

Mt. Vernon Board of School Trustees

Mt. Vernon Board of School Trustees
Mt. Vernon Administrative Service Center
Monday, July 19, 2021
7:00pm - 9:00pm

Present: Mr. Greg Rollo, Director of Technology; Mrs. Gwen Scrogam, Board Secretary; Mrs. Maria Bond, Director of Community Relations; Mrs. Laura Durig, SpEd Director; Mrs. Kellie Freeman, Board President; Dr. Jack Parker, Superintendent; Mr. Derek Shelton, Director of Operations; Mr. Chris Smedley, Assistant Superintendent; Mr. Scott Shipley, Director of Curriculum; Mrs. Shannon Walls, Board Member; Mr. Greg Elkins, Chief Financial Officer; Chad Gray, School Board Member; Phil Edwards, School Board Member

Absent: Mr. Tony May, Board Member; Lisa Heitman, Finance Dept; Susan McElroy

1 Work Session (5:15 p.m.)

Minutes:

The board held a Work Session at 5:15 p.m.

2 Pledge of Allegiance (7:00 P.M.)

Mrs. Kellie Freeman, Board President

Minutes:

Mrs. Freeman led everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance.

3 Call to Order

Mrs. Kellie Freeman, Board President

Minutes:

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

4 Adoption of Agenda

Mrs. Kellie Freeman, Board President

Minutes:

Dr. Parker announced there were several additions to the Personnel Report. Mrs. Walls made a motion to adopt the agenda as presented. Mr. Edwards seconded, and the motion carried 4-0.

5 Reports

Dr. Jack Parker, Superintendent

5.1 Good News

The Community Relations student intern, Sydney Nichols, will be giving the Good News report this evening.

Minutes:

Mrs. Bond's intern, Sydney Nichols, shared the following Good News:

1. MVCSC Food Service served 344 families with 3,440 free meals for those 18 and younger throughout the summer.
2. All three Mt. Vernon Elementary Schools received national recognition for their commitment to empowering students and were each named a Project Lead the Way (PLTW) Launch Distinguished School.
3. MVHS Jobs for American Graduates (JAG) Teacher James Cochran was named an Outstanding Specialist by achieving extraordinary outcomes for JAG program participants.
4. Dr. Parker's Book Bonanza was a hit with the students he connected with at the events. The book clubs were full through the 6th grade and had a healthy number of participants through the 11th grade. Special thanks to the Mt. Vernon Education Foundation who provided each of the students with their book and to the Fortville-Vernon Township Public Library for their partnership.

Attachments:

[7-2021 Board Report.pdf](#)

5.2 MVMS Construction Update

Mr. Derek Shelton, Director of Operations

Minutes:

Mr. Shelton gave the following MVMS Construction Update:

1. Art Room should be completed this week (painted, flooring installed), ready for students on the first day of school.
2. Exterior is coming together. Sitework and underground utility work on-going as well as metal and interior stud framing.
3. Mechanical, electrical and plumbing rough-ins begin.
4. Cafeteria east entrance completed.

Project still on schedule to be completed the end of September.

Attachments:

[Mt Vernon Middle School Executive Summary Report July.pdf](#)

5.3 Social Emotional Learning and Other Curriculum

Dr. Jack Parker, Superintendent

The administration will form a committee of stakeholders with a majority of the make-up of the

committee being non-school employed personnel. This committee will be charged with looking at curriculum (both state mandated and non-mandated) to help make recommendations for clarity for the purpose of ensuring that all students have the opportunity to learn at high levels. Shortly after the start of the school year, we will communicate the meeting dates and begin collecting names of individuals who are interested in serving on the committee.

Minutes:

Dr. Parker announced the administration will be forming a committee of stakeholders with the majority being non-school employees to look at curriculum, both state mandated and non-mandated, to help make recommendations for clarity for the purpose of ensuring that all students have the opportunity to learn at high levels. Meeting dates will be communicated after the start of the school year and names collected of interested individuals to serve on this committee.

5.4 Tiered Health and Safety Protocols

Dr. Jack Parker, Superintendent

Minutes:

Dr. Parker presented the updates to the Health, Safety & Facilities Protocols for the 2021-2022 school that were presented at the May, 2021 board meeting. Most of the changes have come within the past two weeks as new information is received from the Indiana Department of Health, CDC and US Department of Transportation.

Mr. Smedley began by reminding everyone that the tiered response system, previously presented and approved, encompasses five stages based on each school's percentage of absences due to illness. One June 30, 2021 the Governor's mask mandate was lifted, with one notable exception, giving schools boards the jurisdiction to implement routine prevention measures they deem necessary to protect the health of students and staff. The exception relates to the wearing of masks on school buses. Anyone riding a school bus must still be fully masked whether they have been vaccinated or not. That is a federal mandate issued by the U.S. Department of Transportation. On July 9, 2021 the Indiana Department of Health indicated in its guidelines that schools are still required to continue to conduct contact tracing as well as quarantine those determined to be in close contact of a positive COVID individual. Schools are required to report positive cases and COVID cases are treated in the same way as other vaccine-preventable communicable diseases in the school environment, such as chicken pox, etc. Cases would be required to isolate until they meet the CDC criteria and those who are unvaccinated and exposed would be excluded from school until they meet the CDC criteria for release from quarantine. Fully vaccinated individuals who are exposed to COVID would not be excluded from school unless they become symptomatic. Also on July 9th, the CDC released its guidance for COVID prevention. That information is linked in our plan. Mr. Smedley also noted that Hancock County is ranked 5th in the state with its percent of population that are fully vaccinated. Currently, zip codes for McCordsville and Fortville hover at the 80% rate for fully vaccinated individuals.

Dr. Parker stated that although we were hoping not to have to, we are duty bound to continue contact tracing investigations. Those individuals who are fully vaccinated can share that information with school officials, but are not required to. Students who are identified as a close contact and must be quarantined will be deemed excused when absences are due to quarantine.

Corporation Nurse Tracy Furnas stated we will continue to offer BinaxNow testing for those who identify as a close contact and are asymptomatic. This year, testing will be opened up to in-school exposures along with out-of-school exposures possibly allowing 10-day quarantines to be reduced to 7 days for students and staff. She is working with the Indiana State Department of Health to get the PCR testing to our school. As the BinaxNow test is a rapid test, the PCR is a more reliable sent off lab test and

should decrease the number of false positives reported. Mrs. Freeman asked if there was a limit to the number of tests a student can be given and wondered about the cost for each test. Mrs. Furnas stated the tests are free as the state is supporting supplying testing so there is no limit to the number of tests needed. Mrs. Walls asked if parents were notified to obtain consent to test before actually testing. Mrs. Furnas stated yes, parents have the right to refuse. Dr. Parker added parents will bring students in for the testing and be there with them.

Mr. Shelton stated every possible attempt to position classroom furniture to keep the 3 ft. distance will be made. Seating charts will be updated daily to help with the need to contract trace in the classroom as well as on the school buses. Legislation requires bus drivers to wear masks at all times along with the students while riding the bus.

Mrs. Furnas has shared the tiered plan with the Hancock County Health Department. Absences due to illness will be tracked per building and posted on the corporation website, updated weekly when the absence rate due to illness is under 10%. If the rate reaches 10% or higher, the tracker will be updated daily. We will use the color code corresponding to the tier identified on our tiered health and safety protocol. Should we reach 16%, all personnel in that building will be required to wear a mask until the daily tracker reports a lower than 16% absence due to illness.

Any changes in these protocols will be communicated as they occur.

Attachments:

[Update - Health and Safety Protocols Tiered System 2021-2022 - Google Docs.pdf](#)

6 Public Comments Regarding Agenda Items

Mrs. Kellie Freeman, Board President

Minutes:

Patron Haile Loring is the parent of three boys that attend Mt. Vernon. She is concerned about how the schools are regarding SEL (Social and Emotional Learning) and the direction it may be going. She is concerned after seeing public posts regarding Dr. Renae Azziz being brought in to speak at a recent administrative retreat and said there was a lot of public outrage. She believes Dr. Azziz and the company she works for teaches equity, that all school districts are unconsciously biased and racist. Her goals are for equitable outcomes for students and wants administrators to explore supporting equity. In Ms. Loring's opinion this is ideology and not meant for schools. She believes Dr. Azziz wants you to teach your child that no matter how hard they work, there will be an equitable outcome whereas she teaches her kids to work hard and earn what they are working for. She concluded by saying she thought Mt. Vernon was a wonderful school district and board members had the best interest of everyone at heart, but does not believe equity should be taught in our schools.

Janet Smith spoke at last month's board meeting on the dangers of Critical Race Theory. She talked about the differences between equity versus equality and feels equity means a forced equal outcome while equality means an opportunity to accomplish or obtain something, two totally different meanings. She feels equality is needed in our society, not equity as it is a dangerous ideology. She is not saying we should not have discussion regarding race relations or be aware of any discrimination that exists, those are both necessary. She feels the board members are the frontline to know what is and is not being taught.

Amanda Steele is the parent of a 2nd grader and talked about SEL. She feels as we are still dealing with the COVID Pandemic, she does not want to worry about what her child will be learning at school. She has always taught her child they can do whatever they want to do and always treat other children with respect. She has researched SEL and doesn't understand why we would bring in more issues with this curriculum than is needed and wants her child to learn the basics and not be basically interrogated as to how they feel, what are they doing, etc. She wants to be the one to teach her child right and wrong. She feels schools have become politicized and does not feel her child should have to deal with that. She teaches her child they can be whatever they want to be with no one standing in their way and feels it is adults who are standing in the way by not re-enforcing this .

7 Consent Agenda

Mrs. Kellie Freeman, Board President

Minutes:

Mr. Gray made a motion to approve the following Consent Agenda:

1. Minutes of the June 21, 2021 Board Meeting:
2. Claims:
3. The following personnel items:

CERTIFIED RECOMMENDATIONS

Molly Montgomery, FES Kindergarten Teacher

Noelle Truex, MVMS 8th Grade English/Language Arts Teacher

Kaitlin Baldwin, MVMS School Counselor

Linda Steele, MVMS Resource Teacher

MVMS Summer School Staffing - UPDATED

Aaron Amos, MVHS Business Computer Science Teacher

Rebekah Anderson, MVHS English Teacher

Kylie Matusiewicz, MES Teacher (FMLA Leave 1st Semester and will change to another FMLA Leave 2nd Semester)

Betxy Zarse, FES DREAM Room Special Education Teacher

Amanda Smith, FES 1st Grade Teacher

Leslie Spooner, FES 1st Grade Teacher

Sophie Hrinowich, FES 3rd Grade Teacher

CERTIFIED RESIGNATION/RETIREMENT

Travis Daugherty, MVHS English Teacher

Drew Slentz, District Occupational Therapist

Jennifer Strantz, FES 3rd Grade Teacher

Fred Bays, MES Teacher

Jon Palmer, FES 5th Grade Teacher

Patricia Laughlin, MVHS Spanish Teacher

CERTIFIED CHANGE OF ASSIGNMENTS

Joana Goff, MVHS Instructional Assistant to MVMS Special Education Teacher

Heidi Kensinger, FES 1st Grade Teacher to MVHS ELA Specialist

CLASSIFIED RECOMMENDATIONS

Alix Collins, FES DREAM Room ~ High Intensity Instructional Assistant

Hilary Harriman, MMPS Instructional Assistant

Tonya Plettner, MES Custodian

Sarah Cruz, MVHS Media Center Assistant

Jean Wuerch, MMPS Secretary

Shay Shipley, FES Instructional Assistant ~ ICE Student

Alaina Nugent, FES Instructional Assistant ~ ICE Student

Catherine Kernodle, MES Cafe Supervisor

Rita Osborn, Recommendation for salary adjustment in 2020-2021 do to pandemic (10 extra days)

Rita Osborn & Michell Davis to move from 210 contracted days to 220.

Michell Davis to move from hourly position to a salaried contracted position

MVMS Life Skills Coach, Recommendation to move from 200 contracted days to 188.

Kaitlyn Zelepugas, Recommendation for temporary salary adjustment

Ronald Corn, FES Custodian

CLASSIFIED RESIGNATION/RETIREMENT

Sarah McGinnis, MCE Special Education Instructional Assistant

Chad Masters, Alternative School Instructional Assistant, Daily Reporting Room

Stephanie Prasuhn, MMPS Instructional Assistant

CLASSIFIED CHANGE OF ASSIGNMENT

Nicole Birdsong, Transportation Substitute Bus Driver to Full-Time Bus Driver

Tyler Riley, Transportation Substitute Bus Driver to Full-Time Bus Driver

Sheila Lee, Transportation Substitute Bus Driver to Full-Time Bus Driver

Lisa Burchett, MMPS Instructional Assistant to FES Dream Room Instructional Assistant

Tasia Lewis, MCE IA to FISH Room IA (HI)

ECA RECOMMENDATIONS

Mt. Vernon High School Coaches' Recommendations for the 2021-2022 School Year (per the attached)

Mt. Vernon Middle School Coaches' Recommendation for the 2021-2022 School Year (per the attached)

ECA RESIGNATIONS

Jennifer Zitani, 7th Grade Volleyball Coach

Drew Slentz, 8th Grade Assistant Basketball Coach

LEAVES

Kaitlin Stalnaker, Leave of Absence (September 20, 2021 - January 3, 2022)

Tasia Lewis, Leave of Absence (July 26, 2021 - September 13, 2021) Not eligible for FMLA

Shona Kelly, Leave of Absence (July 26, 2021 - November 29, 2021)

4. Constructions Claims.

Mr. Edwards seconded, and the motion carried 4-0.

7.1 Regular Session Minutes

June 21, 2021 Meeting Minutes

Attachments:

[Minutes of the June 21 2021 Meeting.pdf](#)

7.2 Claims

Attachments:

[Claims.pdf](#)

7.3 Personnel Report

Attachments:

[Personnel Report 4 .pdf](#)

[Personnel Report 1.pdf](#)

7.4 Overnight Field Trip Request

There are none.

7.5 Request to Accept Donation

There are none.

7.6 Construction Claims

Attachments:

8 Action Items

Mrs. Kellie Freeman, Board President

8.1 2nd Reading Policies

Dr. Jack Parker, Superintendent

Minutes:

Dr. Parker presented second reading of Policy B200 Membership; Policy E100 Adoption of Curricular Materials; and Policy G375 Community Use of School Facilities. Mrs. Walls made a motion to approve the policy revisions as presented. Mr. Gray seconded, and the motion carried 4-0.

Attachments:

[Policy B200 Membership.pdf](#)

[Policy E100 Adoption of Curricular Materials.pdf](#)

[Policy G375 Community Use of School Facilities.pdf](#)

8.2 Pay Scale Adjustments for Custodians and Instructional Assistants

Mr. Chris Smedley, Assistant Superintendent

Minutes:

Mr. Smedley presented a recommendation to increase the hourly pay rate for both Instructional Assistants and Custodians, per the attached. He cited it has been hard to fill vacancies within these two classified areas of support and the turnover rate is higher compared to other classified positions. By raising the hourly rate, it is the hope that it will alleviate these two issues and make these positions more attractive. It is his hope to be able to include other classified groups over a period of time. Mrs. Walls made a motion to approve the Pay Scale Adjustment for Custodians and Instructional Assistants. Mr. Edwards seconded, and the motion carried 4-0.

Attachments:

[Recommendation for Pay Scale Adjustment.pdf](#)

[Adjusted Pay Schedule for I.A. s and Custodians.pdf](#)

8.3 Tiered Health and Safety Protocol 2021-2022 Updates

Mr. Derek Shelton, Director of Operations

Minutes:

Mr. Edwards made a motion to approve the Tiered Health and Safety Protocol 2021-2022 Updates presented earlier in the meeting. Mrs. Walls seconded, and the motion carried 4-0.

8.4 Appointment to Fortville-Vernon Township Public Library Board

Mrs. Kellie Freeman, Board President

Minutes:

Mrs. Freeman reminded board members that it is the responsibility of the board to appoint two of the seven trustees that make up the Fortville-Vernon Township Public Library Board. One of the appointee's, Ashley Jenkins, term expired on May 31, 2021 and she has agreed to serve another term. Mr. Gray made a motion to approve the appointment of Ashley Jenkins to the Fortville-Vernon Township Public Library Board. Mrs. Walls seconded, and the motion carried 4-0.

Attachments:

[Ashley Jenkins Appointment Letter 2021 1115 001.pdf](#)

9 Announcements

Dr. Jack Parker, Superintendent

Minutes:

Dr. Parker made the following announcement:

1. School starts July 29th. He reminded everyone that it is the practice that there is no Early Release Wednesday on the first and last Wednesday of the school year. Faculty and staff return Monday, July 26th.

10 Adjournment

Mrs. Kellie Freeman, Board President

Minutes:

Mrs. Walls made a motion to adjourn at 7:50 p.m. Mr. Edwards seconded, and the motion carried 4-0.