

Approved by the Charlotte-
Mecklenburg Board of Education
May 8, 2007
Regular Board Meeting



Charlotte, North Carolina

February 13, 2007

**REGULAR MEETING
of the
CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG BOARD OF EDUCATION**

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education held a Regular Board Meeting on February 13, 2007. The meeting began at 4:36 p.m. and was held in Room CH-14 of the Government Center.

Present: Joe I. White, Jr., Chairperson;
Kaye McGarry, Member At-Large;
Trent Merchant, Member At-Large;
Larry Gauvreau (District 1);
Vilma D. Leake (District 2);
Tom Tate (District 4); and
Ken Gjertsen (District 6)

Absent: Molly Griffin, Vice-Chairperson, (District 5) and
George Dunlap (District 3)

Also present at the request of the Board were Dr. Peter Gorman, Superintendent; Maurice Green, Chief Operating Officer; James G. Middlebrooks, attorney from Helms Mulliss & Wicker, PLLC, representing the Board; and Nancy Daughtridge, Clerk to the Board.

Upon motion by Mr. Tate, seconded by Mr. Merchant, the Board voted unanimously of those present for approval to go into Closed Session for the following purposes:

- **To consult with the Board's attorneys on matters covered by attorney-client privilege;**
- **To consider the qualifications of certain individuals for initial employment by the Board; and**
- **To instruct the Board's attorneys and negotiating agents concerning the Board's position in negotiating the price and other material terms of proposed contracts for the acquisition of real estate.**

The motion was made pursuant to Section 143-318.11(a) of the North Carolina General Statutes.

Chairperson White reconvened the Regular Board Meeting at 6:09 p.m. in the Meeting Chamber of the Government Center. CMS TV Channel 3 televised the meeting.

Present: Joe White, Chairperson;

Molly Griffin, Vice Chairperson, (District 5);
Kaye McGarry, Member At-Large;
Trent Merchant, Member At-Large;
Larry Gauvreau (District 1);
Vilma D. Leake (District 2);
George Dunlap (District 3);
Tom Tate (District 4); and
Ken Gjertsen (District 6)

Absent: There were no absences

Also present at the request of the Board were Dr. Peter Gorman, Superintendent; Members of Executive and Senior Staffs; James G. Middlebrooks, Attorney from Helms Mulliss & Wicker, PLLC, representing the Board; Carole Hamrick, Manager of Board Services; and Nancy Daughtridge, Clerk to the Board.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson White welcomed everyone to the Board's Regular monthly business meeting. He apologized for starting the meeting late and noted that the Board had been in Closed Session conducting business.

A. Pledge of Allegiance

Chairperson White introduced Jason Madison Peak, a seventeen year-old senior at North Mecklenburg High School, to lead those present and in the viewing audience in the Pledge of Allegiance and speak to the February character trait of "citizenship." Jason was selected by North Mecklenburg High School to lead the pledge and speak to the February character trait because no other JROTC cadet better represents the high standards of integrity, service before self, and excellence in all that is done than does Jason. He has a 4.0 GPA, earned his Eagle Scout Award in 2002, is completing his fourth year of Air Force JROTC, and has attained the rank of Cadet Colonel. Jason plans to attend UNCC and pursue a commission through the Air Force ROTC. Chairperson White introduced Jason's parents Dave and Deborah McNaught; Joey Burch, principal at North Mecklenburg, who was not attending the meeting; and Senior Master Sergeant (ret.) Lim Summerville. Jason said the mission of the JROTC is to develop citizens of character who are dedicated to serving their nation and community. Jason shared what citizenship means to him which included being informed and responsible; working hard in the community; caring about and helping others; participating in the democratic process; and helping to preserve our resources and making the community better. Jason invited everyone to stand and join him in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

B. Adoption of Agenda

Chairperson White said that Dr. Gorman has requested that Agenda Items III. C. (Recommend approval of appointment of administrative personnel) and V.B. (Report on Adequate Resources and Facilities (Equity)) be pulled from the agenda. Dr. Gorman said he did not have any personnel appointments to present at tonight's meeting and the report item was pulled because staff felt they needed additional time to ensure that the data was accurate. A new version of the report will be available soon.

Ms. McGarry moved that the Board approve the adoption of the agenda excluding Agenda Items III.C. and V.B., seconded by Ms. Griffin, and the Board voted 8-0 to approve the motion. Mr. Dunlap was out of the room at the time of the vote.

C. Public Hearing

- Ten-Year Capital Project Plan
- Superintendent's Standards Review Committee

Ms. Griffin moved that the Board approve opening the Public Hearing on the Ten-Year Capital Project Plan, seconded by Mr. Tate, and the Board voted 8-0 to approve the motion. Mr. Dunlap was out of the room at the time of the vote.

The following people voiced their concerns regarding the needs at Olympic High School:

- Scott Whitfield, student at Olympic High School
- Lauren Scborwski, student at Olympic High School
- Blaine Wallace, president of Olympic High School Booster Club

The speakers addressed the urgent need for facility repairs, technology upgrades, and athletic improvements. They also discussed their disappointment of not being a priority for the 2007 Bond issue.

Nancy Brooks commended the Board on their direction in building more environmentally responsible schools. She encouraged the Board to utilize building products derived from rapidly renewable materials which are materials harvested within a ten-year period. These products are generally American made and decrease the dependence on foreign oil.

Fred Marsh expressed his concerns regarding the upcoming 2007 Bond issue. He said the plan is biased against citizens living within I-485 because it increases their taxes but does not offer them any benefits. He shared alternative considerations which included slowing growth; assigning students in overcrowded schools to inner-city schools and increasing class sizes by taking them out of at-risk status; and treating the suburban schools like schools in Districts 2 through 5 by adding wings to the current buildings and using mobiles to expand their capacity.

Rhonda Lennon serves on the Citizens Capital Budget Advisory Committee and also served on Governor Martin's Committee and the Superintendent's Standards Review Committee. She is a citizen, taxpayer, soccer mom, and the mother of a rising kindergartener. She is in favor of eliminating sport facilities, arenas, and performing arts auditoriums from future high schools. She believes super-sized facilities should be built throughout the system and used as shared facilities, and the cost savings applied towards building schools, providing seats, renovating schools, and educating students.

Dwayne Hill represented Whiz Kid Tutoring and Men in Order which is a group that provides male-based mentoring and tutoring for students. He discussed a proposed plan that will help bridge the gap in low-performance.

Ms. Griffin moved that the Board approve closing the Public Hearing, seconded by Ms. Leake, and the Board voted 9-0 to approve the motion.

Ms. Griffin moved that the Board approve opening the Public Hearing on the Superintendent's Standards Review Committee, seconded by Mr. Tate, and the Board voted 9-0 to approve the motion.

There were no speakers requesting to speak to this item.

Ms. Leake moved that the Board approve closing the Public Hearing, seconded by Ms. McGarry, and the Board voted 9-0 to approve the motion.

II. REQUESTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Teresa Clifton is a parent of a student at Olympic High School. She expressed concern about the media making negative comments about teachers. She discussed the need for positive parental involvement to help reduce classroom disruptions due to discipline issues. This would allow teachers to do their job which is to educate students.

The following people discussed their concerns regarding West Charlotte High School:

- Leslie Davis, represented the West Charlotte PTA
- Amber May, senior at West Charlotte
- Glasher Shealey, senior at West Charlotte
- Isaiah Scott, senior and student body president at West Charlotte
- Russell Alexander, parent from West Charlotte
- Demetris Phillips, student at West Charlotte

Items of discussion included teachers deserve support; the Board should revisit the student assignment boundaries because the current plan only benefits students who are economically privileged and CMS should limit the number of students allowed to transfer out of West Charlotte High School; positive attributes of the school such as after-school tutorials and mentoring programs; concerns regarding social promotion and the inability of students to perform on grade-level; teacher shortages; positive atmosphere of the school which is focused on promoting and supporting learning in a safe environment; media degrading the school and teachers; inadequacy of substitute teachers; and facility and educational material needs.

Carol Sawyer addressed the Equity Report. She has studied the report and was disappointed in its presentation. She hopes the revised report will honestly represent where Focus Schools and other schools of need stand in relationship to schools of excellence and distinction. She encouraged staff to engage in discussion with the community regarding the wording of the report, particularly substituting the word "adequacy" for "equity." She believes the word "equity" has more power.

Pam Grundy represented Mecklenburg ACTS. She commended the programs, leadership, and teachers at Shamrock Gardens Elementary School. She also commended CMS for implementing measures such as smaller classrooms to improve the school and cope with the challenges of having 80% free-and-reduced students. Smaller class size was a cornerstone of earlier equity efforts because it benefited students and teachers. She expressed concern that the new weighted student staffing formula increased class size at struggling schools. She is concerned that the new adequacy report eliminates class size as a benchmark. She encouraged

CMS to establish a specific benchmark for class size that can be promised to teachers and monitored.

Ivan Alexander discussed the philosophy of change that supports the importance of the family unit and education in the black community.

Bolyn McClung commended the speakers addressing their concerns regarding West Charlotte High School. He encouraged the Board to assure the students that their concerns are being taken serious. The public can find information at his new website www.cmsbonds.com.

Constance Johnson discussed cultural esteem which is a term she developed to inspire the educational system to honor diversity and to remind all children that Black history is American history. She encouraged CMS to invest in consistent ongoing activities and projects in the schools that allow people cultural esteem for all cultures. She invited everyone to attend Black History Film Fest and Celebration on Friday, February 16th at the Government Center.

Lisa Moore is the parent of a student at Harding University High School. She and her family are involved with her children and school. The parents at Harding would like the Board to establish priority seats for students who are currently in a middle school IB Program and list Harding as a first choice for high school. Harding has great teachers, and to keep those teachers, CMS must establish stable, consistent leadership to prevent turnover of teachers, students, and parents. The parents at Harding do not want another leadership turnover.

Richard McElrath expressed concern that the adequacy report changes the word “equitable” to “adequate.” He encouraged the Board and staff to listen to the community in making revisions to the report.

Chairperson White recognized Dr. Chris Folk and Kit Cramer, former Member At-Large Board member, who were attending the meeting with a group of students from the Youth Civics 101 Class. The class is an evening program designed to teach students about local government. In addition to learning more about the schools, they learn about the city and county government, the NC Courts, and the role of the local press in reporting on local government. Youth Civics 101 is offered through a partnership between Kids Voting, Partners-In-Out of School Time (POST), and the League of Women Voters.

III. CONSENT ITEMS

- A. Recommend approval of minutes.
 - January 23, 2007 Closed Session
 - January 18, 2007 Closed Session
 - January 9, 2007 Closed Session
 - January 8, 2007 Special Meeting
 - December 14, 2006 Closed Session
 - December 12, 2006 Closed Session
 - November 28, 2006 Regular Board Meeting
 - November 14, 2006 Regular Board Meeting

- B. Construction Items.
 - 1. Recommend approval of site package contract for new Bradley Elementary School
 - 2. Recommend approval of construction contract for Allenbrook Elementary School
- C. Recommend approval of appointment of administrative personnel.
- D. Recommend approval of licensed/non-licensed hires for December 2006 and January 2007.
- E. Recommend approval of supplementary funding request from North Carolina Department of Public Instruction Technology Division for *Cochrane's Opportunity to Learn through Technology (COLT)* for Cochrane Middle School.
- F. Recommend approval of supplementary funding request from National Science Foundation through the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction for *Charlotte Urban Ecosystems* for middle school teachers.

Consent Item III. C. was pulled with the adoption of the agenda.

Ms. Griffin moved that the Board approve Consent Items A. thru F. excluding C., seconded by Ms. McGarry, and a discussion followed.

Ms. Leake requested that Consent Items E. and F. be pulled.

The Board voted 9-0 to approve Consent Items A., B., and D.

Ms. Leake asked that the specifics of Items E. and F. be explained. Dr. Gorman called upon Dr. Terry Brown, principal at Cochrane Middle School, to explain the technology grant. Dr. Brown said this is a request for funding from the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, Technology Division, to provide individualized instruction using technology to help close the achievement gap by providing all students with adequate technology resources. The funding will be used to hire additional media/technology staff to expand access to the media center and computer lab before and after school. This request is pending approval from the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and the school will be notified in May if they are awarded the grant.

Ms. Griffin moved, seconded by Mr. Tate, that the Board approve Consent Item III.E., and the Board voted 9-0 to approve the motion.

Dr. Gorman called upon Dr. Cindy Moss, K-12 Science Curriculum Specialist, to provide information on Item III.F. Dr. Moss said the *Charlotte Urban Ecosystems* is a Math Science Partnership grant. The funding is requested from the National Science Foundation through the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction. The focus of the grant is to change the math science culture at six middle schools. The project will build teams of science and mathematics teachers who will become leaders for CMS. This request is pending approval from North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and the school will be notified in May if they are awarded the grant.

Ms. Leake moved, seconded by Ms. McGarry, that the Board approve Consent Item III.F., and the Board voted 9-0 to approve the motion.

IV. ACTION ITEMS

A. Recommend approval of pre-development agreement for a public private partnership with Place Properties LLC

Chairperson White called upon Dr. Gorman to introduce the recommendation. Dr. Gorman called upon Guy Chamberlain, Associate Superintendent for Auxiliary Services, to present the recommendation to approve the Pre-Development Agreement for a public private partnership with Place Properties LLC. Mr. Chamberlain said three weeks ago he provided the Board an update of the status of the public private development process. This item is the approval of a Pre-Development Agreement which is the next step of several to complete the process. Mr. Chamberlain said this summer the Legislature approved Senate Bill 2009 which allows for Boards of Education to enter into capital leases for facilities which will ultimately lead to ownership of that facility. The lease is to not exceed forty years. CMS is considering a twenty-year lease which is comparable to the payout of a General Obligation Bond. This will apply to building new schools as well as renovations and repairs to existing facilities. The law requires that the construction be completed by a Construction Management At-Risk Contract or by a single prime contractor and all laws regarding good faith efforts for minority participation must be followed. It allows for but does not require a Pre-Development Agreement. It allows for real estate to be transferred to the developer so that during the time of the lease the developer could own that property. The capital lease can also include provisions for the full spectrum of development services and it was designed so that the developer could do the entire building program. This could include planning, architect selection, buying the property, building the building, putting the furniture in, and operating the building after it is constructed. The only thing the district would have to do is enter into a lease and let the students enter the school. The district would not have to worry about the operation of the building. In August 2006, the Board of County Commissioners authorized \$123 million in Certificates of Participation (COPs) for a number of projects and it also authorized CMS to explore a capital lease for two new elementary schools (Hucks Road and Providence Road West/Lancaster Highway); a replacement school at Long Creek Elementary School; renovations at Idlewild Elementary School; additions and renovations at Harding University High School; and additions and renovations at South Mecklenburg High School. CMS issued a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) and several companies expressed interest. Ultimately, four companies submit a Qualification Statement to CMS. There were several local firms that expressed an interest but they did not submit a Qualification Statement. The intent of this process was to deliver the two new elementary schools in 2008. Unfortunately, the process has taken longer than expected and, subsequent to this, the Pre-Development Agreement will also need approval from the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC). The agreement will facilitate initiating the design. It also allows the developer to arrange financing and to complete the necessary due-diligence that will provide the developer the needed information to agree to lease the building to CMS for a certain monetary amount per year. At that point, staff will return to the Board, if they believe it is a reasonable agreement, for Board approval. If it is approved by the Board, it will then go before the BOCC for approval. If the BOCC approves, it will then have to be presented to the Local Government Commission in Raleigh. Mr. Chamberlain said this process includes several steps. CMS could follow this process for the two new elementary schools but they will not start until the fall which would obviate a 2008 opening. By August 15th, staff should be at the threshold of either presenting

an agreement to the Board for approval or recommending the decision not to pursue this process. By August, staff should have a capital lease agreement with the terms and be prepared to go before the Board of Education, the BOCC, and the Local Government Commission. A discussion with Board members followed.

- Mr. Dunlap asked for clarification on the involvement of the land in the process. Mr. Chamberlain said there are several methods that land can be structured which include a \$1.00 per year land lease; an outright transfer of the property with the understanding that at the end of the term it reverts back to CMS; and usually it will be determined based upon the financing instrument the developer utilizes. The developer has offered a number of methods and has recommended a Qualified Public Education Bond. Basically, the government entity would issue a tax exempt bond which would be near the rate of a General Obligation Bond. The developer pays that bond off and will be paid by annual lease payments. CMS would authorize a one-year lease for twenty years. Mr. Chamberlain said all the details will be laid out prior to signing any documents. Mr. Dunlap said he has the same concerns regarding leases for facilities that CMS currently owns that will be renovated. Mr. Chamberlain said CMS would collateralize some of its buildings. Mr. Chamberlain said the structure would be very clear when staff returns to the Board with a lease request.
- Mr. Gauvreau does not believe CMS is moving fast enough on this process because he discussed this with Dr. Eric Smith, former Superintendent, and State Statute 115-530 allows the school district to lease buildings. Mr. Gauvreau expressed concern that CMS has continued to build schools in areas that they should not have and did not explore leasing options earlier. He said several committees have suggested that CMS should consider leasing and he is disappointed this is only at a pre-development agreement stage. Mr. Gauvreau said CMS must take action now. He will not support this item because there is nothing in the document. He encouraged Dr. Gorman to accelerate this concept and incorporate it into the facility policies of the district.
- Ms. McGarry expressed concern that CMS received authorization from the BOCC in August 2006 and six months later staff is still in the preliminary stages of the process. The purpose of this concept was to build schools cheaper, quicker, and where the students live. She understood this process was primarily for new schools first and then renovations but this agreement lists the renovations first. She asked will this process include the recommendations from the Superintendent's Standards Review Committee? Dr. Gorman said part of the due diligence that staff must complete for the Board is to present the Pre-Development Agreement to the Board and then to the BOCC. Regarding the timing, the developers indicated that if the school was already designed they would lose the ability to make recommendations for lower costs. CMS was aggressive in completing the designs for the schools and the developer may not be able to meet CMS' timeframe for opening these schools. Leasing can be used for renovations and new construction and CMS has reviewed a variety of options for the Board's consideration. Mr. Chamberlain said as part of the review of the Capital Plan, the Superintendent's Standards Review Committee recommendations will be presented to the Board at the February 27th Regular Board Meeting and on the agenda for a Board vote at the March 13, 2007 Regular Board meeting. The recommendations that are approved by the Board will be incorporated into the designs. Mr. Chamberlain said CMS is further along in this

process than any other county in North Carolina. CMS is considering \$83 million in projects for this process at this time. Staff felt it was important to thoroughly review the details of the process prior to making a recommendation to the Board.

- Mr. Gjertsen asked would the leases be paid out of the operational or capital budget? Mr. Chamberlain said this would be an operational budget payment. Mr. Gjertsen expressed concern that this could be a moving target as CMS may lose money for operations because the funds could be reallocated to leases. He asked what are the options to build these schools to open in 2008 because the Board recently adopted boundary plans on the basis of having these schools open in 2008? Mr. Chamberlain said staff is not prepared for a recommendation on that at this time. In August, the BOCC approved that if the Board requested it, they would consider funding through COPs or placing the projects on a 2007 Bond. If the projects are placed on a 2007 Bond, they will not get completed until 2009. Mr. Gjertsen said the Board should consider requesting COPs for these projects. Dr. Gorman said he has a joint meeting scheduled with the County Manager and the Assistant County Manager to discuss the fast tracking of these projects as a back-up plan.
- Mr. Tate asked before last summer was it possible in North Carolina to participate in a lease-back arrangement? Mr. Chamberlain replied, no. CMS has leases for buildings that have been used for office space, warehousing, and temporary space for the Morgan School but those are short-term. CMS is not allowed to enter into a lease that exceeds three years. In this process, the lease payments will be spread out similar to a twenty-year debt service on a General Obligation Bond. Mr. Tate asked after the details of this process are finalized, will it be faster the next time? Mr. Chamberlain said this is a learning curve and staff is deliberating ensuring they are thoroughly reviewing all aspects because other school districts are watching to see how CMS completes this process so that they can consider it in the future. After the details are finalized, the process will go faster.
- Ms. Leake would like more information on this concept prior to a Board vote. She wants to ensure it includes renovations because that is her focus. She expressed concern that zoning ordinances allow certain areas to become overcrowded with housing and that puts a burden on CMS to satisfy that growth with building new schools versus renovating existing schools. She wants to ensure the process provides what is right and equitable for everyone. Mr. Chamberlain said this process will be doing what is right. It includes several renovation projects and deals with growth issues. The project at Harding University High School will replace plumbing, mechanical systems, and bring the school to a better standard. This delivery method is a different way of financing a school and provides an alternative to COPs and General Obligation Bonds. Ms. Leake expressed concern that the leases may have CMS not owning the land or giving up its rights to the land.
- Mr. Merchant said there are a number of projects in the Pre-Development Agreement. If one project does not work out, will the other projects continue? Mr. Chamberlain said CMS would want to continue forward with three of the four projects if one should drop aside.
- Ms. McGarry said she thought the priority for this process was on the new projects versus the renovations. She expressed concern that this process will now allow for the two new schools because that was the objective.

- Mr. Dunlap encouraged the Board to support this agenda item because it is only a Pre-Development Agreement. It is a necessary step in order to get to the next step. The purpose of this process is to at least move forward to understand if it will be feasible for CMS. Mr. Dunlap said he would like additional information to understand if it will work for CMS. An option of the agreement is the developer can design the building. He would like for CMS to do a cost assessment or cost comparison of the design to ensure it is cost effective and a worthwhile cost to the taxpayers. He would also like a cost comparison on a long-term lease versus the costs to use COPs, General Obligation Bonds, or another funding source. Mr. Chamberlain said the RFQ outlines three expectations: must be built to a reasonable standard of quality equivalent to what is being built today; the building will be ready to open on certain dates; and if CMS compared a pro forma of the cash flow of the payout of the debt service on a Bond funded project to the lease payments of the capital lease, that the capital lease would be equivalent or less. These will be the standards by which the feasibility of this process will be measured.
- Mr. Gauvreau asked if it is more, will CMS pursue Bonds? Mr. Chamberlain replied, yes. Mr. Gauvreau asked if it is expected to cost more? Mr. Chamberlain said he has his reservations about this delivery method because there is no money cheaper than General Obligation Bonds. The developer can get better funding by starting the projects earlier to beat the CMS delivery schedule which would reduce his inflation costs by two or three years. This will also allow the private sector to share their expertise and have the liberty to do something different. Mr. Gauvreau said he believes a leasing scheme would cost more overtime but the value CMS should be looking for is in speed and flexibility and that costs more. He said CMS should go down these roads at a micro-level and not worry about Long Creek Elementary and Garinger High School. CMS should do what Greenville did. Mr. Gauvreau believes the Board should drive the Superintendent differently.

Ms. Griffin moved, seconded by Mr. Dunlap, that the Board approve the Pre-Development Agreement for a Public Private Partnership with Place Properties LLC, and a discussion followed.

- Mr. Tate said on Page 4 of the documents includes Garinger High School as a project. Is that school included in the projects? Mr. Chamberlain said that was a typographical error and it has been corrected.
- Mr. Gjertsen said he hopes CMS can gain some advantages with the Public Private Partnerships and lease agreements. He said he wants the two new elementary schools to open in 2008. He will support this item but will not support opening the schools in 2009. He expects further information from staff to get those schools open on time. Dr. Gorman said staff will return with a report on the recommendation for opening those schools in 2008.
- Ms. McGarry said she will support this item but she wants it on record that she wants those two schools open in 2008 or the Board must request the option of COPs. The Board must show a sense of urgency and not hesitate until those schools are built.

The Board voted 8-1 to approve the motion. Chairperson White, Ms. Griffin, Ms. McGarry, Mr. Merchant, Ms. Leake, Mr. Dunlap, Mr. Tate, and Mr. Gjertsen voted in

favor of the motion. Mr. Gauvreau voted against the motion.

B. Recommend approval of proposed 2007-08 Budget Calendar

Chairperson White called upon Dr. Gorman to introduce the recommendation. Dr. Gorman said this is approval of the proposed 2007-2008 Budget Calendar. He called upon Dennis Covington, Executive Director Budget and Evaluation, to answer questions.

Ms. Griffin moved, seconded by Mr. Tate, that the Board approve the proposed 2007-2008 Budget Calendar, and a discussion followed.

- Mr. Dunlap said the calendar includes a meeting scheduled on a Friday afternoon. If this is approved, all Board members should attend.
- Mr. Gauvreau said he did not support this item in the past and this is the same format used by past superintendents. The Board and the Superintendent should back this process up as the Broad Foundation has suggested. The Board gets all this data and then does the budget dance. The Board should have upfront input prior to that step. Mr. Dunlap noted that all Board members were given an opportunity to submit recommendations to the Superintendent.
- Mr. Gjertsen said the Board needs to be more involved in the budget and not just for three meetings at the end of the process. The Board should be involved early in the process and should have a Budget Committee that reviews line item by line item. That is where the Board needs to get to if they are going to take control. The budget should represent what we really want to do as a Board. The City does something similar and is much more involved. The Board should rethink how they approach the budget process as opposed to just talking about the incremental amount that the Board will request from the Board of County Commissioners. He would like to get deeper into the budget rather than just the superficial look that the Board ends up doing.
- Mr. Dunlap said he does not disagree with the comments but this is not the time to change the budget process. If a Board member wants the process changed, they should start it after the completion of this budget by letting the Superintendent and Board know what changes they recommend for next year. This has been the established process. Everyone was made aware of it and had an opportunity to provide input. Board members meet with the Superintendent on a regular basis and had an opportunity to provide comments on the budget and the process. Mr. Dunlap said the Board has authorized the Superintendent to run this district. If the Board tells him where to spend the money and he is not successful, how can the Board blame him? If the Board is going to hold someone accountable they should give him the tools he needs to do what he needs to do and then say he failed or succeeded.
- Chairperson White expressed concern that Board members did the same thing last year and even cancelled some of the work sessions. Some members did not meet with that Superintendent, did not recommend changes, and then voted against the budget.
- Ms. Leake said she has always supported the budget but she is concerned how she can recommend the items that she believes should be in the budget versus the items that should be taken out such as the PEAK Program. Chairperson White said the Superintendent asked Board members, a month ago, to provide him their budget recommendations.

- Mr. Gauvreau is opposed to this process and he will vote against it. The Board should have upfront discussions on this item. He suggested beginning the budget process in the fall.

The Board voted 8-1 to approve the motion. Chairperson White, Ms. Griffin, Ms. McGarry, Mr. Merchant, Ms. Leake, Mr. Dunlap, Mr. Tate, and Mr. Gjertsen voted in favor of the motion. Mr. Gauvreau voted against the motion.

V. REPORTS/INFORMATION ITEMS

A. Report on Career Technical Education Program

Chairperson White called upon Dr. Gorman to introduce the report. Dr. Gorman called upon Dr. Ruth Perez, Chief Academic Officer, and Jimmy Chancey, Director of Career and Technical Education, to present the report on the Career Technical Education (CTE) Program. Dr. Perez said CTE is one of the four major curriculum areas within the middle and high school programs. CTE offers a variety of courses in all middle schools, all comprehensive high schools, all alternative schools, and in all the new small high schools such as the Performance Learning Center (PLC) and the small schools at Olympic and Garinger high schools. The traditional courses have been keyboarding in middle schools and accounting at the high school level as well as shorthand and woodworking. The courses now also include Culinary Arts, Computer Engineering, Small Business Entrepreneurship, Biotechnology, Civil Engineering, Architecture, Honors Level E-commerce, Honors Level Strategic Marketing, and Scientific and Technical Visualization. The traditional CTE courses have been modified to meet today's demands. Dr. Perez said CTE is funded primarily through federal funds under the Carl D. Perkins Act that has just been reauthorized by the Congress and State funds that provide over 450 teaching positions in CTE. Through this funding, CTE supports classes in eight different program areas and CTE Student Organizations, and currently serves over 70,000 CMS students each year. CTE is an integral part of the CMS curriculum program that supports the Board's mission and the Superintendent's Goals 2010 Improvement Plan. Dr. Perez thanked the Board for their past support of the CTE Program and hopes the report will show the value that CTE continues to bring to CMS' efforts to raise the student achievement level at each middle and high school. Mr. Chancey recognized the CTE staff members from Central Office that were attending the meeting. He said CTE is one of the three primary curriculum areas within CMS. General Education and Exceptional Children are the other two areas. CTE works within the four major areas of programs, curriculum, student assessments, and teacher education professional development. Mr. Chancey provided student participation and achievement data. Sixty-seven percent of all students at the high school level are enrolled in CTE courses and sixty-nine percent at the middle school level. Last year, eight of the CTE courses were identified as honor courses bringing CMS to the same standard as other core courses offering honors classes. Over the last two years, almost ninety percent of the students taking CTE courses continued to some type of higher education and fifty-one percent of the students continued to college with many pursuing a degree in their chosen field of CTE. February is Career and Technical Education Month. The *Charlotte Observer* will have program announcements and highlight students over the next three weeks.

B. Report on Adequate Resources and Facilities (Equity)

This item was pulled with the adoption of the agenda.

C. Report/update on the Strategic Plan

Chairperson White called upon Dr. Gorman to introduce the report. Dr. Gorman introduced Jonathan Raymond, Chief Accountability Officer; Dr. Ruth Perez, Chief Academic Officer; and Dr. Ron Dixon, Assistant Superintendent for Middle School Curriculum and Instruction, to join him in presenting the report. Dr. Gorman said staff is planning to provide the Board a progress report on one or two Strategic Plan projects at the first Board meeting of every month. Dr. Gorman outlined the process that staff is following for implementing the projects. The Strategic Plan was developed to be aligned with the Board's Vision, Mission, Core Beliefs, Theory of Action, and the Reform Governance policies. The key points are how the Strategic Plan will be implemented. The process will be handled through the Accountability System, which is Project Management Oversight, and the Balanced Scorecard. The process will be taken to a final level where key points will be used in personnel evaluations. The process will include a starting point, a goal, and an evaluation of the results of accomplishing that achievement. This is a building block progression system. Mr. Raymond provided the Board specific information on the process of Project Management Oversight. The Plan Management Oversight Committee (PMOC) is using the Project Management Process to implement the Strategic Plan. PMOC is not new to CMS and is a process that was developed in the mid-90s with the help of First Union, which is now Wachovia, and Duke Energy. The process provides for the implementation, execution, follow-up, and fruition of initiatives or projects utilizing proper oversight and management intervention. The goal of the committee is to ensure that the key initiatives, goals, and objectives of the Strategic Plan are implemented, executed, and that CMS can ultimately attain the objectives to ensure that all students achieve at their fullest potential. The role of the committee is to provide monitoring; intervention; ensuring that any barriers that exist to getting the projects successfully implemented are removed; and resolving any issues in a timely manner. The committee provides oversight to ensure the promises are completed, the hard questions are asked and answered, and seeks some of those solutions that perhaps have not been tested. The committee provides the necessary resources and ensures accountability that the actions are taken and results established. Staff can then take the high level goals and move them into specific initiatives. Dr. Perez explained how the initiatives are taken from goals to specific project charters. The Board established High Academic Achievement as a top priority and, as a result, the goals of the Project Charter are as follows:

- Provide all students with the opportunity to perform to their fullest potential.
- Ensure there is not a discernible achievement gap among students based on race, gender, or economic level.
- Prepare all students to be successful in institutions of higher learning or the workforce without remediation.

Dr. Perez said under the goal of High Academic Achievement there are currently thirteen Project Charters which include nine new initiatives and four continuing initiatives from the previous year. A new initiative is the Grade Eight Plus initiative which is designed to provide

support to students who are not academically prepared to succeed in high school. Dr. Ron Dixon serves as owner of the Eight Plus Charter and he provided the Board a brief update on the new initiative. The program will be housed at Midwood School and will accommodate three hundred students from the four high schools in the Challenge Program. The students will receive intensive support in reading and math for the entire year. The students who are successful will return to their high school in the fall with eight high school credits. The students who are not successful will continue at Midwood and receive a second part to the program. Each high school will develop a pre-ninth grade support program called the Pre-Ninth Grade Academy to help the students who will be ninth graders that need additional help based upon their eighth grade reading and math End-of-Grade scores. The plan will also require some students to be retained in the eighth grade as the plan will follow the state's Gateway Program which requires that students who are not at a Level Three or Four should not be promoted to ninth grade. Dr. Dixon said we have also attached a local promotion standard to the Gateway that requires all eighth grade students must pass all four core subjects (Language Arts, Social Studies, Science, and Math) in order to be promoted to ninth grade. The program and the budget are still being finalized. Board members asked questions and made comments.

- Ms. Griffin said she is familiar with the current pilot program at Midwood School and believes some lessons could be learned from the success of that program. She asked how would the programs in the individual schools differ from the Transition Nine Program which has experienced some mixed level of success? Dr. Dixon said in the Transition Nine Program the students took the same class for Level One and Level Two reading. The new program will develop a more intense reading class for a Level One student and a different class for a Level Two student because the needs of the two groups are different. The same will be developed for math. The plan will also include more intense student support services and we are hoping to have a smaller student-teacher ratio in all classes so that the students can get the attention they need.
- Ms. Leake asked what is in place for the elementary school students who are promoted to middle school but are ill-equipped to perform in sixth, seventh, and eighth grade? She also asked what has been done to evaluate the success and non-success of the Transition Nine Program so that we can benefit from understanding the non-successes of that program? Dr. Dixon said the English scores were better than the math scores and as a result we want to duplicate the successes of the English Program and will not use the same Math Program.
- Mr. Gjertsen said he would like a report on the Eighth Grade Gateway Program at the end of the year. Dr. Gorman said staff will prepare that report. Students will be tracked to ensure they are receiving adequate support.
- Mr. Merchant asked how many Level One students in math and English were retained last year. Dr. Dixon said approximately 165 students were retained in eighth grade. Dr. Gorman said this could be broken out further by the students who would have qualified for the Midwood Program and the group who would be in the intensive Ninth Grade Program.
- Mr. Gauvreau asked how many students would have qualified for the Midwood and Ninth Grade programs this year? Dr. Dixon said of the current ninth graders, there are 279 to 300 students from the four high schools in the Challenge Program that would

have qualified for the Midwood Program. There are approximately 1,900 students from all the high schools, out of approximately 10,000 students, that would have qualified for the Pre-Ninth Grade Support Programs. Mr. Gauvreau said the research on the fast-forward programs indicates that it is an expensive tool that doesn't work and doesn't buy any real benefit. Dr. Dixon said there is just as much research that indicates the program is effective and some school systems have been very successful with its utilization. Staff believes it will greatly benefit certain populations of students and it will be used at the Midwood Program. Mr. Gauvreau expressed concern about the Advisory Team and the size of the Integration Team. Dr. Gorman explained the program is broken into different components and different groups. The program has three different levels which require multiple teams working on each level. Dr. Dixon said the Integration Team also includes people who serve on the Instructional Committee, the Developmental Instructional Program, and the Student Services Committee.

- Ms. McGarry asked regarding accountability, in what grade are the students classified when taking the End-of Grade tests? Dr. Dixon responded that the students who are retained in the eighth grade are eighth graders and their testing scores are the End-of Grade scores for eighth grade. The students who are ninth graders at Midwood as well as at each high school will be ninth grade students and their testing results will come from the ninth grade End-of-Course tests.
- Mr. Dunlap said because research shows some programs have not been successful, what is CMS doing differently to ensure the success of this program? Dr. Dixon said one of the important criteria for the success of a fast-forward program is to implement the program with fidelity and all guidelines closely adhered to. Students must participate in the program five-days a week for fifty minutes each session. Dr. Gorman said staff will be measuring through the accountability system and each student's progress will be tracked. Dr. Gorman said staff will present these results to the Board at the end of the year.
- Ms. Griffin asked why are Independence, Vance, and East Mecklenburg high schools listed separately? Dr. Dixon said originally they were part of the Midwood Program but as the program developed we realized including these schools could result in too many students for the program because Midwood could only accommodate three hundred students. As the criteria of the program changed, those three schools could serve their own students in the pre-ninth grade support program.
- Ms. Leake asked why were those three schools selected? Dr. Dixon said they were the next three schools following the four high schools in the Challenged Program regarding End-of-Grade scores. Ms. Leake asked what will be the quality of the teachers in the program? Dr. Dixon said we are seeking "beat the odds teachers" or someone who understands that these students have struggled for several years and they are very needy. We are seeking teachers who know how to work with and get results from these students. We are seeking principals and teachers who are not going to lower expectations because these students are Level One and Two. Ms. Leake asked could some of these students also be housed at the Performance Learning Center (PLC)? Dr. Dixon said this group of students would be a different group of students than those attending PLC. Some of the students who are Level One and Two are not ready for the PLC Program but they may eventually be there. Ms. Leake said there is room at PLC and staff should consider placing students at that site. Dr. Dixon said the PLC and

Midwood programs are two different programs and this would be housing two different programs at PLC. Dr. Dixon said he does not believe the programs would mesh. Ms. Leake asked to be provided information on the difference of the two programs. Dr. Dixon said he would provide Ms. Leake the information.

D. Report on Substitute Teachers

Chairperson White called upon Dr. Gorman to introduce the report on Substitute Teachers. Dr. Gorman called upon Maurice Ambler, Chief Human Resource Officer, and Kathy Auger, Executive Director for Human Resources Administration, to present the report. Ms. Auger provided the Board information regarding the national shortages of substitute teachers; the current CMS status of substitute teachers; hiring requirements; pay rates; training; working conditions; recruitment efforts; and teacher attendance. Mr. Ambler reviewed the vision and direction for improvement. Mr. Ambler said Ms. Auger reviewed the problem areas and there are enhancements that can be implemented. Mr. Ambler said staff is planning some creative measures to get different results. Enhancement initiatives will include improved training and orientation; focus on relationships and mentoring at the school level; recruitment efforts; and reward, recognition, and retention programs. One of the most important criteria is CMS must fill teacher vacancies with quality teachers at the start of the school year. If this can happen, substitute teachers will be a secondary issue for CMS. Mr. Ambler said there are challenges but he believes with every challenge there is an opportunity. Mr. Ambler said this issue will be resolved. Board members asked questions and made comments.

- Ms. Leake said she had asked that this item be on the agenda because she believed the community needed to know that CMS has experienced difficulty in recruiting qualified people to fill teacher absences. Ms. Leake discussed the importance of treating substitute teachers fairly and having qualified staff in the classrooms. She expressed concern about the number of teacher absences.
- Mr. Gjertsen supports the increased efforts of having qualified staff in the classrooms.
- Ms. Griffin asked how does the teacher vacancy rates compare to last year? Ms. Auger said it is approximately the same as last year. There are individual schools that are showing remarkable progress and we hope their successes will be carried to other schools.
- Mr. Merchant expressed concern about the teacher absentee rate for the first eighty days of school. He asked does CMS identify and track the usual suspects or the ones who are out on a frequent basis? Ms. Auger said this involves two different situations because there are a number of people with serious medical conditions. If there are chronic absenteeism problems, the Employee Relations Department works with principals on those instances. Mr. Merchant hopes action will be taken towards the teachers who are repeatedly absent on Fridays or Mondays because this hurts the morale of the teachers who are not absent on a frequent basis.
- Mr. Dunlap said the Human Resources Department is an area of focus for him because he has many people call him with their concerns. He said teacher assistants are paid \$132.60 and certified substitute teachers are paid \$84.00. He asked how often has CMS employed a teacher assistant instead of a substitute teacher? Ms. Auger said 466 teacher assistants have been paid for subbing this year. Mr. Dunlap encouraged staff to understand what the schools with lower teacher absenteeism are doing because they are

doing something right. He believes many of them were Magnet Schools. He has some ideas that he would like to share with Mr. Ambler. He suggested that the pool of money set aside to pay substitute teachers be disbursed among the teachers as an incentive for not being absent as well as additional vacation or leave for those people who are not absent.

- Ms. McGarry discussed that the state longevity bonus for teachers should be disbursed based on merit rather than just showing up for work. She said there was a bonus put in effect a year ago with the requirement of showing up on the job. She believes salary should be for showing up for work. She asked is that bonus structure still in place? Ms. Auger said that was a part of the Pay for Performance Program which is in its third year. It was planned for a two to three year pilot and that program is being reviewed. She does not believe this program has had much of an impact on attendance. Ms. McGarry believes the standards should be set higher. The salary is for the job. If they are not on the job why pay them an additional bonus. She expressed concern about the absenteeism rate and believes incentives could include leadership in the schools; school of choice; and co-workers. She encouraged CMS to explore the utilization of retirees as substitute teachers because they would enjoy the work and are effective in the classroom. Ms. Auger said currently retirees are one of our best resources.
- Chairperson White said the state's Longevity Bonus Program is a very important and valid program.
- Ms. Leake asked for an absenteeism report by school, by number of teachers, Friday and Monday absences, and principal absenteeism. Mr. Middlebrooks, Legal Counsel, said some of this request would be protected under North Carolina Personnel Law. Statistics per school could be included in the report but it should not include employee names.

E. Report on Budget Amendments for December 2006

Chairperson White called upon Dr. Gorman to present the report. Dr. Gorman said this item is the Budget Amendments for December and they are as presented.

F. Report on Financial Statements for December 2006

Chairperson White called upon Dr. Gorman to present the report. Dr. Gorman said this item is the Financial Statements December and they are as presented.

VI. REPORT FROM SUPERINTENDENT

Dr. Gorman said he did not have a report to present.

VII. REPORTS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

Trent Merchant asked Dr. Gorman to provide an update on Alternative Schools and Discipline. Dr. Gorman said staff has held a series of planning sessions. He recently met with Jim Pendergraph, Mecklenburg County Sheriff, and they discussed partnering options for a school program for students with the most severe disciplinary issues. This in the early stages of discussion and would be part of the tiered system that includes discipline alternatives such as suspension alternatives centers (short-term and long-term suspension centers) and other

options for severe offenses. Mr. Merchant encouraged Dr. Gorman to keep the Board and the community up-to-date on those discussions.

Kaye McGarry enjoyed being interviewed by the boy scouts of Troop 97 as part of their requirement for earning a merit badge. This was a great group of boys who were very intelligent, focused, and asked very worthy questions regarding location of schools, student discipline, and crowding of schools.

Ken Gjertsen invited everyone to attend a Parent Forum on the Strategic Plan 2010 at Mint Hill Middle School on February 15th and a meeting with the PTA Leaders of District 6 on February 24th at J. M. Robinson Middle School at 9:00 a.m.

Vilma Leake visited several schools and attended a National School Boards Association Conference in Washington, DC. She encouraged Board members to be fair and equitable in the disciplinary process.

Chairperson White also attended the National School Boards Association Conference in Washington, DC.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Griffin moved, seconded by Ms. McGarry, and by consensus, the Board agreed to adjourn the meeting.

The Regular School Board Meeting adjourned at 10:15 p.m.

Chairperson, Joe. I. White, Jr.

Clerk to the Board, Nancy Daughtridge