

# NEWTON COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

## MINUTES OF OCTOBER 14, 2008 WORK SESSION

Covington, GA

October 14, 2008

The monthly work session of the Newton County Board of Education was held on Tuesday, October 14, 2008. 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. At 5:30 p.m. the Board went into executive session on a motion by Dr. Bates and second by Mr. Corley to discuss the appointment, employment and compensation of employees.

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

### WELCOME, INVOCATION, AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

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

### SPECIAL RECOGNITION

The week of October 13 – 17, 2008 is National Lunch Week and Dr. Whatley recognized the Newton County Schools nutrition managers and their workers for the important role they play in our school system. The following managers were in attendance to accept a certificate for their school: Jolynn Gill – Alcovy High; Chanda Twilley – Fairview Elementary; Linda Bell – Clements; Annette Robinson – West Newton; Betty Jean Hawkins – East Newton; LaDonna Morrison – Palmer Stone; Mary Key – Middle Ridge; Nancy Howard – Livingston; and Judy Skinner – Ficquett. Ms. Jan Loomans and the School Nutrition Department were also recognized for their vital role in the daily functions of school nutrition. Schools not in attendance will receive their certificate via Ms. Loomans.

### PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was one request for public participation. Ms. Deana Graham, representing the community and Ficquett Elementary School, thanked the BOE members for their work and commitment to the school system. Ms. Graham asked that the idea of a magnet school be reviewed.

### SUPERINTENDENTS' REPORTS

**Financial and Administrative Services Reports** Ms. Deborah Robertson, Associate Superintendent for Business Administration, reviewed the Financial Report for the month ending September 30, 2008. With 25% of the year complete, total revenues are at 15.31% and total expenditures are at 13.69%.

SPLOST II net distribution for July was \$839,884, a decrease of \$125,118 from our net for June. The total net SPLOST II received for the first 43 months is approximately \$36,968,664, an average of \$859,736 per month.

Open Enrollment for State Health insurance began on October 10, 2008 and will conclude on November 10, 2008. Each employee has received a *State Health Decision Plan Guide 2009* detailing the changes and providing instructions on how to make selections online. All employees will be asked to sign that they have printed the confirmation of their open enrollment selection. Employees that do not have State Health Insurance and do not want the insurance will not have to complete the confirmation.

In-service training was conducted on September 24, 2008 for maintenance and operations facility coordinators and head custodians. Captain Robert Thomas, with the Newton County Fire Department, spoke in regards to fire safety and fire safety inspections that will begin in October. The group was also discussed the green custodial program, work order procedures and budget concerns.

Construction on Liberty Middle School by Carroll Daniel Construction is also on schedule. This school is scheduled to open the beginning of the 2009-2010 school year and is funded primarily from SPLOST II.

Construction of the new elementary school (#14) on Kirkland Road by Meja Construction is on schedule. This school is scheduled to open the beginning of the 2009-2010 school year and is funded primarily from SPLOST II.

Meja Construction anticipates having the bus parking area off Jack Neely Road completed and ready for use by the Transportation Department no later than November 1, 2008.

The average cost of fuel for September was at \$3.43 per gallon for a total cost of \$189,511. This is a decrease of \$.10 a gallon under the average amount paid in August. The last fuel purchased in September was \$3.62 per gallon. The least amount paid for fuel this fiscal year was \$3.29 per gallon in September and the most paid was \$3.99 per gallon in July. Buses traveled 501,135 miles for the month of September. The average mile per gallon for the month of September was 8.8.

National School Bus Safety Week is October 20 – 24, 2008. Students in selected grades participated in the state wide Bus Safety Poster Contest.

MealPay revenues for September were \$44,072. Year-to-date collections for 2008-2009 are \$97,742. By comparison, year-to-date collections for 2007 were \$79,759.

Mrs. Robertson introduced Mr. Bob Cunningham, architect from Cunningham, Forehand, Matthews and Moore Architects Inc., who along with Mr. Don Wood, conducted a power point presentation as to the upcoming renovations for the field house at Sharp Stadium. The renovation plan presented included input from a committee of principals and athletic directors. The recommendations were reviewed and discussed.

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

Mr. James Woodard, the CTAE Director, has been meeting with administrators and with middle and high school CTAE teachers. On September 24, 2008, he met with the CTAE Advisory Committee, composed of business and industry representatives. The committee is chaired by Mr. Ed Hutter, Vice-President of Hutter and Associates. The committee was divided into four working groups to assist in developing a plan to better implement Career Pathways in Newton County. Mr. Woodard will bring focus to collectively building a vision that will demonstrate the workforce readiness of our secondary students.

The K-12 Counselor Group will be meeting on a monthly basis, time for which will be credited to PLU's. A series of *Illuminate* sessions for school counselors and graduation coaches compiled by the Learning Support Division of the Georgia Department of Education have begun.

The Newton County School System's Title I Distinguished Schools for 2007-2008 are Fairview (4), Ficquett (4), Heard Mixon (4), Rocky Plains (3), West Newton (4), Palmer Stone (4) and Cousins (4). The number in parentheses is the number of years the school made AYP from 2005, including the unofficial data for 2008.

The Office of Federal Programs began coordinating the implementation of the parent involvement initiative Project Applesseed in six schools: Fairview Elementary, Oak Hill Elementary, Palmer Stone Elementary, Porterdale Elementary, West Newton Elementary, and Clements Middle. The goal of Project Applesseed is to organize America's 50 million public school parents to volunteer a minimum of 10 hours each year to improve the nation's school districts and public schools.

A workshop on Apraxia, a neurological disorder characterized by loss of the ability of execute or carry out skilled movements and gestures, including speech, was provided by Ms. Kristin Hannah, SLP on the afternoon of September 24, 2008, at South Salem Elementary. A power point presentation was shared with the group of special education teacher, SLP's, special education paraprofessionals, occupational and physical therapists and parents. The workshop included a question and answer session.

Representatives from all schools were provided with their annual Section 504 Update on September 15, 2008. Section 504 is a federally mandated program designed to serve students who are identified as having a physical or mental disability that substantially limits their access to learning without educational accommodations. Ms. Cathy Stubbs, Newton County Section 504 Coordinator, provided the group with guidance on making eligibility determinations and on completing the appropriate forms that make up the Individual Accommodations Plan for eligible students.

The Technology Department created a technology-related online work order system that will allow individual end users to report their technology problems. One of the most important features of this new system is that it will allow for email updates to be sent to the end user whenever there is a status change to the reported problem. This email notification will allow for better communication between the technology staff and all end users. This system was pilot tested with select users in July and August and was then pilot tested at an entire school, Porterdale, in September. This program will be given to everyone immediately after fall break.

Intervention materials for students in grade K-2, who are exhibiting reading difficulties, have been purchased with special education Early Intervening Services (EIS) funds. Intervention materials for students in grades K-8, who are exhibiting math difficulties, (iSucceed Math), have also been purchased with special education EIS funds. Professional learning sessions will be provided on these materials.

Training on the Word ID Kansas strategy, a reading intervention to assist students in middle school with reading deficiencies, was led by Jean Austin, Special Education Coach, on October 1, 2008. Up to three teachers from each middle school were trained to use this strategy.

Dr. Ken Proctor, Director of Elementary Grades, presented to the Board recommendations made from the Theme School Committee regarding opening a theme school or schools. The recommendations were made through a power point presentation.

## **Enrollment**

Total enrollment on October 10, 2008 was 19,264. A copy of the detailed enrollment report is attached.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

The following item of new business, Item A, was approved on a motion by Mr. Corley, second by Ms. Dobbs, with all voting in favor:

- **Requested Board Action Relative to Bids for Construction of Classroom Addition at Alcovy High School**  
Approval of the recommendation to accept the low bid of \$8,325,446 from Carroll Daniel Construction for the classroom additions at Alcovy High School. Funds from SPLOST III and other local sources would be required to fund the portion of this project not funded by the state. It is estimated that the addition will be available for occupancy no later than the 2010-2011 school year. It will take longer to construct this addition as it will be ongoing while school is in progress.

The following items were discussed and action will be requested at the Board's regular meeting on October 21, 2008:

- **Requested Board Action Relative to Board Member Participation in State Health Insurance**
- **Requested Board Action Relative to Waiver of Fees for Use of Sharp Cafeteria for Annual Thanksgiving Community Dinner**
- **Requested Board Action Relative to Contractual Agreement with the Marcus Autism Center, Inc.**
- **Requested Board Action Relative to Contract for Network Engineering and Support**
- **Requested Board Action Relative to Theme School(s)**

- **Requested Board Action Relative to Selected Personnel Policies**

**Executive Session** Mr. Dennis Carpenter, Associate Superintendent for Human Resources, presented for Board action, the Superintendent's personnel recommendations. Ms. Dobbs made a motion to approve the Superintendent's recommendation regarding personnel in Executive Session. A second was made by Dr. Bates; all voted in favor. Copies of the Superintendent's recommendations for personnel are attached.

Mr. Turner reminded the Board members of the upcoming high school football games.

With there being no other matters for discussion, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:40 p.m., on a motion by Dr. Bates, second by Ms. Dobbs, with all voting in favor.

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Superintendent, Newton County Schools

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Chair, Newton County Board of Education