

Approved by the Charlotte-  
Mecklenburg Board of Education  
September 8, 2009  
Regular Board Meeting



Charlotte, North Carolina

February 10, 2009

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

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education held a Regular Board Meeting on February 10, 2009. The meeting began at 5:35 p.m. and was held in Room CH-14 of the Government Center.

Present: Molly Griffin, Chairperson, District 5;  
Kaye McGarry, Vice-Chairperson, Member At-Large;  
Joe I. White, Jr., Member At-Large;  
Trent Merchant, Member At-Large;  
Larry Gauvreau (District 1);  
Kimberly Mitchell-Walker (District 2);  
James Ross (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; André Mayes, Deputy General Counsel; Hugh Hattabaugh, Chief Operating Officer; Tyler Ream, Chief of Staff; and Nancy Daughtridge, Clerk to the Board.

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

- **To consult with the Board's attorneys on matters covered by the attorney-client privilege including but not limited to impending real estate transactions and a pending litigation matter.**

**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 5:35 p.m. to 5:45 p.m.

Chairperson Griffin 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: Molly Griffin, Chairperson, District 5;  
Kaye McGarry, Vice-Chairperson, Member At-Large;  
Joe I. White, Jr., Member At-Large;  
Trent Merchant, Member At-Large;  
Larry Gauvreau (District 1);

Kimberly Mitchell-Walker (District 2);  
James Ross (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; André Mayes, Deputy General Counsel; Members of Executive and Senior Staffs; Judy Whittington, Manager of Board Services; and Nancy Daughtridge, Clerk to the Board.

## **I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson Griffin called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Chairperson Griffin welcomed everyone to the Board's first meeting of the month.

Chairperson Griffin recognized the following visitors who were attending the meeting:

- Dr. Chris Law, professor with the School of Education at Queens University, who was attending the meeting with the Queens University's North Carolina Teaching Fellows and Masters of School Administration students.
- Dr. Chris Folk, Jean Burke, Beth Springston representing the League of Women Voters, Fannie Flono representing the Charlotte Observer, and a group of students in the Civics 101 class.

### **A. Pledge of Allegiance**

Chairperson Griffin called upon Mr. Gjertsen to introduce Vaibhav Shrishail, an 8<sup>th</sup> grade student at Community House Middle School, to lead those present and in the viewing audience in the Pledge of Allegiance and to speak to the February character trait of "citizenship." Mr. Gjertsen said Vaibhav does a great job at juggling his schoolwork and extracurricular activities. His interests include Language Arts, math, spelling, swimming, football, soccer, and a member of Scout Troop 119. Despite it all, he has remained a well-rounded young man and he is popular with his classmates and teachers. Vaibhav recently won the Charlotte Observer Regional Spelling Bee and he will compete in the National Spelling Bee in Washington, D.C. Vaibhav was accompanied by his parents, Archana and Halyal, and his principal, Jamie Brooks. Vaibhav invited everyone to stand and join him in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. Vaibhav said citizenship is defined as the status of a citizen with his attendant duties, rights, and privileges. In an organization being a citizen means that duties must be more important than you and both the rights and privileges. Vaibhav shared his thoughts on the responsibilities of citizenship and believes a good citizen is helpful, considerate and willing to put others first.

### **B. Adoption of Agenda**

Chairperson Griffin called for a motion to adopt the agenda.

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

### C. Community Report from the Equity Committee

Chairperson Griffin called upon Tom Tate, Board Liaison to the Equity Committee. Mr. Tate called upon Kelly Doherty, Committee Chairperson, to present the Seventh Annual Report for Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools' Equity Committee. Ms. Doherty highlighted the following points of the Equity Committee Report:

- Recognized the hard working volunteers who have made this committee successful throughout the year:
  - Kelley Doherty, Chairperson
  - Maria Boral, Vice-Chairperson
  - Paul R. Haisley
  - Ellen C. Martin
  - Reggie Singleton
  - Rob Harrington
  - Carol Sawyer
  - Patsy Burkins
  - Sharon Starks
  - Hiawatha Foster
- Recognized and commended the hard work and many years of service of retiring members:
  - Ellen Martin
  - Paul Haisley
  - Reggie Singleton
- Definition of Equity as accepted by the Board of Education:
  - Equity is the condition in which each student is able to realize his/her full potential for academic achievement, individual performance, and personal success. Equity requires an ongoing process to allocate resources to each school so that each student has access to rigorous academic challenges and an environment that promotes high expectations. An equal allocation of baseline resources is the first step toward equity, but equity requires much more. Equity requires a differentiation of resources among all schools to enable every school to meet the unique needs of each student.
- Last year's report promised changes to the structure of the Equity Committee which was based upon specific feedback from the Board during the 2007 Joint Meeting:
  - Deeper focus on three or four core issues/topics with the goal of driving actionable recommendations to the Board.
  - Assign subcommittees to work on issues off line.
  - Use the monthly meetings for subcommittee updates and feedback.
  - Engender a results oriented approach to providing the committee's views to the Board on the core issues that were selected.
- Seventh Annual Report delivered on what was promised:
  - Addressed three core topics:
    - Teacher Assignment/Distribution of Teacher Resources.
    - Math Literacy.
    - Talent Development.
  - Used personal accounts, research, interviews.
  - Expressed concerns and recommendations.
  - Continued the committee's tradition of visiting several schools.

- Details of school tours and other equity topics are covered in the Annual Report.
- Summary of findings and recommendations on core topics:
  - Teacher Assignment/Distribution of Teacher Resources findings:
    - Concerns regarding CMS teachers significantly differ in experience and education from school to school.
    - Focus Schools fail to have a mix of teachers comparable to those in Schools of Distinction and Schools of Excellence.
    - Schools with low achievement scores are most likely to have lower teacher experience levels for core subjects based on median experience.
    - CMS lacks an effective, comprehensive plan for teacher recruitment and retention. The current multi-faceted plan is con confusing and often based on grant funding.
    - Very different results were seen at two schools we visited which is impacted by the strategic staffing initiative.
    - Teach for America (TFA) teachers do not appreciable account for differentiated experience levels at high-poverty schools.
  - Teacher Assignment/Distribution of Teachers Resources recommendations:
    - Adopt a plan that will make the distribution of teacher experience more equitable.
    - Adopt a more comprehensive plan for teacher recruitment and retention.
    - Continue to adopt strong principals to challenged schools.
  - Math Literacy findings:
    - CMS has improved its overall math End of Grade (EOG) test scores in recent years but continues to faces the same problems seen nationwide: Far too many African-American and Hispanic students are not achieving at an acceptable rate in math.
    - According to the 2007-2008 math EOG scores, 48.2% of African-American and 39.8% of Hispanics scored below Level III (proficient) while the average failing rate for all students was 32.3% versus 11.4% for white students. (This report defines “failing” as scoring a Level I or Level II).
    - 2007-2008 school year: Fifty-four of the ninety-two CMS elementary schools recorded math EOG failure rates of 30% or higher.
    - Of those fifty-four elementary schools, two recorded failure rates of 70% and twenty recorded failure rates of 45% or more.
    - Forty-three of those elementary schools are Focus Schools serving large numbers of low income students of color.
    - The results indicate that it is unlikely that CMS will adequately reduce the achievement gap to reach its *2010 Strategic Plan* goal of 88% pass rate for math EOGs with no more than a 10% disparity in academic achievement based upon race, ethnicity, and socio-economic status.
  - Math Literacy recommendations:
    - CMS should make concerted efforts to create a “math culture” that elevates math literacy into a priority issue both in schools and in the community.
    - The automatic (quick and effortless) recall of math facts should be considered equally important to conceptual understanding and problem solving.
    - All Focus elementary schools should have full-time math facilitators and require elementary teachers to attend its math professional development workshops.
  - Talent Development findings:
    - The Equity Committee reviewed and selected aspects of the Talent Development

Program through interviews with Talent Development teachers, leadership staff, and third party consultants.

- Fundamental to the Committee's decision to look into Talent Development was the concern that children performing at higher levels not be overlooked in the equitable allocation of resources – resources intended to help *all* students achieve their full potential.
- Talent Development concerns and observations:
  - The major focus of a school's goals under *No Child Left Behind* is attaining student proficiency – reaching grade level. Concerns regarding most Talent Development students are already “proficient” and there may be too little attention to the advanced needs of the students who require higher-level academic challenges.
  - The North Carolina Standard Course of Study does not include a gifted curriculum; therefore, each individual school system develops its own Talent Development standards and program. Concerns regarding the rigor and consistency of the Talent Development Program offered across CMS.
  - The new Freedom and Flexibility Program gives principals considerable latitude in how Talent Development (and other) services are provided in their school which also contributes to the consistency issue.

Ms. Doherty acknowledged the Board; Dr. Gorman; CMS staff; Rev. Tom Tate; José Hernández-Paris, CMS Diversity Specialist; Barbara Pellin, Assistant Superintendent for Pre-K-12 Support Programs; Tyler Ream, Chief of Staff; and the administrators, staff, and parents of the schools for their contributions and support to the Equity Committee throughout 2008. Ms. Doherty encouraged the Board to consider the real role of the Equity Committee and how the Board's equity concerns could help structure the work of the committee. They are delighted to know that recently such an evaluation has commenced. Ms. Doherty invited Board members to ask the committee members questions at any time and to attend their monthly meetings.

Board members were invited to ask questions and make comments.

- Mr. Tate said traditionally, the Board has held a yearly Joint Meeting with the Equity Committee but due to the Board's busy schedule he has not attempted to schedule a meeting at this time.
- Ms. McGarry thanked the committee for their tireless efforts and hard work in accepting the charge of the Board and being an advisor to the Board. Ms. McGarry asked the committee to share suggestions on what would make the committee more viable ongoing? Ms. Doherty said what would help the committee is we are reminded throughout the year that we have an obligation to do this work on behalf of the Board of Education and the committee was created as a result of Policy ADA. Several times throughout the year, the committee has requested structure, feedback, and direction from the Board of Education on the topics that are most critical to this system in terms of equity. The committee is small and can only do so much and that direction would drive us to be the most helpful. This year, the committee created topics that they thought would be important. There have also been some discrepancies in the definition and charge of Policy ADA. Some people have made that a narrow definition fairly focused on student achievement issues. Ms. Doherty said she believes it is to focus on the equity issues for all students in the entire system. The Equity Committee would like clarification on what Policy ADA really means and what it

asks the Equity Committee to do. The committee has also experienced challenges regarding appointees not actually living in the district that they represent and, in particular, if they reflect strong agendas or personal viewpoints rather than reflecting the neighborhood or community that they should represent. The Equity Committee would like to move forward and Board direction regarding clarity of the policy, role of the liaison, and who should sit on the committee would be helpful. Ms. McGarry asked clarifying questions regarding math as a core topic and Teach for America teachers. Ms. Doherty responded.

- Mr. Tate recognized the Equity Committee members who were attending the meeting and thanked them for their hard work throughout the year.

D. Public Hearing on two proposed new policies: Policy ADDA, Registered Sex Offenders, and Policy ADDB, Student Sex Offenders Subject to the Jessica Lunsford Act, and amendments to Policy JKD, Suspension, Exclusion, and Expulsion of Students

Chairperson Griffin called upon Tom Tate, Chairperson of the Policy Committee, to open the Public Hearing. Mr. Tate said proposed new Policy ADDA, Registered Sex Offenders, and Policy ADDB, Student Sex Offenders Subject to the Jessica Lunsford Act, and amendments to Policy JKD, Suspension, Exclusion, and Expulsion of Students, are before the Board for a Public Hearing and a Board vote. The proposed policies were before the Board for First Reading at the January 13, 2009 Regular Board meeting and consistent with our policies were publicized to the staff and community as well as posted on the CMS Website.

Chairperson Griffin declared the Public Hearing on the proposed new policies and amendments open.

There were no speakers and Chairperson Griffin declared the Public Hearing closed.

Following the end of the Requests From the Public section, Chairperson Griffin said Ron Roseboro has requested an opportunity to speak to the Public Hearing and although that Public Hearing has closed she would allow Mr. Roseboro the opportunity to speak.

Ron Roseboro said he is a concerned parent, community activist, and a fighter for human and civil rights. He encouraged the Board to rethink the sex offender policy. It is imperative to protect our children and to have a safe school environment but there are many different dynamics that cause people to fall under the sex offender umbrella. He expressed concern that there are some people who have been falsely accused of a crime, acquitted of those charges, or have since become law abiding and productive citizens but are still classified as a sex offender. Depriving parents the right to assist their children at school or attend school activities could be devastating.

## II. REQUESTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Lincoln Baxter expressed concern regarding the elimination of media specialists and the additional workload on the remaining staff and the negative impact on student achievement. He encouraged the Board in their budget considerations to restore the media program to parity with the classroom and consider returning 90% of the media specialist.

Blanche Penn represented the Winners Plus Agency. She invited everyone to attend a Celebration of Life Tribute on October 16<sup>th</sup> for Valerie C. Woodard, Board of County Commissioner (District 3) who recently passed away, at 7:00 p.m. to recognize her accomplishments and goals through her friends.

Ellen Loflin, CMS parent and After School coordinator at First Ward Elementary School, discussed the importance of media specialists and believes cuts should be made where they are less likely to directly affect the quality of student education. She reviewed research on the strong relationship between school library staffing and student achievement and she encouraged the Board to pursue methods of investing in the schools' libraries.

Two parents discussed their concerns regarding the budget cuts and the negative impact on Lincoln Heights Elementary School. The families of this school have asked the Board for equity for the children and provided a detail list of concerns for the school which included a request for a small Learning Immersion/Talent Development Program to take advantage of the available capacity at the school and to help make the school successful again. They also discussed school staffing concerns, reduction of available resources, and they encouraged the Board to not combine Lincoln Heights Elementary School with Druid Hills Elementary School.

- Tammy Hill
- Sarah Woodbury

Patrick Christian discussed the importance of the future of young black men. He encouraged the Board to decrease the dropout rate, increase the End of Course test scores, and provide this group of students the proper tools in order for them to be successful. He encouraged the Board to have the best interest of these students at heart and be adamant about the quality of people mentoring them.

Thaia Wheatt and Ullanda Tyler (teachers at Druid Hills Elementary School) discussed their concerns regarding their principal being relocated to another school as part of the principal restructuring initiative. They commended the principal on mentoring the teachers and developing positive changes for the school. They do not believe this principal relocation is in the best interest of the students and expressed concern that there was no advanced notice.

### **III. CONSENT ITEMS**

#### **A. Recommend approval of minutes.**

- May 27, 2008 Regular Board Meeting.
- January 7, 2009 Special Meeting/Work Session
- January 7, 2009 Closed Session.
- January 7, 2009 Special Meeting/Public Hearing.
- January 12, 2009 Special Meeting/Joint Meeting/Legislative Breakfast
- January 13, 2009 Closed Session.
- January 13, 2009 Regular Board Meeting.
- January 26, 2009 Closed Session.
- January 27, 2009 Closed Session.

#### **B. Real Estate Items.**

1. Recommend approval of Interlocal Cooperation Agreement with Town of

Matthews.

*The Interlocal Cooperation Agreement involves the following:*

- *Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education will transfer ownership of the Matthews Agriculture Building (“Ag Building”) (3,960 square feet) and up to .35 acres of underlying land adjoining Matthews Elementary School (parcel number 227-211-02).*
- *The Town of Matthews proposed to renovate the Ag Building for a variety of community uses including art classes, meetings, and additional CMS use of both the Ag Building and the adjoining town-owned Community Center.*

2. Recommend approval to exchange specific parcels of land with City of Charlotte.

*The exchange involves the following:*

- *The property expected to be conveyed by Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education to the City of Charlotte is approximately .44 acres identified as tax parcel number 113-361-18 and an approximately .115 acres identified as tax parcel number 061-081-02. The estimated value of the properties which are to be conveyed to the City of Charlotte is \$27,100.00 based upon the tax values of the properties.*
- *The property expected to be conveyed by the City of Charlotte to Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education is approximately .575 acres identified as tax parcel numbers 061-081-03, 061-081-04, and 061-081-05. The estimated value of the property which is to be conveyed to Charlotte-Mecklenburg is \$25,000.00 based on the tax values of the properties.*

C. Recommend approval of licensed/non-licensed hires and promotions for January 2009.

D. Recommend approval of supplementary funding request for Academic and Cultural Enrichment 21<sup>st</sup> (ACE-21) Century Community Learning Centers.

*The overall goal of the ACE-21 CCLC Program is to prevent and reduce the incidence of student academic failure, delinquency, and truancy; raise self-concept; and prepare students for entry into the workforce. If funded, the program will provide after school programming, employment training, and community-based services tailored to youth interests for students attending four middle schools: Ranson, Sedgfield, Spaugh, and Wilson. Funding requested from North Carolina Governor’s Crime Commission in the amount of \$225,000.00.*

E. Recommend approval of supplementary funding request for Charlotte’s Urban Ecosystems (CUE).

*The proposed project will focus on improving the content and pedagogy of CMS middle schools science teachers. After completing their year in CUE, participating middle school teachers will become part of the CMS Science Leadership Corps and share their experiences and learning with Alliance groups and Learning Community specific groups. Funding requested from North Carolina Department of Public Instruction in the amount of \$1,049,186.00.*

F. Recommend approval of the approval of the adoption of a resolution authorizing the Director of Storage and Distribution to dispose of surplus school property by way of on-line bid in auction format.



*The on-line auction span will encompass the February 16 through February 27, 2009 period. GovDeals, ([www.govdeals.com](http://www.govdeals.com)) an experienced and proven on-line government surplus sales service, will facilitate the process.*

- G. Recommend approval of a Joint Resolution for the Planning Liaison Committee to be reconstituted with a different name and a revised membership.

*The Joint Resolution involves the following:*

- The name of the organization shall be changed from “Planning Liaison Committee” to “Planning Coordinating Committee.”*
- The City Council of the City of Charlotte, the Board of Commissioners of Mecklenburg County, the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education, and the Commissioners of each of the six Mecklenburg County towns mutually agree to expand the membership of the Committee by including the Planning Directors of the City of Charlotte, the six Mecklenburg towns, and Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, as well as by including the chairpersons of the planning committees or boards of the six Mecklenburg towns.*

- H. Recommend approval of appointment of administrative personnel.

*Appointments:*

- Charity Bell named Executive Area Director of the West Learning Community. Ms. Bell previously served as principal at West Mecklenburg High School.*
- Howard Barnhill named principal at Bradley Middle School. Mr. Barnhill previously served as assistant principal at Hopewell High School.*
- Natasha Thompson named principal at Leadership and Public Service School at Garinger High School. Ms. Thompson has a Master of School Administration from the University of North Carolina-Charlotte and a Bachelor of Science in English Education from North Carolina A&T State University. Ms. Thompson previously served as principal at Huguenot High School, Richmond Public Schools, Richmond, Virginia.*

*Transfers:*

- Jametta Martin-Tanner named principal at new Ridge Road Middle School. Ms. Martin-Tanner previously served as principal at Hawthorne High School.*
- Marilyn Osborne named principal at Mt. Holly-Huntersville Elementary School. Ms. Osborne previously served as principal at Tuckaseegee Elementary School.*
- Acquanetta Edmond named principal at new Youngblood Elementary School. Ms. Edmond previously served as principal at Lake Wylie Elementary School.*
- Cheryl Turner named principal at new Dixie River Elementary School. Ms. Turner previously served as principal at Oakhurst Elementary School.*
- Stephanie Wade named principal at new Belmeade Middle School. Ms. Wade previously served as principal at Morgan School.*

*Approval of two-year contracts for Area Superintendents (July 1, 2009 through June 30, 2011):*

- Joel Ritchie*
- Scott Muri*
- Elva Cooper*
- Curtis Carroll*

- *Nancy Bartles*
- *Robert Avossa*

Chairperson Griffin called for a motion to adopt the Consent Agenda as presented.

**Mr. Tate moved, seconded by Mr. Merchant, that the Board approve Consent Items A. through H., and a discussion followed.**

Mr. Gauvreau pulled Consent Item H. for discussion.

**Ms. McGarry moved, seconded by Mr. White, that the Board adopt Consent Items A. through H. excluding H., and the Board voted 9-0 in support of the motion.**

Mr. Gauvreau said he would not support, wrapped in the Consent Agenda, the six area superintendents' two-year contracts. Mr. Gauvreau said they are all good people but he continues to believe that the staff of this school district is heavy and Dr. Gorman does not need so many individuals. This is at a cost of almost \$1 million and this has gone too far at a cost that is too much. This is a budget season and the Board should be reducing the budget and not locking in salaries for two more years. Senior staff and Dr. Gorman should be on a one-year contract. The contracts should be performance-based and not a flat salary. He encouraged the Board to not accept the contracts.

**Mr. White moved, seconded by Mr. Tate, that the Board adopt Consent Item H, and the Board voted 7-2 in support of the motion. Chairperson Griffin, Ms. McGarry, Mr. White, Mr. Merchant, Ms. Mitchell-Walker, Mr. Ross, and Mr. Tate voted in support of the motion. Mr. Gauvreau and Mr. Gjertsen voted against the motion.**

#### IV. ACTION ITEMS

##### A. Recommend approval of proposed 2009-2010 Budget Calendar

Chairperson Griffin called upon Dr. Gorman to present the recommendation. Dr. Gorman said each year staff presents a proposed Budget Calendar to the Board for adoption. This year's calendar includes five proposed Board Budget Work Sessions as well as other dates. The goal will be to eliminate some of those dates if we are far enough along in the budget process. The dates are being provided in advance in case those dates are necessary.

Chairperson Griffin called for a motion to approve the 2009-2010 Budget Calendar.

**Mr. Merchant moved, seconded by Mr. White, that the Board approve the proposed 2009-2010 Budget Calendar, and a Board discussion followed.**

- Mr. Gjertsen said there have already been several meetings conducted with staff regarding the proposed budget and now meetings with the Board are being scheduled. He said at some point it will be the Board's budget that is adopted and forwarded to the Board of County Commissioners for approval. He believes it would be better to seek the Board's input prior to staff compiling a proposed budget. He encouraged the Board to be involved earlier in the budget process which will provide staff the benefit of knowing the direction of the Board and eliminate reworking the budget at Board Work Sessions. He encouraged the following changes to the Budget Calendar for next year:

- Board involvement in the budget process starting in October/November of each year.
- Board to create an Ad Hoc Committee of the Board to review proposed budget recommendations from the various departments.
- Appoint Board members to perform a deeper dive into the budget.

Chairperson Griffin said she would add this to the Board's discussion on committees at the Board Retreat scheduled for Friday, February 13, 2009.

- Mr. Gauvreau said he would not support the Budget Calendar again this year as he did not in the last two years for the same reasons that Mr. Gjertsen outlined. He expressed concern that the budget process does not begin earlier in the school year, that the CMS process is a circus, and that the majority of the Board rubber stamps the budget recommendation. He encouraged the Board to reject the time schedule and direct the Superintendent to comeback with a process that begins earlier in the school year.
- Ms. McGarry said she would like to offer an amendment to add October 2009 (date to be determined) for Board input. This will put October as a starting date for the Board for next year.

**Ms. McGarry moved to amend the motion to add October 2009 (date to be determined) to the proposed 2009-2010 Budget Calendar as a Board Budget Work Session, seconded by Mr. Gauvreau, and a discussion followed.**

- Mr. Tate said while he believes the Board should be involved in the budget process earlier in the budget process, this is the calendar for the 2009-2010 Budget Calendar. He believes the Board would need a different document because the October 2009 date would involve next year's budget for the 2010-2011 Budget. He would be happy to work with staff and the Board to begin Board involvement in October of each year. He does not believe amending this motion is the best way to initiate that change.
- Mr. White noted that Dr. Gorman only got notice from the Board of County Commissioners and the State in December 2009 to review options for 5% and 10% budget reductions in formulating the budget.
- Mr. Gauvreau said for years he has asked the superintendents for a pro forma plan and that has never happened. He expressed concern that the budget process is a game and staff does not get a handle around a grossly overly inflated school budget. The spending has gone through the roof and the financial peril that he has warned the Board about for years is here. He encouraged the Board as a first step to fix the Budget Calendar for next year.
- Ms. McGarry said the point is not when we were notified about the cuts. The point is the Board is in charge of hiring someone to run this school system and if we are good stewards of the taxpayers' dollars the Board needs to spend time each year prioritizing what will give us the results that we need within CMS. The Board should prioritize in order to be better prepared and having these types of discussions on a yearly basis would provide knowledge of our most critical needs and the areas of potential results. She believes adding Board involvement in October or November is a good idea.
- Chairperson Griffin said she would not support the amendment but she would agree with the theory that the Board could have an earlier meeting. Should this amendment not pass, she would agree, as the Board Chairperson, to call a Board meeting for late October or November to give guidance to the Superintendent about the Board's budget priorities and begin the ground work for the new budget. She would not support adding to the 2009-

2010 Budget Calendar an item for the next budget year.

**The Board voted 2-7 on the amendment to the motion and the amendment failed. Ms. McGarry and Mr. Gauvreau voted in support of the amendment to the motion. Chairperson Griffin, Mr. White, Mr. Merchant, Ms. Mitchell-Walker, Mr. Ross, Mr. Tate, and Mr. Gjertsen voted against the amendment to the motion.**

**The Board voted 8-1 in support of the original motion to adopt the proposed 2009-2010 Budget Calendar. Chairperson Griffin, Ms. McGarry, Mr. White, Mr. Merchant, Ms. Mitchell-Walker, Mr. Ross, Mr. Tate, and Mr. Gjertsen voted in support of the motion. Mr. Gauvreau voted against the motion.**

- B. Recommend approval of two proposed new policies: Policy ADDA, Registered Sex Offenders, and Policy ADDB, Student Sex Offenders Subject to the Jessica Lunsford Act, and amendments to Policy JKD, Suspension, Exclusion, and Expulsion of Students

Chairperson Griffin called upon Mr. Tate to present the recommendation. Mr. Tate said before the Board for Board approval is new Policy ADDA, Registered Sex Offenders; new Policy ADDB, Student Sex Offenders Subject to the Jessica Lunsford Act; and amendments to Policy JKD, Suspension, Exclusion, and Expulsion of Students. Proposed new policies ADDA and ADDB and amendments to Policy JKD were reviewed by the Policy Committee on January 8, 2009 and come before the Board with the unanimous recommendation of that committee. Proposed new Policy ADDA prohibits anyone required to register with the Sex Offender Registration Program from being present on CMS property or at a CMS event. Exceptions are applicable to eligible voters whose polling places are at schools, parents of students, and CMS students, if they meet stringent requirements set forth in the policy. In addition, the Superintendent is directed to include provisions in CMS contracts that inform contractors of the ban of all sex offenders from CMS property and require contractors to conduct Sex Offender Registration Program background checks on appropriate employees providing services under the contract. Proposed new Policy ADDB and amendments to Policy JKD apply to student sex offenders who are covered by the "Jessica Lunsford Act," which went into effect in North Carolina on December 1, 2008. The Superintendent is directed to bring all such students to the Board for expulsion hearings. These students may be allowed to be on CMS property only if there is a determination by the Board that they will be provided educational services and will be under constant supervision by CMS personnel while on CMS property. In addition, as allowed by the Lunsford Act, these students may be expelled from school by the Board, even if they are under age fourteen.

**Mr. Tate moved to that the Board adopt new Policy ADDA, new Policy ADDB, and amendments to Policy JKD. The recommendation comes through the Policy Committee and a second was not required.**

Chairperson Griffin said she had received a request to divide the question into three separate votes and she asked if there was any objection from the Board? There was no objection from the Board to divide the question. A Board discussion followed.

- Mr. Merchant expressed concern regarding Policy ADDA. He wants to protect students and he supports both the letter and spirit of the Jessica Lunsford Act. He has a pragmatic

concern that including individuals beyond the Jessica Lunsford Act may invite lawsuits from the Southern Poverty Law Center and the ACLU, and could ultimately risk the good intentions of the Jessica Lunsford Act by reaching too far and undoing the entire policy.

- Mr. Gauvreau said he would support new Policy ADDA because we do not want sex offenders in our schools.
- Mr. White said he would speak only once but his comments would be directed at all three items. Mr. White congratulated the Policy Committee for their fine work on the policies. He said they have gone beyond but, in this case, he would prefer to error by going beyond. Mr. White will not be bothered by a threat of a lawsuit because he believes this is the right thing to do for the 137,000 students in CMS. He will be proud to support all three items.

**The Board voted 8-1 to approve the adoption of new Policy ADDA. Chairperson Griffin, Ms. McGarry, Mr. White, Mr. Gauvreau, Ms. Mitchell-Walker, Mr. Ross, Mr. Tate, and Mr. Gjertsen voted in support of the motion. Mr. Merchant voted against the motion.**

**The Board voted 9-0 to approve the adoption of new Policy ADDB.**

The Board discussed amendments to Policy JKD (Suspension, Exclusion, and Expulsion of Students).

- Mr. Gauvreau said putting this into policy includes an emotional piece to the first two policies approved by the Board. He expressed concern that the Board would approve this policy that would expel this group of students but not approve expelling felons who we allow in the schools. He encouraged the Board to finally put into policy to direct the superintendents to expel students who are unsafe to themselves and others in the classroom. This is a part of North Carolina law and the Board is obligated to expel students who are unsafe. He said until we strengthen this particular policy we should not be putting this into policy because this does not go far enough. He may not support this item. He encouraged the Board to strengthen other policy areas. Chairperson Griffin said this is a strong step in the right direction and she will ask the Policy Committee to review if additional changes are needed.

**The Board vote 9-0 to approve the amendments to Policy JKD.**

## **V. REPORT/INFORMATION ITEMS**

### **A. Report on Financial Statements for December 2008**

Chairperson Griffin called upon Dr. Gorman to introduce the report. Dr. Gorman said Report Items A., B., and C. are the monthly reports and they are as presented.

### **B. Report on Budget Amendments for December 2008**

Presented with Report Item V.A.

### **C. Report on Capital Project Ordinances for December 2008**

Presented with Report Item V.A.

D. Report on Strategic Plan Charter: Parent University/Family and Community

Chairperson Griffin called upon Dr. Gorman to introduce the report. Dr. Gorman said the report on Parent University/Family and Community is a part of staff's regular updates on different topics to the Board. He called upon Barbara Pellin, Assistant Superintendent for Pre-K-12 Support Programs, and Jerri Haigler, Executive Director of Parent University/Family and Community. Ms. Pellin said this is an update on the progress of Parent University which is a part of the *2010 Strategic Plan* (Goal #7: Strong Parent and Family Connections, and Strategy #9: Parent University). Ms. Pellin recognized and commended staff for their commitment and passion for hard work in making this initiative a reality. Ms. Pellin introduced Jerri Haigler and commended her on her experience and passion for moving the outlined goals and objectives forward. Ms. Pellin said parents have questions and one of the main roles for Parent University is to respond to parents and those questions. Ms. Haigler provided the Board with information on the development of the initiative and the progress of Parent University. Ms. Haigler said Parent University is gaining momentum in this community and she thanked the Board for their interest and support. The role of a parent is very important and Parent University is about equipping parents and answering their questions that will help their children to be successful in school and in life. Public education is vastly different and approaches to teaching and learning have to be different so that our students can be globally competitive which is a main focus of Charlotte-Mecklenburg schools. The CMS approaches to parental engagement must also be different as well and we must understand the needs of our parents, the interests of the parents, and how to reach parents. There is a direct correlation between family involvement and student achievement. Research shows that when parents are involved in their children's education there is an increase in test scores, attendance, behavior in schools, and graduation rates. These are the reasons that the Superintendent made this a part of the *2010 Strategic Plan*. Creating successful students is like balancing a three-legged stool. This balancing act includes strong principals, strong teachers, and strong parents are also important. CMS has several programs and initiatives in place to create strong principals and strong teachers. Parent University is about creating strong parents in this community. Ms. Haigler highlighted the following points:

- Parent University development and background:
  - Process began one year ago.
  - Staff reviewed other schools systems across the country and found only one school system that was offering a comprehensive selection of parent workshops and information for parents (Miami, Dade County).
  - Staff researched the Dade County program and discussed the concept with principals, teachers, parents, community agencies, organizations that support families for feedback.
- Parent University is a strong collaborative effort:
  - Parent University Advisory Council consists of well known community leaders who serve as ambassadors for the program. Ms. Haigler commended Sue Gorman for her hard work and volunteer efforts in leading the advisory council and creating a strong collaboration within the community. The leaders of the Advisory Council have been instrumental in the success of this initiative.
  - Curriculum Review Committee is comprised of CMS representatives and community partners (Public Library, YMCA, YWCA, Urban League, Council for Children's Rights, Teen Health Connection, CPCC, Health Department, City of Charlotte

- Community Relations Committee, and others).
- Developed four strands to be addressed through Parent University:
  - Parent Awareness.
  - Helping Your Child Learn in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.
  - Health and Wellness.
  - Personal Growth and Development.
- Parent University Framework:
  - A dynamic compilation of course offerings and resources.
  - Available to all parents in Mecklenburg County (any one serving as a mentor for a child).
  - Targeted focus on reaching the underserved parents.
  - Sponsors:
    - Wachovia Foundation.
    - Belk Family Foundation.
    - AT&T.
    - Charlotte-Mecklenburg Community Foundation.
    - Meck Ed – School Leadership Fund – Committed sponsors include Duke Energy, Bank of America, Wachovia, Presbyterian Hospital, Rogers Builders, Carolinas Healthcare, and Allen Tate Realty.
- Parent University - Fall Semester (First Semester, September through November):
  - Offered thirty-one different courses.
  - Classes offered fifty-six different times in the fall.
  - Courses offered in schools, public libraries, YMCAs, YWCA, Urban League, etc.
  - More than 2,700 parents attended the classes and 1,556 of those parents had children in the Achievement Zone, Title 1, or Focus schools.
  - Success story – results of surveys from the first semester indicate that 93% said they learned information and techniques that they plan to use in the future and 97% said the speakers were effective and presented information that was helpful.
- Fall Family Fun Day:
  - Held October 18, 2008 at the Whitewater Center.
  - Over 9,000 participants.
  - Focus on Health and Wellness.
- Parent University Lessons Learned:
  - Diverse crowd has participated in the activities and have touched nearly 12,000 parents.
  - Topics must be of interest to parents.
  - Parents are busy and course offerings must be convenient and accessible for parents (go where parents are).
  - Must provide the wraparound support services for classes.
  - Must offer classes in Spanish.
- Parent University – Spring Semester (Second Semester, January 12<sup>th</sup> – April 30<sup>th</sup>):
  - Expanded offerings and locations.
  - Offered sixty-four class topics.
  - Offered 159 times throughout Mecklenburg County.
  - Classes are taught by CMS personnel, guidance counselors, teachers, and representatives of agencies and organizations within the community who serve families.
  - Topics of interest include Preparing for End of Grade and End of Course tests,

- transitional grades, profession growth and development.
- Offered fifteen classes in Spanish and response was overwhelming.
- Partnered with houses of worship and offer classes Wednesday night and Sunday mornings.
- Partnered with organizations to do Lunch-n-Learn sessions:
  - Conducted two sessions with Wachovia (over 200 Wachovia employees in attendance).
  - Will hold two additional sessions.
- Ongoing Collaborations:
  - Working with Goodwill Industries and conducting classes with their clients.
  - Partnered with the judicial system in order for the Juvenile Justice Partnership and Truancy Court to consider this as part of their compliance plan for the parent.
  - Reviewing homeless population and working with shelters to offer classes.
  - Partnered with Leadership Charlotte and this will be their Community Service Project for this year.
  - Will have a Spring Family Fun Day in April and details will follow.

Ms. Haigler said we must be accountable and staff is tracking the parents who are attending, the schools their children attend, the impact on parent/family involvement in those schools, and the impact on student achievement for those students. Ms. Haigler thanked the Board, the Parent University Advisory Council, the Curriculum Review Committee, the CMS team, and all those who have volunteered through Parent University for their support of the program.

Board members were invited to ask questions and make comments.

- Mr. Ross asked clarifying questions regarding the family participation from the Achievement Zone and Focus schools. Ms. Haigler responded and noted that staff is continuing efforts to reach parents to make them aware of the programs and to provide services so that they can get to CMS or we can get to them to offer classes. Mr. Ross said CMS focuses on the importance of parents supporting the schools and their children but parents are interested in not wasting their time. He said offering programs that make sense will encourage parents to participate. He encouraged the Board to not do “things” to cause parents to not want to participate.
- Mr. Merchant thanked staff for the good information and efficient delivery of the report. He said he is an amateur carpenter and he can make a three-legged stool balance but he cannot make a four-legged table balance. He expressed concern that the missing leg in the CMS analogy is students and the student’s individual responsibility. He said many of the courses offered are to help parents to help their children engage and there is a focus on what the adults (the Board, the principals, the teachers, members of the community) are going to do to close the achievement gap. He encouraged staff to communicate consistently that the balance of responsibility includes the personal responsibility of the student to engage. He believes it is the responsibility of the adult to find out and understand why that student is not engaged.
- Mr. Gauvreau commended Ms. Pellin and Ms. Haigler for being strong and caring people. He said it is not a government school system’s obligation and we should not have a Parent University on the taxpayers’ dollars when we are not reaching half of the students half of the time correctly. He believes this type of initiative distracts from our core business. He



expressed concern that the courses include Hip-Hop Culture, How to Bridge with Your Student, Resume Writing, Diet, and Cooking courses, and that is not what a public school system should be doing. He believes this has gone too far. CMS should be putting resources and deploying resources into programs that are academically oriented in which the school system has control over. This initiative has gone too far and is costing CMS and the community too much money. He believes there are other ways to generate outcome. He expressed concern that half of the students in CMS cannot read on grade level but we are focusing on teaching parents courses on Hip Hop Culture. Mr. Gauvreau recommended that CMS close Parent University down because this is not something of substance. He said this is an emotional toy, another method getting funding, and it should be one of the first items cut from the budget. He does not believe it will show any results and CMS should not be teaching parents. Chairperson Griffin asked Dr. Gorman if he would like to respond to the funding for Parent University. Chairperson Griffin asked Dr. Gorman if he would like to address funding for the Parent University. Dr. Gorman said he would wait and respond to the other questions of the Board members. Mr. Gauvreau said he did not address the funding because this involves buy-in from the community. He said he does not see value in this initiative because it is a distraction and CMS should be focused on students and academics.

- Mr. Gjertsen said he is interested in the impact this is having on student achievement and how success will be measured. Mr. Gjertsen asked how will this be measured, when are the results expected, and what is the initial impression? Ms. Haigler responded. Staff will be tracking data on parental attendance through on-line registration and sign-in sheets, information on the schools their children attend and grade level, and reviewing data over the next year on the parental involvement with the schools. Staff will also be contacting parents to see if they have used the information and what they are doing differently as a result of attending the class as well as reviewing the individual student on the status and progress of their achievement. CMS is working with Institute for Social Capital at UNC-Charlotte with regards to that information. Ms. Haigler said based upon the number of parents attending sessions and listening to their feedback there were certain areas that their children were struggling with and they were glad to get the information. Staff has ensured the classes provided take away information, how to, and steps to do at home to reinforce the lessons learned.
- Mr. Tate thanked staff for the report. Mr. Tate asked is staff tracking whether these were parents who were previously involved in their schools or parents who were never involved? Are we reaching parents who were previously not participating in school activities with their children? Ms. Haigler said we do not have that information at this time. Based upon the feedback from the parents who have attended the classes we have reached parents because we went to a particular site that was accessible by the parent. There is some challenge with the term “involvement” because it does not mean the parent needs to be at the school once per week, or be in the child’s classroom, or volunteer at the school. We want to stress through Parent University, that it is just as important to set high expectations in your home that your child goes to school everyday, that you provide time for homework, and that if you cannot help with the homework that you know resources are available to help your child. There are several different measurements related to involvement, whether volunteering in the classroom or setting high expectations at home, to help children be successful. Mr. Tate asked will the impact be based upon anecdotal

evidence or actual data to determine the impact on student achievement? Ms. Pellin said we are working with the Institute for Social Capital to track data. We have also heard from parents who were not as engaged in the schools because they may not have had a good experience are now feeling more welcome to the school and identifying with the school culture. The Institute for Social Capital will help with a cross analysis of a logic model that reviews the parents who attended the classes and whether their students attendance in school improve. Ms. Pellin said staff feels strongly that this can make a difference in these issues as well as did reading scores and behavior issues change. Staff is very excited about this initiative and understands that it will take awhile to get results. Staff will have a strong focus on the outcome piece of this initiative. Mr. Tate said the reality for him is there are many areas in a child's life in which CMS does not have control over such as where they live, their health conditions, home life, and parent situations. He hopes the design of Parent University can get a handle on those aspects as well because otherwise we have not had any success in getting the parents involved in the life of their children even at home. Mr. Tate said this is one of the areas in which we must do more and if Parent University can impact that he will be grateful.

- Mr. Gauvreau expressed concern regarding the types of classes being offered because they will not help a six-year old learn to read and that this is being funded by taxpayers' dollars. Dr. Gorman discussed the benefits of Parent University. Dr. Gorman thanked the organizations from outside of the district that have helped to sponsor Parent University. He said it is inaccurate information to indicate that district dollars are funding this initiative. He is thrilled that this program is being offered to our families because it is important to reach parents to help them connect to the schools and connect to their children. Dr. Gorman discussed the benefits of the program and believes helping parents results in helping our students to do a better job. Focusing on helping parents to help educate their children benefits ours students and helps them to come to school to be readers, mathematicians, to write well, and do their job. Dr. Gorman thanked the parents of the community for engaging with CMS. Mr. Gauvreau discussed the reasons he does not support this initiative. Mr. Gauvreau asked if Ms. Haigler was a paid CMS employee? Dr. Gorman said, yes, and she is paid by the generous donations of Mecklenburg Citizens for Public Education who have helped CMS through the Leadership Fund to raise those dollars.

#### E. Report/Update on Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools Facilities

Chairperson Griffin called upon Dr. Gorman to present the report. Dr. Gorman said staff has had scheduled a report to the Board on facility construction. This is a good time to provide an update on the CMS school facility projects because the Board of County Commissioners are reviewing options for issuing Bond dollars. Dr. Gorman called upon Guy Chamberlain, Associate Superintendent for Auxiliary Services, to provide an overview of the status of the projects, the projects completed, direction, and to answer questions. Mr. Chamberlain said this report includes good news and bad news. The good news is our program is running smoothly. We are receiving good pricing, have a loyal following of the best contractors in Charlotte, have a good relationship with the various agencies in Charlotte who have jurisdiction over our projects, are adhering to schedules, and the program is sound. The bad news is there are going to be funding problems ahead.

Mr. Chamberlain provided an overview on the following information:

- 2006 COPs (Schools Building Solutions Committee (SBSC) - \$123,164,532)
  - Projects Completed: Whitewater Academy opened August 2008 on schedule \$300,000 below original budget, Barnette Elementary opened August 2008 on schedule \$1.3 million below original budget, and Alexander Graham Middle Addition opened August 2008 on schedule within budget.
  - 2006 COPs (SBSC) Projects under construction scheduled to be completed August 2009 within budget: North Mecklenburg High Addition, Sedgefield Middle Renovation, and Cochrane Middle Renovation.
  - 2006 COPs Preconstruction only: new Ridge Road Middle, new Bailey Road High, new Ballantyne Elementary through a Public-Private Partnership (PPP), Idlewild Elementary Renovation/Addition (PPP), Harding High Renovation (PPP), South Mecklenburg High Addition (PPP), and Long Creek Elementary Replacement (PPP).
  - 2006 COPs Land only: Salome Church Road Elementary, Palisades elementary/high school, and Alexander Middle.
  - 2006 COPs Land and Preconstruction: new Croft Community Elementary (PPP), new Matthews/Mint Hill High, new Belmeade Middle, and North Mecklenburg High.
  - December 2006 COPs request \$16,500,000: Elon Park Elementary opened August 2008 on schedule \$2.5 million under budget.
- April 2007 COPs request of \$31,600,000: Ballantyne Elementary opened August 2008 on schedule \$400,000.00 under budget (three-story school located on 6.5 acres) and Croft Community School opened August 2008 on schedule \$1.6 million under budget.
- 2007 Bonds (approved by the voters) \$516,000,000:
  - Projects Under Construction: new Matthews/Mint Hill High scheduled to open August 2010 within budget and on schedule (to primarily provide relief for Independence and Butler high schools); new Bailey Road High scheduled to open August 2010 within budget and on schedule; new Belmeade Middle scheduled to open August 2009 \$5.8 million under budget (provides relief for Coulwood Middle School); new Ridge Road Middle scheduled to open August 2009 \$4.6 million under budget (provide relief to Alexander Middle School); Alexander Graham Middle School renovation scheduled to Open August 2009 within budget; new Salome Church Road Elementary scheduled to open August 2009 \$1.9 million under budget (provides relief for University Meadows Elementary School); new Berewick Elementary/Dixie River Road Elementary scheduled to open August 2009 within budget; new Hamilton Smith Road Elementary scheduled to open August 2009 \$2.4 million under budget (provides relief for Winget Park and Lake Wylie elementary schools); and Mt. Holly-Huntersville Road Elementary scheduled to open August 2009 \$1.9 million under budget (provides partial relief for Mountain Island Elementary).
  - 2007 Bond Projects Pending Construction Contract Award (design completed and bids submitted but projects delayed due to County freeze on new construction): McClintock Middle Replacement, Olympic High Stadium, West Mecklenburg High Stadium, and Garinger High Track and Field.
  - 2007 Bond Projects Under Design: Fifteen projects.

- 2007 Bond Land Acquisitions: Seven projects.
- February 2008 COPs - \$58,000,000 (four projects considered for capital lease but more feasible to use COPS- BOCC approved) on schedule to open August 2009 within budget: Long Creek Elementary Replacement, Idlewild Elementary Renovation, South Mecklenburg High Addition, and Harding University High Addition.
- Summary:
  - Total COPs/Bonds 2006-2008 \$745,264,532
  - Total Completed/Under Construction \$436,176,203
  - Balance to Award \$309,088,329
  - Strategic Plan Goal Attainment:
    1. Goal III: Adequate Resources and Facilities – fifteen percent reduction in the number of temporary classrooms.
      - This summer CMS will take over 350 temporary classrooms out of service which will reduce in-service inventory to 892 (below the target of 900).
- Construction Cost Comparison: CMS is well below the North Carolina spending levels for elementary, middle, and high schools.
- Cost Savings:
 

|                                   |                     |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------|
| Savings redirected to 2008 COPs   | \$ 7,000,000        |
| Savings redirected to unallocated | <u>\$14,000,000</u> |
| Total savings                     | \$21,000,000        |
- Impact of Sale Delay
  - Projects under construction will be completed as scheduled.
  - Opening of new elementary schools under design delayed at least one year.
  - Projects pending award will be delayed.
  - All other projects delayed depending upon issuance of Bond funds.
  - Loss of free elementary site at Palisades.

Mr. Chamberlain said the delay of projects could result in additional costs to complete. CMS as a district is responsible for each construction site. At present there are approximately fourteen new projects or renovation projects, and CMS must take care of those sites should construction stop. He is hopeful the County will provide support for these projects in order to get them open. Those elementary schools that are currently under design and scheduled to start construction this year will not open in 2010. All other projects that are under design will not be awarded and the County has indicated, at this time, that it may be as late as 2010 before any substantial debt is issued to start new projects. All of these projects will be off track. Regarding the loss of a free elementary school site, in 2000 a condition of the rezoning petition from Crescent Resources was Palisades had to donate an elementary school site. A condition of that rezoning was that CMS had to start construction by July 1, 2009 and we are not in a position to do meet that requirement. Staff is discussing the potential of an extension to the project requirements with the County and the developer in hopes of not loosing the free elementary school site.

Dr. Gorman said he was pleased to report that CMS was on target with both budget and timeline for all projects. There is now a change in the economic conditions and we must adequately notify the public, the principals, and the communities regarding the impact of the delays. This involves information that has not been determined and staff will continue to work with the County in moving forward and keep the Board informed on the progress of the projects.

Board members were invited to ask questions and make comments.

- Ms. McGarry asked what is the cost for the three projects related to athletic stadiums and tracks that are on hold? Mr. Chamberlain said he would guess between \$5 and \$6 million. Ms. McGarry does not believe that based upon the economy the athletic facility projects should be a priority. Ms. McGarry asked what were the contributing factors for the projects being completed under budget? Mr. Chamberlain responded and the reasons included the Superintendent convened a Standards Review Committee and the Board approved many of their recommendations which reduced construction costs; CMS utilized the prototype designs with reduced square footage of the facilities; and a variety of competitive bids. Ms. McGarry asked why does CMS house Bovis Lend Lease in our facilities? Mr. Chamberlain responded that this is a part of the agreement and having the program manager centrally located is beneficial. At this point, they cost CMS about 2.3% and the average cost for a program manager across the country is much higher. Ms. McGarry asked clarifying questions regarding the ongoing construction project at Alexander Graham Middle School, the costs for two gas powered generators, the expensive building/housing for HVAC equipment, and whether this is being planned for all new sites? Mr. Chamberlain said, no, the circumstances at Alexander Graham Middle School were unique. The electrical service that served the existing building was not sufficient to power the addition and a separate service from Duke Power was required. Mr. Chamberlain said the overall cost for this method was cheaper than connecting the two systems.
- Mr. Gauvreau said another reason the projects came in under budget is because CMS inflated the numbers. He encouraged that those funds be returned to the County. He discussed his concerns regarding misleading the public and not consolidating the school district with regard to facility planning. Mr. Gauvreau asked if there are any plans for consolidation of schools because enrollment is decreasing and what are the plans for the excess floor space? He asked is CMS doing any proactive planning to take action before this gets worse? Dr. Gorman said regarding facilities, staff continually reviews what is taking place, the potential of consolidating space, potential of other options, the utilization of 1,200 mobile units and options for eliminating 300 of those, status of delaying projects, and reviewing options for combining programs. Regarding affirmative plans to close schools because enrollment is declining, the answer would be no because enrollment is not declining at this time. Dr. Gorman discussed enrollment dips that may occur throughout the year and that classes cannot be eliminated at a school because a school may lose a few students. Dr. Gorman said the projects were not inflated and the public receives information that is fair and accurate.
- Mr. Merchant said this is good news because we are controlling what we can control in a efficient manner. He congratulated staff on a job well done. Mr. Merchant said in reality there is nothing to give back to the taxpayers or the County because the way Bonds sells work the County is not obligated for debt that does not exist. He said the Board may need to discuss priority of projects at some point but now is not the time because it would be better for the Board to have a united voice to work with the County to get the schools completed. Mr. Merchant asked how much more debt would need to be issued in order to complete the projects that are under construction? Mr. Chamberlain said staff made a request last fall for approximately \$200 million to complete all the projects that were under construction. Staff also included a request for approximately another \$100 million to start

all the projects that were on track to open in 2010. The amount of money needed to bridge the gap between now and August (understanding that some COPs were sold) would be approximately \$50 to \$60 million. Additional debt would have to be issued to cover the remainder because typically when a school is finished in August we are still closing the school out and paying bills into the next calendar year. There would be several months following that in which a cash flow would be needed. Mr. Merchant asked how much more debt would need to be issued in order to keep the current projects/buildings safe from damage until construction could resume? Mr. Chamberlain said when we thought we would not get any more funding, staff reviewed each project to estimate the cost to bring the buildings to a dried in condition (weather tight with no utilities but sealed) and the estimate was approximately \$130 million to put them in a caretaker status. Mr. Merchant asked is the primary concern of the County staff maintaining a Triple A Bond rating or exceeding an acceptable or manageable level of debt capacity at this point in time? Mr. Chamberlain said he could not answer that question but the County finance staff is concerned that should we have to suspend construction on projects valued at \$300 million that could also impact their Bond rating. Dr. Gorman said he and Harry Jones, the County Manager, have discussed both those factors as well as issuing more debt which would add on to the current deficit environment. Mr. Merchant said he would question the conventional wisdom that indicates we must maintain a Triple A Bond rating. He said it would seem that if we are saving several million dollars on each project that we are continuing to get additional value. He encouraged staff to continue to get the best value possible. Dr. Gorman said this alludes to the fact that, at this time, it may be a positive environment to get bids for projects because of lower prices but if the debt costs more what is the impact of that offset? Mr. Merchant asked is there any other opportunities for financing such private development? Mr. Chamberlain said, no, the private sector does not have any money at this time. Dr. Gorman said some of the discussions within the economic stimulus plan includes construction dollars in that plan but staff has taken a position at this time to not count on those dollars until we know exactly what is included in that plan. Mr. Merchant encouraged staff to seek creative ways to develop another financial model that could include exchange of existing property. Mr. Merchant asked how does the Education Center fit into these discussions? Mr. Chamberlain said we have a meeting scheduled tomorrow with County staff to discuss the Education Center. Last year, the agreement between CMS and the County was \$13.75 million for the Education Center and the County actually has title to the Education Center. Last year, the County sold \$9 million in COPs as part of that \$13.75 million but CMS did not draw on any other funds because CMS has not moved. All indications from the County finance staff is the reserves that we would draw upon to sustain the ongoing construction would include the \$9 million they sold last year. These discussions are ongoing and staff will continue to keep the Board informed.

- Mr. White said the process included a request to the public for \$516 million. At that time, there was a great concern in this community about how their money was going to be spent. When he spoke in the community regarding the Bond request, he carried a list of the projects included in the \$516 million. The people of this community approved all \$516 million and expecting their project in their community to be honored. Mr. White said he gets concerned when the Board talks about that list and its priority order. He will honor that commitment to those people.

- Mr. Gauvreau said we may not be able to honor the list because economic conditions have changed. He has discussed the Triple A Bond rating with the County and that is not a plan. The debt service level of this County is too high and it will only get worse because you cannot not sustain a \$200 million a year run rate in Charlotte, North Carolina. This is a farce and you cannot fool the public. The Board should not be focused on the Triple A Bond rating but on a sensible facility plan that uses restraint. He discussed his concerns regarding building schools and encouraged the Board to direct Dr. Gorman to develop a new plan because the money is not there and the Board of County Commissioners will be faced with epic financial conditions.

## **VI. REPORT FROM SUPERINTENDENT**

Dr. Gorman reviewed staffing changes as a result of the personnel appointments and the Strategic Staffing Initiative to place strong principals where they are needed the most in the low-performing schools.

Dr. Gorman reviewed personnel appointments as follows:

Appointments:

- Charity Bell named Executive Director of the West Learning Community. Ms. Bell previously served as principal at West Mecklenburg High School.
- Howard Barnhill named principal at Bradley Middle School. Mr. Barnhill previously served as assistant principal at Hopewell High School.
- Natasha Thompson named principal at Leadership and Public Service School at Garinger High School. Ms. Thompson is returning to CMS having previously served as principal at Huguenot High School with Richmond Public Schools in Richmond, Virginia. Ms. Thompson previously served as principal at International Studies School at Garinger High School.

Principal Transfers to open new schools:

- Jametta Martin-Tanner will open new Ridge Road Middle School. Ms. Martin-Tanner previously served as principal at Hawthorne High School.
- Stephanie Wade will open new Belmeade Middle School. Ms. Wade previously served as principal at Morgan School.
- Cheryl Turner will open new Dixie River Elementary School. Ms. Turner previously served as principal at Oakhurst Elementary School.
- Marilyn Osborne will open new Mt. Holly-Huntersville Elementary School. Ms. Osborne previously served as principal at Tuckaseegee Elementary School.
- Acquanetta Edmond will open new Youngblood Elementary School. Ms. Edmond previously served as principal at Lake Wylie Elementary School.

Dr. Gorman said the new Youngblood Elementary, Dixie River Elementary, Mt. Holly-Huntersville Elementary, Belmeade Middle, and Ridge Road Middle schools are scheduled to open in the 2009-2010 school year. Dr. Gorman said he would also be transferring a number of staff as part of the Strategic Staffing Initiative which is one of several strategies in place for improving student achievement. Research indicates that strong leadership is an effective tool for increasing student achievement. This initiative targets principals with strong proven records of success and moves them to some of the district's most challenged schools. The

changes include the following principal relocations:

- Celeste Spears-Ellis, principal at Davidson Elementary School, named principal at Allenbrook Elementary School.
- Mary Jo Koenig, principal at Lansdowne Elementary School, named principal at Paw Creek Elementary School.
- Tonya Kales, principal at McAlpine Elementary School, named principal at Ashley Park Elementary School.
- Beverly Newsome, principal at Endhaven Elementary School, named principal at Druid Hills Elementary School.
- Catherine Hammond, Executive Director of Professional Development, named principal at Thomasboro Elementary School.
- Avery Mitchell, principal at Crestdale Middle School, named principal at Albemarle Road Middle School.
- Denise Watts, principal at Mint Hill Middle School, named principal at Spaugh Middle School.

Dr. Gorman thanked the existing principals at the Strategic Staffing schools who have helped greatly in the planning process. They strongly recommended that the placements for Strategic Staffing occur during the spring of year in order for the principals to have some opportunity in the current year to begin their new staffing process prior to the next school year. These principals will be allowed to select an assistant principal, five staff members, and a literacy facilitator to join at their new school. Dr. Gorman commended the principals at the six schools in Phase I of the Strategic Staffing process for their progress this school year. Phase II will begin the next school year and will include seven more schools. The reassignments will take effect March 1, 2009. The schools formerly led by the new leaders will be led by assistant or interim principals until additional staffing decisions are made.

## **VII. REPORTS FROM BOARD MEMBERS**

Trent Merchant said he is the Board liaison to the TIF-LEAP Initiative. The Grant represents Leadership for Educators Advanced Performance Program. The pilot initiative includes ten schools and approximately 460 classroom teachers will have the opportunity to submit Student Learning Objectives. This initiative allows teachers to provide feedback on what they think they should be teaching and what students should be learning. The process includes approval by the principal. If students meet the outlined objectives, the teachers will have an opportunity to earn more money. He congratulated the teachers for submitting the Student Learning Objectives. He commended the teachers at Billingsville Elementary School, Shamrock Gardens Elementary School, and Highland Renaissance Academy for doing a great job.

Joe White reported that last week he was in Washington, DC representing the Board and the state at the Annual Federal Relations Network Conference sponsored by the National School Boards Association (NSBA). This is an opportunity for School Board members from across the country to talk with Washington elected officials regarding educational funding. This was a great opportunity for him to deliver good messages that address the concerns of the state. A focus of the message was to encourage them to facilitate and not to dictate and to not approve any more unfunded mandates as exemplified in parts of the *No Child Left Behind*. Another focus in Washington was the “stimulus package.” NSBA representatives encouraged the officials to



include the education community as part of any approved “stimulus package” whether it be included in the construction monies or coming closer to fully funding Title I and IDEA. This request included having an immediate impact on the local economy in hopes to be able to begin construction sooner because we believe this is more than just an instant stimulus. This is a long-range investment on the strength of the economy of this country and the strength of the country itself because it is an investment in the students of this country and providing a better education.

Kaye McGarry reported the next scheduled “Kaye About Town” would be at the Starbucks at Birkdale Village in Huntersville on Thursday, February 26<sup>th</sup>. She will be available to discuss school related issues. She has posted an update to her newsletter on her website.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

**Ms. Griffin called the meeting adjourned, and by consensus, the Board agreed to adjourn the Regular Board meeting.**

The Regular School Board Meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

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Molly B. Griffin, Chairperson

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Nancy Daughtridge, Clerk to the Board