

**Minutes
Clarksville-Montgomery County
Board of Education**

August 22, 2023

The Clarksville Montgomery County Board of Education convened Tuesday, August 22, 2023 in the Boardroom central administration offices, 621 Gracey Avenue, Clarksville TN. The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. Board members present were: District Chair Kent Griffy, Herbert Nelson, Margaret Pace, Charlie Patterson, Carol Berry, Jimmie Garland, and Aron Maberry. Also present were: Dr. Jean Luna-Vedder, Director of Schools; Mark Nolan, School Board Attorney; Norm Brumblay, Chief Operations Officer; David Holman, Chief Technology Officer; Melissa Izatt, Chief Human Resources Officer; Dr. Schanda Doughty, Chief Academic Officer; Chris Reneau, Chief Financial Officer; Carol Joiner, General Counsel; and LaTonya Long, School Board Secretary who documented minutes of the meeting. Members present of the County Commission School Liaison Committee: Rashidah Leverett, Ryan Gallant, Carmelle Chandler, John Gannon and Walker Woodruff.

Public Conversation

Ms. Karen England addressed the Board concerning policies and procedures and CMCSS' lack of transparency related to age-appropriate materials in CMCSS libraries and recent changes in the law.

Ms. Becky Zientek spoke about inappropriate library books in CMCSS school libraries and student mental illnesses and the associated causes.

Ms. Rachel Bush addressed the Board on increasing recess time for elementary students sharing details of a previous pilot program and gave information on the Link program.

Dr. Dale Brown addressed the Board about the crucial role of physical activity for the mental, physical and neurodevelopment of children.

Ms. Jessica Kelley shared requirements that various age groups need for recess outside play.

Ms. Rebekah Messer addressed the Board on homeschool families supplementing their education as related to elementary student's recess time and shared survey information and research information on the impact of physical activity.

Ms. Morgan Garner spoke about Master Schedule and Physical Education in Elementary Schools as to incorporate more recess time for elementary school students.

Ms. Deanna McLaughlin addressed the Board on school traffic on Cunningham Lane and shared the research and work she has done to obtain a solution.

Mr. Jeremiah Walker shared his observance of school traffic and parents dropping off students at New Providence Middle and Minglewood Elementary Schools.

Approval of Consent Agenda

On a motion by Mr. Charlie Patterson and seconded by Mr. Jimmie Garland, the Board approved the Consent Agenda 7-0. The Consent Agenda consisted of:

1. 07/25/2023 Regular Session Minutes
2. Surplus Property – Asset Removal – NWHS Plasma Tracker Table, 1st Read 08/08/2023
3. Retiree Insurance – 2024 Update, 1st Read 08/08/2023

Reports

Executive Order August 8, 2023 requesting authorization to overspend the Property Liability Insurance Premiums account under Operation of Plant function (72610) in the General-Purpose Fund in order to pay for the 2023-2024 premiums for property liability insurance coverage.

Comments

Fort Campbell School Liaison Officer

Ms. Karen Watkins-Diouf Ft. Campbell Liaison Officer reported that all school principals have been contacted and the Liaison Officers will begin their school visits in September. They are looking forward to serving CMCSS and the community.

CMCEA/PET Representatives

Ms. Stefi Outlaw, President of CMCEA addressed the Board not only as the President of CMCEA but also as a professionally licensed teacher in CMCSS. Ms. Outlaw shared the path for receiving her license as an educator stating that as a professional her ability to teach the Tennessee State Standards with integrity should be respected and supported. Ms. Outlaw commented that the respect and support of educators are being eroded by certain elected officials and community member groups. The attacks on teacher integrity and professionalism are to undermine public education and create an illusion of a broken system. Ms. Outlaw further stated that it is disheartening to see elected officials propel negative information regarding the school system and teachers in public. Ms. Outlaw asked the Board to stand with the teachers of CMCSS and support their professional knowledge, competence, opinions and integrity and allow them to do the jobs they have been hired and trained to do. CMCEA will always have the backs of educators and hope the Board will as well.

Ms. Cathy Kolb, President of PET commented that after hearing all of the comments and concerns from parents and those in attendance two words come to mind “building relationships” stating that building relationships is where it needs to start from the Legislative agenda, Director of Schools, School Board, community members, teachers and parents as well as listening to the warriors.

County Commissioners

No Comments

Board Members

Mrs. Berry made comments on how she is committed to doing an act of kindness everyday and employed those in attendance to do the same and to treat others the way they want to be treated”. Ms. Berry stated that it is unfair that Board members are attacked for not doing their jobs when they are not being communicated to, stating that all board members care about the concerns of the community and all members should be communicated to with concerns.

Ms. Pace had a question concerning the protocol for stadium inspections whether or not there is a schedule for yearly inspections. Mr. Norm Brumblay, Chief Operations Officer shared that thorough structural inspections of stadiums are conducted yearly to include bleachers and grounds.

Mr. Maberry thanked everyone for there comments and shared information about his visits to schools for the first day high fives and handshakes and also for the back-to-school road shows. Mr. Maberry shared that he has had five times more calls from the community in reference to the ENGAGE conference than with any other previous concerns. He reported that he has received 50 phone calls from elected officials, CMCSS employees, and parents that were upsetting and uncomfortable. Their concerns were related to a news report concerning information presented at one of the ENGAGE sessions. The session included a chart on social identities, privilege status and oppression status. Mr. Maberry read the response given by the district that stated that the session in question was not a CMCSS district-wide training. There were hundreds of sessions for educators to choose from. The content was developed independently by educators. CMCSS Leadership will be reevaluating the process in-which educators create content that is included in the ENGAGE conference for next summer to ensure all sessions are in line with district expectations. Employees are trained annually on prohibited content that are against state law. Mr. Maberry shared some of the comments he received from elected officials, educators, and parents.

Mr. Nelson addressed concerns related to an unfounded social media post that stated he and another board member did not address a situation at KWHS. Mr. Nelson continued to detail his career and accomplishments from his time in the military, his educational journey, and his time on the School Board. Mr. Nelson also addressed a comment on social media that stated one should not vote for a Board member just because they are black, stating that he has proven himself through his various accomplishments and that all of his accomplishments are not because he is black, but are because he is qualified. Mr. Nelson also stated that it is insulting to the citizens of Clarksville Montgomery County to make a statement that certain board members have been voted in just because they are black stating that they have been voted in because they have had careers and accomplishments that made them qualified and the citizens of Clarksville saw that they were qualified. He asked that in the future he would appreciate that those individuals would please respect what he and the other boards members have accomplished in their careers.

Mr. Garland thanked the staff and teachers for the work they do every day, stating that some were in attendance to tear teachers and staff down but the Board is there to build them up. Mr. Garland stated that he was in agreement with a lot of the concerns presented but do not understand other concerns. He stated that he will do everything that he can to ensure that CMCSS’ teachers, students and staff get the support, supplies and equipment they need as they matriculate through the school system to adulthood.

Mr. Patterson stated that he is also retired military and voted for Mr. Nelson to fill the vacant seat on the Board during his first term and does not think he made a mistake in doing so. Mr. Patterson thanked Dr. Luna-Vedder and the staff for a safe and great opening of schools. Mr. Patterson commented that he disagreed with Mr. Maberry on some of his comments, stating that he thinks Dr. Luna-Vedder and the staff handled the ENGAGE situation properly and he appreciated them for it.

Mr. Garland stated that he would like the Board Chair to set up a meeting to talk about the Board's responsibilities under Policy Governance.

Director of Schools Report

Dr. Luna-Vedder reported that this week marks the second full week of the 2023-2024 school year. As anticipated CMCSS is continuing to see historic numbers of students enrolling. As of today, enrollment is approximately 39,500 students, which is an increase of about 650 students compared to this date last year. The district is continuing to work with county officials to prepare for future growth in the school system. Dr. Luna-Vedder reported that ground has been broken for the next elementary school. Kirkwood Elementary School is set to open in August 2024 to finish the Kirkwood Complex. The opening of Kirkwood Elementary will help elevate some of the capacity issues currently at the elementary schools. With the growth of the community and a collaborative spirit the district is embracing and embarked on road shows with the theme growing together, stating that she truly believes CMCSS can continue to work and grow together as a school system alongside elected officials, community partners, parents, students and stakeholders. Dr. Luna-Vedder stated that district leadership certainly knows CMCSS is not perfect and there is much room for growth but are proud of the school system and teachers and thanked them for the work they do every day alongside faculty, staff, classified and bus drivers. Dr. Luna-Vedder reported that the district has almost reached capacity with bus drivers and custodians. In closing Dr. Luna-Vedder commented that she is committed to making sure CMCSS is the best school system in the state of Tennessee to both attend and to be employed and thanked the Board members for their support and appreciated seeing many of them at road shows and at school openings.

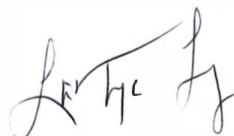
Items on the agenda having been completed, Board Chair Kent Griffy adjourned the meeting at 7:08 p.m.



Kent Griffy
Board Chair



Dr. Jean Luna-Vedder
Director of Schools



LaTonya Long
School Board Secretary