

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

**Tuesday, August 22, 2017**

The Montgomery County Board of Education convened the End of the Year Strategic Plan Review on Tuesday, August 22, 2017 at 5:30 p.m. Board members present were as follows: Steven W. DeBerry – Chair, Tommy Blake – Vice Chair, Bryan Dozier, Jesse Hill, Ann Long, Sandra Miller and Shirley Threadgill. Staff members present included Dr. Dale Ellis, Dr. Kevin Lancaster, Dr. Takeda Legrand, Dr. Jeff James, Dr. Jack Cagle, Mitch Taylor, Katie Hursey and Pam Cameron.

Chairman DeBerry called the meeting to order and asked for a motion to accept the agenda as presented. With a motion by Bryan Dozier and a second from Shirley Threadgill, 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 opened the meeting with an update on the clearing and grading phase of Montgomery Central. Morris-Berg Architects has qualified and recommended the lowest bidder, Branch Civil, Inc., as the contractor for this phase. Dr. Ellis asked for a motion to approve the recommendation. Ann Long made the motion and Tommy Blake seconded. The board approved unanimously.

Dr. Ellis and his executive team presented the power point, “Preparing for Excellence”. The power point reviewed strategic goals and challenges for Montgomery County Schools. The first year in this strategic planning cycle is 2014-2015, with the period ending 2017. All related performance data aligned to the Strategic Plan is presented as part of our focus on accountability, assuring the board and community that we will not hide from data. Several goals were met and surpassed. Montgomery County Schools has much to be proud of in all areas.

Dr. Jeff James gave a review of globally competitive students, which encompasses the graduation rate, Annual Measurable Outcomes (AMO) and Ready Expected Growth. The graduation rate continued its upward trend from 87.5% to 89.8%, remaining above the state and region. Parent communication, community liaison and social workers, differentiated diplomas at Montgomery Learning Academy (MLA) and the high schools, Career and Technical Education (CTE), the work of student assistant teams and closely monitoring attendance are credited with the rate increase. Numbers are expected to continue an upward climb. As for Ready Expected Growth, eight of nine schools met or exceeded growth. Schools that met growth include Star, Green Ridge, Candor, Page, East Middle and West Montgomery while Mt. Gilead and East Montgomery exceeded growth. Opportunities for improvement include continuing to work on improvement at the middle school level and refining the intervention process to ensure students get the help they need.

Dr. Kevin Lancaster gave an update of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Professionals and Healthy and Responsible Students. This section includes goals for teacher satisfaction and attendance, ethical violations, teacher retention, pregnancy rate and Out of School (OSS) suspension rate. The current teacher satisfaction survey states that nine out of 10 teachers are happy with Montgomery County Schools, which led to fewer transfer requests this school year. Strengths include an open door policy with administration, high visibility of administrators and raising the teacher supplement by ten percent this year. Weaknesses include principal turnover, larger class size and a lack of teacher assistants and other support positions. Teacher attendance had a slight decrease. Twelve teachers had perfect attendance, which is up from seven last year. This year, we had twenty-two ethical violations, most of which were non-certified staff. Ethics trainings continue for all staff members twice per year and an updated video is almost complete. Out of school suspension rates rose from 1,686 last year to 1,863 this school year. MLA as an option and in-school suspension programs being maintained at the school level have improved our OSS rate. Issues dealt with were less severe; there were just more of them. Improving was the pregnancy rate. The rate

fell by 16.8% and our state rate dropped from second place to fifth. Areas of prevention include Draw the Line-Respect the Line, the Healthy Living curriculum and increased involvement of school personnel.

Katie Hursey updated the Board on the Leadership Guides Innovation portion, including grants and parent contacts. MCS received over eleven million in grants for the 2016-17 school year. The goal is to continue to obtain grants that benefit all grade levels, creating new resources for our students. The total number of parent contacts remain high. Contacts include phone calls, emails and texts. Positive contacts with at-risk students and families is a priority.

Chief Financial Officer, Mitch Taylor, reviewed 21<sup>st</sup> Century Systems, which includes audit findings, goals, maintaining adequate fund balance and adequate facilities. There were no findings or comments in the audit this year, crediting good communication between the finance department and schools. An adequate fund balance was maintained. Weaknesses stem from enrollment being down due to charter school growth, resulting in \$19,940 per month in local funds leaving our system. In addition, flexibility in funds has been all but cut by the General Assembly. Concerning facilities, collaboration between commissioners is as good as can be remembered. Increased partnership with the college increases the county outlook for educational improvement. Early College and Central High School should be completed by 2019. Capacity to expand technology is limitless due to the expansion of fiber networks.

Dr. Ellis looked ahead to the Strategic Plan for 2020. Possible goals for the new strategic plan will be gathered by sending a survey to the public in September. Expectations will be updated and changes will be made to the mission and vision statement and core values. Final approval will be sought from the board at the October meeting.

After a question and answer session, Chairman DeBerry gave a motion to adjourn. Sandra Miller approved the motion with Ann Long seconding. The meeting was adjourned.

The next regular meeting will be held on Monday, September 11, 2017 at 6:30 pm.

  
Steven W. DeBerry, Chairman

  
Dale Ellis, Ed. D., Secretary