

Monroe County Board of Education
Regular Meeting Minutes
January 10, 2012 at 7:00 p.m.
Monroe County Board of Education Office

I. Roll Call

- a. Mr. Lively called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. All members were present.

II. Pledge of Allegiance

III. Delegations

- a. Joe Panetta, Assistant Superintendent for the WV Department of Education, presented each board member and the superintendent with a copy of an updated efficiency study for Monroe County Schools. Mr. Panetta explained that the study had been updated at the request of the superintendent and that the results indicate that the school system has several areas of concern. He also spoke to the board about the possibility of moving toward a balanced calendar as a way of ensuring that the students in Monroe County can obtain 180 days of instruction every year. Mr. Panetta then went on to discuss the following findings from WV DOE:

1. Monroe County Schools has experienced a steadily declining fund balance from 2007 through 2011.
2. Monroe County Schools has an actual deficit that exceeds the allowable 3% casual deficit and projections indicate that the school system's deficit will grow during the current school year.
3. The primary cause of the Monroe County Schools' deficit is employment of personnel above the state funding formula. This has led to the actual deficit that is in addition to the deficit shown by most governmental agencies because of the requirement that the OPEB liability be shown.
4. Monroe County Schools is currently in violation of state law because the deficit exceeds the 3% allowable amount. As a result, the schools could lose their accreditation status, Board members may be held personally liable for any deficit spending, and Board members face the possibility of a misdemeanor conviction which carries a \$500 fine and up to one year in jail.
5. During the 2011 school year, Monroe County Schools employed 9.26 professional employees and 22.157 service employees above the state funding formula.
6. Monroe County Schools' student enrollment has declined from 2015 in 2007 to 1875 in the current school year.
7. Monroe County Schools charges adults less than the production cost for breakfast and lunches and should consider raising its prices for adult meals.
8. 28.8% of the counties service personnel are bus drivers, compared with the state average of 20.7%.

- b. Mr. Panetta then presented a series of recommendations to address the budget shortfall:
- 1.Reduce the number of personnel employed beyond the funding formula.
 - 2.Maintain personnel levels from the second month throughout the year.
 - 3.Reduce employment terms of employees whose contracts are in excess of 200 days to the minimum amount required.
 - 4.Review and reduce expenditures in all areas of operation.
 - 5.Be critical of any new expenditures.
 - 6.Require that all personnel actions be approved by the superintendent and treasurer to ensure that funding is available.
 - 7.Budget each school with a specified amount for substitutes and don't allow the schools to go beyond their budgeted amounts.
 - 8.Review the current system of assigning and charging substitutes.
 - 9.Make efforts to eliminate overtime.
 10. Prepare for upcoming changes in Medicaid billing procedures to maximize billable time.
 11. Implement a budgetary control through WVEIS to stop purchases unless funds are readily available.
 12. Encumber payroll for the fiscal year through WVEIS.
 13. Explore the possibility of credit card payments for breakfast and lunch bills.
 14. Continue efforts to increase student participation in the breakfast and lunch program at each school.
 15. Increase adult meal prices.
 16. Aggressively pursue collection of delinquent breakfast and lunch bills.
 17. Improve bus preventative maintenance program.
 18. Review bus routing with low average driver mileage and student to driver ratios.
- c. Upon completion of Mr. Panetta's report, Mr. Mustain commented that Monroe County Schools had been in a state of decline for several years due to actions and inaction by the previous administration. He stated that positions had been created which were never approved by the board, contracts were issued which were never presented to the board for consideration, and that problems were ignored regarding the declining enrollment and increasing expenses. Mr. Mustain stated that by his estimation, over \$1,000,000 dollars had been spent for unnecessary positions or extra contracts and that many of those were done without approval of the Board of Education. Dr. Siers explained that there had been a few instances where people were hired and entered into payroll with no supporting board minutes or contracts but that to the best of his knowledge, all of those issues had been cleaned up.
- d. Mr. Sams asked Mr. Panetta why the WV legislature had passed a law prohibiting school systems from requiring their buses be parked at the end of each driver's run and instead making it allowable for the buses to travel many miles per day while empty of students. Mr. Panetta stated that he believed that this was done only to accommodate runs

where an aide was assigned to ride with a particular student. Dr. Siers stated that this may have been the intent of the law but that was not how it worked in application. He explained that Monroe County Schools has a number of buses which travel in excess of 30 miles per day empty of students and that one bus travels over 50 miles per day without students. He also explained that there had been an attempt at the beginning of the current school year to lease bus lots throughout the county on which the buses could be required to park but that two grievances were filed to prevent this from happening and as a result, the board's attorneys recommended that Monroe County not enter into the leases as the cost of the grievances would likely exceed any potential savings from buses traveling less miles. Mr. Panetta stated that he would look into the issue when he returned to his office.

- e. It was determined that executive session would not be necessary as Mr. Panetta had addressed the board's concerns regarding personnel cuts in open session.

IV. Approval of Minutes

- a. Mr. Mustain moved to approve the minutes from the December 20, 2011 meeting. The vote to approve was unanimous.

V. Delegations

- a. Howdy Henritz and Caroline Sparks addressed the board regarding the proposed plan to consolidate boys' and girls' soccer at JMHS into a coed team for the 2012 season. Dr. Siers confirmed that this was the proposed plan. Mrs. Sparks stated that she was willing to help raise the money necessary for the teams to continue to be separated. She stated that she would coordinate a scrap metal drive or oversee other fundraisers if the result would be having a boys' and girls' team for next year. Mr. Henritz asked how much money it would cost to fund one soccer team. Dr. Siers explained that he didn't have the figures in front of him but that it would be something that could be obtained. He also explained that since its inception, soccer had only ended the season with remaining funds for two years and that money had to be taken from the football account to pay for soccer on all other years. He also explained that even on the years that soccer had an ending balance; it had not been charged for its transportation, field maintenance, or paint. Mr. Henritz stated that soccer had paid for its paint and that last year \$800 had been taken from the soccer fund to go toward building a soccer field. Mrs. Mustain stated that she was attempting to create a soccer field at JMHS because there were concerns about the soccer teams practicing and playing on the football, softball, and baseball fields without ever assisting in the maintenance of any of these fields. Dr. Siers stated that he would continue to recommend the coed soccer team since personnel decisions had to be finalized by January 31, 2012 but that the board could reconsider if sufficient money was raised to fund two teams. He agreed to find out the costs of funding one soccer team and to provide Mrs. Sparks with information that would be necessary to begin a soccer boosters program at JMHS.

VI. Superintendent's Report

- a. Dr. Siers informed the board that the JMHS Math & Science team had qualified to participate in the state tournament in Morgantown and congratulated Mr. Rick Eades for his efforts in preparing this team.
- b. Dr. Siers provided each board member with a copy of and read the following expert from a letter which had been submitted by Wayne Spangler, Vice President of the WVEA, regarding his organization's stance on Monroe County's budget deficit:

" Our current deficit has caused a reduction in force to occur in both the professional and service personnel ranks for the upcoming 2012-2013 school year. We realize that these decisions have not been easy, and we realize the impact they have had on many individuals. As the largest professional personnel organization in the county, many of our members have been affected. Therefore, we are not going to be asking the board to use any of the local share money available to fund any additional benefits. We request that those funds be used to save as many jobs as possible. We believe that for our school system to be successful, it must be adequately staffed. We will, however, request that the carryover of the two personal leave days continue to be an option offered to employees. These are difficult times. The members of the Monroe County Education Association realize this and stand ready to help meet the challenges that lay ahead for Monroe County Schools."

- c. Each board member was presented with a year to date expense summary for Monroe County Schools. The summary showed a year to date decrease in expenses of \$72,785 from December 2010 and a decrease of \$480,109 from December 2009.
- d. Dr. Siers informed the board that Eric Widdoes, MCTC Director, would present at the next regular board meeting an overview of recent changes in the CNA program at MCTC.

VII. Finance

- a. Mrs. Sabol moved to approve the payment of all bills as presented with the exception of Check #70886 to King's Tire. The vote to approve was unanimous.
- b. Mrs. Sabol moved to approve the payment of check #70886 to King's Tire. The vote to approve was Sabol-yes, Mann-yes, Mustain-yes, Lively-yes, and Sams-abstained.
- c. Mr. Sams moved to approve the transfers and supplements as presented. The vote to approve was unanimous.

VIII. Policies

- a. Dr. Siers recommended approval of the policy for Use of Federal Funds for Tuition Assistance and Employment of Highly Qualified Teachers with the changes suggested by Mr. Lively. Mr. Sams moved to approve this recommendation. The vote to approve was unanimous.

IX. New Business

- a. Dr. Siers recommended the creation of a list for emergency bus substitutes which would only be used in the event that no regular driver or regular substitute driver could be secured for an after school run. He also recommended that Larry Dunbar and Mike Dixon be approved to be on the initial list with the understanding that more could be added if they had the proper endorsements. Mr. Mann moved to approve the creation of the list with the suggested employees. The vote to approve was unanimous.
- b. Dr. Siers commended Brian Baker, MVS Assistant Principal, and Sarah Burton, PMS Teacher, for their successful completion of the process to become National Board Certified Teachers.

X. Executive Session

- a. Mr. Sams moved to enter into executive session under the guidelines of policy 6-9A-4 for the discussion of student discipline and personnel. The vote to approve was unanimous.
- b. Mr. Sams moved to exit executive session. The vote to approve was unanimous.

XI. Personnel

- a. Dr. Siers recommended that Melissa Sizemore and Linda Harman be approved as volunteers for MVS. Mr. Mann moved to approve this recommendation. The vote to approve was unanimous.
- b. Dr. Siers recommended the following hires: Daniel Walker, Sr. as a temporary bus operator for the War Ridge run, Lee Lucas as the day custodian at PES through June 30, 2012, and Lauren Wills as a substitute teacher. Mr. Sams moved to approve the recommendations. The vote to approve was unanimous.
- c. Dr. Siers recommended the acceptance of the resignation letters from Amanda Church as a substitute cook and Keveney Bair as a substitute teacher. Mrs. Sabol moved to approve the recommendation. The vote to approve was unanimous.
- d. Dr. Siers recommended the approval of leaves of absence for Diane Hoke through February 7, 2012 and Melissa Burdette through April 6, 2012. Mrs. Sabol moved to approve the recommendation. The vote to approve was unanimous.

XII. Mr. Lively adjourned the meeting at 10:15 p.m.