

School Watch

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

Bradley County Schools

by Ashley Murphy

The Bradley County Board of Education met in their regular monthly meeting on Thursday, July 8th. Several good news reports across the county made Director of Schools Johnny McDaniel's list. Many teachers and students throughout the school districts were honored or recognized for their accomplishments.

Charleston Elementary is offering summer intervention through the extended contract program. Intervention programs which were delivered during the regular school year are continuing for at-risk students through the summer months.

At Hopewell Elementary, Guidance Counselor Jenne Wilson held an annual community yard sale and

raised over \$1,000 for the school's Be A Real Friend (BARF) program. Every student received a BARF t-shirt with the help of this money and sponsors.

Oak Grove Elementary was selected as the top art school in the state by the Arts Commission. The school received an additional \$10,000 for the art program for the 2010-2011 school year. The plan is to purchase additional smart boards with these funds.

Valley View Junior Beta Club was recognized by Samaritan's Purse for their funding efforts to support the needs of children in America and across the world. The students raised enough funds to supply a child in need with a wheelchair, as well as money to support education and literacy projects across the

world.

Angie Lyon, Derek Martin and Cason Conn were present to give updates on Park View and the Bradley Central Fine Arts Facility. As of now, all construction projects are on track. The Fine Arts Facility has 25-30% of footings completed. Masonry was started at the time of the meeting and foundation walls will begin to be put in.

Derek Martin listed projects ongoing for the Park View Elementary site. Installation of the schools sewer line and water line has been completed. City water now runs to the site. Installation of the gas line and sidewalks had started prior to this meeting. Inside, all ceramic tile has been laid, ceiling grid has been completed and all athletic equipment in the gym has

been installed.

Over the course of the next 30 days, Martin stated that painting will be completed, sidewalks will be finished, kitchen equipment will be put in and conditioned air is hoped to be flowing through the halls by the end of the month.

Park View still has an expected opening date of mid to late September 2010.

Executive Approval was given to set up a portable at GOAL Academy. ISI Construction was the low bidder with \$19,509. Work for this project will include walks, decks, stairs, ramps and a utility connection for the portable, which was moved from Valley View.

Christy Critchfield gave the Board a policy review regarding personal communication and electronic devices. Bradley County

Schools now considers the use of such devices as integral to the successful application of technology in the 21st century classroom. Cell phones, iPods, MP3 players and computers can now be used while on school property, but must be used responsibly.

While the devices are now allowed, school administrators and teachers will define and direct appropriate use of such devices while on school grounds. Violations of parameters of acceptable use of cell phones and other electronic devices will result in disciplinary action.

A revision has been made in the Bradley County Board of Education Code of Ethics. The statement "Upon initial employment, election or appointment each shall sign and date a copy of this Code of Ethics, which shall form

a part of their personnel record. Upon enactment by the Board, all those covered by this Code of Ethics shall deliver a signed dated copy to the Director of Schools" has been deleted from the Board of Education Code of Ethics.

Lastly, Gary Austin, Pupil Personnel Services Director, requested an additional bus route due to the transition to Park View. Resulting in Ken Baker being awarded bus route 41 for Park View Elementary once the new school becomes operational.

Due to scheduling conflicts, the Bradley County Board of Education will hold their next meeting on Thursday, August 19th at 5:30 p.m. in the Administrative Building on the Bradley Central High School campus.

Cleveland City Schools

by Jamie Ramirez

The Cleveland City Board of Education held their regular monthly meeting on Monday, July 12, 2010. First was the reading of the agenda. After a vote on the movement of the regular agenda, the Director Updates were given by Dr. Rick Denning. Updates were given for the construction work being done at Stuart Elementary; lighting work and tile replacement will be finished by Friday July 16th.

Even with a savings of \$56,000 Stuart Elementary was able to get state of the art lighting and restroom fixtures with energy and water saving sinks and toilets. Much of the interior work is scheduled to be finished by Friday with other parts of the project being finished at a later date.

Dr. Denning stated that there is a problem with the HVAC units in the auditorium. The current 15 ton units have died and need to be replaced. So far a quote has been stated of \$95,000

and they are working to get more bids on the project to replace those units.

A report on the Administrative Office Building Property was also given by Dr. Denning, however, he proposed a site meeting for the Board and members of the press.

Dr. Denning proposed a recommendation for a re-designing of the Cleveland High School Eastside parking lot. He says there is a big problem with run-off because of the gravel in the parking area and there is not enough green on the site. A couple of trees were lost in a previous storm and there are other trees that he would like to save near the parking area. He would like to connect the walkway area, curb it and will eventually have about 150 parking spaces when it's all over, including angled spaces and handicapped parking. The recommendation was approved unanimously.

Dr. Denning emailed the board a few weeks ago about The Small Learning Communities Grant. Mr.

McDaniel from Bradley County Schools approached Dr. Denning about this grant. He and Autumn O'Bryan, Principal of Cleveland High School, have been working together on it. This is a grant for about \$1,750,000 for 3 high schools, spread over a five year period. "Fortunately, Autumn managed this same type of grant before moving here," Dr. Denning said.

"It's a Federal Grant, it's about 8 years old and they were looking for a third school to partner with Walker Valley and Bradley Central to raise together a grant for Smaller Learning Community," stated O'Bryan during the board meeting. "The two priorities for this grant are common planning; which we have some structure already built and put into place, and post secondary planning. This is to have structure built in and have plans for additional initiative involved in that area."

This will help build a bridge between the three schools. The focus is on

personal and professional development. A project director will be in charge of the primary operations of the grant and each school will have a site director. This type of grant focuses on personnel and professional development and will help with school needs when it comes to the professional development of the teachers. They will be introduced to new ways of thinking and teaching. It's training for faculty and sustainable work with a 95% success rate.

Dr. Rick Denning was named as Southeast Regional Superintendent of the Year by the Tennessee Organization of School Superintendents; with many achievements under his belt, this is one more to add. However, this great news doesn't come without some sadness. Dr. Denning announced his plan to retire in front of the Board during the meeting. He has given his notice one year before leaving so the board will have an adequate amount of time to find a new superintendent. They are doing a

nationwide search for the new Superintendent of Schools and are really trying to do their homework. They want talk to the Tennessee School Board of Education about this and try to work out this transition. He has served the Cleveland City School Board for 15 years and is only the 9th school superintendent in the past 125 years.

Dr. Denning's letter was read by Mrs. Peggy Pesterfield, Chair of the Cleveland City Board of Education, followed by a standing ovation.

Bradley Cleveland Public Education Foundation meeting was a large meeting with Bradley County, and the board members were very impressed with the work of the foundation. "A lot of it is due to the dedication and the hard work and the integrity of the community that worked on the Foundation," said board chair Peggy Pesterfield. "The national certification is really taking hold." They had about 25 teachers working on the first level and others that

are going on to the second level. Unfortunately, the City Schools did not apply for as many grants as they could have and were not awarded as much money as the county schools.

The next item on the agenda was a discussion and change of board policies concerning food being brought into the cafeteria during school hours and personal communication devices. On the policy concerning food being brought into the cafeteria, a change has been made. It now states, "Foods from outside sources, such as local restaurants may not be brought to students in the dining hall. These types of food must be included in a lunch packed from home." The board expressed an issue with this change of wording. The problem is that teachers like to, and have in the past, brought students foods from local restaurants. These are treats and rewards for students with excellent conduct in academics and other achievements.

Continued on page 11...