

Approved by the Charlotte-
Mecklenburg Board of Education
January 8, 2008
Regular Board Meeting



Charlotte, North Carolina

July 10, 2007

**REGULAR MEETING
of the
CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG BOARD OF EDUCATION**

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education held a Regular Board Meeting on July 10, 2007. The meeting began at 4:13 p.m. and was held in Room 267 of the Government Center.

Present: Joe I. White, Jr., Chairperson, Member At-Large;
Molly Griffin, Vice-Chairperson, (District 5);
Kaye McGarry, Member At-Large;
Trent Merchant, Member At-Large;
Larry Gauvreau (District 1);
Vilma D. Leake (District 2);
Tom Tate (District 4); and
Ken Gjertsen (District 6)

Absent: George Dunlap (District 3)

Also present at the request of the Board were Dr. Peter Gorman, Superintendent; James G. Middlebrooks, attorney from Helms Mulliss & Wicker, PLLC, representing the Board; Maurice Green, Chief Operating Officer; and Nancy Daughtridge, Clerk to the Board.

Upon motion by Mr. Tate, seconded by Ms. Griffin, the Board voted unanimously of those present for approval to go into Closed Session for the following purposes:

- **To consult with the Board's attorneys on matters covered by the attorney-client privilege;**
- **To consider the qualifications of and/or potential terms for hiring new employees; and**
- **To consider student matters that are privileged, confidential, and not a public record.**

The motion was made pursuant to Section 143-318.11(a) of the North Carolina General Statutes and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

Chairperson White reconvened the Regular Board Meeting at 6:11 p.m. in Room 267 of the Government Center. CMS TV Channel 3 televised the meeting.

Present: Joe White, Chairperson, Member At-Large;
Molly Griffin, Vice-Chairperson, (District 5);
Kaye McGarry, Member At-Large;

Trent Merchant, Member At-Large;
Larry Gauvreau (District 1);
Vilma D. Leake (District 2);
George Dunlap (District 3);
Tom Tate (District 4); and
Ken Gjertsen (District 6)

Absent: There were no absences

Also present at the request of the Board were Dr. Peter Gorman, Superintendent; James G. Middlebrooks, Attorney from Helms Mulliss & Wicker, PLLC, representing the Board; Members of Executive and Senior Staffs; and Nancy Daughtridge, Clerk to the Board.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson White called the meeting to order at 6:11 p.m. Chairperson White welcomed everyone to the Board's Regular monthly business meeting. The meeting was being held in Room 267 rather than the Meeting Chamber because of a scheduling conflict with the Board of County Commissioners.

A. Pledge of Allegiance

Chairperson White called upon Ms. Griffin to lead those present and in the viewing audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

A. Adoption of Agenda

Mr. Dunlap moved that the Board approve the adoption of the agenda, seconded by Ms. McGarry, and a discussion followed.

Chairperson White asked the Board to approve adding Consent Item III.I. (Recommend approval to reschedule the July 24, 2007 Regular Board meeting in the Board Room of the Education Center at 6:00 p.m.) to the agenda. Chairperson White said this meeting has been traditionally cancelled but due to pending action needed by the Board regarding personnel appointments, appeals for student assignment, and the employment of a new general counsel, it is important that the Board reschedule this meeting in the event that it is needed.

Ms. Griffin moved, seconded by Mr. Tate, that the Board approve adding Consent Item III. I (Recommend approval to reschedule the July 24, 2007 Regular Board meeting in the Board Room of the Education Center at 6:00 p.m.) and the Board voted 9-0 in support of the motion.

Mr. Tate moved, seconded by Ms. Griffin, that the Board adopt the agenda as amended, and the Board voted 9-0 in support of the motion.

II. REQUESTS FROM THE PUBLIC

The following parents discussed their concerns regarding the displacement of the principal at Hornets Nest Elementary School, the selection process for the new principal, and the need for better communication between CMS and the parents impacted by these type of decisions:

- Richard Lancaster
- Ronald Cureton
- Cawanda Moore, PTA president at Hornets Nest Elementary School
- Marlon Nesbeth
- Barbara Green, represented the SLT at Hornets Nest Elementary School
- Solestine Lancaster

Neal Howes is running for mayor of Huntersville, NC. He commended Dr. Ralph Taylor, Executive Director of Alternative Education and Safe Schools, and the program that he runs. He encouraged the community to support the program and to consider building a center that would house troubled students because this would be part of the solution for those students.

III. CONSENT ITEMS

- A. Recommend approval of minutes.
 - June 28, 2007 and July 2, 2007 Closed Session
 - June 29, 2007 Closed Session
 - June 28, 2007 Closed Session
 - June 27, 2007 Closed Session
 - June 21, 2007 Closed Session
 - March 27, 2007 Regular Board Meeting
 - March 13, 2007 Regular Board Meeting
- B. Construction Items.
 1. Recommend approval of demolition contract for old Druid Hills Elementary School.
 2. Recommend approval of HVAC contract at Craig Avenue Print Shop.
 3. Recommend approval of contract for fire alarm installation at James Martin Middle School.
- C. Recommend approval of appointment of administrative personnel.
- D. Recommend approval of licensed/non-licensed hires and promotions for June 2007.
- E. Recommend approval of uniforms for Midwood High School.
- F. Recommend approval of 2007-08 Application for Title I, Part A.
- G. Recommend approval of supplementary funding request from US Department of Education, US Department of Health and Human Services, and US Department of Justice for *Charlotte-Mecklenburg Partnership for Safe Schools and Healthy Students*.
- H. Recommend approval of employment of a relative of a member of executive staff in accordance with Policy #GB.
- I. Recommend approval to reschedule the July 24, 2007 Regular Board meeting in the Board Room of the Education Center at 6:00 p.m.

Ms. Griffin moved, seconded by Mr. Tate, that the Board approve Consent Items A. thru I., and a discussion followed.

Ms. McGarry pulled Consent Items G. and H.

Ms. Leake pulled Consent Items B.1. and C.

Ms. Griffin moved that the Board approve Consent Items A. thru I. excluding B.1., C. G. and H., and the Board voted 9-0 in support of the motion.

Ms. Leake expressed concern that B.1 was the demolition project for the old Druid Hills Elementary School because she believes the community could use that facility for community programs. She asked if the demolition could be delayed so that CMS could discuss this option with the community. Maurice Green, Chief Operating Officer, said he is not sure if there were conversations with the community regarding the demolition of the school. He said the old Druid Hills facility is adjacent to the new Druid Hills facility and the new school is a school that can be used by the community. The old Druid Hills site is planned to be a playground for the children that attend the new Druid Hills. At this point, CMS has salvaged all the reusable equipment out of the old facility and is in the process of doing an asbestos abatement project as a prerequisite to the demolition. Staff believes they have taken the useful life out of the old Druid Hills facility as it has been used as swing space a number of times. It is the recommendation of staff, at this point, to demolish the entire building. Ms. Leake asked what are the students currently using as a playground? Mr. Green said they are using the parking lot and CMS does not believe that is an adequate place for them to play. Ms. Leake asked when was the new Druid Hills built? Mr. Green said it was completed in 2002. Ms. Leake asked that staff discuss the use of the old building with the neighborhood leaders in the community. Mr. Gauvreau expressed concern that this request is to keep an old building up when the new facility only has 351 students (according to the May 2007 projections which go to the state) attending that new facility.

Ms. Griffin moved, seconded by Mr. Tate, that the Board approve Consent Item B.1., and the Board voted 8-1 in support of the motion. Chairperson White, Ms. Griffin, Ms. McGarry, Mr. Merchant, Mr. Gauvreau, Mr. Dunlap, Mr. Tate, and Mr. Gjertsen voted in support of the motion. Ms. Leake voted against the motion.

The Board discussed Consent Item C. Ms. Leake wants to ensure that all job positions are open to the public and that everyone is given a fair opportunity to apply for those positions and to be interviewed. She noted that we heard the concerns from the parents at Hornets Nest Elementary School and the recommendations include the new principal appointment by the Superintendent. Ms. Leake would like the public to be able to view the new appointments and she encouraged that they attend the Regular Board meetings. Mr. Dunlap said we have heard from the parents at Hornets Nest Elementary School and they have some concerns. He said he never opposes the Superintendent's appointments but there is unfinished business and the issues of the parents have not been addressed. He believes it is important to speak to these parents to inform them of the changes planned for this school. He is concerned that the new principal may be placed in an uncomfortable position with the unresolved issue. He would recommend that this appointment be delayed until the issues are resolved and the concerns discussed. He asked Dr. Gorman to address how things would be different for the school. Dr. Gorman said the appointment at Hornets Nest Elementary School is a principal transfer and transfers do not require Board action.

Ms. Griffin moved, seconded by Ms. McGarry, that the Board approve Consent Item C. and the Board voted 7-2 in support of the motion. Chairperson White, Ms. Griffin, Ms. McGarry, Mr. Merchant, Mr. Gauvreau, Mr. Tate, and Mr. Gjertsen voted in support of the motion. Ms. Leake and Mr. Dunlap voted against the motion.

Dr. Gorman reviewed the administrative personnel recommendations.

Transfers:

- Chad Thomas named principal at Long Creek Elementary School. Mr. Thomas previously served as principal at Pawtucket Elementary School.
- Victoria James Hicks named principal at Hornets Nest Elementary School. Ms. Hicks previously served as principal at Thomasboro Elementary School.

Dr. Gorman noted that Maurice Ambler, Chief Human Resources Officer, met with the parents at Hornets Nest Elementary School and Hugh Hattabaugh, Area Superintendent of the North Learning Community, also met with the parents and is scheduling additional meetings with parents to address their concerns.

Appointments:

- Ann Nivens named principal at Highland Creek Elementary School. Dr. Nivens has a Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership, Gardner-Webb University, Boiling Springs; Principal Certification, University of North Carolina-Charlotte; Master of Education in Early Childhood Education, University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC; and a Bachelor of Arts in Elementary Education, University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC. Ms. Nivens previously served as principal at Lake Norman Elementary School in Statesville, N.C (Iredell-Statesville Schools).
- Gary Cone named principal at Independence High School. Dr. Cone has a Doctor of Education in Educational Administration, Appalachian State University, Boone, North Carolina; Master of Arts in Educational Leadership, Appalachian State University, Boone, North Carolina; and a Bachelor of Arts in English, College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, Virginia. Dr. Cone previously served as principal at Bartlett Yancey High School in Yanceyville, North Carolina (Caswell County Schools).
- Jennifer Smith named principal at Ashley Park Elementary School. Dr. Smith has a Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership, Fayetteville State University, Fayetteville, North Carolina; Master of Education in English/Administration and Supervision, University of North Carolina-Pembroke, Pembroke, North Carolina; Bachelor of Arts in English Education, North Carolina Central University, Durham, North Carolina. Dr. Smith previously served as principal at Fair Bluff Elementary School in Whiteville, North Carolina (Columbus County Schools).
- Susan Spencer-Smith named principal at Elizabeth Traditional Elementary School. Ms. Spencer-Smith previously served as principal at Elizabeth Traditional Elementary School.
- Cara Heath named assistant principal at Berryhill Elementary School. Ms. Heath previously served as acting-assistant principal, literary facilitator, and teacher at Berryhill Elementary School.
- Monique Burge named assistant principal at J.H. Gunn Elementary School. Ms. Burge previously served as principal intern at Merry Oaks and J.H. Gunn elementary schools.
- Kimberly Hazel named assistant principal at Northridge Middle School. Ms. Hazel previously served as a teacher at Northridge Middle School.
- Michele Cristina Miller named assistant principal at East Mecklenburg High School. Ms. Miller previously served as interim-assistant principal at East Mecklenburg High School.
- Anthony F. Bucci named director of Title I. Mr. Bucci previously served as assistant

superintendent for student, family and community services.

- Barbara J. Pellin named assistant superintendent for Pre-K-12 support programs. From 1994-2003, Ms. Pellin served as assistant superintendent for student, family and community services.

The Board discussed Consent Item G. Ms. McGarry asked for clarification regarding the content of Elements Three, Four, and Five of the grant. She wants to ensure that the grant does not include anti-family or promote values that should not be the responsibility of CMS such as the social engineering of condom use and how to abandon babies. Dr. Gorman called upon Barbara Pellin, Assistant Superintendent for Student, Family, and Community Services, to respond. Ms. Pellin said the five elements specifically address family support and they were a requirement of the grant. CMS has been careful to ensure that the content of each element focuses on family support. Ms. Leake said the grant is only for the schools in the Achievement Zone. She asked if the services would be delivered by the school system or an outside contractor? Ms. Pellin said it would be a combination of the two. Area Mental Health will be utilized. They provide services for the most at-risk mentally ill children and that is a system that is presently in place in the county. CMS will establish partnerships as the grant model is further developed. The grant is currently being targeted to the Achievement Zone but, hopefully, the model will eventually be implemented in all the Learning Communities. Each model is based upon known best practices and programs. Mr. Gjertsen asked what are the goals of the program? Ms. Pellin said CMS has designed a logic model and the grant includes specific goals for each element and the framework. Dr. Gorman said he would provide the Board members a copy of the grant.

Mr. Merchant moved, seconded by Ms. Griffin, that the Board approve Consent Item G., and the Board voted 9-0 to approve the motion.

The Board discussed Consent item H. Ms. McGarry wants to ensure that the recommended new hires will not have or potentially have a conflict of interest, show favoritism, or work closely with a spouse. Mr. Middlebrooks, General Counsel for the Board, said this item is before the Board because of the Board's Conflict of Interest Policy. It is deemed a waivable conflict of interest when there is a close relative of a senior staff member being employed. From a legal standpoint, there is a conflict of interest and that is why this is being brought before the Board. Mr. Middlebrooks said these employees will not be working closely with a relative. Mr. Dunlap said the individuals do not present a conflict of interest because they will not be directly supervised by a relative. Mr. Gauvreau believes there would be a direct contact between the Chief of Human Resources who is responsible for all hires and an administrative secretary. Mr. Gauvreau would like the two recommendations voted upon separately. Mr. Dunlap said this individual would not be directly hired by the Chief of Human Resources and not approving this item would be penalizing that individual because of a family relationship with a senior staff member of CMS. The focus in hiring staff should be are they qualified and would you hire them regardless of their relationship with a CMS employee? Ms. Leake agreed with Mr. Dunlap because the relatives would not be supervising each other and the Board has previously approved similar situations.

Ms. Leake moved that the Board approve hiring Laura Ritchie as a primary K-3 teacher at Flat Branch Elementary School, seconded by Ms. Griffin, and the Board voted 9-0 in support of the motion.

Ms. Leake moved that the Board approve hiring Doris Ambler as an administrative secretary in the South Learning Community, seconded by Mr. Dunlap, and the Board voted 6-3 in support of the motion. Chairperson White, Ms. Griffin, Mr. Merchant, Ms. Leake, Mr. Dunlap, and Mr. Tate voted in support of the motion. Ms. McGarry, Mr. Gauvreau, and Mr. Gjertsen voted against the motion.

IV. ACTION ITEMS

There were no Action Items on the Agenda.

V. REPORTS/INFORMATION ITEMS

A. Report/Update on the Strategic Plan Project Charter: Comprehensive Behavior Support Model

Chairperson White called upon Dr. Gorman to introduce the report. Dr. Gorman said at each Regular Board meeting, staff will present an update on certain Strategic Plan Project Charters. This report will review the Comprehensive Behavior Support Model. Dr. Gorman called upon Dr. Jane Rhyne, Assistant Superintendent of Exceptional Children; Michele Morris, Associate General Counsel for CMS; and Dr. Ralph Taylor, Executive Director of Alternative Education and Safe Schools, to present the report. Dr. Rhyne reviewed the history, purpose, and the plan of the Comprehensive Behavior Support Model Charter. The charter supports the Strategic Plan 2010 and relates to the goal of Safe and Orderly Schools. The charter originated two years ago to address concerns related to students' behavioral issues and the district's responses to them. The needs at that time were apparent and continue to be apparent. Some students enter school not knowing school behaviors. The suspension rate is high and includes disproportionate suspensions for African-American and Hispanic students. Students that commit various behavioral infractions from major to minor are grouped together at one alternative location (Derita Alternative School). The district has not taken advantage of the numerous resources that are available to students and families through the community agencies. Another concern is the drop-out rate has increased. Dr. Rhyne said the plan to address these needs is comprehensive and provides specific strategies to tackle the issues. The umbrella for all the strategies in the plan is a Five Tier Discipline Model and all activities support this model. Dr. Rhyne introduced Michele Morris to provide an overview of the Five Tier Discipline Model and the new Code of Student Conduct and Dr. Taylor to provide information on the Criminal Watch Program. Ms. Morris said the new Code of Student Conduct was developed in conjunction with many partners that included principals, members of the community, community advocates, and service providers. One Code of Student Conduct will be used from Pre-K thru 12. The booklet is designed to be more user-friendly and act as a teacher document encompassing Positive Behavior, Intervention, and Support (PBIS) and Character Education principles. Additionally, the Code of Student Conduct provides more options for administrators at the school level and increases access to what used to be district level resources such as Community Service and educational programs such as Violence Is Preventable (VIP) Program. The Code of Student Conduct is aligned with the Five Tier Discipline Model that was introduced in Strategic Plan 2010. Ms. Morris reviewed the five levels of the Five Tier Model. The tiers range from Tier 1 for students who commit minor infractions to Tier 5 for students over the age of fifteen whose presence constitutes a clear threat to the safety of the educational environment which results in a recommendation for

expulsion to the Board. In addition to the Tier Discipline Plan, the new Code of Student Conduct adds new procedures which include the introduction of a Discipline Team meeting. The student, parent, and school administrator will meet with the area administrator for student services from the Learning Community to better understand the situation with the student and to make a determination on the appropriate action for that student. Consistency throughout the district will be a critical aspect of this plan because now there will be seven Learning Communities making discipline decisions. In an attempt to address this concern, there will be weekly meetings with the area administrators for student services, Dr. Taylor, and Ms. Morris to discuss the infractions, appropriate interventions, and resolutions to the needs of the student and the community. The area administrators will also be working with their schools to ensure consistency and adherence to the guidelines set forth by the district. As the new procedures are introduced, they will be evaluated. The procedures will be reviewed frequently and may be subject to change as the need arises. Dr. Taylor reviewed the Criminal Watch Program which has been in place for four years. The Alternative Education and Safe School Department is notified of a student felony offense from Court Services. The home school is notified of the student felony charge by a Felony Notification letter from the Alternative Education and Safe School Department. The principal of the school meets with the student to notify the student of the felony charge. After meeting with the student, the principal may make a request to the area superintendent to have the student reassigned to an alternative setting if the principal feels the student is a threat to the school environment; however, there are some students that are charged with egregious offenses who will meet with Dr. Taylor and will be immediately placed at Derita Alternative School. The process includes parental involvement. The student must adhere to the behavior guidelines and not commit excludable offenses. If the student commits an excludable offense, the student may be assigned to Derita Alternative School until the decision from the court is rendered. Dr. Rhyne said the plan adds three Alternative to Suspension Centers and Derita Alternative School will be redesigned to serve students who commit more serious behavioral infractions and who cannot attend school with the general student population. CMS will be more effective at connecting students and families with our community resources, and the community partners are eager and ready to assist CMS. The PBIS Program will continue to be expanded with eight additional schools for a total of seventy-five schools implementing the program in the 2007-2008 school year which will include all the schools in the Achievement Zone. Morgan School, which is a school for students with significant behavioral and emotional disabilities, will continue to provide very intense educational and therapeutic services. This school serves students from kindergarten through grade twelve and the student population is growing. The timeline for the plan began in June and will continue through the remainder of the 2007-2008 school year. The plan includes intense professional development focused on topics related to the Five Tier Discipline Model which is the umbrella for the plan. The topics include Anti-Bullying, Anger and Conflict Management, Peer Mediation, and Basic Behavior Modification. The sense of urgency for the plan for Safe and Orderly Schools is great. By the start of school, the Five Tier Discipline Model and the new Code of Student Conduct will be in place; Derita School will be redesigned and will be serving students who commit more egregious behavioral infractions; other suspension centers will be serving students who commit minor infractions; schools will be using a directory of community resources to connect students and families with community services; PBIS will be operating in many schools; and Morgan School will have more students enrolled. Dr. Rhyne reviewed how students, families, and the community will be informed of the new plan and process. The communication process begins with tonight's

presentation and this will be followed by tomorrow's press conference in which Dr. Gorman will address Safe and Orderly Schools. A video will be created regarding the new Code of Student Conduct and this video will be shown to every student in the district while they are in school. It will also be viewed on CMS Channel 3. All students will receive a paper copy of the new Code of Student Conduct. Community resources will be integrated into Tiers One, Two, and Three of the Five Tier Behavior Model. Alternative to Suspensions Centers may include connecting students to the community resources such as Mental Health. The new Code of Student Conduct will benefit students by providing more Alternatives to Suspension Centers so students do not miss as much instruction. Additionally, it will provide separate services for students who commit more egregious offenses. Families will continue to interact with school personnel and, in some instances, learning community personnel will interact with parents around disciplinary issues. Dr. Rhyme said PBIS has been proven to work if it is implemented with fidelity. There were 31% fewer office disciplinary referrals in the CMS elementary schools with PBIS than at the same time last year.

A discussion with Board members followed.

- Mr. Dunlap expressed concern that the process does not include “innocent until proven guilty.” Dr. Taylor said there is no perfect system and staff must do the best that they can for the students because there is due process and consequences for students who get involved with offenses and make mistakes. Mr. Dunlap said he has heard from administrators that PBIS is not working. The report indicated that PBIS is successful if implemented with fidelity. He asked are principals being trained on fidelity? Dr. Rhyme said, yes. Each school develops a PBIS Team and the principal is a crucial member of the team. Training includes three modules that are two days each and they receive information on the universal rules that are developed for each school. This is a teaching program. Principals and school teams are explicitly taught how the program should occur and the training includes coaches. Mr. Dunlap asked what has been done to inform the community of the changes to Derita Alternative School? Dr. Taylor said CMS is working with the church next door as well as the neighborhood association to inform the community.
- Mr. Gauvreau expressed concern that there are no changes in the new plan. The plan is institutional and bureaucratic. He believes staff can apply greater discipline operational execution if they chose to but the problem is he does not believe they, Dr. Gorman, and the majority of the Board wants to. He does not believe PBIS, even implemented with fidelity, will work. He said CMS is missing the mark because this will directly impact the generic sense of student achievement overall in the school district which is getting worse. Mr. Gauvreau asked for the first semester of this year, how many of the students who assaulted teachers and had weapon violations will be expelled? Dr. Gorman said he does not expel students. The Board expels students. Mr. Gauvreau said it is criminal that the Board does not act and continues to maintain a weak discipline policy. Dr. Gorman said he does not agree with Mr. Gauvreau.
- Ms. Griffin said the report represents excellent work that includes significant change for the district going forward in dealing with what has been a difficult issue because of limited options. The new plan includes new options for the students and the schools as they try to maintain discipline in their schools. The implementation of the new plan has a lot of potential. Ms. Griffin said she recalls the Board adopting the Code of

Student Conduct. She asked does the Board need to adopt the Code of Student Conduct? Ms. Morris said, no, the policy references the Code of Student Conduct but that document is not specifically adopted by the Board of Education. Ms. Griffin said she would like to be provided a copy of the new Code of Student Conduct booklet as soon as it is completed. Ms. Griffin asked would students have the option to attend one of the Ten-day Suspension Centers? Ms. Morris said yes, this will be in lieu of an out of school suspension. A principal would have signed an out of school suspension based upon the infraction and students would have the option to attend one of the centers. Ms. Griffin hopes staff will work to strengthen the instruction that takes place in the suspension centers so that it will have real value for the students. Ms. Griffin said this is great work and she is eager to see the improvements in behavior and student achievement.

- Ms. McGarry asked if the 2007-2008 Budget included the \$420,000 needed for personnel? Dr. Rhyne said, yes. Ms. McGarry asked does that include the cost for PBIS? Dr. Rhyne said, no, that is a separate cost and there is not a new cost for PBIS. Staff is taking the PBIS budget and stretching it further to add the additional eight schools. Ms. McGarry said she has visited several schools that have PBIS and uniforms. She asked does PBIS or the uniforms make a difference? Dr. Rhyne said it is probably a combination of the two. The PBIS system is based on the input of data and a principal can extract that data to help make informed decisions. PBIS is a process that gets everyone (staff and students) in the school on board with the rules and the consequences. About 85% of the students will understand the process and will be successful. About 10% of the students will need more intense intervention and a small percentage of students will need individualized attention. Ms. McGarry asked how many of the seventy-five schools with PBIS have uniforms? Dr. Rhyne said she would provide this information at a later time. Ms. McGarry believes uniforms improve discipline in the school and she encouraged the Board to consider implementing a district-wide uniform policy. Ms. McGarry asked if there were any convicted felons in the schools in the 2006-2007 school year? Dr. Taylor said he had provided the Board a report on this. There are very few students who actually go to court and are convicted of a felony charge because the students plead down and are usually charged with a lesser offense. Misdemeanors can also be egregious and staff also reviews those charges. Ms. McGarry expressed concern that the Board has not taken more action in expelling students because it is very important to keep schools safe; prevent teachers from being assaulted; and enforce no weapons on campus. Ms. Morris said the Board would be hearing student expulsion recommendations on July 27, 2007.
- Mr. Gjertsen said he would prefer more strict discipline as opposed to the social services. He said the plan includes several good points and he especially likes the suspension centers. He asked if the suspension centers and the learning communities operating together would solve the problem that parents have experienced in which a student is suspended from school for ten days, the student returns to school for a certain number of days, and then the student receives additional consequences or is excluded to an alternative school setting? He asked will the changes streamline that process? Ms. Morris said staff hopes the Disciplinary Team meeting, which will be scheduled immediately, will get the parents involved in the process quickly to help make good decisions for the student. If the parent disagrees with the determination that results from the hearing, they will have a right to a hearing similar to the hearings in

the past through Dr. Taylor's office. They will continue to happen, hopefully, within the ten-day period so there will not be those types of delays. Dr. Gorman said that is the reason each learning community has an area administrator for discipline. Dr. Taylor said in the past, he was the only person reviewing the discipline referrals and now they will be reviewed by the six different areas. Mr. Gjertsen said the Board wants to discipline students who require it but the intent was to not have their academics suffer during the disciplinary process. He wants to ensure the process allows students to maintain their academics. Dr. Gorman said this can be difficult because all the courses offered in high school are not offered at the alternative sites. The alternative sites do provide the core subjects. Dr. Gorman said staff is reviewing the process to make it more streamlined but it will not be a seamless process for every student. In the interest of safety, there are some challenges that come forward.

- Ms. Leake commended Dr. Taylor for his efforts in keeping our schools safe. She is happy that students have a facility that provides an opportunity for a basic education to attend during suspensions. Students who violate the rules of the district forfeit their right to high level courses. She is concerned that parents have the option to have their children attend a suspension center or to keep them at home. She wants to ensure that principals are being trained to have strong leadership, discipline, and a safe environment for all teachers and students in their schools because without this there will be problems. She believes discipline problems would be lessened if teachers were on duty during class exchange, before school, and after school. She encouraged the Board and staff to maintain consistency and fairness in disciplining students. The purpose of school is for education and negative behavior should not be tolerated. She requested the location of the sites and the costs to have those sites. Dr. Taylor said the sites are located at Amay James, Albemarle Road Methodist Homes, Amay James annex, Sugar Creek, and Naomi Drive. Dr. Taylor these are in conjunction with Parks and Recreation and the lease is for \$1 per year. Staff is a combination of CMS staff and outside contracts. Ms. Leake hopes the process will help to lessen the drop-out rate and will support the parents of troubled students to help make those students productive citizens.
- Mr. Tate said language is important and he encouraged the Board to be focused on educating students rather than expelling students. He believes this process will lead the system in educating students which is a key factor. He supports the idea of additional suspension centers. He asked how is the Code of Student Conduct communicated to school staff and students because it is important they completely understand it and know what to do? Ms. Morris said principals and assistant principals will attend training sessions and the Code of Student Conduct will be thoroughly reviewed. Code of Student Conduct videos will be shown at each school and on CMS-TV. The first page of the booklet includes a parent and student acknowledgement and pledge. Staff at each school will be expected to collect those from every student and to maintain a record of those to ensure that each student has received a copy. Mr. Tate asked if any of the changes require changes to the Board's Discipline Policy? Ms. Morris said staff has reviewed the Code of Student Conduct and district policies, and determined the only changes required were in the form of regulation changes. Mr. Tate said Rule 8 of the current Code of Student Conduct on Bullying/Profanity, Obscenity, and/or Derogatory Language states, "Cursing or saying anything that conveys an offensive, racial, derogatory, bullying, or obscene message to a student or staff member

(including but not limited to references to race, color, gender, sexual orientation, religious affiliation, and/or personal appearance).” He expressed concern that none of the Board’s policies except for the policy regarding the use of the internet references “sexual orientation” as being a concern related to Code of Student Conduct. He suggested that the policy be reevaluated to include that information. He wants to ensure that all staff are trained appropriately and interpret the Code of Student Conduct, policy, and regulations in the same manner. Mr. Tate would like to ensure that staff is trained in teaching skills to reach the different segments of the student population (African-American, Hispanic, Asian, etc.) but also trained in disciplinary methods to help them understand the different ways that people act. Ms. Morris said staff has diversity training each year which addresses different ways to handle different issues related to diversity. Mr. Tate asked if staff could require a student to attend an alternative suspension center during the ten-day suspension? Ms. Morris said a challenge with this is providing transportation and unless CMS can facilitate that it is difficult to make that mandatory. The intent is to encourage students to attend a center so that they can continue to receive a consistent education.

- Mr. Merchant asked how cooperative is the court system in providing notification of a student’s arrest as well as providing timely updates on tracking that student’s progress through the system? Dr. Taylor said it is good and CMS has an extensive tracking method that is utilized. Mr. Merchant encouraged staff to keep the process responsive so that consequences are immediate in order to demonstrate the connection between the behavior choice and the punishment. Mr. Merchant asked if the statistics on the disciplinary infractions or reportable offenses for the second semester were available at this time? Dr. Taylor said, yes. Mr. Merchant asked if the data would be shared between the school level and the learning community level so that trends of behavior could be noted for the district? Ms. Morris said there will be weekly meetings with the area administrators for student services and the items that will be discussed will include the trends throughout the district, consistency of consequences, and any issues that arise. Mr. Merchant encouraged staff to share behavior patterns in the schools with law enforcement because what happens in the neighborhood happens in the schools. Mr. Merchant hopes the handbook will be very clear and easy to understand so that all students will know the consequences for certain behavior.
- Chairperson White said discipline and behavior is a huge issue for CMS and our society in general. He encouraged everyone to set an example of abiding by the rules and being respectful of others. He said CMS will do what it needs to do to enforce discipline and it may become necessary to remove students from the school system. He said he is saddened by the failure to meet the needs of those students rather than excited about the thought of expelling students.

B. Report/Update on the Strategic Plan Project Charter: Strong Parent and Community Connections

Chairperson White called upon Dr. Gorman to introduce the report. Dr. Gorman called upon Nora Carr, Chief Communications Officer, to present the Strategic Plan Project Charter on Strong Parent and Community Connections. Ms. Carr said parent and community connections and involvement is critical to the success of our students, our schools, and our community. This refers to Goal 7 of the CMS Strategic Plan. Building better connections to the parents

and community is part of everyone's job description and it requires a strong team effort. Ms. Carr introduced the staff members on the project and commended them for their efforts to enhance connections. National studies on communication and parental involvement have found a correlation between the quality and quantity of communication and the quality and quantity of parental involvement in the schools as well as community support. CMS has studied this issue and in 2005, a poll of parents identified the need for better and faster communication as their number one concern. This topped safety, discipline, the quality of teachers, and academic instruction. In 2006, the study was repeated and communication was listed as fourth of the top five concerns that parents have regarding CMS. The community would like for CMS to become more strategic and to partner with them in more meaningful ways. The community wants to help CMS achieve its academic goals and to move the needle on better outcomes for children. This project will help CMS to accomplish what the community wants as well as focus and leverage the community's needs where the resources are greater. The Project Charter Objectives are as follows:

- Seventy percent of parents and community members will agree CMS is doing a good job.
- Seventy percent of parents and community members will agree CMS is headed in the right direction.
- Increase the number of partnerships focused on academic achievement by twenty-five percent.
- Increase volunteer hours focused on academic achievement and mentoring by twenty-five percent.

Ms. Carr reviewed the major tasks completed or underway which included weekly media briefings; responding to media inquiries; implementation of Connect-Ed system-wide; Dr. Gorman hosted over twelve public forums; public opinion polls; on-line surveys; forums on the roll-out of the new Strategic Plan and decentralization; and publishing a quarterly report. Ms. Carr reviewed the next steps as follows:

- Continue growth of faith, community and business partnerships.
- Ensure partnerships and volunteer focus on academic achievement goals.
- Survey constituents on Parent University needs.
- Align communications, outreach, and partnerships efforts with Learning Communities.
- Continue to gear communications to the needs of the community.

A discussion with Board members followed.

- Mr. Merchant said the redesign of the CMS website would be completed in thirteen months. He asked if something could be done in the interim to improve the search capabilities of the website? Ms. Carr said, yes, we are hoping to make good progress quickly and there will be an internal step implemented in the fall that will make the website more user-friendly.
- Mr. Tate asked what is being done to help organize PTAs? Ms. Carr said staff works closely with the PTA groups and the Charlotte PTA Council to ensure they are aware of the services that are offered. Mr. Tate encouraged the public to help address equity issues and the impact of poverty because it is important to use the diversity of our community to help.

- Ms. Leake expressed concern that the report does not include the importance of diversity; the involvement of the Student Leadership Teams; the burden on principals; and the value of public education. She would like the process to include reaching the unreachable parents to make them a part of the process and teaching parents to be supportive of their children.
- Ms. McGarry believes academics and safety are a high priority to parents. She wants to ensure that CMS is not duplicating other services within the community because she believes another entity may be best able to carry through with some of the services provided to parents and the community. CMS should focus on students and their education. She believes it would be helpful if the PTA parents reached out to other parents. Ms. McGarry said Charlotte-Mecklenburg is a diverse community and CMS should focus on the diversity of thought because the core business of CMS is teaching and learning.
- Ms. Griffin thanked staff for the quality presentation and she commended the department for receiving numerous awards. She asked does CMS keep track of the partnerships on a school-by-school basis? Lynn Roberson, Executive Director of Strategic Partnerships, said yes, and this includes faith and business partnerships, as well as the depth of those partnerships (continual or a one-time partnership). Ms. Griffin is happy that this is focused on student achievement, mentoring, and tutoring. Ms. Griffin expressed concern regarding the challenges of trying to keep telephone numbers current in the Connect-Ed database. Ms. Carr said this is an ongoing issue and the system is uploaded on a daily and weekly basis. CMS ranges from a 70% to 80% accuracy rate and according to national statistics that is considered good for a system this large. Ms. Griffin asked does the system recognize numbers that bounce back. Ms. Carr said, yes. Principals can see those reports and track those numbers. Ms. Griffin said the emphasis on parents is important because one of our best methods of communicating is one parent to another parent.
- Mr. Gauvreau expressed concern that CMS has allowed this sector of our public education program to consume our focus to the point that we have lost scope on what we should be doing. He also expressed concern that this public relations engine includes a Parent University and this is not the way we should be operating. He said parents and students are not our customers and CMS should become more business oriented and realize that parents and their students are our owners. He said this item will cost \$25,000 dollars. He believes there are better ways to spend our resources and the limited public resources. The public demands that we be responsive because it is their school system. Mr. Gauvreau is concerned that the purpose of some of the components is for image as opposed to substance. He encouraged Dr. Gorman not to pursue some of these items operationally, specifically, the strong parent community connections. He does not believe there is anything in the report that will dramatically change the achievement continuum in the district.
- Chairperson White said the Board represents approximately 133,000 students and they are very diverse. Sixty percent of the students are classified as minority and fifty percent qualify to some degree of poverty. Our greatest challenge is to stop accepting the feeble excuse that our educators cannot teach students who are minority or poor. An even greater challenge is communicating to and educating parents to understand that it is unacceptable to use as an excuse that "I am a minority or poor and therefore I cannot learn." These challenges are not easy but they can be done. It is not

inexpensive and CMS must find a way to do it.

- Mr. Merchant asked what is the annual State of the CMS Address? Ms. Carr said this is a part of the Strategic Plan. This is an annual event in which the Superintendent will provide an update on the state of our schools and our parents, business partners, and community partners are invited to attend. The majority of the funding would cover the costs of materials and information that would be distributed. CMS is pursuing business partners to underwrite this event but they have not been secured and the costs associated with this item are for budgeting purposes at this time. Mr. Merchant encouraged CMS to seek sponsorship because this could be viewed as an example of CMS not managing funds wisely.
- Mr. Gauvreau said this is a great example of how the school system is not managing funds. Mr. Gauvreau expressed concern the charter includes other cost items such as \$25,000 for expanding partnerships with the faith community. He does not believe these costs will generate any results in the educational program.
- Mr. Merchant said \$25,000 to partner with the faith community will be leveraged multiple times and he believes that would be a good use of funds.
- Ms. Leake believes there is a need for this item. She supports a message from the Superintendent to the community on the state of education in Mecklenburg County. This is an excellent method of communicating the status of CMS, its intent, and future plans. CMS is in partnership with faith, community, and business partners and this will involve them in the process. She encouraged the community to support the school district.

C. Report on End-of-Grade and End-of-Course Test Results

Chairperson White called upon Dr. Gorman to introduce the report. Dr. Gorman called upon Jonathan Raymond, Chief Accountability Officer, to review the End-of-Grade (EOG) and End-of-Course (EOC) Test results. Dr. Gorman said the information has been previously shared with the Board and released to the media. Mr. Raymond provided a review of the district's report card. He said the Board will have a Management Oversight Instructional Workshop in August, and the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and the No Child Left Behind results will be forthcoming. Overall results are as follows:

- Writing results are up in grades 4, 7, and 10 from last year. CMS' average is higher than the state average in all three grades.
- Reading EOGs are up in grades 4, 5, 6, and 8 but down in grades 3 and 7.
- Math EOGs are up in grades 4, 5, 7, and 8 and the same in grades 3 and 6.
- The achievement gap was narrowed in both reading and math.
- EOC results show declines in the four subject areas where tests were revised to include tougher standards (Algebra I, Algebra II, English I, and Geometry).
- There were gains in EOCs for the three subjects where tests were not revised.

Mr. Raymond said the Strategic Plan 2010 includes goals for high academic achievement which are as follows:

- Ninety-five percent of students will achieve at or above standard on reading End-of-Grade tests in grades three through eight.
- Eighty-eight percent of students will achieve at or above standard on mathematics End-

- of-Grade tests in grades three through eight.
- Eighty percent of the students will achieve at or above standard on the EOC composite tests.

CMS has made gains in the achievement gap but must do better. It is important that CMS raise the bar but must pay particular attention to the students in the subgroups that are often on the line of proficiency because often those students tend to fall even lower when the bar is raised. CMS has a large population of children who are living in poverty and limited English, and the gaps must be closed at a faster rate. Dr. Gorman reminded Board members that the Management Oversight on Curriculum and Instruction was scheduled to be on the agenda for the August 28th Regular Board meeting and this area will be discussed in more detail.

Board members were invited to ask questions and make comments.

- Mr. Gauvreau asked to be provided the cut scores. Dr. Gorman said he would provide that information at a later time. Mr. Gauvreau said he was suspicious of some of the Biology scores at some schools. Dr. Gorman said he had forwarded this information to the Assessment Department and asked them to investigate the data. Mr. Raymond said he had received this request and should have some preliminary information from a district perspective available next week. The comparison data from the state will not be available until a later time. Dr. Gorman said CMS produces its data prior to the state completing its data.
- Ms. McGarry requested a writing sample be provided at the Work Session. She expressed concern that some tests are “dumb-downed.” Dr. Gorman said he may provide this information prior to that meeting. Ms. McGarry will ask her additional questions at the Work Session. She believes the Board has a lot of work to accomplish in this area.
- Ms. Leake grieves over the minority student achievement gap. She expressed concern that CMS is not reaching expected progression and not reaching all the children in the district. She believes the strongest teachers in the district should teach the weakest children of the district. She commended Davidson IB Middle School on its test results. CMS should understand what that school is doing and implement those strategies in the other schools of the district. She believes smaller classrooms and parental involvement help promote better test scores. She is concerned about the number of students that the system and the process are failing because they will not be able to become productive citizens.
- Mr. Tate said he has had twenty-one years of education and expressed concern whether he would be able to score III or IV. Mr. Raymond said this would be difficult to answer and it may vary depending on the subject. CMS is reviewing additional context and rigor of tests. CMS is a part of the NAEP Trial of Urban School Districts and our students take the NAEP test every other year. NAEP has just completed a longitudinal review and comparison, and there is a linkage between their tests and other state standards. North Carolina ranked forty-eighth out of the fifty states in terms of the rigor of the North Carolina Standards and the level of predictions of passing NAEP and our standards. It is important to have another test to balance the amount of testing with our students. Having another perspective like NAEP allows us to gage ourselves. This is why CMS has been advocating for tougher standards, stronger curriculum, and more rigorous tests. This will continue

to be the trend as more and more accountability systems produce results that provide context. Mr. Tate expressed concern that there were no schools in District 4 that made the Strategic 2010 writing goals. He asked how does zip code not matter in getting a good education and what should he say to the parents of District Four who want their children to get a great education in CMS? Dr. Gorman said at this time our student achievement clearly correlates to zip code, issues related to certain housing patterns, and free-and-reduced lunch. Mr. Tate asked what is a composite score? Mr. Raymond said the composite score is calculated by the number of students tests that are a Level III and above divided by the number of student tests taken. This can be impacted by a low number of students taking Algebra II but a higher number of students taken U.S. History or Chemistry. CMS has a higher number of students taking U.S. History, Civics, and Economics versus Algebra II. Mr. Tate said several schools made notable growth. He is supportive of growth and measuring growth. He expressed concern that a school may show a growth of fifteen points which is reason to celebrate but that school may still be performing at thirty or forty percent. Dr. Gorman said CMS is being very candid about the testing results and the data shows growth compared to the status bar.

- Mr. Merchant said a new more rigorous test would lower scores. He asked how would you expect to see growth on a test that has been around for awhile just because it has been around for awhile? Dr. Gorman said this can be viewed two ways. There is a decline the year the standards were reset. In the preceding years, there is growth again. In some cases where tests have been around for awhile, there are a series of increases and we have seen a peak in the assessment. Part of this is teachers and students become familiar with the style and the test. Mr. Raymond said teachers are more familiar with the new curriculum, instruction alignment, and the formative assessments can be aligned with the new pacing guides. This familiarity allows for instructional adjustments because you better understand the material and we would expect to see testing improvements. Mr. Merchant said this would help efficiency in teaching that particular subject so that we would perform better on that test. He asked does that address what we are providing students and what we mean by an education? He expressed concern that there is a test obsession. He said we must measure what we do and testing is a method of doing that. He is concerned that students may be great at passing a test but may not be able to synthesize the information or understand its relevance and it will be meaningless. Dr. Gorman said our tests must be closely aligned to the curriculum so that if our teachers teach the curriculum they are actually teaching the material that is on the test. Our teachers may have a tendency to put more emphasis on the material that they may know will be included on the assessment even though the importance of that material may not be as great. In some cases, assessment can drive instruction because that is how we are measured. Dr. Gorman said he does not like this concept but that is the reality of it. Mr. Merchant said for the August Workshop, he would like to know the impact of the 4x4 schedule for its first year. Dr. Gorman said staff will not be prepared to present that information in August but they are working on it. Mr. Merchant would like to know what the 4x4 schedule does for mastery. He said we have huge achievement gaps that seem to be in communities that are defined by race or income. He asked what does this say on how clearly we are demonstrating the relevance of the course material to all our populations? He expressed concern regarding the gaps

in History and Math. He said very often staff indicates that it is important to learn the material for a specific career or to reach a financial level at a job. He encouraged staff to make the material more immediately relevant by informing students how the information can be used on a daily basis. This will help students understand the correlation of learning now to benefit from them and for their future careers.

Ms. Griffin and Chairperson White said they would save their questions for the upcoming workshop.

VI. REPORT FROM SUPERINTENDENT

Dr. Gorman addressed the following:

- Dr. Gorman provided Board members with information from the May 30th Joint Meeting with the Equity Committee and the 2005-2006 Equity Report. Dr. Gorman is scheduling an upcoming meeting with the Board to discuss the Equity Report.
- Dr. Gorman congratulated the 6,587 students who graduated this year. This was the largest graduating class in the history of CMS. He thanked the 74,801 guests who attended nineteen graduations.
- Dr. Gorman thanked the Board for attending the graduations and all the staff who teamed together to make the graduations successful. He also thanked Vicki Hamilton, Director of Athletics, and Sue Doran, Assistant Director of Athletics, for the excellent job in coordinating the graduations this year.

VII. REPORTS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

Kaye McGarry thanked CMS staff and medical personnel for assisting her with her medical emergency during the last Board meeting. She thanked Dr. Gorman for having author Erin Gruwell, *The Freedom Writers Diary*, attend the recent professional development training for teachers. She attended the event and enjoyed meeting Ms. Gruwell and getting her autograph.

Vilma Leake thanked Ms. Hamilton and the staff of CMS for their hard work in scheduling and coordinating the 2007 CMS graduations. She thanked the community and James Mitchell, City Councilman, on providing outlets for jobs, social activities, and guidance for the most needy in the community. She visited schools throughout the district and also visited learning communities to ensure they are on task with decentralization.

Tom Tate thanked the Board for their recent Joint Meeting with the Equity Committee. The Equity Committee has taken to heart the need to refocus its direction on the equity policies that the Board has set forward and to tackle the hard discussions. Policy states that the Equity Committee will report to the Board in January and the committee will be timely with their future Annual Reports. He welcomed the Area Learning Community Superintendents who were attending the meeting and thanked them for the work they are doing in those new positions.

Trent Merchant enjoyed attending the opening day of the Star Fish Academy at Billingsville Elementary School. He said this is a summer program that focuses on improving literacy and it has proven dramatic results. He encouraged businesses to support this program because it

does a lot of good for the community and children. He also attended the first public meeting on Generation Engaged at the Levine Museum which is a new charter of a national organization. Their mission is to develop access to government and decision makers, and leverage the voice of eighteen to twenty-nine-year olds. He thanked the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) on their careful consideration in reaching a decision on the upcoming Bond package because it will help CMS move forward with the process. He also thanked Dr. Gorman and staff for their hard work in providing the needed information that the BOCC requested.

Joe White congratulated the CMS Class of 2007 graduates and he noted that he had two granddaughters graduating with the Class of 2007. He thought the graduations this year were the best ever. He commended Vicki Hamilton on a great job.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Griffin moved, seconded by Mr. Merchant, and by consensus, the Board agreed to adjourn the Regular Board meeting.

The Regular School Board Meeting adjourned at 10:15 p.m.

Chairperson, Joe. I. White, Jr.

Clerk to the Board, Nancy Daughtridg