

Farragut / Knox County Schools Joint Education Relations Committee Meeting

Meeting minutes, June 4, 2013

Meeting was called to order with a quorum.

Farragut Intermediate staff and faculty presented information on the use of technology in the classroom. Various committee members voice appreciation at this “direct-from-the-classroom” update.

The bulk of the meeting was spent in a conference call with Connie Williams of The Pencil Foundation, 421 Great Circle Road, Nashville, TN 37228. The Pencil Foundation links greater Nashville community resources with Nashville Public Schools and has existed since 1982. A statement from their website follows these notes.

C. Williams shared about the Foundation and spoke positively about Scott Bacon, of Knox County Schools, and his work to engage the Knoxville community. She shared some successes and obstacles that community linkage groups tend to encounter. As we have discovered in our ERC, Ms. Williams indicated that not all schools are overtly interested in community involvement and that linkage facilitators simply have to help meet the need where there is an identified interest.

Information from the Pencil Foundation website at <http://www.pencilfd.org/about>

About PENCIL Foundation

PENCIL Foundation is the premier organization linking community resources of both volunteers and materials with Metro Nashville Public Schools. PENCIL administers eight educational programs that involve the community as volunteers and mentors, provide academic enrichment opportunities, prepare students for graduation and get school supplies in the hands of children who need them.

PENCIL History

On April 1, 1982, PENCIL Foundation opened its doors after several months of collaborative planning by Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools administrators and community and business leaders. These leaders realized that a strong public school system was essential to a healthy future for Nashville and that broad-based support and involvement from the community, including the private sector, were imperative.

Sue Spickard, President of Cumberland Valley Girl Scout Council and sustaining member of the Junior League of Nashville, and Rosalind McGee, President of the League of Women Voters, co-chaired a committee to gather information on successful school-community partnerships. This data was employed in building community support for Nashville public schools. The committee established PENCIL Foundation as a non-profit organization with the following goals:

- Creating a vital link between the private sector and public education
- Increasing understanding of and appreciation for the public school system
- Promoting community involvement in student learning
- Securing a strong commitment from business leaders to help provide materials and resources necessary for schools to meet the needs of their students

A number of business leaders, including Ed Nelson of Commerce Union Bank and Bronson Ingram of Ingram Industries, helped bring the goals of PENCIL Foundation to the business community and gain its support for the schools. A steering committee that included John Hardcastle, Walter Hale II, Vic Campbell, Ralph Mosley, Allen McCampbell and Charles Wray completed the details for forming the new organization.

Brent Poulton from Tennessee State University's Center for Community Education became PENCIL Foundation's first executive director. Donald McNaughton of Hospital Corporation of America was named the foundation's first board chairman. Bronson Ingram, Edward G. Nelson, Charles W. Cook, Jr., Raymond Zimmerman, Carroll Shanks, Shirley Zeitlin, Bill Wire, Frank Warren, Dale Polley, DeWitt Ezell, Jr., Vic Campbell, Ron DeBerry, Don Williamson, Clyde Ingalls, Sue Spickard, DeVan Ard, Jr., Sue Atkinson and Byron Trauger have also served as board chairmen. Enrico J. Pennisi, Jr., Managing Director--Marsh, chairs PENCIL's 2006-2007 Board of Directors.

For more than 30 years, PENCIL Foundation has maintained strong ties with local businesses, community organizations, and Nashville public schools. Currently, the foundation administers nine programs: eight for youth designed to improve academic achievement and one that assists adults in gaining the education and skills necessary for self-sufficiency and successful entry into the workforce.

PENCIL Foundation's major accomplishment has been the creation of PENCIL Partners (originally called Adopt-a-School). Beginning with 37 “adoptions” in 1982-83, the program has grown to include over 800 community-school partnerships that enhance the education of more than 80,000 students in Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools.