

Monroe County Community School Corporation
BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES
Regular Meeting, Tuesday, November 17, 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, November 17, 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

Also present:

J.T. Coopman	Superintendent
Tim Thrasher	Comptroller
Peggy Chambers	Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources and Personnel
Janet Tupper	Administrative Assistant
Andy Graham	Reporter for <i>The Herald-Times</i>

In addition to the above, ten (10) citizens signed the visitors list, which is made a part of the official record of this meeting, and two representatives of Bloomington Community Access TV were present.

1. **CALL TO ORDER** – Board President, Jeannine Butler, called the meeting to order at 7:00 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 Paris King who was honored for her dedication as the support secretary at University Elementary School. She was nominated for this honor by University School parent Amy Thompson. Paris joined the school system in 2005 as a secretary at University. Ms. Thompson said she is the school's ambassador and she is amazed at how many families and children that Paris knows by name and is able to greet with a friendly warm and welcoming smile. Principal Janice Bizzari said caring comes as second nature to Paris and the first thing everyone says when they enter the office is that she is so wonderful in the way she greets people. Dr. Bizzari said she has a big smile for everyone. She said Ms. King is always engaged and takes the initiative to resolve problems at her level. In addition to her daily duties, Paris finds the time to be a parent volunteer; she coordinates the University School Elementary K-Kids, a youth leadership and service program, and she volunteers in other ways such as selling tickets at a pizza supper, running an activity booth and serving as a source of information. Board members commended Ms. King for her work and willingness to make our students and families feel welcome and valued.

3. **PUBLIC DIALOGUE**

Anna Lynch, University parent, also commended Paris King for her excellent work.

4. **PROGRAM SHOWCASE: Adult Education Program**

Sherry Dick, Director of Adult Education, and teachers Denise Travers and Chris Bultman shared an informative report. Noting the diverse population at the Broadview Learning Center (BLC), Ms. Dick shared examples of the many faces and goals of the BLC students. Ms. Travers explained the goals of the RY+ (Reconnecting Youth Plus) Program. Mr. Bowman provided a visual presentation of BLC activities while BLC/BHS North student Parker Koontz played an original piece on his electric guitar. Parker does his internship at Vance Music. Matt Wysocki, Director of Workforce Initiatives with the Chamber of Commerce, was commended for his efforts to secure internship placements. He said these students have skills and when they have a sincere job and opportunity to do it well, they will amaze you.

5. **SUPERINTENDENT'S COMMENTS**

In his report to the Board, Dr. Coopman said H1N1 vaccinations are now being administered; however, fewer students participated than expected. He noted that the school system is continuing on our educational journey to have professional learning communities (PLC) in place. He mentioned professional development plans for February and during the summer – centered on PLC.

Dr. Coopman congratulated BHS North students for their participation in Habitat for Humanity. Noting that BHSN has the largest high school sponsorship for Habitat for Humanity, he thanked Valerie Merriam, Pat Wilson and others for their sponsorship and involvement. Dr. Coopman also extended kudos to the BHS North football team for a successful season and noted that BHS South's preseason national rankings are #5 (Sporting News Magazine) and #3 (USA Today).

6. **CONSENT AGENDA**

Dr. Coopman reviewed donations, including the collaborative contributions received to build the chimney swift tower at Fairview, and recommended approval of the consent agenda as presented including: (a) donations and a field trip; and (b) allowance of claims. Mr. Muehling so moved. Dr. Sabo-Skelton seconded the motion. Aye: Butler, Merriam, Muehling, Sabo-Skelton, Streiff, Wanzer. Motion carried.

7. **CONTRACTS**

Mr. Thrasher recommended approval of contracts as presented, including: (a) Energy Education; (b) Connection Point Benefits; (c) RE Sutton & Associates Consulting; (d) RE Sutton & Associates Business Associate; (e) Insurance Audit & Inspection Company for Consulting; (f) Insurance Audit & Inspection Company for Insurance and Risk Management Consulting; and (g) Change Orders. Ms. Merriam so moved. Dr. Sabo-Skelton seconded the motion.

Ms. Streiff said she had questions about the Energy Education Inc. contract and moved to remove it from consideration of other contracts for separate discussion. Ms. Wanzer seconded the motion. Aye: Butler, Merriam, Sabo-Skelton, Streiff, Wanzer. Nay: Muehling. Motion carried.

Board members voted on the motion to approve contracts with the exception of the one for Energy Education, Inc. Aye: Butler, Merriam, Muehling, Sabo-Skelton, Streiff, Wanzer. Motion carried.

Mr. Muehling moved approval of the contract with Energy Education, Inc. as proposed. Dr. Sabo-Skelton seconded the motion.

Ms. Streiff said it seemed to her that with consciousness being high, particularly in a town like ours, it seems unlikely that the Energy Education plan will do the school system a lot of good. She asked what are we now doing and are there any known gaps. Mr. Thrasher said we have energy management systems that allow us to control; however, he does not think that what Energy Education offers is mechanical. He said he has talked to 33 other school systems and they all adamantly endorse Energy Education because of savings they have achieved. He added that we have firsthand experience with Dr. Coopman since his former school system (Clark Pleasant) also used Energy Education Inc. He said we spend about \$3.4M on utilities now and in order to achieve the kind of culture change to make that happen will take a significant difference. He said other school systems are smaller but they have less than one full time person. He said Energy Education will help us select the right person who is suitable for the job and they have a number of technical experts who work with the school system.

Ms. Streiff said her experience in the schools is that the people do not have control over the heat and lights; she does not understand how the savings will be realized. Dr. Coopman said we have a guarantee and they will do things behind the scenes that will not be apparent, although some things will be obvious. He said for more than seven years they had the program at Clark Pleasant Schools and he saw the numbers come down; the dollar savings were apparent. Mr. Thrasher added that they guarantee the savings would exceed the cost - \$450,000 to \$500,000 per year and after four years the percentage would be over 90%. Dr. Coopman said more than 1000 school systems in the U.S. have done this and some have been in this program for several years and all realized significant savings. He added that if he did not have that kind of data he would be skeptic. He said the bottom line in Clark Pleasant was that they saved significantly more than they spent for the service/consultation.

Ms. Merriam said she was impressed with the graphs and the guarantee for four years while at the same time we will be re-educating our staff and students. Dr. Butler noted that at one school there were 75 individual refrigerators and they went to five large ones and that netted a savings; if teachers wanted their own they had to pay for them.

Ms. Wanzer wondered what kind of savings would be realized if we hire our own employee to manage the system. Dr. Coopman said the company has background and they have the resources to hire the right person who will be trained by them. He said we will have the ability to draw upon their expertise. Ms. Wanzer commented that his reference is first hand experience and she is glad to hear his recommendation. Dr. Coopman said Mr. Thrasher also called other school systems.

Matt Laherty, parent and citizen, said Bloomington is a wonderful community and they chose Bloomington to build a green home. He said he is an energy strategist-energy expert and serves on the sustainability commission. He said he is not selling anything but he believes there are experts in the community and in Indianapolis who will help without charging so much or perhaps at no charge. He suggested that the schools are poorly managed and need some basic energy monitoring. He said it would be a lot cheaper than what the Board is being asked to pay. He offered to help the school system go through this without charge.

There was no further discussion. Board members voted on the motion to approve the contract with Energy Education Inc. as proposed. Aye: Butler, Merriam, Muehling, Sabo-Skelton, Wanzer. Nay: Streiff. Motion carried.

8. PERSONNEL

Ms. Chambers recommended approval of the Personnel Report as presented. Ms. Merriam so moved. Dr. Sabo-Skelton seconded the motion.

Ms. Chambers noted three employees have given notice of their retirement. Jane Mitchell plans to retire at the end of this school year. She has served as an art teacher for 33 years, most recently at University and Unionville. Janet Thomas began her career as a sub cook in 1985. She is retiring on January 1 from Clear Creek with 25 years of service. Billie Carlson joined the MCCSC secretarial staff in January 1987; she worked in HR and for the Comptroller, and has served as Benefits Coordinator since 1996. She retires on January 1 with 23 years of service. Board members thanked these employees for their service.

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

9. **ADOPT CALENDAR FOR 2010-2011 SCHOOL YEAR**

Dr. Coopman said originally three draft calendar options were considered and then during discussion with teachers a fourth option evolved with a start date of August 16 for teachers and August 18 for students. This calendar includes parent-teacher conferences on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings before fall vacation and two weeks after winter break before exams. Ms. Merriam moved approval of a calendar for the 2010-2011 school year as proposed. Dr. Sabo-Skelton seconded the motion.

Mr. Muehling noted that school is in session for two months before the fall break and then Thanksgiving break is in just three more weeks. He suggested the Board consider moving the fall break to earlier in the year, perhaps October 21 and 22 or 14 and 15. Ms. Merriam mentioned that the fall break comes at the end of the first grading period.

Ms. Wanzer said she received good responses about including Wednesday as a non-school day for the Thanksgiving holiday. She said she thinks the Board has listened to staff and parents and her concern is about closing schools for election. She said we might change fall vacation to Monday and Tuesday to include Election Day. Mr. Muehling said the response he had heard is that it is not a problem for election in the schools. Ms. Wanzer noted that a few years ago we had to make everything accessible and it was up to the school system to make whatever adjustments that had to be made.

Noting this calendar had been through Discussion Council, Dr. Coopman said he tried to poll principals and some said they would rather close on Election Day but others did not see it as a problem to have school. He said we will certainly provide accessibility and accommodations that are necessary. Ms. Wanzer said she sits on the Vote America Task Force and concern was expressed that everybody is going through the back door but the handicapped must go to a different door. She recalled that she brought up this issue two weeks ago. Dr. Coopman said if it becomes an issue, it will be resolved. He said the greater issue is use of cafeteria and space needed for PE classes. He suggested that schools look for alternative places for voting if that is a concern. Ms. Streiff said some elementary schools have large multi-purpose rooms. Dr. Coopman said not all have but that is a good suggestion.

Christine Inman, parent, said they enjoy having the semester end at the beginning of winter break. Dr. Coopman said the semester end date has to do with the beginning the school year; when you try to balance semesters it is difficult to end at winter break if the school year starts later.

There was no further discussion. Board members were polled on the motion to approve the calendar for 2010-2011 as proposed. Aye: Butler, Merriam, Muehling, Streiff, Sabo-Skelton. Nay: Wanzer. Motion carried.

10. **FOR DISCUSSION: First Reading: Proposed Revisions to Policy 8540 – Vending Machines**

Healthy Schools Coordinator Jennifer Staab reported that the Comprehensive Health Issues Committee (CHICs) membership is one-half community and one-half school members with representatives from elementary through high school. She said the committee reviewed the vending machines policy and guidelines and propose changes that will allow schools to keep vending machines open during the day except in compliance with law. She said these revisions would allow schools to have an option. During ensuing discussion, it was agreed that the title should be changed to confirm that this policy refers to food and beverage vending, not pencils or other supplies.

Ms. Merriam noted that in some schools the use of vending machines has gone up with the availability of healthy options. Ms. Staab suggested that this could increase revenue for schools. She will make a title change in the revised policy, which will be presented to the Board for action at the meeting on December 1.

11. **INFORMATION, PROPOSALS OR COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC** – There was no response to Dr. Butler’s invitation for comments from the public.

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

Dr. Sabo-Skelton said she is very happy that the chimney swift tower has been constructed, the result of a tremendous amount of work on the part of many people.

Ms. Wanzer thanked Sherry Dick and staff for a nice report about some of the most wonderful people we have in the school system. She mentioned a situation that she knew about when a mother whose son needed intervention and right away he received the guidance and support he needed at Broadview Learning Center. She said he since has passed the GED and is taking classes at Ivy Tech.

Ms. Merriam reported on a wonderful jazz concert she attended at BHS North last week and the CELL conference she attended in Indianapolis on November 16-17. She said the CELL conference sessions were very interesting and informative, especially those about grants and collective bargaining. She said she talked to people from other school systems about their budget situations and some already know they will have to cut several million dollars next year. She said we do not know how much we will have to cut but know we will also have cuts.

Ms. Streiff noted that she has two children at Summit Elementary and she is continually struck by the quality of teachers and how well they are doing and how hard it is to get qualified teachers when you cannot pay them. She said she is nervous about what this (funding cuts) means for us as a district.

Mr. Muehling thanked people who support this school district financially. He especially thanked the people who saved the chimney swifts and said he would like to see this information on our website. Dr. Butler said she hopes the IT Audit will help find ways to add more information to our website.

Dr. Butler echoed Ms. Merriam’s sentiments; she said we have survived cuts before and this school system rises to the top. She gave credit to our teachers, administrators, support staff and community.

13. **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Board, Dr. Butler declared the meeting to be adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Jeannine Butler, President

Valerie Merriam, Vice President

Victoria I. Streiff, Secretary

Jim Muehling, Member

Lois Sabo-Skelton, Member

Susan P. Wanzer, Member