

Approved by the Charlotte-
Mecklenburg Board of Education
October 9, 2007
Regular Board Meeting



Charlotte, North Carolina

May 8, 2007

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

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education held a Regular Board Meeting on May 8, 2007. The meeting began at 4:34 p.m. and was held in Room CH-14 of the Government Center.

Present: Joe I. White, Jr., Chairperson, Member At-Large;
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);
Tom Tate (District 4); and
Ken Gjertsen (District 6)

Absent: 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. Merchant, seconded by Mr. Tate, 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 including but not limited to the litigation involving Chris and Wendy Hawkins;**
- **To consider the performance of specific employees as well as the potential terms for hiring new employees; 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 6:10 p.m. in the Meeting Chamber of the Government Center. CMS TV Channel 3 televised the meeting.

Present: Joe White, Chairperson, Member At-Large;
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 conducting business in Closed Session. He said the Board was unable to complete that business and would return to the earlier called Closed Session following the completion of business in the Regular Board meeting.

A. Pledge of Allegiance

Chairperson White said Jorge Gonzales, an 8th grade student at Ranson Middle School, was to lead those present and in the viewing audience in the pledge of allegiance and speak to the May character trait "hope." Jorge has taken ill and will not be able to join us tonight. Barbara Perez, an 8th grade student at Ranson Middle School, will read the speech on "hope" written by Jorge. Chairperson White introduced Kevin Carr, principal at Ranson Middle School, and Glenda Blaisdell-Buck, library media specialist, at Ranson Middle School. Chairperson White said interesting facts about Barbara include she is a member of the Japanese Club and Soccer Team; sings in the school chorus; volunteers with Goodwill; the eldest of five girls; an accomplished babysitter; enjoys writing and drawing; favorite subject is Science; and she wants to be an emergency room physician. Chairperson White stated Barbara's parents, Jose and Lucy Perez, were not present. Barbara read Jorge's speech on the meaning of "hope" and invited everyone to stand and join her in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

B. Adoption of Agenda

Ms. Griffin moved, seconded by Mr. Merchant, that the Board approve the adoption of the agenda, and a discussion followed.

Chairperson White asked that the Board approve amending the agenda to add the following two Action Items from Closed Session:

1. Education Center Property Exchange.

2. Regional Office Leases.

Ms. McGarry moved, seconded Mr. Merchant, that the Board approving adding two Action Items to the agenda, and the Board voted 9-0 to approve the motion.

Ms. Griffin moved, seconded by Mr. Tate, that the Board adopt the agenda as amended, and the Board voted 9-0 to approve the motion.

II. REQUESTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Jerry Reese spoke in opposition to the Education Center property exchange transaction.

Blanche Penn discussed the importance of the community working together to make a positive change for young people and the Positive Student Impact Project. Upcoming events include the Just Pull'em Up campaign on May 19th at AME Zion Church on Little Rock Road and the Teen Star play at West Charlotte High School on May 20th.

III. CONSENT ITEMS

- A. Recommend approval of minutes.
 - February 13, 2007 Regular Board meeting.
 - March 29, 2007 Closed Session.
 - April 19, 2007 Special Meeting.
 - April 26, 2007 Closed Session.
- B. Construction Items.
 - 1. Recommend approval of sale of CMBOE surplus property.
 - 2. Recommend approval of construction contract for Alexander Graham Middle School.
 - 3. Recommend approval of construction contract for new Elon Park Elementary School.
- C. Recommend approval of appointment of administrative personnel.
- D. Recommend approval of licensed/non-licensed hires and promotions for April 2007.
- E. Recommend approval of supplementary funding request from The Broad Foundation for *The Broad Foundation: Aspiring Principal Training Programs in Large, Urban School Districts*.
- F. Recommend approval of extension of the primary banking services contract with Wachovia Bank for one year to June 30, 2008.
- G. Recommend approval for the Finance Officer to approve purchase orders for the 2007-2008 school year.

Ms. Leake pulled Consent Items C., E., and F.

Mr. Gauvreau pulled Consent Item C.

Ms. Griffin moved that the Board approve Consent Items A., B., D., and G., seconded by Mr. Dunlap, and the Board voted 9-0 to approve the motion.

The Board discussed Consent Item C. Ms. Leake believes it is important that the appointments possess quality of experience in given areas and that people in supervisory administrative

positions should have the background, training, and experience. She expressed concern that one appointment did not have teaching experience. Mr. Gauvreau asked that the Board vote on the contract extension for the Chief Communications Officer separately. Ms. Leake asked that the Board vote on the contract extension for the Assistant Superintendent for Exceptional Children Services separately.

Mr. Dunlap moved, seconded by Mr. Tate, that the Board approve all administrative recommendations except the contract extensions for the Chief Communications Officer and the Assistant Superintendent for Exceptional Children Services, and the Board voted 9-0 to approve the motion.

Ms. Griffin moved, seconded Mr. Tate, that the Board approve the contract extension for the Chief Communications Officer, and a discussion followed.

- Mr. Gauvreau said this agenda item only includes a brief resume, and does not include contract and salary information. He expressed concern about approving an item without the pertinent information. In the future, he would like the contract, salary, and bonus information included. He will not support the contract extension for the Chief Communications Officer. He said the qualifications and capabilities of this individual are very high but he will not support this item because that particular office is over engineered; its educational purpose in the system is unclear; and some of the senior positions in the system are not providing the value that the taxpayers expect in this school system.
- Mr. Dunlap asked for direction from the attorney. He expressed concern that, as of late, some Board members are challenging the Superintendent's appointments because of personal issues. He believes it is fundamentally wrong for the Board to discuss personnel appointments in public and it is also against the procedure agreed upon by the Board. Mr. Middlebrooks said under North Carolina law, the Board is required to elect every employee of the school system. The Superintendent recommends and the Board of Education elects, and this is usually a Consent Agenda item. Mr. Dunlap believes the Board should focus on voting the appointment recommendations up or down. Mr. Middlebrooks said there is a provision in North Carolina law that discusses the Board's evaluation of the performance of employees is a matter for Closed Session and not a matter for public discussion unless the Board goes through the provisions of the statutes to release the information. Mr. Middlebrooks said Mr. Gauvreau was not speaking to the qualifications or performance of a specific individual and he will vote against the recommendation because he does not like that operation as a whole. Chairperson White said it would be appropriate for the Board to have this discussion at some point with the attorneys to understand how to close this gap but at this time he would continue the discussion.
- Ms. Griffin said when the Board approves the budget they approve the contract payment for our employees. It is the Superintendent's responsibility to allocate that budget amount as he deems best in conducting our business. Mr. Middlebrooks said when the Board votes for the budget, they are approving the operating funds for that division based upon the Superintendent's recommendation. The contract will be funded from the amount that the Board has already voted to approve.
- Mr. Gauvreau asked if the contract amount would change? Dr. Gorman said contracts

for individuals are a continuation and part of the continuation budget. He would be glad to provide this information at a later time if necessary.

- Chairperson White said the Board hired the Superintendent and presented him with the Board's Vision, Mission, Core Beliefs, Theory of Action, and goals. The Board asked the Superintendent to assemble a team to accomplish those goals.

The Board voted 8-1 to approve the contract extension for the Chief Communications Officer. Chairperson White, Ms. Griffin, Ms. McGarry, Mr. Merchant, Ms. Leake, Mr. Dunlap, Mr. Tate, and Mr. Gjertsen voted in support of the motion. Mr. Gauvreau voted against the motion.

Ms. Leake said she does not believe that any Board member is specifically targeting any employee in the district. Her focus is to employ the best people with the appropriate experience. She wants to ensure the process is fair and consistent to all employees.

Ms. Griffin moved, seconded by Mr. Tate, that the Board approve the contract extension for the Assistant Superintendent for Exceptional Children Services, and the Board voted 7-2 to approve the motion. Chairperson White, Ms. Griffin, Ms. McGarry, Mr. Gauvreau, Mr. Dunlap, Mr. Tate, and Mr. Gjertsen voted in support of the motion. Mr. Merchant and Ms. Leake voted against the motion.

Dr. Gorman reviewed the administrative recommendations as follows:

Contract Extensions:

- Nora Carr, Chief Communications Officer.
- Dr. Jane Rhyne, Assistant Superintendent for Exceptional Children Services.
- Terry Middleton, Chief Information Officer.
- Appointments:
 - Elva Cooper named Area Superintendent. Ms. Cooper previously served as Regional Superintendent of Elementary Schools - East.
 - Nancy Bartles named Area Superintendent. Ms. Bartles previously served as Principal at Independence High School.
 - David Brigman named Director of Lawson Integration - Procurement. Mr. Brigman previously served as Business Analyst/Implementation Specialist for Verian Technologies in Charlotte, North Carolina.
 - Kelly Price named Director of Global Studies and World Languages. Mr. Price previously served as the Director of Title 1 Services.
 - William Shapcott named Principal of Blythe Elementary School. Mr. Shapcott has a Master of School Administration from UNC-Charlotte and Bachelor of Secondary Education in English from Kutztown University in Kutztown, Pennsylvania. He previously served as Principal at Northview Elementary School in Statesville, North Carolina.

The Board discussed Consent Item E. Ms. Leake said this item is the approval of Aspiring Principal Training Programs. She encouraged staff to utilize the experience of existing

principals in the district as well retired personnel to assist in training the aspiring principals to become strong leaders.

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

The Board discussed Consent Item F. Ms. Leake said she has repeatedly discussed the banking services for the district. She encouraged CMS to allow the smaller banks in the community to provide some of the banking services for the district, in particularly Farmers and Mechanics Bank. She would like staff to contact the president of Farmers and Mechanics Bank to discuss their potential business with CMS.

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

IV. ACTION ITEMS

A. Recommend approval of the Interlocal Cooperation Agreement with Mecklenburg County regarding Education Center property

Chairperson White reviewed the key business points of the proposed Education Center property exchange. He noted this item had been discussed at length in Closed Session. The proposed Interlocal Cooperation Agreement with Mecklenburg County included the following:

1. The BOE gets the appraised value for the Education Center property by getting in return (i) use of the fifth floor of the Government Center for twenty years at a lease price of \$1.00 per year and (ii) \$13,750,000 to be used to acquire additional office space of its choosing.
2. BOE will pay any up-fit and furniture costs for the fifth floor of the Government Center. The County will pay all operating costs for the use of this space by the BOE.
3. The Closing for the Education Center property occurs only after the County and BOE have negotiated and executed the lease for the BOE to remain in the Education Center property for up to three years and the lease for the fifth floor of the Government Center.
4. BOE receives the \$13,750,000 in the same manner they receive COPs funding.

Ms. Griffin moved, seconded by Mr. Tate, that the Board approve the Interlocal Cooperation Agreement with Mecklenburg County regarding the Education Center property in accordance with the business terms presented, and a discussion followed.

- Mr. Dunlap said this is a difficult vote mainly because of the manner in which it is constructed. He expressed the following concerns should the land swap be approved:
 - He would like to ensure the public will continue to have access to free parking while dealing with School Board business at the Government Center.
 - Currently, the Board pays a fee for holding meetings at the Government Center and this should be negotiated. The School Board should be treated like the other elected Bodies and should not have to pay for holding meetings at the Government

Center.

- Should the Board receive the \$13.75 million in COPs funding, that money should not affect the Board's ability to fund its educational projects.
- Mr. Gjertsen expressed concern regarding the BOE receiving the \$13.75 million in the same manner they receive COPs funding and the financing method will be determined by the County. This has the potential of opening the following possibilities:
 - Debt would be issued against school property to buy school property.
 - There could be a reduction in the amount of debt funding available for renovations or construction of school projects since the County has a limited ability to issue debt each year.

Mr. Gjertsen expressed concern that this item could be making the construction of a new Education Center a higher priority than many of the projects that have been on the priority list or on the Bond list. He would like to delay the vote on this item to get clarity on the terms of the proposal. He will vote against this motion on the basis of lack of clarity. He wants to ensure sure that a new Education Center does not take a higher priority than school projects.

- Ms. Leake expressed concern regarding the language of the contract. She also expressed concern that the Board has been charged for holding meetings at the Government Center and she hopes that fee will be eliminated with a future lease agreement. She believes the Board should participate in the decision for which floor to use at the Government Center and should have the option to be able to purchase additional space for expansion at Walton Plaza from the County. She has been told by senior community individuals that when the Government Center was constructed the front angle (the seating area for lunch) was planned to be the Education building. She has asked the attorney to check the minutes for that information but has not received it. She is also concerned about the limited parking and wants to ensure the Board is treated equally in the process.
- Ms. McGarry has several concerns and does not believe the proposal is complete. She believes the focus of the Board should be on fair market value, utility, and the timing should be when the Board is ready. She would prefer that the Board delay this item to get the questions answered. She also has concerns regarding the COPs financing. She believes the Board would get a better fair market by putting the Education Center up for sale separately because this land will become more valuable. This may end up being a good deal for the Board of Education but because it is linked to other land swaps it could be a bad deal for the taxpayers. She said although the Board of County Commissioners have the right of first refusal on the Education Center, she would prefer that the sell of the Education Center be an isolated land sell and that the timing of the negotiations be convenient to the Board. She does not have enough information on this item at this time and will not support the motion.
- Mr. Merchant said he was appointed to the Board at the August 8, 2006 Regular Board meeting. This deal was presented as a Community Report at that meeting and the Board has been discussing this proposal ever since. He said this proposal is a no brainer. It will benefit the city, county government, taxpayers, and the Board of Education. This is a swap and not a sell, and it will be handled differently. The risk of using collateral as a mechanism is very low because COPs deals do not go bad. This proposal will revitalize the city and will increase the tax base. He encouraged the Board to support the motion.
- Mr. Gauvreau is against taking taxpayers' dollars for public dollars and using them for

private interest which is the concept of this deal. The school district is a secondary party. Mr. Gauvreau said the proposal is baiting the Board and does not provide the taxpayers a good service. This is a scheme that the majority of the County Commissioners have bought into and they have surrendered. The Board does not need the quality of space and the amount of space offered in the proposal. He encouraged the Board to not turn their backs on the taxpayers and to send the proposal back to the Board of County Commissioners for a better deal that does not allow public dollars to fund a private baseball interest. He is concerned about the legal ramifications regarding this deal.

- Chairperson White said the Education Center building is in poor shape and it will require expensive repairs in the near future. This is a once in a life time opportunity that he would like to be part of because it will benefit CMS and the community. This is a good deal that should be simple. The Board of Education will receive \$13.75 million in exchange for the Education Center and that money can be spent in any way the Board chooses, or to build a building, or rent space. In addition to that, the Superintendent, senior staff, and probably the Board of Education's offices will be relocated to the Government Center. There is a big difference in the quality of the facility between the Education Center and the Government Center. Chairperson White will support the motion. He said the major concern for some people has been what will the County do with the land after the sell and that is not the Board's job. He encouraged the Board to support the motion because it could help to accomplish great things for this area of Charlotte in the next twenty years.

The Board voted 6-3 to approve the Interlocal Cooperation Agreement with Mecklenburg County. Chairperson White, Ms. Griffin, Mr. Merchant, Ms. Leake, Mr. Dunlap, and Mr. Tate voted in support of the motion. Ms. McGarry, Mr. Gauvreau, and Mr. Gjertsen voted against the motion.

B. Recommend approval of Regional Office/Learning Community Leases

Chairperson White said this item is to approve six leases for regional offices in accordance with the business terms as presented, subject to approval by the Mecklenburg County Board of County Commissioners as required by North Carolina General Statute §115C-530. The locations of the offices and information are as follows:

- West Office (1801 Cross Beam Drive) - 5,538 sq. ft. - \$12.00/sq. ft. including up-fit.
- South Office (9201 Baybrook Lane) - 8,640 sq. ft. - \$11.61/sq. ft.
- Central Office (324 North McDowell Street) - 7,594 sq. ft. - \$20.18/sq. ft. including up-fit.
- East Office (9601 E. Independence Blvd.) - 4,515 sq. ft. - \$22.45/sq. ft. (staff to renegotiate lease to 6,100 square feet and corresponding rent).
- Northeast Office (2750 E. W.T. Harris Blvd.) - 5,182 sq. ft. \$18.75/sq. ft. including up-fit.
- North Office (16630 Northcross Drive in Huntersville) - 6,000 sq. ft. - \$18.75/sq. ft. including up-fit.

Mr. Merchant moved, seconded by Mr. Gjertsen, that the Board approve six leases for Regional Offices/Learning Communities in accordance with the business as terms presented, subject to approval by the Mecklenburg County Board of Commissioners as

required by North Carolina General Statutes §115C-530, and a discussion followed.

- Ms. Leake said she hopes the community is listening and understands what is occurring with decentralization. She thanked staff for attending a community meeting recently at Butler High School to discuss decentralization. She is concerned decentralization will be very costly and will not have an impact on student achievement. She believes those funds could be used to impact the classrooms and student achievement. She requested the per year cost of decentralization for the next three years. She would like to know the number of classrooms and children that this money could impact educationally to improve student achievement. Dr. Gorman said the ongoing costs for the Learning Community leases for the first year will be \$896,318 and that amount will increase approximately 3% for each of the next two years. Ms. Leake said this amount is for the use of the buildings and does not include staffing. She said decentralization will be expensive and there is no guarantee that it will work. CMS has gone through many processes over the years and implemented a decentralization concept several years ago. Ms. Leake believes test scores could be improved by paying teachers a decent salary instead of offering them bonuses because salaries are permanent. She believes applying some of this funding to increase the salaries of the teachers and administrators at the neediest schools in the district will help close the achievement gap. She believes the focus should be about educating all the children in the district.

Mr. Dunlap left the Regular Board meeting at 7:10 p.m.

- Ms. McGarry supports decentralization. She said the report by the Citizens' Task Force indicated there would not be additional expenses associated with decentralization but we have since realized that is not the case. She had hoped the regional offices could have been located at our existing facilities or empty county buildings to save money but that was not feasible. She is concerned about the reaction of the public to this because it follows the Board's recent decision to have a \$620 million Bond package in November which she believes was a wrong decision. She is not sure what the Learning Communities will achieve but she is hopeful that decentralization will have a good impact. She is also hopeful that the decentralization process will replace many of the people at the Education Center and Walton Plaza so that a new location for the Education Center will not be needed. She will support this motion because it will reduce some of the waste and use the people that we have where they can most benefit the public which is closer to where the public is located.
- Mr. Gauvreau said there will be 658 more people in the budget that the Board just approved. This is not decentralizing anything. This is creating outposts, increasing staffing, and spending an enormous amount of money. This is exactly what Dr. Haithcock presented over a year ago. The public wants deconsolidation and not decentralization. Decentralization should be a structural, organizational, and management philosophy. This decentralization does not do that. The public will not be happy with this because it should not cost money to break up CMS' bureaucracy. He expressed concern that staff is recommending approving leases that will cost close to \$1 million when there are at least twenty schools with ten or more empty classrooms that could provide the needed space. Mr. Gauvreau will not support the motion.
- Ms. Griffin is very supportive of this step in the decentralization process. The Board

started the push for decentralization with the adoption of the Theory of Action almost one and a half years ago. The Board discussed with the new Superintendent its desire to become more responsive to our students, parents, and staff. The Board directed the Superintendent to develop proposals for implementing decentralization. This is not the complete proposal. This is only the facility portion of the proposal. We have heard discussions on the services that will be available at the Learning Communities and there may be additional services forthcoming. Ms. Griffin believes parents and staff will experience a significant improvement in the way CMS conducts its business. This decentralization step pushes our services out to the schools, students, and staff who need them the most in an environment that is closer. Staff reviewed the possibilities of locating the offices in existing schools but they discovered that there was not feasible space for the long-term commitment and those locations did not meet the other terms that the Board requested. Ms. Griffin believes staff has done a great job in finding good locations that are centrally located in each region. She looks forward to getting them staffed, and being able to help our students and staff.

- Mr. Tate said decentralization is more involved than just having offices located away from the Education Center. Those offices are a part of a management strategy that allows CMS to have a decentralized and, ultimately, useful system with principals having more authority in the schools and teachers having more responsibility in the classroom. The Board stated this in its Theory of Action and passed policies that provide that accountability. This step pushes forward not only a decentralized location but also a decentralized system. Mr. Tate said the Board asked the Superintendent to decentralize and he is pleased that the Superintendent is moving the process forward. He commended staff for finding locations that met the necessary criteria. He said there are great needs in the classrooms and this direction has the potential of making a difference in the classroom. Mr. Tate said the Board discussed this item at length in the previous Closed Session. Staff explained that they looked for locations in schools and could not find locations that were in the right place, that had enough space, or that provided the needed safety and security for students. He believes it is inappropriate for Board members to suggest otherwise. He will support the motion because it will move CMS forward and he is happy that CMS is ready to move forward.
- Mr. Gjertsen said he voted against the Theory of Action because it did not include a plan for its implementation. Up until now, it has involved more theory than action, and he is happy this takes action. He will support the motion.
- Chairperson White said he has approached decentralization with mixed emotions. He previously worked in an area office with CMS during the last decentralization process. He has said from the beginning that this would cost money. This is about the delivery of services. If we deliver those services to the students and parents better, quicker, and more efficiently it will be worth the money because happier people will be attending our schools. He hopes CMS will do this and do it well. If this is not accomplished, the public will hold the Board accountable. He will support the motion.

Mr. Middlebrooks, legal counsel representing the Board, asked if the motion also included that staff would renegotiate the lease in the East Learning Center to 6,100 square feet and the corresponding rent. Chairperson White said the Board approved amending the motion in Closed Session to authorize staff to renegotiate the lease in the East Learning Community for

more space and the corresponding rent, and this should be included in this motion.

Ms. McGarry made a substitute motion that the Board not authorize staff to renegotiate the square footage of the East Regional Office to 6,100 square feet, seconded by Mr. Gauvreau, and the Board voted 1-7 and the substitute motion failed. Ms. McGarry voted in support of the substitute motion. Chairperson White, Ms. Griffin, Mr. Merchant, Mr. Gauvreau, Ms. Leake, Mr. Tate, and Mr. Gjertsen voted against the substitute motion. Mr. Dunlap was absent.

The Board voted 7-1 to approve the six regional office leases and authorize staff to renegotiate the square footage for the East Learning Community to 6,100 square feet and the corresponding rent. Chairperson White, Ms. Griffin, Ms. McGarry, Mr. Merchant, Ms. Leake, Mr. Tate, and Mr. Gjertsen voted in support of the motion. Mr. Gauvreau voted against the motion. Mr. Dunlap was absent.

V. REPORTS/INFORMATION ITEMS

A. Report/Update on the Strategic Plan Project: Achievement Zone

Chairperson White called upon Dr. Gorman to introduce the report. Dr. Gorman called upon Curtis Carroll, Area Superintendent for the Achievement Zone, to provide the update on the Achievement Zone Project Charter. Mr. Carroll said he is excited about the new initiatives and the opportunities for improving the lowest performing schools in the district. The concept of having all the low performing schools under one office has been successful throughout the country and he believes it will be successful in CMS as well. He introduced the principals and the recruiters for the Achievement Zone who were attending the meeting.

Elementary Schools:

- Byron Campbell, principal at Billingsville Elementary School.
- Duane Wilson, principal at Shamrock Gardens Elementary School.

Middle Schools:

- Dr. Mark Robertson, principal at Martin Luther King, Jr. Middle School.
- Darius Adamson, principal at Sedgefield Middle School.
- Tyrone McDonald, principal at Bishop Spaugh Community Academy.
- Shelley Hinton, principal at Wilson Middle School.

High Schools:

- Jo Ella Ferrell, principal at Garinger High School.
- Sheila Ijames, principal at Midwood High School.
- Stan Frazier, principal at E. E. Waddell High School.
- John Modest, principal at West Charlotte High School.
- Charity Bell, principal at West Mecklenburg High School.

Recruiters:

- Mekisham Bonner, Human Resources Manager.
- Tia Cooper, Recruiting Specialist.

Mr. Carroll said we are looking forward to working with underperforming families to ensure that they are treated as if they are gifted. Mr. Carroll reviewed the Achievement Zone Project

Charter.

Purpose of the Project Charter:

- Establish an Achievement Zone comprised of under-performing schools.
- Provide struggling schools with resources they need to succeed.
- Increase performance on all academic measures including graduation rates.
- Improve school culture and climate.
- Develop a system plan to ensure schools are safe.
- Strengthen relationships with family.
- Building school level capacity around understanding and the use of data.

Mr. Carroll said the focus of the Achievement Zone Project Charter is teaching and learning every minute of every day. The criteria for schools being included in the Achievement Zone are schools identified as part of the *Leandro* litigation which includes the four Challenged High Schools; underperforming schools by state standards; schools under corrective action by the No Child Left Behind Legislature; and schools designated by Dr. Gorman as he deems necessary. Mr. Carroll reviewed the academic measures for the 2005-2006 school year for the Achievement Zone compared to the district average. The achievement gaps range from 14.6% in Reading EOGs for elementary schools to 31.9% in Math EOGs for middle schools. The results of this hard data indicate a need for a focus on the underachieving schools. Mr. Carroll reviewed the initiatives that will enhance learning and academic achievement.

Achievement Zone Unique Initiatives:

- Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools and the Parthenon Group partnership.
- Billingsville Expanded Day.
- K-3 Intensive Reading Model.
- Midwood Eight-PLUS High School.
- Alternative suspension sites.

Existing Initiatives that need Intensive Replication:

- Academy of Reading and Math.
- Fast ForWord.
- Read 180.
- Advance Via Individual Determination Training (AVID).
- Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol Training (SIOP).
- Positive Behavior Intervention Support Training (PBIS).
- Gates \$800,000 Grant.

Mr. Carroll reviewed the plan and the next steps.

The Plan:

- Data-driven decision-making.
- “Laser-like” focus on Literacy and Math.
- Improvement in Community and Parent Involvement.
- Comprehensive wrap-around services in each school.

Next Steps:

- Develop a comprehensive Literacy Plan for the Achievement Zone.
- Recruit, retain, and provide Professional Development for retraining of the Achievement Zone staff.
- Improve community perception of the Achievement Zone schools from inferior to talented.
- Identify resources to address discipline and behavior problems.

Board members were invited to make comments and ask questions.

- Ms. Leake said the Achievement Zone has 100% of her support. She believes the quality of this information will change the lives of the students in these schools. She is concerned that the Midwood High School Program only accommodates 300 students because last year West Charlotte High School had over 250 students not proficient in reading, writing, and math. Garinger and E. E. Waddell high schools also had a number of students not on grade level. She would like the Midwood Program to increase the number of students that it can accommodate because it is unfair to hold these principals accountable for students who come to the school below grade level. Mr. Carroll said Mr. Modest, principal at West Charlotte High School, is aware that he will have students entering his school that are not on grade level as well as students who will be returning next year that are not on grade level. Mr. Modest has been proactive and has implemented initiatives that will focus on underachieving students. Mr. Carroll said the principals do not have control over the students who enter their school but they do have control over the students who exit the school. Ms. Leake is alarmed at the achievement gaps for these schools and believes the new initiatives must enhance the educational strength of these students. She said part of this issue is social promotion and believes it must be stopped. Mr. Carroll said being a principal is a challenge. It is important that the principals develop the right rituals and routines in their school to promote teaching and learning. The principals have a lot of work ahead of them and they need a lot of support to make the schools in the Achievement Zone successful. Ms. Leake asked Dr. Gorman if the principals were being paid what they are worth because these principals work the hardest. Dr. Gorman said next year there will be a differentiated salary for the four principals at the high schools. CMS does not have a differentiated salary structure based on the difficulty of the job. Dr. Gorman said he does not believe these principals are paid compensatory to the challenges they face. Ms. Leake encouraged Dr. Gorman to find additional salaries for those people who help the children who are the weakest in the district.
- Mr. Merchant is very supportive of volunteers in the schools and he encouraged the public to volunteer. He asked what can the Board do to help recruit volunteers for the schools on a sustained basis and in a manner that will not interfere with what the principals are trying to accomplish. Mr. Carroll commended Nora Carr, Chief Communications Officer, for allowing him to utilize the services of Samantha Evans who coordinates volunteerism in the school system. He said CMS has had volunteers in the system forever but they have never done a needs assessment to understand the types of volunteers needed at a particular school. He encouraged staff to do a needs assessment at each school to help understand the volunteers required to help with such initiatives as testing for EOCs, the Faith Summit Initiative, and the PTAs. He would

love for parents to take ownership of the issues and concerns regarding their children but many parents work second or third shift or have more than one job. He believes we need to know the needs of the school and then train the volunteers to accommodate those needs.

- Mr. Tate said the report was informative and provided him the vision of how the Achievement Zone will make a difference. Mr. Tate thanked Mr. Carroll and the principals for their hard work. He hopes the recruiting process will generate more highly qualified teachers. Mr. Carroll said there are a number of vacancies in the Achievement Zone. Representatives from the Human Resources Department and school-based staff from the Achievement Zone have a recruiting trip planned to Detroit from May 17th through May 20th to recruit personnel from the thirty-five schools that are closing in that area. This will be a great opportunity to seek quality safe.
- Mr. Gauvreau said he does not see a plan in this information. He appreciates the team and the work that has been done. These are the toughest jobs in the school district because they have the toughest groups of students of which many are remedial. He does not see a plan to create improvements in that area. Part of this problem is social promotion and there are no corrective measures to change that. He believes an extra hour of instructional time would be beneficial to these schools and that is not being done except on an isolated basis. Dr. Gorman said the items reviewed by Mr. Carroll are a part of a plan and the Charter includes many more components such as the process for stopping social promotion that will be in place next year. This is an overview and not the entire plan. It is not accurate to say there is not a plan or parts of a plan. Mr. Gauvreau encouraged staff to increase the classroom instructional time to improve student achievement. Dr. Gorman reviewed some of the other components and initiatives of the Charter. The plan does not include a broad expansion of the extended school day at all schools. He would like to see that added but it will be costly. There is a pilot program at Billingsville Elementary School and expansion will be determined after next year. The focus is on a quality teacher and a safe, orderly, and organized classroom using great instructional techniques. Dr. Gorman said we must do a better job at increasing student achievement and this is a good plan. We must all step to the plate to do more for students. Dr. Gorman commended the plan and the staff of the Achievement Zone.
- Ms. McGarry said the challenges for these principals are huge and the key is to have leadership in those schools. She said regarding recruiting and retaining teachers, how can you assure these teachers and students have a safe environment? Mr. Carroll said an initiative this summer will focus on the management of student behavior. The only non-negotiable discipline plan that he will have is to try everything which will include conflict resolution, PBIS, etc. There will be some individual students that we will have to make a tough decision on regarding discipline. Mr. Carroll said each school will have their own safety plan which will include the interventions that are available. Ms. McGarry expressed concern that there are known cases of felons and criminals in the schools. Mr. Carroll said these situations are handled swiftly and fairly.

Mr. Dunlap returned to the Regular Board Meeting at 8:15 p.m.

- Chairperson White said tough decisions on cuts or reductions must be made during the

budget process. Some of those items may have been good for one group of people but not necessarily help another group of people. When the Superintendent presented the original proposed budget to the Board, it included funding for the Eight-Plus Program. When the Board completed its changes to the budget, there was no longer funding available for that program in other schools. This is part of the process and sometimes the consequences of that process are not what we intended them to be.

B. Report/Update on the Strategic Plan Project: High School Challenge

Chairperson White called upon Dr. Gorman to present the report. Dr. Gorman called upon Ann Clark, Regional Superintendent for High Schools, and Curtis Carroll, Area Superintendent for the Achievement Zone, to present the report on the High School Challenge. Ms. Clark said the High School Challenge is not a Project Charter but it is a significant initiative. She works closely with Mr. Carroll and is delighted to have his energy and enthusiasm in joining the CMS team. Originally, the High School Challenge initiative consisted of Garinger High School, West Charlotte High School, and West Mecklenburg, and this school year E. E. Waddell High School was added. Ms. Clark said the Governor and the state Board of Education required that each of the priority high schools submit a reform model or a redesign model. Ms. Clark reviewed the reform/redesign models for the four schools, provided an update on the reconstitution effort, and summarized the recruitment efforts for the schools. Ms. Clark said Garinger High School has successfully submitted a redesign model in collaboration with the new school project. Two small high schools (New Technology High School at Garinger and International Studies High School at Garinger) opened on the campus of Garinger in fall 2006 with ninth graders only. In the fall of 2007, three additional small high schools will open (Business and Finance School at Garinger, Leadership and Public Service at Garinger, and Math and Science School at Garinger) with ninth and tenth graders. The Garinger that remains will be referred to as the "old Garinger" and it will consist of only juniors and seniors next year. For the 2007-2008 school year, there will be six schools on the Garinger campus. The following school year (2008-2009), the "old Garinger" will have seniors only and the five small high schools will have grade configurations of nine thru eleven. Beginning with the 2009-2010 school year, the "old Garinger" will be reflected in the five small high schools with grades nine thru twelve. This design model has been accepted by the state and CMS is leading the state in this initiative. Ms. Clark said we took a very steep vertical climb with this project last year, and Ms. Ferrell and her administrative team are to be commended for the work they have accomplished in this short time. E. E. Waddell High School submitted an alternate reform model that uses a Talent Development model which focuses on the initiatives of a Freshman Academy, AVID, Plato, Early College Program, Extended Day Program, Community Partnerships, and double blocks of English and Math in ninth and tenth grades. This alternate model has been accepted by the state. This model was chosen because many of the pieces of the model were already in place and it was a natural fit to do a modification of the proposal. West Charlotte submitted an alternate reform model that focuses on a Career/Learning Community approach and it has been accepted by the state. It will build on the strong Career and Technical Education Program already in place. Over the next three years, in cooperation with our Career and Technical Education Department, West Charlotte will be adding Digital Arts, Engineering, and Information Technologies and this will be the center piece of the reform model. Mr. Modest has already implemented an Academic Advisory Program which will be a strong component of the program. He will continue to

build on this program as well as his experience from his previous school district with the Freshman Academy. All the Achievement Zone schools will focus on continuing the PBIS model. Ms. Bell, who is a national trainer with AVID, has submitted an alternate reform model for West Mecklenburg High School and it has been accepted by the state. Ms. Bell will be doing the only school-wide AVID Initiative in the state and one of very few, at the level she has planned, in the nation. The National AVID and the Regional AVID offices are very excited about Ms. Bell leading a school-wide AVID Initiative. The strategies of this program will be embedded across the school rather than identifying a group of students who will participate in AVID. Ms. Bell and her team will participate in extensive training. Ms. Clark said the state is very interested in seeing how this initiative will work because there has been a focus on AVID and its impact. Ms. Bell will be working to build a strong AVID piece in the feeder schools so that a good foundation will be in place. West Mecklenburg High School already has a strong Ninth Grade Academy and a Foreign Language Magnet established. Ms. Clark saluted the four principals for their leadership and commended them for the level of confidence the state is showing in the models that they have submitted.

Ms. Clark provided an update on the reconstitution effort. She noted the number of teachers on an action plan continually fluctuates because teachers are being placed on an action plan or teachers are being taken off an action plan. An action plan runs on a ninety day cycle and then it is reevaluated. At this time, there are sixty-nine teachers across the four schools that have been placed on an action plan during the school year and forty-eight of those teachers have successfully completed their action plan. The action plan included professional development, additional observation, and individual requirements. There are twenty-one teachers who have been placed on an action plan across the four schools who will not be returning to these four schools next year or any school in the district. An equally important part of reconstitution is what happens after the reconstitution. Ms. Clark provided update on the signing bonus initiative. Each of the four high schools has ten \$15,000 signing bonuses and five \$10,000 signing bonuses. The signing bonuses have been distributed evenly among the six small high schools at the Garinger campus. Currently, we have offered seventeen \$15,000 and four \$10,000 signing bonuses among the four schools. These signing bonuses include additional requirements. A teacher must be EOC certified to qualify for the \$15,000 bonus and the \$10,000 bonus is for a certified staff member in any area that the principal needs to provide additional support to a particular department that is struggling. The individuals must submit a writing sample and the principal could request that they teach a class at the school, perform a classroom observation, or they may submit a video tape if they live outside the district. There are several recommendations pending but they have not completed the cycle of requirements and are not official at this time. A recruitment team will be going to Detroit, as Mr. Carroll stated, to seek quality candidates and the signing bonuses will be helpful in that effort. Ten of the signing bonuses were from internal candidates within CMS and eleven were from external candidates. Ms. Clark commended staff on the red carpet treatment at the recent Job Fair which yielded a number of guaranteed contracts for these four schools. Staffing for next year is being finalized and currently there are forty-two vacancies across the four schools. Counting the pending offers that have not been finalized, there are eleven vacancies remaining. Ms. Clark reminded the Board that any staff member returning to these four schools next year at any position (custodian, secretary, teacher, assistant principal, counselor, etc.) will qualify for a fifteen percent local salary increase and this incentive will be funded by the High School

Challenge dollars.

The Board members were invited to ask questions and make comments.

- Mr. Dunlap asked Ms. Clark to further explain that twenty-one teachers will not be returning. Ms. Clark said twenty-one of the sixty-nine teachers on an action plan will not be returning to any of the schools in the district. This was not about displacing teachers. It was non-renewal for teachers who do not have tenure and dismissal for those who have tenure. The twenty-one included some resignations and the rest will go through the non-renewal/dismissal process.
- Mr. Gauvreau said he has not been fully supportive of this program. He expressed concern about the amount of funding being applied to the four schools over the past three years. He is opposed to spending an additional \$300,000 for signing bonuses on top of an incredible salary increase when we are not sure what the results of this effort will provide. This is a money grab and there are no results except for enabling behaviors thinking that money is going to change some of the other issues that we have in our school district. Mr. Gauvreau believes the recruitment trip to Detroit will be costly. He said prior to the High School Challenge, these schools were already receiving massive amounts of funding (federal, state, and local) from the public. He urged Dr. Gorman to walk away from this program because it has not worked over the past three years and there have been no changes in these schools. He believes the changes and actions that can be taken must begin in the elementary and middle schools.
- Ms. Griffin said she did not support the original High School Challenge because it was doing the same things that had not been successful. She believes this plan bears no resemblance to the first plan. This plan is targeted school-by-school and we have begun to see results but there is a long way to go. These models are innovative and empowering at the school level which is what needs to be done.
- Ms. McGarry said this model shows improvement over the first plan. She has not seen the results but she knows it takes time to get the players in place in order to get the change under way. She believes more emphasis at the high school level must be placed on the students being more responsible and taking ownership of their learning because they are adults. Ms. McGarry said there are challenges but she is hopeful of the new models. Ms. Clark said the impact and infusion of sixty highly qualified teachers across these four schools is creating the bench strength to play on team analogies that has not been in place previously at these four schools. We are creating a strong team on the floor and a bench behind it should a teacher leave. This is very different from the original proposal that was submitted to this Board and the County Commissioners. She believes the courage of Dr. Gorman to not only combine reconstitution with significant signing bonuses and fifteen percent salary increases has helped us keep strong people on the teams at these four schools and to build on that going into next year. The bottom line is the quality of the teacher in the classroom and giving these principals signing bonuses that are modest compared to business and industry is a courageous step.
- Ms. Leake said this venture was to support the weakest children in the district. She would hope that any program would progress rather than retrogress. She believes we must ensure that the programs change because the students are different each year but the teachers stay the same. She prefers providing salaries over bonuses. She expressed concern about the influx of transfers from other districts or charter schools that are not

on grade level because they have not been in the CMS system from the beginning. She requested a report on the per year gap of the four schools for the past three years of participating in the program. She encouraged parents to be responsible in their role in sending children to school so that teachers can teach because teachers cannot discipline and teach also. She said an area of concern is that once students reach high school their behavior patterns have already been set. She stressed the importance of discipline in the schools. She would like experienced principals to mentor new principals. She supports providing finances for the weakest children in the district because they become our citizens and they should contribute back to society. Ms. Leake has always supported the budget, children, staff, and the community. She encouraged the Board to support public education, the budget, and children.

- Mr. Gauvreau said the original proposal was funded by a \$6 million grant outside of the CMS budget from the County. He asked how many staff members deployed into the four schools from previous High School Challenge episodes are no longer there? He noted there was a large sum of funding for BMTs, social workers, etc. Ms. Clark said as part of the budget process for this year, each of the four principals were given the opportunity to identify the positions that they had in the previous year of High School Challenge and those that were a value added that they wanted to continue. Based on the recommendations by the individual principals, content coaches and some of the other different positions were kept or eliminated when the principals could document a value added. A configuration that had been uniform across the four schools changed this year. As a part of this year's budget, some of the positions are a part of the Achievement Zone budget. The majority of the funding for High School Challenge for the next school year will be for the 15% local salary increase and the signing bonuses. Principals were hoping that many of the positions would become part of their regular staffing knowing that the High School Challenge funding would end at some point. Principals began reviewing their staffing models last year and made position exchanges and adjustments. The principals found that some of the positions did not have the value added that they had anticipated. The schools are focusing on quality teachers in the classroom. Some of the positions such as content coaches have been eliminated and some have been absorbed by other funding sources such as school nurses that are now funded by the Health Department. Mr. Gauvreau requested the per pupil spending for each of the four schools for the past three years.
- Mr. Dunlap asked if the Sunset provision was in place for this program? Ms. Clark said this is the final year for the High School Challenge funding and we received permission from the Board and the Board of County Commissioners to carry over the remaining money to implement the reconstitution and the recruitment strategy. Essentially, yes, in terms of at the end of the next school year, the High School Challenge funding cycle will end. Mr. Dunlap asked how will the salaries and bonuses be funded at the end of next year? Dr. Gorman said that will not be funded by a continuing funding source built into the budget and it will be a decision by staff to make a recommendation to the Board to recommend to continue the program by making internal cuts, requesting new funding sources, or to find a third party to provide funding. Mr. Dunlap asked has a record of the achievement data been kept from year one? Dr. Gorman said, yes. Mr. Dunlap said he understands that next year will be very different from previous years. He believes documentation of achievement will be very important to justify continuing in this

process and investment. He would like to review the data to help him determine future funding.

C. Report on Monthly Financials for March 2007

Chairperson White called upon Dr. Gorman to present the report. Dr. Gorman said agenda items C. and D. are the monthly reports and are as presented.

D. Report on Budget Amendments for March 2007

Presented with agenda item C.

VI. REPORT FROM SUPERINTENDENT

Dr. Gorman did not have a report to present to the Board.

VII. REPORTS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

Kaye McGarry thanked everyone for their condolences on the sudden death of her father at age 94. Ms. McGarry read a favorite poem in dedication to her father called, "The Mark of a Man."

Ken Gjertsen said the Ballantyne Breakfast Club would be holding a meeting on May 12th at the Ballantyne Village Theatre. Guy Chamberlain, Associate Superintendent for Auxiliary Services, will present a report on school construction for the area. The PTA leaders of District 6 will hold a meeting on May 19th at the South County Library.

Vilma Leake enjoyed attending Career Day at Walter G. Byers Elementary School and she thanked Central Piedmont Community College for sponsoring the event. She visited the Right Moves Program and several schools that included First Ward Elementary School, Oaklawn Language Academy, West Charlotte High School, North Mecklenburg High School, and E. E. Waddell High School.

Chairperson White thanked everyone, on behalf of his family, for their thoughts and prayers in the recent death of his mother-in-law.

The Board recessed the Regular Board meeting at 9:15 p.m. and returned to the earlier called Closed Session meeting in Room CH-14.

The Board reconvened the Regular Board meeting at 10:01 p.m. in the Meeting Chamber of the Government Center. All Board of Education members except Ken Gjertsen were present. Also present at the request of the Board were Dr. Peter Gorman, Superintendent; James G. Middlebrooks, Attorney from Helms Mulliss & Wicker, PLLC, representing the Board; and Nancy Daughtridge, Clerk to the Board.

Ms. McGarry moved, seconded by Mr. Merchant, that the Board approve the adoption of the evaluation form and procedure as recommended by Dr. Gorman in the thirty-one page document, and the Board voted 7-1 to approve the motion. Chairperson White, Ms.

Griffin, Ms. McGarry, Mr. Merchant, Ms. Leake, Mr. Dunlap, and Mr. Tate voted in support of the motion. Mr. Gauvreau voted against the motion. Mr. Gjertsen was absent.

ADJOURNMENT

By consensus, the Board agreed to adjourn the meeting.

The Regular School Board Meeting adjourned at 10:06 p.m.

Chairperson, Joe. I. White, Jr.

Clerk to the Board, Nancy Daughtride