

MINUTES OF MEETING

January 6, 2010

The regular meeting of the Whitfield County Board of Education was held at the Whitfield County Central Office on January 6, 2010. Board Chairman Jerry Nealey called the meeting to order at 11:30 a.m.

Executive Session

Superintendent, Dr. Katie Brochu recommended the board move into executive session to discuss personnel. Gary Brock moved approval and Thomas Barton seconded. The board approved 5-0.

Present were the following board members:

Jerry Nealey – Chairman
Tim Trew – Vice Chairman
Thomas Barton
Gary Brock
John Thomas

Also present were the following staff members:

Katie Brochu Judy Gilreath
Dusty Brown Richard Schoen
Danny Hayes Audrey Williams
Janie Osborn

Return to Regular Session

The board having taken no action in executive session returned to regular session at 12:15 p.m. Mr. Nealey called the meeting to order.

Present were the following staff members:

Katie Brochu Richard Schoen
Danny Hayes Kenny Sheppard
Dusty Brown Judy Gilreath
Eric Beavers Audrey Williams
Janie Osborn

Also present:

A list of the public attending is a part of the backup minutes.

Moment of Silent Reflection

Mr. Nealey asked everyone to observe a moment of silent reflection.

Inspiration and Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag – Antioch Elementary

Michael Jones, a student at Antioch Elementary, did the inspiration. He read, *What is Success*. Students Johan Rodriguez, Jose Santizo, Monica Guzman, Jonathan Babb, Megan Owen, and Jennifer Flores led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Welcome/Recognitions/Presentations

Georgia School Board Association Partnership Commendation

Lisa Sloan received a certificate of commendation from the Georgia School Board Association for her generosity and willingness of support for the Whitfield County School System. Mr. Nealey, on behalf of the Whitfield Board of Education, presented Mrs. Sloan with the commendation.

Special Education Services – Meeting State Target Commendation

Sarah Hoskins, direction of special programs, accepted a certificate from the Georgia Council for Administrators of Special Education for Meeting State Targets. It was stated by the G-CASE that the

Whitfield County School System was being recognized for educating children in less restrictive environments, the graduation of more students with disabilities with regular education diplomas, and that fewer students with disabilities had dropped out during the 2008-2009 school year.

Special Education Services – Highest Performance

Sarah Hoskins, director of special programs, also accepted a certificate from the Georgia Council for Administrators of Special Education for Highest Performance. This recognition indicated that more students with disabilities in the Whitfield County School System were graduating with regular diplomas than other systems of similar size.

Approval of Consent Agenda Items

Dr. Brochu recommended the board approve an amendment to the agenda to include under New Business as Item #1, Board Officer Election. She also recommended the board approve the Consent Agenda items listed below: Tim Trew moved approval to accept the amendment of the agenda and the Consent Agenda items. Gary Brock seconded the motion. The board approved 5-0.

Approval of Minutes – December 7, 2009

Approval of Agenda as amended – January 6, 2010

School Fund Raiser Requests

<u>Name of Group or Sponsor</u>	<u>Activity or Request</u>
Dug Gap 5 th Grade	Create Business and sell product/service
Eastbrook Middle Chorus	Sell Candy
New Hope Middle Soccer	Sell “In the City” coupon books
NWHS Graduating Class of 2010	Sell Senior Signature T-Shirts
North Whitfield Middle 7 th Grade	Sell Cookie Dough, gift wrap, bags, candy, candles, etc.
NWMS Boys Basketball	Sell Season Passes
NWMS Girls/Boys Soccer	Pancake Breakfast at Applebee’s
SEHS Volleyball	Host JR Olympic Volleyball Tournaments
VPM Cheerleaders	Host Valentine Dance
WCA Student Government	Hosting Fashion Show
WCA Art Club	Sell Candy Grams for Valentine’s Day

Hearing of Individuals

None

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Teaching and Learning Reports and Recommendations

Instructional Report – Antioch Elementary

Dusty Brown, assistant superintendent of teaching and learning, introduced Lisa Jones, principal of Antioch Elementary for the Instructional Report. She introduced Leslie Bartlett, John Ford, Carrie Hudson, Cindy Martin, and Jennifer Schneider who are participating or have participated in the Whitfield County School System Leadership Academy. She also introduced Lendi Addis, Antioch’s Parent Involvement Coordinator. The teachers shared a video on how they had used their Leadership Academy Action Research Project to benefit the students, parents, and community members. They titled their project, “The School Has Left the Building.” Ms. Schneider explained how they were participating in intervention groups in the neighborhoods of the Antioch community. She said it started with a truck load of produce that had to be disposed of because the truck was over the weight limit. She said they visited a neighborhood that had been added to their school because of redistricting. She said the parents were very excited and appreciative. The parents and community members started asking how they could be more involved with Antioch. The parents wanted to be involved but felt they didn’t have the resources to do so. The group decided to take the school to the community. During these visits they provided education to the

students and to the parents. She explained that's how they came up with the title of their project, "The School Has Left the Building." The teachers added that everyone at Antioch had gotten on board and involved. They said they were building relationships in the student's home environment. Mr. Ford said they added instructional components as well. They shared that they had conducted a food drive at Thanksgiving where they collected 2400 food items which were distributed to every student. Walmart and Bi Lo had partnered with them as well. They discussed how medical help was a need of the community. They had a doctor join them on one of their visits who explained to the parents about services that were available to them. The teachers helped the parents find ways to provide structured time for homework. Antioch staff and students helped provide each student of that community with two presents at Christmas. Antioch's 4th and 5th grade students donated \$5.00 for a Social where the money was used to help buy the presents as well. Another component of the project was a Fall Festival in October where free tickets and food were provided and the result was that all parents attended. The teachers felt some of the benefits were increased parent involvement, improved self esteem, establishment of a sense of belonging, a bridge between the school and community, the strengthening of relationships, and improved communication.

Several of the students in attendance said that when the staff members visited they played outside, had help with homework, read, and that it made them happy.

Mr. Trew said that being a teacher was not just a job, it was a calling.

Mr. Nealey said people ask him why he would want to be a school board member and he said this is a great example of why he does it and added that what these teachers are doing is giving these students a lesson that they will remember forever.

Lisa Jones said it has been heartwarming to see the impact on the adults and children. She said they treat the students like they are their children. She said being a teacher is a calling and they create an atmosphere that causes comfort. She thanked the Board for allowing the teachers to go to the Leadership Academy.

School Council Report – Antioch Elementary

Annette Knapp, the chairperson of the Antioch School Council, gave the board an update. She said Antioch was a wonderful school and community. A few of the items she mentioned was that the council discussed student engagement and involvement, embraced the opportunity to build relationships and communication and to build stronger community pride by being the voice of the school and community. Mrs. Knapp said Project Based Learning was at the forefront of their discussions. She shared seeing several Wax Museum demonstrations and said she was impressed at the knowledge of the content by the students. She added the council had also discussed the MAPS program that showed the academic growth of the students. Mrs. Knapp said she felt there was a need for a second Parent Involvement Coordinator adding that role provides a link to the community by providing parenting skill classes and English speaking classes. She shared that one of their members had participated on the redistricting committee and that they had two new members this year.

Operations Reports and Recommendations

Construction Report

Keith Burran of M.B. Kahn Construction Company gave the board an update of the progress of the new high school and the meetings to discuss the renovations at Eastbrook Middle School.

Easement Agreements with Dalton Utilities

The superintendent recommended the board approve the easement agreements needed by Dalton Utilities for the installation of sewer force mains and sewage lift stations on the Crow Road site and the New Hope Middle School site pending approval of the contracts by the school attorneys. During the meeting the attorneys emailed approval of the contracts. John Thomas moved approval and Thomas Barton seconded. The board approved 5-0.

Support Services Reports and Recommendations

No items

Financial Reports and Recommendations

General Funds and SPLOST Reports

The superintendent said the collections were still coming in higher than ESPLOST 11 collections. She recommended the board approve the financial reports as presented as of December 31, 2009. Mr. Trew asked if all of the expenditures were up to date and Kenny Sheppard, chief financial officer, replied that all of the payables were paid and posted for the month of December. Tim Trew moved approval and Gary Brock seconded. The board approved 5-0.

Human Resources Reports and Recommendations

Personnel Recommendations

Dr. Brochu recommended the board approve the personnel actions as discussed in executive session to include certified personnel changes, resignations, retirements, leaves of absences, long term substitutes, extended day and other personnel changes. The superintendent also recommended the board approve support personnel recommendations, resignations, retirements, and other support personnel changes in this action. Gary Brock moved approval and Thomas Barton seconded. The board approved 5-0.

Previous Business

No items

New Business

Board Officer Election

Mr. Nealey opened the floor for nominations for chairman of the Whitfield County Board of Education. John Thomas nominated Tim Trew for chairman. There were no other nominations. The board approved 5-0.

Mr. Nealey opened the floor for nominations for vice-chairman of the Whitfield County Board of Education. Thomas Barton nominated Gary Brock for vice-chairman. There were no other nominations. The board approved 4-0 with Gary Brock abstaining.

Mr. Nealey turned the meeting over to Tim Trew.

Board Member Comments

John Thomas thanked Mr. Nealey and Mr. Trew for their time and service.

Tim Trew said the teamwork was appreciated and that the school system's well being was being well represented by the board members.

Jerry Nealey added it was nice to have the cooperation of all board members.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 1:10 p.m.

MINUTES OF MEETING January 25, 2010

A work session of the Whitfield County Board of Education was held on Monday, January 25, 2010 at Westside Elementary. Board Chairman Tim Trew called the meeting to order at 11:30 a.m.

Present were the following board members:

Tim Trew- Chairman
Gary Brock – Vice-Chairman
Thomas Barton
Jerry Nealey
John Thomas

Also present were the following staff members:

Katie Brochu	Richard Schoen
Dusty Brown	Kenny Sheppard
Danny Hayes	Judy Gilreath
Eric Beavers	Audrey Williams
Janie Osborn	

Also present:

A list of the public attending is a part of the backup minutes.

Inspiration/Pledge of Allegiance

Students Hunter Williams and Gage Mosteller asked everyone to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance and to continue standing for the singing of the Star Spangled Banner by the Westside Elementary 5th Grade Chorus.

Amanda Jones, a student at Westside Elementary, talked about how Martin Luther King used the words “Liberty and Justice for All” in many of his speeches along with a quote from the Bible “Let justice roll like a river and righteousness like a mighty stream”.

Student Hannah Addis said she was proud of the Whitfield County School System who believes in providing a fair and just education and equal treatment for every student.

The chorus sang “Like a Mighty Stream”.

Instructional Report – Westside Elementary

Dusty Brown, assistant superintendent for teaching and learning, introduced Tracy Mardis, principal of Westside Elementary. He thanked everyone for the opportunity to present the instructional report. Mr. Mardis introduced students Brynne Gillilan, McKenna Lentych, and Tony Martinez.

Brynne, a first grade student, shared that she loved school and loved art. She said there are fun things to do at school. She also said that first grade was hard but that she loved it and her teacher. She added she liked to read books which allowed her to go somewhere she had never been before and to take adventures.

McKenna, a third grade student, shared she liked the “hands-on projects and added it was the best way to get engaged.

Fifth grade student Tony Martinez said the teachers help him learn and they do fun activities. He said students need to be educated and that the teachers care about the students and wants them to learn and to be responsible. He also shared they do fun educational science experiments and use technology to help them learn.

Mr. Mardis shared a comment that had been made at an earlier meeting by board member Thomas Barton about how good it was to see teachers who love what they are doing. He then discussed and read parts of a book *Gung Ho*. He said in the story it discusses the value of finding our work more than important but worthwhile. He also shared that they talked about goals and values and how goals can change or be abandoned at the first sign of trouble but that values will not change. He then shared parts of a poem *Hold or Roll* by Manly Grant that asked when you are tested would you stand up for what’s right. It asked you to decide if you were a rock or pebble and would you hold or roll. He said the three teachers he was introducing who had participated in the Leadership Academy were rocks. Some of what the teachers shared is as follows:

Susan Neal said students were the school system’s core business. She thanked the board for the opportunity to attend the Leadership Academy. She said the experience had helped her move from a lesson

planner to a lesson designer. She said it had also helped with her leadership skills. She thanked the board again for their leadership where students are the focus.

Jennifer Farner also thanked the board for the opportunity to participate. She said the Leadership Academy gave her the opportunity to reflect upon her personal beliefs and strengths. She said she enjoyed the collaboration with others in the Whitfield County School System as well as staff members from Dalton Public Schools. Ms. Farner said it had enhanced her understanding and caused her to focus on designing and analyzing student work. She said she was more confident to speak with others and was encouraging colleagues because of the value. She said the school system had transformed to a united school with a common focus.

Paula Wheeler, after thanking the board for the opportunity, said it had been a year of reflection. She said the Leadership Academy had been a powerful experience and a great life transformation. She said it had deepened her understanding and had helped her with building networks. She said there was great camaraderie and that everyone was on the “bus”. Ms. Wheeler added it had been a truly wonderful experience and that it was amazing to see the transformation of the school system.

Missy Combs could not attend the meeting but asked Ms. Wheeler to read her thoughts about the Leadership Academy to the board members. Ms. Combs said it had been an honor to be a participant. She said she had gained a wealth of knowledge from the literature and the associates leading the meeting. She thanked the board for making the Leadership Academy possible. She said the academy had fostered leadership and was helping move the school system from a good to great system.

Mr. Barton said he appreciated the excitement and added the kids could pick up on the excitement.

Mr. Trew said it was great to see the enthusiasm demonstrated by the kids and teachers. He said the school system does encourage professional development and that it was paying benefits.

School Council Report

Chip Hicks, a parent member of the school council as well as a business partner of Westside Elementary, gave the board an update. He said he had enjoyed participating on the school council and said it had been a great learning experience. He said there had been a new entrance, ball field, and gym floor at Westside Elementary. He discussed how the school cared for both of his children and that Westside Elementary provided a caring and compassionate environment for all students. He said education is important but added how you treat an individual is just as important.

McKenna Lentych presented the board members a booklet of thank you notes from students. Mr. Mardis said teacher Mandy White had compiled the notes for the board. He said the thank you notes were for the strong roles of leadership demonstrated by the Board. He said the Whitfield County staff members have a common focus, the work is valued and appreciated, and they are doing what’s right for the kids.

Review Board Agenda Items – February 1, 2010

School Zone Request

Mike Ewton, safety and security director for Whitfield County Schools, gave the board information on a concern about a school zone on a state highway. He said a contributing factor was that traffic backs up on the highway and there were safety concerns. Mr. Ewton said a request would need to be sent to the state level. He said from Sonya Drive to Varnell the speed limit goes from 45 mph to 35 mph. He said from Sonya Drive to Reed Road the speed limit is 55 mph. He said a request needed to be made to extend the school zone or to add a school zone of 45 mph. He added there were no flashing lights at New Hope Middle on the state highway.

Financial Reports

Superintendent Brochu said reports for the Governor’s office about the budget had not been received by her office. She said as soon as she receives those she will get that information to the Board. She said at this time a recommendation had not been formulated.

Mr. Trew said the school systems were on the bottom of the totem pole even in good times. He said the Governor had handed down austerity cuts to education even when times were good.

New Business

Dr. Brochu shared there were four policies on the agenda for first reading.

Hearing of Individuals

None

Executive Session

The superintendent recommended the board move into executive session to discuss a legal matter and personnel. Gary Brock moved approval and Jerry Nealey seconded. The board approved 5-0.

Present were the following board members:

Tim Trew- Chairman
Gary Brock – Vice- Chairman
Thomas Barton
Jerry Nealey
John Thomas

Also present were the following staff members:

Katie Brochu Judy Gilreath
Danny Hayes Audrey Williams
Dusty Brown Richard Schoen
Janie Osborn

Return to Regular Session

The board having taken no action in executive session, returned to regular session. Mr. Trew called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m.

Board Member Comments

The board discussed the current enrollment figures which indicated there was a very small if any decrease in students, the need for consistent discipline at the high schools, and the options for students that would attend Coahuilla Creek High School.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:55 p.m.