

MONROE COUNTY COMMUNITY SCHOOL CORPORATION
BOARD OF SCHOOL TRUSTEES
Work Session, August 7, 2007

MEMORANDA

The Board of School Trustees of the Monroe County Community School Corporation met in work session, for which proper notice had been given, at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, August 7, 2007, at the School Administration Center, 315 E. North Drive, Bloomington, Indiana.

Board members present: Jeannine Butler, Susan Daniels, Teresa Grossi, Valerie Merriam, Lois Sabo-Skelton and Sue Wanzer

Board member absent: Jim Muehling

Also present: James Harvey, Superintendent; Tim Thrasher, Comptroller; Peggy Chambers, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources & Personnel; Mary Lovejoy, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction; Mike Shipman, Director of Assessment and School Operations; Mike Scherer, Director of Extended Services; Janet Tupper, Administrative Assistant; Linda Richardson, MCEA President; and Nicole Kauffman, Reporter for *The Herald-Times*.

Vice President of the Board, Teresa Grossi, called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. Board members received information about and/or discussed the following:

1. **State Board of Accounts Audit** – Mr. Thrasher had shared with the Board a copy of the State Board of Accounts Audit for the period July 1, 2004 through June 30, 2006. He reviewed a summary of the results (a copy of which is included with the agenda for this meeting) and mentioned that an exit conference on the BHS South audit is scheduled for 1:30 p.m. on August 14. Mr. Thrasher discussed with the Board specific sections of the audit and explained procedures in place as well as procedures to be implemented and/or strengthened. Specifically, principals will be instructed to provide more supervision of extracurricular activities accounts. He does not know for sure what the State Board of Accounts will recommend insofar as follow-up to some outcomes of the audit. He reviewed the recommendations included in the audit. He said he will be bringing bad checks to the Board for approval to write off outstanding checks in order to comply with a recommendation that accounts be reconciled in a timely manner. Mr. Thrasher further explained that the school system did not have good results with Small Claims Court; therefore, we have been turning over checks to a collection agency and a lot of checks are cleared by contacting the bank. He said it has helped that we now accept credit cards for payment. The school system must pay 3% to 3.5% for accepting credit cards and we pay about \$4.00 per case turned over to the collection agency – more if it goes to court because the collection agency keeps 35% of the amount collected.

Mr. Thrasher discussed the difficulties of maintaining positive balances in some accounts such as the textbook rental fund since books are purchased during the summer and fees are collected during the school year. He said the State Board of Accounts wants receipts sent back to everyone who makes a payment and although that would be very cumbersome, a way to comply will be determined. He will work on giving the Board an accurate cash balance. He said we will still be on a cash basis accounting but some changes will be made in the future. He said all aspects of the audit will be addressed and he expects future audits to be much better.

2. **Cash Tuition Transfers:** As a follow-up to previous discussions, Mr. Harvey reviewed the current status of transfers between high schools and shared with the Board a history of cash tuition transfers. He noted some reasons that students want to transfer in from out of district and asked Board members to share their feelings about accepting cash tuition transfer students. **Consensus:** Board

members have no objection to accepting students on a cash tuition basis with the same criteria as other transfers, i.e. space available.

3. **Fairview School:** Mike Scherer explained that the architect for the Fairview project was asked to explore possibilities for the school using the existing facilities. He commented on the various possibilities, i.e. from tearing down the building and building a new school to some options for renovating part of the building and constructing additions. He said parking continues to be a problem and the architect is addressing that issue too.

Mr. Harvey said the Board also talked about the attendance area and what options might be workable. He had asked Mike Shipman and John Carter to review the Middle School Task Force discussions and look at what would happen to enrollments if the task force recommends K-5, 6-8, 9-12 grade level configurations. Mr. Shipman said during the last realignment process a software program was utilized to count the number of students in various neighborhoods and they used that software to look at ways to change the demographics of Fairview. He noted that it would be difficult to divide some neighborhoods but that is what they are investigating. He said they found that if the 6th grade is moved to middle school and Binford is converted back to a middle school, the remaining elementary schools could accommodate Fairview's enrollment, i.e. the Fairview building could be used for other purposes.

Mary Lovejoy talked about the status of Fairview under the provisions of the *No Child Left Behind* law. She said Fairview is not in as much trouble as many schools in the state since the only area not meeting AYP (average yearly progress) is special education attendance. Ms. Lovejoy said if Fairview does not make AYP, long term restructuring options will have to be in place. Mr. Harvey explained that Fairview is at that point this year and a restructuring plan must be in place by June 2008. Mr. Shipman mentioned various restructuring options that were considered. In response to a question, Mr. Harvey confirmed that a public charter school plans to start in 2008 and we will not know the impact of that until school starts.

Consensus: The Board now needs to go through the process with the community and to share with people the various options since there is a political and emotional aspect to this complicated decision. At the next work session, the Board will look at four options to prepare for discussions with the community. It was agreed that Fairview will be the only topic on the agenda for the next work session. During that discussion, the Board will determine how to conduct the forums. Ms. Lovejoy will provide NCLB restructuring options to the Board prior to the next work session.

4. **Report on Seminars Attended by Board Members** – Dr. Butler said the law seminar was one of the best she attended. She said one of the presenters talked about criminal history checks. She shared information provided to attendees, including a suggestion that construction workers who are around children should have criminal history checks. Mr. Scherer said most of the building trades unions do drug testing and criminal history checks. Discussion ensued regarding the school system's procedure for obtaining criminal history checks. Dr. Butler also reported that she learned about FERPA requirements. Board members were assured that the school system is in compliance with FERPA.

Ms. Merriam said she learned a lot at the ISBA Summer Academy in French Lick and was particularly impressed with the PR person from Muncie schools. Board members agreed to share handouts they received at various workshops and seminars they have attended.

5. **Topics for Discussion at Future Work Sessions:** Although the Board will devote the August 21st work session to discussion of Fairview School, Mr. Harvey reported that a bargaining session will be

held on August 8 and if a settlement is reached, he asked if Board members would be available next week for a special meeting to approve if it is ratified by the membership. **Consensus:** August 21 is okay to approve.

The work session adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

ABSENT

Jim Muehling, President

Teresa Grossi, Vice President

Lois Sabo-Skelton, Secretary

Valerie Merriam, Assistant Secretary

Jeannine Butler, Member

Susan Daniels, Member

Susan P. Wanzer, Member