BOARD OF EDUCATION
Minutes for August 19, 2024

The Maryville Board of Education met in a regular session at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, August 19 Maryville City School's District Office. Board members present were Julie Elder, Nick Black, Isaac Simerly, Candy Morgan, and Bart Stinnett. Chair Julie Elder called the meeting to order at 5:38 p.m. and asked for a moment of silence, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by student Abby Cromwell.

UPDATE FROM MARYVILLE ACADEMY

Maryville Academy Administrator Kyle Harris shared a presentation in which he introduced his staff and asked the audience to reflect on a task they might struggle with. He used this example as an analogy for how some students find school difficult. Mr. Harris emphasized Maryville Academy's focus on the themes of Honor, Think, and Grow. He highlighted the importance of creating a flexible learning environment, differentiating instruction, modeling a growth mindset, and celebrating successes along the way.

Mr. Harris expressed his enthusiasm for Maryville Academy's upcoming move to its new shared location with Maryville Virtual School and the district office. He extended his gratitude to the school board for their investment in students. He outlined the exciting opportunities which allow students to enroll in courses and programs including welding, auto collision repair, among others. Additionally, Mr. Harris highlighted the EXCEL program, which emphasizes a forward-thinking mindset and encourages students to set attainable and measurable goals.

Zach Luther, Special Education teacher, spoke about the Leadworthy program, which offers character lessons designed to empower students by fostering healthy self-concepts, building strong relationships, and embracing personal responsibility.

In closing, Mr. Harris emphasized that there is no "MA kid." Rather, the students of Maryville Academy are part of the MCS school community and will one day contribute to the Blount County community as well. He also shared positive feedback from parents and students, expressing appreciation for the vision and direction of Maryville Academy.

ADOPT AGENDA

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

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC ON AGENDA ITEMS

No comments were made by the public on agenda items.

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

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

1. Approve Minutes of July 15, 2024, meeting (Attachment)
2. Approve changes to Board Policy 1.501, 2.400, 2.403, 2.806. 3.205, 3.400, 4.213, 4.214, 4.300, 4.301, 4.302, 4.403, 4.600, 4.603, 5.307, 5.802, 6.203, 6.3041, 6.309, 6.316, 6.318, 6.4052, and 6.409 – second reading (Attachment A1)

3. Approve Maryville High School Volleyball overnight trip to Louisville, Kentucky for the LIVT Volleyball Tournament – Funding Source: Volleyball Account (Attachment A2)
4. Approve Maryville High School Cross Country overnight to Oakville, Alabama for the Jesse Owens Classic Race – Funding Source: Student/Team (Attachment A3)
5. Approve Maryville High School All East Honors Chorus Honorees overnight to Cleveland, Tennessee for a performance for All-East Tennessee Chorus students – Funding Source: Students (Attachment A4)
6. Approve Maryville High School Band overnight trip to Cleveland, Tennessee for ETSBOA Jazz Clinic – Funding Source: Students (Attachment A5)
7. Approve Maryville High School Band and Orchestra overnight trip to Gatlinburg, Tennessee for ETSBOA All-State East Senior Clinic – Funding Source: Students (Attachment A6)
8. Approve Maryville High School Band/Orchestra overnight trip to Disney World/Universal Studios in Orlando, Florida – Funding Source: Students (Attachment A7)
9. Approve Maryville High School Band and Orchestra overnight trip to Nashville, Tennessee to attend TMEA All-State Convention – Funding Source: Students (Attachment A8)
10. Approve Central Technologies, Inc 3-year Firewall renewal – Funding Source: Technology/Software - $83,191.46 (Attachment A9)
11. Approve postage meter renewal for Maryville High School (Attachment A10)

AGENDA

1. Consider the 2025-2026 School Calendar. (Attachment B1)
    a. Motion to approve by Nick Black. Second from Bart Stinnett.
    b. Dr. Winstead highlighted aspects of the 2025-2026 school year calendar including 88 academic days in each semester, a November in-service day for vertical alignment, and no school on Monday, April 13. The last day for students is scheduled for Friday, May 22, and the Class of 2026 will graduate on Friday, May 15.
    c. Motion approved unanimously.
2. Consider changes to Board Policy 4.602 (GPA Calculation and Recognition) first reading (Attachment B2)
    a. Motion to approve by Isaac Simerly. Second from Candy Morgan.
    b. Dr. Winstead clarified that while Maryville High School currently provides rankings upon request, formalizing this practice into policy will support students applying for competitive scholarships and college admissions. The high school will continue with the laude system.
    c. Follow-up discussion included questions about feedback regarding valedictorian and salutatorian distinctions.
    d. Motion approved unanimously.
3. Consider the MCS Visitor Code of Conduct (Attachment B3)
    a. Motion to approve by Candy Morgan. Second from Isaac Simerly.
    b. Policy 1.501 brings Maryville City Schools into alignment with the new state law requiring a visitor code of conduct to be prominently displayed across all school buildings, websites, handbooks, and athletic facilities, in addition to being shared with parents. Dr. Winstead explained that the three-bulleted list was crafted by the district leadership team, incorporating suggestions from sample policies provided by Attorney Chris McCarty. In addition to the posted signs, a more detailed list will be included in handbooks and available online, which parents will acknowledge during the annual verification process. Dr. Winstead emphasized the benefits of implementing a consistent, district-wide visitor code of conduct.

c. Follow-up discussion addressed questions about the consequences for repeated offenses and specific behaviors that were considered during the drafting of the code of conduct. Assistant Director of Schools, Amy Vagnier, clarified that the detailed list encompasses various situations that fall under the three broad categories. Mr. Black inquired whether an attorney's name must be included in the policy, and Dr. Winstead is looking into this requirement.
d. Motion approved unanimously.

4. Consider the FY24 Budget Amendment No. 3 (Attachment B4)
    a. Motion to approve by Candy Morgan. Second from Bart Stinnett.
    b. Dr. Winstead expressed his appreciation for Finance Director Sarah Pritchard's work throughout the year, acknowledging her busiest months of the year as June, July, and August.
    c. Mrs. Pritchard explained that the budget amendment is part of the routine "cleanup adjustments." She highlighted an increase in fund balance to estimated $13.8 million and noted that sales tax collections have brought in nearly $1 million more than budgeted. She also mentioned that in June 2023, the fund balance stood at $12.9 million.
    d. Motion approved unanimously.

REPORTS FROM DIRECTOR OF SCHOOLS

Dr. Winstead expressed his enthusiasm for the strong start to the 2024-2025 school year. He extended his gratitude to administrators, teachers, and staff for their dedication and hard work during in-service week. He shared the positive feedback received on the staggered start schedule, originally implemented during COVID, and shared his desire to keep staggered start part of the calendar moving forward. Throughout in-service week, Dr. Winstead and Mrs. Vagnier met with each school's faculty where they shared a vision for the upcoming school year with both returning and new teachers.

Additionally, Dr. Winstead provided an update on the renovations at the new district office. He shared that by the end of Labor Day, the remaining central office staff, along with Maryville Virtual School and Maryville Academy, will fully transition into the new space. He commended Leon Williams Contractors and Cope Architecture for working extended hours to complete the upstairs of the district office, allowing MCS to occupy the space during the first week in August. Dr. Winstead shared his excitement for the upcoming ribbon-cutting ceremony and open house that will take place in October (date to be determined). He concluded by acknowledging the beginning of the fall sports season.

RECOGNITION OF STAFF AND STUDENTS

Back to school events were held at each school and set an enthusiastic tone for the new school year.

The Gilder Lehrman Institute Named MHS teacher Dr. Alex Oldham as the 2024 state history teacher of the year. Each year, this prestigious award recognizes one exceptional elementary through high school teacher for his or her outstanding contributions to American history education.

Foothills Elementary hosted the WBIR morning show on August 6. Mrs. Bosco expressed her appreciation to the participating students and teachers, along with mascot Cole Shinlever, for arriving at school by 4:15 am and participating in interviews throughout the morning.

John Sevier Elementary recognized the teachers who made this year's Swim Week a success. 440 students in grades 1-3 learned valuable water safety lessons throughout the week.

Fall sports are in full swing, Maryville High School recognized Wyatt Johnson who led the boys golf team to a win over Oak Ridge and CAK. Rylee Tucker led the girls team to defeating Oak Ridge. The girls soccer team celebrated a season opening 3-2 win over Girls Preparatory School of Chattanooga.

COMMENTS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

Bart Stinnett thanked Kyle Harris and Zach Luther for their work with students and providing a roadmap for students to celebrate success. He expressed his appreciation for the collaboration between schools and administrators. Mr. Stinnett thanked Mrs. Pritchard for her work with the budget and healthy fund balance.

Nick Black thanked Kyle Harris and Zach Luther for their presentation and providing services for students to put them on the path to success and graduation. He shared that his family is excited about the new school year, and he feels blessed to be in Maryville.

Isaac Simerly remarked on the great start to the school year. On a personal note, he shared that two of his children are enrolled at MRIS and representing Maryville through participation in sports. He expressed his gratitude for his own children attending Maryville City Schools and thanked principals for all they do to serve students and families. Mr. Simerly shared his excitement about the progress on the new district office. He encouraged everyone to participate in the Miles 4 Maryville fundraiser sponsored by the Maryville City Schools Foundation on Saturday, August 24. He concluded by expressing his excitement about the football season.

Candy Morgan also thanked Mr. Harris and Mr. Luther for their presentation about Maryville Academy and commented on the lasting influence they have on both students and the community. She expressed her appreciation to principals for all they do behind the scenes to ensure a successful start to the school year. Mrs. Morgan concluded by stating this is the first time in 27 years that one of her own children is not a student in Maryville City Schools.

Julie Elder remarked on the importance of serving students at Maryville Academy, regardless of the enrollment in comparison to other schools, stating they are no less significant. She thanked Mr. Harris and Mr. Luther for their dedication. Mrs. Elder commented on the energy level at the beginning of the school year meetings she attended with Dr. Winstead and Mrs. Vagnier and thanked the principals for setting the tone for the rest of the school year.

ADJOURN

Meeting adjourned at 6:30
Respectfully submitted by: Maria Greene