

Minutes
Clarksville-Montgomery County
Board of Education

April 23, 2024

The Clarksville Montgomery County Board of Education convened Tuesday, April 23, 2024 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, Jimmie Garland, Carol Berry, Charlie Patterson and Aron Maberry. Also present were: Dr. Jean Luna-Vedder, Director of Schools; Mark Nolan, School Board Attorney; Dr. Angela Huff, Chief of Staff; 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; Jessica Harris, Director of Elementary Schools; Amanda Nicks, Director of Elementary Schools; Matthew Slight, Director of Middle Schools; 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: Carmelle Chandler, David Harper, Nathan Burkholder, Chris Rasnic, Autumn Simmons

Point of Pride Awards

Elizabeth Vincent, Director of Policy and Continuous Improvement announced the following Point of Pride awards
2024 Miss Basketball Award and Tennessee Girls Basketball Gatorade Player of the Year

Imari Berry-CHS

TSSAA State Basketball Championships-CHS Girls Basketball Team (Final 8)

Imari Berry, Keira Garinger, Shakiah Vance, Ella Muiznieks, Olivia Loos, Avery Hawkins, Summer King, Ava Ahearn, Campbell Boisseau, Ally Howard, Malon Smith, Emma Young, Ella Moore; Coaches, Brian Rush, Tony Amero, Lucy Chilcutt, Sonja Chilcutt

TSSAA State Basketball Championships-RHS Boys Basketball Team (Final 4)

Maksim Idzi, Jiyair Rose, Jay Yip, Cameryn Ward, Roland Morton, Quamond Linsey, Preston Russell, Landon Hankemeier, Evan Deal, Jacob Edwards, Cannon Prather, Christopher Johnson, Nicholas Blocker, Michael Lawton, Logan Piekielek; Coaches, Johnny Jackson, Jacob Freeze, Jamil Jackson, Tariq Silver

Mock Trial State Competition

Ava Heuston-CHS, Best Prosecuting Attorney for 2024

Purple Star School Awards Renewing Applicant Schools: Barkers Mill Elementary School, Liberty Elementary School, Northeast Elementary School, Ringgold Elementary School, Rossvie High School, Rossvie Middle School

First Time Applicant Schools: East Montgomery Elementary School, Glenellen Elementary School, Kenwood High School, Kirkwood High School, Middle College at Austin Peay, Minglewood Elementary School, Montgomery Central High School, Moore Magnet Elementary School, Northeast High School, Rossvie Elementary School, St. Bethlehem Elementary School

Public Conversation

Ms. Faye Morales Hobson gave an employment statement and addressed the board on discrimination in CMCSS' hiring and selection process. Ms. Megan Wise gave an overview of reported incidences and complaints in the district as related to special education, students with disabilities, and students with IEP's.

Approval of Consent Agenda

On a motion by Mr. Jimmie Garland and seconded by Ms. Carol Berry the Board approved the Consent Agenda 7-0. The Consent Agenda consisted of:

1. 03/26/2024 Regular Session Minutes
2. Surplus Property-Custodial Equipment, 1st Read 04/09/2024
3. 2024-2025 Proposed Consolidated Budget, 1st Read 04/09/2024

Board Discussion & Consideration

Naming of Elementary School #26: Mr. Griffy, Board Chair explained that eleven nominations were made for the name of elementary school #26 at the April 9th Board Study Session. The board will be voting on those nominations at tonight's formal meeting. Ballots with the nominations listed were given to each board member. There will be three rounds of voting to determine the name of elementary #26. Mr. Griffy instructed the board to select three nominations on the first round of voting, two names of the remaining nominations on the second round of voting and one name on the third round of voting. (Discussion) Mr. Maberry made a recommendation to amend the nomination Freedom Pass to Freedom Point. Mr. Patterson stated that he did not have a problem with adding the name Freedom Point to the ballot. Mrs. Berry objected to adding a nomination, stating that the purpose of the study session on April 9th was to recommend nominations and to move forward with the vote at the formal meeting. (No further objections). Before voting began Mr. Patterson asked for clarification that Freedom Point could be added to be ballot. Mr. Griffy clarified that Freedom Point could be added to the ballot as there were no other objections. Mr. Maberry explained that at the board's retreat it was discussed and deemed

appropriate to amend or add a nomination to the ballot. Mr. Maberry also asked if the board needed to vote to suspend their regular rules in order to amend the ballot. Mr. Griffy stated that research had occurred on the matter and a vote to suspend would not be necessary. (No Further Discussion). Board members were instructed to place their names and round number on their ballots. The ballot's will be counted by Mr. Nolan, Board Attorney. First round of voting four names selected: Freedom Elementary, Lettie Kendell Elementary, Valor Elementary, Freedom Point Elementary. Second round of voting two names selected: Freedom Elementary, Freedom Point Elementary. Third round of voting name selected: Freedom Elementary.

Comments

Fort Campbell School Liaison Officer

Ms. Karen Watkins-Diouf thanked all of the schools that participated in the month of the military child celebration. Ms. Watkins-Diouf gave a special thank you to NEHS JROTC for their outstanding presentation of the colors at Ft. Campbell's annual kid's fest and congratulated all of the recipients of the purple star award and to those that received their renewal.

CMCEA/PET Representatives

Ms. Stefi Outlaw, President of CMCEA offered a statement to consider as related to state testing "A student is more than their label of below, approaching, meet or exceed, a teacher is more than their label of one, two, three, four or five, a school is more than its label of a b c d or f, a district is more than its label of exemplary, advancing, satisfactory, marginal and in need of improvement", stating that each are more than the labels placed on them by state testing, evaluations and grades. Ms. Outlaw gave examples of the commitment teachers demonstrate daily during the course of their tenure and offered comments on reflecting on the whole of a student, not only on the partial truths that state standardized testing reflect.

Ms. Cathy Kolb, President of PET shared information from the Legislature stating that the universal voucher bill is dead as there were major differences between the House and the Senate regarding the plan to pass Tennessee's universal school voucher bill statewide. Ms. Kolb reported that there is another proposal, House Bill 1202, Senate bill 1325, that aims to allow certain staff members to carry concealed firearms in schools after undergoing psychological evaluations, background checks and training. However, concerns about liability and the added responsibility on teachers have been raised by groups like PET, stating that the state, district and school have immunity, however, the educator alone will carry the risks and responsibility. Liability insurance is the sole responsibility of the educator, the cost is estimated in excess of \$1,500 a year if available. Ms. Kolb stated that post certification in Tennessee needs to be clearly explained. Ms. Kolb further stated that she had conversations with principals, directors of schools, school boards and law enforcement officers and many of them are opposed to this bill sharing that one teacher's comment set the tone of opinion "I do not need one more thing on my plate I am here to teach".

County Commissioners

No Comments

Board Members

Mr. Garland stated that he is happy that the voucher bill did not pass and he is hoping that the Governor does not sign the bill for teachers to carry concealed firearms. Mr. Garland's concern is students being left unprotected in the event of a shooter.

Mr. Nelson commented that many board members including himself have received numerous phone calls and emails with parental concerns that are generally handled through the Director of Schools and Dr. Huff. Mr. Nelson stated, that there are many issues that come up that do not come before the board and board meetings but are handled, while not everything is handled as someone may seem to think it should be, those issues are addressed. Mr. Nelson stated that Dr. Luna-Vedder and Dr. Huff do a great job handling all of the issues that arise. Mr. Nelson thanked Dr. Luna-Vedder and Dr. Huff for taking care of those concerns.

Mrs. Pace commented that she knows education vouchers are basically dead for this year but also know that it will continue to resurface just as charter schools. Mrs. Pace stated that the universal voucher bill skims public education funds from the top to private education. Private schools have the option of picking and choosing students that they will enroll, public schools do not have that choice. Mrs. Pace further stated that one of the more disturbing results is the impact on special education programs, commenting that anyone with any educational savvy knows the extreme expense of these programs designed to educate special needs students, stating that those children deserve every opportunity available but are not chosen by private schools. Mrs. Pace asked Chris Reneau, CMCSS' Chief Financial Officer, as an expert in finance and budget to explain how the voucher bill would directly impact CMCSS educational funds. Mr.

Reneau stated that the voucher bill will take funding away from the entire school population. It will take dollars away that have been allocated and budgeted for students in the county and give that to an additional resource that does not have the same level of accountability as a school district and does not have the same testing requirements or teacher certification requirements. It would have a negative impact on the district. Mrs. Pace commented that as a fierce advocate of public education and of equity and fairness she would certainly be uncomfortable sitting on a County School Board and voting to remove public funds to support private school vouchers which also nurture charter schools. There are vast student choices and remarkable education options and opportunities within CMCS. Mrs. Pace commented that she is so extremely proud of these public schools.

Mrs. Berry agreed with Mrs. Pace comments stating that she is elated and grateful that the voucher bill did not make it out of committee.

Director of Schools Report

Dr. Luna-Vedder reported that the district is wrapping up statewide testing this week and extended a heartfelt thank you to all of the educators, administrators and proctors who worked or volunteered in schools to ensure this week's administration went smoothly as it truly was a group effort. As the last month of school is approaching Dr. Luna-Vedder encouraged board members to pause and recognize the accomplishments of district students and educators. The awards ceremony recognition of valedictorians and salutatorians, grade promotions, field day activities, yearbook signings, proms, graduations and scholarship announcements. There are many good news stories among the districts 39,000 plus students. Dr. Luna-Vedder employed the board to please continue to help highlight the bright spots and work collaboratively on areas of opportunity.

Items on the agenda having been completed, Board Chair Kent Griffy adjourned the meeting at 7:00 p.m.



Kent Griffy
Board Chair



Dr. Jean Luna-Vedder
Director of Schools



LaTonya Long
School Board Secretary