

Approved by the Charlotte-
Mecklenburg Board of Education
October 14, 2008
Regular Board Meeting



Charlotte, North Carolina

April 22, 2008

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

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education held a Regular Board Meeting on April 22, 2008. The meeting began at 6:06 p.m. and was held in the Meeting Chamber of the Government Center. CMS-TV Channel 3 televised the meeting.

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 D. Leake (District 2);
Larry Gauvreau (District 1);
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; Edana Lewis, Associate General Counsel, representing the Board; Judy Whittington, Manager of Board Services; and Nancy Daughtridge, Clerk to the Board.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson White called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m. Chairperson White welcomed everyone to the Board's second meeting of the month. He noted that this meeting was usually held in a Work Session format in Room 267 but tonight the meeting was being held in the Meeting Chamber because of a scheduling conflict with the Board of County Commissioners.

A. Adoption of Agenda

Ms. Griffin moved, seconded by Mr. Tate, that the Board adopt the agenda as presented, and the Board voted 9-0 in support of the motion.

II. CONSENT ITEMS

A. Construction Items.

1. Recommend approval of construction contract for roof replacement at Garinger High School.

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

III. REPORT/INFOMRATION ITEMS

A. Report/Update on Magnet Program Review

Chairperson White called upon Dr. Gorman to introduce the report. Chairperson White said this item is the continuation of the process that the Board initiated to conduct a comprehensive review of Magnet Programs. Dr. Gorman said this report will provide a history and overview of CMS Magnet Programs. Next week, staff will present a draft agenda to outline a timeline for the review process which will include Board Work Sessions and Community meetings. Topics that will be included in these discussions are Magnet Program enrollment, student achievement data, full and partial-Magnets, the lottery process, wait pool procedures, geographic locations of magnets, transportation implications, and any purposed magnet changes. The process will include community forums in each Learning Community which will provide the public opportunities to share their thoughts on Magnet Programs and a Board vote upon any proposed magnet changes. The initial goal for completion of the process is September. This timeframe will allow time to implement changes for enrollment and magnet lotteries for next year. Dr. Gorman said this agenda item was designed to be a presentational report only and he encouraged Board members to hold their questions and comments until the next scheduled Board Work Session on Magnet Programs. Dr. Gorman called upon Robbie Kale, Director of Magnet Schools, to present the report. Ms. Kale provided the Board with a brief history of Magnet Programs. Magnet Programs were first introduced into the CMS student assignment plan as Optional Schools in 1974. In March 1992, the Board approved three student assignment strategies: Stand-alone Schools, Mid-point Schools, and Magnet Schools. These schools were locally funded and in 1993 CMS applied for the Federal Magnet Schools Assistance Program Grant. CMS was awarded that grant for five consecutive funding cycles and that funding ended in 2007. Local funding continued for some new programs and changes to programs that were not included in the Magnet Grant. In 1997, a Future School Planning Task Force affirmed that Magnet Schools were a viable strategy in achieving diversity. They also complimented the academic achievement of Magnet Programs and the stability that Magnet Programs provided for student assignment. The 1998-1999 and beyond Student Assignment Plan de-paired all elementary schools which had been operating on a K-3 elementary and a 4-6 elementary; created consistent grade level structure comprised of K-5 elementary schools, 6-8 middle schools, and 9-12 high schools; and increased the number of available magnet seats through renovations at schools where Magnet Programs already existed. In 1999, CMS was declared unitary and as a result a new student assignment plan was designed that was race neutral. The new plan moved nine Magnet Programs which impacted twenty schools. Magnet Schools still provide options for families, stability for student assignment, and promote voluntary diversity. Over the last few years, the student assignment plan has changed and there have been changes to the attendance zones, transportation zones, and some of the priorities for entering Magnet schools. Currently, CMS has fifteen Magnet Programs in fifty schools. Ms. Kale said the Board previously received a guide book that included a description of the programs, profiles of students who would be candidates for the programs, and the enrollment and application process. The purposes of Magnet Programs include improve teaching and learning; provide choice; improve student integration; provide

learning environments to match student interests and abilities; maximize space; promote innovation in teaching; encourage parental involvement; create greater student engagement which can lead to increased attendance and increased graduation rates; teach North Carolina Standard Course of Study; and encourage partnerships with community organizations and businesses. CMS teaches the North Carolina Standard Course of Study and an important aspect of teaching that is how it is taught. Magnet instructional models include strategies adopted by CMS; Open Court; Video Conferencing; Technology Integration; and International Education. Dr. Gorman said that ends the report and he would finalize the dates for the upcoming Board Work Sessions and Community meetings.

Ms. Leake said she would like to ask a few questions. Chairperson White said this item was not designed for discussion but he allowed Ms. Leake to continue. Ms. Leake inquired about the Leadership Program at Garinger High School. Dr. Gorman called upon Ms. Kale to respond. Ms. Kale said the Leadership and Global Economics Program is located at two elementary schools (Beverly Woods and Winding Springs elementary schools), two middle schools (Eastway and Kennedy middle schools) and two high schools (Olympic and Garinger high schools). Ms. Leake asked why was the wording "Leadership" added to the name of the Military School at Marie G. Davis? She expressed concern that Global Leadership was not part of the original Magnet Program for that school. She requested the minutes regarding the planned programs and the naming of the military school. Dr. Gorman said he would ask the Board Office to provide that information. Ms. Leake asked what is the feeder pattern for the two middle schools? Ms. Kale said the students at Eastway Middle School feed into Garinger High School and the students at Kennedy Middle School feed into Olympic High School. Ms. Leake asked what was the rationale for setting up a third site at Marie G. Davis and when was the Military Program name changed? Ms. Kale said the Military and Global Leadership Academy at Marie G. Davis is not the same program as the Center for Leadership and Global Economics. Marie G. Davis is a county-wide school and students from the entire county may attend that school. Ms. Leake expressed concern that the new school at Marie G. Davis was designed to be a Military Program and that is not reflective in the new name.

B. Report on 2007 NAEP Test Results – Reading, Math, and Writing

Chairperson White called upon Dr. Gorman to introduce the report. Dr. Gorman said this is a report on the 2007 NAEP test results for Reading, Math, and Writing. The report will also include the expansion of districts that will participate in the NAEP Trial Urban District Assessment Process (TUDA). This process will be helpful because it will provide CMS comparative data with the other participating districts. Dr. Gorman called upon Jonathan Raymond, Chief Accountability Officer, to present the 2007 NAEP Reading, Math, and Writing test results. Mr. Raymond said NAEP is the National Assessment of Educational Progress. Unlike state tests, it provides a single standard against which all students that take the test across the country can be measured. The NAEP tests provide good comparative data. This year is the first year that CMS participated in the Writing tests. At present, there are eleven urban school districts participating in TUDA and seven additional school districts are joining the TUDA process for the 2009 testing. NAEP tests are administered every two years to a representative sample of students in the 4th and 8th grades. CMS has participated in Reading and Math testing since 2003. Testing in Science was added in 2005 and Writing in 2007. Mr. Raymond said CMS has positive results and leads the country in Reading, Math and Writing in its performance for 4th and 8th grades. NAEP provides scores for districts and

states, and not for individual students and individual schools. The scores provide a representative sample. Most recently in CMS, the 2007 Writing test was administered to 1,300 eighth graders at twenty-one schools. The 2007 Math test was administered to 1,400 students at fifty schools and the 2007 Reading test was administered to 1,700 students at thirty schools. NAEP reports its information by average scale score based upon a maximum score of 500 or by proficiency (below basic, basic, proficient, or advanced). The state of North Carolina considers a student proficient on the NAEP scale if they have gotten a score of above basic. Mr. Raymond reviewed the 4th grade and 8th grade testing results and a comparison to the North Carolina and TUDA school districts' scores. Mr. Raymond also provided a comparison of the CMS scores with the nation for all students, female students, male students, white students, black students, Hispanic students, students with paid meals, students with free and reduced lunch priced meals, Limited English Proficient students, and students with disabilities. The results indicate that the CMS white students are performing higher than the highest performing students across the country and the CMS African-American students are performing higher or on par with their peers across the country. This is an indicator that CMS is doing well compared to the nation but the results between the CMS white students and African-American students contribute to the significant achievement gap in CMS. Hispanic students, students with disabilities, students with aid, students of poverty, and Limited English Proficient students performed higher or on par with their peers across the country. The results reinforce that CMS is doing well in educating and preparing students but CMS must do better to reach all the students, in particularly the minority students and those in poverty. Dr. Gorman summarized the components that contribute to the achievement gaps within CMS when compared to the nation. He said those components will be targeted areas for growth.

Board members were invited to ask questions and make comments.

- Mr. Merchant expressed concern that the results indicate that students who are white and have money will do well in CMS. Mr. Merchant asked clarifying questions regarding participating in TUDA and Mr. Raymond responded. Dr. Gorman said the seven school districts being added to the TUDA Program include Baltimore, Miami, Louisville, Minneapolis, and Detroit. Some of these districts are larger and have urban and suburban components, and they will provide better comparison data for CMS. Mr. Merchant expressed concern that the CMS scores when compared to TUDA, North Carolina, and the nation indicate that CMS is barely out performing. Mr. Raymond and Dr. Gorman explained the test scoring and noted that the results show that statistically CMS is significantly out performing. Dr. Gorman said we must also understand that CMS does not look like the rest of the nation because 47% of the students in CMS live in poverty. A school is considered to be substantially disadvantaged if 30% of the students qualify for the federal Free and Reduced Priced Lunch Program. Dr. Gorman said CMS must do better and this will be a focus area. He noted that CMS is doing statistically better than the nation and the state. CMS is facing challenges and must focus on closing the achievement gaps.
- Mr. Dunlap asked clarifying questions regarding the scoring and Mr. Raymond responded. Mr. Dunlap said if the African-American and poverty students are on average with all the other districts, the only difference is the scores of the white students. He said it is not necessarily a good thing that African-American students are on par with their peers across the country. He said CMS is doing something that would cause white students to perform significantly better than other minority groups. He asked based upon the research, what is

that difference? What is being done differently? He said if all the students have the same instruction; are in same classroom; and have the same intellectual ability to understand and comprehend, while they may come from different backgrounds, where is the difference? Mr. Raymond said these are the questions that staff is reviewing as well as the instructional practices that are taking place in these schools. Staff is researching the points noted by Mr. Dunlap and the NAEP scores will help to establish trends and patterns for closer review and the instructional practices that are making a difference. Mr. Dunlap requested the data on a per school basis to better understand if the CMS students were on par with each other? Dr. Gorman said NAEP does not provide data on a per school or per student basis.

- Ms. McGarry said NAEP has a good reputation for its testing and NAEP chooses the students throughout the district. Mr. Raymond said NAEP finds a representative sample. Ms. McGarry said CMS is an urban, suburban, and rural district. She expressed concern that the testing was not comparing apples to apples because the other comparison districts do not have similar students. Dr. Gorman and Mr. Raymond explained the process for NAEP finding a representative sample in the comparison districts. The process is completed randomly and results in an even representative sample and that information provides valid and reliable results that are used for national comparisons. Ms. McGarry expressed concern that the information is deceiving to the public and the information does not provide an accurate picture. She said CMS has the resources and must do better to help all students.
- Ms. Griffin said this data does not provide deceptive information. She believes there is valid concern as to whether CMS reflects the other urban districts. It is good news that CMS is generally doing better than the rest of the country. CMS is working hard to get higher scores and improve the gap. She expressed concern that the Math data indicates the students in 4th grade are performing better than the students in 8th grade. She hopes this is because CMS is teaching students better and reaching students earlier, and those results will be reflective in the 8th grade testing in the future. She commended the 8th grade Writing scores compared to the rest of the country. She believes it is great to have the national data because it provides a fairer comparison than just the state comparisons. Ms. Griffin said CMS is not doing as well as we want but we are doing better than the majority of the country.
- Ms. Leake expressed concern regarding the achievement gap. She said teachers and principals in the building make the difference. She also expressed concern regarding Hispanic students out performing the minority students who are natural born citizens; people making reference that some students perform poorly because they are free and reduced lunch students; and that the west side of the district has inexperienced teachers and principals that need support. Ms. Leake said many students are doing great. She is worried about the students who are not performing well and receiving appropriate instruction by strong teachers and principals. Ms. Leake said CMS knows where the poor performing students are and which schools they attend. She asked what does CMS plan to do to alleviate minority students performing poorly in Reading, Writing, and Math? She said areas that need to be reviewed are Curriculum and Instruction, who is delivering the services, and how the services are being delivered. She expressed concern that she attended a CMS Job Fair recently and minority applicants applying for teacher positions said principals at certain schools would not consider them for the job. She asked what is CMS going to do to change the process that exists and where it exists? She said she has

asked for a listing of the programs in the schools, and what is working and what is not working. She said it is important to provide quality people throughout the district and educate the weakest children throughout the district.

- Mr. Gjertsen said in context CMS is doing slightly better than the other districts. He expressed concern that the maximum score was 500 and CMS scored an average of 244 in Math and 222 in Reading which is below the 50th percentile when compared to the nation. He also expressed concern that only 31% of the CMS students were proficient in Writing. He said CMS must do better. He requested that future charts reflect the actual scale. Dr. Gorman said also important in looking at the context overall, is what is the standard and what is the difficulty level. Mr. Gjertsen said it was possible for students to reach a score of 500 on these tests and that should be included in the scale. Dr. Gorman said also important is the overall rigor impacts performance on a scaled score. Mr. Gjertsen expressed concern that the report reflects the urban districts across the country are doing poorly and CMS is only doing slightly better. He would like the gap between CMS and the rest of the nation to grow.
- Mr. Tate asked how is the NAEP nation score comprised? Mr. Raymond said all states participate in NAEP and there are approximately 20,000 districts. All districts participate in a representative sample through their states and that is how NAEP draws their comparison data. Mr. Tate expressed concern in judging the national scores because he does not know how many districts and students participated. He believes the comparisons with the TUDA districts may provide a better comparison. Mr. Raymond said CMS provided approximately a 10% sampling for the NAEP tests. The NAEP results are meant to be comparison data to provide context because, currently, there is not a national test or national standard. Each state develops its own standards and test. NAEP provides CMS another piece to the puzzle in determining how CMS is performing against other districts. NAEP may also help provide research on what is working well, how to improve instructional quality within our schools and classrooms, and how to minimize the variance. Mr. Raymond said research with other school districts will contribute to continually improving the quality of education that students are receiving. Mr. Tate said Board members have expressed concern that the North Carolina test is not tough enough. He asked is the NAEP test too tough? Dr. Gorman said he has read articles questioning if NAEP is appropriate and that is in the eye of the beholder. He noted that the North Carolina Math test had been revised and the Reading test is scheduled to be revised. Mr. Raymond noted the number of times that North Carolina had renormed and rescaled its tests compared to NAEP, and that provides insight to the level of rigor. Mr. Raymond said he believes a rigorous test is an important benchmark and all tests should be rigorous in determining how much our students know, and that bar should be high. Mr. Tate asked has CMS contacted the states that are performing statistically better than CMS to understand what they are doing? Mr. Raymond said, yes, staff communicates with other districts on a frequent basis and they share best practices.
- Mr. Gauvreau said he challenged the statistical validity of the initial NAEP TUDA data a few years ago. This data is nothing but a horrible average. There were problems with the NAEP data regarding exclusion rates for students with disabilities in 2003 and it was subsequently changed. Mr. Gauvreau asked if those problems had been resolved? Mr. Raymond said he was not familiar with this issue but he would follow-up and provide that information at a later time. Mr. Gauvreau expressed concern that CMS memorializes this data and interprets the results to the public that CMS is leading the nation when in reality

CMS only led by a small average or by a one measure scale score difference. He also expressed concern that he believes staff draws conclusions and makes policy based upon this data. Mr. Raymond said the clarity is CMS is leading the comparison districts. The comparison group is the comparison group and this is the data available to us. Next year, the comparison group will be expanded to include seven additional districts. Mr. Raymond said the results show we are ahead and staff is continuing to focus on improving the margins of performance while reducing the variance. Mr. Gauvreau expressed concern regarding the interpretation of the NAEP data and that the results indicate that CMS is only average at best.

- Chairperson White said he interprets the data that in a national comparison, our students are on the top and they can compete with anybody throughout the country. The students in the top percentage are doing very well. The data also shows that the groups of students in CMS who are not doing well are doing as poorly as the other students in their categories throughout the country. This is what creates the achievement gap. He said the real threat to this nation lies within and not without, and that gap is the real threat to our way of life. We cannot continue to have generation after generation of those groups of students on the lower end of the scale to not be prepared through education to do what they need to do to have a better way of life. It is incumbent upon CMS and the Board to continue to try to do it better. Chairperson White said he sincerely believes that every child can learn, however, every child does not come to CMS in kindergarten with the same level of preparation to learn and that gap begins long before a student starts school. He believes the biggest negative in helping to create that gap is poverty. The gap can begin with the mother who did not have proper medical treatment before that child was born. CMS, as a school system, must accept its responsibility for education but the full blame does not lie within CMS because this is a nationwide issue and a societal issue. If we, as a nation, do not address such issues as poverty, healthcare, and employment we will never eliminate the achievement gap. Chairperson White said the greatest threat to the nation is the inability of the nation to solve the achievement gap. Crime will not improve until that is solved. CMS is working hard to improve the achievement gap and this data will help CMS find new and better ways to educate every student. He encouraged the community to get involved and help.
- Mr. Merchant discussed the issue of poverty and the importance of working to solve these concerns in our schools. He expressed concern regarding the data from North Carolina and the time staff spends analyzing that data. He encouraged the Board to take action to solve these issues. He said if a Magnet Program is working, that program or structure should be implemented in every school possible. He said time is running out and our senior administration has the political capital to make dramatic moves. He encouraged staff to take action. He agreed that the results indicate CMS is slightly better than average. He encouraged CMS and the community to move to improve the results.
- Mr. Dunlap said statistically significant is important. He clarified that CMS stated they lead the nation when compared to the people in the groups that were tested. CMS is not saying they lead the nation when compared to every school district in the nation. Mr. Dunlap said when the Board talks about the achievement gap, they are talking about groups of people and it does not imply that the gap exists between every minority and white student. He said there are many African-American students who are on par and higher when compared to white students in every category. He said it is important to note that not all minority and poverty students perform poorly and not all white students

perform well because there are many white students who are failing. Mr. Dunlap said Katie Haithcock with Education Trust completed research with CMS about two years ago. He encouraged staff to review that data and compare it to what other comparative studies say about CMS. Mr. Dunlap encouraged staff to also consider other organizations, comparison studies, and methods of measuring the success of CMS.

- Ms. Leake expressed concern regarding the poverty issues in CMS. She said poverty does not keep students from learning. She encouraged the Board and staff to take action. She said quality staff and quality Curriculum and Instruction will make a difference in educating students who are failing.
- Chairperson White said it is important to not jump to generalizations. There are students in each of those groups who are doing very well. He said his mother taught him at a young age that not having money is no excuse for not behaving properly and for not making good grades.

Chairperson White said the Board would now go into a short Closed Session meeting in Room CH-14. The Closed Session discussion would not require the Board to return to the dais to take action in Open Session and the Board would adjourn the Open Session meeting following the close of business in Closed Session in room CH-14.

Upon motion by Ms. Griffin, seconded by Mr. Dunlap, 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 impending real estate transactions.**

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

The Board recessed the April 22, 2008 Regular Board meeting at 8:06 p.m. and went into Closed Session in Room CH-14.

The Board reconvened the April 22, 2008 Regular Board meeting at 8:15 p.m. in Room CH-14. All Board members were present except Kaye McGarry. Also present were Dr. Peter Gorman, Superintendent; Edana Lewis, Associate General Counsel, representing the Board; and Nancy Daughtridge, Clerk to the Board.

ADJOURNMENT

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

The Regular School Board Meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Joe I. White, Jr., Chairperson

Nancy Daughtridge, Clerk to the Board