

**MONROE COUNTY COMMUNITY SCHOOL CORPORATION**  
**BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES**  
**Regular Meeting, January 19, 2010**

**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, January 19, 2010, in the Large Group Room at Bloomington High School South, 1965 S. Walnut Street, Bloomington.

Board members present:

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

Also present:

John T. Coopman	Superintendent
Tim Thrasher	Comptroller
Peggy Chambers	Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources and Personnel
Mike Scherer	Director of Extended Services
Cameron Rains	Director of Elementary Education
Janet Tupper	Administrative Assistant
Tom Bunger	Board Attorney
Andy Graham	Reporter, <i>The Herald-Times</i>

In addition to the above, 10 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, Jeannine Butler, called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m.

2. **HEARING: Amendment to Lease with MCCSC 1996 School Building Corporation**

Tom Bunger, Attorney, explained that because we plan to expend funds in excess of \$1 million it is necessary to explain the nature of the project and to give that information to the Board to give the public an opportunity to ask questions. Dr. Butler opened the hearing for public comment.

Mr. Thrasher explained that interest rates are more favorable now and refunding will permit the school system to complete other projects, including Bloomington High School North which was the school originally intended to be the recipient of the bond money. He said the savings will be used to replace a portion of the stone that is falling from the building, install security fencing and resurface the parking lot.

As a way of announcing the next hearing that would be held, Mr. Thrasher said we also anticipate spending more than \$1 million on Bloomington High School North projects which necessitates holding a 1028 Hearing. He further explained that the impact on the tax rate is 3.6 cents and that will be offset by the savings from refunding so the net cost to taxpayers is zero. He added that our lease rental payment will be lower.

Receiving no response to an invitation for comments from the public, Dr. Butler declared the hearing to

be closed.

Ms. Wanzer moved approval of the resolution authorizing execution of the amendment to the lease and sale of real estate as proposed. Ms. Merriam seconded the motion. Aye: Butler, Klein, Merriam, Muehling, Sabo-Skelton, Streiff, Wanzer. Motion carried.

3. **HEARING: 1028 Resolution**

Since Mr. Thrasher had previously explained the reason for this resolution, Ms. Wanzer opened the hearing on the amendment to the lease between the MCCSC 1996 Building Corporation and the school system. There was no response to the invitation for comments from the public and Dr. Butler declared the hearing closed.

Ms. Merriam moved that the Board adopt the resolution establishing an amendment to the lease between the MCCSC 1996 School Building Corporation and the Monroe County Community School Corporation as proposed. Ms. Wanzer seconded the motion. Aye: Butler, Klein, Merriam, Muehling, Sabo-Skelton, Streiff, Wanzer. Motion carried.

4. **FACES OF EDUCATION**

Dr. Butler explained that at every Board meeting an employee or volunteer is recognized for outstanding accomplishments. She introduced Sandy Dunn, Cheryl Maxwell, Lisa Voss and Deborah Zigler were honored for their expertise in presiding over the special area instruction at Grandview Elementary School., teaching physical education, art, media/technology and music respectively. They were nominated by their principal, Lily Albright. Collectively, they represent 60 years of teaching experience and dedication to students. In her nomination, Ms. Albright wrote that Ms. Zigler holds a technology club once a week before school. Through this technology she develops students' leadership qualities while also enhancing their self-esteem. She mentored two students who placed in the Martin Luther King, Jr. Web Design Contest. For many Grandview students, the art room is a sanctuary and Ms. Maxwell nurtures each student's interest and ability in art, allowing them to feel at home in her classroom and in their school. She provides additional opportunities for students to be creative through the Art Club. Ms. Dunn instills a love for moving in Grandview students. In February she will transform the Grandview gym into a roller rink. Ms. Albright noted the excitement that has created, adding that Ms. Dunn always brings a smile to the faces of the Grandview children and adults. Ms. Voss leads the Grandview Choir, a large group of students who meet once a week before school to practice. She creates "magic" on the stage in that her music performances are not only entertaining, but educational and often moving and the students take pride in performing. These teachers are truly experts in their field; they not only provide students with high quality instruction in their specialty areas but they have joined the rest of the Grandview faculty in working collaboratively to support each student's academic growth. As they accepted this recognition, Board members commended Ms. Dunn, Ms. Maxwell, Ms. Voss and Ms. Zigler for their dedication and for working together as they exemplify the collaborative nature we will all need to exhibit in order to be high performing schools.

5. **PUBLIC DIALOGUE**

BHS North students and members of the school's Habitat for Humanity chapter Alex St. John, Sami Haddad and Steven Zervas invited Board members and the public to the February 6<sup>th</sup> dedication of the most recent house they sponsored and built for the Bogue family. They also shared information about their annual fund raiser: *Evening for Habitat*, which will be held on Thursday, February 18. Hosted by the BHS North and BHS South Habitat for Humanity Chapters, the event will begin at 6:00 p.m. at Terry's Banquet and Catering. It will include dinner as well as live and silent auctions. The students said for

tickets (\$40) and/or for additional information, people should contact BHS North teacher and Habitat sponsor Pat Wilson at [pwilson@mccsc.edu](mailto:pwilson@mccsc.edu) or 339-7145.

6. **SCHOOL SHOWCASE: Binford Elementary School**

Principal Joe Childers shared an informative report on Binford's "State of the School 2010". Specifically, he explained how Binford's wonderful parents encouraged reading outside the classroom and then their *Read-A-Thon* evolved into a fund raiser for the school. After four weeks, the PTO identified 40 Super Stars – the top Star read over 10,000 minutes outside the classroom. Mr. Childers explained how renovation and the addition of a new computer lab brought Binford into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. He also talked about Binford's efforts toward becoming a Professional Learning Community. Through scheduling changes, Binford teachers made time for collaboration while students read silently in the school's auditorium. He reviewed some aspects of Binford's improvement plan, noting that more than 80% of Binford's students pass all areas of ISTEP he said they are looking for opportunities to improve those scores.

7. **FOR INFORMATION/DISCUSSION: Superintendent's Report**

Superintendent J.T. Coopman provided an update for the Board and public of the financial situation the school system has been placed in – in large part because of the lack of funding that will be received from the state. He said it is unfortunate that personnel cuts will have to be made and class sizes will be larger. He expressed sadness for the staff, community and students. Dr. Coopman said this is the most difficult and least palatable thing he has to do as an administrator, i.e. trying to meet the challenge to cut \$4.5 million from the school system's budget. He said this also reduces the base amount that the school system will have to work with in 2011. He said we can expect additional funding cuts in 2011 and it will be even worse in 2012. He added that this is happening all over the state and all over the country.

Dr. Coopman said the school system is fortunate to have Tim Thrasher as comptroller. He said Mr. Thrasher has done a tremendous job to make sure we have an operating balance to get through the next few months; he does not know what we would do without it. He said several meetings have been held with the leadership team and a web link was created for staff and community to post comments. Additionally, there will be a voluntary staff meeting at 4:00 p.m. on January 21<sup>st</sup> in the auditorium at BHS South for a presentation and time to ask questions. Dr. Coopman noted that at some point recommendations will be proposed to the Board. He said to share input, people should link from "Budget Shortfall Comments and Suggestion" at [www.mccsc.edu](http://www.mccsc.edu)

Referring to the refinance of bonds agreement previously approved by the Board, Dr. Coopman said it could not have come at a better time. He said this will save spending some Capital Projects Fund money that may play a significant role later on in relationship to our General Fund. In response to questions, Dr. Coopman explained that the special education pre-school fund is a separate fund and before now it was a stand alone fund but now will be a part of the General Fund; in essence that affects our base for 2011.

Dr. Coopman thanked those who participated in Dr. Martin Luther King Day activities and congratulated students who won various contests associated with this celebration.

Noting the graveness of the earthquake situation in Haiti, Dr. Coopman said he is sure that our schools and community will step up to help. He mentioned the poverty in the area and said a school of over 700 students had collapsed around them.

Dr. Coopman congratulated parents, staff and students of Four Star Schools recently recognized: Childs Elementary, University Elementary and Batchelor Middle School. He said several other schools were

very close to that recognition.

8. **CONSENT AGENDA**

Dr. Butler called for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda: (a) donations, field trip requests and Conflict of Interest Disclosure statements; (b) Allowance of Claims; and (c) Payroll Register and Claims. Ms. Streiff so moved. Ms. Merriam seconded the motion. Dr. Coopman reviewed donations received. Board members voted on the motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Aye: Butler, Klein, Merriam, Muehling, Sabo-Skelton, Streiff and Wanzer. Motion carried.

Ann Burke, teacher at Bloomington New Tech High School, responded to Ms. Merriam's questions regarding a field trip experience approved for students to travel to Costa Rica.

9. **CONTRACTS**

Mr. Thrasher presented contracts for approval as proposed: (a) Artful Learning Agreement for Fairview Elementary School; (b) Force Fitness Agreement for BHS North Athletics; and (c) Change Orders. Mr. Muehling moved approval of contracts as recommended. Ms. Wanzer seconded the motion.

Fairview Principal Karen Adams briefly talked about the Artful Learning Agreement and what it will mean for students at Fairview. She said this will move forward plans to implement the Leonard Bernstein Center signature program, a school reform model. She noted that the agreement includes professional development during the summer, lesson plan refinement during the first semester and full implementation of the program during the second semester of the 2010-2011 school year. Dr. Butler added that there was an excellent turnout at the community forum when this program was discussed. She expressed thanks for Title I funds and stimulus money, for making this possible.

Mr. Muehling sees this exciting program fitting well with the opening of the new school. He understood that Fairview will be a choice school where parents can select Fairview and we will offer opportunities this spring to instruct and share advantages with parents. Ms. Adams said they would like for Fairview to be a choice school but do not know when that will come about; she would like to have another community forum before implementing the program. Mr. Muehling said he would like to move forward sooner than later to put the program and choice in place.

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

10. **PERSONNEL REPORT**

Ms. Chambers called attention to two retirements, effective January 29. She said Larry Axsom joined the MCCSC staff as a custodian at BHS South in 1971. In 1985 he accepted the Mail Courier position, working as utility maintenance during the summers. He is retiring after a long career with the school system: 37 years, 4 months and 16 days. The other retiree, Jerry Jochim served over 23 years in the Maintenance Department. Hired as a maintenance supervisor in 1986, he completed his Bachelor's Degree in 1996 and in May 1997 he was named the school system's first Integrated Pest Management Coordinator. In this position, he trained staff members in Indiana and across the country. Ms. Chambers recommended approval of the Personnel Report as submitted. Ms. Merriam so moved. Ms. Wanzer seconded the motion. Aye: Butler, Klein, Merriam, Muehling, Sabo-Skelton, Streiff, Wanzer. Motion carried.

11. **PERF RECOMMENDATION TO ADD AGENTS**

Mr. Thrasher reviewed this document, explaining the need to add agents, and recommended approval. Ms. Merriam so moved. Mr. Klein seconded the motion. Aye: Butler, Klein, Merriam, Muehling, Sabo-Skelton, Streiff, Wanzer. Motion carried.

12. **APPROVE POLICY 9505 – CHARTER SCHOOLS**

Noting that this proposed policy was discussed at the January 5<sup>th</sup> meeting and has since been reviewed by the Discussion Council and principals, Dr. Butler called for a motion on the recommendation to approve Policy 9505, Charter Schools. Mr. Klein so moved. Ms. Merriam seconded the motion.

Dr. Coopman explained that this policy allows the Board to approve Charter School applications formed within the boundaries of the Monroe County Community School Corporation. It was noted that this policy would have made a difference when the local charter school was implemented. Mr. Klein understood that this policy gives the Board exclusive rights within our district and could not be bypassed to Ball State. Dr. Coopman confirmed his understanding, adding that school corporations had an opportunity to adopt this type of policy when the Legislation was enacted but we did not do it.

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

13. **CONTRACT BUS ROUTE EXTENSION – Route #179**

Mr. Scherer recommended approval of a route extension for contract bus route #179. Mr. Klein so moved. Ms. Wanzer seconded the motion. There was no discussion. Aye: Butler, Klein, Merriam, Muehling, Sabo-Skelton, Streiff, Wanzer. Motion carried.

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

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

Mr. Klein echoed Dr. Coopman’s comments regarding students and faculty involved in the Dr. Martin Luther King Day festivities and award winners. He also extended kudos to the Four Star Schools, noting they deserve a lot of credit.

Mr. Muehling commented about the cap on property tax, proposed as a constitutional amendment, and how school funding is affected. He said what he has saved in property tax amounts to about the price of a large cup of coffee. He said he wants education for our kids and we are compromising that with a shortfall in funding and large classes. He wishes people would speak out more regarding needs of our kids who are our professionals of tomorrow. He said it is ridiculous to put an amendment in the constitution when we will have to get out of it and is appalled that funding for this school district will be cut by over \$4 million when we are in the bottom one-fourth funded in the state. He concluded we will have to make a lot of tough decisions.

Ms. Streiff agreed with the analysis of our state of affairs but also expressed excitement for what is happening at Fairview. She said everything she learns about the Artful Learning Program is exciting and she thinks it will benefit our entire district.

Ms. Wanzer concurred with Mr. Muehling’s comments and said it amazes her that people in the state want to make the tax cap as a constitutional amendment; she does not know anybody who wants this. She

suggested a referendum in November with the hope that by that time people will understand what is at stake. She said she believes that education lost cannot be regained and we do not know what will be missed that cannot be made up.

Ms. Merriam said she finds it disingenuous of the Governor and the Department of Education to say cuts do not have to go into the classroom when you have such a large percentage of people (91% locally) paid from the General Fund. She wondered if the Governor has taken a pay cut or asked his administrators to take a cut. She said it is very dispiriting.

Noting the wonderful students in this corporation, Ms. Merriam mentioned that Tri-North students donated 2,578 pounds of food to the United Ministries Food Pantry – the largest donation received this year. She also remarked at the incredible dedication of the BHS North students who are active in the school’s Habitat for Humanity chapter.

Mr. Klein said he is really concerned about the cuts. He said he thinks back to the days when the Gary (Indiana) steel mills cut 20,000 jobs and the area never recovered. He said with all the cuts people will achieve what must be achieved – they will still do what they did before with less money. He said people must see through that and not celebrate because they will achieve with these cuts but that they will remember at what cost.

Dr. Butler said public schools in the state will not be the public schools we are familiar with; it may never regain itself because public school is the backbone of our society and of our nation. She said she is most specifically concerned about MCCSC and what is lost that may never be regained.

16. **ADJOURNMENT**

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

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Jeannine Butler, President

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Valerie Merriam, Vice President

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Vicki Streiff, Secretary

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Keith Klein, Assistant Secretary

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Jim Muehling, Member

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Lois Sabo-Skelton, Member

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Susan P. Wanzer, Member