

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION  
END OF THE YEAR  
REVIEW MINUTES**

**Tuesday, August 31, 2021**

The Montgomery County Board of Education convened the End of the Year Strategic Plan Review on Tuesday, August 31, 2021 at 5:30 p.m. Board members present were as follows: Steven W. DeBerry – Chair, Tommy Blake – Vice Chair, Jesse Hill, and Anne Evans. Staff members present included Dr. Dale Ellis, Tracy Grit, Wade Auman, Jack Cagle, Katie Hursey, Matthew Woodard, Mitch Taylor and Shannon Robinson

Chairman DeBerry called the meeting to order and asked for a motion to accept the agenda as presented. With a motion by Tommy Blake, and a second from Jesse Hill, the board unanimously approved the agenda. Chairman DeBerry turned the meeting over to Superintendent Dale Ellis.

Superintendent Ellis welcomed everyone to the meeting. Dr. Ellis presented a power point titled, “Preparing for Excellence.” The power point reviewed strategic goals and challenges faced by Montgomery County Schools. All related performance data aligned to the Strategic Plan presented as part of our focus on accountability, assuring the board and community that we will not hide from data. The goal is for continuous improvement and we have much to be proud of in all areas.

Wade Auman gave a review of globally competitive students, which encompasses the graduation rate, Annual Measurable Outcomes (AMO) and Ready Expected Growth. The unofficial graduation rate for Montgomery County Schools was 94.2%. College Credits increased from mid-year at 48.5% for students with at least 1 credit and 44.4% for students with 2 or more credits to the end of the year with 62.1% for students with at least 1 credit and 55.1% for students with 2 or more credits. Unofficial 2020-2021 Grade-Level Proficiency for Montgomery County Schools was 34.7%. State results release after presentation to the State Board of Education. Mr. Auman shared data regarding ready expected growth. Noting strengths that 70% of schools met or exceeded growth. Seventh grade math improved from prior years. The number of areas not meeting expected growth decreased. Composite achievement gap data showed African American achievement increased 2%. Hispanic achievement increased 2.9%, however, students with disabilities decreased.

Tracy Grit gave an update of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Professional/Healthy and Responsible. This section includes goals for teacher satisfaction and attendance, ethical violations, teacher retention, pregnancy rate and Out of School (OSS) suspension rate. Teacher attendance for the 2020-2021 school year was 90.1%. Strengths of attendance reflects dedication of our teachers. SIP goal for attendance shows school level incentives and awards have helped. COVID L-1 leave was available for first semester. Vaccination rates among staff have been good. Teachers appreciate the school board’s concern for safety of staff and students. Weaknesses shared are inconsistent use of tangible rewards between schools. COVID and vaccination status needs improvement. Younger staff leading to maternity leaves and sick children. Beginning teacher retention increased to 81% for first year teachers. Donna Kennedy is having a positive impact as her work with beginning teachers and mentors continues. Our rural location and housing shortage impacts teacher recruitment and retention negatively. Overall teacher shortages continue and virtual career fairs have been ineffective. State requirements for class size remain a problem. Legislation has reduced state benefits for new hires. The overall effects of COVID continue to be a problem. Out of school suspension rates 2020-2021 remote/hybrid \*8 (27 days lost 0 days saved). Weakness contributed to keying errors inputting discipline infractions, staff mindset, community issues coming into schools and less outlets for students remain a challenge.

Jack Cagle and Katie Hursey updated the Board on the Leadership Guides Innovation portion, including grants and parent contacts. Jack Cagle presented information regarding grants. MCS met goals this year and actually received more grants than our goal. Grants provide teachers support in diverse ways and we have a good variety of them. We have a good relationship with Research Associates. We will

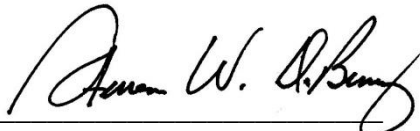
continue to apply for more. Katie Hursey presented Digital Instruction. Strengths shared were the increased use of technology. Technology has aligned standards and plans. Staff trained in framework; know elements and usage. DLC's presented to staffs and at a statewide conference. Language of Triple E is easy to understand. Weakness noted as new staff are hired more training is needed. The pandemic has made it harder to track and created unexpected variables.

Chief Financial Officer, Mitch Taylor, and Matthew Woodard reviewed 21<sup>st</sup> Century Systems, which includes audit findings, goals, maintaining adequate fund balance and adequate facilities. Mitch Taylor shared our strengths in adequate fund balance. We have a very strong fund balance with great staff watching over it. The county has maintained a stable level of funding and have good support from community and donors. Continued grants and COVID relief funding have been helpful. We have been able to build and renovate facilities and still maintain fund balance. Weakness shared as long-term economy is still unknown. There have been changes at the state level. Facilities and infrastructure is always a concern. Prices and costs are way up. State restrictions continue to hamper us. Enrollment in charter schools and home schools harm stability of enrollments. Personnel costs in health and retirement continue to skyrocket. Matthew Woodard presented information for adequate facilities. Strengths shared as funding levels have been a definite strength. Experience of maintenance staff has been helpful. We have a new CTE building and a new high school. We have community support. Our health and dental facilities have been great for students and staff. We continue to upkeep and maintain our older facilities. The field house at Montgomery Central has full funding. There is limited but dedicated county capital fund. Our weakness shared as funding is inadequate when compared to the need. There has been no state k-12 bond since 1996. It is difficult to find contractors and labor at a reasonable rate. Bids for contract work have been very high. Old building decommissioning processes takes up a lot of time. Insurance claims are high. County funding sources have been dedicated but not guaranteed. Strengths in adequate technology shared as costs of devices continue to decrease. Our sustainability plan sets money aside covering costs of devices the next ten years. Infrastructure and bandwidth in schools have increased. The schools have done a great job collecting money for tech fees. Insurance covers all student devices. Tech staff have been able to keep up the workload. Grant funding has funded a lot of tech training. The county has assisted with hotspots. COVID funding has been helpful with replacing k-6 devices and 6-12 next year. Emergency e-rate funds extend. Weakness remains as life span of devices is short. Students do not take good care of the devices they are given. The ability to charge devices in classrooms is a challenge. Despite maintaining staff, the number of devices and software keeps our DLC's and technicians' workload high.

Dr. Ellis opened up the meeting for questions and discussions.

After a question and answer session, Chairman DeBerry asked for a motion to adjourn. Tommy Blake made the motion with Jesse Hill seconding. The meeting adjourned.

The next regular meeting will be Monday, September 13, 2021 at 6:30 pm.



Steven W. DeBerry, Chairman



Dale Ellis, Ed. D., Secretary