

**November 12, 2009**

## **Board of Education Approves Revisions to Current School Calendar**

In light of the possibility of additional furlough days from the state, the Newton County Board of Education approved by unanimous vote at the November 10, 2009 monthly meeting, recommended revisions to the 2009-2010 school calendar. The calendar had previously been revised on July 23, 2009 to reflect Governor Sonny Perdue's announced furlough days due to reductions in state revenues.

State revenues reportedly have continued to fall below projections for this year—in some cases by double digit percentage drops in comparison to last year's monthly collections. According to Newton County School Superintendent Dr. Steve Whatley, it is anticipated that further cuts in state funds may be enacted with either further furloughs or possibly cuts in the number of days in the student year.

"As a result of these anticipated cuts and furloughs from the state, it was important that we build into the calendar, days which could be taken as furlough days in second semester," said Whatley. "Already this year, of the ten days for teachers (pre-planning/post planning/professional learning/work days) beyond the 180 day student year, four have been taken as workday/professional learning days and three days have already been designated and taken as furlough days (October 9, 12, and 13). We only had three days designated at teacher work days remaining on the July 23<sup>rd</sup> revised calendar—January 4, March 19 and June 1."

Although many meetings have been held with Georgia school superintendents, school business officers, and legislators on a regional basis, Whatley stated that, "no one can inform us of what further cuts may be necessary and when they will be made for this school year."

By revising the calendar, the possible days for any future furloughing are placed as late in second semester as possible to allow for both time and local action based on decisions made by the Governor and legislature. For now, the changes to the calendar mean that November 20, 2009 will be a full student day of instruction. There will be no early dismissal for professional learning. Instead, the early dismissal day for professional learning has been moved to April 2.

In addition, the January 4, 2010 teacher work day has been moved to June 2, 2010, and will be a post-planning day for teachers. Staff and students will now report for the second semester on January 5, 2010. Dr. Whatley also announced that students will not have to make up the September 23, 2009 flood day.

"Decisions as to how many furlough days are to be taken will be made when more information is forthcoming from the State," said Whatley. "We don't know what Governor Perdue and the legislators plan to do in light of the continued drop in revenues. What we do know is that we need to be proactive so our students and employees are affected as little as possible. This is a difficult time for everyone but I am very proud of the job our employees—both certified and classified—are doing. They have been asked to do more with less and they have risen to the challenge and continue to place providing educational excellence for all students their top priority."

The revised calendar can be accessed on the Newton County School System website at [http://newtoncountyschools.org/documents/Calendars/2009-2010\\_Calendar\\_November\\_2009\\_Revisions.pdf](http://newtoncountyschools.org/documents/Calendars/2009-2010_Calendar_November_2009_Revisions.pdf).

For more information, contact Ms. Sherri Viniard, Director of Public Relations for Newton County Schools, by email at [viniard.sherri@newton.k12.ga.us](mailto:viniard.sherri@newton.k12.ga.us) or via phone at 770-784-2908.

\*\*\*