MUSCOGEE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
COLUMBUS, GEORGIA

CALLED BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
BRADLEY LIBRARY CONFERENCE ROOM
FRIDAY, JUNE 4, 2004, 2:00 P.M.

MINUTES

A Called Meeting of the Muscogee County Board of Education was held on Friday, June 4, 2004, 2:00 p.m. in the conference room at the Bradley Library.

The following Board Members were present: Mary Sue Polleys, Chairman, James Walker, Vice Chairman, Brenda Storey, David Ebron, Fife M. Whiteside, John Wells, Naomi Buckner, and Owen Ditchfield.

Others present: John A. Phillips, Jr., Superintendent of Education, James E. Humes, II, Greg Ellington, Legal Counsel, Robin Pennock, Chief Academic Officer, Don Cooper, Chief of Human Resources, Margaret Maria Meltzer, Human Resources Coordinator, James Arnold, Principal of Shaw High School, Theodore Gilbert, Teacher, Charlie Cox, Legal Counsel from Macon, Georgia, Houser Pugh, Presiding Mediator, Bobby Russell, court reporter, Mark Rice from the Ledger-Enquirer and other public spectators.

Upon motion of Mrs. Storey, seconded by Mr. Ebron, the Board unanimously voted to excuse Dr. Schley.

Dr. Polleys called the meeting to order. Dr. Polleys stated that the purpose of the called meeting was for failure to renew a contract. Mr. Pugh informed the Board that the burden of proof is on the School Board.

Mr. Humes stated that "the Shaw administration made a decision not to continue the Horticulture class in which Mr. Gilbert has a certificate to teach. When the program was eliminated at Shaw, the Muscogee County School District had no program for the 2004-2005 school year for a teacher to teach Horticulture along with declining enrollment and the number of underclassman decreasing. We have reason to believe that this is a reduction in force (RIF) according to Board policy GBKA. An effort was made to request an out of field certificate for Mr. Gilbert in order for him to teach in a middle or high school science position. Mr. Gilbert did not express any interest. Mr. Gilbert wanted an administrative or supervisory position, a promotion from classroom teacher to a supervisory position."

Mr. Charlie Cox, legal representative for Mr. Gilbert stated, "I have very little in addition to what Mr. Humes stated. The vocational supervisory position is currently open and this is not an increase in pay. There was no contract offered to Ted Gilbert. He received a letter of non-renewal. According to your RIF policy there was no reduction of staff."

Mr. Pugh asked that the witnesses in this issue be called back in one at a time. The following witnesses were questioned by Mr. Humes, Mr. Ellington and Mr. Cox: James Arnold, Robin Pennock, Don Cooper, Margaret Maria Meltzer, John A. Phillips, Jr., and Theodore Gilbert. Mr. Pugh advised the Board that they will go into closed session to deliberate and then back into open session to vote on this issue.

Upon motion of Mr. Ditchfield, seconded by Mr. Wells, the Board unanimously voted to go into closed session to deliberate.

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

Dr. Polleys explained that the Board will recess this matter until Monday, June 7 in which the Board will reconvene at 6:30 p.m. to continue deliberations and she called for a motion to this fact.

Upon motion of Mr. Ebron, seconded by Mr. Whiteside, the Board unanimously voted to reconvene Monday, June 7, at 6:30 p.m. in order to continue deliberations.

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

James E. Humes, II
Legal Counsel