



Minutes

Joint Education Relations Committee Town of Farragut/Knox County Schools

September 6, 2011

4:00 PM

Town Hall Board Room

Committee Members Present

Mark Littleton, Russell Barber, Michael Singletary, Nancy Wentz, Gary Palmer

Staff Present

Valerie Millsapps

Approval of the Minutes

Mr. Singletary moved to approve the August 2, 2011 minutes. Seconded by Ms. Wentz. All voted in favor.

Individual School Update

- **Hardin Valley Academy- Sallee Reynolds, Principal**
Mr. Singletary discussed the Hardin Valley update. See Attachment A for a detail list of needs and important facts about the Hardin Valley Academy provided by Mr. Singletary.
- **Farragut High School- Mike Reynolds, Principal**
Mr. Littleton discussed the Farragut High School update. See Attachment B for a detail list of important facts about the Farragut High School provided by Mr. Littleton.
- **Farragut Middle School- Heather Karnes, Principal**
Ms. Wentz discussed the Farragut Middle School update. Ms. Wentz stated the biggest needs addressed by Principal Karnes were:
 - a. Technology
 - b. Cleaning of curtains downstairs
 - c. New sign out front
 - d. Update some computer labs
 - e. Possibly coordinate a Farragut schools day for fundraising
 - f. Volunteers to come speak with the kids thru the Vols4Stem program within Knox County
- **Farragut Intermediate School-Kay Wellons, Principal**
Mr. Barber discussed the Farragut Intermediate School update. Mr. Barber provided the group with the Optimist Club Letter that Ms. Wellons sent. See Attachment C for the letter to the

Optimist Club. Ms. Wellons stated the school was very thankful to Mr. Bud Mckelvey for bringing mulch to their school. Some of the items that Ms. Wellons addressed were:

- a. The schools supplies drive the Schools Committee done last year and would like to see this again. (maybe combine with the PTA)
- b. Computers
- c. I Pads for the RTI students to improve their skills

● **Farragut Primary School-Julia Craze, Principal**

Mr. Palmer stated Ms. Craze was going to attend the meeting. Ms. Craze was not at the meeting and Mr. Palmer stated he would contact Ms. Craze via email to get a list of needs.

Ms. Wentz stated a "School Wants" section was published in the News Sentinel. This would be an opportunity to highlight a Farragut School. Mr. Littleton stated the school update will be a great direction for the committee to compile a list of all school needs. Mr. Littleton displayed a saying, "Do the Math... Great Schools=Great Community". Mr. Littleton stated the committee work with the Town of Farragut and get the business community to partner with the schools and get the community support. Mr. Singletary stated an action item could be hitting up businesses for support or contact the chamber to get their advice on partnering with businesses or help lead fundraising for the community. Mr. Barber stated with Costco coming would be a primetime for a donation/partner opportunity. Mr. Littleton stated the High School in Illinois that Mr. Reynolds mentioned in Attachment B has created something to support the schools. Mr. Littleton questioned how our committee can create something that will sustain the committee as new members are appointed. Mr. Littleton stated opportunities exist besides money, we can partner with schools with hands on learning. Ms. Wentz stated that she came from upstate New York and the school system monies went their school and that anything we buy for Farragut is technically property of Knox County. Mr. Littleton stated the committee needs to investigate and then pitch an idea to the Board of Mayor and Aldermen. Mr. Palmer suggested the committee generate ideas in a strategic plan format and work on goals from the strategic plan framework. See Attachment D for the Strategic Plan example. Mr. Singletary suggested the committee summarize what the needs are.

Items for next meeting:

- Valerie to email committee strategic plan example to be summarized by midmonth and then send list back to Mr. Littleton.
- Plan for more than an hour at the next meeting as the committee will be working on the strategic plan.

Mr. Russell moved to adjourn at 5:10 PM. All voted in favor.

Next meeting Tuesday, October 5, 2011 at 4:00 PM in the Town Hall Board Room.

Mark Littleton, Chairman
Schools Committee

HVA report for committee

Rpt on HVA

Met with Sallee Reynolds on Fri., Aug. 26, at HVA.

2k students, 160 staff.

24% of students on reduced or free lunch pgms.

that means 75% relatively affluent.

HVA and FHS are destination points for folks moving here.

spend \$20k per yr on paper for copies, sometimes run short.

great PTA support; their budget \$56k.

PTA fundraising is month-to-month, not on-going.

great athletic support.

are developing a foundation, a la FHS, to support school needs.

since HVA is new, the heavy tech needs (whiteboards) are already met.

biggest Needs:

county does not fund staff development costs.

need discretionary funds for field trips and related expenses.

need support for the Robotics team.

need discretionary funds for incidental expenses:

i.e., student needs help for trip, or needs shirt for concert...

need support for classroom supplies, esp paper and related.

need new lap tops for tchrs (used daily, they do not last >3/4 yrs.

need some landscaping for a very bare school front.

Farragut/Knox County Schools Education Relations Committee

Phone Interview between Mark Littleton (ERC) and Mike Reynolds (Principal, FHS) on 8/30/2011

General topic of phone interview: Introduce Mark Littleton as new member of Farragut/Knox County ERC, emphasize the Town's desire to support our schools and gain ideas from Mr. Reynolds on how to do so.

Key points from Mr. Reynolds' comments:

- Glad to know that the committee was active; appreciated the intent of the Town.
- Very receptive to the discussion happy to share with the committee.
- Suggested that Farragut needed to be an advocate for Farragut schools, i.e., focus on the schools that directly affect the community rather than the whole of the Knox County system. General discussion about the critical impact that good schools have on communities, for example, the effect on property values, the desire of people to live and work in a community, etc. *[I noted that the ERC charter was broadly written and encompassed Knox County schools, but that the general tone of our last committee discussion was specific to the five schools in Farragut.]*
- With reference to the above comment, Mr. Reynolds emphasized the need to connect with local businesses. The community businesses need to step up and contribute/participate in fostering strong schools. *[Perhaps the ERC can discover or create a mechanism to develop this idea? MEL.]*
- Referenced the Stevenson High School in Illinois. *[SHS is a US Department of Education "Blue Ribbon" school (highest acclaim); consistently #150 or better in Newsweek magazine's top 1500 schools in the nation; in 2011 97% of their students were college bound. MEL research.]* Mr. Reynolds cited that this school had been/was a model for Farragut High School and the community & businesses have strong support mechanisms for SHS.
- Mr. Reynolds noted the relative difficulty generating funds for academics versus athletics, but noted that academics offer many opportunities for students to do projects with businesses.
- There were no dollars allocated to FHS for staff development last year.
- ✱ • Out of district student transfer per capita dollars do not travel to the receiving school, which has a great impact on Farragut given there are about 1700 students this year, but only 1450 from Farragut.
- FHS is staffed this year for the 1700 students at a student teacher ratio of about 25:1.
- Each school has different needs; ERC members should get into each school so as to learn those needs.
- Noted that daytime meetings were a problem for school administration attendance. Also noted that school representatives did attend last year for the grant awards (which he had heard was a topic of discussion.) Certain FHS administration attended the 1st meeting, did not attend the reception due to a conflict but did attend the 2nd meeting with a picture run in the Farragut Press, etc.
- Noted the work of the FHS Foundation, which is advocating endowments for FHS.

March 26, 2011

Dear Optimist Club,

You say the word "Farragut" and it conjures up images of little miniature fraternity brothers and/or little sorority sisters roaming the halls in a perfect school setting or environment. My new assistant principal, who lives in Halls, has said she has been shocked by the needs and diversity at Farragut Intermediate School. The biggest thing that makes a FARRAGUT school unique is its size. We are still attempting (with our technology plan as the driving impetus) to make sure two computers are in each of our 48 classrooms. We do not receive Title One funds (extra money) and we are in an economy when most folks are spending less and fundraisers are down. Three years ago our PTA Fun Night carnival event netted \$29,000 but this past Friday's event on the evening of February 25th brought in only \$14,000. Our biggest source of funding comes from coupon book sales and PTA fundraising and we simply cannot do what needs to be done technologically speaking with such limited funding.

And just what are our needs at a school that most people would think has everything? Well, it has taken us 5 years to get an Activboard and document camera (similar to an over head projector only more functional) in each classroom, and we are still not there. We have one computer lab with 28 computers for over 1,000 students. Our dreams for our students include another computer lab with a certified teacher as an instructor, and at least three computers (or iPads) in every classroom. Our proposal, specifically, is to secure your funds to purchase iPads to enhance technology and student learning. Classroom sets of iPads would be our dream! Any amount of money toward this goal would be most appreciated.

Why is it necessary that we have more computers and equalized technology in each room for utilization by every student? Research says it improves student achievement! As you know, we live in a different world these days. Things have changed since most of us grew up. Children are playing video games on handheld devices. Their brains and hands and attention spans are wired to be working on, and engaged in, some sort of technology. Young men and women who get their first job, whether while in high school or after, find that most every job these days requires the ability to use a computer along with other forms of technological devices.

My parents taught me to be a sharing caring person and that jealousy and envy were to be avoided. However, they would be sad to discover that recently I turned absolutely green

with envy when I learned that both New Hopewell and East Knox as well as a classroom at Rocky Hill had recently received donations of \$25, 000 to further build their computer base in the school and meet their technological needs. Farragut Intermediate needs support, too. I have been blessed and consider it the highest honor that I have spent over a quarter of a century at this school. Now in my 5th year as principal, my desire is to continue to lead, to impact and improve student achievement, to positively influence, and to leave this school someday functioning even better than I found it. A substantial grant to use to enhance technology at Farragut Intermediate would help us accomplish our goals.

Again, some folks believe that Farragut is the "land of milk and honey" where every student comes from the absolute best home and has every imaginable support. We are punished by the fact that we are located in a higher socioeconomic area where most parents work at white collar jobs. This creates the misconception that the schools in the area have everything they need. It is true that there are many expensive homes in Farragut yet in reality there are areas of socioeconomic deprivation, and all students need support. It is a myth that Farragut schools have everything and need nothing. The facts are we do have 8% of our total population on free and reduced lunch and the statistic is growing each year. We also have almost 10% of our students who qualify for special education services. The area in which we need the most support for all our students centers around technology. Unlike some other schools that were built with an Activ-board in every room, we have spent the last 5 years fundraising in order to put one in each of our 48 classrooms.

We are constantly trying to play the game of "catch up" with technology. Our Intermediate School which is a grades 3-5 school is one of only two remaining intermediate schools in Knox County. In many ways we are also at a disadvantage because of that. Instructional assistants are state funded for K-3. As a result even in personnel we are lacking when compared to other schools. Again in some surprising ways, we have even less support per student than most smaller and/or lower socioeconomic schools.

Just once we would like to have funds that would allow us to help our students be working and learning while using the latest technology as opposed to five year old or even older technology. We are a high needs school, due to our huge population.

Specifically we have approximately 55 students who are participating in the RTI (response to intervention) Process. This is a research based process by which students who are deficient in math or reading go the computer lab daily for extra assistance. This process has a 98% accuracy rate in predicting whether or not a student has a learning disability, thus allowing the school to intervene, further diagnose, and develop an individual education plan for that student. Currently due to limited computers we must concentrate on offering this program before the school day begins (at 7:30 am). With more technology these students who are struggling in math or reading will be able to make even more gains because they will have access to extra time on the computer before the school day begins, as well as during the school day in individual classrooms to

increase accuracy and skill levels. Of course additional technology would benefit ALL students at Farragut Intermediate.

Lots of people think that Farragut Community has most everything it needs in its schools and this is a huge misperception. In actuality the students in my building have no more additional funding spent on them per student than the students at other smaller schools including East Knox, Lonsdale, New Hopewell, West Haven or Beaumont. If one takes the time to come tour Farragut Schools, one will find there is great diversity in our older facility and the diverse students we have are also in need of the most up to date technology available just like the students in any other schools. Although some parents do choose to give to our schools, in this tough and tight economy, even the most generous parents are not able to give as much as they once were. Thus, our school should stand just as good a chance of obtaining your support as any other school. Children are so important – any investment in a child pays dividends and gives returns beyond belief.

If we were granted any amount of money from the Optimist Club, our proposal would be to first purchase iPads which would allow RTI students more access to computer time to improve their skills, as well as all students in a classroom to participate at once, to meet their needs for research, word processing, interactive educational games, curriculum enhancement through educational videos (ie Brainpop), and to practice on all skills in all areas through use of websites that have practice pages and other types of effective skill development. Therefore, we urge you to understand and see our need for resources to support the real diversity that is the reality here at Farragut Intermediate School, regardless of the misperception that most people have. Please realize that our school is not “the land of milk and honey” when it comes to technology. However with your generous support, we could definitely get much closer to that sweet land.

If you have questions, please feel free to contact me by phone at work (865) 966-6703 or cell (865) 300-6911 or by email at kay.wellons@knoxschools.org.

Sincerely,

Kay L. Wellons, Ed.S
Principal
Farragut Intermediate School



Education Relations Committee

Strategic Plan

FY 2011 – 2013

Adopted by the Committee:

Major Sections:

- History
- Mission and Adopted Values
- Strategic Issues
- Goals and Objectives
- Performance Measures and Desired Outcomes
- Exhibits/References
 - Exhibit A: Roadmap to Success (simple charted timeline to be used as a milestone indicator)
 - Exhibit B: Proposed Budget (if any)

Town of Farragut Education Relations

History:

Mission and Adopted Values

Mission: *(this should be a simple statement encompassing the overall objective of the Committee) ie. To create and maintain a forum for dialogue with Farragut Schools with the intent of building consensus on educational needs of the Town's schools and its students.*

Values (Guiding Principles): *(these should be the shared values of the Committee....the foundation of why the Committee exists)*

- **Service Excellence:** Timely, accurate and professional response to request for services
- **Fiscal Accountability:** Maintain a high level of output while striving to keep the cost associated with services at a minimum in order to safe guard against wasteful public expenditures
- **Innovation:** Assess the changing needs of the organization and our partners in order to take advantage of the latest technology in municipal e-government
- **Continuous Improvement:** Constantly evaluate our e-government program with the intent of seeking opportunities to update and improve our current operations in order to provide high quality service delivery and remain competitive with other communities
- **Teamwork:** Working together internally and with our business partners in a collaborative, high performing manner, with a common vision and purpose
- **Problem solving:** Continually striving to find practical and effective solutions to achieving desired goals through innovative municipal e-government

- **Continuous Training:** Provide consistent and thorough training to the primary in-house personnel who will be responsible for the maintenance and improvement of our website and delivery of services through e-government

Strategic Issues 2011-2013

(current issues facing the schools...ie funding, volunteer shortage, etc.)

1. The existing website is largely disjointed, inconsistent and hard to navigate.
2. The existing website template does not meet our contemporary needs for e-government.
3. The ability to distribute information (bandwidth) is inadequate for future expansion.
4. Very few Town employees have the technical ability to change or maintain the website.
5. There is little inter-departmental collaboration regarding e-government best practices, which hinders innovation and keeps us from competing with other communities in the realm of community and economic development.
6. There is no follow up, evaluation, performance measures or mechanism in place for updating our e-government service delivery.
7. We currently lack the proper server capacity and web-based public applications required to distribute e-government services (municipal GIS, Laserfiche, Webcast of Board/Planning Commission Meetings).
8. There is minimal internal accountability or oversight of our e-government services.

Strategic Goals and Objectives for FY 2011-2013

(these should be obtainable goals within the suggested timeframe)

1. Goal:
 - a. Objective:
2. Goal:
 - a. Objective:
3. Goal:
 - a. Objective:

Performance Measures & Desired Outcome

(these can be simple measures used to evaluate the effectiveness of our objectives)

Performance measures used to evaluate the achievement of Goals and Objectives:

1. Quarterly evaluation of the Website Evaluation/GIS Integration Team Goals and Objectives. Desired Outcome: meeting the aforementioned objectives
2. Customer / End User Evaluation: data collection through in-house questionnaires and online surveys. Desired Outcome: positive feedback to our evolution in municipal e-government service delivery.
3. Overall decrease in current costs due to digital transfer of data to the consumer compared to our current process of having to provide paper copies and staff time. Desired Outcome: a realized decrease in overall costs of service delivery through e-government.

4. Obtain regional or national recognition for excellence for our municipal e-government services.