

MINUTES

Monroe City School Board
2101 Roselawn Avenue
Monroe, Louisiana 71201

The Monroe City School Board met in regular session, Tuesday, December 16, 2008 at 6:00 p.m. at the Monroe City School Board Media Center, 2009 Auburn Avenue, Monroe, Louisiana 71201. The meeting was called to order by President Dayton. Prayer was offered by Rev. Larry Stafford. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited in unison.

Item 4: Roll Call

Board Members Present

Mrs. Victoria "Vickie" Dayton
Mrs. Victoria "Vickie" Krutzer
Mr. James Mickey Traweek
Mr. Jessie Handy
Bishop Rodney McFarland, Sr.
Mrs. Brenda Shelling

Board Member Absent

Mrs. Stephanie Smith

Superintendent and Administrative Staff

Dr. James Dupree
Mrs. Derenda Flowers
Dr. Tammye Turpin
Mr. Andrew Hill
Mrs. Betty Carroll
Mr. Bobby Williams
Ms. Mamie Williams
Mrs. Vickie Irwin
Attorney L. Douglas Lawrence

Action Item 5 – Consent Agenda

Dr. Dupree asked that agenda item 7:A (appointment of the public relations officer) be removed from the agenda and placed on the agenda in January.

Mr. Handy questioned the language in section VIII of the December 8th Board minutes. He stated that he objects to the statement that was read by Attorney Lawrence regarding the superintendent's contract. He further stated that the statement should be taken out because changes have been made to the contract.

Attorney Lawrence noted that the language Mr. Handy is referring to involves a statement he read during the special call meeting. He stated that the statement came directly from the superintendent's contract and the minutes reflect what was said.

It was moved by Bishop McFarland and seconded by Mrs. Krutzer, to delete agenda item 7:A and to approve the following consent agenda items:

- 5:A – Adoption of the Agenda
- 5:B – Adoption of the December 2, 2008 Board Minutes
- 5:C – Adoption of the December 8, 2008 Board Minutes
- 5:D – Awarding of the School Food Service Food Products bid
- 5:E – Human Resources Agenda

The motion carried on a majority vote.

Mr. Handy opposed the December 8th minutes.

Agenda Item 6 – President's Reports and Announcements

President Dayton welcomed everyone to the meeting. The public was informed on procedures for addressing the Board on agenda items. She asked that all cell phones be turned off. Board members were reminded to turn in their disclosure forms.

President Dayton announced that as of 5:30 p.m. today, the superintendent's contract was signed and fully executed.

President Dayton noted that at the last meeting Mrs. Krutzer asked that a correction be made to the December 2nd minutes. Research of those minutes revealed that no correction is needed, and the minutes are approved as printed.

Action Item 7 – Action from the Superintendent

Action Item 7:A – Deleted

Action Item 7:B – Presentation of Board Member Certificates

Dr. Dupree presented certificates to Mrs. Dayton, Mrs. Shelling, Mrs. Krutzer and Mr. Handy. These Board members attended a workshop on November 12, 2008 that was presented by the Louisiana School Boards Association. By completing this workshop, the attendees fulfilled the required four hours of training for 2009 as required by Act 380.

Agenda Item 7:C – Update/Information on Possible Budget Cuts

Dr. Dupree noted that the state of Louisiana announced that there will be an approximate \$341 million shortfall this year. The Department of Education will absorb the K-12 portion of the shortfall. Programs such as the National Board Certification stipends, Literacy and Numeracy, Career and Technical Education, High School Redesign, Credit Recovery, and Ninth Grade Initiatives will not be cut this year.

Ms. Vivian Wancewicz requested information about the state salary supplement for Speech Pathologists.

Dr. Dupree stated that the money will be distributed as soon as it is received.

Action Item 8:A – Approval of Parent Notification System

Dr. Turpin noted that two parent contact programs have been piloted and evaluated. These systems provide standard parent notification on absenteeism and emergencies. The system that is being recommended will work with the current phone system. This project will be funded through Title I as part of the parental outreach program.

Mrs. Krutzer asked if there was a reduction in absenteeism because of the program.

Dr. Turpin noted that absentees were not tracked; they only looked at ease of use. She also noted that positive feedback was received from parents.

Mrs. Krutzer asked if this system will flag bad phone numbers.

Dr. Turpin stated that it would.

Mrs. Shelling stated that this program should help with drop-outs.

On a motion by Mrs. Shelling that was seconded by Mr. Handy, the Board approved a contract with Reliance Communications, Inc. to provide School Messenger ASP Plus Parent Notification System.

The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Action Item 9:A – Adoption of portions of the LA Procurement Code

On a motion by Bishop McFarland that was seconded by Mrs. Shelling, the Board approved a resolution to adopt portions of the Louisiana Procurement Code that pertains to sole source under LA R.S. 39:1597 of Chapter 9 of Subpart 1, Part I Title 34.

Mrs. Krutzer asked if sole source items will come before the Board.

Mrs. Flower stated that the procedure will not change.

The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Action Item 9:B – Approval of the 2008 Compliance Questionnaire

On a motion by Mrs. Krutzer that was seconded by Mr. Handy, the Board adopted a resolution approving the systems and compliance questionnaire for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2008.

The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Agenda Item 9:C – Use of MFP Funding

Mrs. Flowers briefed the Board on MFP funding. She stated that in the spring of 2008 the state gave a simulation of the MFP amount for the 2008-2009 school year. The district received \$41.9 million which is an increase of \$3.7 million from the previous year. She also stated that projects and new initiatives were identified when the 2008-2009 budget was being structured. In previous years, the district was required to give half of any new MFP money to certified staff in the form of pay raises. There was no requirement this year because the district's salaries are above the southern regional average. She also noted that in the past MFP funds were given to certified staff not classified. Hand-outs were distributed to Board members detailing MFP expenditures.

Mrs. Dayton stated that the projects are excellent initiatives but the Board should have been brought in to make decisions as to how the money would be disbursed.

Mrs. Flowers stated that the Board did have input because all of the projects were clearly outlined when the budget was adopted.

Mrs. Dayton stated that because there were so many things going on at that particular time the Board did not realize the projects would be funded by MFP money.

Dr. Dupree noted that with this year's budget process, all projects and costs will be clearly identified.

Mrs. Shelling asked what will happen to money not spent according to the line item.

Mrs. Flowers replied that it will go into the fund balance.

Mrs. Shelling stated that it has been a practice of the Monroe City School Board to pay employees part of the MFP money. She then asked when that process stopped.

Mrs. Flowers replied that in the past the district was required to pay one-half of the new money; this year it was not required because the district's salaries are above the southern regional average.

Mrs. Shelling stated that she recalls putting a policy in place to address MFP. She asked Dr. Dupree to research the policies.

Dr. Dupree stated that there is no policy that deals with MFP distribution. He further stated that when the law required a distribution, the district always complied.

Mrs. Flowers stated that the fund balance has grown; once the audit is over, there is a possibility that a recommendation can be made to the Board for a distribution to our employees. She indicated that the onetime payout would come from the fund balance and not MFP.

Public Comments

Ms. Rachelle May stated that because of the economy, employees would benefit from the MFP money. She asked that the Board take action on distributing the funds.

Ms. Sandie Lollie addressed the Board on the distribution of the MFP money and wasteful spending in the district.

Agenda Item 10:A – Board Committee Update – Breard Street Property for Transportation

Mr. Traweek stated that there is a need to centralize central office because employees are spread throughout the district. He stated that at one time the Board discussed using Georgia Tucker for central office but it did not work out. Approximately two million dollars have been allocated for this project. He noted that because the site was used for agricultural purposes, an EPA soil analysis is needed.

Dr. Dupree asked Mr. Monroe to address the Board on the Breard Street Property.

Mr. Monroe stated that several locations have been looked at in the past. This particular piece of property is centrally located and is annexed as I-1 which is a light industrial zone. The property, located at 2810 Breard Street, is approximately nine acres with an existing facility that is 15,470 square feet. He noted that the transportation department needs at least five acres in order to have adequate space. He further noted that the district can not move forward with administrative offices until transportation is relocated.

Mr. Traweek stated that a cost analysis is needed to determine rather or not the existing building can be retrofitted or if a new building should be constructed.

Mrs. Krutzer stated that she is concerned about the existing building because school buses can not drive straight through; they would have to back up. She also stated that a cost analysis is needed.

Mr. Monroe stated that architects and engineers are looking at the building to determine feasibility.

Mrs. Shelling stated that she is concerned about environmental issues at this site. She also voiced her concerns on the price of the property. She stated that the property needs to be appraised.

Mr. Monroe noted that an appraisal is forthcoming. He stated that the property owner is willing to negotiate the price.

President Dayton stated that something does need to be done about central office, but because of this period of recession the district needs to be cautious when spending.

Public Comment

Ms. Maria Maggio addressed the Board on excessive spending. She stated that the Board needs to be frugal with the taxpayers' money because student enrollment is decreasing. She also stated that the district needs to put the children first.

Agenda Item 11 – Superintendent's Announcements and Updates

Dr. Dupree wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Action Item 12 – Recess/Adjournment

On a motion by Mrs. Shelling that was seconded by Bishop McFarland, the meeting adjourned at 7:33 p.m.

The motion carried on a unanimous vote.

Mrs. Victoria Dayton
President

James A. Dupree, Ed.D.
Superintendent