

Approved by the Charlotte-
Mecklenburg Board of Education
March 10, 2009
Regular Board Meeting



Charlotte, North Carolina

March 11, 2008

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

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education held a Regular Board Meeting on March 11, 2008. 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, Member At-Large;
Molly Griffin, Vice-Chairperson, (District 5);
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: Kaye McGarry, Member At-Large

Also present at the request of the Board were Dr. Peter Gorman, Superintendent; Regina H. Bartholomew, General Counsel; Maurice Green, Deputy Superintendent/Chief Operating Officer; Tyler Ream, Chief of Staff; 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 attorney-client privilege including but not limited to the litigation involving Sugar Creek Charter School, Kennedy Charter School, Crossroads Charter School, Carolina International School, and Metrolina Regional Scholars Academy.**

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

The Board held a Closed Session meeting from 4:36 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Chairperson White reconvened the Regular Board Meeting at 6:00 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; Regina H. Bartholomew, General Counsel; 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 6:00 p.m. Chairperson White welcomed everyone to the Board's first Regular monthly business meeting of the month. He said the meeting included a lengthy agenda with many public speakers.

A. Pledge of Allegiance

Chairperson White introduced Marlin Jamell Holmes, a senior at Phillip O'Berry Academy of Technology, to lead those present and in the viewing audience in the Pledge of Allegiance and to speak to the March character trait of "courage." At Phillip O. Berry, Marlin has been named student of the month; received the President's Award for Education Excellence; and is second in his class of 249 seniors. After graduation, Marlin plans to study Aerospace or Materials Science Engineering at Alabama State University where he has been awarded an \$81,000 Presidential Scholarship. In addition to his academic pursuits, Marlin loves to read and his favorite book is *Eldest* by Christopher Paolini. Marlin is a member of the National Honor Society, Future Business Leaders of America, and Junior Achievement. Of his future Marlin says, "You can rest assured that I will reach my future goals and leave a distinct mark in the world." Marlin was accompanied by his parents, Lisa and Roderick Holmes, and his principal, Donald Fennoy. Marlin invited everyone to stand and join him in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. Marlin said "courage" is the character trait of the month and that is an important word for this meeting because we are here to discuss the Anti-Bullying Policy. A characteristic of courage is having the personal courage to know what is right and what is wrong, to stand up for yourself, and to not follow the trend. Marlin said it is not right to pick on people and to play with people's minds.

Chairperson White welcomed approximately twenty students with the Teaching Fellows from UNC-Charlotte. Teaching Fellows receive a \$26,000 state-funded scholarship to attend one of eighteen universities in North Carolina to become a teacher. The Teaching Fellows attending the meeting are juniors at UNC-Charlotte. The Junior Class of Teaching Fellows focus on leadership during seminars throughout the year and are attending the Board meeting to observe policy makers in action. The students were joined by Teaching Fellows Advisor, Sara Smith.

Chairperson White congratulated Molly Griffin on becoming a grandmother today. The baby's name is Violet.

B. Adoption of Agenda

Ms. Griffin moved, seconded by Mr. Tate, that the Board adopt the agenda, and a discussion followed.

Chairperson White asked the Board to approve adding Action Item IV. D. (Recommend approval of land acquisition and resolution concerning land exchange in connection with the new southwest high and elementary school site) to the agenda.

Ms. Leake moved, seconded by Mr. Dunlap, that the Board approve adding Action Item IV.D. (Recommend approval of land acquisition and resolution concerning land exchange in connection with the new southwest high and elementary school site), and the Board voted 9-0 in support of the motion.

Ms. McGarry requested that the Board add an item to the agenda concerning the Board's decision regarding the Charter School Litigation matter which was an item discussed in Closed Session.

Ms. McGarry moved, seconded by Mr. Gauvreau, that the Board add an item to the agenda concerning the Board's decision regarding the Charter School Litigation matter which was an item discussed in Closed Session, and a discussion followed. Ms. McGarry reviewed court rulings on this matter and said it would be in the public's interest to have this item on the agenda. Mr. Gauvreau asked to speak to adding this item to the agenda. Chairperson White said this item has not been added to the agenda at this time and Board members may not speak to an item until it has been added to the agenda. Regina Bartholomew, General Counsel, clarified that there is no discussion on an item until it has been added to the agenda.

The Board voted 3-6 on adding Ms. McGarry's item to the agenda and the motion failed. Ms. McGarry, Mr. Gauvreau, and Mr. Gjertsen voted in support of the motion. Chairperson White, Ms. Griffin, Mr. Merchant, Ms. Leake, Mr. Dunlap, and Mr. Tate voted against the motion.

Mr. Gauvreau said he would like to have the floor for thirty seconds. Chairperson White said the agenda for the meeting is very lengthy and the Chair would not recognize Board members for Personal Privileges to speak to an item that has not been added to the agenda. Mr. Gauvreau requested an *appeal to the decision of the Chair*. Chairperson White said the Chair's decision was that it would be inappropriate to discuss an item in Open Session that has not been added to the agenda and was related to a Board discussion in Closed Session. Mr. Gauvreau again requested thirty seconds to address the Board. Chairperson White called for the Board vote on the *appeal to the decision of the Chair*. Mr. Gauvreau requested to withdraw his *appeal to the decision of the Chair*.

Mr. Dunlap moved, seconded by Ms. Leake, that the Board adopt the agenda as amended, and the Board voted 9-0 in support of the motion.

C. Public Hearing on proposed Policy JICK, Anti-Bullying

Chairperson White called upon Ms. Griffin, Chairperson of the Policy Committee, to open the Public Hearing on proposed Policy JICK, Anti-Bullying. Ms. Griffin said proposed Policy JICK was presented to the Board for First Reading at the February 12, 2008 Regular Board meeting and the proposed policy was posted on the CMS Website for public review and feedback. Policy JICK is before the Board on tonight's agenda for a Public Hearing and Board action.

Ms. Griffin declared the Public Hearing on proposed Policy, JICK, Anti-Bullying, open.

Ms. McGarry requested a *point of information*. Ms. McGarry said she has on the agenda for tonight's meeting an alternate recommendation for proposed Policy JICK and technically it did not have a First Reading. She asked if her alternate recommendation for an Anti-Bullying Policy could be included in the Public Hearing? Chairperson White said Ms. McGarry's alternate recommendation is a separate Action Item (Action Item IV.C.). Chairperson White said the topic for the Public Hearing is Anti-Bullying and he believes the public will address all issues relative to the proposed policy.

Chairperson White reviewed the procedure for conducting the Public Hearing. He noted that there were forty-two speakers signed up to speak and individual speakers would be given three minutes to address the Board and five minutes if they represented an organization.

The following people spoke in support of proposed Policy JICK and encouraged the Board to adopt the policy as presented:

- Julian Wright represented the Equity Committee.
- Elizabeth Wright, freshman at Myers Park High School, has been a victim of bullying.
- Dylan Carrasco-Songer, sophomore at Northwest School of the Arts and member of the Diversity Club involved with Charlotte Coalition for Social Justice and Youth and Empowerment Council.
- Louise Jordan, Social Worker at South Mecklenburg and Providence high schools.
- Rabbi Judy Schindler represented Temple Bethel.
- Pastor Steve Shoemaker represented Myers Park Baptist Church.
- June Carter.
- Bryan Zarbock, senior at Providence High School, has been a victim of bullying.
- Jordan Parker, junior at Providence High School and president of the Junior Class.
- Sharon Walker, CMS parent and Counselor at Providence High School.
- Terry Creech represented the Charlotte Coalition for Social Justice.
- Juan Vazquez, senior at Garinger High, represented the Diversity Club. He has been a victim of bullying.
- Melissa Siegel, junior at North Mecklenburg High School, represented Youth Empowerment Council. She has been a victim of bullying.
- Kunal Vasudev, senior at Vance High School, represented Youth Empowerment Council.
- Edward Martel is a parent of a graduate of South Mecklenburg High School who was bullied by his classmates.
- Mike Godley graduated from CMS and was bullied.
- Janet Peeple supports the policy because it will help teachers to support students.
- Allie Easley, junior at Providence High School.

- Austin Willette, junior at Providence High School.
- Brian Hargett.
- Alex Kilkka (does not support Ms. McGarry's alternate recommendation).
- Amber Koonce, Senior Class President at Providence High School.
- Kaitelyn Latino, student at Providence High School.
- Dr. Maria Hanlin, represented Mecklenburg Ministries.
- Delvenia Crowell.
- Michael Gavin.
- Daniel Popejoy, sophomore at East Mecklenburg High School.

The following people discussed their concerns and opposition to proposed Policy JICK:

- Martin Davis discussed his concerns regarding homosexuality.
- David Benham supports an Anti-Bullying Policy but is opposed to an agenda forced to be institutionalized through this policy and he encouraged the Board to eliminate reference to sexual orientation and gender identity.
- Flip Benham is opposed to categorizing groups of people, institutionalizing homosexuality, and reference to sexual orientation and sexual identity.
- Ante Pavkovic is opposed to institutionalizing homosexuality and gender identity expression.
- Timothy Hanline expressed his concerns regarding homosexuality and gender identity.
- Christan Sugar expressed her concerns regarding homosexuality and the policy could help a few people but hurt many.
- Warren Shinn is opposed to the verbiage in the policy and encouraged CMS to incorporate God in school.

Lindalyn Kakadelis represented the North Carolina Education Alliance. She cares deeply about education and believes no one should be bullied and schools should be safe. She encouraged the Board to not pass the policy until the policy includes a clear, concise definition of bullying and the policy defines what the Board wants to stop.

The following people support a bullying policy but have concerns regarding the verbiage and/or categories of the proposed policy:

- Hans Plotseneder is opposed to the proposed policy categories. He believes the existing policy adequately covers harassment.
- Dr. Michael Brown, represented Coalition of Conscience, is against bullying. He does not support the categories and verbiage because it may promote homosexuality.
- Bishop Jaeremiah Boseman, represented Body of Christ International Church, is opposed to the verbiage.
- Cindy Woodlies expressed her concerns regarding the verbiage.
- Ed Barnes is opposed to verbiage and presented a strong, simple policy for the Board's consideration.
- Charles Neil is opposed to the verbiage.

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

D. Public Hearing on Ten-Year Facility Master Plan

Ms. McGarry moved, seconded by Ms. Leake, that the Board open the Public Hearing on Ten-Year Facility Master Plan.

No speakers requested an opportunity to speak to this item.

Ms. McGarry moved, seconded by Mr. Merchant, that the Board close the Public Hearing on Ten-Year Facility Master Plan.

II. REQUESTS FROM THE PUBLIC

June Blotnick and Lawrence W. Raymond, MD represented the Carolinas Clean Air Coalition. Ms. Blotnick encouraged the Board to support completing retrofitting all school buses by including \$2.5 million in next year's budget. Dr. Raymond discussed the importance of promoting clean air and the harmful health impact of diesel exhaust on school children.

Futong Cui said anti-bullying is about respect and fairness. He encouraged the Board to grandfather students currently attending Villa Heights Academic Center a guaranteed feed to Davidson IB Middle School and students currently attending Davidson IB Middle School a guaranteed feed to North Mecklenburg High School. The current IB student assignment plan is unfair. He lives less than ten minutes from North Mecklenburg High School but is assigned to West Charlotte High School which is thirty minutes from his home.

Antar Azan is a sophomore at Myers Park High School and represented Mecklenburg Youth Voice. Antar discussed the importance of student representation and input. He encouraged the Board and CMS to listen to students and to not drown out student voices.

Lehong Jim discussed the CMS Gifted Program and expressed her concerns regarding the feeder patterns for the Magnet Programs.

III. CONSENT ITEMS

A. Recommend approval of minutes.

- February 26, 2008 Closed Session.
- February 21, 2008 Closed Session.
- January 25-26, 2008 Board Retreat.
- January 22, 2008 Closed Session.
- January 11, 2008 Joint Meeting.
- November 13, 2007 Regular Board Meeting.
- October 23, 2007 Regular Board Meeting.

B. Construction Items

1. Recommend approval of First Amendment to Joint Use Agreement for Canipe Park/New Elementary School at Bradley Middle School.
2. Recommend approval of an easement at Marie G. Davis Military and Global Leadership Academy.
3. Recommend approval of design contracts for 2007 Bond Projects.
4. Recommend approval of construction contract for Berryhill Elementary School.
5. Recommend approval of permanent sidewalk easement on Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education property regarding City of Charlotte's ramp and sidewalk construction project.
6. Recommend approval of lease for space at Airport Center, 5001 Airport Center

Parkway, Building M, Charlotte, NC.

7. Recommend approval of First Amendment to Land Swap and Lease/Operating Agreement (Recreation Center – Hickory Grove Elementary School).
 8. Recommend approval for set-up and relocation of mobile and modular units for various schools.
 9. Recommend approval of design and construction project for the above-ground fuel tanks at Downs Road Transportation Center.
- C. Recommend approval of appointment of administrative personnel.
- D. Recommend approval of licensed/non-licensed hires and promotions for January 2008.
- E. Recommend approval of one citizen appointment to the Equity Committee by the District Two Representative.

Ms. Leake recommended Hiawatha Foster, teacher at Myers Park High School, as the District 2 appointment to the Equity Committee to fulfill an unexpired term ending November 30, 2009.

- F. Recommend approval of supplementary funding request from US Department of Education/Grants to Reduce Alcohol Abuse Program for *High Risk Alcohol Abuse Prevention Program*.

Ms. Griffin moved, seconded by Mr. Dunlap, that the Board adopt Consent Items A. through F., and a discussion followed.

Ms. Leake pulled B.1., B.3., B.5., B.8., B.9., and C.

Ms. McGarry pulled B.8.

Ms. Gjertsen pulled C.

Mr. Dunlap moved, seconded by Ms. Griffin, that the Board adopt Consent Items A. through F., excluding B.1., B.3., B.5., B.8., B.9., and C., and the Board voted 9-0 in support of the motion.

The Board discussed Consent Item B.1. Ms. Leake asked clarifying questions regarding the agreement with the Town of Huntersville and the additional costs associated with the town's restrictions. Dr. Gorman called upon Guy Chamberlain, Associate Superintendent for Auxiliary Services, to answer questions regarding the construction items. Mr. Chamberlain reviewed the agreement with the Board of Education and the Town of Huntersville. The Town of Huntersville will reimburse CMS in the amount of \$644,000 toward the costs of a new full size gymnasium at the new elementary school next to Bradley Middle School. In return, CMS will convey \$265,000 to the Town of Huntersville for related road improvements contiguous to the site that they have completed on the behalf of CMS.

Ms. Leake moved, seconded by Mr. Tate, that the Board adopt Consent Item B.1., and the Board voted 9-0 in support of the motion.

The Board discussed Consent Item B.3. Ms. Leake requested a list of the contractors and the number of minority contractors for the 2007 Bond projects. She asked clarifying questions regarding the contract for renovations at East Mecklenburg High School. Mr. Chamberlain said there was one full minority contractor (ALR Architecture) and they will be completing the work at Joseph W. Grier Academy. Ms. Leake requested a copy of the contracts. She expressed concern that there is only one minority firm out of the twelve contractors listed. Mr.

Chamberlain said two years ago the Board adopted a new Minority, Women, Small Business Enterprises (MWSBE) Policy. One of the goals was to increase the MWSBE participation for architectural contracts to 15%. Last quarter, CMS was at 29% and since the policy was adopted 25% of the CMS architectural fees have been awarded to minority firms. Dr. Gorman said he would provide the Board an update on all MWSBE dollars to date. Mr. Chamberlain said it is important to note that every architectural firm that responded to the CMS Request for Qualification were interviewed and ALR was the only minority firm that submitted a qualification statement and they were selected.

Ms. Griffin moved, seconded by Mr. Tate, that the Board adopt Consent Item B.3., and the Board voted 8-1 in support of the motion. Ms. Leake voted against the motion.

The Board discussed Consent Item B.5. Ms. Leake asked clarifying questions regarding the permanent sidewalk easement in front of Providence High School. Mr. Chamberlain said this is a safety improvement in collaboration with the Charlotte Department of Transportation as a result of a death of a pedestrian in front of the school. This will grant an easement to the City of Charlotte so that they can enter CMS property to perform periodic maintenance on the sidewalks as necessary.

Ms. Leake moved, seconded by Mr. Tate, that the Board adopt Consent Item B.5., and the Board voted 9-0 in support of the motion.

The Board discussed Consent Item B.8. Ms. Leake expressed concern regarding the bidding process and the companies selected to move modular units. She requested a list of the companies used in the past five years. Mr. Chamberlain said he would provide that information at a later time. Ms. Leake would prefer that CMS use local businesses. Ms. Leake asked how many modular units does this include, what company will we use, and where will the modular units be relocated? Mr. Chamberlain said he would provide Ms. Leake a list of where the mobiles will be distributed. That was not the purpose of this agenda item. This agenda item is Board approval for contracts to allow CMS to perform this work. Mr. Chamberlain said this is still being reviewed and a final number should be reconciled by the end of the week. Dr. Gorman said this agenda item is for twenty-seven different companies to perform different phases of the work for relocation. Ms. McGarry also wanted to know the new sites for the modular relocations. She encouraged staff to develop a more efficient system than having to continually relocate modular units. She would like to know the parameters and why CMS continually spends millions to move mobile units again and again. Mr. Chamberlain said CMS will open seven schools this fall and as a result schools that are overcrowded today will get relief and will no longer be overcrowded. The mobile classrooms that sit on those campuses must be relocated to where the growth occurs. Based upon the CMS projections for enrollment in August, we have taken mobiles away from existing campuses and plan to move them to other campuses.

Ms. McGarry moved, seconded by Ms. Leake, that the Board adopt Consent Item B.8., and the Board voted 9-0 in support of the motion.

The Board discussed Consent Item B.9. Ms. Leake expressed concern that the above-ground fuel tanks at Downs Road Transportation Center may have a negative impact on the air quality for the surrounding area. Mr. Chamberlain said the installation of the tanks would meet the

current requirements for above-ground storage and that would preclude that from happening.

Ms. Leake moved, seconded by Ms. Griffin, that the Board adopt Consent Item B.9., and the Board voted 9-0 in support of the motion.

The Board discussed Consent Item C. Mr. Gjertsen expressed concern that one of the appointments is a principal at the new Performance Learning Center (PLC). He was unaware that CMS had created a new PLC and believes the appointment may be premature. Dr. Gorman said this is not premature. He will not backfill the position and the position will begin work on that initiative to ensure that it is ready should the Board approve that process. This is an effort to be transparent about an individual being out of the building performing other duties to prepare and plan for that process. Dr. Gorman said this appointment is included under the rules for transfer and this item is an effort to be transparent and ensure the information is shared with the Board. Ms. Leake expressed concern that the Board had not voted to approve this facility and she asked clarifying questions on the location of the new facility and the costs. She would also like information on the success of the current PLC to include the number of students enrolled and dropped out. She expressed concern that the school can only accommodate one hundred students and that contributes to a form of segregation because it does not allow all children to be a part of the process. She is not convinced that it is feasible to create another site and include it in the budget at this time. Dr. Gorman said those questions will be answered during the budget process. Ms. Leake discussed the importance of creating a climate of academic success on the west side of town by providing those schools (Achievement Zone) more resources, stronger principals, quality teachers, and smaller class sizes. She would prefer having more resources directed to those schools rather than funding a school that will only accommodate one hundred students. Ms. Leake requested a job description of a principal that is being transferred to a non-existing site.

Mr. Tate moved, seconded by Ms. Griffin, that the Board adopt Consent Item C., and the Board voted 6-3 in support of the motion. Chairperson White, Ms. Griffin, Mr. Merchant, Mr. Gauvreau, Mr. Dunlap, and Mr. Tate voted in support of the motion. Ms. McGarry, Ms. Leake, and Mr. Gjertsen voted against the motion.

Dr. Gorman reviewed the personnel recommendations as follows:

Appointments:

- Sandra Fish named Executive Director of Inventory and Distribution Management. Ms. Fish previously served as Director of Inventory Management and Internal Audits.
- Dawn Parker named principal at University Meadows Elementary School. Ms. Parker has a Certificate of Administration and Supervision from Virginia Commonwealth University; Master of Education in History and Social Studies from Virginia Commonwealth University; and a Bachelor of Arts in Government from College of William and Mary. Ms. Parker previously served as Assistant Head Master of Academics at Davidson Day School in Davidson, North Carolina.
- Michael Lane Price named principal at McKee Road Elementary School. Mr. Price previously served as assistant principal at Hawk Ridge Elementary School.

Transfer:

- Sherry Sigmon named principal of the new Performance Learning Center, which will be

the second of its kind in CMS. Ms. Sigmon is currently serving as principal at the existing Performance Learning Center.

IV. ACTION ITEMS

A. Recommend approval of changes to the State Plan for Gifted Education

Chairperson White called upon Dr. Gorman to present the recommendation. Dr. Gorman said this is the recommendation of changes to the State Plan for Gifted Education. This information was presented to the Board at the February 12, 2008 Regular Board meeting and the Board also held a Work Session on March 5, 2008. He called upon Ann Clark, Associate Superintendent for Pre-K-12 Curriculum and Instruction, and Stephanie Range, Director of Advanced Studies, to answer Board member questions.

The proposed changes include the following:

1. Change the qualifying T-score from 70 to 65.
2. Eliminate the wording “self-contained” as referenced in the CMS Learning Immersion/Talent Development Magnet Program description but add a framework to ensure a gifted curriculum is offered and provide a timeline for teachers to begin the licensure classes.
3. Allow a rubric to be used in evaluating students for the Horizons Program.
4. Specify that students who are unable to test with CogAt because of modifications and accommodations will be given an alternative assessment.

Mr. Dunlap moved, seconded by Mr. Tate, that the Board approve the proposed changes to the State Plan for Gifted Education, and a discussion followed.

- Ms. McGarry said she understands the proposed information but she believes the logic is flawed because it is “dumbing down” the program for the wrong reasons. It is adding subjectivity as opposed to keeping it objective. She does not believe you can make a child gifted by lowering the test scores to qualify. Ms. McGarry finds the recommendations disturbing and she would prefer to keep the quality of the program at the current standards.
- Mr. Gauvreau agreed with Ms. McGarry’s comments. He expressed concern that this has been going on for some time and he referenced a letter from Dr. Gorman dated January 4, 2008. The letter stated that research tells us that the minority and poor children have been traditionally underrepresented in Gifted Talented Programs and one of our goals in identifying and educating our brightest students is to correct such under-representation. Mr. Gauvreau expressed concern that the recommendations are “dumbing down” the program. He asked what is the number of Gifted Students in CMS? Dr. Gorman said it is about 11% of the student population. Mr. Gauvreau expressed concern that CMS has taken a program and made it so subjective that it has become diluted and that was done in the past to fuel the Magnet Program which is an “Orwellian” approach to public education in 2008. He also expressed concern that CMS has too many schools. Mr. Gauvreau will not support the recommendations.
- Mr. Dunlap expressed concern that the Board previously had this item at a Regular Board meeting and held a Board Work Session in which Board members had the opportunity to ask questions and make recommendations and only four Board members attended the

Work Session. Board members also had the opportunity to provide their requests in writing. Mr. Dunlap said there is national research that suggests what the national cut off scores should be to determine Gifted. The research presented to the Board was based upon the recommendations of the national research. The Board was told the recommendations would correct some of the past mistakes that had been made and correct some of the misdiagnoses or misrepresentation of those students who failed to qualify because of the subjectivity. Mr. Dunlap wants to ensure the proposed recommendations will guarantee that CMS qualifies those students who deserve to be identified as Gifted. He expressed concern that some Board members would suggest the proposed recommendations will “dumb down” the program but that is not the case because the recommendations are based upon proven national research. Mr. Dunlap will support staff’s recommendations.

- Ms. Griffin apologized for not attending the Work Session. She noted that she had been scheduled to be out of town at that time awaiting the birth of her granddaughter. She said this is an area that she has a great deal of interest. She said the change to a lower T-score does not automatically qualify students into the program. The score qualifies students to be evaluated for the Gifted Program and the lower score range allows the process to consider more students for assessment. Ms. Griffin expressed concern regarding the second proposed recommendation to eliminate the wording “self-contained” as referenced in the CMS Learning Immersion/Talent Development Magnet Program description. She does not want the plan that CMS presents to the state to include that recommendation. She believes if the numbers are such that CMS is not able to have a self-contained program than CMS should carefully review that during the Magnet Program Review process. She requested that the second proposed recommendation be separated because she would not support that recommendation but would support the other three recommendations unless there is reason to convince her otherwise.
- Mr. Dunlap said he would support Ms. Griffin’s request to divide the question. He had the same concerns as Ms. Griffin but staff was able to address those concerns. He said CMS has Talent Development (TD) Programs in which all students in the classroom are TD students. CMS has some programs in which there are only a few TD students in a classroom and not enough TD students to fill an entire class. Those classes combine the TD students with other students who are high performing students. The concern is whether those other high performing students have a negative impact on the TD students. Mr. Dunlap said he had suggested to staff that CMS allow those TD students in a school with only a few TD students to be given the option to transfer to a full TD school. Ms. Griffin said her concern was only about Magnet Schools. This recommendation references that not all the students in the TD Magnet Schools are identified as Gifted and that is the point in which she objects. Mr. Dunlap hopes that issue will be resolved with increasing the number of students who will be evaluated for the TD Program and determining that additional students will qualify for the TD Program. Mr. Dunlap said several Board members had the same concern to ensure the Talent Development Program remained intact and he was assured by staff that they would work diligently to ensure this recommendation would not have a negative impact on the TD classroom.
- Mr. Tate asked clarifying questions regarding the process for identifying students. He noted that in the past two years CMS identified fewer students. Ms. Range said, yes. At this time, CMS has identified fewer students because two years ago the numbers were

very high and CMS identified 33% of the second graders as Gifted. This resulted in a number of students who were not succeeding in the program and, at that time, CMS changed the entire process. The new process identified fewer students. Mr. Tate asked if the purpose of the proposed recommendations was to ensure that CMS identified as many students as possible who are truly identified as Gifted? Ms. Range said, yes. Mr. Tate asked clarifying questions regarding eliminating the wording “self-contained” classroom and whether those classrooms would still be using the TD curriculum the full day. Ms. Range said, yes, those classes would remain as homogeneous as possible and eliminating the term “self-contained” would accommodate adding small numbers of high achieving students (in most cases two to four students) to fill a classroom. Ms. Range said the process has included additional professional development to ensure the teachers have training in gifted strategies to use with those students the full day as well as instructional visits to ensure the fidelity of the curriculum for a Gifted student.

- Ms. Leake said her concerns include ensuring the TD and Horizon students are provided adequate educational opportunities as they move from elementary to high school; that CMS provides quality staff in all classrooms; providing support to teachers; and minimizing the enormous amount of paperwork required by teachers. Ms. Leake asked clarifying questions regarding the feeder pattern for students in the Horizon Program and Ms. Clark responded.
- Ms. Griffin said she is not concerned that the non-gifted students will bring down the instructional level of the TD classroom. She believes if CMS is going to offer a TD Magnet Program and parents choose that type of education for their child then those CMS Magnet schools should provide that program. She is particularly concerned about CMS changing their plan to the state to include CMS will not require “self-contained” classes. Ms. Clark said this particular recommendation would be better served in a larger context for a future conversation around the Magnet Programs in the district. In reality at this point, there are situations in the LI/TD Magnets that CMS does not have “self-contained” classes as promised and staff needed to bring this to the Board’s attention with an recommendation that allows CMS to complete this year and address this again during the Magnet Program review process. This is one of the few plans that the state requires to have local Board approval and staff must report any variances to that plan to the Board. This is approved for a three-year period of time and we are early in the first year of that plan.

Ms. Griffin said she does not want this included in the CMS plan to the state and she asked that the question be divided. Chairperson White said he would divide the question for the Board vote.

- Ms. McGarry said she did not attend the Work Session because she also was scheduled to be out of town visiting family. As a Board member she does her homework and she met with staff to have her questions answered. She votes responsibly and she would not support the recommendations based upon her previous comments.
- Mr. Tate expressed concern that Board members referred to the recommendations as “dumbing down” the program. He asked staff if they believed this was “dumbing down” the program? Ms. Range said she does not believe the recommendations are not “dumbing down” the program. She said the proposed recommendation changes the T-score and by doing that it casts a wider net for students to be considered for an assessment

to qualify for the program. The actual portfolio assessment process which students must go through to enter into the program; the indicators; the work samples; and the level of academic work have not changed.

- Chairperson White said the Work Session was productive and Board members explored all of these questions. He commended Dr. Gorman and staff on their expertise and hard work on reviewing the recommendations. He asked Dr. Gorman and staff if they still believed the recommendations were the best plan for the Board to adopt at this point? Dr. Gorman said, yes, this is the best option for the district. Chairperson White said he would support the recommendations as presented.

Ms. Leake moved, seconded by Mr. Tate, that the Board adopt proposed recommendations 1., 3., and 4., and the Board voted 6-3 in support of the motion. 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.

Ms. Leake moved, seconded by Mr. Dunlap, that the Board adopt proposed recommendation 2., and the Board voted 5-4 in support of the motion. Chairperson White, Mr. Merchant, Ms. Leake, Mr. Dunlap, and Mr. Tate voted in support of the motion. Ms. Griffin, Ms. McGarry, Mr. Gauvreau, and Mr. Gjertsen voted against the motion.

B. Recommend approval of proposed Policy JICK, Anti-Bullying

Chairperson White called upon Ms. Griffin, Chairperson of the Policy Committee, to present the recommendation. Ms. Griffin said before the Board is the approval of proposed Policy JICK, Anti-Bullying. The proposed policy was presented to the Board for First Reading at the February 12, 2008 Regular Board meeting, posted on the CMS Website for public comment since February 14th, and a Public Hearing was held earlier in this meeting. This comes before the Board as a recommendation from the Policy Committee.

Ms. Griffin moved that the Board approve proposed Policy JICK, Anti-Bullying, and a discussion followed. The motion did not require a second because it was presented through the Policy Committee.

- Mr. Gauvreau expressed concern that this policy is before the Board because it is unnecessary, too bureaucratic, and its remedies are so sweeping they are Orwellian. The policy is silly and he is embarrassed it is before the Board. Bullying is already covered in existing CMS documents and should not require a Board Policy. The genesis of this policy is a result of a break through from the gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and questioning community in Charlotte. He expressed concern that the policy is being driven by the gay lesbian educational network and not bullying. He encouraged the Board to focus their role and mission on moving academics. These topics are not in state law and the Board should not be trying to adopt this policy. He is opposed to group classifications and will not support this recommendation. The 14th Amendment protects all individuals and a pro-homosexual advance is not needed in our public schools. He does not believe CMS needs a bullying policy but he would support the bullying policy as recommended by Ms. McGarry which is focused on bullying.

- Ms. Griffin said she has heard from many citizens regarding this matter and that input has been helpful in understanding what people are thinking. The public has had good reasons for supporting or opposing this policy. She will support the policy as written because it is important that the Board make a clear statement that all CMS schools will be safe. She would argue that this is an academic policy because if our schools are not safe and our students do not feel safe they will not be able to learn to their full potential. She believes it is more impact to have a Board policy rather than a rule in a handbook because the Board has learned to be an effective Board we must govern by policy for those matters that are really important to the Board and CMS. She discussed the importance of being careful with crafting the language regarding the training for elementary students. She encouraged CMS to include parents in developing the training for young students. She said with that proviso she would support the policy as presented.
- Ms. McGarry said CMS currently has Policy CMS/NEPN Code: JK: Student Discipline and it states education is the primary purpose of public schools. It also states discipline is defined as a well-ordered directed behavior; therefore, students should be taught character education including the values of responsibility, respect for others, and self-discipline. It also provides that guidelines for appropriate student behavior shall be set by the district and that responsibility is delegated to the Superintendent. Ms. McGarry said the Superintendent has carried out that objective through the Student Code of Conduct Handbook. Rule 8, page 12 of that handbook includes a Bullying Form/Threat Form that students can complete. Ms. McGarry said CMS has a Student Discipline Policy in place and she has heard from many people in the community who are satisfied with those current documents. Ms. McGarry encouraged the Board to enforce the current guidelines that are in place because that would eliminate the controversy surrounding this issue. She expressed concern that the proposed policy includes listing subgroups and she noted that the State Board of Education did not support listing subgroups in the bullying policy adopted by the state. She encouraged the Board to adopt a no tolerance Board policy to support students who are disciplined in these instances and hire principals who will support teachers. Ms. McGarry is opposed to the proposed policy because it is not about education but indoctrination; it is a value laden policy that is wrong; and it has been blown up into a homosexual, gay rights agenda in the community. Ms. McGarry believes the Board should have some type of bullying policy in place and she offered a substitute motion regarding an alternate policy.

Ms. McGarry made a substitute motion that the Board adopt an alternate version that states the following: It is the policy of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education to maintain learning environments that are free from harassment and bullying. Harassment and bullying are not to be tolerated. Therefore, the Board prohibits any and all forms of harassment or bullying on Board property or at Board-sanctioned events.

“Bullying” is defined as the intimidation of others by the actual or threatened infliction of physical, verbal, written, electronically transmitted or emotional abuse, or through actual or threatened attacks on the property of another. Bullying may include, but is not limited to, assaults, verbal taunts, name-calling and put-downs, extortion of money or possessions, implied or stated threats, and exclusion from peer groups.

“Harassment” is conduct that has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with a

student's educational opportunity, creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive school environment, or otherwise affects a student's educational opportunities. (See Policy JBA, Harassment of Students by Employees, for further information regarding conduct that constitutes harassment.), seconded by Mr. Gauvreau, and a discussion followed.

Ms. McGarry said the alternative policy then refers to the legal reference of the State Board of Education Policy SS-A-007 and the related CMS Polices: JBA, JK, JK-R, and CMS Code of Student Conduct.

- Mr. Tate expressed concern that Ms. McGarry made a speech and then made a motion and that is not proper protocol in *Robert's Rules of Order*.
- Ms. McGarry clarified that she made the motion and then continued to explain the motion.

Mr. Dunlap called for the question on the substitute motion. Chairperson White said seeing no objection he would call for the Board vote on the substitute motion.

- Ms. McGarry requested a *point of order* and asked that Board members be allowed to speak to her motion. Chairperson White said no Board member raised their hand to speak. The Chair recognized Mr. Dunlap and he *called for the question*. Regina Bartholomew, General Counsel, said Mr. Gauvreau seconded Ms. McGarry's substitute motion and the question has already been called so the debate on the substitute motion is closed.

The Board voted on the request to *call for the question*.

The Board voted 5-4 in support of calling the question on the substitute motion. Chairperson White, Mr. Merchant, Ms. Leake, Mr. Dunlap, and Mr. Tate voted in support of calling the question. Ms. Griffin, Ms. McGarry, Mr. Gauvreau, and Mr. Gjertsen voted against calling the question.

Ms. McGarry expressed concern that the Board would not discuss her substitute motion because she was informed by the Policy Committee that her substitute motion could be brought forth and discussed. Chairperson White said the Board is following the procedures of *Robert's Rules of Order* and the Board voted that the debate on the substitute motion is closed.

The Board voted 3-6 and the substitute motion failed. Ms. McGarry, Mr. Gauvreau, and Mr. Gjertsen voted in support of the substitute motion. Chairperson White, Ms. Griffin, Mr. Merchant, Ms. Leake, Mr. Dunlap, and Mr. Tate voted against the substitute motion.

The Board continued the discussion on the original motion.

- Mr. Tate said the Board has needed this policy for a long time. He thanked the Policy Committee and the Equity Committee for following the process to have it come before the Board. He also thanked the members of the community for sharing their opinions on the proposed policy. Mr. Tate recognized that there are differences of opinions regarding this policy but there are areas that most everyone agrees upon such as no child should feel bullied in our public schools. He said the proposed policy does not establish any protected classes and it does not limit bullying to the categories. The policy states freedom from bullying will include but not be limited to the list of categories. The

policy does not create any particular classes but instead illustrates areas that need to be recognized in order for teachers, administrators, parents, and students to know that these areas will also be taken seriously by CMS. This will help to ensure that there are no areas outside the bounds of potential bullying. The policy addresses the importance of maintaining learning environments and that is focused on education. Mr. Tate encouraged the Board to adopt the policy because it is focused on ensuring no one will be bullied in CMS. The purpose of the policy is to provide substance to the rules that the Superintendent has already put in place. The training is necessary to ensure that everyone comprehends and will carry out the rules in a uniform format. The adoption of this policy will provide an avenue to enforce the policy adopted by the state. Mr. Tate expressed concern that many people have admitted that they were bullied in CMS and this policy will enforce that bullying will not be tolerated anywhere in CMS. The proposed policy outlines how CMS can stop bullying.

- Ms. Leake said she values and respects every individual in Mecklenburg County. She has communicated with many members of the community regarding this policy. She commended the students who spoke during the Public Hearing. She has studied the policy and she commended the staff members who do what is right for all children of the district. She values the quality of education, quality of staffing in the CMS schools, and she will do what is best for all children of the community. She discussed the importance of ensuring children and staff members are not mistreated and that students receive a quality education.
- Mr. Gjertsen has enjoyed the public discourse regarding this issue and he thanked the community for expressing their views. He wished the Board could generate this much interest with the academics in CMS. He said we are all against bullying and this policy was generated with good intentions. He expressed concern regarding the format of the policy because it bucks the trend that the Board was going toward in which policies would be developed in a more clear, concise, and simple format. This is exemplified by the revision of the Uniform Policy which is an upcoming item on this agenda. That policy went from a very detailed policy to a simple policy. His other concerns regarding the policy included the policy did not include a definition of bullying, consequences, and directives to the Superintendent to develop consequences. He encouraged the Board to include substance to the policy and to define what to take seriously so that teachers and administrators will take it seriously. The policy also holds third parties accountable and CMS does not have jurisdiction over those parties. He does not have confidence that a regulation would hold those parties accountable. He also expressed concern regarding the training techniques to support the enforcement of anti-bullying, the inclusiveness training, and the overlap with parents who are concerned that they should have the responsibility of teaching those values to their children. He does not believe CMS had a hidden agenda with the original intent of the policy but there are concerns regarding how the policy will be operationalized. He encouraged staff to ensure this is reviewed in developing the training programs. He would support a strong statement against bullying but for the reasons stated he would not support the proposed policy.
- Mr. Dunlap said he was proud of the students who spoke at the Public Hearing this evening and he noted that many of them shared his same concerns. He expressed concern regarding some of the public comments against people who do not believe what they believe. He said he has listened to the community and he understands why some

people support or do not support the policy. He expressed concern that many people believe this is not a bullying policy but a homosexual policy. He said the focus should be on that some students have felt threatened and they should be protected. The policy addresses everybody and that ensures that no one will be bullied. He said CMS does not have a bullying policy in place and although this is addressed in the Student's Right and Responsibility Handbook those guidelines could change from year to year. The purpose of a policy is to ensure procedures and guidelines are in place and valid from year to year.

- Chairperson White said he would like to make three points. CMS is unique because they are the public schools. The Board has a legal and moral responsibility to each and every child in the school system and they do not have the right to make judgments about those students. He expressed concern that some people have made references to hidden agendas. His agenda is that he believes the Board has a legal and moral responsibility to every child in CMS that he represents each child in CMS. He shared his concerns regarding this policy at the Work Session. He discussed the importance of adopting guidelines and practices into policy because it will maintain consistency from year to year. He believes the policy should be written in the format as presented to ensure its effectiveness. He will support the policy as presented.
- Mr. Gauvreau expressed concern that the Board may not have the legal authority to list the categories as presented in the policy because this information is not listed in state statutes. Ms. Bartholomew responded and noted that any state agency can expand the category of Title 7 to provide protection for persons within its organization which in this case would be students and employees. Ms. Bartholomew said she has thoroughly researched the issue to ensure there is no authority under federal and/or state law that would prohibit the Board from adopting this policy as written. Mr. Gauvreau expressed concern that adoption of this policy could open CMS to an attack and financial peril.
- Ms. McGarry expressed concern that the majority of the Board would vote to adopt the proposed policy. She would support an Anti-Bullying Policy but she wants it to be for all students. She believes the proposed policy should include a definition and the categories should not be listed. She expressed concern regarding the proposed policy and the resulting programs that would be implemented throughout the schools. She would not support the proposed policy.

The Board voted 6-3 to adopt Policy JICK, Anti-Bullying as presented. 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.

C. Recommend approval of Ms. McGarry's alternate proposed Policy JICK, Anti-Bullying

Ms. McGarry presented the alternate recommendation for proposed Policy JICK as a substitute motion with Agenda Item IV. B. This item was thus deleted.

D. Recommend approval of land acquisition and resolution concerning land exchange in connection with the new southwest high and elementary school site

Chairperson White said this item was added to the agenda as a result of business in Closed Session. The adoption of this item includes the following:

(i) Approve the acquisition of a 50% interest in tax parcel numbers 217-101-12 and 217-101-11 (approximately 5.338 acres and a house) for a total purchase price of \$485,000 (\$242,500 from Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education), and (ii) approve a resolution concerning exchange of land in connection with southwest high school and elementary school site.

Ms. Leake moved, seconded by Mr. Merchant, that the Board (i) approve the acquisition of a 50% interest in tax parcel numbers 217-101-12 and 217-101-11 (approximately 5.338 acres and a house) for a total purchase price of \$485,000 (\$242,500 from Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education), and (ii) approve a resolution concerning exchange of land in connection with southwest high school and elementary school site, and a discussion followed.

- Mr. Gauvreau expressed concern that this is the fourth time that the Board has voted on this item in Closed and Open sessions. This is a complicated and expensive deal to the taxpayers and the end result is CMS will put a high school and an elementary school on the same site. He is opposed to this type of school layout.
- Ms. Leake said she made the motion to support this item because it is important to support the needs of the lower end of this district. This area has growth and the Board must support what they have supported in other areas. She encouraged the Board to be fair in the process.

The Board voted 8-1 in support of the motion. 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.

V. REPORTS/INFORMATION ITEMS

A. Report/First Reading on proposed amendments to Policy BEDH, Public Participation in Board Meetings

Chairperson White called upon Ms. Griffin, Chairperson of the Policy Committee, to present the proposed amendments to Policy BEDH. Ms. Griffin said before the Board for First Reading is a proposed amendment to Policy BEDH, Public Participation in Board Meetings. This policy comes before the Board from the Policy Committee. The proposed amendments will be posted on the CMS Website for public feedback. There will be a Public Hearing and Board vote at the April 15, 2008 Regular Board meeting. The proposed amendment will eliminate the five-minute speaking time given to individuals who represent groups or organizations at Board meetings. All speakers will be limited to three-minutes to address the Board.

B. Report/First Reading on proposed amendments to Policy JICAA, School Uniforms

Chairperson White called upon Ms. Griffin, Chairperson of the Policy Committee, to present the proposed amendments to Policy JICAA. Ms. Griffin said before the Board for First Reading is a proposed amendment to Policy JICAA, School Uniforms. The proposed amendments will be posted on the CMS Website for public feedback. There will be a Public Hearing and Board vote at the April 15, 2008 Regular Board meeting. The proposed amendments simplify the existing Uniform Policy and include the following:

- The policy will no longer require Board approval of school uniform plans.

- The Board will allow schools to implement uniform plans with the approval of the Superintendent.
- The Superintendent is directed to develop regulations that include details of the process by which schools shall develop uniform plans, guidelines for permissible types of uniforms, and the process by which such plans are to be approved by the Superintendent.

C. Report/First Reading on proposed new Policy BA: Theory of Action and accompanying Exhibits, BA-E1: Theory of Action for Change and Exhibits BA-E2: CMS Board of Education Vision, Mission and Core Beliefs and Commitments

Chairperson White called upon Ms. Griffin, Chairperson of the Policy Committee, to present the report. Ms. Griffin said before the Board for First Reading is proposed new Policy BA, Theory of Action and accompanying Exhibits, BA-E1, Theory of Action for Change and Exhibits BA-E2, CMS Board of Education Vision, Mission and Core Beliefs and Commitments. The proposed new policy enacts the Board's Theory of Action into policy, thereby providing consistency for the district. The Theory of Action and the Vision, Mission, Core Beliefs and Commitments accompany the policy as exhibits. The policy includes the Board will review and readopt the Theory of Action at least every three years with the first review in February 2009. The proposed amendments will be posted on the CMS Website for public feedback. There will be a Public Hearing and Board vote at the April 15, 2008 Regular Board meeting.

D. Report on Financial Statements for January 2008

Chairperson White called upon Dr. Gorman to present the report. Dr. Gorman said Agenda Items D., E., and F., are the monthly reports and they are as presented.

E. Report on Budget Amendments for January 2008

Presented with Agenda Item V.D.

F. Report on Capital Project Ordinances for January 2008

Presented with Agenda Item V.D.

G. Report on Superintendent's Proposed Recommendations for 2008-2009 Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education Budget

Chairperson White called upon Dr. Gorman to present the report. Chairperson White said this is the Superintendent's proposed recommendations for the Board of Education 2008-2009 Budget. The Board is scheduled to have three Work Sessions to discuss the proposed budget and the first Work Session is scheduled for March 19th at 4:00 p.m. in the Board Room of the Education Center. Chairperson White encouraged Board members to submit questions and suggestions to Dr. Gorman and staff will respond to them at the Work Session. Dr. Gorman called upon Maurice Green, Deputy Superintendent/Chief Operating Officer, to present the recommendations for the 2008-2009 Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education Budget. Mr. Green commended staff for their hard work in developing the proposed budget. Mr. Green provided the Board with a highlight of the proposed 2008-2009 proposed budget. The framework of the budget is based upon four guiding principals. The proposed budget is aligned with the district's *Strategic Plan 2010: Educating Students to Compete Locally*,

Nationally and Internationally. The plan sets increasing student achievement as its top goal coupled with data driven decision making and sound fiscal management. The classroom continues to be the major focus of our efforts and our budget aligns with that commitment by continuing to put most of our spending at the school level. *Strategic Plan 2010* initiatives will be funded with existing resources or through partnerships. The proposed budget redirects \$2.5 million to help pay for new initiatives in the district. The request to the County will be funding for new growth, new schools, personnel costs, and other sustaining operations. The total proposed 2008-2009 budget recommendation is \$1.22 billion and is inclusive of state, federal, and local dollars. This is an increase of \$48.4 million or 4.1% over last year's budget request. The proposed budget request includes the following:

Budget Request	\$	%
Federal	\$101.2 million	8%
State	\$734.9 million	60%
Local/County	\$369.8 million	30%
Other	\$15.7 million	2%
	\$1.22 billion	

Approximately 84% of the budget is contributed to salaries and benefits of staff. The projection for employees is forecasted to increase next year to 18,028 employees. The additional request of \$28.4 million from the county over last year's request will continue services at current levels and cover increases in costs such as salaries and benefits, growth in enrollment, and opening new schools. Mr. Green reviewed the new initiatives as follows:

- Academy of Engineering Motorsports.
- Achievement Zone Project.
- Small School Performance Learning Center.
- World Class Service.
- Anti-Bullying Initiative.
- Performance Management.
- FOCUS (Finding Opportunity, Creating Unparalleled Success, a designation indicating a school with high poverty) School Expansion.

The new initiatives with the largest price tag are focused on students: Expansion of a small-school initiative, adding a second Performance Learning Center, and the designation of five additional schools as FOCUS. Mr. Green reviewed the areas impacted by redirections and reductions as follows:

- Lead teacher model.
- Alternative education.
- Local instructional supplies.
- Central Office staffing.
- Non-personnel Central Office expenses.
- Staffing at Hawthorne High School.
- Extended employment for opening new schools.

Mr. Green said the request is in line with the outlined guiding principals and the current

economic environment. Mr. Green said the budget utilizes a strategy that is fiscally sound and meets the demands of the economy. Staff will be happy to answer Board member questions at the upcoming Work Sessions and meet with Board members on an individual basis. Mr. Green invited Board members to submit questions to staff prior to the March 19th Work Session. The Board will hold a Public Hearing on the proposed 2008-2009 Board of Education Budget at the March 25, 2008 Regular Board meeting.

Board members were invited to make comments and ask questions.

- Mr. Dunlap requested a comparison of the proposed budget with last year's budget in order to view the increase or decrease of the categories.

VI. REPORT FROM SUPERINTENDENT

Dr. Gorman said keeping students and staff safe is a top priority for him, the Board, and Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. This is one reason why he believes conducting periodic criminal background checks performed on CMS employees is important. The current system only screens employees for criminal behavior when they join CMS. After that, by Board policy, regulation, and current practice, employees who commit a crime are supposed to self-report the offense to their supervisor. Employees who joined CMS prior to the mid 1990s never received a criminal background check. This means an employee could join the district on a Friday, be arrested for a felony on Saturday, and, in general, the way CMS would know would be if the employee told his or her supervisor on Monday. Clearly, our current practice creates a major gap that leaves students and other staff members unprotected. Expecting an employee who has committed a crime to respect an "honor system" is a challenge. Dr. Gorman said he recognizes that the manner in which the criminal background check forms were rolled out and communicated to the CMS employees was not effective. It is important that the Board understand that much of the legal jargon contained in those documents is required by the Fair Credit Reporting Act. Although this law sounds like it only involves credit checks, the statute allows businesses, organizations, and school districts such as CMS to conduct periodic rolling criminal background checks on current employees or employment candidates. CMS does not intend to pry into our employees' personal lives, mode of living, or personal credit history. For CMS to conduct background checks, they are required by law to provide employees notice regarding certain processes. This means employees will probably see some of the same language again when we move forward with this process but CMS will do a better job of explaining why the language is used and what it means. This process began last night when all staff received an e-mail from Dr. Gorman in which he explains the importance of conducting periodic background checks on an ongoing or rolling basis. Dr. Gorman said he would continue to share information with employees as CMS moves forward with this process that will include what is being done, why it is being done, how it will work, and when it will be implemented. There will also be a series of e-mails to staff explaining various rollout phases and step-by-step processes. Employees will also have an opportunity to ask questions and share their concerns regarding this matter. Ms. McGarry would like to have the information sent to Board members prior to it being sent to CMS employees. Dr. Gorman said this will be part of the process.

VII. REPORTS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

Vilma Leake attended several events in her district that included an event for Wilson Middle School at Boulevard Homes Recreation Center; a Steele Creek Community Meeting; a dinner for One Hundred Dad's Mentoring Program at Joseph W. Grier Academy; and lunch with the 4th and 5th graders at Dilworth Elementary School. She commended the girls' Basketball Team at West Charlotte High School. She reported that a Summit would be held in the West Boulevard Community to help parents on March 15th from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at Mount Zion Baptist Church.

Kaye McGarry said a goal for her has been to bring more of the public back to the public schools. She expressed concern that the approval of the Anti-Bullying Policy may have a negative impact on the families in Mecklenburg County and may attempt to teach values to children that parents have the right to teach. She read a letter from her son who is a taxpayer living in District 2. He encouraged everyone to support goodness and simplicity by following the Golden Rules, showing kindness to others, and sending a clear message of "No Bullying" period.

Trent Merchant read a letter from his daughter who is a kindergarten student at Old Providence Elementary School. She commended Mr. Merchant on being a great dad and said she had a great day at school.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The Regular School Board Meeting adjourned at 11:35 p.m.

Joe I. White, Jr., Chairperson

Nancy Daughtridge, Clerk to the Board