BOARD OF EDUCATION
Minutes for December 16, 2024

The Maryville Board of Education met in a regular session at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, December 16 at the MCS District Office. Board members present were Julie Elder, Nick Black, Isaac Simerly, and Candy Morgan. Chair Julie Elder called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m. and asked for a moment of silence followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Judge Tammy Harrington administered the oath of office to Nick Black and Candy Morgan, officially reinstating them as school board members. Both were re-elected in the November election to serve another four-year term.

Chair Julie Elder called for nominations for Board Chair. Nick Black nominated Julie Elder, with Isaac Simerly seconding the nomination. The motion carried unanimously, with no opposition. Julie Elder then requested nominations for Vice Chair. She motioned to nominate Nick Black for the position, and Isaac Simerly seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor, with no opposition.

UPDATE FROM MARYVILLE VIRTUAL SCHOOL

Maryville Virtual School Principal Deana Bishop provided updates, highlighting the recent ribbon-cutting ceremony and open house. She expressed appreciation for the new, welcoming space designed to meet the needs of students. During her presentation, Mrs. Bishop shared photos of the facility and explained its use by both students and staff.

She reported a current full-time enrollment of 71 students, with an additional 22 students set to join for the spring term. Mrs. Bishop emphasized that Maryville Virtual School operates as a program within a school, allowing students from other Maryville City Schools to take classes at MVS. Currently, 25 students are utilizing this opportunity to earn additional credits, helping them stay on track for graduation. In total, MVS is serving 118 students, including five who are set to graduate this December.

Mrs. Bishop also highlighted a recent TSSAA policy change, which now allows MVS students to participate in athletics at their zoned schools. She discussed the Early College Experience program, where juniors are taking dual enrollment courses, and shared the unique story of two international students who, while abroad for a semester, can continue earning credits remotely.

To conclude, Mrs. Bishop shared positive feedback from parents, emphasizing the value MVS brings to students and families.

Following Mrs. Bishops presentation, Board Member Candy Morgan initiated a discussion, expressing her desire for MVS students to have the opportunity to attend Maryville High School's prom.

ADOPT AGENDA

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

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC ON AGENDA ITEMS

Dustin Parks commented on Agenda Item #3 and expressed his desire for the three local school boards to unanimously pass resolutions to oppose school vouchers. He emphasized last year's effective collective effort from school boards across Tennessee and commented that Blount County is once again taking a stand.

Mr. Parks highlighted two new aspects of the proposed legislation: a one-time $2,000 bonus for teachers if the bill passes- essentially an attempt to "buy support" for the measure, and a provision tying school infrastructure funding to the bill. However, fundamental issues remain unchanged. The proposal discriminates against students with disabilities and English learners, while posing a fiscally disastrous threat to public education.

He strongly urged the board to pass this resolution emphasizing the importance of leading the way in advocating for public schools and what is best for all students.

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

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

1. Approve Minutes of November 18, 2024, meeting (Attachment)
2. Approve changes to Board Policy 6.2001 (Attachment A1) second reading.
3. Ratify Executive Committee approval for replacement intercom system for Maryville High School - $38,676.16 – Funding Source: Building Improvements (Attachment A2)
4. Approve PowerSchool renewal - $55,220.65 – Funding Source: Regular Education Software (Attachment A3)
5. Approve Maryville Junior High School Orchestra overnight to Cincinnati, Ohio to perform in the Music in the Parks Competition – Funding Source: students (Attachment A4)
6. Approve Maryville Junior High School Cheer Team overnight to Orlando, Florida to compete at Nationals – Funding Source: students (Attachment A5)

AGENDA

1. Consider quotes to replace the combination oven at Foothills Elementary School – Funding Source: Cafeteria - Equipment (Attachment B1)
    a. Dr. Winstead commented on the benefits of having a self-funded cafeteria program and stated the purchase of this oven benefits FHE and MRIS, as the schools share a kitchen.
    b. Isaac Simerly made the motion to approve the purchase of a replacement oven from KaTom for the amount of $30,795.29. Nick Black seconded the motion.
    c. Motion approved unanimously.
2. Consider appointing Nick White as a trustee of the Employees Sick Bank with term expiring December 31, 2027.
    a. The Sick Bank currently has 164 members (9 new this year) with 472.5 available days.

b. Motion to approve by Nick Black. Second from Isaac Simerly.
c. Motion approved unanimously.

3. Consider a resolution opposing the adoption and implementation of The Education Freedom Scholarship Act (Attachment B2)
    a. Motion to approve by Nick Black. Second from Isaac Simerly.
    b. Dr.Winstead expressed his appreciation to the City of Maryville for adamantly restating their opposition to vouchers. He reiterated that public dollars should remain with public schools, and the proposed voucher bill is just a step towards universal vouchers, further negatively impacting public schools.
    c. Vice Chair Nick Black thanked Mr. Parks for attending the board meeting and sharing his comments on vouchers and the Daily Times for its opinion piece. Mr. Black stated that the disastrous voucher proposal is not fiscally conservative or sound, and he will continue to support any resolution again school vouchers.
    d. Motion passed unanimously
4. Consider changes to Board Policy 2.201 (Line Item Transfer Authority) first reading (Attachment B3)
    a. Motion to approve by Nick Black. Second from Isaac Simerly.
    b. Dr. Winstead explained that The TN Comptroller of the Treasury has issued guidance that local legislative bodies have the option to adopt a resolution allowing the TN Dept of Education to be the approving authority for all budgets of the School Federal Projects Fund, thus dismissing further approval by the school board. Board Policy Section 2.200 was revised last January; however, this policy was not amended at that time and should have been.
    c. Motion approved unanimously

REPORTS FROM DIRECTOR OF SCHOOLS

Director of Schools, Dr. Mike Winstead, reflected on an outstanding fall semester and expressed his gratitude to administrators and staff for their dedication and hard work. He also shared his hope that the fall semester had been equally positive for the board members' children. Dr. Winstead concluded his remarks by wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and a joyful holiday season.

RECOGNITION OF STAFF AND STUDENTS

Maryville Junior High
Congratulations to Andy Herbert for receiving a $3,500 grant from the TN Valley Authority for his Start Your Engines Project where students will use a web-based physics simulator called Whitebox Learning to design, build, and test/race dragsters. Students will use power shop tools to construct the wooden dragsters.
Congratulations to 9th grade student Ella McNulty for winning the 2025 Martin Luther King Celebration Art/Design Contest. Ella's winning entry is a mixed media portrait of a young Dr. King gazing upward against a background of words and phrases from his writings and speeches. According to the judges, Ella's entry is "thoughtful, inspiring, and beautifully rendered." Her work will be featured in the 2025 MLK Celebration Program and on display during all of the celebration events. Thank you to MJHS art teacher, Julie Drake-Roberts for encouraging Ella to participate in this exciting opportunity.

Foothills Elementary
1st grade students and teachers worked together to create beautiful blankets for families in need, which are donated to Black Mountain Elementary School in Kentucky. Mission of Hope shared stories about the families they serve, making this a meaningful experience for our students.

Foothills Elementary received a copy of *Fox and Raccoon* by Leslie-Ann Green, donated by John Sevier, in memory of Karen Schito. This book, gifted by JSE, is a beautiful way to honor her legacy and impact on Maryville City Schools.
The Rocky Runners were celebrated and honored with certificates, bracelets, and a pizza party in appreciation of their progress in running in the Parks and Rec Reindeer Run. A special thank you Rocky Runner coaches, Kara Matthew, Emily Headrick, and Megan Jett.

Montgomery Ridge Intermediate

Congratulations to Jeremy Miller who is also a recipient of a $3,500 TVA STEM grant. Mr. Miller's students will learn block-based and python coding through the use of Codrone EDU in the SkyCode Project and will solve real-world problems by coding and flying drones.

Sam Houston

Maryville City Schools was honored to feature the art of 3rd grade student Charlotte Henry on this year's district holiday cards.

Athletics

Congratulations to Derek Hunt for being named Football Region 2-6A Coach of the Year
Football Region 2-6A Honors: Price Davis, MVP, Matthew Covert, Defensive POY, Will Jones, Underclassmen of the Year
Football All-Region 2-6A: Zak Hampel, Nolan White, Casey Cobble, David Crawford, Brody Smith, Nash Stinnett, Colton Foust, Alex Boyd
The girls' Bowing team is District Champion, and the girls earned a spot at team Regional competition in January
Bowling's Jack Taylor, Sarah Dee, and Rylee Tucker all earned individual spots at the state championship bowling match in January. This will be Rylee's 2nd sport representing Maryville at a state championship (Golf and Bowling)

COMMENTS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

Isaac Simerly thanked Mrs. Bishop for her presentation and commented on the importance of cosmetic upgrades to the virtual school to make the students feel valued. He expressed his excitement about the opportunities being provided to students internationally, commenting on how much he appreciates the flexibility to meet the needs of students. Mr. Simerly thanked Mr. Parks for speaking against vouchers and reiterated his opinion that tax dollars should remain with public schools.

Candy Morgan wished everyone happy holidays and a time with family and friends. She thanked Mrs. Bishop for her diligence in making sure no child is unheard. Mrs. Morgan thanked Mr. Parks for advocating for public schools and encouraged people to email their legislatures to express their opposition to the voucher bill.

Nick Black thanked Mrs. Bishop for her update and shared his excitement that 118 students are being served through Maryville Virtual School. He stated he is blessed to have his own children in Maryville City Schools and wished everyone a great Christmas.

Julie Elder shared her appreciation to Mrs. Bishop, stating that she, “did it right,” by starting small and then growing into a successful school and program. She wished all the principals, teachers, and staff a merry Christmas and expressed her appreciation to the Family Resource Center and Deb Skyler for making sure Maryville City School students are provided for.

ADJOURN

Meeting adjourned at 6:14 p.m.
Respectfully submitted by: Maria Greene