

## MCMINN COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

Board Workshop  
Center for Educational Excellence  
March 18, 2019

The board met in a workshop on Monday, March 18, 2019 at 4:00 p.m. at the Center for Educational Excellence.

Board Members Present:

Quinten Howard  
Donna Casteel  
Denise Cunningham  
Mike Cochran  
Billy Manis  
Donna Cagle  
Mike Lowry  
Rob Shamblin

Absent:

Sharon Brown  
Tony Allman

AGENDA:

- 1) MCBOE Class Ranking Policy- John Burroughs, Secondary Supervisor
- 2) HVAC Updates- Jill Pierce
- 3) Feasibility Study Update
- 4) Technology Plan- Next phase
- 5) 2019/20 SY Budget

1) MCBOE Class Ranking Policy - John Burroughs, Secondary Supervisor

Mr. John Burroughs reviewed this policy with the board. Currently, he stated, our board policy sets a cap of the number of Quality Pride points a student can have due to non-discriminating with those students who cannot afford the costs associated with Dual Credit Courses.

Mr. Burroughs distributed State Board of Education policy 3.301. He referenced Section (3)- Locally approved grading system. He said this policy does not set a limit and is based on a la carte courses. Mr. Burroughs states this punishes a student who cannot afford to take the EPSO and Dual Credit courses. He states this policy will become effective with our 2019/20 freshman class. Mr. Burroughs proposes to amend our policy for the purpose of class rank to keep our cap for the selection of Salutatorian and Valedictorian and recommends allowing and encouraging the courses be taken to further their educational opportunities for competitiveness at the post-secondary level.

Mr. Burroughs said the cap was originally set at seven (7) as this was the total number of AP courses offered at the time of the policy. Ms. Casteel asked if the two high schools were offering the same number of AP/DE/EPSO courses which Mr. Burroughs indicated he felt with DE and AP, the two schools were pretty equal. Ms. Cagle asked why we were different on our AP courses between the two schools. Mr. Burroughs said we are working with providing additional opportunities for our teachers to be certified to offer these classes.

Ms. Cagle asked if there were funds available to help offset the costs for our students taking these exams and asked what other systems were doing to help students. Mr. Burroughs stated he has seen where other systems are offering assistance to offset the expenses incurred.

Mr. Shamblin asked what other systems are doing in regards to the selection of Valedictorians and Salutatorians. Mr. Burroughs stated several are looking at taking just the GPA of the student. Mr. Burroughs said several school systems are looking at the Latin status of Suma Cum Laude, Magna Cum Laude, and Cum Laude. He said though this may be more of a status symbol for our students with unintended consequences.

Mr. Burroughs said he felt as though we have an access or equity problem with the current SBE policy. He gave the example of an athlete taking weight training or a student taking band classes during their high school career, which prohibits them from taking other EPSO's (Early Post-Secondary Opportunities) He said he would like to consider looking at presenting a cap to prohibit those students who cannot afford the EPSO/post-secondary courses. Mr. Burroughs said he prefers the cap being at (7) which he feels is attainable.

Several board members shared their comments in regards to the communication of these requirements to our incoming freshmen.

Mr. Burroughs said we have to follow SBE policy 3.301. He said the new policy for EPSO courses changes how we give points to our students. Mr. Shamblin asked if he knew of other LEA's changing their policy which Mr. Burroughs said he did not. Mr. Burroughs proposed to keep our cap at (7) for the purpose of selecting our Valedictorians but to continue allowing and encouraging the accruing of points for the additional coursework to remain competitive with other schools and the students' post-secondary education.

Several board members questioned the process of AP course exams and our passing rate verses our Dual Enrollment courses. Mr. Burroughs stated the AP course exams are rigorous and set by the college board. Dual Enrollment courses are a partnership between local colleges to recognize the courses for college credit at the individual colleges. Mr. Burroughs said the AP Courses are nationally recognized and therefore, the curriculum and exams are more rigorous.

Ms. Cagle asked how other school systems are helping pay for these expenses for students. Mr. Burroughs said probably due to the individual county's tax rates.

Mr. Parkison asked for other questions for Mr. Burroughs. An additional discussion was had regarding block schedule verses our current seven period a day schedule. Mr. Parkison said he has currently tasked Mr. Burroughs and others to review the options of moving to the block schedule.

Mr. Burroughs said in a synopsis, in three years, we will be forced to address this policy if we do not go ahead and evaluate our class ranking policy to include a cap on these courses.

Ms. Cagle said she felt that offering the ROTC program would help with some of our discipline issues. Mr. Parkison said we can look at this and would be another study for another day.

2) HVAC Updates- Jill Pierce

Ms. Pierce reminded the board we approved the purchase of HVAC units at the last board meeting which will help us by not paying sales tax. She said this saved us approximately \$200,000. She said currently, Main Stream Architects are working on the installation bid for these units. Ms. Pierce distributed the following timeline regarding the HVAC projects:

1. We have ordered Trane Units
2. Need notice for the Paper 10 days prior to bid opening
3. On March the 22st we will issue the drawings and specs for public bid and release to the contractors Monday, March the 25th.
4. We would like to set the Pre-Bid meetings for all school starting at Calhoun @ 10:00 a.m. Englewood at 12:00 a.m. and Niota at 1:30, on Friday, March 29th, if possible.
5. We will notify the Board in the packet on April 4th or 5th that bid is opening on the 9th
6. We would like to set the bid opening for Thursday morning @ 10:00 a.m. for April the 9th if possible.
7. We will send to Board the recommendation on the 9th to be voted on the Board meeting on the 11th
8. We would then have the contracts prepared and ready for contractor and owner agreement, by the following Thursday April the 18th as well as the Notice to Proceed for the contractors.
9. This would give the contractors a month to get mobilized and all prep work out of the way for the unit delivers by May the 15th.
  - a. His manufacturing tracking at the moment for all units is projecting a May 8th – 15th delivery for our units.

She said we hope to have these installed and ready to go by the end of June. Ms. Pierce said in addition to this, we are looking at 24 barge units to be replaced at Calhoun School and she is working with our maintenance department on this bid as they will be installing these. Mr. Lowry asked the cost of these units which Mr. Pierce said should be around \$190,000. Mike Lowry asked if we are buying these straight out. Ms. Pierce said we would be.

Ms. Cagle asked if the county has hired a new engineer. Mr. Parkison said they have hired the same company as we have, Mr. Sam Moser with Mainstream Architects.

Several board members have asked if they will receive a copy of the bids and contracts, which Ms. Pierce said the board would. She said the company we are currently using is very thorough in their process.

Mr. Parkison stated he has spoken with Mr. Luallen and said we may have to run the additional units to be purchased for Calhoun and Niota through the 3/25/19 County Commission Meeting. Mr. Parkison said he is prepared to do this, if needed.

### 3) Feasibility Study Update

Mr. Parkison said we are about to install approximately \$1 million of HVAC units at several of our schools. He said we have discussed holding off the purchase of these units until after we receive the feasibility study but that we can repurpose these units elsewhere if we decide to go another direction.

Mr. Parkison said we have discussed not replacing some of these units right now, but the immediate need is present for all of these projects.

He said we are moving along with the study and will relay the information as we receive it. Mr. Parkison referenced the following timeline distributed by Ms. Jill Pierce:

- **1. MARCH 25 – APRIL 19<sup>TH</sup> SITE INFO GATHERING**
  - Site visit and evaluation of each school facility and site conditions by architects, civil, structural, mechanical, plumbing, fire protection, electrical engineers and food service consultant
    - McMinn County High School
    - McMinn County CTE
    - McMinn County Central High School
    - Mountain View School
    - Englewood Elementary School
    - Rogers Creek Elementary School
    - Riceville Elementary
    - Niota Elementary
    - E.K. Baker Elementary
    - Calhoun Elementary
  
- **2. APRIL 1<sup>ST</sup> – APRIL 19<sup>TH</sup> INTERVIEWING STAFF w/ VISITS**
  - Interviews with the Director of Schools, Director of Facilities Maintenance, school administrators and staff, etc.;
  
- **3. APRIL 8<sup>TH</sup> – APRIL 26<sup>TH</sup> PUBLIC INFO GATHERING**
  - Electronic user survey and data compilation;
  
- **4. APRIL 15<sup>TH</sup> – APRIL 19<sup>TH</sup> FORMATTING SCHOOL DATA AND COMMENTS**
  - School data compilation and evaluation, including current and historic enrollment;
  
- **5. APRIL 22<sup>ND</sup> – APRIL 26<sup>TH</sup> FORMATTING A/E DATA AND COMMENTS**
  - Engineering Reports including Mechanical/Electrical/Plumbing, Structural and Technology assessments (to be provided by **Client** based on information already obtained), as required;
  
- **6. APRIL 29<sup>TH</sup> – MAY 3<sup>RD</sup> GRADING OF EACH FACILITY BY NEEDS**
  - Preparation of priorities, potential solutions and recommended capital projects;
  
- **7. MAY 6<sup>TH</sup> – MAY 10<sup>TH</sup> OPINION OF PROBABLE COSTS**
  - Preparation of initial budgets and probable cost projections;
  
- **8. MAY 13<sup>TH</sup> – MAY 23<sup>RD</sup> DISCUSSION AND PRESENTATION**
  - Final Report compilation and presentation

Mr. Parkison said he has sat down with Jason Luallen to make certain the monies are available to do these projects. He said with the board not moving forward with the soccer complex, this has been a huge savings. Mr. Lowry said he feels as though we will have to move forward with the soccer project as he has been asked about this project and where we stand. Mr. Parkison said we can address this when presented to us.

#### 4) Technology Plan (Next Phase)

Jill Pierce gave the history of the Technology plan and where we are today. She said we have upgraded our Infrastructure using Erate money, started our Even Playing Field classrooms and Right time Teacher Classrooms with our technology plan. She said we have recently completed Phase 3 of the installation of all Even Playing Field Classrooms this school year and further shared that in March of this year, we provided 12 additional Right Time Teacher classroom grants.

Ms. Pierce said all of our teachers received a new laptop through the Even Playing Field classrooms. Ms. Pierce said in order to continue building our technology program, we need to look at the 1:1 concept. She distributed information regarding the 1:1 Technology Initiative for the period of 2019-2025. Ms. Pierce said we do have the “bring your own device policy” but this brings additional issues with use outside of the classroom. She said we have been laying our foundation to prepare for the 1:1 for our students.

Ms. Pierce said we have had city school kids in grades 6-8 who have had the 1:1 benefits and do not have this when they come to high school with us. She said we are currently running into space issues with desktop computer labs and going 1:1 would assist with this issue. Ms. Pierce said the biggest advantage with going with a 1:1 is with the required online testing schedules. She said this interrupts instructional time for several days during our testing window.

Ms. Pierce said she would like to propose starting a 1:1 with the 2019-2020 school year and begin with our high school students. She said we do have bids on the laptop example shown to the board. She said these would be for in classroom use only at this time.

Ms. Pierce said this is also a big deal for the technology department, but they hope to build a student-based tech team at each school to help with needs. In regards to the funding for this proposal, Ms. Pierce said she would propose using \$1 million of the undesignated fund balance and then put any rollover monies to maintain the restricted account until we create a line item for sustainability. She said she would like to ask the board that we set aside this money in a restricted account to have ready to purchase and ready to use this next school year.

#### Proposed Cost

Year 1- \$993,600. (grades 9-12)

Year 2- \$510,000. (grades 6-8)

Year 3- \$498,000. (grades 3-5)

Mr. Shamblin asked the number of these computers represented by the proposed cost. Ms. Pierce referenced the total number of our current student attendance. She said to begin with, we would be looking at approximately 2144 machines with carts.

Mr. Manis asked if we provide online classes does this not require the student to take home the computer. Ms. Pierce said not necessarily, as not all students have access to internet and for equity, we must provide students with internet service during the instructional day. She said we need to start with "in house" use and then look at other options. Ms. Cagle asked about looking at classrooms over the weekend and allowing students to attend. Ms. Pierce said that is definitely something to consider such as virtual learning classrooms.

Ms. Pierce then reviewed the schedule of rotation of machines over the course of five years due to the wear and usage projected on the machines based on current data.

Mr. Manis asked if these students would carry them from 1<sup>st</sup> period through the end of the day. Ms. Pierce said yes they would be. She said our goal is to bring this before the board in April. She said this gives the board time to think about this and ask any questions they might have before moving forward. Ms. Pierce said she personally feels this is right for our students.

Ms. Cagle asked if the students would have the opportunity to print from their computers. Ms. Pierce said the majority of files student used are saved to their cloud accounts and rarely use printing for their assignments.

Mr. Shamblin asked if this would prevent the current issue with students using their cell phones during the instructional day. Mr. Parkison said he had a principal evaluation today and the question came up regarding our current policy for K-8 students which he said we do not currently have. He said we need to create a policy for elementary students and review our current policy for our high school students and enforce it.

Mr. Cochran said if we do not allow our students to take the computers home, this will restrict the student if the teacher's assignments are computer based. Ms. Pierce said still have areas where students do not have internet service at home. She said we need to make certain we have access at schools for equity purposes. Mr. Cochran said the battery life is going to get less and less with continued usage and asked how we will charge them throughout the day. Ms. Pierce said the battery life of the laptop they are looking at is a minimum of a 6-hour day and are should last 4-5 years (longevity).

Ms. Cagle asked if students do need to print items will this be an option. Ms. Pierce said we will look at setting up print stations as needed.

Mr. Cochran said he does not see the need for 1:1 computers for students in grades 3-5 as they need to be focusing on reading and writing. Ms. Pierce said we have to begin teaching these students and how to use their research skills. She said students could still use a stylus and practice their writing skills on the laptop.

Mr. Cochran asked if there has been research on "screen time" as he is concerned on the effect on our students. Ms. Pierce said the computer would be used for access as needed and not to be a crutch for use all day.

Director Parkison asked for any further questions. He said it will ultimately be the board's decision on this and will keep the board apprised of where we are with our funding with budgeted items. He commended Jill on her work with this presentation.

5. 2018/19 SY Budget

Director Parkison said we are working on the list of personnel actions anticipated for next school year including retirements, additional degrees, along with insurance costs projected for the next budget year. He said we are awaiting the BEP projections to come in along with other budgeted items and would be compiling this information as we move forward in the budget process.

Mr. Parkison adjourned the workshop.

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Chairman's Signature

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Director's Signature