

**SOUTHEASTERN COOPERATIVE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS**  
**(SECEP)**  
**MINUTES OF MEETING**  
**MAY 27, 2015**

The Southeastern Cooperative Educational Programs (SECEP) held its Joint Board Meeting on Wednesday, May 27, 2015, at the Smithfield Building in Norfolk, VA.

**PRESENT: Board Members: Mr. Thomas Mercer, Dr. Noelle Gabriel, Mr. James Bridgeford, Dr. Carolyn Modlin, Dr. Judith Brooks-Buck, and Mrs. Carolyn Weems**

**ABSENT: Board Members: Mrs. Dawna Walton and Mr. Alvin Wilson**

**PRESENT: Committee of Superintendents: Mr. Craig Pinello, Special Education Director for Dr. James Roberts, Mrs. Teresa Howington-Vaughan, Exceptional Education Specialist for Dr. Willie Bell, Mrs. Laura Abel, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction for Dr. A. Katrise Perera, Dr. Elie Bracy, III, Dr. Wayne Smith, Assistant Superintendent for Dr. Alvera Parrish, Dr. Deran Whitney, and Dr. Daisy Wood, Director for the Office of Programs for Exceptional Children for Dr. Aaron Spence**

**ABSENT: Committee of Superintendents: Dr. James Roberts, Dr. Willie Bell, Dr. A. Katrise Perera, Dr. Michael Thornton, Dr. Alvera Parrish**

**PRESENT: SECEP Staff: Mr. Donald Fairheart, Mr. David Sadler, and Mrs. Brenda Estes.**

The Joint Board Meeting was called to order at 12:30 p.m.

**INTRODUCTION OF SUPERINTENDENTS AND JOINT BOARD MEMBERS**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Dr. Judith Brooks-Buck, Chairperson, asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the March 25, 2015, Joint Board Meeting. A motion was made by Dr. Gabriel and seconded by Mr. Mercer (Ayes 5, Nays 0). (Mrs. Carolyn Weems abstained from the vote due to her absence at the March meeting.) Motion carried.

**COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC:**

None.

Donna Sayegh from the Civic League in Portsmouth was present.

**REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE OFFICER:  
OPERATING BUDGET FOR FY 2015-2016:**

Dr. Deran Whitney, Executive Officer, stated that the 2015-2016 Operating Budget that was presented at the March 25, 2015 had minimal changes to it. A copy of the revised budget was included in the board packet. He asked Mr. Fairheart to share the information with the board members.

Mr. Fairheart stated that the change in the budget was an addition of \$430,000. This increase was driven by the increase in participation from the divisions in SECEP's programs. Specifically, the increase was an additional ten (10) students to be served in the Autism Spectrum Program (ASP), three (3) additional slots purchased for students that are served in the TRAEP Program, and two (2) additional commitments to serve students in the Re-ED Program. The increase in students being served will generate the revenue that was added to the budget. This will be offset by the need to hire three (3) additional teachers and seven (7) teacher assistants. With the exception of these items, the budget proposal that was presented to the board in March remains unchanged. This proposed budget includes a 2% compensation increase for staff which was also proposed and adopted by Norfolk Public Schools.

Mr. Thomas Mercer, Vice Chairperson, commended SECEP for being able to keep the budget increase at only 1.26%, considering all of the limitations from governmental authorities.

A motion was made by Mr. Mercer and seconded by Mrs. Weems to adopt the 2015-16 SECEP Operating Budget. (Ayes 6, Nays 0). Motion carried.

**APPROVAL TO FILE A RATE APPLICATION FOR FY 2015-2016:**

Dr. Whitney asked the Joint Board for their approval for SECEP to file a Rate Application for FY 2015-16 based on the budget that was presented. A motion was made by Mrs. Weems and seconded by Dr. Gabriel. (Ayes 6, Nays 0). Motion carried.

**REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF SECEP:  
PROGRAM ENROLLMENT REPORT:**

Mr. Fairheart reviewed the Program Enrollment Report including current enrollment and referrals.

**PROGRAMS UPDATES:**

Program Update Reports were included in the board packets. Mr. Fairheart reviewed and highlighted the information provided in the reports.

Mr. Fairheart shared that Mrs. Carolyn Simmons, SECEP's Principal at the Norfolk SECEP Center, was retiring after 32 years. She was honored with a Retirement Party and will be missed by many of our SECEP staff and the families of our students who she made a significant impact on over the years.

Mr. Fairheart highlighted the information from SECEP's Department of Human Resources and Support Services Update Report regarding the transition to *SafetyCare* as SECEP's Crisis Prevention and Intervention Protocol. SECEP is shifting away from the *MANDT* System and *Handle with Care*. SECEP has completed the training of the trainers for *SafetyCare*. All staff will be trained during the summer months.

**FEDERAL MONITORING AND REVIEW:**

Mr. Fairheart updated the joint board regarding the Federal Monitoring and Review with the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE). SECEP was visited by several VDOE members. In the past, regional special education programs were not reviewed as a "stand alone" entity. The reviews were conducted with school divisions. This year VDOE changed their position and are now conducting the reviews with regional special education programs individually. SECEP was the first program they visited. VDOE spent three full weeks with SECEP. Prior to the arrival on site, SECEP facilitated a meeting with members of SECEP's staff as well as the special education directors for SECEP's participating school divisions. SECEP received numerous compliments for our services and for our collaboration with our school divisions from VDOE. Feedback was also given on how SECEP can grow better over time. As this process unfolds, SECEP will receive a written report from VDOE identifying areas that may be of concern to them, and also areas that may need improvement or require SECEP to develop some type of action plan in regards to compliance. Typically most of the compliance issues are associated with the file review. Any areas that SECEP can remedy will be implemented prior to the beginning of the school year, if the written report is received from VDOE in time. SECEP will comply with VDOE's legal guidance, and will adjust the programs and practices as necessary to meet the student needs, and continue to provide quality education and services.

**JOINT BOARD ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION:**

None.

**REVISED PERSONNEL DOCKET:**

A motion was made by Mr. Mercer and seconded by Dr. Gabriel to accept the revised personnel docket. (Ayes 6, Nays 0). Motion carried.

**NEXT MEETING DATES, TIMES AND PLACE:**

The meeting dates were presented for the 2015-2016 School Year. They are as follows: Wednesday, September 30, 2015, Wednesday, January 27, 2016, Wednesday, March 23, 2016, and Wednesday, May 25, 2016. A motion was made by Mrs. Carolyn Weems and seconded by Dr. Modlin to accept the dates. (Ayes 6, Nays 0). Motion carried.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

The meeting was adjourned at 1:03 p.m.

**JOINT BOARD MEETING DATES FOR THE 2015-16 SCHOOL YEAR –  
REVISED:**

The revised meeting dates for the 2015-16 school year were proposed and approved by board members by electronic vote on June 18, 2015. They are:

Wednesday, September 30, 2015

Wednesday, December 9, 2015

Wednesday, March 16, 2016

Wednesday, June 1, 2016

VOTE: (7): Mr. Thomas Mercer, Mr. Alvin Wilson, Dr. Noelle Gabriel, Mr. James Bridgeford, Dr. Carolyn Modlin, Dr. Judith Brooks-Buck, and Mrs. Carolyn Weems

AYES: (7) Mr. Thomas Mercer, Mr. Alvin Wilson, Dr. Noelle Gabriel, Mr. James Bridgeford, Dr. Carolyn Modlin, Dr. Judith Brooks-Buck, and Mrs. Carolyn Weems

NAYS: (0)

Respectfully Submitted,

  
Donald R. Fairheart, MBA  
Clerk of the Board

APPROVED:

  
Dr. Judith Brooks-Buck  
Chairperson