

MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

MINUTES

August 4, 2014

The Montgomery County Board of Education convened in its regular monthly meeting on Monday, August 4, 2014, at 6:30 p.m. Board members present were as follows:

Steven W. DeBerry, Chair
Tommy Blake, Vice Chair
Bryan Dozier
Jesse Hill
Ann Long
Sandra Miller

Chairman DeBerry called the meeting to order and moved to adopt the agenda as shown. With a motion by Sandra Miller and a second from Jesse Hill, the agenda was adopted with unanimous approval from the board.

Chairman DeBerry opened the meeting with a devotional on overcoming obstacles. In, 1689, architect Christopher Wren designed the interior of Windsor Town Hall near London. In his design, pillars supported the ceiling. After the building was finished, inspectors decided the ceiling would not stay up with the amount of pillars he installed and ordered Wren to add a few more. Christopher Wren, England's greatest architect at the time, didn't think the ceiling needed more support. Therefore, to prove his point, he added four pillars that didn't reach the ceiling and supported nothing. Our lives often become like Windsor Town Hall. We place things in our lives that take up space and time, but have no practical value, like the useless pillars. The only thing accomplished was satisfying the expectation of others. Remove obstacles and hurdles in your life that are as useless as the columns.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America was led by Chairman DeBerry.

Dr. Ellis presented Kathy Johnson, MCS Chief Finance Officer, with a plaque in honor of her retirement. Dr. Ellis said, "Kathy has been a tremendous asset to Montgomery County Schools and to me personally. She has handled tough budgets with grace and class without it effecting student achievement". Kathy told the board that she appreciated the opportunity the board gave her to work at MCS and was very lucky to have such great working relationships. "You couldn't ask for better people; I consider them family, not co-workers," she said. The board and Superintendent Ellis wished her well on her retirement.

Chairman DeBerry asked that the Consent Agenda be held until closed session for discussion. The board expressed no opposition.

Dr. Jeff James, Assistant Superintendent of Learning, discussed the next phase of instructional rounds. The four elements of instructional rounds include: indentifying a problem of practice, observing and collecting data by visiting classrooms and documenting what needs to be changed, debriefing and brainstorming the next level of work. These rounds will take place in addition to regular classroom observations and will be completed by the curriculum team two times per semester per school. The timeline for the rounds will be discussed with principals.

Deidra Steed, Director of Elementary Education, gave an overview of Summer Camp. Ninety students attended summer camp this year at Green Ridge and Page Street Elementary from June 23rd to July 24th. Nine teachers worked at the camp instructing students for 16 days

5.5 hours each day. Deidra stated the teachers from different schools did a great job of working together and enjoyed getting ideas from each other. The camp schedule consisted of breakfast, lunch and a lot of reading! Of the eighty-eight total participants, ten passed the state Read to Achieve test, four passed the state portfolio, twenty-nine passed under the Good Cause for Students with Disabilities Act (House Bill 230) and forty-five students reading non-proficient will move to fourth grade transitional classes. Those forty-five students who were non-proficient in reading will take the third grade Read to Achieve test in October and work on their portfolio. The next steps will be to continue the steps already in place, have staff development for fourth grade teacher the second week of September, meet with the K-2 task force to finish steps on K-2 PDSA and monthly meetings with K-2 Task Force and parent meetings.

Dr. Takeda Legrand, Director of Performance and Accountability, updated the board on the Exceptional Children PDSA (Plan Do Study Act). The purpose of the PDSA is to adopt a continuous improvement process for enhancing the delivery of exceptional children (EC) services that will identify and improve at least two key areas of service. The State audits 10% of our EC files for compliance. MCS will internally audit 100% (554) of all EC files. To date, 137 files have been signed and returned meeting state requirements. Any new data will be incorporated and the process will continue until all 554 are up to date. New files will be reviewed with the current protocol to ensure compliance. The team will meet August 18, 2014, to study any new data, reflect on last year and define the goals for the 2014-2015 school year. Several Board Members expressed concern over the amount of files missing items. Dr. Legrand explained that something as simple as a missing signature or date could throw a file out of compliance. With the new system in place, these problems should be eliminated in the future.

Dr. Lancaster presented Technology Responsible Use Policy Code 3225/4312/7320 to the board for approval. Mrs. Miller made the motion to approve with Mr. Blake seconding the motion. All members collectively agreed.

For Superintendent's Remarks, Dr. Ellis discussed issues with Pre-K. His comments are as follows:

I think this Board is aware that I have no problem cranking out pages and pages of my thoughts on any educational topic in a matter of minutes. I have always been blessed in my ability to quickly put my thoughts into words and be able to share them with others. However, the script from which I read tonight has taken over a month to construct and it has been written and re-written numerous times. I have struggled with what to say on this topic. However, I feel it needs to be said because it relates to a major decision that has been made and one that continues to be called into question, most recently by another leader in this county in front of a public Board in a public meeting with implications that we were wrong and have been wrong in our actions in the past. I have tried every possible communication pattern to convey my feelings and serious concerns on this matter. I have tried professional and respectful. I have tried sugary sweet. I have tried stressed and distressed. And now apparently I have tried downright rude. Regardless of the communication method, I get the same result, nothing. Based upon recent events, my opinion is it is getting worse instead of better. I do not take the gravity of what I am about to say lightly and I intend this to be my one and only official address on this topic.

In the spring of this calendar year, we were granted the opportunity to administer the Pre-K contract for the 2014-2015 school year and we were happy to do it. We gladly accepted the challenge in an effort to try and improve the program and to improve the customer service normally associated with the administration of a contract. Much work was needed to get the program where we knew it could be. We assumed responsibility for managing the contract early this spring by hiring a Pre-K Director, Mrs. Lizzie Garner. In her short time here, we filled the 150 slots and have 38 on the waiting list. She worked tirelessly to screen the students herself so that we, and our partners in the childcare centers, would know exactly where the children were academically when entering into the program and to make sure that the neediest children are actually receiving the services. The collection and analysis of such necessary and meaningful data was not done prior to her arrival. There will also not be a shortage of qualified Pre-K students this year that requires knocking on doors in late August, which is what at least one of our principals had to do last year. As I was told last year by the Executive Director administering this

contract, we needed to get this principal out there “beating bushes” to fill those slots. Not so this year. Unlike what we had become accustomed to in the past, Mrs. Garner visited classrooms regularly and established relationships with our childcare partners that could have helped us all benefit from improved services. She also worked on a comprehensive professional development calendar for teachers, to provide PD that has been sorely lacking in the past. We plan to clearly communicate the who, what, when, where, and why of our PD. That was yet another issue we have dealt with in the past. She did all of this with a staff of one, herself, at what I will admit was low pay for the worth she exhibited in this endeavor and particularly when comparing it to the past payroll of the previous contract administrator. We felt we could do better and we exceeded our own expectations thanks to her leadership. All of this was accomplished before we even became the contract administrator, which officially occurred on July 1. Unfortunately, Mrs. Garner is no longer with us for various reasons.

We have thoroughly reviewed the contract and the financial resources needed to administer the program the way that it needs to be to meet our standards. We have made considerable financial contributions from our K-5 funds in the past to supplement the amount that we get to run our Pre-K centers and we have received supplemental funds from Smart Start. For whatever reason, state law dictates that we get a fraction of the amount that private centers get to run their classrooms. Public schools are seemingly punished for operating a Pre-K program. That is an extremely depressing thought, but it is sadly true. If you couple that with the recent attempt to siphon away the Smart Start funds we have relied upon to help supplement the program in the past, the recommendation for which came from this very same Executive Director who previously administered the contract, it becomes quickly clear that the program is financially unsustainable unless something changes. Due to the financial realities that currently exist and due to the poor state of the relationship that currently exists between MCS administration and the Executive Director of the former contract administrator, I fear that I may no longer be able in good conscience to recommend that we commit such considerable resources to this program after the 2014-2015 school year.

I have informed the Montgomery County Partnership for Children Board that we no longer wish to serve as contract administrator after this school year. I have requested that they advertise the need for quality childcare services in Montgomery County for the purpose of serving as Pre-K classroom sites. There are a number of people on the Partnership Board that I know personally and that I have a great deal of respect for. If some solution to the aforementioned poor relationship that now exists can be reached between now and the end of this school year we would be happy to explore keeping the contract or we would be happy to partner with them to provide space and/or transportation on a contract basis. Otherwise, absent some semblance of a workable solution to the problems we have experienced in the past and unfortunately continue to deal with, I will recommend at a future meeting of this Board that Montgomery County Schools have no further involvement with NC Pre-K in 2015-2016. Despite my sharing of the school system's ongoing concerns numerous times over time, I have seen no action that would lead me to believe that improvement of the current situation is possible. Disbelief that problems existed within the program or outright ignoring the problems will not and did not fix the problems. Action did. And someone was apparently not happy with that action.

Lastly, I would like to illustrate my current view of this situation with an analogy. I view the Pre-K Program like a recipe. It can be an awesome recipe. In the past when we have turned the heat on it, it has cooked a little bit here and there. Unfortunately, when we have turned off the heat, it has stopped cooking altogether. We need it to cook all the time regardless of how much heat we are putting on it. That has not been my experience in my 4 years here. When you have a great recipe and it is not working well, you might need to change some ingredients if you want the recipe to cook as intended. Unfortunately, we are the only ones who have been interested in reviewing and improving the recipe. That has to change if we are to move forward. I will be developing a detailed plan over the course of the coming months to possibly transition away from the program. We will look at a different recipe for early childhood success altogether. We will make room in our elementary classrooms for our Pre-K teachers who want to stay with us through attrition next year if we ultimately decide to go in another direction. Even though we get less money for the program, we employ some of the best Pre-K teachers in the world. We will also develop a plan to further support K-3 classrooms with the supplemental funds that we would no longer be spending on Pre-K programs. Students would still experience the Pre-K program in private childcare sites and they would continue to benefit from the program and from the hard work of our childcare center partners. We would further benefit by introducing new resources into our K-3 classrooms. With the new Read to Achieve requirements at the end of grade 3, we need to support our lower grades with everything we have, now more than ever. Thank You.

Chairman DeBerry then asked for a motion to adjourn and move into closed session. With a motion from Ann Long, along with a second from Bryan Dozier, the board unanimously approved going into closed session to discuss personnel.

During closed session, the Board approved the following consent agenda items with a motion by Tommy Blake and a second from Shirley Threadgill. The Board unanimously approved the motion.

1. Minutes from the Regular Board Meeting July 14, 2014.
2. Personnel and Auxillary Reports as follows:

- a. Upon the recommendation of the principal, approval of the following addition to the substitute teacher list:

<u>Noncertified</u>	<u>Recommended By</u>	<u>Record Check</u>
1) Anthony Maynor	Donnie Lynthacum	Yes

- b. Superintendent reports the acceptance of the following resignations/retirements:

<u>Resignation/Retirement</u>	<u>School/Assignment</u>	<u>Effective Date</u>
1) Ben Grindstaff Resignation	West Middle School Social Studies Teacher	July 15, 2014
2) Katie Tucker Resignation	Green Ridge Elementary Guidance Counselor	July 21, 2014
3) Thomas Berriman Resignation	Montg. Learning Academy Assistant Principal	July 18, 2014
4) Maggie McKinley Resignation	East Middle School 7 th Grade Teacher	July 14, 2014
5) Sharon Romero Resignation	Star Elementary School Elementary Teacher	July 22, 2014
6) Adrian Davis Resignation	West Middle School Teacher Assistant	July 29, 2014
7) Nancy Williams Resignation	Green Ridge Elementary EC Teacher	July 31, 2014
8) Rebecca Micco Resignation	East Middle School 7 th Grade Lang. Arts Teacher	July 30, 2014

- c. Upon recommendation, approval of the following probationary contracts for the 2014-2015 school year as provided by General Statute 115C-325:

<u>Contract/ Effective Date</u>	<u>School/ Assignment</u>	<u>Record Check</u>	<u>Replacing</u>
1) Erin Leach 08/19/2014	Green Ridge Elementary 3 rd Grade Teacher	Yes	Amy Chisholm
2) Mike West 08/19/2014	West Middle School Health/PE	Yes	Sean Thompson
3) Brittney Stone 08/19/2014	West Middle School Language Arts-Grade 8	Yes	Miranda Duell
4) Daniel Coggins 08/19/2014	West Montgomery High Interim Math Teacher	Yes	New Position
5) Johnathan Frazier 08/19/2014	East Middle School PE Teacher	Yes	Joshua Frye
6) Jasmine Hill 08/19/2014	West Montgomery High Social Studies Teacher	Yes	Eric Trail
7) Melissa Kidd 08/19/2014	East Montgomery High Spanish Teacher	Yes	Adriana Persin
8) Bethany Roush 08/19/2014	West Middle School ELA/Social Studies Teacher	Yes	Lee Ann Griffin

d. Upon recommendation, approval of the following administrative contract:

- Pokie Noland, Director of Exceptional Children, annual twelve-month term, commencing September 1, 2014 and ending June 30, 2016, pending criminal history check.

Upon recommendation approval of the following student transfers is requested.

Montgomery County Schools to Moore County Schools

Alexis Nicole Green

Montgomery County Schools to Randolph County Schools

Autumn Leigh Van Hoose

Montgomery County Schools to Stanly County Schools

Christian Daviyon Thompson

Nyaja Ashanti Bryant

William Lemonte Davis, Jr.

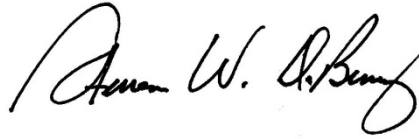
Hunter Tristan Threadgill

Guilford County Schools to Montgomery County Schools

Genesis Lae'Shaun Pratt

After closed session, Chairman DeBerry asked for a motion to adjourn. With a motion by Sandra Miller and a second from Shirley Threadgill, the meeting was duly adjourned.

The next regular meeting will be held on Monday, September 8, 2014.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steven W. DeBerry". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Steven" being more prominent.

Steven W. DeBerry, Chairman

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dale Ellis". The signature is cursive, with the first name "Dale" being more prominent.

Dale Ellis, Ed. D., Secretary

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION
END OF YEAR REVIEW
AUGUST 19, 2014**

The Montgomery County Board of Education convened in its midyear review session on Tuesday, August 19, 2014, at 5:30 p.m. with the following members present:

Steven S. DeBerry, Chair
Tommy Blake, Vice Chair
Bryan Dozier
Jesse Hill
Ann S. Long
Sandra Miller
Shirley M. Threadgill

Chairman DeBerry called the meeting to order and asked for a motion to accept the agenda as presented. With a motion from Ann Long, along with a second from Sandra Miller, the board unanimously approved the agenda.

Superintendent Ellis welcomed everyone. At this meeting, we will be looking at performance data and how it is aligned to the Strategic Plan. Dr. Ellis announced that 2013-2014 will be the final year in this strategic planning cycle, stating that the goal is for continuous improvement, noting that we have much to be proud of in all areas. Our Vision, Mission and Core Values will not change. He then turned over the Globally Competitive Students portion of the meeting to Dr. Jeff James.

Dr. James gave a review of Globally Competitive Students which encompasses strengths and weaknesses of the graduation rate, AMO, ABC Expected Growth and the most recent assessment data.

Kevin Lancaster gave an update of 21st Century Professionals/Healthy & Responsible which includes the goals for Ethical Violations, teacher retention, OSS suspension rate and attendance rate. The board discussed requiring all staff to review the ethical video during the first two weeks of school to cut down on ethical violations.

Takeda Legrand updated the group on the Teen Pregnancy Rate, which includes strengths, weaknesses and opportunities for improvement.

Dr. Ellis discussed the Leadership Guides Innovation portion covering MCS Community and Parent Contact goals.

Kathy Johnson reviewed 21st Century Systems, which includes audit-finding goals, maintaining an adequate fund balance and adequate facilities. The finance department has had no audit findings for many years, have good accounting controls in place and have received numerous financial rewards.

Superintendent Ellis ended looking forward to the process of development of Strategic Plan 2017. Some of the proposed goals include increasing the graduation rate, decreasing the achievement gap, increasing the teacher attendance rate and reducing the number of ethical violations to zero.

Before closing Dr. Ellis asked the board to approve a revised tolling agreement for Green Ridge Elementary, which extends the roof contract for six months. After discussion, Tommy Blake made the motion to approve the extension, while Sandra Miller seconded the motion. There was no board opposition.

Chairman DeBerry asked for a motion to adjourn. With a motion from Tommy Blake, along with a second from Shirley Threadgill, along with unanimous approval from the board, the meeting was adjourned.

Steven W. DeBerry, Chair

Dale Ellis, Ed. D., Secretary