



Blount County Government

359 Court Street
Maryville, TN 37804-5906

Meeting Minutes - Final

Education Committee

Commissioner Mike Akard
Commissioner Robbie Bennett
Commissioner Brad Bowers
Commissioner Nick Bright
Commissioner Misty Davis
Commissioner Jessica Hannah
Commissioner Earl McMahan
Commissioner Steve Mikels
Commissioner Dawn Reagan
School Board Members (ex officio, non-voting):
Fred Goins and Erica Moore

Tuesday, August 29, 2023

12:30 PM

Carpenters Middle School
920 Huffstetler Rd., Maryville 37803

ROLL CALL

BE IT REMEMBERED, that the Blount County Education Committee met at Carpenters Middle School in Maryville, Tennessee, on Tuesday, August 29, 2023, at 12:30 p.m. Blount County Education Committee Chairperson Dawn Reagan called the meeting to order. There were 10 members present, and 1 absent. The Chair declared that a quorum did exist. In addition to the Education Committee members, others present were: Director of Schools David Murrell; Assistant Director Jake Jones; Chief Financial Officers Troy Logan and Kristi Yates; and Supervisor of Facilities, Maintenance and Capital Projects James Duke. The following proceedings were held, to wit:

- Present** 10 - Commissioner Mike Akard, Commissioner Robbie Bennett, Commissioner Nick Bright, Commissioner Misty Davis, Commissioner Jessica Hannah, Commissioner Earl McMahan, Commissioner Steve Mikels, Commissioner Dawn Reagan, School Representative Fred Goins, and School Representative Erica Moore
- Absent** 1 - Commissioner Brad Bowers

WELCOME AND REPORT FROM THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

The Chair recognized Carpenters Middle School (CMS) Principal Jordan Ridenour and Assistant Principal Molly Lyon. Principal Ridenour welcomed the attendees. He spoke of CMS being a Level 5 growth school; and being one of only 16 schools in the State to receive the Tennessee Purple Star School Award, a commendation provided to military-friendly schools who display a major commitment to serving military-connected families and students. The Principal mentioned a program at CMS in which 30 eighth grade students are enrolled that mentors students at Carpenters Elementary (CES); that CMS has applied for a grant that, if awarded, will create a career counseling center; the window graphics around the school building while visually pleasing were added for security purposes; and in closing he stated that the CMS volleyball team finished the season as undefeated district champions. The Chair thanked CMS for hosting the Education Committee.

UPDATE ON DRUG EDUCATION PROGRAM

CMS Teen Living & Life Skills Teacher Melissa Crabtree spoke about the school's Drug Education Program. The program was incorporated into the school's eighth grade social health class, and was expanded to include sixth and seventh grades. They encourage parent involvement in the program. CMS has been working with local agencies, such as the health department and sheriff's office, to include vaping and alcohol abuse in the program.

There was no action taken.

A. SETTING OF AGENDA.

A motion was made by Commissioner Mikels, seconded by Commissioner McMahan, that the agenda be set. A voice vote was taken with all voting aye, and none opposed. The Chair declared the agenda to be set.

B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES.

1. [Education Committee Meeting Minutes for May 2, 2023.](#)

Attachments: [Minutes 2023-May-02](#)

A motion was made by Commissioner Bright, seconded by Commissioner McMahan, that the minutes be approved. A voice vote was taken with all voting aye, and none opposed. The Chair declared the minutes to be approved

C. PUBLIC INPUT ON ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.

There was none.

D. REPORTS.

1. Maintenance/Construction Report.

Blount County Schools Supervisor of Facilities, Maintenance and Capital Projects James Duke commended the School's Maintenance staff for their efforts in closing 981 work orders. He also gave the maintenance/construction report that included the following system-wide school projects:

UNDER CONSTRUCTION:

Eagleton College & Career Academy (ECCA) Science Class/Lab renovation; ECCA CTE/Field/Track/Parking/Press Box/Concession/Field House; Fairview Elementary roof replacement; Heritage High (HHS) security vestibule; William Blount Ninth Grade Academy roof repair; Montvale Elementary gym floor replacement; Townsend Elementary new bleachers installation; multi-school HVAC replacement; HHS CTE building renovation; HHS and William Blount High (WBHS) turf fields.

CLOSE TO BID/AWARD:

SESI HVAC; Heritage Middle (HMS) baseball practice field; WBHS softball food/restroom facility; and CMS awning.

FY2023-24:

WBHS CTE building renovation; WBHS roof repair/replacement; Walland gym roof; Friendsville Elementary gym roof; Middlesettlements Elementary secure main entrance; Montvale Elementary secure main entrance; multi HVAC controls replacement; Central Office (CO) bathroom renovation and replace boardroom lights with LED.

OTHER MISCELLANEOUS:

ECCA gym floor screen/recoat.

There was no action taken.

2. Financial Report.

Blount County Schools Chief Financial Officer Troy Logan gave the financial report. He spoke of a budget increase for \$30,392 to re-appropriate funds for Supporting Postsecondary Access in Rural Communities (SPARC) grant initiatives for the advancement of CTE programs; and a budget increase to School Capital for \$411,430.09 to accept and appropriate Public School Security Grant funds to enhance school safety (a one-time, non-recurring state grant).

There was no action taken.

E. UNFINISHED BUSINESS.

There was none.

F. NEW BUSINESS.

1. Report from the Director of Schools.

Director of Schools David Murrell thanked CMS Principal Ridenour and staff for their hospitality. He stated that according to the State's ranking with 5 being the best, CMS was one of nine Level 5 schools in the system. He also spoke of a level enrollment in the school district; ECCA's inaugural football game and open house; and announced that Kristy Yates will officially take on the roll as Blount County Schools Chief Financial Officer on October 1, 2023. Director Murrell challenged the committee members to stand united and come together on common ground to be supportive of the school system.

There was no action taken.

2. Blount County School Board.

No one spoke. There was no action taken.

3. Other.

The Chair opened the floor for discussion on meeting frequency of the Education Committee. She stated that Director Murrell is scheduling some strategic planning meetings at different schools that the Education Committee and commissioners would be invited to attend. These meetings would be conducted in the mornings on November 17, 2023, in February 2024 and May 2024. It was the Chair's suggestion that the Education Committee would meet in conjunction with those meetings. Commissioner Mikels inquired about the committee being informed monthly prior to commission meetings. It was suggested that Mr. Murrell's team could communicate information monthly via email to the commissioners. There was no action taken.

Director Murrell informed the committee members that in April 2023, the county requested that the schools move their maintenance facility out of the operations center. They are looking into their options. There was no action taken.

Commissioner Davis inquired about the bus situation. Mr. Logan suggested that the county consider a centralized bus operation for all three school systems. There was no action taken.

School Board Member Robby Kirkland inquired about the salary increases that the Board of Commissioners approved at their June 2023 meeting. The Chair will follow-up with Mr. Kirkland. There was no action taken.

4. Next Meeting - Tuesday, October 31, 2023 - location to be announced.

The Chair opened the floor for discussion, and it was declared that the next Education Committee meeting would be held at Carpenters Elementary (pending confirmation by the school) on Tuesday, September 26, 2023, at 12:30 p.m. The Chair declared that the Education Committee would not be meeting in the month of October 2023.

G. PUBLIC INPUT ON ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA.

There was none.

H. ADJOURNMENT.

With no objection, the Chair declared the meeting to be adjourned. The Education Committee meeting adjourned on Tuesday, August 29, 2023, at 2:02 p.m.