

MARYLAND SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Meeting Minutes
November 8, 2013
Frederick Campus

MEMBERS PRESENT: Benjamin Bahan, Ph.D.; Julie Bourne; Sheryl B. Cooper, Ph.D.; Laurie Corcoran; John Ertel, Ph.D.; Dennis Galvan, Ph.D.; Ernest Hairston, Ph.D.; Roslyn Hannibal-Booker; Sandy Harriman; Ricardo Hernandez, Ph.D.; David Martin; Angela McCaskill, Ph.D.; Khadijat Rashid, Ph.D.

SUPERINTENDENT: James E. Tucker

RECORDING SECRETARY: Jennifer Lake

INTERPRETERS: Myra Foley and Brenda Kelly Frey

At 9:08am President Martin called the meeting to order. President Martin stated there would be a change to the agenda. At 1:15pm representatives from Foulger-Pratt Development will be present to answer any questions about the possible sale of a portion of MSD land. Superintendent Tucker and President Martin will greet visitors here for the Open House during the morning break.

Board committees held their meetings.

President Martin gave a presentation on Mr. Uriah Shockley.

A **MOTION** was made to approve the Agenda with the addition of the Foulger-Pratt Development Company coming at 1:15pm – **SECONDED – PASSED**.

A discussion took place regarding the recording of who is in attendance at the Board meetings. The decision was made that it is not necessary to show that the Assistant Attorney General was not present. In the future, the minutes should show the names of all present but not show the names of anyone absent. President Martin will work with Ms. Lake. A **MOTION** was made to approve the September 2013 Minutes as corrected – **SECONDED - PASSED**.

President's Report: President Martin spoke briefly about the emails he sent out to the Board regarding the press and the articles appearing in the newspapers about MSD. President Martin reminded members of their obligation to file their Financial Disclosure Statements, renewal paperwork, and if needed a request for an attendance waiver. President Martin urged the members to check out the school's web-site as there is a new video called the Orioles News. The Foundation President will be contacted to invite her to present at the spring meeting here in Frederick regarding the Foundations role.

Vice President's Report: No report.

Secretary's Report: No report.

Treasurer's Report: Dr. Ertel stated on or about in January the Board receives a bill for the Board's share of the audit expenses. Dr. Ertel made a motion that when the audit bill comes in, the board should allow Ms. Lake or Mr. Tucker to get it paid. Motion will be held till New Business. President Martin shared with the Board that there was an article in the newspaper regarding the great job that the President of the Foundation, Ms. Marisa Shockley is doing with the endowment funds. Dr. Ertel explained that the Board's funds have not increased as dramatically as the Foundations because the Board does not conduct fundraisers. A discussion took place on fundraising. In the past the Board did conduct fundraisers but then the Foundation was formed and took over that responsibility. President Martin stated it was an individual decision whether or not board members made monetary contributions to any of the Foundation's fundraising campaigns.

Superintendent's Report: Superintendent Tucker stated MSD is going through a difficult experience with the trial under way. A discussion on the trial and the media coverage took place.

Superintendent Tucker shared that there is a developer who would like to purchase two tracts of MSD land to build a Montessori school on. Across the street will be mixed use development. Superintendent Tucker expressed concern that the current visual buffer of trees behind the athletic field would be removed and the lights could be distracting from East Street to the players and spectators.

Ms. Stacey Farone, Director of Student Achievement will give a presentation this afternoon on student achievement. In addition to the families that are here today for the Open House, there are also professionals here to learn more about the programs and services that MSD has to offer.

Two feasibility study groups have been established. One group is to establish if MSD should raise the credit graduation requirement standard. Currently MSD requires 21 credits to graduate, however other schools have increased the number of credits required for graduation and we need to consider if MSD should do the same. Some students at MSD are graduating early, in their junior year, because they meet the 21 credit requirement. Possible class requirements under consideration are a freshman orientation class, a deaf studies class, and another English class. The other group is to study if MSD should consolidate and have only one middle school which would be located at the Frederick campus. This would give middle school students more opportunities and the Family ED department at Columbia is booming so this would allow more room for that program to grow. Mr. Kevin Strachan is chairing the group studying raising the graduation requirements and Ms. Jennifer Yost Ortiz is chairing the group studying the consolidation of the middle school program. Parents from both campuses will be solicited to participate in both of the groups. Dr. Cooper expressed concern for middle school students who live close to the Columbia campus, their families may not want their children to be at Frederick. President Martin shared that those students will come to Frederick anyways for high school so it is just an earlier transition. Superintendent Tucker shared that most of the middle school students at Columbia are already dorm students.

Superintendent Tucker shared that there are currently two students enrolled in the new Pilot Program for students with Autism. MSD is moving ahead with the program and putting into place an interim Director of Enhance Services position. A search for a permanent director will take place later on.

The Board of Public Works has to review the Board's recommendation on the name for the new cafeteria at the Frederick Campus. Ms. Lake will follow up with the Board of Public Works.

Recognition by the Board: Ms. Lori Bonheyo, Director of Student Affairs introduced Ms. Nesly Bravin and explained that Ms. Bravin goes above and beyond not only with the dorm students but with the day students as well. Ms. Bravin gets awesome speakers to come in and speak to the students and the students participate in the workshops because they are engaging and interesting. Some of the programs that Ms. Bravin organizes are the Bullying program and Red Ribbon Week. For Red Ribbon Week, Ms. Bravin gets a wrecked car placed on campus and there is a demonstration by an emergency crew about how to get the people out of the wrecked car. Ms. Bravin is essential to the PBIS program here at school and at home and she is also a coach for the Special Olympics soccer team. Ms. Bravin provides new students with an orientation to MSD. Ms. Bonheyo thanked Ms. Bravin for doing much more than what she is supposed to do. Ms. Bravin thanked Ms. Bonheyo and the board stating she was both surprised and happy to get this recognition. Ms. Bravin shared that she does it for the students and that it wouldn't happen without the support of the student life counselors and Ms. Bonheyo. Ms. Bravin stated she is happy to know that her efforts are being recognized. President Martin presented Ms. Bravin with a certificate and shared that he serves on the Board's student life committee and he hears very good things about the student life program and is happy to congratulate Ms. Bravin on all of her hard work.

Ms. Bonheyo introduced Ms. Marjorie Sonnenstrahl. Ms. Sonnenstrahl is the middle school counselor, but before that, she has had many different roles at the school, however today we are recognizing her current role. Ms. Sonnenstrahl does not sit back and wait she goes above and beyond. Everything she has done just shines. Ms. Bonheyo encouraged the members to go down during their break and look at the walls in the middle school corridors. All of it is the result of Ms. Sonnenstrahl's efforts. The students want to participate because she has made it so colorful and so wonderful. Ms. Sonnenstrahl started the Character Counts program last year and the students love it. Ms. Sonnenstrahl started a bulletin board where students can put their thoughts about MSD on a post-it to share with others. She got the students involved with drug awareness week by asking them to wear a different red item for each day of drug awareness week. Ms. Sonnenstrahl has developed her own web-site. It is a web-site for parents and it has many wonderful resources for families on it. Ms. Sonnenstrahl stated that she loves kids and she really enjoys being with them. President Martin recognized Ms. Sonnenstrahl's work, creativity, and countless hours of dedication to the students at MSD.

Open Forum: MSD Student, Mr. Cary Ballard stated that he wanted to address the Board regarding bilingualism at MSD. Mr. Ballard shared with the Board that bilingualism is used in instruction but he would like to see it practiced more often through ASL classes and deaf studies programs here at MSD in order to increase the students bilingualism and biculturalism. Instead of classes being set up in rows Mr. Ballard expressed that he would like to see class's set-up best for deaf culture. Perhaps a professional could come in and help with the design. Dr. Rashid asked Mr. Ballard if all of the Student Body Government (SBG) agreed with what he shared with the Board today. Mr. Ballard responded yes to the question. Mr. Ballard shared that there should be an ASL class since students have to take an English class. Mr. Ballard believes that the middle school may have a deaf studies class, but high school does not. Ms. Bourne asked what is the history of what the SBG has done to achieve this goal. Mr. Ballard responded that he wanted to bring it to the Board. The Board recommended that the SBG do some more research on what is already offered at MSD and how they could grow those programs.

Mr. Josh Finkle introduced himself to the Board stating that he is the secretary of the PTCA. Mr. Finkle asked what the Board's plan is for the next 5-10 years; what is the Board's vision on how to bring new students to the school. Mr. Finkle stated that MSD has an age group of 18-21 year olds, which is the age of transition and at some other schools for the deaf, they have a private business model where they raise money to support many of the school programs. Mr. Finkle wondered if the same happens here. Mr. Finkle invited the Board to come to a PTCA meeting or send someone to represent the Board to the meeting or the PTCA could send a representative to the Board's meeting. Mr. Finkle would like to see the board members out in the community at a meet and greet event to allow people to meet them.

Dr. Bahan asked Mr. Finkle exactly what it is that he wants, so that Board knows how to respond to the issues he's raised. Mr. Finkle stated that parents want to see their students graduate with high academic qualifications because the amount of graduates not prepared to enter the work force is high. MSD is different in that, but what are MSD students doing in non-school hours to better prepare themselves. Could MSD add something for more student training in technology to make sure that they are ready for jobs after graduation. President Martin stated that MSD just went through an accreditation process where the Board's goals, Profile of a Graduate, the school's Mission Statement, etc. were developed and posted on the web. President Martin suggested that Mr. Finkle read through those items to see if there are more goals that the Board should add. Mr. Finkle stated that he is looking more for what's the Board's vision for the school. Mr. Finkle invited President Martin to speak at the PTCA meeting because of the need for more collaboration between the board and the PTCA and the school. The PTCA is meeting tomorrow night, please come if you can.

Presentation by Foulger-Pratt on two slots of MSD land: President Martin introduced Mr. Alexander San Andres and Mr. Brigg Bunker from Foulger-Pratt. Mr. Bunker explained that Foulger-Pratt has partnered with the Brick Works Company and their 65 acres on both sides of East Street and that some of that borders MSD property. The goal of Foulger-Pratt is to go into a community and build something that is long lasting, usable, and that Foulger-Pratt is proud of. Dr. Ertel stated that one of the concerns a number of people had was the noise and the light incursion into the MSD athletic field. What is the plan or idea as to how to reduce that incursion of light and noise. Foulger-Pratt would look into a dense planting program along the border and structures as well which will to a great degree manage those issues. There are a lot of constraints on vehicular access so that impacts greatly where things can go. At the earliest, construction could begin mid-way through 2016 but it could be as late as 2018.

Fiscal Matters/Facilities Management: Dr. Ertel suggested a possible motion be made to allow Mr. Tucker, Ms. Lake, the President or the Secretary to authorize payment of the Board's share of the audit bill when it comes through. **MOTION – SECONDED - DISCUSSION.** Amendment to motion to put a ceiling on the amount authorized to pay the audit fee, amount cannot exceed \$1000.00. If amount required to pay audit fee exceeds \$1,000 the matter must be brought back to the Board. **MOTION to approve amendment – SECONDED - PASSED.** **MOTION to approve main motion – SECONDED - APPROVED.**

Presentation on Student Achievement by Stacey Farone, Director of Student Achievement: Ms. Farone presented a PowerPoint presentation to the board. A copy of the presentation is located in the file. President Martin thanked Ms. Farone for all of her hard work and complimented her on a very visual presentation. The Board requested that Ms. Farone send them

a copy of her presentation. Ms. Farone will email it to President Martin and he will send it out to the Board.

Executive Committee: No report.

Education: Dr. Bahan stated that the committee talked about teacher preparation before they arrive to teach at the school. The committee also talked about other types of things that could be surveyed such as questions to the teachers asking them what is their understanding of what it means to be bilingual. If teachers don't understand what it means to be bilingual they should receive training. The next step is to assign these tasks to certain people. Maybe Ms. Farone can do the data collection and the Board can help develop the questions that Ms. Farone would send out.

Fiscal Matters/Facilities Management Committee Report: Report given earlier as Dr. Ertel had to leave.

Personnel Committee Report: Dr. Hernandez shared that one of the issues brought forward and still unresolved is appropriate job descriptions that needs to be entered into the state system. There isn't one for the Superintendent so we are in discussion with Ms. Currin on how to develop an appropriate job description. Once information has been collected the committee will put together a rough draft and then send it out to the Board for review. When the Board reviews the rough draft two things need to be considered at the same time, the role and responsibilities of the current Superintendent, but also if and when it becomes time to recruit a new superintendent what should that person be, what will that person do. The campus principals are really the day-to-day operations so think in terms of 3 years, 5 years, and 10 years for the Superintendents position. The Superintendent's evaluation should be put on hold while the committee develops the job description so that the evaluation can align with the job description. The committee has not established a clear set of goals either. Dr. Hernandez stated that the committee will work on this between now and the next board meeting. President Martin stated that he is in favor of letting Ms. Schwertman begin the process of writing up the specs and beginning the process so that a contract can be awarded to a consultant to perform an evaluation on the Superintendent. Ms. Bourne suggested the Board talk about and develop a time line for things to happen so that future board members know what to do.

Student Life Committee Report: The committee discussed the idea that possibly in the spring time there will be two nurses retiring so MSD will need help looking for nurses who sign. Dr. McCaskill made a **MOTION** to discuss rumors circulating out there about waiting list for students to be admitted to the Frederick campus - **DISCUSSION**. Ms. McCaskill reported that she received several emails from people saying that Frederick discriminates against students of color, especially black students. Dr. Rashid stated that during the break she mentioned it to a few people here and she was satisfied with the answers given to her. President Martin stated that after looking into the matter there is no waiting list and MSD does not discriminate against students of color. The recommendation was made to put more information on the school's website showcasing the school's diversity.

Trusteeship Committee Report: Ms. Corcoran asked Dr. Cooper to take over as Chair of the Trusteeship Committee and Ms. Corcoran will now only serve on the Personnel Committee. Dr. Cooper stated that board membership is pretty good, but the Board needs two more members.

Dr. Cooper and Ms. Bourne brain stormed some names and they will follow up and contact those individuals. Ms. Bourne is willing to assume the responsibility for flushing out and revising the Board binder. Ms. Zeolla emailed President Martin and asked to resign.

Old Business:

A. Climate Survey for Both Campuses

The Board will table this for now and President Martin and Dr. Hernandez will discuss it later.

B. Dates for Town Hall

Dr. Bahan suggested the Town Hall dates be scheduled with the PTCA so need to find out what their meeting dates are. Ms. Bourne suggested partnering with the Booster Club too. Ms. Bourne suggested it would be nice if the PTCA took care of child care. President Martin will not require everyone to attend but those who can come should.

C. Superintendent's Goals

Discussed earlier in the meeting.

D. Evaluation of the Superintendent

Discussed earlier in the meeting.

A **MOTION** was made to close Old Business – **SECONDED – PASSED.**

New Business:

Ms. Bourne made a **MOTION** that the Board refer concerns raised by the SBG about bilingual and bicultural opportunities at MSD to the education committee – **SECONDED - PASSED.**

A discussion took place on how the board should respond to the land developer. A **MOTION** was made having heard the presentation by Foulger-Pratt the Board refers it to the FM/FM committee and the MSD administration to continue the investigation and then get back to the board with a recommendation - **SECONDED – DISCUSSION - PASSED.** The Executive committee can discuss through email but the Board cannot vote through email.

A **MOTION** was made to close New Business – **SECONDED – PASSED.**

The Board evaluated itself upon the conclusion of the meeting and the scores ranged from 4 to 5. The strengths that the Board expressed regarding the meeting was the information learned through the presentations and discussions and overall the meeting was managed well.

The weaknesses that the Board expressed regarding the meeting were the fact that the Board lost Quorum due to members needing to leave early and there was not enough time at the end of the day for thorough discussion.

MOTION to adjourn – **SECONDED - PASSED.** Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully,

Roslyn Hannibal-Booker