

School Watch

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

by Tonya Brantley

Due to conflicting graduation schedules the Bradley County School Board scheduled their regular monthly meeting at noon on Monday, May 18th. The following are highlights from that meeting.

During Director of Schools, Johnny McDaniel's good news report, he announced the following:

The 2009 graduating class at Bradley Central High School had 63 Tennessee Scholars and 83 Bear Scholars among the class of 358 graduating seniors. Many Scholarships were awarded from colleges, universities, community organizations and businesses totaling over \$1.5 million.

The 2009 graduating class of 330 students at Walker Valley High School received \$5,150,000 in scholarships. A total of 103

seniors were awarded academic or athletic scholarships in addition to the HOPE scholarship. 185 students received the Tennessee HOPE lottery scholarship.

Twelve high school students from GOAL Academy received diplomas in May and twenty adults received a high school diploma from REACH Adult High School. The Reach Adult Center also awarded 64 GEDs which is a 20% increase over last year.

Systemwide, the 2008-2009 fiscal year ended with approximately six percent in reserves. This is the same percentage with which the system began the fiscal year. McDaniel said, "The Bradley County Board of Education and Bradley County Schools has fulfilled the expectations of taxpayers to operate efficiently and effectively and to use fiscal restraints to

maintain a balanced budget with a sufficient reserve fund." The Board unanimously voted to accept the budget for the 2009-2010 general purpose budget for Bradley County Schools with expenditures totaling \$62,905,200.

McDaniel also stated that with the passage of the county tax referendum, approximately \$1.8M in additional revenue will be provided to Bradley County Schools. It is proposed to build a fine arts facility at Bradley Central which will fulfill a promise made several years ago by the Board of Education to address this need at Bradley Central. The 2009-2010 proposed budget allocates \$1.5M to supplement the nearly \$1M already set aside by the Board for this 17,350 sq. ft., \$2.5M project.

The increase in sales tax revenue will also supply \$1.4M in operational costs for the new school on Min-

nis Road set to open in August 2010. Due to some of the wetlands being more extensive than originally thought on the Minnis Rd. site, the original location for the school has to be moved. Engineers are looking at two possible alternate locations on the site which shouldn't delay the construction schedule. Tentatively, groundbreaking for the new school will take place next month. The Board will be voting on the name of the new school during this month's regular meeting. The four choices are: Mountain View, Meadow View, Mountain Shadows, and Park View.

Johnny Mull reported that the Land Search Committee met with the owners of several possible locations for a new school in Southern Bradley County. The committee hopes to make their recommendation to the Board this month.

The Board voted to Ap-

point Johnny McDaniel to the Coordinating Committee for Urban Growth. The committee will reconvene in order to study and make recommendations concerning changes in the urban growth, plan growth and rural area boundaries.

Terry Murray updated the Board on how the \$943,000 in Title I stimulus money is going to be spent for Title I schools. Murray explained the needs assessment for Bradley County Schools showed that help was needed in math and technology. They will be hiring 3 tech/math coaches, purchasing parent portal, brain pop software, united streaming software and the rest, totaling \$453,000 will be for technology enhancement.

Johnny McDaniel commented on the sewer project for the new school. He said, "If the city brought the sewer we would have an industrial sewer hook up

for the school and pay a regular sewer fee and we wouldn't have to maintain the line. My concern as director of schools is that we're going to open that school in August of 2010 and I would hope that the project wouldn't be delayed because of the sewer project. We can install our own line, a direct line at the cost of about \$285,000 and we've budgeted \$300,000 to connect our school to the city sewer down at Michigan Avenue School. So our plan is in place but we are optimistic about the possibility of the city and county working together to provide sewer to our school and to that part of our community."

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

School Watch - Cleveland City Schools

by Tonya Brantley

The Cleveland City School Board held their regular monthly meeting on May 4th. The following are highlights from that meeting.

The Board unanimously voted on a proposal request from Fillauer Family Partnership, LP to release the Cleveland City Board of Education from its obligation to build a road and bridge as required in the contract signed on July 12, 2005.

In a letter from the Fillauer family to Director of Schools, Dr. Rick Denning and to the Cleveland City School Board, it states the Board will be released from its contractual obligation in exchange for a lump sum of \$485,000. In addition, an amendment would be added to the contract that would provide perpetual ingress and egress to the remaining Fillauer property by way of Fillauer Lake Road and revoke the easement granted for construc-

tion of the road and bridge from Parker Street. Board member Dawn Robinson commented she was, "happy to get out of the bridge building business."

Dr. Rick Denning appointed a committee to review the standards based report cards which met several times in April and made recommendations to the Board for consideration for grades 1-5. Board member Steve Morgan had a concern that some of the staff and teachers have not taken training for the changes. On May 11, 12, 13, 14, the Tennessee Department of Education will offer content specialty institutes by webinar for grades K-12. Individual schools will provide a central area and a schedule for viewing.

Jim David with Cleveland Middle School's club "S.A.M. (Students Against Meth) I am," gave an update to the Board on the progress of S.A.M. Currently, students are attempting to create a new law

concerning meth consumption, making it illegal to consume meth. Georgia is one state that already has this law in place. The students have been working with Senator Dewayne Bunch to amend a bill he already has in place to include a consumption law for Tennessee.

The "S.A.M. I am" program has existed for three years and has approximately 50 members led by Jim David and Grace Blevens - teachers at Cleveland Middle School.

Dr. Rick Denning made a recommendation of a position for an Energy Education Manager for Cleveland City Schools. The Board unanimously voted that beginning July 1, 2009, Supervisor of Public Information for Cleveland City Schools, Paul Ramsey will be the Energy Education Manager for the city school system.

Cleveland High School Principal Chuck Rockholt will replace Ramsey's previous position. Energy Edu-

cation projects a net savings of more than \$4.8 million will be achieved as a result of implementing this program into the Cleveland City School System. According to Energy Education representative Truman Atkins, this significant savings will come directly from the school system's utility bills. The Bradley County School System already implements Energy Education and has saved over \$3 million dollars.

Board member and Site Committee Chairman Murl Dirksen made a motion that he later withdrew to employ a project supervisor for the Cleveland High School science wing for the total sum of \$74,000 from start to finish, starting with the plans to the final punch list. Several Board members were reluctant to vote until they received more information about the job description and what the person's role would be or if a contract will be created for the position.

Dr. Denning recom-

mended Gene Bishop to this position. Dirksen said about his motion that, "I kept the name out of this because I don't think the Board hires, that is a personnel decision and that's not what we do."

Board member Bill Brown suggested that the role of this person should be addressed within the contract. Dawn Robinson said, "We don't want to blind sight any general contractors we would like to let them know what our contract is before we bid it out."

Dr. Denning said that he would like to go ahead and have Gene Bishop's name in the contract. Board member Steve Morgan made the comment that last month he attempted to try and re-route some of this discussion. He also said, "It seems to me what we are trying to do is fill a gap between how we usually do business with a construction manager and choosing a general contractor and so we're creating an expense of \$75,000 to try to

get someone to do what a general contractor should do." Board member Dawn Robinson said, "\$75,000 is too much money for a liaison." Further discussion will take place at a site committee meeting before a vote is decided.

Dr. Denning informed the Board that administration has been monitoring the swine flu very closely and mentioned that the scare will spread faster than the flu itself.

However, the school system does have an emergency response procedure in place that principals have at their fingertips, on the school system's website for responding to a pandemic incident, as well as other types of emergency situations.

The Cleveland City School Board meets on the 1st Monday of the month at 5:30pm in the school system's central office on Mouse Creek Road on the E.L. Ross Elementary School campus. All meetings are open to the public.