

NEWTON COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

DRAFT MINUTES OF APRIL 15, 2008 WORK SESSION

Covington, GA

April 15, 2008

On Tuesday, April 15, 2008, Board Chair Mr. Almond Turner called to order the monthly work session of the Newton County Board of Education in the Central Office Administrative Board Room. The following board members were present: Mr. Turner, Chairman; Vice Chair Mr. Rickie Corley, Dr. C. C. Bates, Ms. Cathy Dobbs, and Mr. Johnny Smith. At 5:30 p.m. the Board went into executive session on a motion by Mr. Corley and seconded by Ms. Dobbs to discuss appointment, employment and compensation of employees, and land acquisition. The Board returned to open session at 7:00 p.m. on a motion by Mr. Smith and second by Dr. Bates.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

Mr. Turner welcomed members of Youth Leadership Newton County to the meeting.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION

Mr. Turner recognized several students who recently won awards at the Griffin RESA Regional Science Fair. From Indian Creek Middle School - Cameron Curles and Joey Mitchell earned third place honors in group projects; Grace Murphy and Kathryn Drumheller earned third place in group projects; Alex Grady won third place for his Physical Science projects; Robin Greer earned third place in the Biological Sciences competition; Samantha Arrieta and Megan Born placed second in the Group Projects Competition; Holly Croom and Rebecca Johnston earned second place for their group project; Kelsie Rice placed second in the Biological Science category; Sandy Davis earned the second place award in Biological Science Competition; Wesley Chambers won first place in the Physical Science category; Hanna Jacobs won a first place award in Biological Sciences; Mary Ruth Davis earned a first place award for her Biological Sciences project; Cassidy Sims and Kathleen Cunningham won first place honors in the Group Projects competition and also won the U.S. Navy/ U. S. Marine Corps Award. In addition to this award, Ms. Sims and Ms. Cunningham brought home a first place award at the State Science Fair. Max Alas of Veterans Memorial Middle School earned third place in the Physical Sciences competition and also won the U.S. Navy/U.S. Marine Corps Award. Newton High School student Brooke Wilson won a first place award in the Cellular and Molecular Biology category with her project and also won the UGA Griffin Campus Award (\$100) and the U. S. Army award.

Representatives from the Covington Pilot Club presented a check for \$1,000.00 to the Newton County Schools Special Needs Preschool Program. These funds will be used to purchase additional *Read It Once, Read It Again* curriculum books and materials.

SUPERINTENDENTS' REPORTS

Financial and Administrative Services Reports Ms. Deborah Robertson reviewed the Financial Report for the month ending March 31, 2008. With 75% of the year complete, total revenues are at 78.05% and total expenditures are at 71.18%.

SPLOST II distribution for January was \$686,020, a decrease of \$196,976 from our net for December. The total net SPLOST II received for the first 37 months is approximately \$31,560,260 an average of \$852,980 per month.

Mr. Mark Davis, the representative from Associated Paper, met with the principals and head custodians in March to discuss the implementation of the custodial supply and equipment maintenance program previously approved by the BOE. Mr. Davis will continue to work with the head custodians and the school system representative from the maintenance department to train the staff on proper use of supplies and equipment.

Construction on South Salem Elementary School by Carroll Daniel Construction is on schedule. The Board members were able to take the first walkthrough of the facilities on March 24. This school is on schedule to open the beginning of the 2008-2009 school year and is funded primarily from SPLOST II.

Construction on the new Liberty Middle School is also on schedule for opening in the fall of 2009. It is also funded primarily from SPLOST II.

The following bid openings are scheduled: sealed bids will be opened for the site work at Alcovy High School on April 29; sealed bids will be opened for the construction of the canopies at Heard Mixon and East Newton as well as the renovations at Sharp Stadium on May 1; sealed bids will be opened for the renovation work at Newton High School on May 6; and sealed bids will be opened on the rubberized track at Alcovy High on May 8.

R & E Electric, Inc., the Board approved electrical contractor, will be replacing lighting at East Newton, Fairview, Porterdale, and Mansfield this summer. The estimated cost is \$133,688 which is within the budgeted amount of \$150,000.

Fuel was purchased in March at an average cost of \$3.39 per gallon for a total cost of \$182,707. This is an increase of \$.59 a gallon over the average amount paid in February. The last fuel purchase was \$3.32 gallon. Buses traveled 543,038 miles for the month of March, averaging 9.5 miles per gallon.

There were 543 athletic and/or instructional field trips taken during March, for a total of 3,104 trips to date. Principals have been asked to review field trips carefully prior to approval due to the increased costs of fuel.

As a part of the continuous improvement plan for the Transportation Department to improve bus safety, the Transportation Department will expand safety training to include middle school students. The current training is provided to elementary students.

The next lead drivers meeting will be April 23. The Transportation Director will begin to compile minutes of the meetings and will place them in each driver's mailbox.

Meal Pay collections for March were \$33,848. Total collections for this school year are at \$226,092. The receipts for 2008 show a 58% increase over 2007.

The State Coordinated Review Team from the School Nutrition Program conducted its on-site visit March 19-21. The three schools reviewed were Porterdale Elementary, Heard Mixon Elementary and Indian Creek Middle.

Meal prices for student meals for the 08-09 school year will remain the same. A la carte milk prices will go from \$.40 to \$.50 to cover the increased cost of milk. Adult lunch prices will increase from \$2.50 to \$2.75 since federal guidelines require that the price of non-student meals must cover all costs incurred.

The Purchasing Department is preparing an invitation to bid an annual renewable contract for HVAC services. The bid will seek to procure the services of a qualified and experienced HVAC contractor to perform repairs and installations as needed by the school system. It is anticipated this bid will be publicly advertised in April.

Curriculum and Instruction Report Associate Superintendent, Dr. Linda Hayden, presented the CIT report.

Special education students at Veterans Memorial Middle School scored higher than other Newton County middle school students with disabilities on the 2006 and 2007 CRCT in reading, math and language arts. The VMMS students also earned the highest writing test scores among all students with disabilities in the 2006 and 2007 administration of the 8th Grade Georgia Writing Assessment.

One of only twenty-two Math Academic Coach grants funded by the State was awarded to Veterans Memorial Middle. The grant funds part of the cost for a teacher with Master Teacher certification to be the school academic coach.

The Georgia Criterion-Referenced Competency Test (GCRCT) will be administered to students in grades 1-8, the week of April 21-25. End of Course Tests at the high schools will be given April 20 – May 12. Make up test days for the End of Course Tests are May 9 and May 12 – May 14.

Kindergarten Round-Up is scheduled for the week of April 28 – May 1.

Under No Child Left Behind, science will not be included in Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) determinations for schools for 2007-2008. However, Georgia is required to report participation for science tests – CRCT, GHS GT, GAA - on the state report card. At least 95% of students in Grades 3-8 and Grade 11 must participate in the science assessment.

The Newton County Arts Association provided a production of *Oklahoma* for the sixth grade students on March 28. They also provided a production of *Cinderella* on April 18 for kindergarten students. These programs are an ongoing collaboration between the Newton County School System and the Arts Association.

School Messenger training was completed on April 3. This program is being used by the schools to relay information about school activities to parents via telephone.

Ms. Karen Crowder and Ms. Kim Owens gave a presentation to the Board to consider their request that Middle Ridge students conform to a uniform policy beginning next school year, 2008-2009. The policy would coincide with the uniform policy already in place for Heard Mixon, Oak Hill and Porterdale Elementary schools.

Enrollment

Total enrollment as of April 4 was 18,866. A copy of the detailed enrollment report is attached.

OLD BUSINESS

The following policies have been on the table for one month and action will be requested on April 22:

- Revised Policy IFBG – Use of Computers/Communication Resources
- Revised Policy IHE – Promotion /Retention
- Revised Policy IHF – Graduation Requirements/Credentials

NEW BUSINESS

Item A on the agenda, Bids for Construction of New Elementary School #14 to be constructed on the Kirkland Road property, was discussed and Board action was requested. The low bid of \$13,319,000 for construction was submitted by Meja Construction, Inc., of Jackson, Georgia. A motion was made by Ms. Dobbs to accept the item, with a second by Mr. Corley, and all voting in favor.

The following items of new business, Items B –D, were discussed and action will be requested at the Board's regular meeting on April 22:

- **Requested Board Action Relative to Bids on Contracted Services for Plumbing Services**
- **Requested Board Action Relative to Bids for Purchase of Custodial Equipment for South Salem Elementary School**
- **Requested Board Action Relative to Use of Facilities (Veterans Memorial) by Mustard Seed Faith Church**

The following policy, Item E on the agenda, was discussed and will lay on the table for one month before action can be taken:

- **Requested Board Action Relative to Policy KI – Free Material Distribution**

The following items of new business, Items F – Q were discussed and action will be requested at the Board's regular meeting on April 22:

- **Requested Board Action Relative to Approval of Secondary Program Planning Guide**
- **Requested Board Action Relative to Approval of Elementary Handbooks**
- **Requested Board Action Relative to Approval of Secondary Handbooks**

- **Requested Board Action Relative to Math Adoption for High Schools**
- **Requested Board Action Relative to Science Adoption for Grades K-12**
- **Requested Board Action Relative to Bids for Desktop Computers**
- **Requested Board Action Relative to Interactive White Boards**
- **Requested Board Action Relative to Bids for Expansion of MediaCast**
- **Requested Board Action Relative to Amendment of 2008-2009 School Calendar**
- **Requested Board Action Relative to Bids for Primary Rated ISDN Telephone Lines**
- **Requested Board Action Relative to Middle Ridge Uniform Proposal**
- **Requested Board Action Relative to Modifying Attendance Lines for South Salem Elementary School**

Executive Session Mr. Dennis Carpenter presented for Board action the Superintendent's personnel recommendations that had been discussed in executive session. Dr. Bates made the motion to approve the list of recommendations; second by Ms. Dobbs, and all voting in favor. A copy of the personnel report is attached.

Dr. Whatley announced that Dr. Renee Mallard has been approved as the new Principal of Indian Creek Middle School as of July 1, 2008.

With there being no other matters for discussion, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:55 p.m. on a motion by Ms. Dobbs, and a second by Mr. Corley, with all voting in favor.

Superintendent, Newton County Schools

Chair, Newton County Board of Education