

The Effingham County Board of Education met in special session on January 10, 2018 at 5:30 p.m. at Effingham County Middle School with the following members present: F. Lamar Allen, Beth Helmly, Vickie Decker, Robert Grant and Troy K. Alford.

The purpose of this meeting was to discuss upcoming redistricting plans

Board Chair F. Lamar Allen called the meeting to order.

Superintendent Randy Shearouse opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and then advised that there would be one more Public Hearing on January 18, 2018 at South Effingham Middle School at 6:00 p.m.

Dr. Shearouse discussed the rapid growth in the school system over the last few years and how this has impacted school enrollment.

Dr. Shearouse also explained School Choice and how this would be made available to those impacted by the district changes. He stated that all of the schools will be open for School Choice next year.

The Superintendent introduced Assistant Transportation Coordinator Eric Harris who presented a PowerPoint Presentation explaining the rationale of the district changes. Mr. Harris and Dr. Shearouse answered questions from the audience.

Superintendent Shearouse asked for comments from the audience.

Ms. Angela Steward asked if there would be a STEM program at Ebenezer Middle School. Principal Amie Dickerson explained that currently there is not a STEM team but there are STEM teachers that lead STEM lessons.

Mr. Curt Kessler asked how long before the system would need to redistrict again. Dr. Shearouse explained that the hope is not to redistrict again for five years. He then stated that there is not really a way to predict which areas would be affected by growth, but currently the south end of the county is having the fastest growth in the system. Mr. Kessler asked if transportation would be provided for any school choice students. Dr. Shearouse stated that normally we do not provide transportation.

A parent advised that she lives in Hickory Knob and wanted to know why the subdivision was divided down the middle with one group attending Rincon Elementary and the other group attending Ebenezer Elementary. Dr. Shearouse stated that he recalled the subdivision being separated by a dividing road. Dr. Shearouse reiterated that school choice would be available.

Ms Jennifer Heaton stated that she lives in Effingham and currently teaches at a school in Chatham County. She said that her children cannot attend schools in Effingham because she has to be at work at 7:00 and there isn't a school open at 6:15-7:00 so that she could drop off her children. She asked if the time would change for schools to be open with the new districting.

At the conclusion of the hearing, Board Chair F. Lamar Allen thanked everyone for coming and stated that the regularly scheduled board meeting would begin in 5 minutes. He invited anyone that would like to stay.

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F. Lamar Allen, Chairman

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Dr. Randy Shearouse, Superintendent