



BOARD OF EDUCATION

Minutes for July 14, 2020

The Maryville Board of Education met in regular session at 5:30 p.m. on July 14 at Maryville High School. Board members present were Nick Black, Chad Hampton, Julie Elder, Candy Morgan, and Bethany Pope. Chairman Black called the meeting to order promptly at 5:30 p.m. and asked for a moment of silence, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Mr. Black called for a vote to adopt the meeting agenda. Chad Hampton made the motion for the agenda adoption. Bethany Pope seconded the motion. The motion carried.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC ON AGENDA ITEMS

There were no comments from the public.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Mrs. Morgan made the motion to approve the consent agenda. Julie Elder seconded the motion. The motion carried with full agreement.

1. Approve minutes of June 8, 2020 meeting
2. Approve MHS Guidance Department interior upgrades
 - a. Funding Source: School Funds \$21,423.02
3. Approve HVAC from REA Parts
 - a. Funding Source: Maintenance and Repair/Building \$11,949.46
4. Approve MyMathLab software renewal
 - a. Funding Source: Supplies and Materials \$50,988.00
5. Approve application and subsequent amendments to the ESSER Fund application
 - a. ESSER Funds (established as part of the Education Stabilization Fund in the CARES Act) awards State and Local Education Authorities grants to address the impact of the Novel Coronavirus Disease 2019.
6. Approve the purchase of cameras for Maryville Jr. High School
 - a. Funding Source: MJHS School Funds \$14,754.10

AGENDA ITEMS

- 1. Consider revised 2020-21 salary scales for Certified, Classified, Cafeteria, and Supplements**
 - a. As explained by Dr. Winstead, the uncertainty of both short and long-term tax revenues and other economic factors makes it especially challenging to go ahead with the planned salary increase at this time. It was agreed that a salary increase would be postponed. Mrs. Pope asked that the topic be reconsidered later in the fall.
 - b. Motion made to suspend a salary increase at this time by Mrs. Pope; Second by Mrs. Morgan. All votes were affirmative and the motion passed.
- 2. Consider increasing amount allocated for strategic compensation from \$118,800 to \$148,800**
 - a. Anticipating an unusually large number of duties required, but not contracted, for teachers and other staff to support digital and traditional education in a pandemic, this change would allow additional funds in this budget category.
 - b. Motion to increase this line item was entered by Bethany Pope and the second came from Chad Hampton. All votes were affirmative and the motion passed.
- 3. Consider Board Policy Manual section 4.205, 6.304, 6.3041, and 6.319**
 - a. Policy Section 6.319 reinstates local discretion when it comes to student suspensions and remandment to the alternative school.
 - b. Motion to approve from Candy Morgan. Second from Bethany Pope. Motion approved.
- 4. Consider the ABM EnhancedClean Program for the 2020-21 SY**
 - a. Funding Source: ESSER Funds \$127,748.92
 - b. Electrostatic cleaning at each school, every 7-business days.
 - c. Motion presented by Julie Elder, with the second by Bethany Pope. Motion approved.

DIRECTOR OF SCHOOLS REPORT

Dr. Winstead highlighted the work of the Leadership Team and central office staff in creating detailed plans to facilitate the reopening of school. He went on to detail the survey process and communication to parents for selecting virtual or traditional options. At the time of the meeting, just over 80% of parents wanted their children to attend school on campus, 18% wanted to take advantage of the virtual option, and 2% would be considered hybrid students.

At Sam Houston Elementary, facilities work is ahead of schedule and should be completed by Labor Day. The majority of this work was on the school bathrooms.

The district issued a public statement (attached) in response to calls to change the name REBELS at Maryville High School. A committee will be named in August to assess public and student support for and against such a change and work toward the goals established for the taskforce. The school board will expect a report in the January/February 2021 timeframe.

RECOGNITION OF STAFF AND STUDENTS

MHS was recognized for the work they did to receive a \$250,000 grant from the Transition School To Work (TSW) state program. This program focuses on the provision of vocational rehabilitation (VR) services to eligible and potentially eligible high school students with disabilities who are interested in employment after high school.

The districtwide Special Education team, under the direction of Dr. Melanie Davidson, receive three grants recently, totally over \$60,000. These grants will help provide digital learning materials, scanners, and preschool inclusion efforts.

COMMENTS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

- Bethany Pope noted that we are all in this together and need to remember that it will change as time goes by. She expressed support for a strong diversity plan across the district.
- Chad Hampton echoed the comments of others and expressed great appreciation for the communication and level of detail coming from the district and each school. He agreed it is important to get back to school and to consider all risks. He suggested that we may need to consider mask-wearing for everyone at some point. He expressed support for the taskforce on diversity.
- Julie Elder talked about positivity, flexibility, and unity, saying “we are successful, because we are united.” She expressed support for the taskforce and thanked everyone for all the hard work on back to school planning.
- Candy Morgan agreed with the idea of unity as a success factor in moving forward. She wanted to express her appreciation for the thoughtfulness and detail in every plan. She too expressed support for the taskforce.
- Chairman Black expressed how difficult the situation is, but how having exceptional people in place makes all the difference. He agreed with the plan to form a taskforce around diversity and looks forward to the outcome.

Meeting adjourned at 6:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Sharon Anglim

PUBLIC STATEMENT ON DIVERSITY IN THE MARYVILLE CITY SCHOOLS

MCS Diversity Planning

July 2020

Position Statement

The mission at Maryville City Schools is to prepare students for a lifetime of learning and responsible citizenship. Our focus is to empower and support students in helping them to reach their highest potential to make a positive impact in their ever-changing world. We know that as an educational body, we have a heightened responsibility to teach our students to show respect and dignity to others while working to eliminate social and racial disparity. We are passionate about cultivating and celebrating diversity within the school system and stand united against the negative impact of racism upon communities. We welcome open communication and seek ways to improve our work toward the creation of inclusive, safe, and supportive systems for those who are marginalized while cultivating a heightened awareness of perspective and mutual respect. We acknowledge that we are not perfect, that work is to be done, and there is always room for growth and change. We want to do our part to make our community a stronger and better place to learn and grow.

Diversity Initiatives – Purpose and Process

In 2018, Maryville City Schools began a renewed prioritization of Diversity Initiatives as part of our strategic planning, needs assessments, and survey data. The response was and continues to be comprehensive – strengthen training, programming, and culture to be inclusive and to better meet the needs of marginalized students and families. The Administrative Teams, district Diversity Team, and School Improvement Committees have worked together to develop goals and action steps to eliminate social and racial disparity as we know these are destructive to our communities. Our goals are inclusive and refrain from reducing diversity to a focus only on color or race. Instead our goals attend to social, economic, behavioral, religious, special needs, and race disparities and oppression. Racism, intolerance, and exclusive communication and actions are dehumanizing to everyone it touches.

Action Steps

Genesis Diversity Solutions, October 2018 - Dr. Benjamin Lewis was hired to lead an in-depth district self-assessment, provide leadership consultation, advise on recruitment and empowerment of diversity in hiring practices, and deliver training to administrators and staff members in the following topics: Dimensions of Diversity, From Unconscious Biases to Inclusive Community, Courageous Conversations, Empowering Diverse Students, Cultural Confidence in our Global Community, Creating Healthy Cultures, Recruit-Employee-Retain.

Diversity Team, 2019-2020 – Through our work, this district-wide team identifies the negative impact of diversity intolerance, acknowledges our own lack of understanding, but seeks to work hard to make positive changes in our schools through practical solutions, one person at a time. The mission statement for the group is to empower faculty and students to create an

inclusive, safe, and supportive system for those who are marginalized while cultivating a heightened awareness of perspective and empathetic respect. Current and past action steps include increasing curriculum, library resources, and professional development.

Timeline

Aug 2020

Creation and Charge of the Task Force

Sep – Dec 2020

Resource Review – Gather Feedback

- Feedback from our school community, past and present
- Action Plans and Outcomes of schools facing similar decisions
- Strategically seek guidance and ideas from various stakeholder groups

Dec 2020 – Jan 2021

Compilation of Diversity Strategies and Ideas to Improve Inclusiveness and Understanding in our Community

Feb 2021

Report provided to the Maryville City Schools Board of Education for their review and response

Mar 2021

Instructional resources compiled and prepared to share with individual schools

Goals

- To acknowledge racism and exclusive actions exist in our schools and community
- To increase staff and student awareness and evaluate our misconceptions, prejudices, practices, and biases that benefit some while disadvantaging others.
- To uplift and serve marginalized and disenfranchised individuals in order to help strengthen our communities.
- To prioritize the development of inclusive language, curriculum, discipline, outreach, established routines, and practices.
- To continue the push to close the achievement gap for subgroups in an effort to open more doors and opportunities for their futures.
- To develop structures to encourage diverse stakeholders to provide input and feedback in school improvement decisions.
- To increase diversity of staff to better mirror or surpass our student diversity population.

Response to the petition to remove the Rebel name

The decision to change the school nickname is solely under the leadership and decision of the Maryville City School Board of Education. Our community has polarizing opinions regarding this issue. As with all controversial and complex decisions, the school board directs our school system toward a methodical and intentional review and analysis. Many important issues have been raised and great ideas have been shared that will complement our current plans to expand diversity understanding and increase inclusiveness. Conversations have already begun that are much deeper and broader than a potential nickname change, and these community conversations need to continue. A task force will be created to gather and assimilate data and to provide a report to the board of education. The Board will then decide what action, if any, it wants to take. All provided correspondences, petitions, and information will be provided artifacts for the committee.

While we take these imperative action steps, we will continue to focus on overall diversity and the goals and plans set forth in our strategic plan of creating inclusive environments for all student to feel engaged and included. In addition, the board fully supports rigidity and disciplinary actions regarding racist expressions of the Confederate flag, the Confederate soldier, racist slurs, offending and intolerant communication or actions. Increased monitoring of all sporting events and school related events will occur to ensure the name “Rebels” for the 2020-2021 school year will only reflect the highest caliber of citizenship, void of any hint or gesture of racism.

We understand we are a small piece of a large puzzle, but working together we can make a difference.