

Monroe County Community School Corporation
BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES
Work Session – October 20, 2009

MEMORANDA

The Board of School Trustees of the Monroe County Community School Corporation met in work session at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, October 20, 2009, at Bloomington High School South, which is located at 1965 S. Walnut Street, Bloomington, Indiana.

Board members present: Jeannine Butler, Valerie Merriam, Jim Muehling, Lois Sabo-Skelton, Vicki Streiff and Sue Wanzer

Board member absent: John Hamilton

Also present: J. T. Coopman, Superintendent; Cameron Rains, Director of Elementary Education; Deb Prenkert, Grants Coordinator; Janet Tupper, Administrative Assistant; and the following from Fairview Elementary School: Principal Karen Adams; Assistant Principal Trudy Litz; Teachers Megan Parmenter, Jennifer Goodman, Hannelore Meier, Mary Wicker and Kathy Heise; and Theresa Malone, citizen and Title I representative.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. and President Butler stated that the purpose for this meeting was to discuss Fairview Artful Learning and professional development.

1. **Fairview Artful Learning** – Karen Adams summarized a history of the work of the Fairview Restructuring Committee. She said during 2007 they looked at how to accomplish a broader socio economic base, including consideration for a variety of theme schools, combining with another school, redistricting, etc. and recommendations were made for a restructuring plan. She said last year the restructuring committee met again and talked about new ideas, including the artful learning model and several visited an artful learning school. She said Dr. (Tim) Hyland (interim superintendent) asked her to survey the staff and only two were not in favor of an artful learning school.

Ms. Adams explained that last year was a year of exploration and changes would coincide with the opening of the new building. She said 27 staff members want to move forward, one is not interested and two are concerned about summer schedule and one is concerned about pay for summer professional development but they support integration initiatives.

Noting that test scores are higher for artful learning schools, Ms. Adams shared data on project based learning schools and said excellent professional development is offered for the artful learning program. She said there is great community support and the PTO seems to be supportive. Referring to an overview of artful learning, Ms. Adams said the teacher who does not want this program would be offered a transfer.

Mr. Rains reviewed the timeline for an artful learning school, if the Board decides to move forward. He explained that this will align with district goals and should be a seamless process. He said insofar as technology, suggestions were having Apple Macs because there is a full Mac and PC lab at Fairview; funding would be through various means, including grants.

Ms. Prenkert said \$68,000 is the standard package per year for three years for training during the summer. She said leadership training is \$150 per person but is not mandatory. They will continue

searching for grants to fund the program. She expects that the MCCS Foundation and other organizations in town will help if they can. Ms. Merriam wondered if grants are received could technology money be redistributed elsewhere.

Mr. Rains explained a question proposed to DOE, i.e. we need a 50% change in population to change AYP status (restructure). We are already at 39% mobility at Fairview and it seems 11% more would be all that is needed; however, no response has been received.

Ms. Wanzer expressed concern for the Board to receive public input as other options are considered. Dr. Sabo-Skelton mentioned that since she has been on the Board small groups have gone out to look at different designs and the artful learning program was very impressive. Dr. Butler noted that she has served on the restructuring committee and the committee considered many ideas that were reported to the Board over a two-year period of time. Mr. Muehling recalled that the Board has been discussing this over a period of three or four years and his focus is what is best for this population.

In response to Mr. Muehling's question, Mr. Rains and Ms. Adams said the stipend for professional development will be used for 13 classroom teachers as well as Title I and special education staff. Ms. Adams said this will include ongoing professional development; it includes summer and a couple of days throughout the school year for three years.

Discussion ensued regarding transportation for students who may choose to attend Fairview's artful learning program. Mr. Rains said that has been discussed and it may be possible to run a bus. He said if Fairview becomes a choice school the plan would be to implement the choice for the second year the new school is open; getting accustomed to a new school is hard enough without program changes. However, if parents want to transfer their children to Fairview when the new school opens, that is possible if they provide transportation. Ms. Streiff suggested that teachers and principals at middle schools be a part of the planning so they will be prepared when these students come to middle school.

2. **Professional Development** – Mr. Rains shared information on plans for professional development on professional learning communities. He said when ISTEP scores were received they talked about the need to have discussions around the data, but there was no district level planning. He said elementary principals agreed to have a special meeting for this discussion and they talked about the need for structural changes – school reform and what works in schools.

Mr. Rains said as a result of those discussions, K-12 principals agreed they want to attend the National Summit on Professional Learning Communities in February and when they return they will develop a long-term plan for curriculum development and instruction. He said he was excited to get 14 elementary principals on the same page and was even more pleased that all principals are in agreement. He said they need a common core knowledge base and what better way than to get that from experts in school reform. He was happy to report to the Board that grant money will be used to completely fund this professional development opportunity.

During ensuing discussion, Mr. Rains said this will not replace Critical Friends Group but will provide an opportunity to dig deeper. He reviewed the handout provided to Board members. He said the plan is to establish regular conversations with staff to make the process completely collaborative. He invited Board members to attend the conference in February; deadline for registration is Friday, October 23.

Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 7:05 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