

MUSCOGEE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
COLUMBUS, GEORGIA

REGULAR BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2004, 6:30 P.M.

MINUTES

The regular meeting of the Board of Education of the Muscogee County School District was held on Monday, November 15, 2004, 6:30 p.m. in the conference room at the Bradley Library.

The following members were present: Mary Sue Polleys, Chairman, James Walker, Vice Chairman, Brenda P. Storey, Philip T. Schley, David E. Ebron, Fife M. Whiteside, John Wells, Naomi Buckner and Owen Ditchfield.

Others present: John A. Phillips, Jr., Superintendent of Education, Charles T. Staples, Legal Counsel (Mr. Humes was absent), Del Parker, Treasurer, Brenda F. Dozier, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services, Myles Caggins, Assistant Superintendent for Business Affairs, Billy Kendall, Administrative Assistant, Peggy Connell, Chief Academic Officer, Richard Hyatt from the Ledger-Enquirer and other media.

Dr. Polleys called the meeting to order with an invocation and pledge of allegiance to the flag led by students from Clubview Elementary. The Character Education word – Self Control was introduced by students from Clubview Elementary.

Dr. Polleys recognized visitors in the audience, Mr. & Mrs. Halouska, representing the League of Women Voters and Friends of the Libraries, Karen Jowers from the Army Times Magazine, and a Boy Scout Troop.

The recognitions were as follows: Mrs. Jean Ebron re-appointed to Professional Standards Commission; State Superintendent's Student Advisory Council; Carver High School Service Learning Student Project; State of Georgia Elementary School Counselor of the Year; Region VII Secondary Counselor of the Year; Georgia School Counselors Association President; CORTA Donation; PAGE Teacher Academy Participant; Georgia Legislative Black Caucus Award; ABCD Award; Historic Columbus Preservation Award; International Media Festival Awards; Pay for Performance Award.

Dr. Polleys introduced Ms. Audrey Palmore on the public agenda to speak regarding One Columbus.

Upon motion of Mr. Ditchfield, seconded by Mrs. Storey, the board unanimously voted to modify the agenda to include addendum items.

Dr. Phillips noted that Shaw High School had won in the State finals in Cairo, Georgia on Friday and will be playing the third round of the finals on Friday, November 19 at Kinnett Stadium with Cartersville City Schools and invited everyone to come out and support Shaw.

Upon motion of Mr. Wells, seconded by Mr. Ebron, the Board unanimously approved official actions taken at the Board of Education meeting held on October 18, 2004.

Upon motion of Mr. Ebron, seconded by Mr. Ditchfield, the Board unanimously approved the appointment of Mr. Richard Green to the position of half-time Assistant Principal at Midland Middle School.

Upon motion of Mr. Ebron, seconded by Mr. Ditchfield, the Board unanimously approved new policy IEDA Unstructured Break Time for Students.

Upon motion of Mr. Ebron, seconded by Mr. Ditchfield, the Board unanimously approved a revision to policy DFK Gifts and Bequests.

Mr. Ebron made a motion, seconded by Mr. Ditchfield, to approve new policy GAM-Reporting of allegations of and circumstances concerning crimes and criminal offenses. Ms. Buckner commented, "I was concerned about the motivation for this policy. Do we have chronic problems with criminal behavior of our employees?" Dr. Phillips said that "From time to time we do run into occasions where people do things that are inappropriate. There are over 6,000 employees and we do background checks, we do checks every five years for certification issues, we are required to report any inappropriate behavior to the professional standards commission they review it and take various disciplinary action. This closes some loopholes in our current procedures to make that we have good role models in every classroom throughout the school district." Mr. Ditchfield commented for a point of clarification, "It's requiring people to report criminal activity but does not include speeding and parking tickets and things like that but it does include DUI and it doesn't say they're automatically fired. It just says they must report it so that a decision can be made. I think it's important that people understand we're not turning into a Gestapo state here, we're just trying to make sure we know what's going on. I can think of a couple of cases where some things slipped through the cracks and shouldn't have so this does tighten things up." Mr. Whiteside asked, "What will be the procedure to implement this with employees?" Dr. Phillips commented, "Anytime a new policy is adopted or revised, we make it known to the employees, through the principals." Ms. Tessin, Director of HR said that this new policy will be circulated to all employees to sign including new employees acknowledging the policy. This will be done around the first of the year. The vote was unanimous.

Upon motion of Dr. Schley, seconded by Mr. Ebron, the Board unanimously approved Financial Statements for three months ending September 30, 2004.

Mr. Ditchfield made a motion, seconded by Ms. Buckner to approve CELT Corporation as the Technology Consultant for SPLOST planning and purchasing and maximum expenditures for the two initial SPLOST projects. Mr. Whiteside commented, "I believe this stems from a consensus statement by the Board asking the Administration to go out and get someone to make a firm cost estimate on what it would cost to complete the technology program as defined in the 2003 sales tax. What this does is propose to hire a consultant not to define the cost of the technology program for the 2003 Sales Tax but rather to sort of redefine, clarify, modify would make better a portion of that technology program and the portion that it relates to is the HR and payroll function." Dr. Phillips commented that, "this is a very significant action item tonight. It has been a well thought out project. It not just software for HR and Financial, this is about instruction in the school district. The majority of this is going for instruction not these other projects." Mrs. Storey asked if a vote on Phase II of the project could be delayed. Mr. Whiteside also asked is it possible to separate out the Phase I part. Dr. Phillips said that they can be handled separately and it will have to be negotiated. Mrs. Storey offered an amended motion, seconded by Dr. Schley to go on with Phase I of the project. The vote on the amended motion was (8) affirming and (1) opposing, Mr. Wells. Mr. Whiteside noted that "it was the original request of the Board to receive a cost estimate."

Upon motion of Mr. Ebron, seconded by Mrs. Storey, the Board unanimously approved the payment of \$13,000.00 for the collaborative agreement with Vocational Rehabilitation as part of a GDOE Program.

Upon motion of Mr. Ebron, seconded by Mr. Whiteside, the Board unanimously approved Georgia's Choice Program at Forrest Road Elementary; America's Choice Program implementation at Baker Middle School; and Georgia's Choice Program continuation at Brewer, J.D. Davis and Martin Luther King, Jr., Elementary Schools.

Upon motion of Mr. Ebron, seconded by Ms. Buckner, the Board unanimously approved a SPLOST Citizen's Advisory Committee as proposed by the Board of Education and the dissolution of the 1997 Citizen's Advisory Committee. On behalf of the Board Dr. Polleys will be sending letters to the 1997 committee and to those not chosen for the new committee.

Mr. Ebron made a motion, seconded by Dr. Schley, to approve Tentative Budgets and Funding Sources for the remaining 1997 SPLOST Projects as stated. After a lengthy discussion, it was the consensus of the Board not to delay any of the construction projects from the 1997 SPLOST and the 2003 SPLOST. It was the consensus of the Board that the Administration bring to the next meeting a proposal on Jordan High School. Mr. Wells noted that he is "discontented with the proposal and does not want any of the projects delayed but I am concerned about the overspending. We have a budget and we should stick with that." The vote was (8) affirming and (1) opposing, (Mr. Wells). Mr. Wells noted, "My vote is not to delay it but to control the overspending in each one of the budgets."

Upon motion of Mrs. Storey, seconded by Mr. Ebron, the Board unanimously approved the assignment of Hecht, Burdeshaw, Johnson, Kidd and Clark, Architects for re-roofing at the Columbus Museum.

Upon motion of Mr. Wells, seconded by Mr. Walker, the Board unanimously voted to change the regular meeting date of the December Board meeting due to the winter break. The date will be changed to Monday, December 13, 2004.

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

- Human Resources Report/Professional and Classified (Appendix A)
- Workers' Compensation Settlement, \$11,500.00 and six months medical.
- Contract awarded to Angel Security for services at all four libraries.
- New budget John S. & James L. Knight Foundation, \$82,000.00 for Marshall Middle.
- New budget FY05 Rule 10, \$4,000.00 Relations with Other Agencies.
- New budget FY05 K-3 Reading Grant for Woodall Program.
- Contract awarded Fashion Interiors, Inc., \$10,900.00 for stage curtains at J.D. Davis (\$2,800) and Shaw (\$8,100).

- Contract awarded Malone Contract Floor Covering, \$19,997.00 for carpet at Rose Hill and Academic Success and VCT Flooring at Rose Hill.
- Grant awarded FY05 VI-B IDEA Flow Through, FY05 Federal Pre-school Grant, FY05 State Pre-school, FY05 Capacity Building.
- Grant awarded Title II, Part A of NCLB, \$2,105,639.00.
- Grant awarded Title V, Part A of NCLB, \$181,395.00.
- Audit of Financial Statement of 1997 SPLOST and 2003 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 to SPLOST Fund to cover Scope Changes.
- Report of change orders/changes in project contingencies.
- Status Report for Projects under Construction.
- Financial Assistance, \$2,400.95.

Upon motion of Mrs. Storey, seconded by Mr. Walker, the Board unanimously approved a legislative agenda for the 2005 Legislative Session. Dr. Polleys reminded the Board of the lunch tomorrow with the local Legislative Delegation.

Upon motion of Mr. Wells, seconded by Dr. Schley, the Board unanimously approved a new budget from the Georgia Department of Education for a Pay for Performance award to Columbus High, \$163,400.00.

Dr. Polleys invited the public to a meeting regarding the old Sears Property on Monday, November 29, 2004, 4:00 p.m. at the Columbus Museum. She noted that this meeting will be conducted by Tunnell-Spanger-Walsh and public input would be welcome.

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

Charles T. Staples
Legal Counsel