

MUSCOGEE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT  
COLUMBUS, GEORGIA

REGULAR BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING  
MONDAY, AUGUST 21, 2006, 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, August 21, 2006, 6:30 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 P. Storey, Philip T. Schley, Patricia Hugley Green, Fife M. Whiteside, John Wells, Naomi Buckner and Joseph Roberson.

Others present: John A. Phillips, Jr., Superintendent of Education, Greg S. Ellington, Legal Counsel, Robin Pennock, Deputy Superintendent of Education, Del Parker, Don A. Cooper, Jr., Eddie V. Obleton, Peggy Connell, Myles Caggins, Billy Kendall, Harry Franklin and other representatives from the media.

Dr. Polleys called the meeting to order with an invocation. The pledge to the flag and the character education word was led by students from J. D. Davis Elementary School. Dr. Polleys recognized visitors in the audience.

The Board recognized students who won State and National awards for Technology/Career Education.

Dr. Polleys recognized Mr. Norman Hardman a parent at Northside High who asked the Board to consider the construction of an auditorium at Northside High School. Mr. Wells asked if he could get the consensus of the Board to ask the Superintendent to develop a plan that would give the Board options to consider regarding an auditorium at Northside High School. There were no objections from the Board.

Mr. Wells made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Storey to modify the agenda to add addendum items. The vote was unanimous.

Upon motion of Mr. Walker, seconded by Mr. Roberson, the Board unanimously approved official actions taken at the regular Board of Education meeting held on Monday, July 24 and a called meeting held on August 3.

Upon motion of Mrs. Storey, seconded by Ms. Buckner, the Board unanimously approved the appointment of Ms. Donna Cutler to the position of Coordinator of Adult Education.

Upon motion of Ms. Buckner, seconded by Mrs. Storey, the Board unanimously approved a revision to policy EGAA – Workers Compensation.

Upon motion of Ms. Buckner, seconded by Mr. Walker, the Board unanimously approved the reimbursement of \$157,320.00 to The New York Institute for Special Education for the second year cost to implement the Cornerstone Literacy Framework, contingent upon receipt of the Consolidated Application State grant funds.

Upon motion of Mr. Walker, seconded by Mrs. Storey, the Board awarded contracts for group insurance carriers and agents. The plans include; Long Term Disability, Short Term Disability, Dental DMO and Dental Indemnity. The vote was (8) affirming and (1) opposing, (Mrs. Green).

Upon motion of Mrs. Storey, seconded by Mrs. Green, the Board unanimously approved the continuance of the Employee Assistance Program with the Pastoral Institute and approved funding in the total amount of \$87,000.00 to be taken from the FY07 Trust Fund that is set aside for this purpose. Mr. Whiteside asked for a report on legitimate Trust Funds. Mr. Whiteside asked if this was principal invasive. Mr. Parker said it is not. Dr. Phillips asked that Mr. Parker get a report of Trust Fund monies to all Board members.

Upon motion of Mrs. Storey, seconded by Mr. Walker, the Board unanimously approved a stipend in the total amount of \$50,000.00 to the Greater Columbus Chamber of Commerce for their continued support of Muscogee County School District educational programs for FY07.

Upon motion of Mrs. Storey, seconded by Mr. Walker, the Board unanimously approved a purchase order to SL-Tech, \$33,108.90 for renewal of software support in the School Nutrition Program.

Upon motion of Mrs. Storey, seconded by Mr. Walker, the Board unanimously approved the local Adult Education application for Federal and State funds.

Upon motion of Mrs. Storey, seconded by Mr. Roberson, the Board unanimously approved the deduction of \$104,000.00 from the General Fund Budgeted Reserve to augment the purchase of 35-passenger buses under the State's "Bond" bus program.

Upon motion of Mrs. Storey, seconded by Dr. Schley, the Board unanimously awarded a contract to Clear Concepts Consulting Group to represent the Muscogee County School District in the preparation, evaluation and selection process for a Flexible Spending Account Administrator.

Upon motion of Mrs. Storey, seconded by Mr. Walker, the Board unanimously approved financial statements for twelve months ending June 30, 2006.

Upon motion of Ms. Buckner, seconded by Mrs. Green, the Board unanimously approved the assignment of Peach Engineering, Inc., to prepare the plans and specifications for the repair and replacement of the air conditioning systems at Carver High and Marshall Middle.

Upon motion of Mr. Walker, seconded by Mrs. Storey, the Board unanimously approved the purchase from Virtucom of a wireless, mobile computer lab and cabling to support the International Baccalaureate Programme at Richards Middle School. The funds for the project total \$45,028.90 and are available in the Reading Literacy FY07 budget.

Upon motion of Mrs. Storey, seconded by Ms. Buckner, the Board unanimously approved purchase orders to IBM Corporation for the maintenance of the computer controllers and printers, (\$11,656.32); Secure Computing Corporation for filtering software, (\$55,004.00) and Software Express for system-wide anti-virus and anti-spyware, (\$88,687.02).

Upon motion of Ms. Buckner, seconded by Mrs. Storey, the Board unanimously approved annual technology purchases in the total amount of \$209,598.94 to the IBM Corporation.

Upon motion of Mrs. Storey, seconded by Ms. Buckner, the Board unanimously approved purchase orders for the annual payments for maintenance, support, and licensing for various hardware and software system-wide. These technology purchases go to Cisco Systems (\$15,182.25) for maintenance of Internet, WAN, and firewall equipment; Computer Associates International, Inc., (\$18,209.00) for maintenance of utilities and performance monitors on the mainframe system; and Novell Academic Associates (\$63,990.00) for the annual licensing of the network operating system, budgeted from the Department of Technology.

Upon motion of Mrs. Storey, seconded by Mr. Roberson, the Board unanimously approved the FY07 State Instructional Extension Program allocations for elementary schools in the total amount of \$490,419.00.

Upon motion of Mrs. Storey, seconded by Mr. Roberson, the Board unanimously awarded a contract to Denson Contracting, sole bidder in the total amount of \$101,300.00 for the installation of entry steps and the landscaping of the new track and field complex at Hardaway High School and recommends approval of the project budget.

Mr. Wells commended the Administration and Legal Counsel on settling items of litigation that are included on the consent agenda.

Upon motion of Mrs. Storey, seconded by Mr. Wells, the Board unanimously approved the following consent agenda items:

- Personnel Report for Classified and Professional Employees. (Appendix A)
- Broadcasting of high school football games.
- Request from Open Door to use Kinnett Stadium.
- Workers' Compensation Settlements.
- Employment Settlement, EEOC, \$15,000.00.
- Grant, WIA, \$62,780.00, Adult Education.
- Grant, Lowe's Toolbox Education, \$5,000, Muscogee Elementary.
- Grant, Career, Technical and Agricultural Education, FY07 Local Plan.
- Grant, Georgia Learn and Serve Ambassador, \$1,000.00.
- Grant, Georgia Department of Education Learn & Serve FY07, \$9,539.00.
- Grant, Department of Library Services, \$41,795.10, Columbus Public Library.
- New budget, GLRS, Title VI-B Federal Discretionary Funds, \$345,054.00.
- New budget, GLRS, Special Education Teacher Mentor Academy, \$17,849.00.
- New budget, Elementary School Magnet/Special Program, \$1,636,568.00.
- New budget, Even Start Family Literacy, \$577,664.00.
- New budget, Pre-K FY07, \$77,392.00.
- New budget, Pre-K FY07 Resource Coordinators, \$648,000.00.
- Renewal of contract for financial package, Tier Technologies, \$71,791.00.
- Audit of Financial Statement of 1997 SPLOST Capital Projects.
- Sales Tax Construction Program Report.

- Report on Transfer from FY03 SPLOST Critical Needs
- FY97 Sales Tax Construction Program Report
- Report on Transfers from Capital Projects/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 Mrs. Storey, seconded by Mrs. Green, the Board approved the following addenda items:

- Budget adjustment from the Contingency Reserve Fund, \$83,134.00 for the relocating and furnishing of four portable classrooms due to the increase in student population at Arnold, Richards, and Blackmon Road.
- Purchase order to B&H House Movers, \$37,398.40 to relocate four portable classrooms to Arnold, Richards and Blackmon Road.
- Purchase order for installation of portables to Leesburg Concrete Company, \$20,040.00 for installation of steps, ramps and platforms for access to the relocated portable classrooms.
- Purchase order to Vicro, Inc., \$24,903.80 to furnish the relocated portables with classroom furniture.

Mr. Whiteside asked about the movers cost to B& H House Movers on the addenda. He asked, “what is the justification for not bidding this item? Why is the installation and bid going to Leesburg Concrete Company?” Mr. Askew said, “these had been bid back in February with the Leesburg Concrete and the steps and ramps were included so we went back to the same vendor to get the steps and ramps.” Mrs. Storey noted, “As I understand it, they need these installed fairly quickly.” Mr. Whiteside, “If this was an emergency then we should have had something in the agenda item that said emergency.” Dr. Polleys, “Let me clarify something. Mr. Whiteside, are you saying in order for an item to be an emergency item, you’re simply saying it should have been stated on the agenda. Can we decide at this point that it is an emergency?” Mrs. Storey, “I’ll change the motion to include it as an emergency.” Mr. Whiteside, “I’ll still vote no because these are the kinds of deals that we’re most at risk of getting a haircut on and if we’re to ever expect the public to support up again our burden is to explain the \$44 million. I think this is needed and appropriate but my vote is no.” The vote on these consent agenda items was (8) affirming and (1) opposing, (Mr. Whiteside).

Mr. Whiteside asked, “What happened to the truck? Last month we talked about a \$50,000 custom specialty truck that the Board voted not to approve because it was clearly something that was to be bid. What’s going on with the truck? The two things that I’d like to have added to the agenda are the return of the practice to use class sets of books rather than take-home sets. I would like to have some discussion about that. The other thing is, we have a policy here that we decline to allow employees to supply their own computers where the School District chooses for whatever reason not to supply them. I think I know the justification for that but I would like that for discussion for next month.”

Ms. Buckner, I'd like the Superintendent to give us some update on what kind of start the school year has gotten off to. Dr. Phillips, "We had a very good start. We've reached 98% of our peak enrollment by the end of the first week of school. We feel confident that we'll reach the 33,500 figure if not go over. We have had to move some teachers around as we always do. One thing that we are struggling with as those all over the state is this no flexibility with class size and if you go over one student then you've got to open up another section or you'll lose all funding for that class. The other issues are if your classes are small and they don't meet the funding level for instance kindergarten if you have less than 15 students in kindergarten you do not get funding for all of those students in the class. If you go over, you lose all funding for the class. I had an extensive conversation today with Stewart Bennett the Deputy Superintendent and I have indicated to him that I'll be writing a lengthy letter to the State Superintendent to talk about these unintended consequences. It's not the fact that class size is bad but when you take away the flexibility it disrupts the educational process during the course of the year. We've counted in our school district about 50 or 60 instances where we're not going to get full funding for our classes."

Mr. Walker noted that on January 23, 2007, is the Board visit to the State Capitol with Georgia School Board's Association.

Upon motion of Mrs. Storey, seconded by Dr. Schley, the Board unanimously voted to go into executive session for a real estate and legal matter.

Upon motion of Ms. Buckner, seconded by Mr. Roberson, the Board unanimously voted to come out of executive session.

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

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Greg S. Ellington, Legal Counsel