MUSCOGEE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
COLUMBUS, GEORGIA
MONDAY, OCTOBER 16, 2000

MINUTES

The regular meeting of the Board of Education of the Muscogee County School District was held on Monday, October 16, 2000, 6:30 p.m. in the conference room at the Bradley Library.

The following members were present: Mary Sue Polleys, Chairman, James Walker, Vice Chairman, David E. Ebron, Linda Parker, Fife Whiteside, John Wells, Barbara Pierce, and Brenda Storey.

Others present: James E. Humes, II, Legal Counsel, Fred M. Jones, Treasurer, Billy Kendall, Administrative Assistant, Brenda Dozier, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services, Gordon Stallings, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, Tom Walters, Assistant Superintendent for Personnel, Myles Caggins, Assistant Superintendent for Business Affairs, Bill Hortman, Associate Superintendent, and representatives from the media.

Mrs. Polleys called the meeting to order with an invocation and pledge of allegiance to the flag led by students from Allen Elementary School along with Mrs. Connie Johnson. Mrs. Polleys recognized visitors in the audience; Mr. Ditchfield, Board Member-Elect, and representing South Columbus Concerned Citizens, and MEEF Board; Mr. & Mrs. Halouska representing the League of Women Voters and Friends of the Libraries; Mrs. Annie Askew representing various PTA'S and an unidentified lady representing the Greater Columbus Gifted Program. Dr. Vander Gheynst introduced principals of the following school who have earned Pay for Performance awards. Dr. Vander Gheynst informed the Board that there were eight awards, the most Muscogee County has every had with this year's total earnings being $728,000; Jose Negron', Arnold Middle; Rochelle Jones, Linda Moore, Sheila Brock, Blanchard Elementary; Betty Hipps, Barbara Haynes, Clara Bedingfield, Double Churches Elementary; Linda Jenkins, Jean David Eastway Elementary; Donna Johnson, Janice Fanastock, Kim Huskins, Edgewood Elementary; Joe Ryan, Diane Tucker, Mathews Elementary; Cora Pooler, Pauline Talley, St. Mary's Elementary; Jim Hayes, Cheryl List, Wesley Heights Elementary. Mr. Caggins, Mrs. Schneider and Mrs. Barnett introduced Richard D'Amato, nutrition manager at Key Elementary who won first place in the USDA School Food Services Southeast Regional. Dr. Budge, President of Friends of Libraries presented a check for $500 to the Board for the 12th Street Library. Mr. Seth Harp presented (5) computers formerly used in the office of the late Paul Coverdell to Reese Road Elementary, Mrs. Jeanella Pendleton, Principal accepted the gift on behalf of Reese Road Elementary. Mrs. Noren, a Blanchard Elementary parent spoke to the Board regarding her concerns of safety because of construction at the school.

Upon motion of Mr. Wells seconded by Mrs. Storey, the Board unanimously approved official actions taken at the regular Board of Education meeting on September 18, 2000.

Upon motion of Mr. Whiteside, seconded by Mr. Ebron, the Board unanimously approved the absence of Dr. Philip Schley due to out of town business.

Upon motion of Mrs. Parker, seconded by Mr. Ebron, the Board unanimously approved the establishment of an anniversary garden at the Central Office to commemorate the 50th anniversary year of the Muscogee County School District.

Upon motion of Mrs. Parker, seconded by Mr. Ebron, the Board approved new policy (JGC) School Health Nurse Program. This policy has been on the table for thirty days. The vote was (7) affirming and (1) opposing, Wells.

Upon motion of Mrs. Parker, seconded by Mr. Ebron, the Board approved a draft proposal for implementing Model I of the School Health Services Program and the use of funds from the budgetary reserve. Mr. Whiteside asked Mr. Humes for his opinion. Mr. Humes commented that it would be appropriate to send a copy of the proposal to GSBA for review and to insure coverage for the school nurses. Mrs. Polleys said that this could be included in the motion to send a copy of the proposal to GSBA for their review. Mr. Ebron commented that the services are needed, they will help with immunization, giving out medication and although it is an unfunded mandate, it is needed because of the tremendous amount of medication given out by the schools. Mr. Ebron further stated that there are children who are disruptive and some that have medical conditions that will benefit from this program. Mr. Wells commented that if the State is requiring this then they should provide proper financing. Mr. Whiteside asked the Administration to report back to the Board next month on the progress of hiring nurses. Mrs. Polleys said that this plan calls for hiring (1) lead nurse, R.N.; (5) school nurses and (51) part-time unlicensed personnel to be clinic clerks. The vote was (7) affirming and (1) opposing, Wells.

Upon motion of Mrs. Pierce, seconded by Mrs. Parker, the Board unanimously approved to transfer the Georgia Comer Artwork from Muscogee County School District to a collection at the Columbus Museum.

Upon motion of Mrs. Pierce, seconded by Mr. Ebron, the Board approved the proposal of Gossage Sager Associates, LLC to provide executive search and consulting services related to the hiring of a new library director and a budget adjustment in the amount of $30,000 from the budgeted reserve. Mrs. Parker commented that it is "difficult for her to approve $30,000 to pay consultants to hire a director for the new library when there are talented people here. The library committee could do the same thing, check references, resumes and do an interview. What's so hard about that? You're talking about paying $30,000 of taxpayers money to do that and when you hire people, you hire by trial and error. This person may not even work out so we lost $30,000. My thing is I just cannot sit here and give away $30,000 to hire someone." Mr. Walker asked whose budget would the $30,000 come out of ? Mr. Sims said this would come from the budgeted reserve. Mr. Wells commented that the Board had previously asked the Superintendent that "when the directorship of the library comes open to initiate a search and after speaking with the Superintendent the Superintendent has convinced him that the professional help to hire a new director is more essential now than ever." Mr. Walker commented that, "after finding out the money will come from the budgetary reserve rather than the library budget, can action on this be delayed?" Mr. Sims said that it is critical to go ahead because the new director needs to be involved in working with the architect and it's going to take a minimum of (4) months to do a search and that is pushing it. Mrs. Parker commented, "the Library Committee searched for the architect in New York, but certainly if they went to New York and got the architect, I would think the architect would be just as important as the director, surely we wouldn't have to pay $30,000 of tax payer money. We were just complaining about the $10,000 that we are going to have to give for the nurses program and possibly it will be more money for the nurses program which I think is important to. I think we need to do a little bit more evaluating. That's just my personal opinion." Mr. Sims said that he wanted to "remind the Board and make sure the public understands, there was an offer to pay for this out of non-taxpayers money. The Board made the decision and chose that they wanted to pay for it so that they would have more control over the selection of that person. But we turned the offer down." Mr. Wells commented that, "the Board has had time to look over the inflammatory library report. I am not willing to let someone else pay for this search because I want it to belong to the Board. We want to be able to control this and the outcome of it and pay for it ourselves". Mrs. Pierce commented, "I know that I made the motion to move because of being the chairperson but I'm having a lot of mixed feelings listening to Mrs. Parker and Mr. Wells. I understand where Mrs. Parker is coming from especially politically because every time we spend money, somebody stops me on the street and ask, how about them para-professionals. As a Board member, I know that I am not qualified to hire anybody. I don't have the expertise of the library to think that I could stand here and hire somebody to run a $30,000,000 library so that is why I am going to support it." Mr. Whiteside commented, "when we made the decision to permit the Project Development to do the study that Mr. Wells alluded to. I had some questions at that time whether or not that really ought not to have been a study that we should have been responsible for and paid for and the point about that is like it or not for better or worse we are charged with the responsibility of providing governance for the library as well as for the school district and there is only a certain amount of that we can delegate out to people. Having said that, I don't have the ability to hire." The vote was (7) affirming and (1) opposing, Parker.

Upon motion of Mrs. Storey, seconded by Mr. Wells, the Board unanimously approved the Georgia Challenge Program Grant Site Award from the Georgia Council for the Arts in the amount of $40,000 to be used for arts programming in dance, music, theatre, and visual arts for grades K-5.

Upon motion of Mrs. Storey, seconded by Mr. Walker, the Board unanimously approved a Georgia Council for the Arts Touring Grant in the total amount of $5,000 to be used for performances and workshops. Mr. Ebron commended Mrs. Nail for her work in acquiring these grants. Mr. Wells also commended Mrs. Nail.

Upon motion of Mrs. Storey, seconded by Mr. Walker, the Board unanimously approved a collaboration between Reese Road Elementary and the Columbus Boys and Girls Clubs to implement a pilot physical fitness program to benefit students in grades 3-5 and special activities for students in 1st and 2nd grades.

Upon motion of Mrs. Storey, seconded by Mr. Ebron, the Board approved a policy on the establishment of Charter Schools within the Muscogee County School District. Mr. Humes commented that the proposed policy is drafted on the basis of State laws governing charter schools and rules following State law put out by the State Board of Education and basically local school boards can do no less than that. Mr. Wells asked that the policy be made available for those desiring to establish charter schools. Mr. Whiteside commented that "by having a policy in place, miscommunication with those wishing to establish charter schools can be avoided." Mrs. Parker commented that there are too many unanswered questions and she "cannot support charter schools." Mrs. Parker said the "charter schools will take away from public schools and she was not elected to represent charter schools." Mrs. Parker said "charter schools are not going to allow this Board to govern them". Mrs. Storey said she "has the same concerns as Mrs. Parker, but the policy will give the Board some parameters that anyone presenting a charter school application for approval will have to meet certain criteria." Mrs. Pierce commented that as she understands it, "this is just a policy and it doesn't mean the Board has to approve it and as far as control, if it doesn't work it can be voided and I can support it." Mr. Ebron commented that, "if this policy does not receive a unanimous vote then it will lie on the table for thirty days and will be voted on again." Mr. Ebron asked "if there is a request between now and the next sixty days, the Board cannot act on it until there is a policy or can the Board act on what State law dictates?" Mr. Humes commented that the Board could act on a request in accordance with State laws governing charter schools. Mrs. Parker commented that she is "aware that this is a policy proposal but wanted to make it clear that she does not support charter schools." The vote was (7) affirming and (1) opposing, Parker. The policy will lie on the table for (30) days.

Upon motion of Mr. Wells, seconded by Mrs. Storey, the Board unanimously approved financial statements for one month ending July 31, 2000.

Upon motion of Mr. Wells, seconded by Mrs. Storey, the Board unanimously approved the (CAFR) Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for the year ended June 30, 2000 and six-year trend information.

Upon motion of Mr. Wells, seconded by Mrs. Storey, the Board unanimously approved the plans as prepared by JRA Architects, Inc. for the construction of new high school No. 1 which will be located on Williams Road; consisting of fifty-six instructional units, gymnasium, media center, administrative area, kitchen/cafeteria and a multi-purpose space. Funds are available in the sales tax budget. Mr. Whiteside asked questions regarding the layout of the parking lot, which is actually located on, property owned by the City of Columbus. Mr. Humes commented that it would be prudent to get the City involved as quickly as possible and contact the federal government to make sure they have no problem with it. Mrs. Storey said, "even it means cutting off a portion of the parking lot and making it smaller, it would cost less and not more." Mrs. Parker asked the cost of the school? Mr. Sims said the original budget was $13.6 million and the estimate at this point is $14.2 million. Mr. Sims said there is value engineering and other things going on to bring the cost lower.

Upon motion of Mr. Wells, seconded by Mrs. Storey, the Board unanimously approved the plans for construction at Britt David Magnet Academy as prepared by Neal, Kendust & Murray, P.C., Architects.

Upon motion of Mr. Wells, seconded by Mrs. Storey, the Board unanimously approved change order no. 2 in the amount of $48,931.72 to be added to the original contract for construction at Gentian Elementary.

Upon motion of Mr. Wells, seconded by Mrs. Parker, the Board unanimously approved a confirmation purchase order in the amount of $16,188.00 to Summit Systems, Inc., for additional data cabling at St. Mary's Elementary.

Upon motion of Mr. Wells, seconded by Mrs. Storey, the Board unanimously approved the re-direction of SPLOST funds between (7) schools. This will enable the school district to take advantage of $416,112.00 provided by the Schools & Libraries Division funding for the third year of E-Rate.

Upon motion of Mr. Wells, seconded by Mr. Walker, the Board unanimously approved the following consent agenda items with the exception of item D:

- Approved Personnel Report. (Appendix A)
- FY2001 Georgia Department of Education Pay for Performance Award new budgets.
- FY2001 Technology/Career Education Extended Day Grants, $58,287.00 new budget.
- FY2001 Georgia Council for the Arts Touring Program Grant, $5,000 new budget.
- FY2001 Alternate Roots Artists Grants budget, $1,925.00 new budget.
- FY2001 Georgia Challenge Program Grant Site Award, $40,000 new budget.
- FY2001 Title VI (Class Reduction) Funds new budget.
- FY2001 Title VI (Innovative Strategies) Funds new budget.
- FY2001 Title II (Eisenhower) Funds new budget.
- Approved budget adjustment for Staff Development to re-allocate funds.
- Approved financial assistance requests in the total amount of $2,930.94.

Mr. Ebron commented that he understood that services for athletic training is already being provided by the Hughston Clinic free, why is there a need to contract out for athletic services? Mr. Jones said that these services were agreed upon by high school principals and that now athletic services provided by the Hughston Clinic must be contracted and paid for. Mr. Ebron asked what funds are being used? Mr. Jones said from local activity and Instructional. Mr. Sims said that the program is a part of Hardaway High Schools Sports Medicine Program and that is why Instructional funds can be used. Upon motion of Mr. Wells, seconded by Mrs. Storey, the Board approved contracts for athletic training services with Human Performance & Rehabilitation Center, Inc., for Hardaway, Kendrick and Columbus High Schools. The vote was (6) affirming, (1) opposing, Ebron and (1) abstaining, Pierce.

Mrs. Polleys reminded the Board of the listening sessions scheduled for the week as listed on the information agenda.

Upon motion of Mrs. Storey, seconded by Mr. Wells, the Board unanimously voted to go into executive session to hear a three student discipline appeals.

Upon motion of Mr. Wells, seconded by Mr. Walker, the Board unanimously voted to come out of executive session.

Upon motion of Mrs. Storey, seconded by Mr. Walker, the Board unanimously voted to adjourn the regular October meeting of the Board.

James E. Humes, II
Legal Counsel