MUSCOGEE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
COLUMBUS, GEORGIA

REGULAR BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
MONDAY, MAY 17, 2004, 6:30 P.M.
BRADLEY LIBRARY CONFERENCE ROOM

MINUTES

The regular meeting of the Board of Education of the Muscogee County School District was held on Monday, May 17, 2004, 6:30 p.m. in the conference room at the Bradley Library.

The following members were present: James Walker, Vice Chairman, Brenda P. Storey, David E. Ebron, Fife M. Whiteside, John Wells, Naomi Buckner and Owen Ditchfield.

Others present: John A. Phillips, Jr., Superintendent of Education, James E. Humes, II, Legal Counsel, Del Parker, Treasurer, Brenda F. Dozier, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services, Robin Pennock, Chief Academic Officer, Don A. Cooper, Jr., Chief Human Resources Officer, Billy Kendall, Administrative Assistant, Myles Caggins, Assistant Superintendent for Business Affairs, Bill Hortman, Associate Superintendent and representatives from the media.

Mr. Walker called the meeting to order with an invocation and pledge of allegiance to the flag led by students from Clubview Elementary. The Character Education word was introduced by a student from Clubview – Tolerance. Mr. Walker recognized visitors in the audience.

The Board held a Public Hearing on the Property Tax Digest as required under O.C.G.A. §48-5-32.1. Mr. Louis Carver spoke on this issue. There were no other speakers therefore, Mr. Walker declared that the hearing was held in accordance with the law.

Mr. Walker called on Dr. Phillips who recognized; 2005 Teacher of the Year, Tim Vinson; 2005 Outstanding First Year Teacher, Amanda Lane; and 2005 Sara Spano Top Teacher, Caron McNeil. The Board then recognized the School Nutrition Program Awards; Governor's Honors; Page One; Japan Bowl; Odyssey of the Mind; State VICA; and AFLAC All American Baseball.

Mr. Walker recognized those to speak on the Public Forum. Mr. Dubose of the NAACP spoke. A parent Andrea Gardner had requested to speak but was not in attendance.

Dr. Phillips presented a tentative proposal of the FY05 budget to the Board as information. Mr. Walker noted that the Board will vote on a tentative budget on June 7, 2004 at a called meeting. Mrs. Buckner and Mr. Ditchfield spoke regarding the proposal to eliminate Reading Recovery. Dr. Pennock presented statistics on the Reading Recovery Program. She stated, "there are forty-four Reading Recovery teachers; six are paid with Title I money, three teacher leaders. They saw a total of 201 students first semester. In those three periods they went from two students in the morning to six students for a semester. The average for three periods was 4 ½ students. There are approximately 201 students in the program, 86 successfully met the Reading Recovery standards at the end of the first round from the 33 elementary schools. This is a success rate of 43% by Reading Recovery standards. There are 199 students being seen during the second semester. The Reading Recovery teachers see from a low of 3 students to a high of 7 students. There are 150 students projected to meet Reading Recovery Standards by the end of the year and that is 75%. When I look at the total number seen, over the two semesters, it is 400 children. The total number projected to meet Reading Recovery Standards by the end of the year is 236 out of that 400 or 59%. There are another 400 out there that did not get the program. The salary cost for each Reading Recovery participant this year was $3,461.00. The salary cost for each successful Reading Recovery student climbs to $5,866.00 per student. The cost of salaries next year to Muscogee County School District for regular education para-professionals is $2.7 million which is almost the cost of the Reading Recovery Program. This is an incredibly hard decision. We are facing probably the most stringent budget year on record in Georgia schools."

Mr. Whiteside asked for a discussion at the June meeting of the Board on the policy regarding the budget process. Mr. Whiteside said, "the Board needs to put guidelines in place in the policy that establish timelines that make it possible for the public to have a meaningful opportunity to review the budget and comment on it." Mr. Whiteside also asked for a discussion at the June meeting on compensation for Central Office employees under the Pay for Performance Plan. Mr. Wells commented, "I have asked with every new program that an evaluation instrument be put into that program and be brought back to us. We have not had an evaluation of Reading Recovery this in depth since it has been implemented. Where is the evaluation? If we had an evaluation three or four years ago when the grant ended we wouldn't be in this situation. It's not this superintendent's fault but, I've been saying this for the last six or seven years. If you put in a program, bring us an evaluation component. If I had seen where we were paying approximately $3 million to see 400 children with only a 49% success rate, I don't see how this Board could have approved it. I never knew this until you did the research."

Upon motion of Mrs. Storey, seconded by Mr. Wells, the Board unanimously approved the absence of Dr. Polleys and Dr. Schley.

Upon motion of Mr. Whiteside, seconded by Mr. Ebron, the Board unanimously voted to modify the agenda to include an addendum.

Upon motion of Mr. Wells, seconded by Mr. Ebron, the Board unanimously approved official actions taken at the regular Board of Education meeting held on April 19, 2004 with a change and called meetings held on April 27, 2004 and May 10, 2004.

Upon motion of Mr. Wells, seconded by Mrs. Storey, the Board unanimously approved the appointment of Mr. Dwain Tovey to the position of Principal at Jordan Vocational High School.

Upon motion of Mr. Wells, seconded by Mr. Ebron, the Board unanimously approved the appointment of Mr. Johnny Freeman to the position of Principal at Rose Hill/Daniel Alternative School.

Upon motion of Mrs. Storey, seconded by Mr. Wells, the Board unanimously approved the appointment of Mr. Edward Wilson to the position of Principal at Midland Academy.

Upon motion of Mr. Wells, seconded by Mrs. Storey, the Board unanimously approved the appointment of Mrs. Nancy Housand to the position of Principal at Mathews Elementary.

Upon motion of Mr. Ditchfield, seconded by Mr. Wells, the Board unanimously approved the removal of Acting Principal status to that of Principal for Dr. Ann Robison at Hannan Magnet Academy.

Upon motion of Mr. Wells, seconded by Mr. Ditchfield, the Board unanimously approved a revision to policy JB – Student Attendance.

Upon motion of Mr. Ebron, seconded by Mr. Wells, the Board unanimously approved a revision to policy JCD – Student Behavior Code and Discipline Policy Handbook.

Upon motion of Mr. Ditchfield, seconded by Mr. Ebron, the Board approved a request from the Woodall Program to establish a year round school schedule. The vote was (6) affirming and (1) opposing, Mr. Wells.

Upon motion of Ms. Buckner, seconded by Mr. Ditchfield, the Board approved a request from Forrest Road Elementary to implement year round education. The vote was (6) affirming and (1) opposing, Mr. Wells.

Upon motion of Mr. Ebron, seconded by Mrs. Storey, the Board unanimously approved the appointment of Robinson, Grimes & Company, P.C., to perform financial and compliance audits for the school district.

Upon motion of Mr. Wells, seconded by Mr. Ebron, the Board unanimously voted to table any action on the request from the Georgia Department of Revenue, to refund taxes collected through the 1997 SPLOST until further information can be obtained. The amount of the claim is $1,044,868.20.

Upon motion of Mr. Wells, seconded by Mr. Ebron, the Board unanimously awarded a contract to Darton Roofing, Inc. in the amount of $249,542.00 and approved a budget for a total of $289,469.00 for roofing at St. Elmo School.

Upon motion of Mr. Wells, seconded by Mr. Ebron, the Board unanimously approved as one motion the Financial Statements for nine months ending March 31, 2004 and the continuance of the Employee Assistance Program with the Pastoral Institute funding for FY05 is $75,000.

Upon motion of Mr. Wells, seconded by Mrs. Storey, the Board unanimously approved the following consent agenda items including addendum items A-C with the exception of consent agenda items G 1-3; H 1, 2, and I:

- Human Resources Report. (Appendix A)
- Local Application to Georgia Department of Technical and Adult Education.
- Technology/Career Education Local Plan and Funding Application.
- Grant, Arts & Humanities, $4,300.00.
- Purchase order Intrusion Detection Sensor, $20,150.00.
- Budget adjustment, Printing, Graphics, & Mail, $35,000.00.
- Budget adjustment, Safe & Drug Free Schools, $27,000.00.
- Budget adjustment, IDEA Flow Through, FY04.
- Budget adjustment, Contingency Reserve, Sales Tax Election, $84,727.00.
- Budget adjustment, 4-8 State Grant, Elementary & Middle media centers for June.
- Budget adjustment, Horizon Software Package at Bradley Library, $35,455.00.
- New budget, JTPA Summer Youth Program, $39,741.00.
- Donation, AFLAC, $16,000.00 for Summer Reading Program at Bradley Library.

- Contract awarded, Orkin Exterminating Company, $56,760.00, FY05.
- Contract awarded, Moore-Warren Equipment Company, $44,350.00, cooler at Carver High School in Nutrition Program.
- Contract renewal, CybraryN, $20,040.30 computer maintenance at Library.
- Report on Transfer from FY03 SPLOST Critical Needs.
- FY97 Sales Tax Construction Report.
- Financial Assistance, $1,140.97.

After some discussion Mr. Wells made a motion seconded by Mr. Ebron to approve items G1, contract awarded to Environmental Partners, $175,363.20 for system-wide solid waste disposal; G2, contract awarded to Waste Management of Alabama-Opelika, $5,040.00 for garbage compactors at Eastway and Rothschild; G3, contract awarded to Reaves Wrecking Company, $10,080.00 for construction dumpsters and I, Sales Tax Construction Program Report. The vote was unanimous.

Upon motion of Mr. Ebron, seconded by Mr. Ditchfield, the Board approved the renewal of a contract to Stevens Gymnasiums, in the amount of $36,750.00 for refinishing and re-coating gym floors system-wide. The vote was (6) affirming and (1) opposing, Mr. Whiteside.

Upon motion of Mr. Wells, seconded by Mr. Ebron, the Board approved the renewal of a contract to Southeastern Facility Management, in the amount of $78,643.50 for system-wide carpet cleaning. The vote was (6) affirming and (1) opposing, Mr. Whiteside.

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

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

Upon motion of Mr. Wells, seconded by Mr. Ditchfield, the Board unanimously voted to adjourn the regular meeting of the Board.

James E. Humes, II
Legal Counsel