

MUSCOGEE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
COLUMBUS, GEORGIA

REGULAR BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
MONDAY, APRIL 19, 2004

MINUTES

The regular meeting of the Board of Education of the Muscogee County School District was held on Monday, April 19, 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, 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, James E. Humes, II, Legal Counsel, Del Parker, Treasurer, Brenda F. Dozier, Assistant Superintendent for Student Services, Robin Pennock, Chief Academic Officer, Don A. Cooper, Jr., Chief Human Resources Officer, Billy Kendall, Administrative Assistant to Superintendent of Education, Myles Caggins, Assistant Superintendent for Business Affairs, Bill Hortman, Associate Superintendent and representatives from the media.

Dr. Polleys called the meeting to order with an invocation and pledge of allegiance to the flag led by students from Waddell Elementary who also performed a hand bell recital. The Character Education word was introduced by a student from Waddell Elementary – Loyalty. Dr. Polleys then recognized visitors in the audience.

Dr. Polleys called on Mrs. Dozier who recognized first place winners for a Tobacco Use Prevention Poster and Media awards. Dr. Kendall then recognized Carver High ROTC State Drill Team Champions; Presidential Award to Janice Hudson a Columbus High teacher; STAR student and STAR teacher; Technology/Career Education State winners advancing to Nationals for Carver, Shaw, Hardaway, Jordan, Kendrick, and Northside.

Upon motion of Mr. Ditchfield, seconded by Mrs. Storey, the Board unanimously approved official actions taken at the regular Board of Education meeting held on March 15 and a called meeting held on March 18.

Dr. Polleys announced that as required under O.C.G.A. §48-5-32.1, the Board will conduct the first public hearing on this year's millage levy. Dr. Polleys said that hearings are also scheduled for May 10 at 5:00 p.m. and May 17 at 6:30 p.m. Dr. Polleys said that, "development and the rise in the value of property in Muscogee County will result in a projected increase in the digest and in local tax revenue of approximately 3% this year." Dr. Polleys opened the meeting for any in citizens of Muscogee County who would like to address this issue. Mr. Walker noted that it is not the school district that is raising the millage rate by 3%. He further stated that this is the result of the tax digest and the school district will benefit from someone else's actions. Dr. Polleys noted that the school district has not raised the millage for fifteen consecutive years. The hearing was completed and there were no citizens that wanted to speak on this issue.

Dr. Phillips noted some changes in the agenda which included an addendum for a budget adjustment of \$84,727.00 for the SPLOST election in November, 2003; item K on the consent agenda is a donation of a batting cage from the Northside High School booster club; the Woodall request for year-round status was removed because, they will need to follow the process to make sure that the research is current in dealing with exceptional children. This item will be brought back in the future. Dr. Phillips also noted that item M in the action agenda dealing with the purchase order, it is no longer termed an emergency. Dr. Phillips also noted that the law was approved by the General Assembly that any construction item under \$50,000 is the new amount for purchase orders. Mr. Whiteside commented that it should be noted again that this is for construction items only. Dr. Phillips also noted that he spoke with the State Board regarding the waiver petition to delay school openings at Kendrick and J. D. Davis. This request does not meet the standards of the interpretation of the law.

Upon motion of Mr. Ditchfield, seconded by Mrs. Storey, the Board unanimously approved the modification of the agenda to add the addendum item regarding a budget adjustment in the amount of \$84,727 to fund the November 2, 2003, SPLOST election.

Upon motion of Mr. Ebron, seconded by Mr. Ditchfield, the Board unanimously approved the modified contract for the Strategic Plan from the Carl Vinson Institute of Government.

Upon motion of Mr. Wells, seconded by Dr. Schley, the Board unanimously approved the application to Georgia School Boards Association to certify the Muscogee County School Board.

Upon motion of Mr. Walker, seconded by Mr. Ditchfield, the Board unanimously approved the updates to the Board Policy Manual.

Upon motion of Mrs. Storey, seconded by Mr. Ebron, the Board unanimously approved a new policy GBR, Electronic Communication Devices, to include cell phone use by personnel. Dr. Phillips clarified that the use of cell phones by school personnel should not distract or interfere with instruction or the guidance of students which should not include conducting personal business on a phone in the classroom where instruction would be impaired.

Upon motion of Mr. Ebron, seconded by Mr. Walker, the Board unanimously approved a revision to policy JCDAF, Use of Electronic Devices by students. Dr. Phillips clarified that the revision of this policy will allow students to be in possession of cell phones that are not visible, not turned on, nor used during the school day or on the school bus. The use of cell phones by students will be limited to use after school and outside the building.

Upon motion of Mrs. Storey, seconded by Mr. Ebron, the Board unanimously approved a revision to policy JBCBA, Tuition.

Upon motion of Mrs. Storey, seconded by Mr. Walker, the Board unanimously approved a plan proposing an elementary fine arts magnet program at Wynnton Elementary School.

Upon motion of Mrs. Storey, seconded by Mr. Ebron, the Board unanimously approved an increase in fees for Conduct Summer School. The fees for the summer of 2004 are \$100 for Elementary; \$150 for Middle and \$200 for High School students.

Dr. Phillips asked that the request for a waiver petition to delay school openings at Kendrick High and J. D. Davis be deleted. This item will be handled administratively.

Upon motion of Mr. Wells, seconded by Mr. Walker, the Board unanimously approved a request from Columbus Water Works to utilize a portion of property at Edgewood Elementary for a sanitary sewer easement.

Upon motion of Mr. Wells, seconded by Mr. Walker, the Board unanimously approved Change Order No. 1 in the amount of \$21,664.13 to be added to the original contract for construction in the Assembly Hall at Wynnton Elementary. This change order is covered by funds received from the Wynnton School Auditorium Group and the Wynnton School Alumni Society.

Upon motion of Mr. Wells, seconded by Mrs. Storey, the Board unanimously approved a confirmation purchase order to Allen-Simpson, Inc., Civil Engineers in the total amount of \$13,800.00 for engineering services to correct soil erosion/drainage problems at four schools.

Upon motion of Mr. Ditchfield, seconded by Mr. Wells, the Board unanimously approved resolutions authorizing the established of Georgia Extended Asset Pool and Georgia Fund 1 accounts for investment of 2003 SPLOST funds.

Upon motion of Mr. Wells, seconded by Mr. Walker, the Board unanimously approved the year end projected T&E funds in the amount of \$240,912.00 for Pre-K Instructional Program budget.

Upon motion of Mr. Wells, seconded by Mrs. Storey, the Board unanimously approved Financial Statements for eight months ending February 29, 2004.

Dr. Polleys informed the Board of the need to modify the agenda in order to take action on the addendum. Mr. Wells made a motion, seconded by Mrs. Storey, to approve a budget adjustment from the Contingency Reserve for \$84,727.00 to fund the November 2, 2003, SPLOST sales tax election. After some discussion, Mr. Whiteside offered an amended motion, seconded by Mr. Ebron that these funds from the Contingency Reserve be treated as a loan and re-paid by SPLOST funds. The vote was unanimous on both the main motion and the amended motion.

Upon motion of Mr. Wells, seconded by Mrs. Storey, the Board unanimously approved the following consent agenda items with the exception of item F-1:

- Personnel Report (Appendix A).
- Workers' Compensation Settlement.
- National Down Syndrome Organization to use Kinnett Stadium October 9, 2004.
- New budget, Best Buy Children's Foundation Grant, \$2,500 for Kendrick High.
- New budget, Pay for Performance, \$56,110.43 for Midland Academy.
- New budget, Weyerhaeuser Company Foundation, \$7,000 for Reese Road.
- Budget adjustment, State-wide Grant for K-3, \$80,832.64.
- Budget adjustment, State-wide Grant for 4-8, \$48,462.98.
- Budget adjustment, Friedlander Fund for Bradley Library, \$6,000.
- Purchase order, Dell, Inc., servers for (19) schools, \$79,842.37.
- Sales Tax Construction Report, February 29, 2004.
- Report on Transfer from FY03 SPLOST Critical Needs.
- FY97 Sales Tax Construction Program Report for (52) SPLOST Projects.
- Financial Assistance, \$909.52.
- Donation to Northside High School, \$65,000 from Booster Club for batting cage.

Upon motion of Dr. Schley, seconded by Mr. Wells, the Board approved item F-1; purchase order (\$21,916.20) for a van to Bill Heard Chevrolet for the Bradley Library. The vote was (8) affirming and (1) abstaining, (Mr. Whiteside).

Upon motion of Mr. Ditchfield, seconded by Mr. Walker, the Board unanimously voted to go into executive session to hear five student discipline appeals and a personnel matter.

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

Upon motion of Mr. Ditchfield, seconded by Ms. Buckner, the Board unanimously voted to adjourn the regular April meeting of the Board.