

## School Watch

### *A look at what is happening in Cleveland and Bradley County Schools*

by Tonya Brantley

The Bradley County Board of Education held their regular monthly meeting on Thursday, November 12, 2009. The following are highlights from that meeting.

Director of Schools, Johnny McDaniel updated the board on school report cards stating that the Bradley County school system has an overall grade average of a 'B' in achievement. There are two straight 'A' schools in the Bradley County school system, they are North Lee Elementary School and Michigan Avenue Elementary School.

McDaniel recognized the Bradley Central High School's Future Farmers of America (FFA) for receiving the National Gold Emblem Rating for the 42nd consecutive year, the longest streak in the United States of America. The FFA's theme for this year is

"Success by Design, Not by Chance."

Special recognition was given to Brenda and Stan Lawson for Christmas Memories. Brenda Lawson explained Christmas Memories was started when a second grade student told her they wanted to draw when they got older. However, not the type of drawing associated with artwork, he wanted to draw a check just like his father did. Lawson knew then that something needed to be done and if that cycle wasn't broken with children at that age, it would never be broken. She stated the purpose of Christmas Memories is not just to give children toys and clothes, but to teach students to remember that someone helped them and when they get older and make it in the world to give back. Lawson said, "Not everybody can give money, but everybody can give time."

Angie Lyon with Kaatz, Binkley, Jones and Morris Architects, and Derek Martin with American Constructors updated the board on the construction projects at Valley View Elementary, Park View Elementary and the BCHS Fine Arts facility. After furniture is moved in on December 3rd, then the new renovation at Valley View will be ready to occupy. Construction crews received their TDEC approval on October 23rd and broke ground at the new Park View Elementary School site on October 26th. The entrance road has been started and the building pad has been laid. Martin explained that because of the water table being so high in the area, a material called chert rock has been brought in to the site to build up the area where the building pad will go. More funding is needed to finish building up the pad. Board member

Troy Weathers made a motion to take \$60,000 out of the contingency fund to finish this stage of construction. With a second from board member Dr. Richard Baker, the motion passed unanimously.

Board member Christy Chritchfield gave a review of policies 4.100 - 4.805: Instructional Services, Curriculum Development, Special Education, Summer School, Adult Education Program, Field Trips and Excursions, Textbook Selection, Distribution and Care, Use of the Internet, Graduation Requirements, Graduation Activities, and Maintaining Test Security. With a unanimous vote from the board, minor wording changes were made to make sure the Bradley County School System is in alignment across the board with their policies. The board heard the first reading of Policy 6.307.1 Drug and Alcohol

Testing of Students. According to Chritchfield, Bradley County Schools has not previously implemented a student drug testing policy. Under Tennessee law, before a drug testing program is implemented in any LEA, the local board of education in that LEA shall establish policies, procedures and guidelines to implement the provisions of this section within that LEA. The proposed new policy has been prepared by the school board attorney using language referenced in the Tennessee Code and adopted by the State Board of Education. Policy 6.307.1 will require a second reading before it can be voted on by the board.

Chairman David Kelley appointed three members to the Ethics Committee consisting of two members of the school board, Terry McGuire and Charlie Rose, and one non-member, Judge Van Deacon who are to

serve one-year terms. The Ethics Committee will convene as soon as practicable after its appointment and elect a chair and secretary. The records of the Ethics Committee will be maintained by the secretary and will be filed in the office of the director of schools, where they will be open to public inspection. The committee will also be at liberty to recommend additional ethical standards for the board's approval. Kelley stated, "As Chairman of the Board, I want the public to know that the Bradley County Board of Education means business - proper ethical conduct is not an option!"

The Bradley County School Board meets on the second Thursday of the month at 5:30pm at the administrative office on South Lee Highway on the BCHS campus.

All meetings are open to the public.

## School Watch - Cleveland City Schools

by Tonya Brantley

The regular meeting of the Cleveland City Board of Education was held on November 2, 2009. The following are highlights from that meeting.

Executive Director of the Bradley Cleveland Public Education Foundation, Lynn Voelz updated the board on the National Board Certification for Teachers. As a result from the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, the program was initiated by teachers for teachers to develop, recognize and retain our nation's most accomplished educators and improve their overall effectiveness in the classroom. A set of national standards has been put in place along with a system to certify teachers within 25 teaching fields who meet these rigorous standards. Regionally, Tennessee ranks lowest in number of nationally board certified teachers at 338 total. Voelz stated Cleveland City Schools has two teachers who have completed the

program. Lenada Laing, math coordinator at Cleveland Middle School and Jeanie Long, a biology honors course teacher at Cleveland High School. The cost per teacher is \$2565. Board member Tom Cloud suggested the board consider putting funds in the budget to go toward teachers interested in the program. He said, "I think it should be awarded monetarily."

Jeff Elliott updated the board on Cleveland Middle School's (Intensive Care University) ICU program. Students who did not pass a 9-week core subject will receive a grade lower than a 69.5 (D) on the report card. This numerical grade will be equivalent to an "I" for the reporting period. Students will have one more opportunity to show mastery of the standards for the recent grading period. ICU is an accountability option for students who did not make a passing grade. Students will be expected to complete a standards assignment each week and be responsible for

finishing a Study Island module for the 9-week standards. Upon completion of all work, students will receive a 69.5 average and receive an earned point. Attendees will be expected to come to all designated days to recover their lost point and gain a better understanding of the state curriculum standards. ICU prevents students from having to attend summer academy.

In June of this year the Site Committee approved a plan to renovate the field house at Cleveland High School at an estimated cost of \$5,700 to be paid for by donations and fund raisers. The final bill was received at a cost of \$9,585.44. \$3,000 is being paid from donations leaving a balance of \$6,585.44 to come from the maintenance budget. This expense qualifies as a capital projects expense for the Sales Tax Capital Projects Fund. The board had a balance of \$21,525.42 in the capital fund reserve. In addition to the field house, \$8,981.90 was used to pay

the balance from Cleveland Public Works for the CHS parking lot and \$4,500 for the Arnold Elementary ramp, leaving a balance of \$1,458.18 in the capital projects reserve. Board member Bill Brown asked, "You mean it's already been done? Now they're asking for forgiveness rather than permission. I'm bothered by this." All three projects received approval from the board.

The board unanimously approved wording changes to their Student Solicitations / Fundraising Activities Policy 6.701 to include: No fundraising activities shall involve the sale of hazardous materials such as fireworks and fundraising activities shall be authorized in advance by the board or the board executive committee if time is a factor. Board member Evelyn Rockholt voiced her frustration on the topic saying, "At least thirty minutes of each meeting is taken up with problems associated with fund raising." The

board discussed ways to enforce proper procedure for fundraising, including forfeiting proceeds of fundraisers to the general fund balance. Further discussion will take place during the December board meeting.

The Cleveland City School System's Holiday Break will be December 21st through January 1st.

The Joint Boards of Education Meeting will be held January 11, 2009 at 5pm.

The annual retreat of the Cleveland Board of Education was held on Saturday, November 14, 2009, at the Gaylord/Opryland Hotel, in meeting room Belle Meade A, Nashville, TN, at 7:00p.m. The meeting was scheduled to be held while the board was attending the TSBA Annual Convention.

Budget documents currently implemented by the Oak Ridge, TN school board were reviewed. The board liked the clarity used in the presentations of the documents on-line and requested Director of Cleveland City Schools, Dr. Rick

Denning to acquire additional information. The board had a lengthy discussion on their long range facility plan. A revised plan will be brought back to the board at the December 11th meeting for consideration. Ten long range facility items to fund will be recommended at a future date. The board also had preliminary discussion of possible budget cuts for the next school year in case the State revenue picture does not improve. Dr. Denning informed the board that due to scheduling conflicts, he and the Fillauer family have been unable to meet concerning the proposed property line fence at Mayfield Elementary.

The next City School Board meeting will be held on December 7, 2009 at 5:30pm. The Cleveland City School Board meetings are on the 1st Monday of the month at 5:30pm at the Administration office Building located on the E.L. Ross Elementary School Campus on Mouse Creek Rd. All meetings are open to the public.