

Approved by the Charlotte-
Mecklenburg Board of Education
June 6, 2011
Regular Board Meeting



Charlotte, North Carolina

February 22, 2011

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

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education held a Regular Board Meeting on February 22, 2011. The meeting began at 5:34 p.m. and was held in Room 267, 2nd Floor, of the Government Center.

Present: Eric C. Davis, Chairperson, (District 5);
Tom Tate, Vice-Chairperson, (District 4);
Kaye Bernard McGarry, Member At-Large;
Trent Merchant, Member At-Large;
Joe I. White, Jr., Member At-Large;
Rhonda Lennon (District 1);
Richard Allen McElrath, Sr. (District 2);
Dr. Joyce Davis Waddell (District 3); and
Timothy S. Morgan (District 6)

Absent: There were no absences.

Also present at the request of the Board were Dr. Peter Gorman, Superintendent; George E. Battle, III, General Counsel; Hugh Hattabaugh, Chief Operating Officer; and Nancy Daughtridge, Clerk to the Board.

Upon motion by Dr. Waddell, seconded by Mr. Morgan, the Board voted unanimously 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 concerning a pending workers' compensation claim regarding D. Alexander.**

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 5:34 p.m. until 5:42 p.m. in Room 267.

Chairperson Davis reconvened the Regular Board Meeting at 6:00 p.m. in Room 267 of the Government Center. CMS-TV 3 televised the meeting.

Present: Eric C. Davis, Chairperson, (District 5);
Tom Tate, Vice-Chairperson, (District 4);
Kaye Bernard McGarry, Member At-Large;
Trent Merchant, Member At-Large;
Joe I. White, Jr., Member At-Large;

Rhonda Lennon (District 1);
Richard Allen McElrath, Sr. (District 2);
Dr. Joyce Davis Waddell (District 3); and
Timothy S. Morgan (District 6)

Absent: There were no absences.

Also present at the request of the Board were Dr. Peter Gorman, Superintendent; George E. Battle, III, 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 Davis called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and he welcomed everyone to the Board's second meeting of the month which was held in a Work Session format.

A. Adoption of Agenda

Chairperson Davis called for a motion to adopt the agenda as presented.

Dr. Waddell moved that the Board adopt the agenda as presented, seconded by Mr. Morgan, and the motion passed upon unanimous voice vote of the Board.

B. State Budget Information Update by Philip Price, Chief Financial Officer for the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction

Chairperson Davis called upon Dr. Gorman to introduce the report. Dr. Gorman introduced Philip Price, Chief Financial Officer for the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, and Sheila Shirley, Chief Financial Officer, to present the information. Dr. Gorman said the budget process takes times and has many points along the way. Dr. Gorman said we are pleased to welcome Philip Price to provide information regarding the State budget outlook. Mr. Price said we are just beginning the process to determine the budget for next year and he will provide an overview of the Governor's budget. Mr. Price provided an overview of the State Budget Deficit; the Four Types of Adjustments in Governor's Budget; Future Budget Information, and Other Legislation.

- Budget Deficit: The proposed budget has changed from \$3.7 billion to \$2.4 billion because additional revenues have been realized, the student enrollment growth rate declined (growth is usually 20,000 students but this year it is projected at 5,300 in total for the State) which saved approximately \$300 million, and the Governor identified approximately \$400 million in reversions.
 - Governor's Proposed Budget includes four types of adjustments: The proposed budget reduces funding to public schools 8.57% in four types of adjustments: Cost Transfers to Local Governments, Continuation Adjustments, Recommended Adjustments, and ADM Adjustments (discretionary reduction).
 1. Cost Transfers to Local Governments:
 - Tort Claims: \$4.6 million.
 - Workers' Compensation: \$34.7 million (Mecklenburg County currently has \$6.2 million in outstanding claims that would need to be settled or transferred over).
 - School bus replacement: \$56.9 million.

2. Continuation Adjustments: Normally built based upon revised data for student population and local costs. The ADM for these items were held stagnant.

Categories	Funding Not Included
Transportation	(\$10,562,350)
School Building Administration	(\$2,030,916)
Non-instructional Support	(\$1,424,27)
Instructional Support	(\$1,204,375)
Testing	(\$192,825)
Central Office	(\$120,000)

3. Recommended adjustments: The Governor worked diligently to ensure no additional cuts would be taken from teachers or teacher assistants. The budget focuses on non-classroom type activities. The budget eliminates school technology replacement and staff professional development funding but includes incentives to generate more revenue. In addition, the budget includes an incentive for early retirement (\$10,000 incentive if eligible for retirement and \$20,000 if not eligible for retirement). The details for how the early retirement incentive will be implemented have not determined but the savings would be substantial and is estimated at \$30 million the first year and \$77 million the second year when it is implemented.

4. ADM Adjustment (discretionary reduction):

- The State had \$304.8 million recurring discretionary reductions and they are still in place. The ADA Adjustment provides the funding formula needed for teachers but LEAs are expected to give back funding or return positions (discretionary reduction).
- Last year, CMS returned \$28 million.

- Other Legislation:

- Charter school legislation is currently passing through the general assembly but it has not passed. The proposed legislation includes requirements that could be problematic for LEAs and charter schools. The proposed legislation takes off the 10% growth requirement for charter schools. Charter schools are allowed to grow by 10% and during that growth cycle the funding is provided by the continuation budget. Charter schools are required to get permission from the State Board for any growth above 10% and if they are approved that money will be provided by the local LEAs. These growth funds would not be built into the continuation budget and that will directly impact the local school district. In addition, this could also impact the local LEA's Child Nutrition funding.

Board members were invited to ask questions and make comments.

- Ms. Lennon discussed concerns regarding the complexity of the current State process for funding school districts. She said it would be beneficial for the legislators to provide LEAs a lump sum of money and allow the school districts to determine how the funds will be spent. She expressed concern about the State requirements for the school calendar and she hopes legislation to change those guidelines is under consideration. Mr. Price said the various funding formulas to different categories are the nature of the legislature to ensure funding goes into those categories at the school district level. The legislators have the ability to simplify or consolidate funding and

that is considered each year. Some of the advantages to the state of North Carolina are the guaranteed salary for teachers and salary schedule across all school systems. The calendar bill is being discussed this year but no decisions have been made.

- Mr. Merchant asked regarding the budget flexibility how much do you anticipate LEAs will have this year compared to last year? Mr. Price said last year's legislation allowed the State Board of Education to establish a broader level of flexibility to enable school districts to deal with the budget crises that we were facing. It was more open except for certain items that the legislature did not want left opened such as moving money into Central Office. For example, a discretionary reduction for a furlough process was allowed but that type of flexibility would need to be reinstated by the General Assembly this year. Mr. Price said at this point, the comments are positive for maintaining or enhancing the flexibility that school districts have related to the financial waivers. Mr. Merchant asked is there an advocacy or strategy that LEAs should be using to stress the importance of continuing that type of flexibility? Mr. Price encouraged the Board to continue to communicate the importance of the need for flexibility to the legislators. Mr. Price said he is not a fan of the discretionary reduction or the ADM adjustment. He prefers having elected officials make decisions based upon the established formulas but he likes the idea of the total flexibility of the funding once it is received by a school district to allow them the ability to personalize the State funding to meet their specific needs.
- Mr. McElrath said people were happy that the Governor did not want to cut teachers or teacher assistants and he expressed concern that those positions could be cut locally. Mr. Price said the proposed budget did not specifically address the allotment categories for teachers and teacher assistants but as outlined in the discretionary reductions for school districts those positions will need to be returned. In addition, this will be impacted at the local and federal levels as well as the funding from the Recovery Act because last year some school districts used that funding for personnel to cope with the loss of funding. That money is disappearing and will not be a part of this budget discussion which could lead to the elimination of additional positions. Mr. Price said there will be tough decisions made at the local level that will lead to the reductions of teachers and teacher assistants. Mr. McElrath asked what is the potential number of charter schools? Mr. Price said it would be difficult to estimate the number because the proposed legislation removes the cap without restrictions and eliminates the minimum size of a charter which is currently established at sixty-five students.
- Dr. Waddell said she has kept abreast of the proposed State budget changes and believes the early retirement could be a blessing and curse. She said many people have retired early and now find they do not have enough money to exist and have had to return to work to survive. She said there is not much for the older, experienced teacher and she is concerned that they are being pushed out. She believes it could save money and be beneficial to lower the retirement to less than thirty years. Dr. Gorman said the early retirement would be an option for someone to take and no one would be forced to take early retirement. Mr. Price said this option is not just for teachers but all employees, the details of the incentive are still being reviewed, and the State is seeking clarity on the recommendation.
- Ms. McGarry asked why has the State not encouraged LEAs to outsource transportation? Mr. Price said there have been studies and most of the studies have indicated that it is not necessarily cost effective to outsource transportation for the

whole State because there may not be providers in certain counties. Those discussions also included availability, cost, and consistency and this matter continues to be reviewed. Ms. McGarry said based upon her research she believes CMS could save millions of dollars and she encouraged the privatization of transportation. Ms. McGarry expressed concern regarding the inequity of the State funding formula because larger school districts have different types of needs than smaller districts and she believes the formulas should be redefined. Mr. Price said large school district organizations have discussed the potential for a large school district funding category and the financial flexibility of that concept is appealing. Ms. McGarry discussed concerns about State longevity bonus. She believes the State should replace the longevity bonus with a form of performance bonus and it would be more beneficial to use those dollars for other purposes. Ms. McGarry supports raising the cap for charter schools because they provide a service, give parents more choices or another option, and in the concept of free enterprise encourage competition because they are public schools. Mr. Price said the State Board of Education has recommended that the cap be raised with a stagger based upon the percent of charters that were classified as being very effective but the General Assembly was not receptive. The closing of a charter that is not being effective can be challenging and may require court proceedings. There are some who believe the growth of charter schools should be controlled to ensure the quality of charter schools. Mr. Price said the charter school process has improved and we hope it will continue to improve to ensure charter schools add value.

- Mr. Tate asked are the cost transfers directed to the local county or the LEA? Mr. Price said the details have not been determined but the idea is to have them transferred to the local governments. Mr. Tate said CMS is considering significant budget reductions to the Bright Beginnings Program and he asked what is the State budget status for the More at Four Program? Mr. Price said the Governor's budget proposed a reduction of 5% to the State funding and that includes taking federal funding that can be used for preschool and moving it into the appropriation. Mr. Tate asked if the charter school cap is raised when will those schools be scheduled to open? Mr. Price said this will need clarity but once a charter school is approved they have one year for planning to ensure everything is in place to operate. The one charter school that was approved this year is scheduled to begin operation next year.
- Mr. Morgan said originally CMS was charged with planning for budget reductions at 5, 10, and 15 percent and he asked has that number now been set by the Governor at 8.57%? Mr. Price said the Governor did not include recurring discretionary reduction as a part of the process and she set the tone in her proposed budget at 4%. The budget process takes time and it is anticipated that additional reductions will be needed in the upcoming budget cycle at the house level. The Governor did include the continuation of some of the temporary taxes and that enabled her to maintain a certain level of funding but the final funding is yet to be determined. Mr. Morgan asked based upon an 8.57% cut what would that equate to statewide? Mr. Price said approximately \$800 million. Mr. Morgan expressed concern that this could equate to approximately \$80 million in State cuts for coupled with flat funding from the County which may raise the proposed \$100 million budget reduction request for CMS. Dr. Gorman said at this point any projections are early estimates but staff believes the proposed \$100 million in budget reductions for CMS is the best case scenario for a planning piece. Mr. Price said it is hard to estimate the level of reductions needed at this point because it is early

in the process but we expect significant reductions.

- Mr. White thanked Mr. Price for coming to the Board's meeting. He said it is good that the people in Mecklenburg County hear this information from the State level because they have been reluctant to believe the seriousness of the proposed budget reductions.
- Chairperson Davis asked how do the lottery funds factor into the budget analysis? Mr. Price said there have been questions about the budget adjustments that were included in the Governor's proposed budget related to the lottery but the office of budget management has indicated that any adjustments being discussed are not related to public schools. At this point, there are no changes to the lottery percents or amounts of money and it will be as it was this year. Chairperson Davis asked should our Board of County Commissioners expect to be able to use lottery funds to pay down debt service? Mr. Price said that was not changed in the Governor's budget but that is being discussed in the General Assembly. The Governor's budget redirects the corporate tax which is currently used for capital and it was permanently removed from public schools. Chairperson Davis said the two largest items that currently impact the CMS budget are ongoing obligations for retirement and health care costs. Chairperson Davis asked is there any work being done to reduce those ongoing State obligations for future years? Mr. Price said the proposed Governor's budget increased both the amount for retirement contribution and hospitalization. The retirement rate would increase to 11.62% and we anticipate an increase in the premium costs as well as a change in the benefits. Mr. Price said the employer or the school district is obligated to pay the matching cost for the retirement increase. Chairperson Davis expressed concern that we continue to take dollars out of educating children today to pay health care and retirement benefits for past educators or those who would retire in the future. At this point, the State is estimating approximately \$800 million in budget cuts and the CMS portion of that would be approximately \$80 million. It is important to note that the proposed \$100 million in budget reductions for CMS is based upon an expected \$63 million budget reductions from the State and that is less favorable than we anticipated. Chairperson Davis expressed concern that last year the proposed Governor's budget and the actual budget that passed included significant changes. Chairperson Davis thanked Mr. Price for his great working relationship with CMS and for sharing the information with the Board and the community.

II. CONSENT ITEMS

- A. Recommend approval of requests for release of students to other North Carolina school districts.

The Board will be asked to approve request to release students to other North Carolina School Districts. Loss of ADM: 43 students.

- B. Recommend approval to continue leasing 7,805 square feet of office space at 5001 Airport Center Parkway, Building M, Charlotte, North Carolina.

The CMS Transportation Department currently occupies this space. The previous lease was terminated January 31, 2011 based upon plans to move the department into the Education Center. Due to circumstances surrounding the Education Center, this move was prohibitive; therefore, a new lease was negotiated. The negotiated lease obligation is \$7,400.00 less than the previous lease. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools will pay to landlord a total base rent, TICAM, and impositions of \$162,306.23. The term of the lease is February 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012.

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

Mr. Tate moved that the Board adopt Consent Items A. and B., seconded by Mr. Morgan, and the motion passed upon unanimous Board voice vote.

III. ACTION ITEMS

There were no Action Items on the agenda.

IV. REPORT/INFORMATION ITEMS

A. Report/Update on Teacher Effectiveness

Chairperson Davis called upon Dr. Gorman to introduce the report on Teacher Effectiveness. Dr. Gorman called upon Andy Baxter, Director of Human Capital Strategies; Robert Avossa, Chief Strategy and Accountability Officer; and Tom Tomberlin, Senior Human Capital Analyst, to provide an update on the Teacher Effectiveness initiative. Mr. Baxter said approximately one year ago the Board received a research study report from Harvard. That was a very detail report regarding the CMS teacher workforce, what is and is not making people effective, lessons learned from recruitment and retention, and how to recognize our most effective teachers. That report recognized the fact that our teachers are the number one factor that we can provide students to help them meet their educational goals and prepare them for a life after school. The difference in progress that our students make will be largely determined by their exposure to our most effective teachers. That is the single biggest gift that we can give our students. Mr. Baxter provided an overview of the following:

1. A Closer Look at Our Most Effective Teachers.
 2. Research Spotlight: The access that different types of our students have to our most effective teachers.
 3. Teacher Design Team Update: Teachers from the different Design Teams will share how to reach fuller definitions and measures of teacher effectiveness.
1. A Closer Look at Our Best Teachers: The one measure standing behind teacher effectiveness is the Value-Added Measure. It is a measure that is reviewing the types of impact that teachers have on their students' achievement and it is the type of achievement that can be measured by a standardized test. It is a small measure in and of itself but it is what we have at this point. Within one year there will be additional measures that will provide a fuller totality of what teachers are doing for their students. The Design Team members will recap the other types of measures being explored. The definition of the word "effective" will become richer as this work progresses.
- Characteristics of the CMS Top 25% Value-Added Teachers (all tested subjects, 2008-2010):

Attribute	Percentage of Teachers in	
	Tested Subjects (N = 17,597)	Top 25% Value-Added (N = 4,384)
Advanced Degrees	29%	31%
National Board	9%	11%
1 st Year	4%	3%
Career Status	31%	36%

Male	17%	16%
African-American	24%	24%
Hispanic	2%	2%

- The two columns are very similar and the top 25% of the CMS teachers are reflective of the teacher workforce as a whole.
 - Knowing who the most effective teachers are means that it cannot be determined by just reviewing the previous established proxies for teacher effectiveness and it is important to review what they are actually doing for their students.
 - Once that is determined it opens policy questions for CMS such as who gets access to our most effective teachers.
2. Research Spotlight: Access To Effective Teaching: Who gets access to our most effective teachers/least effective teachers? Are there any subgroups of students that over the last several years that have systematically gotten access to our most effective or least effective teachers? Everyone needs access to the highest performing teachers.
- Exposure to Top 25% Value-Added Teachers. Based upon a study from 2005 to 2009 the students who came in the most ahead of grade level were getting access to the most effective teachers at a rate that was significantly, statistically higher than the bottom quartile of performing students. In 2010 and 2011, the gaps narrowed and became statistically insignificant meaning the top students and the lowest performing students were no more or less likely to get access to the top 25% teachers. There was no longer a significant gap.
 - ✓ Questions for consideration: Is this the desired state in which there are no longer any statistical differences in access or should the lowest performing students have more access to the more highly effective teachers than the top performing students?
 - Exposure to Bottom 25% Value-Added Teachers. There will always be a distribution of teachers who are impacting some students more than others. Policy decisions cannot be made that state every student will have a top 25% teacher. The goal will be that in the future, the bottom 25% of five years ago will be as good as the average of today and that CMS will be making steady progress. In any given year, there will always be some teachers who are doing more for the students than others. Based upon a study from 2004 to 2011, there was no significant difference in exposure from the top and bottom performing students to the least effective teachers. The most significant difference occurred in 2006.
 - ✓ Question for consideration: Who should have the top 25% of teachers?
 - Exposure to Missing 25% Valued-Added Teachers: A third group of teachers would be the teachers in which their past performance has not been determined (novice teachers, teachers new to the district, or teachers teaching a subject for the first time). Based upon a study from 2004 to 2011, in most every year the bottom 25% students who were coming in the lowest performing were getting the teachers in which there is no past performance data at a rate higher than the rate of the top 25% students. What this means must be explored and it does not mean that those students were assigned a worst teacher or a better teacher. This must be explored to determine if there is a pattern and who is getting the teachers whose effectiveness have not been determined. This information is measuring both changes within a school and across schools.

Mr. Baxter called upon Tom Tomberlin to provide an overview of the work being completed to build better and fuller measures of teacher effectiveness. Mr. Tomberlin provided an overview of the progress of the Design Teams, the information being shared with the schools, and introduced members of the Design Teams to share information.

3. Teacher Design Team Update: Designing a Better System.

- Working together: The Design Teams have presented information to the faculty at 130 schools (73% of the schools). They will visit an additional 20 schools by April 1st and the remaining 28 schools by the end of the year.
 - A goal for the Center for Human Capital Strategies includes visiting all schools by the end of the year.
 - A guiding value of the work is to communicate the work clearly and transparently to all members of the CMS community, invite them to ask questions, and help them fully understand the work.
 - The Design Teams are also working with non-instructional groups for the pay for performance compensation system. This includes the executive staff, principal groups, and media specialists.
 - The majority of the work is focused on teachers and the multiple measures of teacher performance being established as part of a pay for performance system.
 - Design Teams: Four Design Teams have been established.
 - ✓ Professional Learning Communities (PLC).
 - ✓ Value-Added Model.
 - ✓ Hard to Staff Schools and Subjects.
 - ✓ New Options.
- Design Team Members: These teachers meet for approximately two hours each week and spend an additional two to three hours on research and homework. They receive no compensation or professional development credit for their work. They have approached their work with dedication, intelligence, and professionalism. The work they are performing is invaluable to advancing the profession of teaching. Mr. Tomberlin introduced the members of the Design Teams and they highlighted their group's work.
 - ✓ Professional Learning Communities: Cheryl Mandle, Tryon Hills Pre-K Center, Exception Children Pre-K Teacher.
 - ✓ Value Added Model: Danielle Gladden, Bain Elementary School, K-3 teacher. Kevin Strawn, East Mecklenburg High School, Algebra II Teacher.
 - ✓ Hard to Staff Schools and Subjects: Somali Davis, Bishop Spaugh Community Academy, 8th grade Math teacher.
 - ✓ New Options: Sue Varga-Ward, Quail Hollow Middle School, 6th Grade Math Teacher.

Mr. Baxter said this is a lot of information, a lot of information is currently being processed, and the information will grow as more teams are established and it is expanded to other employee groups. Dr. Gorman said a challenge with this initiative is that Andy Baxter and his group get asked certain questions but at this point some the answers are "We have not decided or We don't know yet" because the system is still being designed. Mr. Baxter said some of the questions cannot be answered until we have completed the design process and gotten feedback. The Design Teams are working on questions that we do not have answers to and the work they are doing will shape this plan. Until this process has been worked

through and the recommendations come forward, the answers to some questions will be “We don’t know yet.” We do know the questions we need to ask and the process for how they will be answered. It is important to accomplish this work because every child deserves a great teacher.

Board members were invited to ask questions and make comments.

- Ms. McGarry said the information presented referenced students who had effective teachers and she asked how was that defined? Mr. Baxter said the information for teacher effectiveness is being based only on one method and that is the value-added measure. That is not because we think it should be but because the value-added is the only measure we have regarding teacher effectiveness that differentiates among teachers. That will not be the case in the future because we are building more measures through this process. Ms. McGarry said the strategic staffing initiative is one of the best initiatives that CMS has done lately. She said she has been perplexed by that initiative because it allows the new principal to replace five ineffective teachers with effective teachers but those ineffective teachers are placed at other schools. Chairperson Davis noted that this is not a part of this report and Dr. Gorman said he would respond to that comment. Dr. Gorman said the teachers are not just moved to another school. Some of those individuals have been dismissed, some have been moved to another school but did not do well and were dismissed, and others were moved to another school and performed well in another environment.
- Mr. Merchant said at the Board meeting in December Mr. Baxter discussed comparing the top 25% to the bottom 25% and we discussed that a better measurement may involve the use of a bell curve. Mr. Merchant asked is a bell curve measurement still being considered? Mr. Baxter said we have not moved on that but it is still being considered. Mr. Merchant believes it would be beneficial to identify who is the top and who is not and measure that against the middle because that would raise the notion of average. Mr. Baxter provided clarification regarding the correlation of measurements. Mr. Merchant said some teachers are concerned about value-added but at this time this is the only measure we have and we are working to develop other measures. Mr. Merchant discussed the development of measures, the Design Teams, and he asked if this process would include incentives. Mr. Baxter provided clarification regarding the measures and the correlation of the development of measures tied to incentives. Mr. Merchant hopes this process will involve discussions with teachers on what is important to them because that will give them ownership. This process should be a holistic approach that includes what is important to teachers.
- Ms. Lennon thanked the teachers for their hard work and for participating in this initiative.
- Mr. McElrath encouraged the Design Teams to continue to review the initiatives by countries outside of the United States because they are focusing on efforts to make teaching a profession and the importance of making children globally competitive because all children can learn. He discussed the importance of putting the best teachers with the neediest students and allowing first year teachers time to develop their craft.
- Dr. Waddell said she would like to know the expected end result because the different teams have different goals and a lot of this work is a continuation of previous work

conducted by CMS. Mr. Baxter provided clarification that this initiative is working to spark the imagination of the Board and community and address equity, access, and distribution of teachers. The concept of the value-added component is a new metric. Dr. Waddell asked questions regarding the distribution of teachers and the top and bottom quartile of teachers. Dr. Gorman and Mr. Baxter provided clarification. Dr. Waddell said she visits the schools and has seen an improvement. She believes people know what is going on nationally, longitudinally, and that districts are facing challenges. She discussed concerns regarding teachers who teach subjects that are not measured.

- Mr. Tate asked regarding the data, do the top 25% of teachers remain the same or are they bouncing around? Mr. Baxter said the teachers could have different effects on different students and there could be some movement. Mr. Tate said in reality we want our top performing teachers in every classroom and if we want to close the gap we need to get more top performing teachers with low performing students. Dr. Gorman said this involves a teacher gap and student gap. Mr. Tate discussed the importance of getting high performing teachers with low performing students over a three year period. Mr. Tate asked clarifying questions regarding the Design Teams. Members of the Design Team provided clarification noting that the teachers were invited to attend a meeting, the teachers volunteered, there are approximately twenty people on the teams, and they meet on a regular basis.
- Mr. Morgan said he would contact Andy Baxter to have his questions answered. He cautioned everyone from advocating for the initiatives being used by Finland because only ten percent of their students are disadvantaged and without that statistic we are actually performing better.
- Mr. White thanked staff for their good work and essential work because if public education is going to survive this type of work must be done. We must create a new culture and a new breed because we know that every student can learn. Mr. White said the majority of teachers can be effective and that potential is there just as it is for each and every child can learn. We must move to increase effective teachers and improve student achievement but in order to reach that utopia we must find methods to reach the other 75% of the people who are not being effective because the only people who can lose are the students in the classrooms. Mr. White said he has just returned from traveling through five countries and we must be careful with the comparisons to other countries because he would not want to live in most of those other countries.
- Chairperson Davis said regarding access to effective teachers, the Board has the ability to assign teachers and that is one decision the Board owns. He discussed the importance for the teachers and the community to get involved in this initiative because that will make it a community value. Chairperson Davis asked the Design Team members questions and their responses included the following:
 1. Why did you volunteer? Wants to be a part of the growing project and contribute to the input.
 2. What gives you cause or concern? He was in the lower quartile and he wants to understand how he can do it better.
 3. What have you learned? Wants to contribute to what is happening to her. She is two years away from early retirement and wants to leave CMS at a better place than she found it and help to make teaching a more desirable profession.

Kaye McGarry left the meeting at 8:15 p.m. and returned at 8:22 p.m.

Dr. Gorman discussed the importance of this initiative on effective teaching and student achievement, the support of the Board, and communicating accurate information in the community.

B. Report on Exceptional Children Inclusive Practices

Chairperson Davis called upon Dr. Gorman to introduce the report on Exceptional Children Inclusive Practices. Dr. Gorman called upon Ann Clark, Chief Academic Officer; Dr. Jane Rhyne, Assistant Superintendent Exceptional Children Programs; and Val Morgan, Director Exception Children, to present the report. Dr. Jane Rhyne provided opening comments and called upon Val Morgan to present the report. Ms. Morgan provided the Board with an update on Exceptional Children Inclusive Practices.

- History: Ten-year journey that has been supported by three Superintendents and new School Board members. Dr. Gorman put the expansion of inclusive practices in the *Strategic Plan 2010* and embedded the program in the *Strategic Plan 2014* with a focus on the areas of effective teaching and leadership through professional development for instructional strategies and the area of teaching and learning through technology for both students and staff.
- Driving Governance: Federal guidelines govern the education of students with disabilities and the State and local statutes and procedures support the federal law.
 - Federal: The provisions of special education and related services for students with disabilities are governed by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEIA) and ensures that school districts serve students with disabilities to maximum extent possible with the general education population. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), previously known as the *No Child Left Behind Act*, mandates that all children in grades three through eight and 10th grade must be assessed on their annual progress in the general curriculum.
 - State: North Carolina General Statutes, Article 9 of Chapter 115C.
 - Local: Board of Education Policy IHBA, Special Education/Programs for Handicapped/Disabled/Exceptional Students.
- Budget: The Exceptional Children (EC) Department uses a combination of local, state, and federal funds to support inclusive practices. The annual budget is approximately \$200,000.00 and the major components of that expenditure cover Professional Development Contracts, Workshop Stipends, Substitutes, and Printing.
- Goal: Increase fidelity of inclusive practices implementation to raise achievement scores of students with disabilities.
- Results:
 - Current Trends: Narrowed the achievement gap between students with disabilities and nondisabled peers.
 - ✓ Narrowed the gap in End-of-Grade Math composite score by 4.3 percentage points for students in 3rd through 8th grade over the previous year's scores. There was a slight increase in the gap in End-of-Grade Reading composite score.
 - ✓ Narrowed the gap in End-of-Course English I by 7.2 percentage points, U.S.

History by 13.9 percentage points, Civics and Economics by 3.5 percentage points, Biology by 22.8 percentage points, and Algebra I by 9.6 percentage points for students with disabilities over the previous year's scores. In all areas students with disabilities are growing faster than general education students except in the area of End-of-Grade Reading in grades 3rd through 8th.

- Over a seven year period, reduced the number of self-contained classes needed by 51%. CMS has dropped 227 self-contained classes and the classes were closed because the services were no longer needed. The students' needs dictated the reduction of the classes.
- Over a five year period (2005-2009) more students with disabilities are being served in a regular setting. This indicates students are being served at the regular level of service and students with disabilities are with non-disabled peers at least 80% of the school day. There was a slight decrease last year and targeted support will be directed at schools to bring that percent back up in the future.
- Lessons Learned:
 - The inclusive practice journey is an evolutionary process that is aligned with all other initiatives of the District.
 - This is a collaborative effort between the Exceptional Children's Department and general education working together and must be supported by the Board of Education, Superintendent, principals, teachers, and parents.
 - Data analysis is essential in order to provide targeted support and monitor student achievement.
 - Professional Development must be ongoing, differentiated, and multi-faceted.
- 2010-2011 Focus: IP2.0 Inclusive Practices.
 - Major Initiatives:
 - ✓ Co-teaching: Targeted school support; Grades 3rd through 8th reading, English I, and Algebra I; and Strategic Professional Development.
 - ✓ Math Forward/Algebra I: Technology Resources, Professional Development, and Coaching Support.
- Next Steps:
 - Utilization of data-driven decisions. Student achievement data will be the driving force for providing support at targeted schools.
 - Professional Development for administrators, general education teachers, and special education teachers must continue with Central Office support with a focus on co-teaching because effective co-teaching benefits all students.
 - Focused monitoring on teacher effectiveness based upon student outcome and co-taught classes is important.

Ms. Morgan said the Exceptional Children's Department continues to make inclusive practices business as usual as we take inclusive practices to the next level.

Board members were invited to ask questions and make comments.

- Mr. Morgan asked did the reduction in self-contained classes result in a cost savings and where have those dollars been redistributed? Dr. Rhyne provided clarification that based upon the structure of the self-contained classes for inclusive practices (small teacher-pupil ratio) the department did not gain new dollars but shifted how the funds were used. For example, some special education teachers were shifted from self-

contained classrooms to resource or counselor positions to provide resource level services to lower the pupil-teacher ratio at the school level. Mr. Morgan said inclusive practice is staff focused and he asked as more students have been main-streamed has CMS reviewed how that has impacted the regular students and the school? Mr. Morgan discussed the benefits of initiatives that match regular students with EC students. Ms. Morgan said, yes, we have reviewed the effects of co-teaching on general education students and special education students who were in those co-taught classes and there were higher levels of achievement in Reading in 4th and 8th grade, in Math in 6th, 7th, and 8th grades, and in high school in Biology and U. S. History. This has been positive for both general education and exceptional students in various tested areas.

- Board members White, McGarry, and Tate thanked staff for a great report.
- Dr. Waddell asked questions regarding Individual Education Plans (IEP) for students, parental involvement, and as the achievement gap is narrowed are more students receiving diplomas instead of certificate. Ms. Morgan said students are required to have an IEP; we encourage parental involvement, parents are invited to participate, and some of this is handled via phone conferences to help ensure parental involvement; and information regarding diplomas versus certificates will be provided at a later time.
- Mr. McElrath asked are the general education students in the co-taught classroom encouraged to work with the special education students to help them learn. Ms. Morgan said in the co-taught classroom it is difficult to differentiate between the two groups of students but those students can be strategically paired in groups. Ann Clark, Chief Academic Officer, said the nature of inclusion is to include the students in the regular education classrooms and by being in those classrooms the students are in small groups and work in pairs. This would be a decision by the teachers in the classroom and on a classroom-by-classroom basis as well as the nature of the assignment but the overall intent is to have the students work together.
- Chairperson Davis thanked staff for the report and the good work they are doing.

Dr. Gorman said the success that CMS is experiencing in narrowing the gap is not happening in many districts throughout the country. The exceptional children in CMS are growing consistently and closing achievement gaps. This is one of the reasons that CMS moved out of district improvement. Dr. Gorman commended the great work being accomplished by our exceptional children teachers, the students, and leadership of that department.

C. Report on PreK-12 Literacy and Writing

Chairperson Davis called upon Dr. Gorman to introduce the report on PreK-12 Literacy and Writing. Dr. Gorman called Ann Clark, Chief Academic Officer, and Katy Dula, Director Literacy and Writing. Ms. Clark as a follow-up to the report on Inclusive Practices and the challenge in the Reading gap, this school year we will have an opportunity to see the potential impact of the K-3 Intensive Reading Program as those students advance to 3rd grade and experience End-of-Grade testing. An important step in *Strategic Plan 2010* was to put K-3 Intensive Reading in place to work with our students and that program has continued as we have moved into *Strategic Plan 2014*. Ms. Clark said we look forward to seeing the 3rd and 4th grade Reading results in the spring. Katy Dula provided an overview

of PreK-12 Literacy and Writing.

- **Literacy Overview:** In July 2007, the K-12 Literacy Department was formed to provide support to schools in all areas of literacy instruction which includes reading, writing, listening, speaking, viewing, and most recently digital media has been added.
- **Literacy Strategies:** A focus has been placed on literacy in current years because research has shown that the more students interact with content or the text that they are learning the better the comprehension and retention of the information that they are learning. Teachers can use literacy strategies within the classroom to engage students and determine whether the students are comprehending and what differentiation needs to happen.
- **Literacy Mission:** To provide K-12 teachers with effective instructional strategies for literacy that will enable every student to interact successfully with various texts and audiences as they become 21st Century readers, writers, speakers, listeners, and consumers of digital literacy.
- **CMS Trends:**
 - End-of-Grade Reading test scores in 3rd through 8th grade indicate consistent progress in reading proficiency.
 - Reading gap trends in 2009-2010 within subgroups (without retests) in 3rd through 8th grade showed progress when compared to the 2007-2008 school year. The progress is moving in the right direction.
 - English I gap trends within subgroups (without retests) are making progress.
 - Writing gap trends within Subgroups in 10th Grade (without retests) are making progress.
- **Research-Based Best Practices:** Methods utilized to ensure the continuation of the increase in reading proficiency and the closing of the gap.
 - Access to core reading instruction for all K-5 students.
 - Target and address reading difficulties early such as decoding, fluency, and vocabulary acquisition.
 - Align reading instruction to formative assessment.
 - Differentiate instruction based on student data.
 - Ensure writing across all content areas.
- **K-12 Literacy Plan:**
 - Aim for all students to be reading on grade level by end of 3rd grade.
 - Provide core reading instruction and additional time for intensive instruction in grades K-8.
 - Assess effectiveness of reading instruction.
 - Differentiate reading instruction as needed.
 - Provide inquiry and research in all content areas using higher level thinking skills.
 - Implement writing instructional plans, K-12.
 - Facilitate response to texts writing across all curricula, K-12.
 - Provide Professional Development.
- **Elementary Reading Initiatives:**
 - Core Reading Instruction.
 - K-3 Intensive Model.
 - Response to Instruction (RtI).
 - Dynamic Indicators for Basic Early Literacy Skills/Progress Monitoring

- (DIBELS).
 - 3-D Reading Diagnostic Assessment.
 - Acceleration: To ensure students who are at or above grade level are also receiving challenging instruction and their learning is being accelerated as well.
- Middle School Language Arts Initiatives:
 - Core Language Arts Differentiated Instruction.
 - Additional time for reading interventions based on student data to address the needs of those students who may be struggling.
 - Active reading strategies that will allow students to become self-monitors of their own comprehension.
 - Vocabulary acquisition and fluency.
- High School English Initiatives:
 - Core English I-IV Curriculum (includes Honors/Advanced Placement).
 - Foundations of English I.
 - Literacy I.
 - Fundamentals of Composition (10th grade integrated reading and writing course).
 - Literacy strategies.
 - Graduation Project.
- K-12 Writing Initiatives:
 - Writing instructional plans.
 - Writing in all content areas.
 - Writing to Learn Strategies (WTLs).
 - State writing system for 4th through 7th grade: Content-specific and On-demand.
 - Writing assessment in 10th grade.
- Partnerships:
 - The Aspen Institute (ULLN-Urban Literacy League Network).
 - Literacy Design collaborative (LDC) – Gates Foundation Grant.
 - Partnership with UNC-Charlotte (Writing Project and Reading Department).
 - Southwest Education Alliance.
- Growing Literacy Leaders:
 - Elementary Reading Cadre.
 - Literacy Facilitators for Grades K-5.
 - Reading Foundations Training.
 - Secondary Literacy Cadres.
 - Literacy Alliances.
 - Literacy Design Collaborative.
- Collaborating for Literacy: Zone Offices, Exceptional Children, Advanced Studies/Talent Development, English as a Second Language, After School Enrichment Program, Extended Day Services, Career and Technical Education, CMS Parent University, and Curriculum and Instruction (content areas/Professional Development).
- Common Core State Standards: Developed to ensure standards were common across the states and adopted by North Carolina in June 2010.
 - Aligned with college and career expectations.
 - Focused on coherent with grade-specific end-of-year expectations.
 - Include rigorous content and application of knowledge through higher-order thinking skills.
 - Emphasis on informational texts.

- Internationally benchmarked.
- Aligned with National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).
- Four Strands: Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening, and Language.
- Three Main Sections: K-5 (cross disciplinary); 6-12 English Language Arts; 6-12 Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical subjects.
- Three appendices: Contain important information on the research and evidence that supports the standards, provides examples of the complexity of the text that students will be expected to read, and student writing examples.

Ms. Dula said we strive to ensure that all students graduate as effective readers and writers with a love for both and understanding of the lifelong, precarious types of experiences and travels of the places that they can go through reading and writing.

Board members were invited to ask questions and make comments.

- Ms. McGarry said literacy is so important and she thanked staff for a thorough report and uplifting comments. She expressed concern why there are still some students who cannot read to the grade-level but they are promoted to the next grade. She discussed the importance of reading because that opens a whole new world. Ms. McGarry asked what are we doing to ensure students are not promoted and they are held back until they learn to read? Ms. Clark said that is an important question given the State Board of Education's decision around the gateways which is a process that will be reviewed by the Policy Committee once staff prepares a recommendation regarding the District's position given that grades 3, 5, and 8 as well as the five gateway courses for End-of Course test for high school have been eliminated. Staff will be presenting a recommendation to the Board before the next school year on the promotion policy and regulations based upon the State Board's decisions. In addition, there are proposals under review that will further eliminate the number of End-of-Course tests. This presents an opportunity for CMS and we should also review the K-3 Intensive Reading Program at the end of this year to see how that begins to impact our promotion and retention rates at the elementary level. Ms. Clark said another important area is response to instruction which will be a separate report to the Board in late April or early May. It is a requirement of the federal government that every district have a plan in place for what to do when a student does not learn. That will be a preventative approach to eliminate the idea of promoting a student who is not on grade-level. Ms. Clark said currently there are two gateways in elementary school, 3rd and 5th grade, and a provision for the maximum number of times that a student can be retained at each grade span. When a student has been retained twice in elementary school, they are moved forward with a plan for remediation and a personal education plan.
- Mr. Morgan said next year the elementary school day will be extended and he asked will that additional time in instructional day be used for those students who are struggling with reading? Ms. Clark said that will be nuanced at each elementary school but as noted in the report literacy is a part of all courses. Whether it is additional time in social studies or another course, literacy and writing will be a part of the entire instructional day. The initial feedback from principals regarding the extended day is the need for more attention to instruction in social studies and science but literacy will not be neglected as a part of that extended day.
- Dr. Waddell said the results show an improvement in student achievement and she

commended staff for the increased support to teachers. She expressed concern that based upon the budget shortfall the State may need to eliminate additional tests and it may be difficult to continue to narrow the gap. Dr. Waddell supports the concept of the Common Core State Standards to ensure that all states are using the same standards because that will allow students to transition more easily from state to state. Ms. Dula said North Carolina will begin assessments using the Common Core Standards in 2012-2013. Dr. Waddell said many students come from different cultures and nationalities and she hopes the Common Core Standards include modifications to adapt to the different cultures of the students.

- Mr. Tate said this will be the first year that students have gone through the K-3 Intensive Reading Program and he asked has there been interim assessments to see the results/progress of the program? Dr. Gorman said one of the challenges that we have is there are very few assessments for the lower level students but we are moving towards having more assessments. Based upon the assessments in DIBELS, we have seen positive trends. Mr. Tate asked does the K-3 reading program include a combination of drills and enrichment reading to encourage students? Ms. Dula said, yes, it includes a combination of direct instruction, small groups, and flexible groupings to meet the needs of the students.

Chairperson Davis thanked staff for a good report.

D. Report on Political Redistricting

Chairperson Davis said the report on Political Redistricting is a Board report but it does involve support from staff. This involves redistricting activities that the Board is required to undertake. Chairperson Davis said he has worked on this presentation in order to provide a frame for the Board discussion and he was assisted by Mike Raible Executive Director for Planning and Project Management, and George Battle, General Counsel. The purpose of this report is to introduce the topic, the issues on the table, the pending decisions, and the legal requirements the Board must meet. The Board will not make decisions tonight but will develop questions, the additional information needed, and the process to satisfy the Board's legal requirements for the redistricting activities. Chairperson Davis called upon Mike Raible to present the information.

Political redistricting occurs once every ten years. It involves a redistribution of the precincts that make up each of the Board of County Commissioners and Board of Education six districts to provide a more equitable distribution of registered voters among the district representatives. Mr. Raible outlined the proposed Board of Education timeline, parameters, and decision points of the process.

- Board of Education Timeline:
 - February 22, 2011 Regular Board meeting: Discussion parameters and decision points.
 - March 8, 2011 Regular Board meeting: Decisions regarding scope of work and pre-approach.
 - March 15, 2011 Board Work Session: Currently this is scheduled as a Budget Work Session but it could be used to discuss Political Redistricting.
 - March 22, 2011 Regular Board meeting: Board decisions regarding scope of work and approach.

- July: Recommendations formulated.
- July 1st through July 15th: Filings dates for At-Large Board of Education seats (three).
- September: Board adoption of new districts.
- Map of the six districts (including precincts) as they are currently configured: The Board could use the precincts as the building blocks for the redistricting.
- Why Redistricting is required?
 - Equal Protection Clause interpreted to require that districts be “substantially equal.”
 - 10% rule established by Courts to determine “substantially equal.”
 - ✓ Currently, CMS has an estimated population that is a 30% difference between Districts 1 and District 4. District 4 is the lowest estimated population and District 1 being the highest estimated population.
 - Census data delivered to local authorities by April 1st.
 - Districts to be redrawn by the next general election, 2012.
- Voting Rights Act establishes the legal requirements of redistricting.
 - Section II requiring race be taken into account **does apply** (*Thornburg v. Gingles*, 1986) in the redrawing of districts.
 - Section V requiring pre-clearance by the US Department of Justice **does not apply**.
 - Equal Protection Clause of United States Constitution cited by Courts as preventing race from being the predominant factor unless use of race narrowly tailored to achieve a compelling interest. (*Shaw v. Reno*, 1993; *Shaw v. Hunt*, 1996; *Miller v. Johnson*, 1995). For example, a majority-minority district would be a compelling interest.
- Board of Education Decisions Points:
 - Appointment and Composition of Working Group.
 - Board Composition/Number and Type of Districts.
 - Length of Term/Concurrence of Terms.
 - Co-terminus Districts for the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) and Board of Education (BOE). The two bodies would have the same districts.
 - Board of Education guidance regarding Districts: Incumbent Competition, Precincts, Minority-Majority Districts, Town Boundaries and District Inclusion of the towns, Partisan Considerations.
- Appointment and Composition of Working Group:
 - Option 1: Independent Commission:
 - Board appoints Commission.
 - Commission has complete autonomy.
 - Board considers Commission recommendation for up or down vote.
 - Option 2: Advisory Committee:
 - Board appoints Advisory Committee.
 - Board provides policy guidance to Committee.
 - Board considers several alternatives recommended by the Committee.
 - Option 3: Committee of the Whole to determine the districts.
 - Board in its entirety handles redistricting itself.
 - Option 4: Sub-committee of the Board
 - Board appoints members as representatives.
 - Board provides policy guidance to sub-committee.
 - Board considers several alternatives recommended by the sub-committee.

- Appointment and Composition of Working Group Questions: Composition and Size?
How are members selected?
 - Independent Commission:
 - Advisory Committee:
 - Committee of the Whole.
 - Sub-committee of the Board:
- Board Composition / Number and Type of Districts:
 - Option 1: Seek change to composition via referendum or legislation.
 - District Seats:
 - ✓ Number?
 - ✓ How Elected?
 - ✓ Primaries?
 - At-Large Seats:
 - ✓ Number?
 - ✓ How Elected?
 - ✓ Primaries?
 - Option 2: No change to composition; proceed with redrawing districts based upon six districts and three at-large seats.
- Length of Term / Concurrence:
 - Option 1: Seek change to length of term or concurrence via referendum or legislation.
 - District Seats:
 - ✓ Term length?
 - ✓ Concurrence?
 - At-Large Seats:
 - ✓ Term length?
 - ✓ Concurrence?
 - Option 2: No change. Current four-year term for all seats. Elections alternating on odd years with at-large in 2011.
- Co-Terminus Districts:
 - Option 1: Work with BOCC to draw co-terminus districts.
 - Option 2: Draw districts independent of BOCC.
- Board of Education Guidance:
 - Redrawing Districts.
 - Dependent Issues: Partisan issues and number of registered republicans or democrats. This may not matter to the BOE but if the Board should pursue Co-terminus districts with the BOCC this will be a factor.
 - Independent Issues: How many school economically disadvantage students are in a district or how many school age students are in a district. These may be factors that are important to the BOE but not to the BOCC.
 - Incumbent Competition:
 - Option 1: Do not put multiple incumbents in the same district.
 - Option 2: Specifically put multiple incumbents in the same district and specify those incumbents.
 - Option 3: Ignore incumbency when drawing districts.
 - Precincts:
 - Option 1: Do not divide precincts in drawing districts.

- Option 2: Divide precincts to achieve other goals.
- Minority-Majority Districts: Currently have two districts.
 - Option 1: Draw two districts that would be “minority-majority.”
 - Option 2: Draw two districts that while not “minority-majority” would likely give minority voters the opportunity to elect a commissioner of their choosing.
 - Option 3: Do not use race as a predominant factor when drawing districts while still complying with Section II of the Voting Rights Act.
- Municipal Boundaries:
 - Option 1: Except for Charlotte, no municipality will be split between multiple districts. (One district to contain northern towns and one district to contain southern towns.)
 - Option 2: When possible, municipalities should be split between multiple districts.
 - Option 3: Do not consider municipal boundaries.
- Partisan Considerations:
 - Option 1: To the extent possible, draw districts that will likely elect a member from a certain party. Specify how many districts for each party.
 - Option 2: To the extent possible, draw districts that will likely be competitive. Specify how many should be “competitive” and how many should be “safe.”
 - Option 3: Ignore partisan considerations.

Chairperson Davis said this summarizes the work the Board is facing and the questions the Board will need to consider. The Board will discuss Political Redistricting at the March 8th Board meeting and the Board will consider holding a Work Session on March 15th. Chairperson Davis invited Board members to ask questions regarding information they need in order to make these decisions.

Board members provided the following clarification.

- Ms. McGarry said the Citizens’ Task Force recommendations included the Board of Education should have a seven member board. She reviewed national research regarding boards and discussed the benefits of having a seven member board. Ms. McGarry would prefer a seven member board, in seven districts, and each run in the general election as an at-large member. She believes that would be an advantage for taxing authority because the whole county would be taxed.
- Dr. Waddell reviewed research from a Citizen’s Guide to redistricting. She said a concern is about diversity because district lines make it more likely that certain interests would be represented and others ignored. Many forms of diversity are relevant in deciding who draw the lines including geographic, ethnic, racial, and partisan diversity. Dr. Waddell would not support a seven member board because that would eliminate two members and lessen the diversity of the board. She believes timing is important because redistricting process is time sensitive and most of the states will not receive the Census data until April. Dr. Waddell would support keeping the configuration of the Board the same. Dr. Waddell believes the decisions must be equitable, the Board should vote on the decisions as a body, and the Board should establish a priority order for the process of redistricting.
- Ms. Lennon said she lived here when it was one giant district and there were no at-

large members elected who lived north of Charlotte. She would not support an all at-large member election because previously they all lived in one section of Charlotte and it was not representative of our community. Ms. Lennon said this Board is a great body that works well together and we should steer our own ship regarding redistricting. She would be glad to work with the BOCC but the districts of the two bodies do not need to match because the City and County districts do not match. She encouraged the Board to make these decisions by June in order to adequately inform the community and the potential candidates running in the upcoming election. She would not support splitting District 1 because the towns are inter-related and she would recommend keeping the northern towns intact in one district. She supports the current nine member composition with six districts and three at-large members as well as the staggered elections. This process should focus on redrawing the districts.

- Mr. White said he lived this before and we will have great intentions but the name of this process is “political redistricting” and the final solutions will be politically motivated. He does not believe it is necessary for all members to be elected at-large to have taxing authority because the City has district members and they levy taxes. Mr. White said it is logical for the BOE to work with the BOCC to determine co-terminus districts because it would be confusing to have another set of districts. This is a similar process to determining logical attendance lines for schools. Mr. White said he has little concern regarding incumbent competition; wants to keep precincts whole; believes it would be difficult to not guarantee some minority representation; and supports the proposed timeline. He would prefer to not divide the northern towns but there is tremendous growth in that area and it may be the end result. This will include partisan considerations and that is why districts are gerrymandered rather than drawn logically.
- Mr. Tate said incumbency is not a necessary consideration; lines should be drawn that make the most sense; precincts should be used as the building blocks; race should be taken into consideration; and we must ensure we maintain a diverse board and perhaps even more diverse. He would support keeping the town boundaries together but the Board must consider the entire District. Having totally different districts from the BOCC could cause some problems. It would be great if every School Board district included examples of all the schools and students in the District. This would eliminate mostly all Focus schools being in one district and Board members could be responsible for representing everybody. The Board of Education has a working relationship with the BOCC and it would make sense and be helpful to have co-terminus districts. Mr. Tate said this is a “political” redistricting situation and he does not really care about partisan considerations but if we are going to work with the BOCC we must consider partisan considerations. Mr. Tate said the first election was 1995 and the districts were redrawn in 2001. At that time, the BOE and BOCC employed consultants that did their work and presented recommendations. He believes it would be beneficial to use people who know the political landscape and demography of the County, City, and towns. Mr. Tate would support appointing a separate group to conduct this work because that would lessen some of the partisan consideration from the elected officials. He believes it would be helpful to complete this work early so that those who want to run as at-large members in July will know how the districts will be divided.
- Mr. Morgan agreed with the comments of Mr. White with the exception of co-

terminus. The current districts for the BOCC and City Council do not line up and they do not line up with town districts, which do not line up with senate districts, which do not line up with house districts, which do not line up with congressional districts. He said the majority of the conversations the Board has with the BOCC go beyond what goes on in the district. He is not opposed to partnering with the BOCC but he wants to ensure the BOE receives same information as the BOCC. He would prefer to function as a Committee of the Whole and he is not opposed to appointing a group. This is a political process that will include politics but this is a responsibility of the Board of Education that comes around every ten years.

- Mr. Merchant does not want to work as a Committee of the Whole because the last time the Board worked in that format it required eleven drafts and was time consuming. He believes the Board should focus on its real purpose because redistricting is the least important item of the Board's current responsibilities. This is the most self-serving process that any politician will undertake. Mr. Merchant appreciates the concept of working with the BOCC but believes their process is flawed and it is prescriptive to appoint a committee of proxies to an advisory committee because their purpose will be to protect the self-interest of the person who appointed them. He would prefer the BOE not follow that same process and expressed concern that working with the BOCC would result in a committee of eighteen people. In the past, large committees have not accomplished anything in Charlotte. He does not believe the BOCC is serious about partnering with the BOE because they have begun their process without contacting CMS. Mr. Merchant encouraged the Board to ask planning staff to develop recommendations based upon the forecasting and demographic tools they have available because that will serve as an egoless consultant. Following that process, the Board can then apply the political process as we do when we draw school boundaries or make decisions. This way we are thinking about the families that we serve before we are thinking about how we can get reelected. Mr. Merchant encouraged the Board to not devote too much time on this process and to focus on what we want to accomplish. He suggested the Board follow a divergent path and then compare the results with the BOCC's results.
- Mr. McElrath expressed concern that the BOCC may have gone too far in their process for the BOE to join them because they have already appointed a committee and given the committee directions. He does not want to commit to working with the BOCC because he is concerned that their directions to the committee may not agree with the BOE's directions. He would only work with the BOCC if the BOE is on equal footing and agree upon the directions to the committee.
- Chairperson Davis said the BOCC has already made decisions on these proposed items. He would like to know the rationale behind the BOCC's decisions because that would help him determine whether he agrees with those decisions. Chairperson Davis is concerned about the advisory committee approach because he would rather make the recommendations than have someone stand in his place. He would prefer a consultant approach or a format of the Committee of the Whole.
- Mr. White said his comments referenced that he would support working with the BOCC as equal partners. He would support using consultants because that would take politics out of the recommendation but he expressed concern about the cost for a consultant. He suggested the BOCC planning group and the BOE planning group could work together to develop recommendations.

- Ms. McGarry said she would support the BOE working with the BOCC; even though the BOE is non-partisan, everything we do is partisan; should the BOE work with the BOCC she would want to appoint someone to their committee; and she does not want to hire a consultant because you hire a consultant to get the answer you want. She would support changing the length of term to two years versus four because that would give the public more opportunity to make changes. Incumbent competition should not be a prime consideration because this will be established for the next ten years. Town boundaries should not be divided but CMS is off the 10% guideline and we must take that into consideration. The Board should be more cognizant of towns and that has not been the case with student assignment. Ms. McGarry would like to work with the BOCC but she would want to appoint a person to their committee and communication would be very important.

Mr. Merchant left the Regular Board meeting at 10:20 p.m.

- Dr. Waddell said the Board should be very involved in this process because this is our task and we should take the leadership. The Board composition should remain the same; the length of terms should remain the same; and if we are going to equalize our districts we do not need to be co-terminus but minority representation should be included. She believes the districts should be more equalized regarding economically disadvantaged students and students of affluence. The Board should have a more minority representation than currently; should not put an incumbent against another incumbent; the minority-majority considerations should remain the same; and towns should not be split. We are a non-partisan board and we should be non-partisan. She supports the proposed calendar but she does not want a lot of meetings. She will be willing to work with the BOCC but the BOE should be responsible for this task.

Chairperson Davis encouraged all the Board members to talk with their BOCC partners to seek understanding of why they made the decisions they made because that will provide insight as to whether we want to be in alignment with their process.

- Mr. Morgan said he is opposed to having staff develop recommendations. Staff does a fabulous job of developing student assignment boundaries but they are following policies that have been adopted by the Board and Board direction for developing maps. This process is the Board's responsibility and as an elected body we should not put staff into a political situation where they are placed into an environment for developing districts where Board members are elected.
- Ms. McGarry asked would this be the time to change the board's term limit to a two term limit? Chairperson Davis said, yes, that would be a part of the third bullet. Mr. Morgan said this could be an individual decision by each Board member.

Chairperson Davis said a first step for the Board would be to answer the questions and those answers would serve as guidance or direction to Board or an advisory committee. After the Board has answered those questions, a designated person or group will use the computer model to create districts and the Board will provide guidance to whatever group will develop the districts. Mr. Raible said the Census data will not be loaded until April and the figures that have been shared with the Board are estimated numbers. The computer model was built by the County GIS staff and shared by the County with CMS. They have given


CMS access to the computer model whether the BOE works with the BOCC or not. Dr. Gorman said the preliminary numbers will change when the Census data is received. Chairperson Davis said as a process the Board could consider is taking straw votes on the individual items at the March 8th meeting in order to reach a consensus to provide direction.

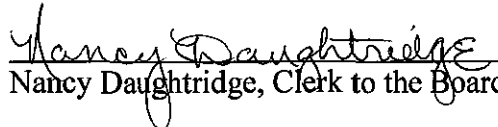
ADJOURNMENT

Chairperson Davis called for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Dr. Waddell moved that the Board adjourn the Regular Board meeting, and by consensus, the Board agreed to adjourn the meeting.

The Regular School Board Meeting adjourned at 10:35 p.m.


Eric C. Davis, Chairperson


Nancy Daughtride, Clerk to the Board