

MINUTES OF MEETING

April 16, 2012

The regular meeting of the Whitfield County Board of Education was held at the Whitfield County Central Office on April 16, 2012. Board Chairman Louis Fordham called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Present were the following board members:

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

Also present were the following staff members:

Danny Hayes Audrey Williams
Judy Gilreath Richard Schoen
Ron Hale 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

Eastside Elementary principal Ben Hunt introduced students Sydney Earley and Alex Pace who led the Pledge of Allegiance. Sylvia Earley presented the inspiration. She thanked the board members for their hard work and dedication and informed them that she knew the importance of education.

School Council Report – Eastside Elementary

Lis Pace presented the school council report. She stated the school council members had been informed about the importance of the Measuring Academic Progress (MAP) and how the information is used to design work for students. She said the school council had also toured the new Eastbrook Middle School. She thanked the board for the flexibility and autonomy given to the schools and for the new third grade class. She informed the board there was a need for improvements to the parking lot and roof.

Instructional Report

Ben Hunt said Eastside Elementary made a movie to share their story to the public. Mr. Hunt showed the movie to the board members. The movie talks about Eastside's desire to promote student achievement. The school does MAP testing three times a year and from those results determine each student's instructional needs. Students are included in making a plan for their improvement. Various websites are used in computer class to target some of those needs by expanding knowledge. Students lead parent/teacher conferences. The students have ownership and need to understand their strengths and weaknesses so they can lead the conference. Reading Recovery is also used to increase student achievement. The movie showed a student reading before she was placed in the Reading Recovery program and reading after Reading Recovery. There was significant improvement after sixteen weeks. Eastside Elementary also celebrate kid's successes by honoring students that have demonstrated character traits that should be recognized or have worked hard on a difficult subject by selecting them to walk on the "Red Carpet". Staff members have "Design Days" where they collaborate to see how they can help each other help the students. Staff members are given various sources of professional development and they can choose what they feel they need which makes the professional development meaningful to each teacher. Staff members are

engaged and are busy writing grants to help the students. To engage staff and students it was decided that the class that read the most books would get to silly string the administrative staff. A “School to Go” initiative was designed where staff members go into the neighborhoods where the students live. While there they read, play games, and interact with parents. The results have been beneficial for both students and staff members. It helped build relationships and gave the opportunity for more one on one learning. The school is using funds from a Lowe’s grant to build an outdoor classroom for the students. Students and staff members of Coahulla Creek High School have helped design the outdoor area. Eastside received a book writing grant from the Whitfield Education Foundation that will instill writing and reading appreciation in students. Mr. Hunt said Eastside was a great school with amazing teachers where everyone responds to student achievement.

Welcome/Recognitions/Presentations

Ben Oliver – PAGEONE Magazine Outstanding Teacher

Ben Oliver was recognized for his achievement of being named as one of the six teachers quietly making a difference. He was presented a certificate of congratulations from the board members. Julie Stafford, a student in Mr. Oliver’s accelerated Math II class, demonstrated a project she had worked on in class. Mr. Oliver stated he was a product of Whitfield County Schools and had a sense of personal investment in teaching students. He added he teaches with enthusiasm, loves the students, and wants to see students succeed. He said he was blessed to be an educator. Mr. Hayes said that teachers like Ben are what the Whitfield County School System looks for when hiring teachers. He said Ben has a passion for his community, the subject he teaches, and the students.

Executive Session

Superintendent Danny Hayes recommended the board members 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:

Thomas Barton
Gary Brock
Louis Fordham
Rodney Lock
Bill Worley

Also present were the following staff members:

Danny Hayes Richard Schoen
Judy Gilreath Audrey Williams
Janie Osborn

Return to Regular Session

The board members having taken no action in executive session, returned to regular session at 8:45 p.m. Bill Worley moved approval and Gary Brock seconded. The board approved 5-0.

Approval of Consent Agenda Items

Mr. Hayes recommended the board approve the Consent Agenda items listed below. Thomas Barton moved approval and Rodney Lock seconded. The board approved 5-0.

Approval of Minutes – March 5, March 26, 2012

Approval of Agenda – April 16, 2012

School Fundraising Requests

Name of Group or Sponsor**Activity or Request**

Beaverdale Elementary
CCHS General Athletics
CCHS Athletics
CCHS Basketball
CCHS Basketball
CCHS Basketball
CCHS Basketball
EMS Advanced Visual Arts
NHE PE
NHM 6th & 7th Grade
NHM Baseball
NHM Girls Basketball
NHM Drama
NHM Drama
NWHS QB Club
NWHS FCCLA
NWHS Boys Basketball
NWHS Boys Basketball
NWHS Athletics
NWHS Volleyball
NWHS Volleyball
NWHS Volleyball
NWMS 6th Grade
SEHS Baseball
SEHS Baseball
SEHS Journalism Club

SEHS Cheerleading
SEHS National Art Honor Society
SEHS National Art Honor Society
VES 5th Grade
VPM Track & Field
VPM 8th Grade Class

Spring Carnival, - Wildcat Rodeo, Activities and Raffle
T-shirt and sweatshirt sales
All Sports Camp for rising 3rd-7th grade students
Sell wrist bands
School Social Dance
Sell Krispy Kreme Doughnuts
Coupon books
Combined student basketball game
Sell yogurt and ice cream
Walk-a-thon
Sell signs for the outfield fence on baseball field
3 point shootout, hot shot contest, and skills competition
Sell ads, "shout outs", and dedication pages in program
Sell flowers or candy bags to be presented to actors
Alumni Football Game and Raffle
Bake Sale, BBQ Dinner
Bruin Basketball Camp for grades K-9
One day Basketball Skills Camp
Host professional wrestling event
Host Volleyball Clinic at WSE
Host Volleyball Clinic at NHM
Host Volleyball Clinic at WSM
Car Wash
Sell Nuts and Designs Jewelry
Travel baseball tournaments
Annual Spring Dance, Pajama Day, Hat Day, truffle sales, carwash
Catalog sales
Sell pre-wrapped snacks
Hat Day
Sell snacks during field day
Pre-Spring Break Jam School Dance
8th grade dance

Overnight Field Trip Requests**Name of Group or Sponsor****Activity or Request**

NWHS, SEHS, WCA FCCLA
Westside Middle 7th Grade

Westside Middle 8th Grade

North Whitfield Middle 7th Grade
BE, DE, VE 5th Grade Alpha

FCCLA State Leadership Meeting, Atlanta, GA
Tour Okefenokee Swamp, Savannah, Ft. Pulaski, Ft. Jackson, riverboat cruise, 1st African Baptist Church, ghost tour, etc.
Tour CNN Studio, Coca Cola Museum, Georgia Aquarium, Holocaust Museum, Tellus Museum
Trip to Atlanta- Tour State Capitol, Fernbank Museum
Natures Classroom

Hearing of Individuals

None

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**Teaching and Learning**

Social Studies – Amy Haynes

Amy Haynes, teaching and learning coordinator, presented a powerpoint to the board members titled “Social Studies Matters”. She said the Georgia Council for Social Studies had used that title for their annual conference. The title was used to help establish the importance of the work. Adequate Yearly Progress’ emphasis on reading, language arts, and math has created a “pecking order”. She stressed how social studies is embedded in CCGPS reading/language arts standards. Dr. Haynes said people between the ages of 15-26 were considered the “DotNet” generation. When surveyed they could give you information about American Idol and could tell you where the family in the “Simpson’s” television series lived but fewer than half knew about state government. This data showed the need to consider the design of the work to meet the needs of the students. Dr. Haynes said social studies was meaningful in our lives and that students need to be informed as they see and hear economics and political issues each day. Professional learning that is offered to the staff members is also very meaningful. The Georgia Council on Economic Education is a great resource that is free. This year they provided 133 teachers with training sessions where lunch, pay for subs, and resources were also provided. The challenges are that the work use to be about memorization. The old way of teaching involved lots of reading and listening to a teacher and that gave students one perspective. Document Based Questions is a tool used to look at historical documents with the teacher being able to ask higher thinking questions. Students can see different points of view. The need to know who wrote the information is important so you can see and understand possible bias. The work can be engaging. Dr. Haynes stated that we have such rich history and opportunities in our community. Students have the opportunities to visit historical sites and have authentic experiences such as Prater’s Mill, Civil War sites, and others. Dr. Haynes said moving forward staff members would still have Document Based Questions training as well as literacy training which would encourage critical thinking.

Operations

Superintendent Hayes informed the board members that the facility that previously housed Phoenix looks like the best option to house Crossroads. He asked Richard Schoen, assistant superintendent of operations, how much he thought it would cost to make the needed repairs to that building as well as other costs that might be involved. Mr. Schoen said it cost approximately \$300,000. That would cover a new HVAC system, painting, technology, and electrical work costs. He said the money is in reserve. Mr. Lock asked him about the roof and Mr. Schoen responded that it was in good shape. There was also discussion about the flooring at Coahulla Creek High School. It was said that a meeting had been held and another one was in the process of being scheduled. Mr. Schoen said there was no solution at this time.

Support Services Reports and Recommendations

None

Financial Reports and Recommendations

General Funds and Capital Project Funds

Ron Hale, chief financial officer, presented the General Funds as of March 31, 2012 and the Capital Projects report as of February 29, 2012. Superintendent Hayes recommended the board approve the reports as presented. Thomas Barton moved approval and Bill Worley seconded. The board approved 5-0. The financial reports are a part of these minutes.

Human Resources Reports and Recommendations

Personnel Recommendation

Superintendent Hayes recommended the board approve the personnel actions as discussed in executive session to include certified and support personnel recommendations and resignations. Louis Fordham moved approval and Thomas Barton seconded. The board approved 5-0.

Previous Business

Vision, Mission, and Beliefs

Mr. Hayes recommended the board discuss this agenda item at the next board meeting.

New Business

ESPLOST Resolution

Superintendent Hayes recommended the board approve a resolution for a 5-year ESPLOST to be placed on the ballot. He said there were three priorities in this ESPLOST and they are paying off debt, capital improvements, and technology. After discussion about why the ESPLOST was needed and a commitment to being transparent to the community, Louis Fordham moved approval and Gary Brock seconded. The board approved 5-0. The resolution is a part of these minutes.

Georgia School Boards Association Summer Conference Delegate

Board Member Gary Brock will be the delegate for the Whitfield County Board of Education at the Georgia School Boards Association Summer Conference.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

Secretary

Chairman

MINUTES OF MEETING

April 30, 2012

A work session of the Whitfield County Board of Education was held on Monday, April 30, 2012 at Varnell Elementary. Board Chairman Louis Fordham called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.

Present were the following board members:

Thomas Barton
Gary Brock
Louis Fordham
Rodney Lock

Board Member Bill Worley arrived after roll call.

Also present were the following staff members:

Danny Hayes Richard Schoen
Judy Gilreath Audrey Williams
Carolyn Weaver Ron Hale

Also present:

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

Inspiration/Pledge of Allegiance

Varnell Elementary students Landon Conley, Melissa Valencia, Gage Richards and Giselle Santos led the Pledge of Allegiance. Landon Conley read The Crunching Munching Caterpillar by Sheridan Cain and Jack Tickle.

Moment of Silent Reflection

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

At this time Mr. Fordham explained the change in the Work Session Agenda. He stated that the work session would deal mainly with schools and school reports. Board meetings will be more about Board work.

School Reports

Varnell Elementary

Lisa Jones introduced music teacher Tricia Jennings who shared that just like a caterpillar turning into a butterfly, our students go through many stages of life. At times, these stages can be difficult to go through. As educators, part of our calling is to help these precious little individuals move through these stages with love and support. Varnell is very blessed to have a staff that is loving, caring, and committed to our students. Tricia said in the presentation, you will see the wide variety of students at Varnell. Some have special needs, those that come from other countries, and those that are desperate for someone to let them know they care. Tricia stated that students' basic needs must be met before they can learn and grow. She said that this year Varnell has faced many challenges as a school family, but the most important thing is that our students know that we love them no matter what. Presentation – Butterflies.

Lisa Jones, principal of Varnell Elementary, welcomed everyone to Varnell. She stated that the staff at Varnell strive to build relationships with students so that learning is meaningful, engaging, and based on student's needs. Lisa stated that currently 69% of our students qualify for free & reduced services. This is a 1 % increase over the past 3 years. 53% of our students are Caucasian, 46% are Hispanic, and the remaining 1% of our students are a combination of Asian and African-American. Our Math MAP data,

number sense and numeracy have been identified as areas of need. Over the past two years, we have expanded technology, purchased resources, provided teachers with design time and professional learning opportunities, and increased the use of Co-teaching to support math curriculum. In disaggregating our MAP and CRCT data, we can see our efforts at work.

- 2010-2011 75% were proficient in Math MAP Assessment and 80% met or exceeded on CRCT. This was 4% points above the previous year.
- 2011-2012 82% scored at proficiency on the Math MAP. This was 7% increase from last year. We do not have CRCT data for this year but if the correlation from last year holds true, we should see an increase in Math CRCT scores as well.

Lisa stated that in Reading, vocabulary and comprehension were identified as areas of need. Teachers have implemented SIOP strategies that focus on building background knowledge, increasing communication skills, and connecting reading and writing throughout all content areas. Literacy stations have also been created and utilized in K-2 classrooms.

- 2010-2011 93% scored at proficiency on MAP and 89% met or exceeded on CRCT. This was 3% increase from last year.
- 2011-2012 92% scored at proficiency on MAP.

Lisa stated as we look forward to next year she feels good about the progress that has been made. She said that they will continue to review data, focus on content, and provide experiences for our staff to help meet the individual needs of our students. She said that next year will be the implementation year for Common Core Standards. Teachers have used charts to compare our current GPS math curriculum with next year's Common Core Standards. They are looking for similarities and difference. She said that it will be vital to have vertical collaboration occurring regularly in order to ensure rigor within all classrooms.

School Council Report – Varnell Elementary

Keith Parham, the school council chairman at Varnell Elementary, informed the board members that they had ushered in several new members this year. They now have 12 members. Parent involvement continues to be a valuable component which determines social, academic, and emotional health for our students. Business partners support the effort of parent outreach. The Council and PTA have spearheaded a school grounds beautification project this year in an effort to build school pride as well as make our school aesthetically pleasing. Mr. Parham said that the Council had many guest speakers this year. School personnel have shared information on MAP, student data; our Gifted Program, Music Program, and Academic Support Lab. Phillip Brown updated the council on Coahulla Creek High School. Andrea Bradley discussed the transition from elementary school to middle school and Danny Hayes provided a budget presentation. He stated that the Varnell Council supports this school's successes and accepts its' challenges. We know our role as leaders and acting liaisons between school and community. He said that we will continue to celebrate our successful learners. He said that we welcome suggestions or comments from you to help us meet the visions and goals of tomorrow.

New Hope Elementary

Brinda Clayton, principal of New Hope Elementary, stated that New Hope Elementary has worked hard to provide our students with meaningful work tailored to meet the individual needs and interest of our students. She said the students were tested using the MAP assessment that showed 95% of students at proficient level in reading and 85% at proficient level in math. These scores are closely aligned with the results of the 2011 CRCT scores. She stated that our students for the past three years scored in the average range of 95% in the area of reading. Because of the many changes to standards in the past several years it has resulted in our students not scoring as high in the area of math. Due to the efforts of much concentration in math to review and find gaps that needed to be addressed, Mrs. Clayton can proudly say that New Hope Elementary has made a 11% gain in the area of math and scored in the 90% during the 2011 CRCT. Mrs. Clayton said that with the Common Core Standard coming on board that they are concerned with the gaps that will have to be addressed again to assist our students in mastering these new standards. She said that the staff at New Hope will continue to keep a focus in this area and collaborate with grade levels to continue our effort to meet the needs of all students.

Mrs. Clayton stated that the population at New Hope Elementary has changed with an increase of ELL students to 32% and Free & Reduced Population to 59%. For us to make the proper changes to continue with the high quality teaching, our staff has begun looking for ways to scaffold our reading instruction while still providing rigor for all students. Mrs. Clayton introduced three New Hope Teachers who have led in the change of philosophy in how reading instruction needs to be presented to students.

- Sunshine Narramore – Reading Recovery and EIP
- Denise Langford – Reading Recovery and EIP
- Cortney Buckelew – Kindergarten

Ms. Langford stated that Reading Recovery is one of the best programs. It is a wonderful intervention program that is helping students who have extreme difficulty learning to read and write and brings them up to grade level or higher. She said that collaboration between Kindergarten and First grade teachers has helped to pilot a program that is introducing Real Books with true meaning. Reading these books helps them with problems solving too. Sometimes if they can't sound the word out they learn to look at the pictures to help them. Learning to problem solve is a very important component. In a sense, we are training all students to be Reading Recovery. Ms. Narramore stated that the rich conversation is providing all kinds of opportunities in all academic areas. She stated that this is the 3rd year of Reading Recovery at New Hope Elementary. Teachers are providing excellent learning opportunities and developing relationships and respect for students on how to teach these students. Professional Development is so important to student performance. We hope to train all teachers and paraprofessionals to have extensive training in Reading Recovery. Ms. Buckelew stated that it is so important to teach parents too so they will be able to help their child at home. ESOL is also providing Spanish speaking books for these parents to be able to read with their children at home.

Ms. Langford introduced two students that have been in Reading Recovery program this year. Both students are in Kindergarten. Each student read a portion of a book:

- Haley Rhoades – she is at level 22/beginning of 3rd grade
- Fatima Rodriguez – she is at level 12/middle of 1st grade

Each student did a wonderful job. The teachers were so proud.

Mr. Fordham asked, what is the percentage for students entering Kindergarten who can read? Ms. Langford stated that it is high. She said that some students come in not knowing any letters or numbers. The clientele is changing. Both parents have to work with the economy the way it is. Demographics numbers are increasing with a larger ELL population at New Hope Elementary. Mr. Hayes stated that most teachers only receive about 3 or fewer courses in reading. This is why the additional training is so important. Ms. Langford said that the Kindergarten teachers have built this program from the ground up. Mr. Hayes thanked them for stepping out and being innovative for our students.

School Council Report – New Hope Elementary

Allison Crossen, school council chairman at New Hope Elementary, informed the Board that they had a building year adding new members. The council had some concerns that they want to bring before the Board.

- Classroom sizes continue to increase.
- Financial problems – We need to educate teachers and parents by getting the information out there to them. Mr. Fordham said that Mr. Hayes and Mr. Hale have been going out to the schools to educate them on the budget and let them know the financial needs. He thanked Mrs. Crossen for coming and sharing those concerns.

Mr. Fordham thanked the teachers from New Hope Elementary for focusing on getting students reading on the 3rd grade level and to hear their excitement about the Reading Recovery program and the opportunity to teach all of their teachers. Mr. Fordham asked Mr. Hayes if all of our schools had Reading Recovery. He said they did not, but we are in the process of implementing this into all of our elementary schools.

Mr. Fordham thanked the students from Varnell Elementary for the great job that they have done. He said he understands that the students are our customers and that the teachers are changing to treat their students as customers.

Review Board Agenda Items – May 7, 2012

Mr. Hayes reviewed and discussed with the board members the agenda items for the May 7, 2012 board meeting.

Other Business

A copy of the Whitfield County School System Student Discipline Code of Conduct was given to all Board Members for review of the Dress Code. Judy Gilreath said she is working on a coach's handbook.

Louis asked Board members to be ready to report anything that you may hear from the community. There will be 5 community meetings held at each middle school. Louis said that we would like 2 Board members at each meeting. Mr. Hayes stated that there could not be more than two so there would not be a quorum.

- May 1, 2012 at Westside Middle – Louis and Bill
- May 3, 2012 at Valley Point Middle – Thomas and Bill
- May 8, 2012 at North Whitfield Middle – Rodney and Gary
- May 10, 2012 at New Hope Middle – Gary and Louis
- May 17, 2012 at Eastbrook Middle – Rodney and Thomas

Mr. Lock stated that as he has gone around to the schools there have been a lot of leaky roofs but that they were being repaired quickly.

Mr. Fordham said that he met with the Tea Party and it went good. He liked the hand out that Eric prepared. He said he did a great job. Ron and Eric put the presentation together for the meetings.

Mr. Hayes explained to the Board about the Called Board Meetings. Mr. Fordham explained that public comment would be only at Board Meetings and not at Work Sessions.

Executive Session

The superintendent recommended the board move into executive session for the discussion of personnel. Gary Brock moved approval and Bill Worley seconded. The board approved 5-0.

Present were the following board members:

Thomas Barton
Gary Brock
Louis Fordham
Rodney Lock
Bill Worley

Also present were the following staff members:

Danny Hayes Audrey Williams
Richard Schoen Carolyn Weaver
Judy Gilreath

There was no action taken.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:55 a.m.

Chairman

Secretary