BOARD OF EDUCATION
Minutes for March 24, 2025

The Maryville Board of Education met in a regular session at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, March 24 at Maryville Junior High School. Board members present were Julie Elder, Nick Black, Isaac Simerly, and Candy Morgan. Chair Julie Elder called the meeting to order at 5:27 p.m. and asked for a moment of silence, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chair Julie Elder asked for the following updates:

Update on Maryville Housing Authority's Summer Reading and Summer Feeding Programs – Tom Taylor

Tom Taylor provided an update on the Maryville Housing Authority's summer initiatives. The Summer Reading Program was offered two days per week, while the Summer Feeding Program operated four days per week. The total cost of the programs was approximately $6,500, with generous donations received from local churches and banks helping to offset expenses. Second Harvest Food Bank supported the effort by providing backpacks on Thursdays, each containing enough food to sustain a student for the entire week. A total of 15 students were served throughout the summer. Volunteers are currently being sought to assist with future programming.

Update on TSBA SCOPE Conference – Julie Elder and Heather Hilton

Julie Elder invited MHS Principal Heather Hilton to share highlights from the recent TSBA SCOPE Conference. Mrs. Hilton turned the update over to the student representatives who attended. The students expressed their appreciation for the opportunity and spoke about the valuable experience of learning how school boards operate across the state. During the conference, they participated in a mock school board meeting and engaged in debates on relevant educational issues, such as school uniforms and the length of the academic year. Students also acknowledged the graduation requirements of completing at least one postsecondary course and 30 hours of community service. All students reported that the experience enhanced their understanding of educational policy and civic engagement.

Update from Maryville Junior High School – Principal David Combs

Principal David Combs provided an overview of current initiatives at Maryville Junior High School, emphasizing the school's focus on student work and critical thinking—specifically, what students are producing. He discussed several key areas of emphasis, including Academic Focus, the role of Deans, Academic Expeditions, Maryville Merits, Inclusion practices, the Student Concern Committee, Ready Graduate processes, Student Council activities, and recent physical plant improvements. Principal Combs concluded his report by expressing gratitude to the School Board for their continued support.

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 February 17, 2025, meeting (Attachment)
2. Approve Maryville High School All State Honors Chorus overnight to Nashville, Tennessee for honors choir clinic and performance for Tennessee All-State Chorus students – Funding Source: students (Attachment A1)
3. Approve Maryville High School Tennis Team overnight to Hendersonville, Tennessee for tennis tournament – Funding Source: Tennis (Attachment A2)
4. Ratify Executive Committee approval for Maryville High School Mock Trial Team overnight to Nashville, Tennessee for National State Championship – Funding Source: donations (Attachment A3)
5. Approve Maryville High School DECA Club overnight to Orlando, Florida – Funding Source: Students (Attachment A4)

AGENDA

1. Consider FY25 Budget Amendment #1 (Attachment B1)
    a. Motion to approve by Candy Morgan. Second from Nick Black.
    b. Sarah Pritchard provided an update of the budget and reviewed the attachment. The budget amendment will go to the City Council on April 1st for approval.
    c. Motion passed unanimously.
2. Consider expedited action on Board Policies 2.806 and 4.602 - first reading (Attachment B2)
    a. Motion to approve by Nick Black. Second from Candy Morgan.
    b. Dr. Winstead provided a summary of lowering the bid limit to $25,000.
    c. Motion passed unanimously.
3. Consider sole bid for Student Transportation Services from Rocky Top School Buses, LLC- Funding Source: Transportation (Attachment B3).
    a. Motion to approve by Candy Morgan. Second from Isaac Simerly.
    b. Dr. Winstead provided a review of the district's historical transportation contracts. He noted that Rocky Top Bus Service was the sole bidder in the current cycle. The company's proposal meets the district's expectations for service and reflects a fair and competitive rate. The new contract will secure services for a three-year term, with the option to renew for an additional three years based on satisfactory performance. Nick Black inquired about strategies to increase the number of bids in future cycles. Dr. Winstead explained that national transportation providers often face challenges competing with more competitive pricing offered by local vendors.
    c. Motion approved unanimously.
4. Consider proposal from Cope Architecture for design services for the Sam Houston Expansion Project (Attachment B4).
    a. Motion to approve by Nick Black. Second from Isaacl Simerly.
    b. Dr. Winstead provided an update regarding the architectural fee structure for upcoming projects. He noted that a detailed cost analysis is expected by early January, with the goal of beginning construction around this time next year. Board member Isaac Simerly raised questions about the design plans for the main entrance and the potential modifications to the front façade of the school.
5. Consider iPad replacements from Apple, Inc - $204,120.00 – Funding Source: Regular Education/Regular Instructional Equipment (Attachment B5).

a. Motion to approve by Isaac Simerly. Second from Candy Morgan.
b. Dr. Winstead explained the new iPads will replace the oldest iPads in the system that have been used for the last decade.
c. Motion approved unanimously

REPORTS FROM DIRECTOR OF SCHOOLS

Dr. Winstead addressed the Board regarding potential funding changes that could arise from shifts in the political environment, particularly at the federal level. He indicated that, at this time, the district expects minimal impact from any such changes.

He also noted that the district is entering the budget preparation season. Work is underway to develop the upcoming budget request. Dr. Winstead shared that there has been a decline in Maryville's share of the WFTEADA. He also provided a brief update on planning efforts related to the upcoming high school project.

RECOGNITION OF STAFF AND STUDENTS

COMMENTS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

Candy Morgan thanked Mr. Combs for hosting tonight's meeting and praised the school for working on the culture and climate, highlighting the new student breakfast. She also congratulated the students who served at SCOPE.

Isaac Simerly thanked Mr. Combs for his update and praised the Maryville Merits program and new student breakfast. He remarked at the positive side of the voucher bill is the one million dollars provided to schools. He also expressed his enthusiasm for the MHS and SHE construction projects.

Nick Black expressed his appreciation to David Combs and praised the celebration of high achievement as well as growth. Mr. Black discussed the mock trial experience and his enjoyment of working with the team, highlighting the benefits of the experience for students. He also expressed his enthusiasm for the SHE and MHS construction projects, remaking that this is an exciting time to be part of MCS.

Julie Elder extended thanks for the MJHS administrative team and praised the recent external improvements to the building, paired with the inside improvements with a focus on making the campus a fun learning environment for students.

ADJOURN

Meeting adjourned at 6:17.
Respectfully submitted by: Amy Vagnier