

## MINUTES OF MEETING

February 7, 2011

The regular session of the Whitfield County Board of Education was held at the Whitfield County Central Office on February 7, 2011. Board Chairman Louis Fordham called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

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	Richard Schoen
Dusty Brown	Audrey Williams
Judy Gilreath	Kenny Sheppard
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. Fordham asked everyone to observe a moment of silent reflection.

### **Inspiration/Pledge of Allegiance**

Members of the Westside Elementary Rockin' Rockets chorus led the Pledge of Allegiance and then presented a patriotic program for the inspiration. The students dressed in early American clothing, represented and described early American heroes. The students then performed the *Star Spangled Banner*. The chorus members who participated are as follows:

Sarah Crawford, Preston Nealey, Taylor Stallings, Madison Finkbone, Catherine Duffy, Claire Duffy, Jason Haven, Trevor Morgan, Taylor Nichols, Sarahanne Sanders, Rose Davis, Tera Smith, Sabrina Morgan, Haley Hughes, Kayless Ensley, and Hannah Hamilton.

### **Instructional Report – Westside Elementary**

Westside Elementary first grade teachers, Kim Reed, Lisa Cagle, and Theresa Thomas presented the instructional report for Westside Elementary.

Mrs. Reed thanked the board for the opportunity to present at the meeting and thanked them for allowing staff members to have the opportunity to participate in the Leadership Academy. She shared information about her experience as a participant in the Leadership Academy. She said the Leadership Academy empowers all participants and teaches them to “lead from where you are”, which encourages staff members to drive change into the culture of the school. She added that change can be hard but emphasized that it is imperative to have strong teacher leaders. Mrs. Reed said she was proud to have been a part of the Leadership Academy and to be a teacher leader. She informed the board that educators throughout the Whitfield County School district as well as educators from Dalton Public Schools participate in the Leadership Academy. She added it offers the opportunity for like minds to lead, collaborate, and design meaningful work. She thanked the board again for believing in their teachers and for the important investment in them.

Theresa Thomas said she was a product of Whitfield County Schools. She said the Leadership Academy broadened her understanding of needing to know your “who”. She said knowing your “who” is vital to meeting the needs of the students and ensuring student success. “Relationships need to be built so you understand where they are coming from”, said Mrs. Thomas.

Lisa Cable said she had enjoyed being in Leadership Academy. Mrs. Reed, Mrs. Cable, and Mrs. Thomas collaborated on a project to see if they were meeting the needs of their “who”. They spent six weeks getting to know their students, surveying parents, talking to past teachers, to help find the student needs which allowed them to differentiate the work being provided to the students. The information they gathered gave them the knowledge on how to go deeper with the standards while meeting the needs of all. Mrs. Cable said they designed an informational unit for the students. The students were allowed to choose their own topics, created graphic organizers, and did an informational writing. The students were challenged with the reward being chosen to present their work to the Whitfield County Board of Education. The students who were chosen to share their work were Emma Witt, Emma Hayes, Riley Tucker, and Lydia Hamilton.

### **School Council Report – Westside Elementary**

Anne Bearden, a parent member of the Westside Elementary School Council gave the school council report. Mrs. Bearden said she was also a product of the Whitfield County School System. She said parents were included in the decision making process to help provide the best educational experiences at Westside Elementary. She shared how the school system had honored an earlier request made by the school council to improve the ballfields. She said the school had installed a double safety door at the office to help ensure the safety of the staff and students. She said all of the students were in excellent hands and were safe and well cared for. She praised Westside Elementary principal Tracy Mardis for knowing each student by name. Mrs. Bearden thanked the board members for providing great faculty and staff members and for making tough decisions in these economic times and added that they were doing a great job.

### **Welcome/Recognition/Presentations**

Adrian Rosillo was recognized for winning a computer from 4-H for his essay, “Why I want or need this computer.” Adrian read his winning essay to the board members. Mr. Fordham presented Adrian a certificate of congratulations for his accomplishment.

### **Executive Session**

Superintendent Danny Hayes recommended the board move into executive session to discuss personnel. Thomas Barton moved approval and Bill Worley 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	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 7:20 p.m. Mr. Fordham made a motion to reconvene in regular session. Gary Brock moved approval and Bill Worley seconded. The board approved 5-0.

### **Approval of Consent Agenda Items**

Mr. Hayes recommended that a change be made to the agenda to include a new item under Human Resources Reports and Recommendations as item #2. The superintendent recommended the board approve the Consent Agenda items listed below: Gary Brock moved approval and Rodney Lock seconded. The board approved 5-0.

Approval of Minutes – January 3, January 31, 2011

## Approval of the Amended Agenda – February 7, 2011

### School Fund Raiser Requests

#### **Name of Group or Sponsor**

#### **Activity or Request**

Cohutta Elementary Junior Achievement	Hat Days, Candy Sales
Eastbrook Middle Cheerleaders	Sell snack items
Eastbrook Middle Cheerleaders	Sell Otis Spunkmeyer cookies
Eastbrook Middle 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Field Trip	Vote on teacher to be duct taped to gym wall
Eastbrook Middle Baseball Team	Sell Sonic Value Cards
New Hope Middle Baseball	Choo Choo Barbeque coupon sales
New Hope Middle Soccer Teams	Magazine Sale
Northwest High Academic Decathlon	Sell Live Strong bracelets
Northwest High Yearbook	Sweetheart Dance
Northwest High Golf Team	Golf Tournament
Northwest High Beta Club	Leukemia and Lymphoma “Pennies for Patients”
Northwest High Track & Field	Run-a-Thon
North Whitfield Middle Counseling Dept.	Selling flowers before Valentine’s Day
Southeast High Wrestling	Scrap booking Crop
Southeast High Wrestling	Sell Krispy Kreme Doughnuts
Southeast High Track	Dinner/ TV Giveaway
Southeast Boys Soccer	Dalton Soccer League donate funds for use of field
Valley Point Middle Soccer	“Best Tacos in Whitfield County” taco contest
Valley Point Middle Soccer	Spring Sweetheart Dance
Westside Elementary Month of Miracles	Sell “trinkets”
Whitfield Career Academy Student Government	Art Show
Whitfield Career Academy FCCLA	Sell carnations for Valentines
Whitfield Career Academy 10 <sup>th</sup> Grade Team	Sell suckers

### Overnight Field Trip Request

#### **Name of Group or Sponsor**

#### **Activity or Request**

New Hope Middle 7 <sup>th</sup> Grade	Fortson 4-H Center, Hampton, GA
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### Yearly Contract Renewals

#### **Name of Group**

#### **Contract Request**

#### **Amount**

NW Georgia Trade & Convention Center	Northwest High Graduation	\$3703.00
NW Georgia Trade & Convention Center	Phoenix Graduation	1440.00
NW Georgia Trade & Convention Center	Southeast High Graduation	3232.00
NW Georgia Trade & Convention Center	Whitfield Career Academy	800.00

### **Hearing of Individuals**

- Mitzi Jeter – Personnel Issue
- Mary Thelma Norris – Volunteered to sit on a committee to help the WCBOE “live within their means”
- Laverne Damron – Supportive of Mitzi Jeter

## **SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Teaching and Learning**

#### Reading Recovery

Cindy Fujimoto, a Reading Recovery trainer who works with Dalton Public Schools and the Whitfield County School System, informed the board members that Reading Recovery is a 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Intervention Program to help students get back to or above reading grade level. She described that the Reading

Recovery teachers spend thirty minutes on intense training one on one with the student for twelve weeks. She introduced the nineteen Reading Recovery teachers in the school system. They then presented a video. In the video Kari Hurd, a parent of a student in the Reading Recovery Program described how her student had trouble reading. She praised teacher Carol Ingle for her hard work. She said her son is coming home each day wanting to read. She added he is thriving and that his confidence has been bolstered as a result of the program.

Alice Oliver, an ESOL teacher at Antioch Elementary, said she could see a difference in the students who had participated in the Reading Recovery Program. She said they start out unsure of their reading skills but after completing the program she not only sees much better reading skills but the students have built confidence as well

Cedar Ridge principal and former principal of Cohutta Elementary, Allyson Millican said she has seen the benefits of Reading Recovery. She shared that at Cohutta Elementary almost all of the students who had participated in Reading Recovery had passed the reading portion of the CRCT. She said at Cedar Ridge Elementary, students are trying to learn the English language. She said Reading Recovery enables those students to read at or above grade level even as they are learning another language. She concluded by saying that having Reading Recovery has been the best decision.

The video then showed students who had participated in Reading Recovery describing how it had changed their lives. The students said they were proud that they could read to their class and that they were confident now as they read. Nine out of ten first graders are successful and the program changes lives one student at a time.

Reading Recovery teacher Denise Langford introduced two students, Ruben Hernandez and Rudolpho Garcia who showed the board members the books they could read before they participated in Reading Recovery and the books they were able to read now. The students then read the book to the board members. Mrs. Langford said the students had made huge progress and had met benchmarks. She thanked the board for their support and for allowing them to share.

## **Operations Reports and Recommendations**

### Construction Update

Keith Burran with M.B. Kahn updated the board on the progress at Coahulla Creek High School. He said the construction at the school was progressing nicely. He said the heat was on and the interior finishes were moving along. He informed the board the updated monthly report would be given at the next work session.

Mr. Fordham said the ability to get folks in the building was limited with the construction that was going on. He said it was an impressive facility and it was important for people to be able to see the school. He suggested the possibility of a virtual tour.

### Bid Approval for Eastbrook Middle Project

Mr. Hayes recommended approval of the bid submitted by R.K. Redding for \$24,140,897 for the additions and renovations to Eastbrook Middle. Gary Brock moved approval and Thomas Barton seconded. After discussion it was decided to table the vote until the community had an opportunity to be more informed on the project. It was decided to hold a called meeting before the February 28<sup>th</sup> work session. Bill Worley moved approval to table this item and Rodney Lock seconded. The board approved 5-0.

### Sale of Mobile Homes

Richard Schoen, assistant superintendent of operations recommended to the superintendent the approval of the sale of mobile classrooms that are no longer needed. The superintendent made that recommendation to the board. Thomas Barton moved approval and Bill Worley seconded. The board approved 5-0.

### Bus Purchase

The superintendent recommended the board approve the purchase of six school buses utilizing funds provided by State of Georgia bond sales. It was explained the reimbursement from the state would not

exceed \$76,292 per bus and that to meet the school system's current specifications; the purchase price for each bus would be approximately \$93,852. That would leave a balance of \$117,594 to be paid by ESPLOST funds. Gary Brock moved approval and Bill Worley seconded. The board approved 5-0.

### **Support Services Reports and Recommendations**

No items

### **Financial Reports and Recommendations**

Kenny Sheppard, chief financial officer, presented the General Fund reports from January and February as of January 31, 2011 and the ESPLOST reports as of December 31, 2011. The superintendent recommended the board approve the reports as presented. Thomas Barton moved approval and Gary Brock seconded. The board approved 5-0.

### **Human Resources Reports and Recommendations**

#### Personnel Recommendations

Mr. Hayes recommended the board approve the personnel actions as discussed in executive session to include certified personnel changes, resignations, retirements, leaves of absences, 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.

#### Recommendation of Substitutes

The superintendent recommended the board approve the substitute personnel action as was discussed in executive session. Thomas Barton moved approval and Bill Worley seconded. The board approved 4-1 with Gary Brock voting no.

### **Previous Business**

#### Coahulla Creek High School Options for Opening

The superintendent and board members discussed the options for opening Coahulla Creek High School. The superintendent read the current plan which would mandate all 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> graders who are zoned for Coahulla Creek to attend. The school would also be open to 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> graders from across the district if there was enough interest through an application process.

Mr. Hayes said his greatest concern was that time on buses was hurting student academics. He added he wasn't referring to the Friday night games but the competitions that occurred several times a week such as soccer, softball, and basketball. He informed the board members that there had also been a severe hit on athletic department finances with the lack of participation from opposing schools.

Britt Adams, principal of Northwest High School, was asked to address the board about his thoughts on the issues facing the school being in a 4A classification. Mr. Adams said his concern was also the travel time and the problem that causes academically for students. He added that football and basketball proceeds also financially support the other sports. He said that many of the other schools in the 4A classification do not have traditions in place and they do not attend the events. He expressed concern that if Northwest High School ended up in the region for two more years, it's possible they would have three more years of traveling. Each classification is decided on two year terms.

Mr. Fordham stressed the need for communication to let parents and students know that the deadline to apply to the new school is March 31<sup>st</sup>.

### **New Business**

#### Lease Agreement with Georgia Northwestern Technical College

Superintendent Hayes recommended the board approve the lease agreement between the Whitfield County School System and Georgia Northwestern Technical College to lease space at the Whitfield Career Academy. Gary Brock moved approval and Thomas Barton seconded. Mr. Lock stated this agreement was important to the community. Mr. Fordham added Georgia Northwestern Technical College was currently providing programs that would provide a seamless educational opportunity for students to learn innovative skills to complement traditional high schools. He stated the Whitfield Career Academy was a good central location. The board approved 5-0.

#### Community Engagement Presentation

Eric Beavers, media and public relations specialist, presented a powerpoint presentation with several suggestions about ways to improve communication. Mr. Beavers suggested a community based meeting hosted by a school council member. Mr. Hayes stated the school system understood the importance of building strong relationships.

#### **Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

### MINUTES OF MEETING February 21, 2011

The Whitfield County Board of Education held a called meeting at Southeast High School on Monday, February 21, 2011. Board Chairman Louis Fordham called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Present were the following board members:

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

Also present were the following staff members:

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

Also present:

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

#### **Welcome**

Mr. Fordham welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained that the meeting was being held at Southeast High School because of the room size and communication needs. Superintendent Hayes welcomed everyone and expressed his appreciation for their attendance.

#### **Overview of Eastbrook Middle Building Project**

Richard Schoen, assistant superintendent of operations, and Kenny Sheppard, chief financial officer, gave a detailed overview of the Eastbrook Middle Building Project along with the amount of debt that has already been incurred. Mr. Sheppard also explained the debt would need to be paid in either a property tax increase or an ESPLOST tax.

#### **Hearing of Individuals**

●Dan Rogers  
●Lawrence Headrick

●Shelby Bryant  
●Austin Rosas

●Mike Gibson  
●Tony Robertson

- Glen Grant
- Shanda Hickman
- Ralph Noble
- Tom Miller
- Mary Thelma Norris
- Marshall Mauldin
- Austin Center
- Reygun Henry
- Gary Shipman
- Shelbi Bryant
- Austi Rossas
- Gary Sosebee

- Chuck Oliver
- Leonard Stickler
- Kim Denton
- Rodney Brock
- Lix Ramirez
- Rana Mashburn
- Shawna Woodruff
- Angela Jones
- Jean Adyha
- Scott Hearn
- Sabrina Jones
- Angela Grant

Mr. Lock said the main reason the board members called a meeting was to let folks know about the debt. He shared his ties to the school saying his children had attended Eastbrook Middle and he had coached many teams on the Eastbrook fields. Mr. Lock said he had run his campaign on being transparent and he wanted the public to know about the debt and the shape and condition of the school.

Mr. Fordham shared that the bid for the Eastbrook Middle project would expire on March 6<sup>th</sup> which is before the next regular scheduled board meeting. He said the board members wanted the opportunity to have a conversation with the public before they made a decision on the Eastbrook project at the February 28<sup>th</sup> work session.

Mr. Barton shared that when he came on the board, Eastbrook Middle was scheduled for a \$4.1million facelift. He stated that the board members and school system staff members soon realized that the initial renovations that were scheduled to be made were not going to be sufficient. He added that they understood the need, but wanted to wait and do what was best for students. He said with the cost savings from the other ESPLOST projects they felt they were going to be able to rebuild Eastbrook.

Mr. Worley stated his reasons as to why the students from Eastbrook Middle could not be placed at the Whitfield Career Academy. He said Dalton State College had a building on the campus and that he did not feel 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade middle school students should be placed with college students. He also said Eastbrook Middle should not be taken out of the community.

Mr. Fordham agreed that the Whitfield Career Academy was not a good option for students from Eastbrook. He said he felt you shouldn't displace students from one school to make room for another group of students. He said the Whitfield Career Academy was built to keep kids in school. He added that it would cost additional money to get the school ready for middle school students. Mr. Fordham said the school system was building a school for fifty plus years as a long term investment for the students and the community.

### **Adjournment**

After a question and answer session, the meeting was adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

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## **Hearing of Individuals**

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●Shanda Hickman	●Leonard Stickler	
●Ralph Noble	●Kim Denton	
●Tom Miller	●Rodney Brock	
●Mary Thelma Norris	●Lix Ramirez	
●Marshall Mauldin	●Rana Mashburn	
●Austin Center	●Shawna Woodruff	
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