

Board of Education Legislative Forum

March 3, 2022 5:30 PM

MCS Administrative Offices

I. CALL TO ORDER Procedural Item	MCS Chair Butch Campbe
A. Pledge of Allegiance Procedural Item The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Ms. Tiffany Johnson, Chair of the Rutherford County Board of Education.	RCS Chair Tiffany Johnso
B. Moment of Silence Procedural Item	MCS Chair Butch Campbe
II. INTRODUCTION OF THE PANEL Procedural Item Ms. Johnson started by introducing her school board which included Vice Chair Sheila Bratton, Tammy Sharp, Coy Young, Tim Holden, Claire Maxwell, Jim Estes, and Director Bill Spurlock. She also introduced Representative Mike Sparks, Representative Tim Rudd, and Senator Shane Reeves, and thanked them for attending. Representative Charlie Baum joined the group later in the meeting. Senator Dawn White and Representative Bryan Terry were absent. Chair Butch Campbell introduced himself and the MCS School Board, which included Wes Ballard, Amanda Moore, Becky Goff, Roseann Barton, City Clerk Liaison Bill Shackett, City Attorney Elizabeth Taylor, and Director Trey Duke. Vice Chair David Settles was absent.	RCS Chair Tiffany Johnso
III. REPORTS AND INFORMATION Information Item	MCS Chair Butch Campbe
A. Update from Representatives Information Item To begin the meeting, Senator Reeves thanked the School Board members and that he appreciated the job they do for students each day. Senator Reeves mentioned the things that were happening in the legislature, which included redistricting, the Governor's State of the Union Address, Tennessee's budget increase from 42 billion dollars to 52 billion dollars, TISA (the new funding formula) finally getting COVID behind us. Representative Rudd mentioned the items that he was presently involved with which included election security and integrity, seventy-seven bills in election reforming sentencing and pardons, and finally the biggest issue in the state budget transportation and road issues. To that, he stated that we have no debt on our books in the state of Tennessee. He also mentioned that he couldn't really figure the TISA funding formula out and would like input from the boards on that issue. He felt that locals may have to increase their share of this funding formula at some point, and that, he felt, could cause a tax hike. Mr. Bill Spurlock, Director of Rutherford County Schools said that his understanding was that local school systems would have five years to build up that. Representative Mike Sparks mentioned several items that he was involved with including the district that he represents. He asked that everyone pay attention to the Grove Farm off of I-24 and make sure that farm is supported as events a	

taking place there. He mentioned a bill that is in place now that will allow a school teacher one college class at no cost. He spoke about gun safe legislation, music therapy week, a social worker bill, along with a nursing bill and litter that he was working on.

B. Questions from Board Members

Information Item

MCS Chair Butch Campbell began the question and answer section of the meeting by stating that the legislators are always wanting to hear from school boards however, in the past year, the MCS board has contacted them several times regarding the partisan election bill and only two of the representatives voted against it. He asked why they voted the way they did. Senator Reeves stated he voted against it because he felt that some school board members would not be able to serve at all if they put a party with their name. He felt that keeping partisanship out of school boards just makes sense.

Representative Rudd and Representative Sparks voted for it. Representative Sparks said that you can never guarantee what people are thinking based on their party but you have a good background. Representative Sparks echoed what Representative Rudd stated.

There were several comments against partisan elections from both boards.

RCS Chair Tiffany Johnson asked about the new funding formula, TISA. She wanted to know how much this new formula would impact the local school portion in maintenance of effort.

Representative Rudd said that Representative Baum, who serves on the funding committee would be able to explain the funding formula better. Senator Reeves said that he felt that this was a step in the right direction.

MCS Director of Schools, Dr. Trey Duke said that it was his understanding there would be no change in maintenance of effort for the first four years.

There was more discussion regarding the maintenance of effort with the new funding formula after Representative Baum arrived to the meeting. He explained that at the end of the four years, it would depend on the local system's ability to pay. This would all take place in 2027. He explained that if a local school system was unable to pay, the comptroller would recognize that and not require as much from that system.

MCS Board Member Roseann Barton asked about charter schools. She said the consensus is that legislators are trying to get rid of public schools by allowing charter schools. She added that the average citizen doesn't know what charter schools are.

Representative Rudd said that Rutherford County may need a few charter schools to serve a certain population. He added that they are public schools, just independent. He said that people are seeing this as a personal threat to their territory, and they really just don't know what is going on.

Some board members wanted clarification on what Representative Rudd meant by "areas that need them." He said the parts that are in poverty.

Senator Reeves made the comment that he feels that the charter school issue is the "wine in the grocery store" issue. He said that charter schools are coming wide and legislators will have to address it. He said that he doesn't really know

<p>what it's going to look like, but was hoping that somehow it could be a positive thing.</p> <p>There was much discussion from all board members with opposition to charter schools. Ms. Barton feels that the Governor is pushing charter schools. Ms. Barton added that she feels that they are selling our public schools out to a hedge fund. She explained that they are not, in fact, a public school, and they are also low performing. Representative Sparks asked the group if anyone had ever visited a charter school and if not, he recommends that they do so.</p> <p>Senator Reeves feels that charter schools are coming to Rutherford County, and he asked that as a board and leaders of the community, how can we do this in a way that is thoughtful for our children.</p> <p>RCS Board Member Sheila Bratton asked the legislators to please look at the charter school notebook and what they have to do to apply for a license before making a decision on this issue.</p> <p>Representative Charlie Baum added that the Governor is putting one billion dollars into education and is an advocate for charter schools. He said that prices are going up all the time to build schools and charter schools are providing the facility for less cost to us. He said that if charter schools are low quality, then parents should not choose them. Charter schools will provide parents with a choice.</p> <p>RCS Board Member Coy Young asked Representative Baum if public schools have to share funds with charter schools, and he said no.</p> <p>MCS Board Member Jimmy Richardson asked for more funding in USDA Farm to School programs.</p> <p>Representative Rudd said that he is willing to vote for a replacement for the TISA but asked that everyone let him know their thoughts on the TISA funding for schools.</p> <p>RCS Director of Schools Bill Spurlock said that he is supportive of the TISA and feels that it is a great investment for our students.</p> <p>MCS Director of Schools Dr. Trey Duke thanked the group for coming to the meeting. He said that it is important to have these conversations. He wanted everyone to keep in mind who is going to be teaching the children of our community. He said some bills that we have to be very aware of are those that send the message that we don't trust our teachers. He said that we have to think about the message we are sending our teachers. He also added that we are not flying in from other cities, they live among us, and if we do our job right, we trust our teachers.</p>	
<p>IV. OTHER BUSINESS Information Item</p>	<p>MCS Chair Butch Campbell</p>
<p>V. ADJOURNMENT Action Item MCS Chair Butch Campbell thanked everyone for coming to the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 7:01 p.m.</p>	<p>MCS Chair Butch Campbell</p>