchelor Interim Assistant Principal was included on this report. On behalf of the Board, Dr. Butler expressed sympathy to the family and friends of Nicole 'Nicki' Baker, teacher at BHS North who died recently. There was no further discussion. Aye: Butler, Hamilton, Merriam, Muehling, Streiff, Wanzer. Motion carried.

## 14. **RESOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATION TO ADOPT 2010 BUDGETS**

Mr. Thrasher said hearings on the 2010 Budgets were conducted at the September 15<sup>th</sup> Board meeting. He reviewed each of the resolutions and recommended that the Board adopt the following: Resolution of Appropriations for the 2010 Budgets; Resolution of Tax Rates for the 2010 Budgets; Resolution to Appeal for an Excessive Levy Pursuant to I.C. 20-45-6-5 to recover a shortfall in collections of 2008 Property Taxes; Resolution to Lower the Tax Levies and Allocations for Future Projects and Purchases in the 2010 Capital Projects Fund and Bus Replacement Fund Budgets in Accordance with I.C. 20-48-1-2; Resolution to Adopt 2010 Capital Projects Plan; and Resolution to Adopt 2010 School Bus Replacement Plan. Dr. Butler read the resolutions. Ms. Merriam so moved. Ms. Wanzer seconded the motion.

Dr. Butler said there had been a lot of discussion about purchase of small extracurricular buses this year. She asked if lowering the budget will change that decision. Mr. Thrasher said every intention is to purchase two buses in 2010 and two in 2011.

Ms. Wanzer asked how we will manage the budget shortfall due to a decrease in enrollment. Mr. Thrasher said we are taking a look at it now and developing a plan. He will make recommendations, noting that 91% of the General Fund Budget is spent for personnel and benefits. He said it will be difficult to do it without reductions in staff; we will do everything we can to control the other 10% of the budget and will take a look at all non-personnel budget items.

Mr. Hamilton asked what will be the impact of lost revenue due to declining enrollment. Mr. Thrasher said an exact number of dollars has not been determined but is expected to be in excess of \$1.4 million. He said one strategy would be to make cuts in one year; however, there are certain statutory requirements for contracts and reductions in certified staff will not be able to be made until 2011. He said projections for 2011 are that revenue will be bleaker.

Ms. Merriam noted that everyone said this would happen with property tax cuts but we have no recourse.

She said we may have to ask the Legislature to look at it again. Mr. Muehling mentioned that if equity is built into the funding formula it would take care of the problem. He said there is not much equity because the MCCSC is funded in the lower 20% of the state.

There was no further discussion and Board members voted on the motion. Aye: Butler, Hamilton, Merriam, Muehling, Streiff, Wanzer. Motion carried.

**15. AWARD CONTRACT FOR DRIVE IMPROVEMENTS AT BINFORD/ROGERS SCHOOLS**

Mr. Scherer recommended that the Board award a contract to the low bidder, R.H. Marlin for drive improvements at Binford and Rogers Elementary Schools for the base bid of \$118,540. Mr. Muehling so moved. Ms. Wanzer seconded the motion.

In response to questions, Mr. Scherer said the number of security officers at Rogers/Binford have been reduced from five to three and possibly down to one with this construction. He said we have used R.H. Marlin before and the bid environment is getting more competitive. He said construction will start within a couple of weeks and the target date for paving is October 29-30.

Board members voted. Aye: Butler, Hamilton, Merriam; Muehling, Streiff, Wanzer. Motion carried.

**16. APPROVE CONTRACT BUS ROUTE EXTENSIONS**

Mr. Scherer recommended approval of extensions for contract bus routes #171 and #176 as proposed. Mr. Hamilton so moved. Ms. Wanzer seconded the motion. Aye: Butler, Hamilton, Merriam, Muehling, Streiff, Wanzer. Motion carried.

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

Anna Lynch, Templeton and University parent, discussed with the Board her efforts to report to the PTO at other schools about getting involved regarding teacher certification and licensure proposals coming from the State. She said she used Dr. Butler's words and the ISBA (Indiana School Boards Association) petition to try to make sure they know she is not speaking on behalf of the Board. She said she would be happy to e-mail information to PTO presidents; Ms. Tupper will assist with getting e-mail addresses to Ms. Lynch.

In response to questions, Dr. Coopman explained that essentially Dr. (Tony) Bennett (State Superintendent for Instruction) has proposed that anybody who holds a bachelor's degree could pass an exam and become an administrator, anybody with a master's degree could pass an exam and become a school superintendent, and with a bachelor's degree they could go through some prep classes and be teachers – pedagogy and methodology classes would not be necessary to teach or to be a superintendent. He thanked Ms. Lynch for working on behalf of the school system; he offered to share the name of the state PTO so she could communicate with PTO presidents in the state.

Mr. Hamilton said he personally thinks there is a need for licensure reform and that has to be a thoughtful and timely process. He said this process has not been a good one and is being pushed much too fast.

Ms. Merriam said she observed an education panel in which a professional from Indiana University said their recommendation to do away with early childhood licenses would do away with some Head Start programs and Dr. Bennett said that had just been brought to his attention. She wondered what data are they using; certainly not best practices. She said his recommendation limits state universities and he is overstepping his bounds. Ms. Wanzer agreed they are telling colleges and universities how they are

limited and not everyone (who attends Indiana colleges and universities) will be teaching in Indiana.

Ms. Streiff understood that since she has a master's degree that has nothing to do with education and because she can do 4<sup>th</sup> grade math she could teach. Dr. Butler said yes and even in secondary schools if you only deal with content you will not reach those kids. She said Dean (Gerardo) Gonzalez appealed to Dr Bennett that they just wanted a collaborative venture with him and they are not invited in.

Dr. Coopman said he would hate to think that any school board in Indiana would give consideration to hiring a principal or superintendent that we assume will be an instructional leader but has no understanding of the complexities that go on in the classroom. He said he does this because he feels strongly that education is the backbone of our society. He said we are in serious trouble if we have people who do not want that for our kids.

Ms. Wanzer commented that she doubts they would ever change the licensing requirement for lawyers and doctors and it is as ridiculous to say it will change for teachers. Ms. Lynch said Indiana will have to hire non-Indiana graduates. Dr. Butler said Indiana has a great track record for teachers getting licenses in other states and if we reduce our requirements that reciprocity will end. Ms. Streiff said she has a friend studying to be a special education teacher in Georgia and then come here for a master's degree but school systems that care will not hire people without licenses.

#### 18. **COMMITTEE REPORTS AND PROPOSALS FROM BOARD MEMBERS**

Ms. Merriam thanked Southern Indiana Pediatrics for donating many items to the school system. She mentioned that the *Sounds of South* has a musical coming up for three weekends, beginning October 16.

Mr. Muehling thanked Mr. Hamilton for his services on the Board. He expressed appreciation and said he hoped someone from District 5 will express an interest in filling the vacancy.

Ms. Streiff said that she and her youngest child enjoyed the Fairview celebration and then had lunch at Summit today. She said her pre-schooler is getting very high expectations: the Summit School librarian led everyone in the 'hokey-pokey' and everyone got out of their seats and moved around. She said it is nice to know that what is going on day-to-day in our schools is very good.

Ms. Wanzer also thanked Mr. Hamilton for serving on the Board. She said his knowledge of organizational development challenges us to look at things differently and that is exciting. She voiced sadness and concern about the state of our budget and what it says about the value the State of Indiana places on public education and their lack of responsiveness to educators. She said her understanding is that the committee is not listening to any educational experts in the state. She called for a grass roots effort to lobby the state and she will be working on that.

#### 19. **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Board, Dr. Butler declared the meeting to be adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

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Jeannine Butler, President

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Valerie Merriam, Vice President

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Victoria I. Streiff, Secretary

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John Hamilton, Assistant Secretary

ABSENT for Action Portion of Meeting

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Jim Muehling, Member

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Lois Sabo-Skelton, Member

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Susan P. Wanzer, Member