

**MONROE COUNTY COMMUNITY SCHOOL CORPORATION**  
**BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES**  
**Regular Meeting, March 9, 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, March 9, 2010, 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
Keith Klein	Assistant Secretary
Lois Sabo-Skelton	Member
Sue Wanzer	Member

Board member absent:

Jim Muehling	Member
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Also present:

J.T. Coopman	Superintendent
Tim Thrasher	Comptroller
Peggy Chambers	Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources and Personnel
Mike Scherer	Director of Extended Services
Tina Peterson	Executive Director of the MCCS Foundation
Janet Tupper	Administrative Assistant
Andy Graham	Reporter, <i>The Herald-Times</i>

In addition to the above, 28 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 7:05 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 Henry "Joe" Boddie who was honored for his service to the Tri-North Middle School community as the Boys Basketball Coach. Starting with MCCSC in 1987, he led and mentored the young men of Trojans' Basketball for 23 years. He was nominated by Tri-North Principal Gale Hill and MCCSC Media Specialist Verna DeLuce. According to Ms. DeLuce the secret to Joe's longevity is his ability to value the unique potential of middle school students. She said "Joe has coached them through life as well as basketball .... He has a talent for making the best teams possible with his young men. We are blessed to have him!" Dr. Hill said Joe's success can be directly linked to his fine sense of dignity and character. She said "He taught his players more than basketball, but how to be part of a team, how to be gentlemen, how to show and receive respect ... and how to be good citizens." Others who have worked with Joe shared positive memories of working with him and of his accomplishments with students – not just on the basketball court but as a mentor for young men. Cindy Chrzastowski said she admired and respected Coach Boddie for what he was able to help his players accomplish, "most of which cannot be measured by wins and losses in the gym, but by what those students have accomplished

because of him.” Dennis Inman said Coach Boddie “taught and expected his players to be good human beings. He became a father figure for many of his players.” Board members applauded and thanked Mr. Boddie for his spirit, drive, leadership and dedication to Tri-North students.

### 3. PUBLIC DIALOGUE

Milton Fisk of the *South Central Indiana Jobs with Justice* program said his organization is interested in fairness for employees. He said they serve as ‘watch dogs for rights of union and non-union workers.’ He shared a written statement of his comments. He said they know that there is no way to avoid lay-offs but encouraged the School Board to call for a referendum to save our class sizes and staff. He said if Board members are opposed to a referendum, the staff and community needs to hear that. He believes a referendum now would be different than in the past because now property taxes are lower and we are talking about saving jobs and the difficulty of learning in crowded classrooms. He asked that the Board please respond to the call for a referendum.

Dr. Butler assured Mr. Fisk that conversations about a referendum are taking place; the Board just talked tonight about putting together a task force. She said they also realize the timing for a referendum is important and they have been advised that trying to do it in May will be short-sighted. She concluded that the Board is definitely looking at that.

George Turchyn, media specialist at Arlington and Marlin, asked the Board for a temporary extension for teachers to update licenses through August 2010 so that veteran teachers can keep their licenses. Dr. Butler said she knows that is an issue and is in the union contract and is negotiable.

An Aurora student said it was reported in the newspaper that all Aurora teachers will lose their positions and the school will continue at North High School. She asked how they will be able to continue without their teachers. Dr. Butler said all faculty at Aurora will not be eliminated but plans are to have at least two teachers from Aurora continue to teach in the new location. She said it is simply a budget consideration.

A parent asked if she raises \$380,000 will the Board keep Aurora open. Dr. Butler deferred to Mr. Thrasher who responded that he would have to study the actual costs for keeping the school open. He said one concern is that we must have money upfront before signing contracts. The parent said she has people who are ready to give money. Dr. Butler said the State Board of Accounts would have to advise if we can accept private money for this purpose and noted that even more money would be needed next year. She said the Board would like to have been told about the budget shortfall before January. The parent advised that if these kids do not graduate from Aurora they probably will not graduate. She said she just wants them to have a chance to raise \$380,000.

Ms. Merriam explained that the Board must vote on a RIF list by April 27 and money would have to be on the table before that to save jobs. She added that she does not want any of us to underestimate Aurora students and although they love their home she thinks they can adapt with two of their teachers and their own space.

Danyell Dahn, mother of an 8<sup>th</sup> grader, asked why not move forward with a referendum in May. Dr. Butler said the Board looked into it and all people with wisdom tell them it is necessary to have overwhelming support from the entire school community and compelling arguments to pass a referendum. She anticipated that the Board would ask for a referendum for seven years. Ms. Dahn said they will be organizing people. Ms. Wanzer explained that if the referendum fails we have to wait a year to hold another referendum. She said there is no doubt about the wisdom of a referendum but we want to do it right.

Daria Smith, teacher and Fine Arts Department Chair at Bloomington High School North, shared her concerns about the lack of professional librarians and all resources in the school system. She asked how libraries will be maintained and used without the guidance of a professional. Dr. Butler assured her that none of the cuts the Board agreed to are things they want; they did not want to do any cuts. She said they had to do some things that allow us to balance the budget and her personal opinion is that they tried to hold class sizes as much as possible. She added that this was not easy, was not taken lightly and the Board did not enjoy making these decisions. She said they have seen cuts over the years but not to this extent.

Referring to outsourcing custodians, a parent noted that PTO groups use schools buildings a lot and she wondered how that might change. Mr. Thrasher said if outsourcing takes place he did not know how that would affect use of facilities. He said they may take a look at people using buildings after school hours as part of energy conservation and it would be considered at that time.

In response to Mr. Fisk's question, Dr. Butler said the Board's advisors regarding a referendum included the County Council and the Superintendent after discussions with school systems throughout Indiana whose referendums had failed. She advised that the Board is bringing in someone to talk with the community, personnel and the Board in April to give expert advice on this topic. She noted that it would be easy to just say 'let's do it' but it is imperative that the solution be sold to our entire community – including the some 70% who do not have children in school. She said sometimes we have to listen to people who have experienced it. Ms. Wanzer added that the money would be received at the same time whether the referendum is done in May or November.

4. **FOR INFORMATION: Batchelor B-TV Poland Trip**

Jeff Rudkin introduced B-TV students who had much to share about their 'field trip' to Poland. Caleb Baechtold (BHSS sophomore) and Lincoln Ellington (Batchelor-7<sup>th</sup>) spoke for the group, sharing some insight into their adventures. Other students present included: Batchelor 8<sup>th</sup> graders Wendy Vencel, Shane Spicer, and Avery Walter-Bailey; and BHSS sophomore Criss Beyers (Batchelor- 8<sup>th</sup>). Students who were unable to attend were sophomores Courtney Sinclair (BHSN) and Benny Richmond (BHSS). The group received official press accreditation for the 65<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Liberation of Auschwitz official ceremony at Auschwitz II – Birkeneau and worked alongside of the international press. They were the only kids in the press tent. The group took extensive tours of the Auschwitz I and Auschwitz II – Birkeneau concentration camps, the Schindler factory, and historical sites in Krakow. They took nearly 3,000 pictures and over 20 hours of video footage. They are producing several documentaries and photo essays as well as speaking to a number of community groups.

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

Executive Director Tina Peterson announced that this is scholarship and awards ceremony season for the Foundation. She said the Foundation manages and administers 30 scholarships and awards to support a variety of educational opportunities for high school students. She said to apply for scholarships students should visit their high school guidance office. Ms. Peterson mentioned several of the scholarships available and noted that new this year will be the Greg Mongold Math Scholarship (\$2,000 will be awarded at BHS North and BHS South for students interested in pursuing math, preferably in teaching) and the Fred Simic Memorial Scholarship to be awarded to a student interested in pursuing a health care field career. The deadline for applying is April 9. Ms. Peterson said the annual grant reception for teachers is March 11; 58 grants were awarded for a total of \$106,000. She said the Foundation is working diligently on plans to support schools and a fundraising campaign will be launched on March 25. She noted that she is getting a number of calls from people interested in raising money for schools.

6. **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

Superintendent J.T. Coopman noted that rededication of the Hoosier Hills Career Center will be on March 10 from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. He said confirmation of the Artful Learning Center has been received. He reported that a BHS North student scored a perfect 36 on the ACT, one of only 638 in the nation who earned a perfect score – out of 1.4 million students. He extended congratulations to the student, a 2009 graduate, and the faculty at North.

Dr. Coopman acknowledged that there have been many references to the need for a referendum and when it should be done. He explained that bringing a referendum to a vote is a very complex and scientific process and should be entered into with a great deal of thought. He said through process and prioritization we hope to identify what we can afford and what we want but cannot afford. He added that it takes a lot of time to guide that process and ultimately present it as a referendum on a ballot – a process that can take up to 18 months. He believes that parents will be committed but said we also need the support of other citizens in the community. Dr. Coopman said property tax caps will be on the November ballot and to include a referendum to increase taxes may not be wise. He said there is a possibility of a special election but all of this takes careful consideration if we expect to be successful with a referendum. He announced that a person who has written two books is coming to help guide us through this very important initiative. He reiterated that none of the expenditure reductions are palatable but we have a statutory obligation to balance the budget at the end of 2010. He added that none of these things are palatable to any of us.

#### 7. CONSENT AGENDA

Dr. Coopman reviewed donations and recommended approval of the Consent Agenda: (a) minutes of previous meetings on February 2, February 16 and February 19, 2010; (b) donations, ECA expenditures, field trip requests, disposal of obsolete books and conflict of interest disclosure statement; (c) Financial Report; (d) Appropriation Balance Report; (e) Allowance of Claims; and (f) Register of Payrolls. Mr. Klein so moved. Ms. Merriam seconded the motion. Aye: Butler, Klein, Merriam, Sabo-Skelton, Streiff, Wanzer. Motion carried.

#### 8. CONTRACTS

Mr. Thrasher presented contracts as proposed, including: (a) Scholastic Book Fairs and Fairview Elementary; (b) Kirkwood Photo Lab and Lakeview Elementary; (c) Smithville Digital, LLC; (d) Educational Services Company; (e) Under Armour, Inc. and BHS South; (f) Indiana Department of Natural Resources (DNR); and (g) Change Orders for Fairview, the Hoosier Hills Career Center and the Service and Transportation Building. Dr. Butler asked that the Under Armour contract be removed from the list to be considered separately. Ms. Merriam so moved. Ms. Wanzer seconded the motion. Aye: Butler, Klein, Merriam, Sabo-Skelton, Streiff, Wanzer. Motion carried.

Ms. Wanzer moved approval of contracts as amended. Ms. Merriam seconded the motion. Following discussion, Board members voted unanimously to approve contracts as amended.

Ms. Wanzer moved approval of the Under Armour contract with BHS South boys' basketball. Mr. Klein seconded the motion.

In response to a question, Mr. Thrasher said he thought that this contract was going to be pulled from the agenda; therefore, he advised BHS South officials that they did not need to be present for discussion. Ms. Wanzer noted that the contract includes a donation of a number of uniforms, travel bags and shoes. She asked if there is any other payment or obligation other than the teams have to wear them. Mr. Thrasher said it is his understanding that this is the terms of the contract and it addresses times when staff is expected to wear the product. In response to Mr. Klein's question, Mr. Thrasher said he is not aware of

any legal issues.

Ms. Merriam said she is concerned that we are in the business of schools and teaching and learning and she does not remember previous contracts for uniforms. She said it bothered her that even other teams have to wear and purchase Under Armour uniforms. She felt other teams were being held captive by this agreement.

Dr. Butler said she also does not recall contracts for uniforms. Mr. Thrasher apologized; he said the BHS South principal and athletic director could have answered these questions and would have been present but he understood that the Board wanted to pull this contract from consideration at this meeting.

Dr. Butler noted that the contract commenced on December 15, 2009. She said she is concerned if Under Armour has already provided clothes in that it would be in conflict since the Board had not approved it. Mr. Klein recalled that the team was wearing the uniforms at a recent game. Ms. Merriam suggested that since a contract had not been approved, the uniforms were a gift.

Dr. Coopman explained that Mr. (J.R.) Holmes (BHS South athletic director) and he talked about this and he asked if it was okay to sign and he (the Superintendent) gave him permission because of the timing. He noted that many of the major metropolitan athletic programs have such contracts and you see the logo on any uniform that athletes wear. He said this is not something necessarily unique to South; however, the offer was made only to two high schools and five colleges in the country. He said it does benefit other athletic programs because of expense that would have been incurred by athletes in that by providing uniforms other programs can be helped. Dr. Coopman said he understood the concerns in relationship to promotion of a specific uniform company but obviously that is what they are looking for. He said they want a high profile team to wear their uniforms. He said whether athletes wear Nike or Adidas or other sportswear, the logo is a part of the uniform. He concluded that this is a good thing and a great opportunity and it only happens with successful programs.

Ms. Merriam said she is concern that other teams have to buy the uniforms. She believes it is okay if they want to support all teams at BHS South.

Mr. Klein said there are not that many high school teams undefeated. He understands that the national federation and the IHSAA (Indiana High School Athletic Association) have rules regarding size and how many logos can be on high school uniforms. He said he had some concerns too but he is supportive and the contract had been taken to the Superintendent in advance.

Ms. Wanzer said she might have a problem but the way we are with money she thinks if it helps with the financial situation she is willing to put aside philosophical concerns.

Dr. Butler said she also had philosophical concerns and if we want to contract with the district as a whole she would look at it differently. She said she believes the company is making a profit by exploiting our kids. She said she understands the company wants to showcase the South basketball team but she is concerned that they are agreeing to wear Under Armour exclusively. She said they would have photos of the team in uniforms and she would want to make sure that parents agreed to that; she sees this company as using the name of South to advertise a for-profit business. She agreed this is an expectation with college teams but not high school. Dr. Butler noted that athletic funds come from gate receipts and booster clubs. She said we are not in a pay-to-play situation and she could not support this contract.

Ms. Streiff said she would like to have Mr. Muehling's thoughts on this and he was absent. During ensuing discussion, Dr. Sabo-Skelton said she did not want to take their clothes away and the number of games still to play as well as when the Board would meet next was considered.

Ms. Wanzer moved to table the contract with Under Armour, Inc. Ms. Streiff seconded the motion. Aye: Butler, Merriam, Streiff, Wanzer. Nay: Klein, Sabo-Skelton. Motion to table carried. Board members agreed to reconsider this contract at the March 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting.

9. **PERSONNEL REPORT**

Ms. Chambers expressed thanks to Ann Worland who began teaching at Brown Elementary in 1975, then taught at Dyer and has been at Highland Park for 19 years. She retired on February 17<sup>th</sup> with 34 years service to MCCSC. She recommended approval of personnel matters as presented. Ms. Streiff so moved. Ms. Wanzer seconded the motion.

In response to a question, Ms. Chambers said she is holding teacher retirement notices until March 23 because they will not be binding until it is confirmed that 25 have submitted notices. She is hopeful that the number will be reached. Board members extended thanks to Ms. Worland for her service.

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

10. **REVISE CALENDAR FOR THE 2009-2010 SCHOOL YEAR**

Dr. Coopman said due to inclement weather and because we must attend school for 180 days, the 2009-2010 school year calendar must be adjusted to make-up seven (7) days when schools were closed. He recommended that the Board approve a revision to the calendar by designating May 4 as a make-up day for January 7. The six additional days missed will be added to the expected end of the school year thereby establishing the last day for students as June 1 and the last day for teachers would be Wednesday, June 2. Mr. Klein so moved. Ms. Wanzer seconded the motion.

During ensuing discussion, Ms. Wanzer thanked the Superintendent for not rescheduling commencement, noting that many people make plans well in advance. In response to Mr. Klein's question, Dr. Coopman said seniors are not on a different calendar – all students are mandated to attend 180 days. He confirmed that 'blank' diplomas will be handed out at commencement ceremonies on Saturday, May 29.

Board members voted on the motion to approve the revised calendar for 2009-2010 as recommended. Aye: Butler, Klein, Merriam, Sabo-Skelton, Streiff, Wanzer. Motion carried.

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**

Ms. Wanzer mentioned that the annual meeting of the Hoosier Hills Food Bank and MCCSC was the second highest food drive and the National Association of Letter Carriers was first. She said there are great things going on in MCCSC outside the classroom. She thanked people who expressed support for the referendum. She said she wanted to do it in May to get through it but that is not enough. She said after talking with business people and others she realizes that like any other political campaign, it takes time and it takes all the people volunteering. Ms. Wanzer said she was sorry if she did not appear as transparent when talking about cuts and hope the public will continue to share ideas and visions.

Ms. Merriam read a message she had written to State Legislator Matt Pierce. She said the real solution will come in the next session but we will have our work cut out in getting changes from Legislators. She

said the latest edict from the Governor is no school bus inspections this year. She said she has been very disappointed in news coverage. She said if anyone had contacted her they would have known that she lobbied to retain one position, endorsed Honey Creek and the strings program but would have to raise money and individual student teachers over libraries. She said the MCEA leadership received the list four weeks before it was published. She said so the press with its good qualities has done a disservice in this regard. She said we did not react capriciously; it is a matter of perception. Ms. Merriam reviewed what she is hearing about the referendum and teachers asking for a frozen wage. She said her priorities were no cuts to art or classroom music. She said we would not have any easy solutions. She expressed gratitude for all who understand and have stated that it is a state issue. She concluded that we have to work together and everyone has to make a sacrifice.

Mr. Klein congratulated people who had stayed until the end of this meeting and thanked those who participated in opening remarks. He said we cannot operate in a vacuum; we need your input. He congratulated students who have been involved in raising money and the young folks from Batchelor who have engaged in a different kind of learning experience. He extended thanks to administrators for withstanding pressures and for all they do and to our teachers for still providing an education.

Ms. Streiff expressed appreciation for Mr. Klein's comments. She said she went to Baron Hill's office and tried to get money but it did not work. She said the federal government has earmarks for local money; she hopes we can find money somewhere else. She thanked people who have been kind to her. She said she was told this (serving as a Board member) was a thankless job but she has been thanked far more times than for her other job being a mother. She said we have an educated and involved and independent community and people understand when given facts. With gratitude, she said she is proud to be from Bloomington.

Dr. Butler also commended the B-TV program and said she would have been proud to see what they experienced in Poland. She also thanked Ms. Peterson for her support. She said that she had written to the editor of the newspaper in an effort to clear up information included in recent editorials. She believes the MCCSC has taken a beating from articles and thinks the comparisons of the Richland-Bean Blossom school budget cuts are unfair comparisons. She reviewed the numerous meetings that began in January to gather input and inform the public about budget cuts. She mentioned that the Board held public meetings – one lasting until early the next morning, to hear from citizens. She said they started talking about cuts in September and talked about it at every meeting since then and a link on our website to receive public input was opened in January. Dr. Butler wanted to clarify misinformation about a number of things, including the Superintendent's salary. She believes that many do not understand about different funds a school system must use. She said she has received over 500 e-mail messages and has read all of them. She reiterated that we received information about budget cuts the first week of January and the Board had only three weeks to formulate a proposed plan. She noted that teachers must be notified by April 1 if they will not be offered a contract for next year. She said the Board and administration have worked together and done everything they can to inform our community. She urged that all work together for our kids.

### 13. **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Board, Dr. Butler declared the meeting to be adjourned at 9:20 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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Keith Klein, Assistant Secretary

ABSENT

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Jim Muehling, Member

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Lois Sabo-Skelton, Member

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Susan P. Wanzer, Member