MUSCOGEE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
COLUMBUS, GEORGIA

REGULAR BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
MONDAY, APRIL 25, 2005, 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, April 25, 2005, 6:30 p.m. in the conference room at the former Bradley Library.

The following Board Members were present: Mary Sue Polleys, James Walker, Brenda P. Storey, Philip T. Schley, Pat Hugley Green, Fife M. Whiteside, John Wells, Naomi Buckner and Joseph Roberson.

Others present: John A. Phillips, Jr., Superintendent of Education, Chuck Staples, Legal Counsel, Del Parker, Treasurer, Robin Pennock, Deputy Superintendent of Education, Brenda F. Dozier, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services, Don Cooper, Chief Human Resources Officer, Myles Caggins, Assistant Superintendent for Business Affairs, Billy Kendall, Administrative Assistant and the media.

Dr. Polleys called the meeting to order with an invocation and pledge of allegiance led by students from Britt David Elementary. The Character Education word for April is Loyalty. Students from Wynnton Elementary presented a musical performance.

Dr. Polleys recognized visitors in the audience; Mr. and Mrs. Halouska representing the League of Women Voters and Friends of the Libraries; and Owen Ditchfield, representing Concerned Citizens of Southeast Columbus.

The following recognitions were presented: Hardaway High Future Educators of America State winners and State Academic Decathlon; Rothschild Middle Urban Forestry Educator of the year; Technology/Career Education State winners; Northside High State Odyssey of the Mind champions and State Rifle Team champions; Georgia School nutrition Award; ABCD Award.

Dr. Polleys called on Audrey Palmore, former employee and James Muszynski, President of the band boosters at Spencer High.

Upon motion of Mr. Whiteside, seconded by Mr. Wells, the Board unanimously voted to modify the agenda to add an addendum item.

Upon motion of Mr. Wells, seconded by Mr. Walker, the Board unanimously approved official actions taken at the regular Board meeting on March 21, 2005 and a called meeting held on March 29, 2005, amended to attach Appendix A item of the called minutes.

The Board conducted the first public hearing on this year's growth in the tax digest. Dr. Polleys asked if there was anyone from the audience that would like to speak regarding this issue. There was no public input. Dr. Polleys noted that this does not mean that the School Board is increasing the millage rate but the growth of the digest will produce an increase of about 3.25 percent and by law the public has to be notified of this.

Upon motion of Mrs. Storey, seconded by Mr. Walker, the Board unanimously approved the re-election of professional employees for the 2005-2006 school year with the exclusion of relatives of Board members.

Upon motion of Mrs. Storey, seconded by Mr. Wells, the Board approved the re-election of Emily Whiteside. The vote was (8) affirming and (1) abstaining, Mr. Whiteside.

Upon motion of Mr. Walker, seconded by Mrs. Storey, the Board approved the re-election of Philip Schley. The vote was (8) affirming and (1) abstaining, Dr. Schley.

Upon motion of Ms. Buckner, seconded by Mr. Wells, the Board approved the re-election of Cherry Wells. The vote was (8) affirming and (1) abstaining, Mr. Wells.

Upon motion of Mrs. Storey, seconded by Mr. Wells, the Board unanimously approved the appointment of Belinda Ingle as Human Resources Coordinator.

Upon motion of Mr. Wells, seconded by Mrs. Storey, the Board unanimously approved the appointment of Wyndell Crowell as Instructional Specialist.

Upon motion of Mrs. Storey, seconded by Mr. Wells, the Board unanimously approved the appointment of Robin Barber as Instructional Specialist.

Dr. Polleys asked that the personnel appointments on the addendum be taken next.

Upon motion of Mr. Wells, seconded by Mrs. Storey, the Board unanimously approved the appointment of Christopher B. Lindsey to the position of Principal at Carver High School.

Upon motion of Mr. Roberson, seconded by Ms. Buckner, the Board unanimously approved the appointment of Paula Jean Shaw-Powell to the position of Principal at Double Churches Elementary School.

Upon motion of Mr. Wells, seconded by Mr. Walker, the Board unanimously approved Wynnton Elementary to apply for a charter school planning grant.

Upon motion of Mr. Walker, seconded by Mrs. Storey, the Board unanimously approved an agreement with the Hughston Orthopedic Hospital to provide an athletic trainer at no cost to the School District and in exchange the Muscogee County School District agrees to display signage on school property.

Upon motion of Mr. Wells, seconded by Mr. Walker, the Board unanimously approved a Board resolution authorizing the transfer of a Colt Revolver with a homemade holster, and a Georgia Confederate Infantry Regiment flag to a collection at the Columbus Museum.

Upon motion of Ms. Buckner, seconded by Mr. Roberson, the Board unanimously approved the implementation of the Cornerstone Literacy Initiative at Downtown, Key, Rigdon Road and St. Mary's Elementary Schools. Dr. Phillips called on Dr. Connell who introduced representatives from Cornerstone.

Upon motion of Mr. Walker, seconded by Dr. Schley, the Board unanimously approved the revision of the Student Behavior Code and Discipline Policy Handbook (JCDA) for the 2005-2006 school year. Mr. Wells commented, "It has come to my attention that we are not consistent with the dress code policies in the District. I am aware of some cases where students have been suspended out of school for dress code violations. It does not say on the suspension record that a shirt tail was out but, it says that the student was defiant. In one school a student may get suspended for a shirt tail being out and at another school it is alright. I have spoken with the Superintendent and Mrs. Dozier and I think this is something that we should look at." Dr. Polleys stated, "Since we have recently returned from the National School Board Association meeting. This would be a good time to talk about re-instituting our committee system. If we do this it would be the perfect thing to refer to our Discipline Committee. I would like for this to be on the table so that we can talk about it." Mrs. Buckner commented, "The Youth Advisory Committee is also working on a dress code for the system. Another minor infraction is the I.D. badge. We need to work with these students not upholding them but trying to keep them in school." Mr. Roberson commented, "The South Columbus Re-vitalization has also looked at this. The preponderance of students being disciplined is something that has been discussed. I would urge us as a Board and encourage the Superintendent to look at the raw data and then begin looking at corrective steps." Mr. Whiteside commented, "The tail-tuck-em-in rule. We tried about four years ago to implement at a system level a rule that would require clothes to be worn in a way that a weapon could not be concealed. It never got anywhere. The next time that a system-wide dress code came up was with YAC last year. I want to make sure that the issue regarding committees will be on the agenda as discussion or action next month."

Upon motion of Mr. Walker, seconded by Dr. Schley, the Board unanimously approved the revision to Policy JB – Student Attendance as it relates to student tardiness.

Upon motion of Mrs. Storey, seconded by Dr. Schley, the Board unanimously approved Financial Statements for eight months ending February 28, 2005.

Dr. Phillips stated that the Board will consider the CELT Corporation budget and timeline plan and SPLOST Technology Projects after review by a group of experts. Dr. Polleys stated that she has heard from some of the experts and a tentative date has been set up to meet.

Upon motion of Mr. Wells, seconded by Mrs. Storey, the Board unanimously approved the extension of the contract with D&B Enterprises, Inc. to continue representing the Muscogee County School District in the completion of all projects by Energy Systems Group. Dr. Phillips stated, "After speaking with Mr. Humes today, we would like to add into this contract that it would be for 18 months and quarterly reports will be given to the Board about the progress of the implementation of this program." Mr. Whiteside asked if an eighteen month contract can be done. Mr. Staples said that this needs to be subject to a termination after 12 months. Mr. Wells who made the motion and Mrs. Storey who seconded the motion amended to add that this will be subject to a termination. The vote on the amended motion was unanimous. Mrs. Green asked that reports be available after this period of time since this will be an on-going project. Dr. Phillips said that the Board will continue to get reports but initially Mr. Ledford will provide them.

Upon motion of Mr. Walker, seconded by Mr. Wells, the Board unanimously awarded a contract to Stevens Gymnasiums, Inc., in the amount of $57,661.00 for the scrubbing and refinishing of gymnasium floors at various schools and for the sanding, sealing, painting, and re-coating of the gymnasiums floors at Cusseta Road Elementary School.

Upon motion of Mrs. Storey, seconded by Dr. Schley, the Board unanimously awarded contracts to various vendors for audio/video equipment at Jordan and Shaw High Schools.

Upon motion of Mrs. Storey, seconded by Mr. Wells, the Board unanimously awarded a contract to Freeman & Associates, Inc., low bidder in the amount of $6,583,000.00 for the construction of New Elementary School No. 5 and approve the budget. Mrs. Green asked what the timeline on this school is. Dr. Phillips noted that "if the project construction started in June then the actual completion date would be March of the next year". Dr. Polleys noted, "In taking this action tonight, by this time, all of the 1997 construction projects would be under contract and moving forward with the exception of Rigdon Road Elementary." Dr. Polleys asked that "some possibilities regarding a new school at Rigdon Road be brought back to the Board at the May meeting. This way the people at Rigdon Road will know that we are keeping our promise. I just think the people at Rigdon Road deserve an answer." Dr. Phillips noted that "a new school for Rigdon Road Elementary will depend largely on the development of the Sears Property and I will bring some ideas to brainstorm to the next Work Session." Dr. Schley commented, "I think before the Board can make a decision, we need to have more input from the community. There's been an outpouring of comments pro and con for this development. At this moment, I would vote against it. It would be my hope that some sort of compromise can be reached where we can change Mr. Walsh's plan to something that the whole town can live with not just people in favor of the development as envisioned. I think it is important that we get the community involved and we have to proceed to do that before I can make any sort of compromise. I've had people calling me mainly because they know that I'm not happy with the 300+ houses out there."

Upon motion of Mrs. Storey, seconded by Mr. Wells, the Board unanimously awarded a contract in the amount of $2,429,969.00 to Webb Construction Group, Inc., low bidder for construction at Mathews Elementary School and approves the project budget.

Upon motion of Mr. Wells, seconded by Dr. Schley, the Board unanimously approved Change Order No. 2 in the amount of $304,865.00 to be added to the original contract for Phase III construction, additions, and renovations at Jordan High School. The funding would come from the 2003 SPLOST.

Upon motion of Mr. Walker, seconded by Mr. Wells, the Board unanimously approved the payroll deduction of the cost for physicals of new School Nutrition Program employees.

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

- Human Resources Report for Professional and Classified Employees.
- Amended budgets in Program for Exceptional Students.
- Audit of Financial Statement of 1997 SPLOST Capital Projects Fund.
- Sales Tax Construction Program Report.
- Report on Transfer from FY03 SPLOST Critical Needs.
- FY07 Sales Tax Construction Program Report.
- Report on Transfers from Capital Projects and Debt to SPLOST Fund to cover scope changes.
- Report of change orders/changes in project contingencies.
- Status report for projects under construction.
- Report on system-wide Technology Plan.
- Report on Forecasted Revenue Collections.
- Report on Transfers from Capital Projects Fund.

Upon motion of Mr. Walker, seconded by Mr. Wells, the Board unanimously approved the continuation of Conduct Summer School Fees.

Upon of Mr. Wells, seconded by Ms. Buckner, the Board unanimously voted to go into executive session to hear (4) four student discipline appeals.

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

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

Charles T. Staples
Legal Counsel