

REGULAR SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
Monroe-Gregg School District
Monrovia Elementary Cafeteria
August 13, 2007
6:30 p.m.

Present were Jack Elliott, Nancy Dorsett, James Shields, Greg Gore and Paul Kaiser.

Pledge of Allegiance

I. Call to Order

Mr. Jack Elliott, Board President, called the board meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

II. Curriculum, Building Updates, and Other Reports

Presentation of Board Member Plaque

Mr. Paul Kaiser, Superintendent, presented a plaque with the names of the current and former Board of School Trustees. This plaque will be on display in the Administration Center. The purpose of the plaque is to honor those people that have served on the Monroe-Gregg Board of School Trustee.

Building Reports

The first principal to speak was Mr. Duffy Hagist, Monrovia Senior High School Principal. He began by advising board and audience members that the School of Integrated teaching was in place, several high school students scored very high on their A.P. test scores; and the high school's Parent Night will be held on August 20th from 6:30 p.m. until 8:30 p.m.

II. Curriculum Building Updates, and Other Reports (continued)

Principals' Report (continued)

Mrs. Bobbie Jo Monahan, Middle School Principal, presented the next building report. Before the meeting began Mrs. Monahan distributed a copy of the middle school's student handbook agenda to each board member. She noted that the courtyard is in good shape and students will be able to use the courtyard for art and science. The middle school's Back-to-School night will be held on August 27th beginning at 6:30. Also, the middle school will begin a Parent/Teacher Organization this year.

Mr. Chris Sampson, Monrovia Elementary School Principal, began by thanking the elementary staff for all of their work and stated that he was very proud of his staff members. The elementary school has implemented positive behavior support procedures. This new program is designed to help students make the statements "*I am safe, I am respectful, and I am a learner.*" Also, there will be a Nutrition Club sponsored by Carol Dirlam, Food Services Director. The elementary school's Back-to-School evenings will be August 14th for kindergarten, August 21st for grades 2nd and 4th, and August 23rd for grades first, third, and fifth.

Curriculum Update

Hall Early Childhood Center

This agenda item was presented by Mr. Kaiser. He gave the board and audience members an update on the status of the Center. The Hall Elementary School building will house the Head Start Program and the pre-school. Currently, a dance studio is renting space for dance classes and the board previously approved renting space with room rates based on a square footage amount with a one year lease.

II. Curriculum, Building Updates, and Other Reports (continued)

Hall Early Childhood Center (continued)

Mr. Kaiser spoke of the closing of the local day care/pre-school agency and noted the need in the community for a day care facility for the children. This new pre-school will be the Hall Early Childhood Center and will open on September 4th. Until then the pre-school will continue to be housed in the elementary school.

A before and after school care program was provided by the Barbara B. Jordan YMCA during the 2006-07 school year. This program is now being provided by the Hall Early Childhood Center. Mr. Kaiser noted that the fee structure had been adjusted and that the YMCA employees had been hired by the Corporation to continue the before and after program for the Center.

Mr. Greg Gore, school trustee, stated that the board had directed Mr. Kaiser that the Center may continue as long as it is not subsidized by monies taken from the Corporation's schools. The directive also included that no tax dollars could be used for the Center. Mr. Kaiser replied that currently the Center was \$2,500 ahead.

Mr. Kaiser noted that the Center would be open during snow days and holidays and is tax-neutral to the Corporation. The capitol improvements, which have been made to the Hall building, will be re-paid.

Mrs. Nancy Dorsett, school trustee, reminded board and audience members that the Center is on a one-year trial basis.

Mrs. Tammy Denny, Hall Early Childhood Center Director, distributed copies of the fee statement. Parents have the option of the number of days their child attends and may choose pre-school only, before school only, after school only, and before and after. Also, parents with more than one child in the Center will receive a reduced fee.

II. Curriculum, Building Updates, and Other Reports (continued)
Hall Early Childhood Center (continued)

Also, parents may choose to have their child attend the before and after program at Monrovia or they may attend the Hall Center.

Mr. Kaiser noted that the Center will be hiring more people during the coming week and he will provide board members with a monthly update. He stated that "the Center is providing a strong need in the community."

III. Minutes

The motion was made by Mr. James Shields to approve the minutes of the July 12th Board meeting and the Executive Session of the same date. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Nancy Dorsett and carried 4-0.

IV. Claims

The motion was made by Mr. Greg Gore to approve claims #8436 through #8585 in the amount of \$1,534,868.62. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Nancy Dorsett, and carried 4-0.

V. Personnel

Mr. Kaiser advised the board that there was an addition to the Personnel Report. Due to the increased class size in the kindergarten classes, another teaching assistant had been hired.

The motion was made by Mr. James Shields to accept the employment recommendation as listed with the salary within the parameter of the approved salary schedule; and the addition of a teaching assistant. The motion was seconded by Mr. Greg Gore and carried 3-0 with 1 abstention.

VI. Public Comment on Agenda Items

The first audience member to speak was Mrs. Lorie Blythe. Mrs. Blythe has a child who participated in the YMCA Before and After school program during the 2000-07 school years.

Mrs. Blythe stated that the Corporation “took a program that wasn’t broken and tried to fix it” which resulted in increased cost for parents. She distributed to board members a report which compared the cost of the YMCA vs. the Hall Elementary Before/After school program. By comparing the number of days in each program, parents would pay an increased dollar amount of \$494 for this school year by utilizing the Hall Before/After school program.

The Board also received a copy of the mileage and time calculation for Hall vs. Monrovia from Mrs. Blythe. The report concluded that a parent would spend an additional sixty-seven hours driving to Hall for the after school program.

Mr. Kaiser assured Mrs. Blythe that the Corporation had no intention of moving the After School Program to the Hall Education Center. The after school program will remain at Monrovia Elementary for those parents who wish to pick their child up at Monrovia.

The next speaker was Mrs. Dora Brown who asked if the teaching assistants received the same salary as teachers? Mr. Kaiser replied that they did not. Mrs. Brown then asked about the liability insurance cost for opening the Hall Education Center. Mr. Kaiser replied that there were no additional cost to the Corporation. Mrs. Brown inquired about the salaries that would be paid to the Hall Education Center employees. She questioned if those employees’ salaries would be paid out of the income that is received from the Center? Mr. Kaiser replied, “yes.” He further explained that when the building sat empty it was costing the Corporation approximately \$20,000 to maintain. Her next question was “if the program does not work in one year will the entire program be gone or just part of the program?” Mr. Kaiser replied that he is confident the program will work.

VI. Public Comments on Agenda Items (continued)

Mr. Kaiser gave a brief synopsis of the various agencies involved with the Hall Early Childhood Center and what they are contributing to the Center. These agencies include, the Head Start Program, Mr. and Mrs. Parks and the Hall Civic Association.

Also, the utility cost will be shared with Head Start and part of the building is being rented to a dance studio which will also help defray the cost of utilities.

Mrs. Denny thanked Mr. and Mrs. Parks for their contributions to the Hall Early Childhood Center. Mr. and Mrs. Parks purchased the facility that housed the former day care and they donated playground and classroom equipment to Monrovia Elementary.

The next speaker was Mrs. Sonjia Graf. Mrs. Graf is a taxpayer from Gregg Township. She spoke in favor of using the Hall Elementary building. Mrs. Graf stated that she was, "pleased with what has been done at Hall and would hate to see that school not being used."

Mrs. Blythe asked about the grade school using trailers during this school year. Several board members assured Mrs. Blythe that portables were not new to the Corporation. Mr. Sampson invited Mrs. Blythe to visit the portables and he noted that the portables have fire alarms, phones and an intercom system. Mr. Sampson advised her that there were bathrooms within 200 feet which is within code.

Mr. James Shields, board member, spoke to Mrs. Blythe and audience members noting that when the elementary school building project was begun, the board through they were "ahead of the curve." There were feasibility studies conducted and the information the board received was that the building would be large enough for future growth.

Mrs. Dora Brown asked about the cost of sending buses to the Hall Early Childhood Center. Mr. Kaiser replied that there would be one bus versus the six or seven that

VI. Audience Input on Agenda Items (continued)

were sent there in past years. Also, any transportation cost will be taken from the pre-school program and not the Corporation.

A discussion followed regarding the Corporation's funding for 2008. The funding received, from the State, will be determined by the enrollment numbers on September 14th. The Corporation will not be receiving State money for any child that enrolls after September 14th.

VII. Committee and Community Reports

Mr. Kaiser advised board and audience members that there had been three community meetings this year, and the building principals are working on involving more parent volunteers.

The Corporation recently secured the property needed for the library and has sold the property to the Morgan County library. The ground breaking ceremony will be in in September. The project should take approximately eighteen months to complete.

Mr. Greg Gore complimented Mr. Kaiser on "getting the ball rolling" on securing a library in Monrovia. He stated that Mr. Kaiser saw an opportunity to purchase the property and then turn that property over to the Morgan County Library. He congratulated Mr. Kaiser on helping push the project forward and he noted that the library will benefit both students and the community.

Mr. Kaiser stated that the library "will enhance the community for many years to come."

VIII. Board Members and Superintendent Comments

Mr. Kaiser presented the following comments:

Budget

The budget proposal had been sent to the newspaper today. The open budget meeting will be held on August 30th and the Corporation will be notified in February of the final budget approval.

Hall Civic Association Contract

The Association will lease the building for \$1 per year and will make any improvements that are necessary. The Association will also take over the utility payments for the original building and assume liability.

School Improvement Goals

Mr. Kaiser suggested that these goals be adopted after the Board's retreat. He noted that teachers had been meeting to discuss some type of testing other than ISTEP which is not always an effective means of testing.

Purdue Literacy Network

The staff training is focused on staff members being on the "same page" with the same type of literacy strategies.

Mr. James Shields thanked audience members for giving their input. He noted that the discussion, during the meeting, was a good thing.

Mr. Jack Elliott invited audience members to also attend the Monrovia Town Council meetings and noted that audience members were able to receive a copy of the Council's agenda as well as phone numbers of public servants, if they so desire. He also thanked audience members for attending.

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XII. Adjournment

The motion was made by Mr. James Shields to adjourn, seconded by Mrs. Nancy Dorsett and carried 4-0. The meeting adjourned at 8:04 p.m.

Board President, Mr. Jack Elliott

Board Secretary, Mr. Scott Everett