

MINUTES OF MEETING

January 3, 2011

The regular meeting of the Whitfield County Board of Education was held at the Whitfield County Central Office on January 3, 2011. Vice Chairman Gary Brock called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Executive Session

Superintendent Danny Hayes recommended the board move into executive session for the discussion of personnel only. Thomas Barton moved approval and Louis Fordham seconded. The board approved 5-0.

Present were the following board members:

Gary Brock – Vice Chair
Thomas Barton
Louis Fordham
Rodney Lock
Bill Worley

Also present were the following staff members:

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

Return to Regular Session

The board having taken no action in executive session, returned to regular session at 6:55 p.m. Mr. Brock called the meeting to order.

Present were the following board members:

Gary Brock
Thomas Barton
Louis Fordham
Rodney Lock
Bill Worley

Also present were the following staff members:

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

Also present:

A list of the public in attendance is a part of the backup minutes.

Moment of Silent Reflection

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

Inspiration/Pledge of Allegiance

Cedar Ridge Elementary students Brady Ensley, Gracey Ensley, Tristan Howard, and Connor Priest led the Pledge of Allegiance. Student Morgan Hurlock asked what it means to be inspired, to inspire that extra degree of effort, and to inspire to cross the line to commit to our direction. Cedar Ridge staff members presented the video *Piano Stairs*. The video showed that people will take the stairs if inspired to do so by engaging them with a fun experience.

Welcome/Recognitions/Presentations

Matt Sanders – United States Senate Youth Program Delegate Semifinalist

The board recognized Matt Sanders for being a semifinalist in the competition to represent Georgia in the U.S. Senate Youth Program. Mr. Sanders was selected to represent Congressional District 9 and was one of Georgia's 13 semifinalists.

Special Education Services Recognition for Meeting State Target

Sarah Hoskins, director of special services, accepted a certificate from the Georgia Department of Education for meeting one or more of the Georgia performance goals for students with disabilities. Ms. Hoskins informed the board that 67% of the Whitfield County School System special needs students were served in a regular education setting.

Approval of Consent Agenda Items:

Superintendent Hayes recommended an amendment to the agenda to include under New Business, item #2 Lease of Space to Georgia Northwestern Technical College. The previous items listed as #2 and #3 would now be items #3 and #4.

Mr. Hayes recommended the board approve the Consent Agenda items listed below. Bill Worley moved approval and Louis Fordham seconded. The board approved 5-0.

Approval of Minutes – December 6, 2010

Approval of Agenda – January 3, 2011

School Fund Raiser Requests

<u>Name of Group or Sponsor</u>	<u>Activity or Requests</u>
New Hope Elementary (WCS Elementary Schools)	Raise funds for Relay for Life
New Hope Middle Olweus	Half court shots during Olweus kickoff night
New Hope Middle 7 th Grade Field Trip	Sell cookies
New Hope Middle Chorus/Kodiak Choral	Take pictures at Christmas dance
Northwest High Ping Pong Club	Sell pizza, concessions, t-shirts
Northwest Tennis	Tennis Serve-a-Thon, Carpet Walk
Northwest High Swim Team	Raffle ticket sales
Northwest High Beta Club	Sell candy bars
Northwest High Special Education Department	Open a coffee shop for teachers
Pleasant Grove PTA	Coca Cola by the case sale
Pleasant Grove ALPHA	Sell Friendship Grams
Southeast High Georgia Young Farmers	Live auction of donated products
Southeast High Tennis	Sell cookies, brownies, and rice treats during lunch
Valley Point Elementary Attendance Committee	Bike for Bikes

Purchase Orders over \$25,000

<u>Vendor</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Apple	60 IpadS for Eastbrook Middle	\$37,233.60

Hearing of Individuals

None

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Teaching and Learning Reports and Recommendations

Instructional & School Council Reports

Dusty Brown, assistant superintendent of teaching and learning, introduced Allyson Millican, principal of Cedar Ridge Elementary. Mrs. Millican recognized the staff members, students, and parents who were in attendance. She then turned the instructional report over to her staff and students. Elizabeth Phelps, assistant principal of Cedar Ridge, welcomed new board members Louis Fordham, Bill Worley, and Rodney Lock. She stated the world is changing and added it was wonderful to be a part of a school system that understood that. Student Ally Morrow shared that her teachers make learning challenging and fun and they helped her until she understood the work.

Student Tristan Howard carried a box to Mr. Worley that contained a mobile with the words School Council, Student Council, Leadership, Design Team, Expert Guidance, VOICE, and Responsive attached. Teachers Casey Woods and Kelsey Bates said they were presenting, "Building Capacity". They shared that leadership is central at Cedar Ridge and that the voice of every child, parent, community, and faculty member is represented. The teachers emphasized that everyone was committed to one direction.

Student Lexi Brownfield presented a box to Mr. Brock. Teacher Denise Menchaca and Content Extension Specialist Billi Merk presented, "Diving Deeper through Exploration". Mr. Brock's mobile contained the words Game-Busters, SWAT, LEGO Basic Training, FLL Lego Team, Deep Dive, CRE Post, Family Nights, Pod & House Experiences. They shared that the teachers structure curriculum to allow each student to achieve their personal best while building problem solving skills through strategic play and critical thinking activities. They added the staff at Cedar Ridge dives deeper to build relationships.

Brady Ensley presented a box to Mr. Barton. Alesa Smith, teacher and school council secretary and teacher Shonna McClure presented, "Time as a Tool". Mr. Barton's mobile contained the words, Schedule, Experts, Reading Recovery, Tool Time, ESOL, EIP, Gifted, and Deep Dive". They shared how materials and content were presented in many different ways and style because children do not learn the same way or at the same speed. They added that students are matched with their best learning environment to meet each and every individual need.

Mr. Lock was presented a box from student Gracey Ensley. Teresa Ensley, school council chairperson and mother of Brady and Gracey Ensley, along with gifted program services teacher Amy Zock presented, "Resources with a Future Focus". Mr. Lock's mobile represented Balance, Unique Philosophy, Resources, Relevance, SWAT, Social Networking as a Learning Tool. They shared that Cedar Ridge has a balance between nurturing and learning; self discovery and guided enlightenment. The environment helps children gain a deep-rooted love of learning that builds a foundation for a lifetime of success and achievement, and also fosters independent thinkers and creative problem solvers for the 21st Century.

Connor Priest presented Mr. Fordham with a box that contained a mobile which represented Core, Collaborate, Pods, Houses, Roots, Wings, Cooperative Learning, and Creativity by Design. Students Macy Stephenson and Lilli Ownby presented, "Collaboration at Our Core". They described how learning was designed to provide multiple experiences and time for conversation. They shared how communities of learning and collaboration range from small students groups to teacher teams, grade levels to houses and pods.

Student Jazmin Ortiz presented Mr. Hayes with a box. Jennifer Thurman, Reading Recovery and early intervention teacher and Traci Priest, cafeteria manager and mother of Connor presented Mr. Hayes with a box that contained a metaphor. When life feels fragmented and off center, it is always helpful to have a model to reflect upon. It can display the parts of something and how they fit and work together as a whole and it can serve as an ideal---a guide or tool to be used in making improvements. The structure of the house represents how each stakeholder fits into the direction of Whitfield County Schools. Inside is what

happens when we bring unity and balance to our educational lives. From the outside you see windows of different colors. Once the roof is raised, the colors within come together. There is space to think outside the box. Don't see the house as empty but instead see it as full of potential.

Mrs. Millican presented the video, *Crossing the Line*. Mrs. Millican discussed that there will be people who will not cross the line and try to block the direction and added the biggest challenge will be whether we choose to cross the line. She said to cross the line was our choice and that there would be challenges and setbacks but the lessons learned would make you stronger. She also said you could choose to commit; to not accept average and to work hard. She added there was no quick fix but you needed to focus and eliminate distractions and that you needed to be resilient.

Teacher Emily Rich informed the group that there was a line on the floor at each entrance. She shared that when everyone walked into the room they were crossing a line and that it was easy.

Teacher Donna Trew shared that our school system is more than a place – it is a state of mind – openness to new ideas, a willingness to listen, and eagerness to learn, a desire to grow, and the flexibility to change.

EIP teacher Bridget Morrow thanked the board for allowing Cedar Ridge to show them what made the school district and school great.

Student Jazmin Ortiz invited the board to visit Cedar Ridge.

Operations Reports and Recommendations

Construction Update

Richard Schoen, assistant superintendent of operations, introduced Keith Burran and Rick Ott with M.B. Kahn Construction Management Company. Mr. Burran updated the board on the progress of the ESPLOST projects. He presented the board members with a monthly progress report as well.

Rick Ott thanked the board members for their service to the community. Mr. Ott reminded the board that the original scope of the ESPLOST III updates to Eastbrook included food service upgrades, gymnasium renovations, and other upgrades. He added that very little of the renovations to Eastbrook would be evident to the public and that the upgrades would not have an impact on teaching and learning. Mr. Ott shared that on March 1, 2010 the Board approved increasing the budget for Eastbrook to \$23,700,000 to construct a new facility. This was made possible because of cost savings from other finished ESPLOST projects. The costs of maintaining a 40 year old facility was taken into account in making this decision.

Mr. Schoen said that several alternates for the new construction were needed. He said polished concrete floors in the common areas, carpet in classrooms that open out into the commons area, resurfacing of the existing parking lot, data security raceways, and replacing the gym roof alternates would be added to the existing cost to make the total cost of the Eastbrook Middle project \$24,140,897.

Mr. Lock asked if the bid had gone through general contractors and if it had been a single or multiple contractor bid. Mr. Ott said that all bids were public bids and that it had been a 90 day bid frame.

Mr. Worley encouraged all board members to visit Eastbrook Middle and to go through the school.

Support Services Reports and Recommendations

No items

Finance Reports and Recommendations

Kenny Sheppard, chief financial officer, presented the SPLOST report as of November 30, 2010 for approval. Mr. Sheppard said the property taxes came in a little early this year. He said the school system

was in line with SPLOST budgets. Superintendent Hayes recommended the board approve the SPLOST report as presented. Rodney Lock moved approval and Thomas Barton seconded. The board approved 5-0.

The General Fund report for January, as of December 31, 2010, will be approved at the February meeting. Because of the holidays, the board didn't receive the report until the day of the meeting.

Human Resources Reports and Recommendations

Personnel Recommendations

The superintendent 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. Louis Fordham moved approval and Bill Worley seconded. The board approved 5-0.

Previous Business

Redistricting Plan

Mr. Hayes said he wanted to review the redistricting plan with the board members to make sure everyone was on the same page. He reviewed what had been previously approved by the board on August 2, 2010. The recommendation to the board was from the Redistricting Committee. The approved recommendation is as follows:

The Committee recommends that the Coahulla Creek High School district lines be drawn to conform to the existing district lines for North Whitfield Middle School. This district configuration will mean that North Whitfield Middle will be the only middle school that is a feeder school for Coahulla Creek High School. The Northwest Whitfield High School district lines are to be redrawn to conform with the combined district boundaries of New Hope Middle and Westside Middle School. This will mean that New Hope and Westside Middle Schools will be the feeder schools for Northwest High School. The Southeast Whitfield High School district lines will be redrawn to conform to the combined district boundaries of Eastbrook Middle School and Valley Point Middle School. This means that Eastbrook and Valley Point Middle Schools will be the feeder schools for Southeast High School.

He also shared with the board a recommendation from the previous board that 11th and 12th grade students would have a choice to attend and that it would be decided by an application process. Mr. Brock added that 11th and 12th grade students would be invited to attend if there were enough students interested in transferring to Coahulla Creek High School.

Mr. Fordham asked how Southeast High School would be affected. Mr. Hayes answered that about 40 students from North Whitfield Middle would go to Southeast. Mr. Fordham also asked for a timeline for the 11th and 12th grade students. Mr. Hayes responded that the application process should be complete by March 30th. Mr. Fordham asked if there had been any appeals or exceptions and Mr. Hayes responded that there had not been any appeals or exceptions. Student athletic eligibility was discussed and it was decided the board members would have a called board meeting to meet with Georgia High School Director, Ralph Swearingin.

New Business

ESPLOST

Mr. Hayes informed the board that there had been an opportunity to put an ESPLOST on the March ballot. He said because of the changes in the board, it had been decided to wait until the November ballot to consider putting that item on the ballot. He explained that would give the new board additional time to be

more informed. Mr. Hayes said that he had discussions with Dalton Public Schools and other taxing authorities.

Leasing of Space to Georgia Northwestern Technical College

The superintendent informed the board that the school system had been in conversations with Georgia Northwestern Technical College in regard to a request from them to lease approximately 25,000 square feet from the school system. Mr. Hayes asked the board for approval to continue the conversations with the college. Louis Fordham moved approval and Thomas Barton seconded. The board approved 5-0.

Approval of Board Meeting Dates FY2011

Mr. Hayes recommended the board approve the calendar of board meeting dates FY2011 as presented. Bill Worley moved approval and Louis Fordham seconded. Mr. Lock asked if the board would be disrupting school by having the work sessions at the schools. Mr. Brock said the students and staff members loved having the Board come to the schools. He then asked the principals in attendance to state their opinions. Mrs. Millican responded that the students and staff at Cedar Ridge love having the meetings at their schools. She added it was a great idea to come to the kids and gave them the opportunity to talk to the students and hear their hearts. Mr. Kopcsak said he liked the idea as well. Mr. Worley asked Caroline Woodason for her opinion. Mrs. Woodason said that as a former teacher and assistant principal that so often teachers don't get to see the board members. She added it was a positive communication opportunity. Mr. Worley said he liked being in schools. He said that also allows students time for their extra curricular activities in the evenings. The board approved 5-0.

Election of Board Chair and Vice Chair

Mr. Brock asked for nominations for Board Chairman. Rodney Lock nominated Louis Fordham. Mr. Brock asked if there were any other nominations. There were none. Mr. Worley seconded the nomination of Louis Fordham as Board Chairman. The board approved 5-0. Mr. Brock turned the meeting over to Mr. Fordham. Mr. Fordham asked for nominations for Board Vice-Chairman. Rodney Lock recommended Thomas Barton. Mr. Fordham asked for any other nominations. There were none. Gary Brock seconded the motion. The board approved 5-0.

Board Member Comments

- Mr. Brock discussed the possibility of additional state funding cuts
- Mr. Barton said he was excited about the new year and for everyone having the kids at heart
- Mr. Fordham said it had been a long time since going through the election process and that he was excited about the good things happening in the school system.
- Mr. Worley said he appreciated the staff and students from Cedar Ridge coming to the meeting.

Adjournment

Mr. Fordham said he appreciated everyone's attendance. The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

MINUTES OF MEETING January 31, 2011

A work session of the Whitfield County Board of Education was held on Monday, January 31, 2011 at Cohutta Elementary. Board Chairman Louis Fordham called the meeting to order at 11:30 a.m. Mr. Fordham thanked the staff members at Cohutta Elementary for hosting the meeting.

Present were the following board members:

Louis Fordham – Chairman
Thomas Barton – Vice-Chairman
Gary Brock
Rodney Lock
Bill Worley

Also present were the following staff members:

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

Also present:

A list of the public in attendance is a part of the backup minutes.

Inspiration/Pledge of Allegiance

Cohutta Elementary students Kevin Newby and Destiny Edwards led the Pledge of Allegiance. Rachel Thurmond presented the inspiration. Rachel described her participation in a Service Learning Project at Friendship House. Rachel shared that she met a little girl named Allie and that they read books, had a tea party, and played games. She said the experience was all about helping others and that when it was time to go she felt like a new person.

Instructional Report

Cohutta Elementary principal Cindy Dobbins welcomed everyone to the meeting. She started her presentation by discussing two books written by Daniel Pink, A Whole New Mind and Drive. She said the books were excellent and had a great impact in the Whitfield County School System. Mrs. Dobbins introduced teachers Emily Scoggins and Tim Wright who had helped put a video together of the students and staff members at Cohutta describing what was happening at Cohutta. In the video students answered the question: What will your sentence be? The video also shared things that were important to Cohutta. A few of the items mentioned were community outreach, Family Nights, Fish Philosophy, citizenship and character, clap outs, service learning, community pride, leadership, 21st Century Learning, teachers leading the way, engaging and challenging work, teamwork, creativity, dance, dramas, sports, and real world experiences. Mrs. Dobbins ended the presentation by asking, “What will your sentence be”?

School Council Report

School Council President Andie Coker presented the school council report. A few of the items she shared was that Cohutta staff members were providing a quality education for students, were customizing instruction for each student, and going above and beyond to meet the needs of each student and making sure they felt valued. She added the facility was in great condition and that the small school helped create positive relationships. Mrs. Coker informed the board that business leaders such as Tandus Flooring had partnered with the school and helped create the Internet Café, had helped provide a walkway, provided new carpet and that their staff members had helped paint. Mrs. Coker described a strong PTO, acceleration remediation time being provided, a school improvement coach, and MAPS technology as a few reasons the students were excelling at Cohutta. She shared with the board members a few needs of the school such as the need for a shaded and fenced area on the playground, a bus loading awning, help in starting the process for a turning lane on Wolfe Street, and speed bumps.

Mrs. Dobbins finished by saying the school council members were a pleasure to work with. She added that all Cohutta teachers give it their all. She welcomed those in attendance to visit anytime.

Review Board Agenda Items

Superintendent Hayes reviewed and discussed with the board the February 7, 2011 board agenda items.

Yearly Contract Renewals under Consent Agenda Items

The board members asked for an explanation as to why there was a difference in the amount of the fees charged for the graduation ceremonies. Dr. Gilreath explained that each school had different needs and requests for their ceremonies. She was asked if the cost had increased since last year and she responded that the cost was the same.

Action taken on the Revised 2010-2011 School Calendar

The board was informed that staff members would be required to make up all days lost due to inclement weather. Students will be required to make up two days. The recommendation was that the two days would be made up on February 21st and April 22nd. Dr. Gilreath shared that she had met with several middle school and elementary principals as well as all the high school principals to discuss the staff makeup days. She said the general consensus from a survey of many parents and staff members was that they wanted two days to be used for professional development and two days to be made up by using flex time. Personal days could also be used. She asked the board if they would be willing to take action at the work session to help parents, students, and faculty make their plans. There was discussion of flex time and documentation. Mr. Hayes recommended the board approve the revision to the 2010-2011 school calendar. Mr. Fordham asked the board members for a recommendation for approval. Gary Brock moved approval and Bill Worley seconded. The board approved 5-0.

Construction Report

Keith Burran with M.B. Kahn gave a construction update to the board on the progress of Coahulla Creek High School. He said fire marshal approval had been given for the 80% overhead inspection of the main building, all gas and utilities had been installed, the boiler system has been put in operation to provide heated condition air for the building that has allowed for interior finishes to get started, the rough in work is almost complete, the footings have been started on the field house, painting, sheet rocking, and casework were underway. He added that kitchen equipment was expected to be installed in April and that the HVAC systems were ready.

Mr. Fordham asked about the logistics of touring the new high school. Mr. Burran responded by saying because of the state of the construction and the liability, touring would need to be done on a limited basis at this time. He added that he was happy to be accommodating and that two or three visitors at a time or even a small bus load would be feasible. Mr. Schoen added the school system would take over ownership from the construction company three weeks before the opening and that might be a good time for visitors.

Eastbrook Bid Approval

Mr. Schoen reviewed the Eastbrook bid item with the board members. Mr. Lock asked about the technical costs that were listed in the bid summary and was given an explanation.

Mobile Classrooms

Mr. Schoen informed the board the mobile classrooms listed in the board packet would be sold on the website and once sold would be transported by the buyer.

Bus Purchase

Mike Ewton, transportation/safety and security director informed the board of the opportunity to purchase six new school buses utilizing funds provided by State of Georgia bond sales.

Financial Reports

Kenny Sheppard, chief financial officer, discussed and reviewed the financial reports with the board. Mr. Lock asked what the projected funds for ESPLOST III would end up being. Mr. Sheppard said the amount would be around \$60 million and added that up to \$78 million had been approved on the referendum. Mr. Lock wanted to know what the total balance would be after the new high school and all the other projects were completed. Mr. Sheppard provided all of the board members with a detailed summary sheet of the ESPLOST projects.

Lease Agreement with Georgia Northwestern Technical College

Mr. Hayes shared that Georgia Northwestern Technical College wanted to lease 25,000 sq. ft. at the Whitfield Career Academy and said that after a recent conversation that could expand to 33,000 sq. ft. He said that with the opening of the new high school, classroom space would open at Northwest Whitfield High School as well as the Whitfield Career Academy. He added the technical college would offer classes to Murray County, Dalton Public Schools, as well as Whitfield County students.

Coahulla Creek High School

Mr. Lock asked if the school would only be open for freshmen and sophomore students. Mr. Hayes explained that his directive from the previous board had been for the school to open to students in grades 9-12. Mr. Brock added that an application to attend Coahulla Creek High School had to be made by 11th and 12th grade students to make sure there would be enough student interest. Mr. Hayes said the biggest concern of the school system is the duplication of services. Mr. Fordham said he would like to see a logistics plan of the curriculum and the day in and day out operations. He asked what numbers would be necessary to have extra curricular such as band and sports programs. Mr. Hayes added the school would probably need 120 11th grade students and that many 12th grade students as well. He informed the board that a survey had been given earlier to see the interest and only 2% of the 11th and 12th grade students had expressed an interest in attending. Mr. Hayes added that each class would need 18 students. Mr. Lock asked if anything was on the website and Mr. Beavers, media and public relations specialist, responded that the artist rendering of the front of the school was on the website at this time. Mr. Burran said a virtual reality could be provided to be placed on the website. Mr. Fordham said he had visited the school and that it was impressive, beautiful, and well designed. He emphasized the need to get folks exposed to the school.

Hearing of Individuals

Holly Ridley – Concern of another ESLOST passing if the school system builds a new school at Eastbrook Middle when there is availability at the Whitfield Career Academy.

Chuck Griffin – Mr. Griffin would like to see Eastbrook Middle moved to the Whitfield Career Academy. If the building of Eastbrook Middle is approved by the board he said the gym should not be left where it is currently located.

Executive Session

The superintendent recommended the board move into executive session to discuss personnel. Thomas Barton moved approval and Rodney Lock seconded. The board approved 5-0.

Present were the following board members:

Louis Fordham
Thomas Barton
Gary Brock
Rodney Lock
Bill Worley

Also present were the following staff members:

Danny Hayes Richard Schoen
Dusty Brown Audrey Williams

Judy Gilreath Janie Osborn

Return to Regular Session

The board having taken no action in executive session, returned to regular session at 1:40 p.m.

Board Member Comments

- There was discussion about Eastbrook Middle students needing to remain in their community.
- A need for better communication
- There was discussion that the decision to lease to Georgia Northwestern Technical College would enable and enhance experiences for the students at the Whitfield Career Academy.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:50 p.m.