

NEWTON COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

DRAFT MINUTES OF JUNE 10, 2008 WORK SESSION

Covington, GA

JUNE 10, 2008

The monthly work session of the Newton County Board of Education was held on Tuesday, June 10, 2008 and was preceded by an advertised public hearing relative to the proposed FY 2009 general fund budget and millage rate. The following board members were present: Mr. Almond Turner, Chairman; Vice Chair Mr. Rickie Corley, Dr. C. C. Bates, Ms. Cathy Dobbs, and Mr. Johnny Smith. Both meetings were held in the Central Office Administrative Board Room following a groundbreaking ceremony for a new elementary school to be located on Kirkland Road. The new school is scheduled to open in the fall of 2009. At 5:30 p.m. the Board went into executive session on a motion by Mr. Smith and second by Mr. Corley to discuss the appointment, employment and compensation of employees.

On a motion Mr. Smith and second by Ms. Dobbs, the Board voted 5-0 to return to open session.

PUBLIC HEARING

At 6:45 p.m., Chairman Turner called to order the first of three public hearings before the Board officially adopted the FY 2008-2009 operational budget and millage rate. Dr. Whatley briefly reviewed the proposed budget which had been presented to the Board in detail at their May 13, 2008 work session and studied extensively in a special called budget work session on May 15, 2008. The tentative budget was adopted in the regular May 20, 2008 meeting of the Board and has been advertised in the county's legal organ, *The Covington News*.

In previously held meetings, concerns have been expressed regarding the effects of both the local and state economy on our revenue projections and required expenditures. In addition to the effects of low or slow growth in the local tax digest on the FY09 budget, other issues include rising fuel costs, increasing numbers of students, increased costs associated with opening the new South Salem Elementary School on Salem Road, and a continuing state reduction in revenue, which for FY09 is \$1,027,133.

In the budget presentation made to the Board and the tentative budget adopted on May 20, 2008, a millage rate used by the Administration for Maintenance and Operations for raising the needed local revenue was 18.21 mills. That millage rate is .054 mills under the tax office's calculated rollback rate of 18.264 mills.

Mr. Turner opened the floor for discussion from the public. There were no comments from the audience and at 7 p.m. Mr. Corley made a motion to adjourn the public hearing session and begin the regular monthly work session. Ms. Dobbs seconded the motion and all voted in favor.

WELCOME, INVOCATION, AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Following the welcome by Mr. Turner, Mr. Corley gave the invocation, and Mr. Smith led the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

SUPERINTENDENTS' REPORTS

Financial and Administrative Services Reports

Ms. Deborah Robertson, Associate Superintendent for Business Administration, reviewed the Financial Report for the month ending May 31, 2008. With 91.67% of the year complete, total revenues are at 87.50%.

SPLOST II net distribution for March was \$973,409, an increase of \$5,950 from our net for February. The total net SPLOST II received for the first 39 months is approximately \$33,501,128, an average of \$859,003 per month.

The \$100 classroom gift cards from the Governor's office for all full-time K-12 classroom teachers employed as of August 1, 2008 are scheduled to be delivered to the school system around the middle of July. Each media center will also receive one card to purchase supplies for the schools media center. These cards can only be used from 12 a.m., July 31 until 11:59 p.m., on August 10. Specific instructions will be given as to where and how the cards can be used.

Of the 947 work orders accepted in May, 697 have been completed. Of the remaining 250 work orders, two are waiting on parts and 248 are in progress. Major repairs for the month of May included replacing two classroom HVAC units and a roof top HVAC unit at Newton High and replacing one classroom unit HVAC at Livingston. Major summer contracted services for school repairs are underway.

The maintenance department will be working to further reduce the costs associated with garbage removal by implementing a paper and cardboard recycling program. B & W Waste, Inc., in cooperation with Pratt Industries, will be placing cardboard recycling containers at each school and removing one standard garbage container. Separating the cardboard from other garbage in this manner will result in a reduction in the frequency of garbage pick-ups at each school. The charge for having the recycling containers emptied is also much less than the rate for normal garbage pick-ups. This change could save the school system as much as \$80,000 per year. In addition to the cost savings, the program will help to divert a significant amount of recyclable material from landfills.

Construction on South Salem Elementary School by Carroll Daniel Construction is on schedule to officially welcome students on August 1, 2008. The final punch list is being prepared. Furniture and instructional supplies are being delivered. Funding for the construction of South Salem is primarily from SPLOST II funds.

Construction on Liberty Middle School by Carroll Daniel Construction is also on schedule. Steel work is at 90% completion and block work is at 66% completion. This school is scheduled to open for the 2009-2010 school year and is funded primarily from SPLOST II.

Construction on the new elementary school (#14) located on Kirkland Road by Meja Construction is on schedule. Initial grading and retention points are at 75% completion. This school is scheduled to open the beginning of the 2009-2010 school year and is funded primarily from SPLOST II.

Kevin Price Contractors, the contractor for Alcovy site work, Newton High improvements, Heard Mixon and East Newton canopies, and Sharp Stadium improvements, has begun work. Materials have been ordered for railings and step improvements at Sharp Stadium and for the canopies for Heard Mixon and East Newton. They are on site and working at Alcovy and Newton High. These projects are scheduled for completion for mid-July and are primarily funded from SPLOST II.

There are five bus drivers currently in training, with the next training scheduled for June 16. There are currently 31 sub drivers and seven sub monitors available.

Fuel was purchased in May at an average of \$3.88 per gallon for a total cost of \$161,038. This is an increase of \$.30 a gallon over the average amount paid in April. The last fuel purchase was \$4.17 per gallon. Buses traveled 425,204 miles for the month of April, averaging 9.7 miles per gallon.

There are 30 buses running summer school routes; ten conventional elementary, seven conventional middle, three special education elementary and ten special education middle.

Meal Pay collections for May were \$16,450. Total collections for this school year are at \$269,834. In comparison, year-to-date collections through May 2007 were \$174,131. The receipts for 2008 show a 64.5% increase over 2007.

Annual in-service training for school nutrition employees will be held on July 21 at Alcovy High School. The focus will be on providing quality customer service.

There was discussion relative to establishing an Education Foundation. In researching existing education foundations in several counties within our proximity that operate in partnership with school system, the Board members were asked to contact interested civic and business community members that would be committed to the concept of private and corporate funding to benefit public education. Each Board member will submit two names to serve on a Steering Committee.

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

All students seeking a Georgia high school diploma must pass the Georgia High School Graduation Tests (GHSGT) in four content areas as well as the Georgia High School Writing Assessment.

Special Education teachers and related services personnel completed Annual Review Individual Education Program (IEP) team meetings and eligibility re-determinations for all students with disabilities receiving special education services. As of May 30, 2008, special education teachers conducted over 2,600 IEP team meetings in preparation for the FY09 school year.

The Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA 2004) requires that the need for Extended School Year (ESY) services be considered for each student served in special education programs as part of the IEP process. There are currently 120 students with disabilities receiving ESY services. Services are provided through contractual arrangements with system staff. This program and services are funded through IDEA flow-through funds.

Elementary summer school enrollment is as follows: 3rd grade Reading – 195 students; 5th Grade Reading – 33 students; 5th Grade Math – 245 students; 5th Grade Reading and Math – 169 students. Projected enrollment is 639 students, with approximately 75 test takers only.

Elementary students participated in an Art Contest sponsored by The Center of Community Preservation and Planning. The contest was in conjunction with the Newton County Comprehensive Transportation Plan, a project undertaken by the Newton County Board of Commissioners through the Atlanta Regional Commission. Winners were as follows: Kindergarten – Blaise Norman from Oak Hill; 1st Grade – Peyton Harrison from Oak Hill; 2nd Grade – Mason Andrews from Rocky Plains; 3rd Grade – Miranda Hopper from Mansfield; 4th Grade – Kiersten DaCosta from East Newton and 5th Grade – Consuelo and Havanna Knepper from Middle Ridge.

The Technology Department has scheduled several technology-related professional development opportunities for teachers and other staff. Classes were taught on Teaching and Learning in a 21st Century Classroom, eLearn and Microsoft Applications. The total enrollment for all three courses was 427 staff and teachers.

During 2007-2008, the Technology Department applied for and received \$1,197,452.37 in E-rate reimbursement. An additional \$199,978.66 has been applied for and is expected to be received before June 30th. The total reimbursement will be \$1,397,431.03 for this school year. These funds have been used for technology infrastructure renovations in both elementary and middle schools. Media Cast, School Messenger and equipment for the Business Continuity and Disaster Recovery site were also purchased from these funds.

Middle School Language Arts, Math, and Science GPS committees met during the week of June 2, 2008, to update the county-wide GPS curriculum units. The Social Studies committees will meet on July 28, 2008.

Sixth grade regular education and special education math teachers participated in two days of intensive math content instruction on June 3 and 4. Seventh grade math teachers participated in the same training on June 5 and 6. Eighth grade teachers will do the same on June 23 and 24. The training is provided by math consultants from Griffin RESA.

Middle School administrators and selected teachers participated in an overview of STEEP, the reading and math universal screener. This is an assessment tool that will be used with all middle school students three times a year during 2008-2009.

Congratulations go to Ficquett and Veterans Memorial schools for winning an HP Technology for Teaching grant award. Each school will receive five each of the following for use by the teachers on the grant team: HP Tablet PC's, digital projectors, printers, digital cameras, Microsoft Office Enterprise 2007, and Microsoft Student 2008. Teachers will also receive online professional development from the International Society for Technology in Education and a \$500 stipend. In addition, each school will receive an HP Design Jet Printer for use by the entire staff for printing large items such as posters. The grants awarded to the two schools have an approximate combined value of \$80,000. The grant writer, Dr. Kathy Garber, assisted the schools in applying for the grant.

CRCT remediation is being offered for both elementary and middle school students. Different sessions for CRCT remediation for middle school students will occur each week during June. Some students are taking morning classes, some afternoon classes, and some are taking both.

Enrollment

Total enrollment as of May 23, 2008 was 18,687. A copy of the detailed enrollment report is attached.

OLD BUSINESS

The following items were reviewed:

- **Requested Board Action Relative to Section F of Secondary Program Planning Guide**
Section F of the Secondary Program Planning Guide was reviewed but tabled for further review.
- **Requested Board Action Relative to Adoption of FY 2009 Budget** This item will require Board action in June.
- **Requested Board Action Relative to Setting Millage Rate for FY 2009** This item will require Board action in June.

NEW BUSINESS

The following items of new business, Items A –E, were discussed and action taken:

- **Requested Board Action Relative to Fiber Agreement with Snapping Shoals EMC** Approval of the recommendation of the attached agreement with Snapping Shoals for fiber service. A motion was made by Ms. Dobbs, seconded by Dr. Bates, with all voting in favor.
- **Requested Board Action Relative to Pole Attachment Agreement with the City of Covington**
Approval of the recommendation of the attached contract with the City of Covington regarding the Pole Attachment Agreement. A motion was made by Mr. Corley, seconded by Mr. Smith, with all voting in favor.
- **Requested Board Action Relative to Private Drive (Ag Drive) Easement** Approval of the recommendation of the attached joint driveway easement with the Newton County School System and Suburban Home Sales. Many years ago, a driveway was cut to landlocked private property adjacent to Newton High School. The drive, which begins on property of the NCSS was also used by the school system to access the agricultural facilities on the campus of NHS. This recommended agreement grants to each party a perpetual easement on the other's portion for use in common of the owners for ingress/egress for vehicular and pedestrian traffic. The agreement constitutes a covenant running with the title, given the property shall only be for single family residential development(s). A motion was made by Ms. Dobbs, seconded by Mr. Corley, with all voting in favor.
- **Requested Board Action Relative to Contract with Global Teacher Research and Resources, Inc.**
Approval of the recommendation of the contract with Global Teacher Research and Resources, Inc. to assist in employing highly-qualified teachers in critical needs areas and providing multicultural learning experiences for students across the school district. A motion was made by Ms. Dobbs, seconded by Dr. Bates, with all voting in favor.

- **Requested Board Action Relative to Bid for Financing Buses** Approval of the recommendation to enter into an agreement with the low bidder, BB&T, for financing the 23 buses that the Board approved for purchase in January at a total purchase bid price of \$1,925,252. BB&T submitted a fixed interest rate of 3.92%. Attached is the required *Resolution Approving Financing Terms* that will be approved as part of this recommendation. A motion was made by Mr. Corley, seconded by Mr. Smith, with all voting in favor.

The following items, Item F – M were discussed and action will be requested at the Board’s regular meeting on June 17:

- **Requested Board Action Relative to Bids to Contract Renewal for Garbage/Trash Removal and Disposal**
- **Requested Board Action Relative to Contracts for Selected School Nutrition Program Items**
- **Requested Board Action Relative to Renewal of Energy Management Contract**
- **Requested Board Action Relative to Authorization to Transfer 08 Mid-Term Funds to Appropriate 09 Accounts for Incomplete Projects**
- **Requested Board Action Relative to Bids for Antivirus Software**
- **Requested Board Action Relative to Bids for Microsoft License Renewals**
- **Requested Board Action Relative to FY 2009 Career and Technical Education Plan**
- **Requested Board Action Relative to Agreement with Newton County for School Resource Officers**

Executive Session Mr. Dennis Carpenter, Associate Superintendent for Human Resources, presented for Board action the Superintendent’s personnel recommendations that had been discussed in executive session. Ms. Dobbs made the motion to approve the list of recommendations; Mr. Smith seconded, and all voting in favor. A copy of the personnel report is attached.

Mr. Turner reminded the Board members of the Board Budget sessions on June 17, 2008, at 9:00 a.m. and June 17, 2008, at 6:45 p.m.

With there being no other matters for discussion, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:25 p.m. on a motion by Ms. Dobbs, seconded by Mr. Corley, and all voting in favor.

Superintendent, Newton County Schools

Chair, Newton County Board of Education