

The Board of School Trustees Preliminary Determination Hearing and Board meeting was held on Tuesday, April 22, 2025, at 6:00 p.m.

The complete meeting can be viewed [here](#).

Members present: Erin Cooperman, Ross Grimes, April Hennessey, Tiana Iruoje, Aja Jester, Ashley Pirani, and Erin Wyatt

Call to Order

President April Hennessey called the preliminary determination hearing to order at 6:00 p.m.

Attorney Tom Bunger presented the Statement of Purpose for the Hearing in line with Indiana Code § 20-26-7-37: Before a school corporation can spend over \$1,000,000 on building, repairing, or renovating a school building financed through a lease or bonds, it must hold a public hearing to explain the project's potential benefits to the community. Under Indiana Code § 6-1.1-20-3.5, a school corporation must conduct two public hearings and adopt a resolution to preliminarily decide to issue bonds or enter a lease for projects exceeding certain costs or tax rates. These steps initiate the legal process, establishing the maximum financial terms for the proposed project.

Dr. Winston presented an overview of the educational needs and the project details, focused on the "Designing and Building to Sustain Excellence" initiative. She emphasized the significance of strong schools for the vitality of the community. In 2017, CSO Architects were hired to evaluate facility needs, the Board has revised the facility plans to improve educational environments while navigating budget constraints. The proposed project seeks approval for a maximum borrowing amount of \$221.62 million over the next decade. This funding will be used to upgrade safety and security systems, classrooms, site improvements, and technology, all without increasing the historical debt service tax rate. The goal is to enhance learning environments while keeping tax rates low.

Mr. Brock Browsher from Baker Tilly presented a financial analysis covering various financial aspects and the impact on the average property taxpayer. You can find his presentation [here](#).

Public Comment: No members of the public made comments.

The hearing was closed at 6:16 p.m.

The regular meeting of the Board began at 6:16 p.m.

President Hennessey made a motion to amend the agenda to include 6.04 Teacher Petition Discussion.

Motion by April Hennessey, seconded by Ashley Pirani.

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Yea: April Hennessey, Erin Cooperman, Ross Grimes, Ashley Pirani, Erin Wyatt, Tiana Iruoje, Aja Jester

Excellence Spotlight is a new segment for each regular board meeting.

The Excellence Spotlight honors the daily occurrence of excellence through the dedication of MCCSC employees, students, and volunteers who make a difference in our school community and foster environments that reflect the MCCSC mission, vision, and core values.

Alexis Harmon recognized and congratulated Mrs. Lisa Voss, Grandview Elementary, for her incredible work in making music education accessible for all students! Her passion and dedication to creating inclusive music learning environments have led her to share her expertise at a professional

event on Adapted Music for students with special needs.

Public Comment: One (1) member of the public made comment.

Items approved by the Board:

Consent Agenda: Minutes from the Board Meeting on March 25, 2025; Memorandum from the Work Session, Executive Session and Special Meeting on April 10, 2025, Grants Fund and Bank Reconciling, Financial Report (March 2025), Appropriation Balance Report (March 2025), Register of Claims (April 22, 2025), and Payroll Register and Payroll Claims (March 2025), and Request to Declare as Surplus and Authorize Disposal of Out-of-Date Items were recommended for approval as part of the Consent Agenda.

Motion by Ross Grimes, seconded by Tiana Iruoje

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Yea: Erin Cooperman, Ross Grimes, April Hennessey, Tiana Iruoje, Aja Jester, Ashley Pirani, and Erin Wyatt

Donations – President Hennessey recommended approval of the donations.

Motion by Ross Grimes, seconded by Ashley Pirani

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Yea: Erin Cooperman, Ross Grimes, April Hennessey, Tiana Iruoje, Aja Jester, Ashley Pirani, and Erin Wyatt

Personnel Report– Dr. Henderson recommended approval of the Personnel Report as presented.

Motion by Ross Grimes, seconded by Tiana Iruoje

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Yea: Erin Cooperman, Ross Grimes, April Hennessey, Tiana Iruoje, Aja Jester, Ashley Pirani, and Erin Wyatt

Contracts– Mr. Kenny recommended approval of eight (8) contracts and one (1) bid to be awarded as presented.

Motion by Ashley Pirani, seconded by Ross Grimes

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Yea: Erin Cooperman, Ross Grimes, April Hennessey, Tiana Iruoje, Aja Jester, Ashley Pirani, and Erin Wyatt

Resolution 2025-06 Tax Anticipation Warrant was recommended for adoption.

Motion by Ross Grimes, second by Tiana Iruoje

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Yea: Erin Cooperman, Ross Grimes, April Hennessey, Tiana Iruoje, Aja Jester, Ashley Pirani, and Erin Wyatt

Teacher Petition Discussion

President Hennessey opened the discussion in response to concerns in a petition received from MCEA President Jenny Noble-Kurchera and signed by teachers. The petition advocated for a formalized policy regarding the factors and procedures for Reduction in Force (RIF) and transfer decisions. Hennessey noted that Indiana law prohibits RIF decisions based on retaliatory motives or emotions and mentioned an existing policy for structured discussions with labor organizations like MCEA and AFSCME.

Board members engaged in a discussion on whether the aim was to improve the current policy's

enforcement or to create a new policy for RIF and transfers. They questioned if the factors influencing RIF decisions were already covered in ongoing union discussions and if the existing policy was sufficient or needed further formalization.

After the discussion, Dr. Winston clarified her understanding of the Board's request by asking President Hennessey if the Board wanted to know, "What issues cannot be addressed through our current discussion policy regarding changes in staffing?" President Hennessey confirmed that this was indeed the request made.

Board Goals and Priorities:

Dr. Jeff Henderson, the Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources and Operations, presented on the Thoughtful Classroom Teacher Effectiveness Model. The Thoughtful Classroom is a high-quality evaluation model and platform that provides professional learning and growth, timely and actionable feedback, and instructional tools and support. The model consists of three components and dimensions within each:

- Four Cornerstones of Effective Teaching
 - Organization, Rules and Procedures
 - Positive Relationships
 - Engagement and Enjoyment
 - A Culture of Thinking and Learning
- Five Episodes of Effective Instruction
 - Preparing Students for New Learning
 - Presenting New Learning
 - Deepening and Reinforcing Learning
 - Applying Learning, Reflecting on and Celebrating Learning
- Professional Practice
 - Professional Growth & Continuous Learning
 - Contributions to the Larger School Community
 - Professionalism

Dr. Henderson reviewed the timeline of implementation with full implementation of all components in 2026 -2027, and reviewed the pilot program that began in 2024.

Redistricting Study Commission Update

Dr. Dowling presented information on the MCCSC's Redistricting Study Commission. The commission recently held its first meeting, with all interested participants invited and representation from every school building. The commission's main focus is on **two board priorities: balancing socioeconomic status across schools and evaluating the cost-effectiveness of redistricting** efforts. Using a World Café model, members provided input on these priorities and identified additional topics they want to explore, such as transfer policies, transportation, and building maintenance costs. The project charter outlines goals that include improving socioeconomic balance, assessing building efficiency, and understanding the broader impacts of redistricting. Community engagement is a key part of the process, with a public feedback form launched earlier this week. The next commission meeting is scheduled for tomorrow and will feature a presentation of 14 redistricting scenarios by demographer Preston Smith, as well as a follow-up on topics requested by the commission.

Legislative Update:

Member Ashley Pirani, the ISBA Legislative Liaison representative for the Corporation. Board Member Pirani's report from week #15 of the budget session of the Indiana General Assembly and

mentioned the following:

1. Senate Bill 1 was signed by the Governor on Tuesday, April 15th. This was commonly referred to as the property tax relief bill for homeowners. The significance of this piece of legislation is that it significantly reduces funding for public schools, it requires referendum sharing with charter schools beginning in 2028, and it limits referenda questions to only occur during general elections. What this means for MCCSC is that we are projected to lose approximately \$17 million in property tax revenue over the next three years of 2026, 2027, and 2028.
2. On Thursday, April 17, the State Revenue Forecast was released and it is estimated that Indiana will experience a loss of over \$2.3 billion over the next two years. This is not an encouraging outcome for the work currently underway on the state budget bill (1001). It is expected that this will adversely impact state tuition dollars allocated to schools.
3. A number of bills are in conference committee this week- including the state budget Bill 1001, and Senate Bill 287 (Partisan School Board Elections), and Senate Bill 482 (Absenteeism).

Encouraged the community to make their voices heard by calling, texting, or emailing their legislators.

The Superintendent's Report mentioned the following:

Summer Learning Programs

Mentioned registration for summer learning opportunities is ongoing. There are opportunities for Pre-K to high school students, including "The Little Explorers" Adventure Camp for Pre-K and K students. Many families of 4-year-old Pre-K students will qualify for free or very low tuition costs to attend thanks to public support for MCCSC's 2023 Referendum. For more information, please visit the MCCSC website.

Sustaining Excellence News:

Students from Bloomington High School South have been named one of the 10 National Finalist Teams in the Samsung Solve for Tomorrow STEM competition, which will take place in Washington, D.C. This competition encourages students to develop innovative solutions using STEM principles to tackle pressing issues within their communities. The team has designed a prototype called the STORM Shield, an eco-friendly headband specifically designed to protect hearing aids from damage during physical activities while also sensing potential dangers, thereby improving accessibility in sports for students who use hearing aids. The competition will occur on April 28 in Washington, D.C., where the team will vie for the opportunity to become one of three national winners, each receiving a prize package worth \$100,000 in Samsung technology and classroom supplies. The talented team is guided by Bloomington South teachers Dr. Kirsti Milks and Kara Parker. Their achievements thus far are commendable, and they are wished the best of luck in the competition.

Extended congratulations to Yena Park, a remarkable student from Bloomington North High School, for achieving an outstanding perfect score on the American College Testing (ACT). This incredible accomplishment places her in an elite category, as only 1% of all students who take the ACT earn such a distinguished score. Yena's hard work, dedication, and commitment to her education have clearly paid off, and we are immensely proud of her achievement. We wish her all the best in her future endeavors, confident that she will continue to excel in whatever path she chooses.

A few MCCSC upcoming events:

Thursday, April 24, MCCSC will host Healthapalooza at Bloomington South. This event is open to all families and focuses on health and literacy. It will include hands-on activities, educational sessions, community resources, and much more. Dinner will be provided from 6 to 7 PM. Thanked Novo Nordisk for

sponsoring this meal.

Saturday, April 26th, Grandview Elementary will host the annual Family Fun Run, a one-mile or 5k run event for students and their families and friends. The race serves as a culminating event for elementary running clubs, allowing for an opportunity for families to participate together.

2-Year Strategy to Achieve Excellence

Dr. Winston provided an update on the district's two-year strategy aimed at sustaining excellence, highlighting progress achieved through natural attrition as a key cost-saving measure. She noted that a detailed quarterly progress report will be shared at the upcoming board meeting. In discussing the recent passage of Senate Enactment 1 (SCA 1), Dr. Winston pointed out its projected impact, which may reduce MCCSC's Operations Fund by approximately \$17 million over the next three years. The Budget Office is diligently conducting an analysis to evaluate the financial implications for the district. Recognizing that payroll constitutes the bulk of expenses, Dr. Winston explained that staffing adjustments will be essential to ensure long-term financial viability while maintaining the highest commitment to classroom instruction and student services. The district will continue to pause most new hires, with exceptions for critical positions, and will actively seek out alternative staffing models and operational efficiencies.

Dr. Winston expressed her gratitude to the teachers, parents, and community members for their advocacy efforts at the Statehouse. She emphasized the value of ongoing collaboration with MCEA, AFSCME, and district leaders. In closing, she reaffirmed the district's dedication to thoughtful decision-making that prioritizes the well-being of students and the sustained quality of education.

Adjournment – The meeting adjourned at 7:16 p.m.