

## 5/3/16 LPC Forum Question/Concerns/Comments

The following is a list of concerns voiced at the public Forum on 5/3/16. There were not a lot of questions asked but those that were are included here with the answer. Most were suggestions or thoughts for the LPC to consider.

- How many school age children live in our county but attend schools in other counties? *The estimate of around 140 was given during the meeting by the DPP.*
- What are we missing in Trimble County that other counties and schools offer? What do we as a community to entice these students to come back? We need to be like the Girls Basketball team and have participation, cooperation, and a common focal point. The speaker praised our teaching staff. The question was asked, "Doe anyone in this room have children going to school in another county? Mr. Miracle, do your children attend Trimble County Schools? You should be the leader and lead by example. If you bring your children to Trimble County you show faith in our schools.

*As a candidate for the position of Superintendent in Trimble County, I was honest and open about my intentions before I was even interviewed. I called a board member to inform him that I would not sign a contract with a residency clause in it. I stated that I understood that that may disqualify me from consideration and I was willing to accept that. I wanted to be sure that I did not waste the board's time nor did I want to deceive anyone so it was important to me to inform the board prior to the interview in case they wanted to interview someone in my place instead. That would be fair to both the board and any other candidate that happened to take my place should I be disqualified. I was informed by the board member that I was still someone they wanted to interview. This question came up in my interview, as to my living out of the district and my son going to school outside of the district. My was and is: This is a personal decision that has nothing to do with the county in which I live, whose school by the way I hold in no more esteem than the schools here, or through any slight to Trimble County as a community or a school system. As an educator for 18 years I have preached to parents that consistency is important in the education of a child and moving schools should only be done as a last resort. I also stated that my son had just gone through a transition into a middle school that was not districted with those student he attended elementary school with. 6<sup>th</sup> grade was hard and I would not do that to him again. He is also very involved in school through Leader in Me, basketball, and football. I told the board that my family is more important to me than a job, and as the parent I would make the sacrifice of not being hired to moving my son. I was offered the position. I know that I have been criticized and judged based upon this decision but I feel that I acted with honesty and integrity throughout, as I have always in all of my jobs, and as I do daily as the leader of this school district. I would hope that people are hired based upon their experience, their knowledge, and their record.*

*Where I live has no impact on any of that. I applied for the position, I did not force anyone to hire me.*

- How many people were working in the district office when you got here? Did you add two new positions to board office? Was that a need?

*Going back once again to when I was only a candidate for the position of Superintendent, I was asked in my interview if I had anyone I could bring with me. I was also asked how I would address the issue of so many duties being assigned to district personnel. I had already researched this and had it in my initial plan for the district that a division of duties would be necessary and it would require two new positions. I again was not deceptive in this at all. Both the board and I seemed to understand that this was a need, even before I was hired. We heard from some committee members and some staff members in the forum that these positions have been a benefit. While they are constantly thrown out as reasons for our financial issues, either on Facebook or in covert conversations in which people misquote facts or change them to fit their need, they have little to do with our current struggles. It has been presented publicly now at least two times that if you look at the general fund expenditures over the past 3 years, there is no significant change. This is why stating that the two new positions are the cause of our financial problems is false. There is no factual evidence to support it. Our current issues stem from declining enrollment. 259 students in the last 10 years, 87 this year. The loss of 87 students equates to \$285,255.00. For the past four years the district chose not to take the 4% tax, a cost of \$474,000.00 to the district. The impact of these events over time have culminated into our present state. We still have to run the district, we still have to provide the best education we can provide. Costs of everything go up every year. We have had a mandated 2% raise for teachers for that past two years, without state finding to support it.. Somehow two positions that have offered support that was needed are the cause. With or without those positions, our problems will remain. One of the positions is not returning. I made the statement in the forum when asked that this connected back to the question of what the community could do. The reason it is not returning is due to the scrutiny and criticism that the position and the person has undergone by some in the community. That person has chosen not work in our district any longer after this school year.*

- Can we take time to consider this? If we are going to make a change let's not do it haphazardly.

*At the district level we have been planning for this since late November, when it was first deemed a possibility. We have taken time and are continuing to do so. If anything places pressure on us at this point it is continuing to stall on making a decision one way or the other. There is still time to make the changes necessary if the decision is made soon. We are, however, reaching a point where we are running out of time to make any change effectively from a logistical standpoint.*

- Can we phase in the change? 6<sup>th</sup> grade to elementary next year, begin to move office staff, then move 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade next year?

*This is certainly a possibility and may in fact become necessary depending on how long it takes to have a decision from the LPC. Regardless the LPC would be approving the same plan as the timing of implementation is not governed by KDE, the District Facility Plan, or the LPC.*

- Speaker stated having gone to school in Trimble in 1996 when BES and TCHS were in the same building and there was no overcrowding, even though our enrollment was higher than it is now. As to two new positions at the board office the speaker stated that she used to never see board office staff in their school, now they see board office staff at least weekly in their building.