

MONROE COUNTY COMMUNITY SCHOOL CORPORATION
BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES
Regular Meeting, January 8, 2008

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 8, 2008, in the Board Room at the Administration Center, 315 East North Drive, Bloomington.

Board members present:

Teresa Grossi	President
Jeannine Butler	Vice President
Valerie Merriam	Secretary
Sue Wanzer	Assistant Secretary
Susan Daniels	Member
Lois Sabo-Skelton	Member
Jim Muehling	Member

Also present:

James Harvey	Superintendent of Schools
Timothy Thrasher	Comptroller
Peggy Chambers	Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources & Personnel
Mary Lovejoy	Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction
Mike Shipman	Director of School Operations
Kathleen Hugo	Director of Special Education
Mike Scherer	Director of Extended Services
Cathy Diersing	Director of Literacy Services
Janet Tupper	Administrative Assistant
John Carter	Director of Planning
Brady Gillihan	Reporter, <i>The Herald-Times</i>
Linda Richardson	MCEA President
Tina Peterson	Executive Director, MCCA Foundation

In addition to the above, 25 citizens signed the visitors' list, which is included with and made a part of the official record of this meeting, and two representatives of Bloomington Community Access TV were present.

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

The 2007 President of the Board, Jim Muehling, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. **ORGANIZATION OF THE BOARD**

Election of Officers: Ms. Daniels presented the following slate of officers to serve for 2008: Teresa Grossi – President; Jeannine Butler – Vice President; Valerie Merriam – Secretary; and Sue Wanzer – Assistant Secretary. Dr. Sabo-Skelton moved approval of the slate of officers as proposed. Mr. Muehling seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Dr. Grossi assumed the presidency and thanked Mr. Muehling for the wonderful year that he served as president of the Board.

Appointments – Board members agreed that appointment of individuals to serve on committees would be considered at the next meeting (January 22, 2008).

3. **CALENDAR OF MEETINGS FOR 2008 and JANUARY 2009**

Mr. Muehling moved approval of the calendar of meetings for 2008 and January 2009 as presented. Dr. Sabo-Skelton seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

4. **ORGANIZATION OF BOARD OF FINANCE**

Mr. Thrasher recommended that the Board establish this portion of the agenda as the organizational meeting of the Board of Finance as called for in IC 5-13-7-6. Dr. Butler so moved. She further moved that the officers of the Board of School Trustees be declared the officers of the Board of Finance. Dr. Sabo-Skelton seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

5. **INVESTING OFFICER'S REPORT**

As required by IC 5-13-7-6, Mr. Thrasher presented and reviewed the Investing Officer's Report for 2007 [a copy of this report is included in the agenda]. This report was accepted by Board acclamation.

6. **FACES OF EDUCATION**

Outgoing President Jim Muehling explained that at every Board meeting an employee or volunteer is recognized for outstanding accomplishments. He introduced Terri Burks, secretary in the Title I and Literacy Office as the first honoree for 2008. He said she was nominated by Cathy Diersing and each member of the department sent a nomination form to exhibit their agreement. He read portions of the nomination, stating that each contributed positive comments regarding Ms. Burks' work. Ms. Diersing said she could not possibly say enough about the work that Terri contributes. Mr. Muehling said that she is noted for her work with *Readers and Writers* and that she is the rock who knows the answer or will find it; she sets high goals and always sees the best in others. He said her colleagues are delighted to work with her on a daily basis because everything she does is based on 'what is best for children' and everything she does is done with a smile and graciousness. Mr. Muehling said it is the Board's pleasure to recognize Terri Burks as one of the school system's shining *Faces of Education*.

Ms. Burks graciously accepted the Board's award. She commented that she has been in many different positions with the school system and she has enjoyed each one. She said she misses seeing the children everyday but is happy to be a part of the Literacy Department.

7. **PUBLIC DIALOGUE** – There was no response to an invitation for comments from the public.

Ms. Merriam reported that Tri-North Middle School had made the largest donation of 2007 to Monroe County United Ministries when the students presented a gift of 2,985 pounds of canned goods and blankets to the charity.

Ms. Merriam said she would like to be at BHS North at the time listening to the wonderful music of the jazz trio. She thanked *The Herald-Times* and reporter Andy Graham for giving excellent coverage of the accomplishments of these young people. She said she also attended the "Hot Jazz on a Cold Night" benefit concert on Friday. She thanked Karl Sturbaum, Rachel Caswell, Rick Heeter and Tom Walsh for donating their time and talents to raise money for the BHS North and BHS South orchestras. She expressed thanks to all in the community who do so much for our students.

8. **SCHOOL SHOWCASE: Bloomington High School North** – Since BHS North 'showcase' presenters were attending the jazz trio concert, the school's presentation was moved to later in the meeting.

9. **CONSENT AGENDA**

Mr. Harvey recommended approval of the Consent Agenda: (a) minutes of regular meetings held on December 5 and December 18, 2007; (b) donations, ECA expenditures and field trip requests; (c) Personnel matters; (d) Financial Report and (e) Allowance of Claims. Ms. Wanzer so moved. Dr. Butler seconded the motion.

In response to Ms. Merriam's questions, Mr. Harvey confirmed that schools send notice of donations without a timeline established by policy. Beth Smith, BHS South teacher, reviewed a trip her students are planning and responded to specific questions about arrangements for the trip. She said students from France visited in October and this is a reciprocal trip for her students. She said students go to class with few field trips and they stay in homes where the parents usually speak only French.

Mr. Harvey pointed out that an Addendum to the Personnel Report was in front of each Board member and his recommendation for approval included that addendum. Mr. Muehling thanked employees who will be leaving the school system: Barb Backler, Gracia Valliant and Pam Heinlein. He expressed appreciation for their contributions to MCCSC.

Board members voted on the motion to approve the Consent Agenda as amended. Aye: Butler, Daniels, Grossi, Merriam, Muehling, Sabo-Skelton, Wanzer. Motion carried.

10. **DEVELOP SPECIFICATIONS AND ADVERTISE FOR BIDS FOR CONTRACT BUS ROUTES, INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT, JANITORIAL AND PAPER SUPPLIES, FURNITURE, BUSES, MAINTENANCE VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENT, FUEL OIL, GASOLINE, DIESEL FUEL, AND ALL MAJOR MAINTENANCE PROJECTS INCLUDED IN THE 2008 CAPITAL PROJECTS FUND PLAN**

Mr. Thrasher recommended authorization to develop specifications and advertise for bids for items as presented. Mr. Muehling so moved. Ms. Wanzer seconded the motion. Following a time for discussion, Board members voted unanimously to approve the recommendation as presented.

11. **CONTRACT NOTIFICATION OF ADMINISTRATORS FOR 2008-2009**

The Board of Trustees of the Monroe County Community School Corporation met on January 8, 2008, at 7:00 p.m. at the School Administration Center, 315 E. North Drive, Bloomington, Indiana, to consider official business including the nonrenewal of the administrative contracts of the following individuals:

(1) Cindy Chrzastowski, Assistant Principal at BHS South – Terminate contract in the best interests of the school corporation; this position was temporary for the 2007-2008 school year and will be posted as a permanent position effective the 2008-2009 school year.

(2) Marcus Debro, Assistant Principal at BHS North – Reduction in contract from 238 days to 220 days with corresponding reduction in compensation and change position title from Assistant Principal to Administrative Assistant.

(3) Catherine Diersing, Director of Literacy at the Administration Center – Elimination of position in the best interests of the school corporation.

(4) Joe Doyle, Assistant Principal at BHS South – Reduction in contract from 238 days to 220 days with corresponding reduction in compensation and change position title from Assistant Principal to Administrative Assistant.

(5) Trudy Litz, Assistant Principal at Fairview Elementary School – Change position title from Assistant Principal to Administrative Assistant with corresponding reduction in compensation.

(6) Kara Parker, Assistant Principal at BHS South – Terminate contract in the best interests of the school corporation; this position was temporary for the 2007-2008 school year and will be posted as a permanent position effective the 2008-2009 school year.

Mr. Harvey pointed out that nonrenewal of these contracts was not because of unfavorable evaluations of their job performance and explained the specific reason for each situation. He said in accordance with legal requirements as set forth in IC 20-28-8-1 et seq. and as per terms of the Administrators' Agreement, he recommended that the Board consider the cancellation and/or reassignment of administrator contracts for the reasons noted.

Following a time for discussion and questions, Ms. Wanzer moved that the Board of Trustees not renew the contracts of Cindy Chrzastowski, Marcus Debro, Catherine Diersing, Joe Doyle, Trudy Litz, and Kara Parker. The motion was seconded by Dr. Butler. The motion passed 7-0, with Dr. Butler, Ms. Daniels, Dr. Grossi, Ms. Merriam, Mr. Muehling, Dr. Sabo-Skelton and Ms. Wanzer voting "yes" and none of the members voting "no".

12. **APPROVAL OF SALARY SCHEDULE AND INSURANCE BENEFIT INCREASES FOR THE NON-UNION SUPPORT STAFF**

Ms. Chambers explained that the proposed percentage increases are the same as previously approved for teachers and union employees. She recommended a salary schedule increase of 3.0% and a 7.0% increase in MCCSC contributions to medical and dental insurance programs for all non-union support staff groups effective January 1, 2008. Dr. Butler so moved. Ms. Merriam seconded the motion.

Dr. Butler said she is pleased that we continue to ensure that all employees are treated with the same respect. There was no further discussion. Aye: Butler, Daniels, Grossi, Merriam, Muehling, Sabo-Skelton, Wanzer. Motion carried.

13. **AWARD CONTRACT FOR NEW SCHOOL BUSES TO MIDWEST TRANSIT**

Mr. Scherer recommended that the low bidder, which meets specifications in each category, be awarded a contract: Midwest Transit for seventeen buses, per attached bid tab, \$1,525,251.00. Mr. Muehling so moved. Ms. Wanzer seconded the motion. In response to questions, Mr. Thrasher explained that the Bus Replacement Fund is a separate fund. He said a nice feature of the fund is that you can build an allocation for future projects and last year we only purchased six buses but raised the tax rate to be able to purchase 17 buses this year while keeping the tax rate level. There were no additional comments. Aye: Butler, Daniels, Grossi, Merriam, Muehling, Sabo-Skelton, Wanzer. Motion carried.

14. **FIRST READING: Policy 5600-Student Discipline and FOR INFORMATION: Guidelines 5600-Student Discipline**

Mr. Shipman said this policy is the product of a long process of work started at the beginning of 2006. He mentioned the various groups involved and the many meetings held, including community forums at BHS North and BHS South, to discuss this policy. He said in June 2007 this policy was initially proposed to the Board; however, at the request of some organizations it was withdrawn to get more input. He said additional meetings were held in September and additional input was received from the Commission on the Status of Black Males, the Criminal Justice and Mediation Center and principals. He reviewed sections of the policy and guidelines, pointing out preventive actions, mediation and parental notification

changes. He talked about alternative to expulsion possibilities that can take many forms and may be offered more than once, for non-alcohol and non-drug infractions as well. Mr. Shipman referred to the number of forms that are appended to the policy, explaining that these were recommended by legal counsel with the Indiana School Boards Association. Mr. Harvey said this policy will be brought to the Board for action at the next meeting on January 22.

15. FOUNDATION OF MCCS

Ms. Peterson said they had a great time at the New Year's Eve fund raising event with more people attending than expected. She said based on preliminary figures, she thinks the Foundation exceeded expectations by raising a little more than \$40,000 at this event. She said the Foundation added a matching grant opportunity this year; it went well and about \$7,000 was raised through that effort.

Ms. Peterson thanked matching donors and noted that December is a big month. She said annually they contact all of their local donors and they have had a great response, about \$12,000 from those leaders. She said a former Foundation board member donated \$20,000 from an IRA for the school assistance fund for shoes, coats, school supplies, etc. She said the next grant deadline is February 4 – for school and classroom grants. She said they have also awarded fitness challenge grants to encourage more physical activity. She added that they still have about \$30,000 in professional development money to give out.

16. INFORMATION, PROPOSALS OR COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Christy Smith, Templeton parent, voiced concern about the elimination of the Director of Literacy position. She said she did not have much information but eliminating Ms. Diersing's position from the school system will be a tremendous loss. She said Ms. Diersing is a very competent person who always has children at the forefront. She said she believes it is quite serious that this corporation is losing her.

Dr. Butler said Ms. Diersing has provided an exemplary service to the school system and elimination of her position does not mean that she will not have a contract. She said she hopes that Ms. Diersing can continue to serve students in the MCCSC in some role. Dr. Grossi agreed. Ms. Wanzer further explained that this does not eliminate the function of that position. She explained that the position was eliminated as a part of reorganization of that department. She did not want people to think the function of literacy is being eliminated.

17. INFORMATION AND PROPOSALS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

Ms. Wanzer wished everyone a happy new year. She thanked Jim Muehling for his service as president of the Board and expressed congratulations to the new officers. She recalled that a year ago the Board had three new Board members and a relatively new superintendent as the school system was going through some reorganizational changes with new positions and staff, new initiatives and new relationships. She saw 2007 as a year of change and growth as it has been for the board. She said the Board has had challenges, disagreements and agreements, but all have done their best to serve children of this school corporation. Ms. Wanzer said this is a year that we have grown as Board members as they work together and 'we will continue to develop and grow as a Board.' She thanked her colleagues and Mr. Harvey.

Mr. Harvey extended an apology to the Board, community and his colleagues for the audit of BHS South. He said he is embarrassed on behalf of the school corporation and said we will take steps to make sure that proper instruction and actions are taken to prevent a recurrence. He said this is not how we want or plan to do business. He pledged 'we will do it correctly'. Mr. Harvey added that none are perfect and we all have times in our lives that circumstances compel us to do things that we would not ordinarily do. He expressed his sorrow that this occurred and stated that we have known about it since last summer.

Mr. Harvey said with the General Assembly beginning work, he wants to make sure that we all monitor what is happening on the 'crisis of property tax'. He suggested that people listen very carefully to what is proposed. He said our county has not suffered some of the difficulties of other counties and he is concerned that the Legislature may take action that is not well thought out. He said if you take away from property tax, you have to replace it and when you look at options it would have to be an increase in income tax or sales tax. He said we can all argue but it is not to say these may be better alternatives. Mr. Harvey pointed out that schools tend to not pay as well as the private sector, etc. because we do not have resources but with property taxes we had some predictability of revenue whereas income and especially sales tax is more prone to react to slips of the economy. He closed by saying this is a critical session of the General Assembly and he appreciates the wisdom of local Legislators.

8. **SCHOOL SHOWCASE: Bloomington High School North** – Representatives from BHS North arrived. Mr. Harvey explained that Principal Jeff Henderson was ill and Assistant Principal Andrea Mobley will introduce BHS North's presentation.

Ms. Mobley expressed appreciation for the invitation to showcase BHS North. She also thanked the Board for allowing teachers and students to arrive late after attending the jazz trio concert. She mentioned that BHS North was the only public high school invited to send talented students to this prestigious international festival in Toronto. She introduced two of the wonderful programs in place at BHS North: *Philbeck's Phriday Phlicks* and the *Best Buddies* program.

Steve Philbeck, social studies teacher, said about five years ago they got some LCD projectors at school for use in the classroom and students asked if they could watch movies after school. He said at first about five boys stayed to watch *Star Wars* and at the end of the evening they thought maybe some other students would like to come. He said the first year they showed five to eight films and maybe 15 students attended each one. The next year they moved into a smaller classroom and advertised and called it *Philbeck's Phriday Phlicks* (PPP) and to his shock, some 50-60 students showed up. He said they decided to meet every other Friday night and have been doing so since then. He introduced Lucas Paskash, who is a senior now and started coming as a freshman. He said the *Youth in Action* group has been sponsoring popcorn and about 115 students came to one movie last year, but the average is about 60 to 70 students. Lucas shared his experiences with PPP and said it is a great opportunity to be in a high school social environment but removed from some of the pressures of high school life. He said kids go to see the movie but it is really Mr. Philbeck who makes it fun. He added that Mr. Philbeck is a real gem at BHS North – he is a great teacher and he is glad that he had a chance to be a part of this group.

Amee Yoder and Janice Hazelrig shared information about the *Best Buddies* program that just started this year at BHS North. Ms. Yoder said one of their first functions with their large group was to go to one of the Friday movies. She said *Best Buddies* is an international organization and it is run by students at BHS North. She introduced Stephanie Ridge, president, and Rob Chapman, member. She said their best buddies could not come to the meeting.

Stephanie said BHS South was not able to get a program going this year but in addition to the one at BHS North, Edgewood has a program in place. She said they work together with students with disabilities – learn about that person, have lunch with them, learn what music they like, go shopping, etc.

Rob said at first he didn't think he could participate because it would be hard to work around football practices, commitments, etc. However, he said they went bowling and it was really fun. He said it is a great program and good for kids who do not get around the school much. Rob said his best buddy is shy and he sits with him at the lunch table so now he knows many other students.

In response to Dr. Grossi's question, Rob said the biggest surprise to him has been how fun the buddies

are to be with and learning how to interact with more people. He said it also gives him a chance to hang out with people he normally would not. He said sometimes he doesn't know how to get across something to them and that causes him to think outside the box.

Ms. Merriam congratulated the teachers and students for their work and participation. Ms. Yoder said the coordinator of the *Best Buddies* program in Indianapolis contacted the school last spring and then sent some materials to regular and special education teachers and the program took off because they have students who were willing to do this.

In response Ms. Merriam's question, Stephanie said they maintain weekly contact with their buddies – lunch, hi in the hallway, etc. and they meet as a big group once a month for fun activities. She talked about some of their seasonal activities and said they go out with their buddies twice a month.

Dr. Butler noted that BHS North still has peer tutoring. She said what a wonderful growth activity because it goes beyond the school. She said it sounds like *Best Buddies* is well on its way to success.

In response to other questions, Rob said after graduation will be college and he plans to continue with *Best Buddies*. Stephanie said she wants to be an elementary school teacher and she is looking into special education.

Ms. Hazelrig thanked the Board for inviting them to share. She said she is the co-sponsor of *Best Buddies* of Indiana and they recently applied for and received a grant from the city for efforts on diversity. She said they will have two friendship bowling outings and it looks like about 34 students and volunteers will be in attendance.

Board members thanked Ms. Mobley, teachers and students for this inspiring presentation.

18. **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the Board, Dr. Grossi declared the meeting to be adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Teresa Grossi, President

Jeannine Butler, Vice President

Valerie Merriam, Secretary

Susan P. Wanzer, Assistant Secretary

Susan Daniels, Member

Jim Muehling, Member

Lois Sabo-Skelton, Member