Ball State University, Muncie Community Schools and the city of Muncie have a long relationship, and House Bill 1315 will lead to an advantageous and prosperous collaboration for all stakeholders.

I am one of those stakeholders. I am a Muncie resident who grew up in the area, and before joining the Ball State faculty in 2016, I had a long relationship with MCS. When I was a Ball State student, I did my student teaching at Muncie Central. Later, I taught science in MCS schools for 12 years, first at Southside High School, then Central. I also worked as a Woodrow Wilson clinical faculty member for more than six years while teaching at MCS.

Based on the language of the bill, it is my understanding that MCS would remain a community school corporation, and despite what you’ve heard in the rumor mill, MCS would remain a public school system. The community would have a voice, something we’re lacking now. This proposal already has outlined many clear, concise and transparent strategies to strengthen the academic success of MCS, along with encouraging the viewpoints and opinions of teachers, parents and students.

Although Ball State and MCS will remain financially independent, the university has many resources to offer our local schools.

- Ball State has access to a variety of grant opportunities that could be applied for in conjunction with MCS teachers. Major corporations and endowments might see such an interesting collaboration as an opportunity as well. In fact, many educational foundations would entertain the idea of becoming an active participant, aiding financial stability for MCS.
- Both institutions are rich in talent. Faculty members at Ball State and MCS could collaborate to increase professional development at every level. Continuing education possibilities for MCS faculty members provided by Ball State would allow more teachers to satisfy state and national mandates and allow a wider variety of courses offered at MCS, bringing in more students.
- Ball State and MCS could continue to increase their commitment to service learning, while extending that learning and service into the community with long-term and sustainable service projects. We could see urban renewal projects as an extension of this collaboration and pool of resources. This type of collaboration could also draw more students to Ball State and more families to Muncie.
- The proposed legislation could lead to a sustainable, diverse teaching pool and encourage more Muncie students to stay and give back to the community. MCS students could start building relationships early on with Ball State faculty members, choose Ball State for post-secondary education and then secure employment in our schools and businesses. All of this allows for a stronger sense of community.

Relationships flourish when the participants have a common goal. This collaboration would create a unique relationship with all stakeholders. If Ball State assumes responsibility for managing MCS, we can build upon the positive work already being done and take it to a whole new level.
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