BOARD OF EDUCATION
Minutes for September 22, 2025

The Maryville Board of Education met in a regular session at 5:30 p.m. on September 22 at Coulter Grove Intermediate School. Members present were Julie Elder, Nick Black, Isaac Simerly, Candy Morgan, and Bart Stinnett. Board Chair Julie Elder called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm. and asked for a moment of silence, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance led by 7th grade student Scout Jackson.

UPDATE FROM COULTER GROVE

Dr. Ramona Best welcomed everyone to CGIS and shared a reflection on the school's journey - where they have come from, who they are today, and their vision for the future. She emphasized CGIS's "Game Plan" to build a school culture that is second to none, guided by their Social Agreement for 2025–26: to be positive, connected, genuine, consistent, flexible, and always strive to be their best.

Assistant Principal Wendy Newson introduced 7th grade teachers and students who highlighted what it means to be a CGIS 7th grader, showcasing the Black and Red Houses that foster belonging, school spirit, and teamwork. Students engage in chants, traditions, and Serve Days with community partners such as United Way, nursing homes, and Meals on Wheels. Parent involvement is strong through events like the Red House Ohana Thanksgiving Breakfast and the Black House Victorian Christmas Celebration. Enrichment experiences, including the Medieval Fair, Hawk Olympics, dissections, and field trips, provide hands-on learning and connection.

The presentation concluded with Zac Hargett introducing "Pieces of Being a Hawk," core experiences designed to guide, protect, and prepare students for success beyond CGIS.

ADOPT AGENDA

Chair 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.

APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

Issac Simerly made the motion to adopt the consent agenda, and a second came from Candy Morgan. The motion carried with full agreement.

1. Approve Minutes of August 18, 2025, meeting (Attachment)
2. Approve Maryville High School Band to Walker Valley High School, Cleveland, Tennessee for ETSBOA Jazz Clinic – Funding Source: Students (Attachment A1)
3. Approve Maryville High School Band overnight to Gatlinburg, Tennessee, for ETSBOA All-State East Senior Clinic – Funding Source: Students (Attachment A2)

4. Approve Maryville High School Band overnight to Nashville, Tennessee for TMEA All-State -Funding Source: student and Band Boosters (Attachment A3)
5. Approve Maryville High School Varsity Baseball Team overnight to Tri Cities for regular seasonal baseball games – Funding Source: MHS Baseball (Attachment A4)
6. Approve Maryville High School Varsity Baseball Team overnight to Bradenton, Florida – Funding Source: Students (Attachment A5)
7. Approve Maryville High School Key Club to Dollywood to attend District Fall Rally – Funding Source: Students (Attachment A6)
8. Approve Maryville High School Dance Team overnight to Hoover, Alabama, for NDA Competition – Funding Source: MHS Dance Team (Attachment A7)
9. Approve Maryville High School Wrestling Team overnight trips to Asheville, North Carolina and Johnson City, Tennessee for tournaments – Funding Source: Wrestling Account/Students – (Attachment A8)
10. Approve Maryville High School Boys Basketball Team overnight trips to Huntsville, Alabama and Nashville, Tennessee – Funding Source Boys Basketball Account (Attachment A9)
11. Approve Maryville High School Chorus overnight to Sevierville, Tennessee for Camp Ba-Yo-Ca – Funding Source: Students (Attachment A10)
12. Approve Maryville High School AP Art & Design overnight to New York to the AP Art Museum – Funding Source Students (Attachment A11)

AGENDA

1. Consider the nominee and alternate for Student Representative to the Board for the 2025-26 school year.
    a. Assistant Director of Schools Josh Oliver introduced candidates McKenzie Kovatch and Noah Jackson, sharing highlights from the interview process.
    b. Motion to approve by Candy Morgan. Second from Nick Black.
    c. Motion approved unanimously.
2. Consider Employee Bonus Proposal for categories of employees not covered by state-funded bonus (Attachment B1)
    a. Motion to approve by Nick Black. Second from Isaac Simerly.
    b. Dr. Winstead provided a brief update on employee bonus, noting that $500, $1,000, and $2,000 bonuses will be distributed to staff not covered by voucher legislation. A total of 423 employees are slated to receive a bonus at a total cost of approximately $400,000. To qualify, employees must have been hired before fall break last year, remain continuously employed through fall break this school year, and the stipends will be paid with the November 3 payroll.
    c. Motion approved unanimously.
3. Consider Change Order for the Fort Craig Renovation Project to provide space for Maryville City Schools Foundation and Family Resource Center - $307,259.00 – Funding Source: Regular Capital Outlay-Building Improvements (Attachment B2)
    a. Motion to approve by Nick Black. Second from Bart Stinnett.
    b. Dr. Winstead shared that the remaining classrooms at Fort Craig, originally part of the bid but later removed to reduce costs, will now be renovated. The clinic will stay in its current location, while the updated space will better serve the Family Resource Center and Maryville City Schools Foundation. The project is expected to be completed by spring break.
    c. Motion approved unanimously.

4. Consider agreement with Steve McDaniel to serve as Owner Representative on the Sam Houston Elementary Expansion Project (Attachment B3)
    a. Motion to approve by Isaac Simerly. Second from Candy Morgan.
    b. Dr. Winstead expressed that MCS is pleased to have Mr. McDaniel in this role, noting the value of his experience and expertise.
    c. Motion approved unanimously.
5. Consider emergency purchase of rooftop HVAC units for Coulter Grove Intermediate School from McMahan Mechanical, Inc. - $88,700.00 Funding Source: Regular Capital Outlay-Building Improvements (Attachment B4)
    a. Motion to approve by Bart Stinnett. Second from Nick Black.
    b. Dr. Winstead reported that the AC units are down in the CGIS auditorium, requesting emergency approval to move forward. He noted that the same contractors who bid on the JSE project were asked to submit quotes, with McMahan providing the lowest bid.
    c. Motion approved unanimously.
6. Consider bid for the Maryville High School Kitchen Equipment required for the expansion project – $636.525.26 - Funding Source: Cafeteria Funds – Food Service Equipment (Attachment B5)
    a. Dr. Winstead explained that while three vendors attended the walk-through, only one submitted a bid for the project, which will replace all serving lines in the main cafeteria area and include two walk-in coolers and a walk-in freezer. He noted that the cafeteria fund, which grew to $2 million during COVID, will cover the cost. The bid came in below the original estimate, with work expected to begin around April 15.
    b. Nick Black made the motion to move forward with the Maryville High School Kitchen Equipment purchase in the amount of $636,525.26 from Singer H&R. Second from Isaac Simerly.
    c. Motion approved unanimously.

REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR OF SCHOOLS

Dr. Winstead shared that the October inservice day will serve as the starting point for transition planning. Teachers in grades 9–12 will meet together, grades 7–8 will gather at MJHS, and grades 4–6 will meet at one of the intermediate schools. These sessions will allow for brainstorming, input, and the formation of teams that will guide the next stages of planning for the grade reconfiguration.

He also discussed technology planning, noting that it has been ten years since MCS launched iReach. A survey was sent to teachers in grades 4–12 to gather feedback on devices, particularly what should be purchased for grades 4–8 for next year. Options include continuing with laptops, purchasing Chromebooks to be replaced more frequently, or using iPads. Dr. Winstead emphasized the importance of reflecting on past goals, addressing both the successes and challenges of student engagement, and prioritizing digital citizenship.

Curriculum Director Amy Vagnier added that the district is interested in teacher feedback on how technology can be used to free up time for deeper student thinking, what practices may need to be abandoned, and how best to maximize learning through technology.

RECOGNITIONS OF STUDENTS AND STAFF

MJHS: 9th grade students Maia Nibali, Mei Mizokami, and Caroline Porter were selected to exhibit artwork at the 109th Tennessee Valley Fair. Mei Mizokami also received Honorable Mention for her piece titled *Beautiful Flowers*.

MHS: Congratulations to senior Allison Simpson for being named a National Merit Semifinalist. Allison is one of 16,000 Semifinalists for the National Merit Scholarship Program.

Congratulations to Rebecca Boone, Cash Coffman, Lillie Dykes, and Mason Malone for being named National Merit Commended students based on their 2025 PSAT performance.

The MHS Criminal Justice classes won 1st place in the Tennessee Valley Fair Forensics Competition, defeating eight other schools.

SHE: Sam Houston kicked off its Watch D.O.G.S. Program with more than 300 dads and kids attending the event.

District Wide: Maryville City Schools was recognized as an iReady Super Stretch District for remarkable Stretch Growth on the 23-24 iReady Diagnostic Data.

Congratulations to the over 50 students who graduated from the ELL Program and were celebrated at a graduation ceremony on August 25 at CGIS.

COMMENTS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

Candy Morgan thanked Dr. Best and noted that what resonated most was seeing how students are supported beyond the classroom. She expressed appreciation for the encouragement given to teachers to care for and “love on” kids.

Isaac Simerly thanked Dr. Best and highlighted the many positive things happening at CGIS. He remarked that teachers want to teach, students want to be there, and leaders want to lead. He especially liked hearing about Serve Days and the way teachers show support by attending student events, which helps students feel cared for. He also shared excitement about the Fort Craig renovations and the upcoming decisions on devices for grades 4–8.

Bart Stinnett congratulated McKenzie and Noah and thanked the CGIS admin for hosting the meeting. He emphasized that the culture being built at CGIS is something students will carry with them throughout their lives.

Nick Black thanked Dr. Best and said it was wonderful to hear directly from staff, students, and the admin team. He praised CGIS’s culture as “second to none” and said the enthusiasm of teachers and students was clear in their presentations. He also welcomed McKenzie and Noah, sharing that he looks forward to their input, participation, and student perspectives. He closed by expressing gratitude for a great start to the school year, noting his own children in grades K–9 are having a positive experience.

Noah Jackson thanked Dr. Best and said he enjoyed learning about the new traditions at CGIS, which are still firmly rooted in the school’s strong culture. He shared his excitement to serve in his new role, believing it fills an important need, and looks forward to contributing his input.

Julie Elder thanked everyone for attending and adjourned the meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 6:32

Respectfully submitted by Maria Greene