

BOARD OF EDUCATION
Minutes for October 16, 2023

The Maryville Board of Education met in a regular session at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, October 16 at John Sevier Elementary School. Board members present were Nick Black, Isaac Simerly, Julie Elder, Candy Morgan, and Bart Stinnett. Chairman Black called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m. and asked for a moment of silence, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance, led by JSE student Joe Keller.

UPDATE FROM JOHN SEVIER

In his update, Principal Josh Oliver offered an overview of the 23-24 year at JSE. The current student enrollment exceeds 600, with the largest grade level being 3rd grade. JSE is supported by a team of 47 certified teachers, 60 classified assistants, and a dedicated full-time School Resource Officer (SRO).

Mr. Oliver shared recent achievements including JSE's recognition as a 2023 iReady Super Stretch School. In addition, an 69% of 3rd grade students met or exceeded the standards for English Language Arts on the TCAP, and 77% achieved the same for math. Furthermore, JSE achieved some of the highest TVAAS growth scores in TN for 3rd grade ELA and math. Additional highlights include updates to the master schedule, as well as implementing new dismissal and pick-up procedures to enhance the safety of students and staff.

Goals for the upcoming year include implementing a shared leadership philosophy with the JSE site leadership team, which will extend to all teachers and support staff at JSE. Mr. Oliver emphasized the goal of working as a cohesive team to drive school progress and continuing the commitment to provide clear, consistent, and effective communication to students, staff and stakeholders.

Assistant Principal Kristin Bosco expressed her gratitude to Mr. Oliver for his capacity-building efforts and for uniting voices under his strong leadership. Ms. Bosco shared significant facility improvements, including the addition of new lettering on the outside of the auditorium and freshly painted hallway tiles. The school is awaiting installation of auditorium lights for the state, a shade structure for the Burrough playground, and the installation of turf, play equipment, and tables for the inner courtyard.

Mr. Oliver concluded by expressing his thanks to the board, Ms. Vagnier, and Dr. Winstead for their support.

ADOPT AGENDA

Nick Black asked for a motion to adopt the agenda. Julie Elder moved to adopt, and a second came from Bart Stinnett. The agenda was adopted unanimously.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC ON AGENDA ITEMS

No comments were made by the public on agenda items.

APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

Isaac Simerly made the motion to approve the consent agenda. Candy Morgan seconded the motion. The motion carried with full agreement.

1. Approve Minutes of September 18, 2023, meeting (Attachment)
2. Approve changes to Board Policy sections 2.805 – Purchasing, 2.806 – Bids and Quotations, 3.219 – Use of Unmanned Aircraft Systems (Drones), and 4.700 – Testing Programs – Second reading (Attachment A1)
3. Ratify Executive Committee approval of the renewal of Nearpod software - \$27,209.60 – Funding Source: Regular Education – Software (Attachment A2)
4. Ratify Executive Committee approval for Maryville Junior High School Tennis Team overnight trip to Murfreesboro, Tennessee to attend the TMSSA/USTA Tennis State Tournament – Funding Source: Maryville Junior High School Athletics (Attachment A3)
5. Approve PowerSchool renewal - \$35,732.85 - Funding Source: Regular Education - Software (Attachment A4)
6. Approve Maryville High School Boys Basketball Team overnight to Bristol, Tennessee for Arby's Classic Basketball Tournament – Funding Source: Boys Basketball (Attachment A5)
7. Ratify Executive Committee approval for Maryville High School Volleyball Team overnight trip to Murfreesboro, Tennessee to attend the state tournament – Funding Source: Maryville High School Athletics (Attachment A6)
8. Approve the TBOE 2023 Compliance Report (Attachment A7)
9. Approve the 2023 TISA Accountability Report and any subsequent amendments (Attachment A8)

AGENDA

1. Consider agreement to purchase the Centegix Safety Platform – Funding Source: Public School Security Grant - \$93,400 Year 1, \$52,000 Years 2-5.
 - Motion made by Julie Elder. Second from Candy Morgan.
 - Dr. Winstead provided further details regarding the purchase of the Centegix Safety Platform and the safety badge provided to staff, enabling them to activate an alarm or initiate a lockdown during emergency situations. Several platforms were explored, and it was determined that Centegix aligns best with the needs of MCS. This purchase was made through a cooperative purchasing agreement. The initial year of this purchase will be funded through the state safety grant, and Dr. Winstead shared his hope that funding will continue for the next few years;

however, a provision in the five-year contract allows the district to opt out if the purchase is no longer supported by grant funding.

The implementation timeline is estimated to be around four months. A completely separate network, apart from the current infrastructure, will be established, ensuring it doesn't impact the current bandwidth. An additional component of the software includes a visitor app software, and schools will use the tool to determine suitability for future use. MCS is currently awaiting the outcome of a separate grant under review, which would secure keyless entry for doors and shatterproof film for windows. Dr. Winstead referenced the school safety laws enacted in TN and mentioned that he anticipates some of the recommendations for safety upgrades will become mandatory requirements in the future.

- The Motion approved unanimously.

2. Consider joining litigation through the Frantz Law Group and Lewis Thomason pursuing claims for damages arising from students' use of social media.

- Motion made by Julie Elder. Second from Bart Stinnett.
- Dr. Winstead conveyed that while class action lawsuits have been an option in the past, our district has not participated in previous actions. This particular litigation centers around claims for damages related to students' use of social media. The lead plaintiff is Seattle schools, and several Tennessee districts will join in this multi-district lawsuit. Dr. Winstead reached out to our attorney, Melanie Davis, as the city has previously been involved in similar litigations. No cost will be associated with the district's participation; rather, it serves as a public declaration to our families, students, and teachers that we are concerned about our students' mental well-being and acknowledge the potentially negative impact of widespread social media use on students. The lawsuit primarily targets Meta, including platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, among others.

Board members asked questions regarding the amount of money that could potentially be awarded, future exposure to depositions, actions the district currently takes to assist students who battle negative impacts of social media, and plans for any money awarded through this litigation. Chairman Black stated his initial hesitation and expressed a parent's responsibility in monitoring a child's social media; however, he stated that he also has a greater responsibility as a board member to highlight the dangers that are present with the use of social media.

Isaac Simerly expressed his desire to ask for feedback from the community before joining the class action lawsuit and made the motion to table the vote until the November board meeting. The motion died for lack of a second.

- The motion approved unanimously.

3. Consider agreement with Leon Williams Contractors, LLC for renovations at Fort Craig – Funding Source: Capital Outlay –

Jim Hinton with Cope Architecture explained that Leon Williams and Birdwell Construction submitted bids for the Fort Craig renovation project. Leon Williams proposed the lower of the two bids (\$3,845,000), and after negotiation with the contractor base price of \$3,115,646 with no contingency was agreed on. Mr. Hinton recommended adding back in a \$300,000 contingency and whatever amount is not used will come back to the school system.

Dr. Winsetead added this is a 275 day bid, and if we can mobilized in November that will put us about 9 months out. The Fort Craig project is key to beginning construction on the MHS expansion. Dr. Winstead shared that items not essential to the initial move to For Craig including some bathrooms, flooring, and painting were removed from the renovation list. Dr. Winstead shared that if approved, he feels comfortable moving forward to begin the project.

Board members asked clarifying questions about items eliminated from the initial bid and what projects would still need to be fulfilled at Fort Craig. Dr. Winstead shared that it would be mostly parking, and the remaining items are more cosmetic, including landscaping and signage. The roof is currently under contract, and work will be begin around Christmas.

Candy Morgan made the motion to award the bid to Leon Williams Construction. Second from Julie Elder.

Motion approved unanimously.

REPORTS FROM THE DIRECTOR OF SCHOOLS

Dr. Winstead expressed his hope that all board members and their families had an enjoyable fall break. He provided an update on the Sam Houston roof project, noting that it should be completed by Thanksgiving. The plan for MHS remains on track, with Phase 1 scheduled for completion by October 25. Ongoing meetings with the city and Cope Architecture are taking place. Once pricing details are confirmed with contractors and sub-contractors, the district, along with the board and City Council, will determine available funding before presenting the project to PBA. The goal is for the project to be in motion by Christmas.

Additionally, Dr. Winstead mentioned there will be a budget amendment next month to account for grants received during the first 9 weeks of the school year. He also extended a warm welcome to Julie Keyl, who will be joining the administrative team at Montgomery Ridge, officially beginning her role on Monday, October 23.

Maria Greene provided details about the new mobile app purchased by the district. This integrated app will provide families with easier access to student, school, and district information without the necessity of logging in to multiple platforms. The new app will launch on January 2, 2024.

RECOGNITION OF STAFF AND STUDENTS

(See attached document)

COMMENTS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

Bart Stinnett thanked Mr. Oliver and Ms. Bosco for hosting the board meeting at JSE and for their dedication and leadership. He acknowledged the recognition of staff and students, sharing the district shines in every area.

Julie Elder expressed her appreciation to Mr. Oliver and Ms. Bosco for the amazing changes to the John Sevier campus and the difference they make in a student's outlook and attitude. She also highlighted the new window wraps on at MJHS and thanked Mr. Combs for his attention to the aesthetics.

Isaac Simerly also thanked Mr. Oliver and Ms. Bosco for hosting the board meeting. He noted the new mascot logo and the garden in the interior courtyard. Mr. Simerly congratulated Ms. Keyl on her new position and acknowledged the accomplishments of the volleyball team and expressed his excitement about the Friday night football game against Alcoa.

Candy Morgan thanked Mr. Oliver and Ms. Bosco for the work they are doing at JSE. She congratulated Ms. Keyl on her new role in administration and thanked the other administrators for their hard work.

Nick Black

Thanked John and Kristin for hosting. Appreciate all the wonderful things going on and growth scores. Chart is expected, and hard to make sure we highlight and celebrate achievements across the district and want to do as often as we can. Thank you for having us. Excited about moving forward with FC excited about the safety improvements we make and continue to make. Everything coming together and moving in a great direction for safety of our students. Congrats Julie Keyl. Excited about all of our sports teams. Thank you appreciate all you do.

Meeting adjourned at 6:32

Respectively submitted by: Maria Greene