

Approved by the Charlotte-
Mecklenburg Board of Education
January 8, 2008
Regular Board Meeting



Charlotte, North Carolina

September 25, 2007

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

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education held a Regular Board Meeting on September 25, 2007. The meeting began at 5:23 p.m. and was held in Room 267 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;
Vilma Leake (District 2);
Tom Tate (District 4); and
Ken Gjertsen (District 6)

Absent: Larry Gauvreau (District 1) and
George Dunlap (District 3)

Also present at the request of the Board were Dr. Peter Gorman, Superintendent; Maurice Green, Chief Operating Officer; Regina H. Bartholomew, General Counsel; and Nancy Daughtridge, Clerk to the Board.

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

- **To consult with the Board's attorneys on matters covered by the attorney-client privilege including but not limited to an impending real estate transaction and litigation involving the following cases: (a) *Angela Magana, Guardian Ad Litem for Ivan Magana, a minor v. David Roberts*, and (b) *Alicia Moore v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education*, CO A06-601, 09/04/07.**

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 6:03 p.m. in Room 267 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);
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; Regina H. Bartholomew, General Counsel; Carole Hamrick, Manager of Board Services; Members of Executive and Senior Staffs; and Nancy Daughtridge, Clerk to the Board.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson White called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. Chairperson White welcomed everyone to the Board's second meeting of the month which will be held in a Work Session format.

A. Adoption of Agenda

Chairperson White said Mr. Dunlap would not be attending the meeting tonight. Agenda Item II.D. is his appointment to the Bond Oversight Committee and the Board will not vote on that item at this time and, with that knowledge, the agenda will not need to be amended.

Ms. Griffin moved that the Board approve the adoption of the agenda, seconded by Ms. McGarry, and the Board voted 8-0 in support of the motion. Mr. Dunlap was absent.

II. CONSENT ITEMS

- A. Recommend approval of appointment of administrative personnel.
- B. Recommend approval of citizen appointment to the Bond Oversight Committee by the District 5 Board member.
- C. Recommend approval of citizen appointment to the Bond Oversight Committee by the District 4 Board member.
- D. Recommend approval of citizen appointment to the Bond Oversight Committee by the District 3 Board member. (*Item will not be voted upon at this meeting.*)

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

Ms. Leake asked for the names of the appointments to the Bond Oversight Committee. Chairperson White said this item is a formality as these are the appointments by Ms. Griffin and Mr. Tate and they will introduce their appointments after the vote. Ms. Leake and Mr. Gjertsen said they would prefer to know the names of the appointments prior to the vote. Chairperson White called upon Mr. Tate and Ms. Griffin to introduce their appointments.

Mr. Tate said he would reappoint Paul Tuggle as the District 4 appointment to the Bond Oversight Committee. Mr. Tuggle has served one-year to fulfill an unexpired term and a full three-year term so he is eligible to continue this appointment because he has not filled a six-

year term. Mr. Tate said Mr. Tuggle is excited about continuing his service in this area. Ms. Griffin said she would reappoint Brian King as the District 5 appointment to the Bond Oversight Committee and he has served for the last three year.

Dr. Gorman reviewed the administrative personnel recommendations.

Appointments:

- Vicki Rose Merritt named assistant principal at Joseph W. Grier Academy. Ms. Merritt previously served as a teacher at Piney Grove Elementary School.
- Lisa M. Gordon named assistant principal at Independence High School. Ms. Gordon previously served as principal intern at J.V. Washam Elementary School.

Ms. Leake expressed concern about the strength of one of the appointments because she does not have previous experience as an assistant principal or administrator, although she has participated in the Principal Intern Program. Ms. Leake believes experience should be the focus in the hiring and appointment process. Dr. Gorman said the Principal Intern Program is one of the main training grounds for first time assistant principals. It is a requirement that they attend UNC-Charlotte for a year-long process and they are trained to be an assistant principal.

The Board voted 8-0 to adopt Consent Items A., B., and C. Mr. Dunlap was absent.

III. ACTION ITEMS

There were no action items on the agenda.

IV. REPORTS/INFORMATION ITEMS

A. Report/Update on the Strategic Plan Project Charter: Midwood High School

Chairperson White called upon Dr. Gorman to introduce the report. Dr. Gorman said staff will periodically provide an update to the Board on a Strategic Plan Charter. This agenda has two of those items and this report will be an update on Midwood High School. Dr. Gorman called upon Curtis Carroll, Area Superintendent in the Achievement Zone, to present the report. Mr. Carroll introduced Sheila Ijames, principal at Midwood High School, to present the report. He commended two teachers from Midwood High School on their inventive and common sense approach to teaching. He invited Jessica Savage, math teacher, and Susan Black, health educator, to stand and be recognized. Ms. Ijames said she is pleased to be the principal at Midwood High School which is a new and outstanding program. She said many students do not have an educational opportunity because of their home life or they had teachers that did not understand, had the time, or the ability to reach out to help them. Midwood is taking the time. Midwood has approximately 202 ninth grade students between the ages of fifteen and sixteen, and all of them have failed or been failed in the past. The students are from the four Challenge High Schools (Garinger, E. E. Waddell, West Charlotte, and West Mecklenburg high schools). The staff at Midwood is doing all they can to provide students individual instruction and support in their social and emotional uplifting. Midwood was planned to have approximately 240 students and some of those students chose to not attend a non-traditional high school sitting. The class size at Midwood is small and teachers focus on meeting the needs of the student. The students have been assessed in Read 180 and Fast Forward which are programs

to help students with their reading. Midwood has a strong parent involvement and last week approximately seventy-five families attended the first Open House and thirty of them joined the PTA. Midwood is pleased to have partnerships with the Charlotte Bobcats, Hope Junction Foundation, St. Paul's Missionary Church, and The Charlotte Rotary Club. The partnerships will assist with uniforms, field trips to local and regional colleges, mentoring, and financial resources. Every student at Midwood will have a mentor by December. We are also pleased to report that three of our students have already been offered full scholarships to attend any college of their choice. Midwood High School has been completely remodeled on the inside and it is beautiful. Ms. Ijames invited the Board members to visit Midwood High School soon. Mr. Carroll said Midwood has the capacity to enroll an additional fifty students. Staff is checking with the four Challenge High Schools to ensure that there are not any students that would like to attend the Midwood Program. The next step will be to seek volunteers throughout the district but it is difficult to ask students to transition after the twenty day. Progress Reports are going out tomorrow and parents may decide that the Midwood Program would be a better opportunity for their children as they may benefit from the smaller class size ratio. Staff is also reviewing a priority chart to understand which schools would benefit the most but transportation is an issue. Martin Luther King, Jr. Middle School is in the Achievement Zone and many of those students feed into Vance High School. The consideration of that school may be ideal for recruiting students. Another school for consideration would be East Mecklenburg High School because they have a high enrollment of students who would qualify for the Midwood Program. This may help relieve some of the overcrowding issues at both of those schools. Staff believes utilizing these options will bring Midwood High School to capacity.

Board members were invited to ask questions and make comments.

- Ms. Griffin asked are these students classified as ninth graders and what classes are they taking? Ms. James said they are ninth graders and that is one of the reasons the name was changed from the 8th Plus Program which will still be housed at some of the middle schools. The majority of students are taking foundation classes and Introduction to Math or pre-Algebra classes. Next semester, the students will take English I (which is a required ninth grade class) and Algebra. There were a few students who actually placed in Algebra this semester. One hundred students per semester will be enrolled in the Fast Forward Intervention Program. Ms. Griffin said if the students successfully pass four courses this semester and four courses next semester, will they be on track to return to their home high school as sophomores. Ms. James said, yes.
- Ms. McGarry said for the students who have already received a scholarship to college, was that an incentive for them to complete their high schools? Ms. James said, yes. The scholarships will be based upon the completion of high school, behavior, and attendance.
- Ms. Leake asked are the students eight or ninth graders? Ms. James said they are ninth graders and, because of their low academic performance, they are taking Introduction to Math, which is a ninth grade course, but they will not get credit for that course. Next semester, they will take pre-Algebra or Algebra I and they will get credit for those courses. Ms. Leake asked what is the reading level of the students? Ms. James said the reading level is Foundations of English which is a prerequisite to English I, which

is a ninth grade class, and they will move to that class in January. Ms. Leake asked what are the reading levels of those students? Ms. James said they are Levels 1 and II. Ms. Leake asked if the school had any vacant classrooms? Ms. James said, at this time, there are no vacant classrooms. There is one area in the school that could be turned into a classroom if necessary. Ms. Leake asked what size are the classes? Ms. James said the classes range according to the level of students and the average class size is approximately ten students. The Fast Forward Program has twenty seats and every seat is full each period. Ms. Leake asked does Midwood have the AVID Program? Ms. James said, yes. Mr. Carroll said the school is committed to AVID and the AVID Methodology is posted throughout the building.

- Mr. Gauvreau said this is a 1:6 staff to student ratio. He asked how can you measure success with so few students? Dr. Gorman said success will be measured. The school will go through the same process that the other schools go through related to the School Quality Review process and the School Progress Report which will be shared with the Board at the Management Oversight workshop on Accountability in August. Students will also take the same state assessments as other schools. Staff expectations will be a minimum of at least one year's growth in one year's time. Staff will also measure the progress rates compared from year to year over time. State measurements will be one component of measurement but we will also review attendance, successful course completion, as well as a series of other measurements. Dr. Gorman said the School Leadership Team will also be reviewing measurements of success. Mr. Gauvreau asked what are the first year's expectations? Ms. James said the goal is that 80% of the students will move forward to the tenth grade and be successful.
- Ms. Griffin asked was the goal for student population set at 250 students for the first year because of maximum capacity of the building? Dr. Gorman said not necessarily because class size could be increased which would result in an increase in capacity. The focus was to keep capacity at full school utilization at the student teacher ratio which was 250 students. Dr. Gorman said staff expected the possibility of not reaching the full 250 students which is why there is a process in place at the Progress Report period to accommodate some of those students who were not performing academically. Ms. Griffin asked if the program is successful this year, will the goal be set at 250 students again next year? Dr. Gorman said, yes, unless staff believes there is good reason that the class size should be changed. The current goal is to keep the school at 250 students.
- Ms. McGarry said schools have PTAs, PTSAs, or PTOs. She asked how do those groups differ and do they have dues that go to a national or county organization? Dr. Gorman said the PTA has a national governing body that provides extra support and resources such as a framework for insurance and an existing structure with individuals who can assist the schools with everything from audits to helping with meeting organization and structure. The structure for PTAs allow for PTSAs. The PTO does not have the procedures of a governing body. The majority of our schools have chosen PTAs or PTSAs. They are chosen by the parents at the school level as this is not a district decision. Dr. Gorman said he does not know the due structures for each group but will provide that information at a later time. Ms. McGarry said she would also like to know what funds stay at the schools and if a school had a PTO structure would all that money stay at the school level. Dr. Gorman said he would provide this information at a later time.

- Mr. Tate has visited Midwood High School and was very impressed with the quality of the renovations as well as the eagerness of the staff. Mr. Tate asked was this school initially designed to have 300 students? Dr. Gorman said, yes, but staff reviewed facility utilization and course programs and determined capacity would be better at 250 students, and this resulted in a reduction of staff. Mr. Tate asked how can students choose to not attend Midwood if they are assigned to that school? Dr. Gorman said some students have chosen not to return to public education or attend any school. Mr. Tate asked if a student is designated to attend Midwood, do they have the option to attend their home school? Dr. Gorman said, yes, but some students do drop out if they are sixteen. Mr. Tate asked for clarification on seeking additional students through the volunteer process and Mr. Carroll responded. Mr. Tate asked what is in place at the four Challenge High Schools that is comparable to the program at Midwood that will help the students who have not fully made it to the ninth grade? Mr. Carroll said each of the four Challenge High Schools have the 9th Grade Academy. This program has similar classes to Midwood and students take courses in a smaller class ratio. Dr. Gorman said the classes are smaller but not as small as Midwood. Mr. Tate asked are there extra resources for those other students at other schools to fund more teachers or smaller class size? Dr. Gorman said the four Challenge High Schools receive extra resources. There is also a situation where you have a student who does not attend one of the Challenge Schools or a school with a high rate of students that have not been successful and those schools do not receive those extra resources. Dr. Gorman said there are different levels of resources. The Midwood Program has the most resources followed by the Challenge High Schools. Mr. Tate said he is excited about the program at Midwood but is concerned about the other high schools that will be held at the same success standards for students but do not have the same resources as the other schools. Those principals will be held accountable for the success of their students without the same resources. He believes we must find a way to provide those schools the same resources necessary to make those under-performing students succeed. He said CMS received additional DSSF monies. He asked was any of that funding applied to the high schools with the 9th Grade Academy? Dr. Gorman said a portion of the DSSF monies was required to go to the four Challenge High Schools but it did not go specifically to the 9th Grade Academy.
- Chairperson White asked Dr. Gorman to remind the Board what was in the original budget and what happened to the money in that budget to address those students in those other schools. Dr. Gorman said the original budget request included funds to extend the 9th Grade Academy into other schools. The extra resources would be applied to all the high schools on a proportional basis for the number of students that were Level I and II who would need those extra resources. In the budget process, those dollars were taken out and put into a reduction of class size in the elementary schools.
- Mr. Gjertsen said the Board received an additional \$10 million over the amount of the budget where those funds were deducted. Why were those additional funds not restored to that program? Dr. Gorman said that was not a direct \$10 million piece where we could go dollar for dollar where those funds came from because it went into several different categories. Dr. Gorman said he did not have the budget available at this time and he would provide a more specific answer at a later time.
- Ms. Leake asked clarifying questions on the criteria for assigning students to Midwood, the program, behavioral issues, and the process to seek additional students

for the program. Dr. Gorman, Mr. Carroll, and Ms. James answered those questions. Dr. Gorman said students were assigned to the school this summer and some of those students did not show up and we are now filling those vacancies. Staff is not mandating students to fill those vacancies. Based upon the Progress Reports, there are many students who will fall in the category of not being successful after only four weeks of attending high school. At this point, staff is meeting with students and families that want to attend Midwood because the year is underway and some students do not want to transition to another school. Dr. Gorman said the group of students from the summer and this group of students are being treated somewhat differently. Mr. Carroll said this is the first year for Midwood and we are building the playing field. As we move forward, staff will review steps that can be improved and this will include the recruitment of students. Mr. Carroll said he is very impressed with what Ms. Ijames and her staff have done thus far for the students. Ms. Ijames said regarding behavior issues, whenever you have a student that cannot read you have behavior problems. The Midwood staff is trained and will continue to be trained because the goal is to teach them how to behave and be successful. This will include teaching them that there are options in life. Choosing positive options will help them to be successful.

- Mr. Merchant said 250 students were assigned to Midwood and 202 enrolled. He asked what happened to the other forty-eight students? Ms. James said approximately eighteen students, who were sixteen years old, told her that the program was not for them and they dropped out. They chose other avenues instead of attending any Charlotte-Mecklenburg School. Staff was unable to contact approximately twelve students and we are not sure what happened to them. A few students opted to attend school in another school district. Some students did not like the required rules and chose to not attend. Mr. Merchant asked has staff determined processes that are working or that need tweaking which may help the program to work better? Ms. James said the small class size is a tremendous help because teachers can take time to build one-on-one relationships. Ms. James said, as the principal, she wants much more for these students. She has a huge vision for this school but she does not have the resources. She would like to have additional funding to be able to take the students on field trips to all the colleges/community colleges and to provide every student a uniform which would help with appropriate dress issues. This year she started talking to students and families in July. Next year, she will begin talking with students and families in January and this will make a big difference. Staff will be better equipped in the future on how to inform parents of the great things that are happening at Midwood. Mr. Merchant encouraged the community to participate in the mentoring program.
- Mr. Tate asked is the program designed for students to attend Midwood for one year only? Ms. James said, yes. It is our hope that 100% of the students will go into a high school as a sophomore. In reality, this may not happen. Staff will review each student and determine what is best for that student before the end of the school year and the students will know their destination before May of next year. Mr. Tate hopes the program will be successful because it shows great promise for the students and their families.
- Ms. Leake said regarding the needs of the students and the wrap-around services that are provided at Midwood, how will the school impact the families in changing their thought processes to be supportive in helping those students to be successful? Ms. James said the support staff contacts the parent and/or guardian on a daily basis to

inform them of the process, the expectations at Midwood, and notify them if a student is not on target or missed a day of school. Support staff has a fifteen minute assessment with each student to discuss who the student lives with, the goals of the student, and what does the student want to do in order to be successful. Following the assessment, support staff contacts the parent/guardian to have a joint discussion on the needs of the student.

B. Report/Update on the Strategic Plan Project Charter: Science and Math

Chairperson White called upon Dr. Gorman to introduce the report. Dr. Gorman called upon Dr. Cindy Moss, Director of PreK-12 Math and Science Instruction, and Bill Scott, Math Specialist, to present the update for the Strategic Plan Project Charter on Science and Math. Dr. Moss introduced members of the department who were attending the meeting and she commended them on their dedication in providing students quality math and science instruction. Dr. Moss said the purpose of the project charter is to provide all students with quality teaching and learning experiences in science and math so that they are college-ready and prepared to compete in the global market. Reports indicate that there will be more jobs in the science and math arena over the next several years. We want to prepare our students to be poised to succeed in that market. Dr. Moss and Mr. Scott reviewed research programs that CMS participates in; the areas of need; the plan to address the needs; and opportunities to excite students and teachers in science and math. For the first time ever, 5th and 8th grade students will have End-of-Grade tests in May 2008 and these tests will include topics from the previous grades. This year, the high school level will have four End-of-Course tests (Physical Science, Biology, Chemistry, and Physics) compared to only one in Biology last year. Biology I and Algebra I are graduation requirements and students must score a Level III in order to graduate. The state mandated Math End-of-Grade tests in 3rd thru 8th grades will continue to be a requirement. Dr. Moss said we are continuing to develop partnerships and currently our community partners include Discovery Place; local colleges and universities; Duke Energy; Presbyterian Hospital; General Dynamics; and Parsons Engineering.

Board members were invited to ask questions and make comments:

- Ms. McGarry said the information is exciting and she is happy that science will start in the elementary grades because that will help build student interest.
- Ms. Griffin said Biology and Algebra are now gateway courses. She asked what are we doing to help students and to increase the pass rate as this is a requirement for graduation? She is aware that students have the opportunity to retest going forward but expressed concern that it becomes more difficult to pass an End-of-Course test if it has been some time since the student has taken the course. Dr. Moss said staff is aware of the potential low percentage of pass rates for these courses. To help students achieve, staff has taken measures to set the student up and focus on the objectives that must be taught. CMS is focusing on top quality professional development utilizing best practices to teach teachers the correct way to reach students so that remediation will not be necessary. Dr. Moss said CMS has the best that there is to offer and we must maximize its effectiveness and teach our teachers how to utilize the resources that are available. Ms. Griffin said she still has a concern for those students who we are not successful with the first time and will have to pass that test. Dr. Moss said students can submit a portfolio at the second retest if they have not passed that EOC but have passed

the course. A committee will review the portfolio to understand if the work the student has performed indicates mastery of subject. There are other options and staff has developed a remediation plan for students who do not pass the first test. Ms. Griffin asked if there was vertical integration within the learning communities separate and a part from what we are doing as a system? Dr. Moss said this is planned for in the future. This year, we are establishing science and math leadership core people so there will be twelve science experts PreK-12 and twelve math experts PreK-12 in each learning community. They will receive the best quality professional development available and they will choose the direction based on the needs of their learning community.

- Mr. Tate asked if the department believed they had enough resources (staff, science kits, funds, etc.) to reach the students and make this successful? Dr. Moss said in terms of material resources (books and equipment) our teachers have what they need. We will always be looking for more resources for professional development because it takes 80 hours of quality professional development to change a teacher's practice and 160 hours to change the culture, and we are a long way from that maximum. Research indicates that the effectiveness of the teacher is the number one factor in student achievement and we must train them how to use the tools that are in place.
- Mr. Merchant asked who sets the science and math graduation requirements? Mr. Merchant said there is a push for more rigor and some school districts believe additional graduation requirements may equate to an increase in rigor. Mr. Scott said graduation requirements are set by the State Board of Education and colleges want to ensure that school districts follow the North Carolina Standard Course of Study and/or a national curriculum such as AP or IB, and there is very little wiggle room outside tested courses for admission to the universities. Dr. Moss said there is an upcoming national plan by the Federal Commission that will require all students across the country have certain math and science skills. This will include standardization in teacher licensure. The work of this commission is to outline a national strategy because this is a problem throughout the United States. This will help us to become globally competitive because the rest of the world has national tests. Mr. Merchant understands that rigor is important but we must find out why students do not understand the required material. Dr. Moss said for students to survive in the 21st Century they must have a fairly high level of math, science, and technology skills or they will not be able to get a job because these students will be competing globally. Teachers must be trained to make it relevant as well as interesting and exciting. Mr. Merchant believes relevance is important and teachers must help students understand how they will be using math and science in their everyday lives because that will catch the interest of the students who really are not interested in math or science.
- Mr. Gjertsen encouraged staff to continue its focus on utilizing teaching methods that incorporate relevance.
- Ms. Leake said statistics indicate that minority girls perform poorly in math and science. She asked what is CMS doing to target minority girls to be excited about science and math and to impact minority males to also be excited? Dr. Moss said research shows that most of our students lack first-hand experience. Best practices and relevant teaching practices involve hands-on and inquiry based-learning which help to excite students. This levels the gaps between boys and girls, minorities, English Language learners, and EC students. Ms. Leake hopes all the teachers will have the

enthusiasm of Dr. Moss. She encouraged staff to focus on increasing the scores, the interest, and the success of the minority students to be equally prepared to compete world-wide.

Chairperson White congratulated Carole Hamrick, Manager of Board Services, on her recent engagement.

ADJOURNMENT

By consensus, the Board agreed to adjourn the Regular Board meeting.

The Regular School Board Meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Chairperson, Joe. I. White, Jr.

Clerk to the Board, Nancy Daughtridge