

# **NEWTON COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION**

## **MINUTES OF OCTOBER 21, 2008 REGULAR SESSION**

**Covington, GA**

**October 21, 2008**

The regular monthly session of the Newton County Board of Education was held on Tuesday, October 21, 2008. The following board members were present: Mr. Almond Turner, Chairman; Mr. Rickie Corley, Vice Chair; 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. Smith and second by Ms. Dobbs to discuss the appointment, employment and compensation of employees.

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

### **WELCOME, INVOCATION, AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

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

### **SPECIAL RECOGNITION**

There were two items of recognition. The week of October 20 – 24, 2008 is Bus Safety Week. The transportation department, including bus administrators, bus drivers, mechanics, and monitors, were recognized for their contributions to the school system. Lead bus drivers were presented certificates of appreciation on behalf of the drivers at all schools. They were: Lynn Patterson – East Newton Elementary; Pam Leidig – Fairview Elementary; Donna Brown – Ficquett Elementary; Kandie Harwell – Heard Mixon Elementary; Kathy Dye – Livingston Elementary; Sherry Barnett – Mansfield Elementary; Frances Cronan – Middle Ridge Elementary; Pam Ballard – Palmer Stone Elementary; Cynthia Morris – Porterdale Elementary; Debora Griggs – Rocky Plains Elementary; Shirley Smith – South Salem Elementary; Gail Eidson – West Newton Elementary; Pam Dillard – Clements Middle; Donna Brown- Cousins Middle; Sherry Barnett – Indian Creek Middle; Jeannie Roberson – Veterans Middle; Barbara Ewing – Alcovy High; Charles Rooks – Eastside High; Herb Carson – Newton High; Rosemary Thompson – ESOL Program; and Tracey Conner – Special Needs Program. Mr. Charles Brasher, Director of Transportation, and his staff were also recognized.

The Newton High School JROTC unit was also recognized as they recently earned national distinction as a Naval Honor Unit. This distinction means the Newton High School unit is in the top 15 percent of the 225 Marine Corps Junior ROTC programs in the nation. This is the seventh consecutive year the school has earned this distinction. The unit is led by Lt. Col. Rick Stanford and Gunnery Sgt. Sherman Smith. Members of the JROTC recognized were; Cadet Lt. Col. Corey Ware, Cadet Major Edward Jackson; Cadet Major Za' Coya Scott; Cadet 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Haley Laurenzo; Cade 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Renee Horne; Cadet 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Joel Harris and Cadet Sgt. Maj. Mark Ehrig.

### **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

There was one request for public participation. Ms. Tina Sailer addressed the Board with her concerns about teacher and administrative accountability in the secondary schools.

### **AGENDA AND MINUTES**

Mr. Corley made a motion to approve the agenda as presented; Ms. Dobbs seconded, with all voting in favor.

Ms. Dobbs made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 2008, meeting as presented; Mr. Smith seconded, with all voting in favor.

### **SUPERINTENDENTS' REPORTS**

## **Administrative Services Report, Curriculum/Instruction/Technology and Enrollment Reports**

No additional information was added to the Administrative Services Report that was presented at the October 14, 2008 work session. Copies of the reports are attached.

Mrs. Robertson introduced Ms. Connie Waller, from the Keep Covington/Newton Beautiful organization. Ms. Waller updated the Board on the foam tray recycling program that the school system will begin in the cafeterias in November. Mr. Bill Rosser and Ms. Leighann Johnston, from the Newton County School System Maintenance and Operations Department, also presented information about the implementation of the program; which included the type of vehicle needed to transport the trays to the recycling center in Gwinnett and also teaching the students and faculty how to recycle the trays. Volunteers will be at the schools the first few days of the program to help with the implementation.

No additional information was added to either the Curriculum/Instruction/Technology Report or the Enrollment Report that were presented at the October 14, 2008 work session.

Dr. Hayden introduced Dr. Shelia Thomas, Director of Testing and GPS for the Newton County School System. Dr. Thomas gave a powerpoint presentation on the 2007-2008 test results of the school system.

On a motion by Mr. Corley and second by Ms. Dobbs, the Superintendent's reports were approved, with all voting in favor.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

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

- **Requested Board Action Relative to Board Member Participation in State Health Insurance** Approval of the recommendation of the Board to authorize the participation of Board Members in the State Health Benefit Plan, effective beginning of the 2009 State Health Benefit Health Plan calendar year. Research relative to this provision is provided from GSBA elaw and O.C.G.A 20-2-55(b)(1-3) for Board member review. A rate sheet is also provided.
- **Requested Board Action Relative to Waiver of Fees for Use of Sharp Cafeteria for Annual Thanksgiving Community Dinner** Approval of the recommendation of the application for use of Sharp Cafeteria for the annual Community Thanksgiving Meal sponsored by the Newton County Ministers Union. The Ministers Union, represented by Rev. Carl Jones, has requested the use of this facility for the last 10 years.

The following item, Item C and D, was approved on a motion by Mr. Corley, a second by Ms. Dobbs, and all voting in favor:

- **Requested Board Action Relative to Contractual Agreement with the Marcus Autism Center, Inc.**  
Approval recommended of the agreement between the Newton County Schools and the Marcus Autism Center, Inc. This agreement is a continuation of the agreement under the name of the Marcus Institute for Development and Learning, Inc. The services previously delivered by the Marcus Institute will now be delivered by Marcus Autism Center, Inc., a Georgia nonprofit corporation and wholly owned subsidiary of Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, Inc. Services are provided by the Center in accordance with the services noted in the Individual Education Program (IEP) for one of our high school students with disabilities. The rate of \$400 per day is funded from the IDEA Flow-Through Grant. The GDOE Grant for Residential and Reintegration Services will be applied for in March 2009 to also help offset the cost of this service.
- **Requested Board Action Relative to Contract for Network Engineering and Support** Approval of the recommendation that our school system contract with Infinity Network Solutions for engineering and support for data, voice and video networks with an effective date of November 1, 2008 through

June 30, 2008. The estimated value of this contract is \$36,900.

The following item, Item E, was approved on a motion by Ms. Dobbs, second by Mr. Smith, with all voting in favor:

- **Requested Board Action Relative to Theme Schools**

Approval recommended that a theme school(s) be established for the 2009-2010 school year. The Theme School Committee has listed and presented general recommendations for consideration when opening this school in the fall of 2009; focusing on parent involvement as the theme. A timeline has been developed and specifics are being developed. Many factors will have to be addressed before opening; finalizing the concept's program delivery and costs (academic, student disciplinary code/safety, parent involvement); grade span of students served; parent interest in such a choice program, transportation issues, student selection procedures, selection of administrative staff; staff allocation and parent/student notification.

The following item, Item F, will be on the table for 30 days:

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

Approval recommended on the revision/update on Policies GAEB and GBRIG. BOE Policy GAEB on sexual harassment should define the process an individual must follow to report complaints of sexual harassment. The policy should clearly outline the school system's position on notification, confidentiality, and non-retaliation related to reports of sexual harassment. The revised policy included each of these components. BOE Policy GBRIG, on family and medical leave, is being updated to become compliant with the changes of the Family Medical Leave Act of 1993. In January of 2008, the President signed into law the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). Among other things, NDAA amends the Family Medical Leave Act of 1993 to include two additional qualifying events applicable to military families. During review of this policy, legal counsel suggested that the school district clarify some language that could be confusing to employees. This revised policy includes the additional qualifying events and clarifies the existing language as recommended by legal counsel.

**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. Dr. Bates made the motion to approve the list of recommendations; Mr. Corley seconded, and all voted in favor. A copy of the personnel report is attached.

Mr. Turner reminded the Board members of several upcoming events. The Teacher of the Year finalists will be announced on October 24, 2008. Snapping Shoals EMC will be honoring the Snapping School grant recipients from our school system with a breakfast on October 27, 2008 at 7:30 a.m. The upcoming football game schedule for the three high schools was announced. The next Board Planning Session will be held on November 19, 2008 at 7 p.m. at Newton Federal.

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

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Superintendent, Newton County Schools

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Chair, Newton County Board of Education