

CHEROKEE COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

Thursday, February 15, 2024

MINUTES OF REGULAR BOARD MEETING

5:00 p.m.

The Cherokee County Board of Education called its regular meeting to order at 5:04 p.m. on Thursday, February 15, 2024, in the Dr. Frank R. Petruzielo Educational Services Facility, 1205 Bluffs Parkway, Canton, Georgia. The meeting was conducted in person and available to the public via live Internet streaming. Present were: School Board Chair Kyla Cromer; Vice-Chair Patsy Jordan; Members John Harmon, Dr. Susan Padgett-Harrison, Kelly Poole, Erin Ragsdale and Robert Rechsteiner. Superintendent Dr. Brian V. Hightower; and Attorney Abby Roach.

Call to Order

The call to order by Kyla Cromer was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America led by School Board Chair Kyla Cromer.

On a motion made by Kelly Poole, seconded by Erin Ragsdale and carried to adjourn to Executive Session to discuss a Personnel Matter (O.C.G.A. Section 50-14-3(6)) at 5:06 p.m. (7-0 vote).

Motion was made by Dr. Susan Padgett-Harrison, seconded by Kelly Poole and carried to enter recess until 7:00 p.m. (7-0 vote).

School Board Chair called a recess at 5:30 p.m.

School Board meeting reconvened at 7:00 p.m.

The meeting's inspiration was shared by Dr. Susan Padgett-Harrison.

Approval of Agenda

On a motion by Kelly Poole seconded by John Harmon and carried, the Board unanimously adopted the Superintendent's recommended agenda (7-0 vote).

Minutes for Approval

On a motion by Dr. Susan Padgett-Harrison seconded by Erin Ragsdale and carried, the Board approved the Minutes from the January 18, 2023, School Board Meeting (7-0 vote).

On a motion by Patsy Jordan seconded by John Harmon and carried, the Board approved the Minutes of the following Called School Board Meetings: January 24, 2024; January 25, 2024; January 26, 2024; and January 31, 2024 (7-0 vote).

Consent Agenda

Following the identification of those agenda items, Board Members and members of the public indicated they would like considered separately, a motion was made by Kelly Poole seconded by Dr. Susan Padgett-Harrison and carried, to approve the Consent Agenda, for the remaining items - identified by asterisks (7-0 vote).

A. RESOLUTIONS/RECOGNITIONS/PARTNERSHIPS

A-1 School Board Recognition of Cherokee County School District Special Olympics' Winter Games Gold Medalists
(Recognized)

A-2 School Board Recognition of CCSD Educators Hall of Fame -- Class of 2024 Inductees
(Recognized)

A-3 School Board Recognition of Woodstock High School Junior Kate Bean - Selected for the All-State Art Symposium
(Recognized)

***A-4 School Board Approval of a Resolution Recognizing February 17, 2024 as "PTA Day in the Cherokee County School District"**
(Approved)

***A-5 School Board Consideration of Superintendent's Recommendation to Approve the Renewal of the Partnership Agreement with History Cherokee**

(Approved)

B. SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS/STUDENT ADVISOR TO THE SCHOOL BOARD

B-1 School Board Approval of Appointment of Superintendent of Schools

On a motion by Kelly Poole seconded by Dr. Susan Padgett-Harrison and carried, the School Board appointed Dr. Mary Elizabeth Davis to serve as the next Superintendent of Cherokee County School District (4-3 Vote, Patsy Jordan, Erin Ragsdale and Robert Rechsteiner dissented).

(Approved)

School Board Member Comments:

- School Board Vice-Chair requested legislative updates.
 - Senior Staff reviewed several legislation bills (including those which could have a major effect on property tax collections) and how they could impact Cherokee County School District (CCSD).
- School Board Members shared concerns relative to the Superintendent vote.

C. SCHOOL BOARD POLICIES

D. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

***D-1 School Board Consideration of Superintendent's Recommendation for Approval of January 2024 Financial Report and Sales Tax Update**

(Approved)

D-2 School Board Consideration of Superintendent's Recommendation for Adoption of the Bond Resolution and Bond Purchase Agreement Relative to Series 2024 General Obligation Bonds (GO Bonds)

On a motion by Robert Rechsteiner seconded by John Harmon and carried, the School Board approved the adoption of the bond resolution and bond purchase agreement relative to Series 2024 General Obligation Bonds (GO Bonds) (7-0 Vote)

(Approved)

E. CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

***E-1. School Board Consideration of Superintendent's Recommendation for Approval of Out of State Travel**

(Approved)

***E-2. School Board Consideration of Superintendent's Recommendation for Approval of Out of State and Overnight Field Trips**

(Approved)

F. SUPPORT SERVICES

***F-1. School Board Consideration of Superintendent's Recommendation for Approval of the Monthly Update on Capital Outlay Projects**

(Approved)

***F-2. School Board Consideration of Superintendent's Recommendation for Approval of the Special Lease Agreement**

(Approved)

G. HUMAN RESOURCES

***G-1. School Board Consideration of Superintendent's Recommendation for Approval of Recommendations, Resignations, Terminations of Employment and Transfers for Certified and Classified Personnel**

(Approved)

H. SCHOOL BOARD ATTORNEY

I. SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Superintendent Comments:

- Recognized the end-of-year retirement of: Dr. Richie Carnes, Principal Creekland Middle School; Kim Hagood, Principal Carmel Elementary School; Penny Valle, Principal Oak Grove E.S. STEAM Academy; and Dr. Keith Bryant, Executive Director Curriculum and Instruction.

Informational Items:

- Moody's Credit Rating:
 - Moody's upgraded Cherokee County School District credit rating from AA2 to AA1 on February 1, 2024.
 - The Moody's AA1 rating is shared by only three other school districts in the state of Georgia. Additionally, only three school districts in the state have a higher rating, putting CCSD in the top 6% in the state.
 - Increased revenue, excellent budget management and favorable governing authority were contributing factors.
- 2024 General Obligation (GO) Bond Issuance:
 - The School District's current credit rating will have a positive impact on bond sales.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Four members of the public signed up to address the School Board relative to Agenda Item B-1

ADJOURNMENT

On a motion made by Kelly Poole, seconded by Erin Ragsdale and carried to adjourn to Executive Session to discuss Student Discipline matters (O.C.G.A. Section 20-2-757) 8:34 p.m. (7-0 vote).

Motion was made by Kelly Poole, seconded by John Harmon and carried to return to Open Session at 8:44 p.m. (7-0 vote).

Motion was made by Dr. Susan Padgett-Harrison, seconded by Erin Ragsdale and carried to Uphold the Findings and Disposition of the Discipline Tribunal panel for Tribunal #23-198175, (7-0 vote).

The Board adjourned at 8:46 p.m.

School Board Chair

Secretary