



the Pitt County Schools website regarding three factors pertaining to Board of Education: the size of the Board, the length of term for Board members and the time lapse between election and installation. Mr. Sean Kenny seconded the motion. Chair Peaden then asked In-House Attorney Rob Sonnenberg to come to the podium at which time Attorney Sonnenberg informed everyone that the Board of Education has asked him to research the legal and legislative process of possibly changing the election criteria for the Pitt County Board of Education. Currently the Pitt County BOE election process is covered by Session Law 193 which was adopted in 1987. As part of that, Attorney Sonnenberg reported that he has made contact with several legislators, and he will share his results after speaking with all five contacts. He also informed the Board that Pitt County Schools is subject to the Voting Election Act of 1965 and needs pre-approval from the United States Department of Justice to be sure changes in the Board of Education make up do not represent discriminatory changes based on the rights of minorities or others.

Mr. Worth Forbes asked did a vote of the Board members regarding changes in these issues have to be unanimous. Attorney Sonnenberg replied that he had not completed his research into the matter and could not give an answer tonight. Ms. Little reminded everyone that she's not asking for a vote, she's only asking for a survey for public input. Ms. Barbara Owens responded that she had spoken with a legislator last evening, and according to her, the vote does not have to be unanimous but could not be a split vote received in a negative manner. Mr. Benjie Forrest stated he likes the idea of public input, but feels the Board should wait until more information has been obtained. Ms. Mary Williams asked Attorney Sonnenberg could he expound on Ms. Owens' statement as in an earlier meeting with the legislators, they reported that the vote would have to be unanimous to make these changes. She asked what happened between short session and long session that would make the voting results different. Ms. Williams also asked Attorney Sonnenberg what will be the representation by losing a Board member per district – statistics or other data. Attorney Sonnenberg again responded he had not made contact with all five legislators, and he would rather wait until his information is complete before giving an up-date. Ms. Christine Waters added that in the Raleigh paper, it was reported that a census is being taken to see if they need to redraw the school board districts to be sure they are equal. She wondered if that type action would apply to Pitt County also.

Superintendent Beverly Reep asked Rob if there is a chance that the U.S. Justice Department (regardless of the survey) will direct that we can or cannot alter the size of the Board of Education with Attorney Sonnenberg stating that as yet he has not contacted the U.S. Department of Justice other than researching the process, but they may depending on discriminatory findings. He did state that there is a side process of going through the District Court of the District of Columbia, but the majority of people choose the U. S. Department of Justice because of simplicity and money. Ms. Mary Williams also asked that Attorney Sonnenberg make an Office of Civil Rights inquiry to get their input on Board of Education changes.

Mr. Marc Whichard stated we do need a survey as Ms. Little suggested, but feels we need to get a response first from the U. S. Department of Justice, OCR or whomever. If all Attorney Sonnenberg's contacts give a favorable response, then we should proceed with the survey.

Ms. Jill Camnitz asked has the Board of County Commissioners size been approved by the Department of Justice with Attorney Sonnenberg replying that he does not know the answer to

this question. Mr. Worth Forbes commented that whatever report we send to the legislature, that the report should reflect whether the African American members of our Board are for the reduction or against the reduction.

Mr. Sean Kenny reminded everyone that there are three factors regarding the Board of Education involved in this request: the size of the Board, the length of term and the length of time between election and swearing in. He further commented that this survey will serve as an opinion poll, not a vote. Mr. Kenny feels the survey could be conducted at the same time that Attorney Sonnenberg is researching data for the appropriate process.

Chair Peaden then called for a vote by the Board: For adding to the Agenda discussion of a survey regarding changes to the Board of Education were: Ms. Jennifer Little, Ms. Jill Camnitz, Ms. Christine Waters and Mr. Sean Kenny. Against adding the survey to the Agenda were: Mr. Benjie Forrest, Mr. Worth Forbes, Ms. Mary Williams, Ms. Barbara Owens, Dr. Matthew Ward, Mr. Marc Whichard, Bishop Ralph Love and Chair Billy Peaden. Motion failed.

Ms. Jill Camnitz asked for a Point of Order regarding adding an item to the Agenda. Attorney Sonnenberg stated that an Adjustment to the Agenda under our own Rules for Procedure 1.200 says that once a meeting has been convened, this must be approved by a majority vote. Ms. Camnitz believes that the Board has just discussed something that has not even been added to the Agenda. Mr. Marc Whichard asked were we not discussing the merits of adding an item to the Agenda. Attorney Sonnenberg commented that we did kind of slide into the merits, but thinks the initial question would be whether or not the Board will add the requested Agenda item tonight. He feels that what he has heard is that the majority of the Board does not want to have this item added to the Agenda for this meeting.

Bishop Ralph Love moved, second by Mr. Marc Whichard, that the Agenda be accepted as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

For Public Expression, PCAE President Mary Robinson informed the Board that January 18<sup>th</sup>, she attended a meeting at Snowhill Primary with representatives from Pitt, Green and Wayne Counties and Senator Louis Pate. She commented that Senator Pate is a supporter of education as his wife is a retired teacher and was pleased to hear some of the issues regarding cuts and what their priorities were. Ms. Robinson invited everyone to start wearing red on Tuesdays as this has been named our Action Day and on February 14<sup>th</sup>, the PCAE will have a “show love for public education” event.

Ms. Robinson also stated she is the only teacher in the state that is involved with DPI’s Teacher Effectiveness Work Group and will work beside DPI Personnel Lynn Gardner, Rebecca Garland and others. This Group will develop an instrument to measure teacher effectiveness based on student growth. This Group has been discussed in the Race to the Top regional meetings, and the instrument developed will be tied into Standard 6 of the new Teacher Evaluation process. Ms. Robinson stated this is a two-year appointment, and she promised to keep the Board updated on the Work Group’s progress.

The next person speaking to the Board was Ms. Kathy Herring who thanked the Board for polling the public regarding the Moment of Silence and other issues. She asked the Board to post a poll regarding all major issues which impact students and feels the Board of Education questions merit public input at this time while the legislators are in long session. Ms. Herring stated that timing is important and commented that surveys are good as all have the opportunity to respond using a website when having time available for contacting appropriate leaders is limited. She feels feedback from constituents should not be controversial, and results of the survey would be important feedback to constituents.

Regarding the Spotlight on Teaching and Learning, SIG Grant Coordinator John Coleman shared with the Board an update on the School Improvement Grant with a goal of improving graduation rates in three high schools - North Pitt, Farmville Central and South Central. Focus is being placed on four key critical areas: attendance, academics, staff development and family engagement. Mr. Coleman informed the Board that much of this school year has been used to identify and implement new initiatives and strengthen support for programs already established. Means and measures to collect data have been put into place to help evaluate progress of the grant and learn what documentation is required by the State and the Federal Government. Mr. Coleman commented that going into next school year; we will have this year's baseline data to better track our progress as it occurs.

He stated one effort that has been clearly seen in the first semester is a good reduction in the number of students who have passed the high school course, but failed due to the attendance policy. Mr. Coleman reported that data is being collected by periods, weekly, monthly and by semester – pending on what information is being gathered.

In closing, Mr. Coleman shared with the Board the existing budgets for each high school and explained the percentage of funds spent for salaries, staff development/contracted services, materials and supplies, technology, after school tutoring/remediation, summer programs and family engagement. He stated a total of \$1,080,988 has been spent or obligated to this date, and commented that all the money which has been designated for summer school and other areas may not be needed and will be redirected to technology or another area as deemed appropriate.

Mr. Worth Forbes asked has over \$1,000,000 already been spent with Mr. Coleman responding yes. Mr. Forbes asked has the staff noticed any trend in progress being made for these students – i.e. test data and attendance. Mr. Coleman stated students are staying in school and the dropout rate has decreased, but reinforced that these figures could change before second semester ends. Mr. Marc Whichard stated he would like to see attendance percentages monthly and End-of-Class scores compared to last year at this time. Mr. Coleman stated this could be accomplished. Ms. Mary Williams asked how many coaches and other staff have been hired with Mr. Coleman responding that each school has a graduation coach, an attendance specialist who actually goes into the homes and asks why a student is out, classroom teachers and curriculum coaches for English, math and technology. Ms. Williams questioned all the money being spent for staff development when she feels it's important that the money be spent in the schools - for after school programs and providing materials and resources for the students. Mr. Coleman also explained that some of the money was being spent for transportation to allow parents to come to the schools and be involved or to have a consultation. Chair Peaden asked was this money used

for all students or just at-risk students with Mr. Coleman stating the whole school was involved, but students with at-risk factors for attendance, behavior and academics were targeted.

Chair Peaden asked Mr. Coleman could the Board receive a chart showing where a child placed when the SIG Grant began and where the child is now. Mr. Forbes stated it would be good to know where a child placed at the end of first semester last year and where he is now, including any behavioral issues. Mr. Coleman stated PBIS is a part of the Grant and improvement has been documented across the district.

Mr. Marc Whichard informed the Board that the bulk of the money spent is usually in salaries as a rule with this type grant, but tracking of students in various areas needs to be reviewed. Mr. Coleman stated data is available to report this information and will be prepared. Ms. Williams stated she understands that salaries are a large cost for implementation of any program, but would like to see what new programs are available to benefit students. Mr. Coleman stated that many initiatives including Guiding Good Choices will provide this type data at the end of second semester. He informed the Board that a report could be created to provide each initiative with its results at the end of the school year. Dr. Reep invited all Board members to visit the three high schools to actually see what's happening with students first hand. Mr. Worth Forbes commented that salaries take away a lot of money that could be used to help students, and he would like to see a report of the people who are employed under the grant and their salaries, i.e. Dr. Mark L'Esperance. Mr. Whichard stated if paying out money gave positive results, then it was worth the money spent. He added that maybe this information needed to be included with the salaries – checking to see if employees were getting good results from their efforts.

Ms. Christine Waters asked if you identify at-risk students with attendance issues, do you document if they have children of their own. Mr. Coleman stated yes, and the three schools target these students to provide intervention with school social workers as well as getting help from social services.

Dr. Matthew Ward asked what plans are being made for the summer programs. Mr. Coleman explained that extending the school year and adding more educational options have been discussed. He informed the Board that failure will not be accepted.

Superintendent Reep stated when the SIG Grants were presented; each LEA had to pick one model from four Federal models provided to apply for the Grant. She stated we chose the transformation model which in year one requires major changes in staff so they stay in the schools and help us see long-term benefits for students. In the first year, you may see front loading of salaries and professional development to boost individual teacher performance. In the first year, staff has to prove they are proficient or above or they don't stay in the school.

Under Consent Items, Bishop Ralph Love, second by Ms. Jill Camnitz, motioned that the Board approve the Minutes from the Meeting held January 18, 2011, the Personnel Report for February 2011 and the Property to be Declared Surplus. Motion carried unanimously.

Under New Business, Chair Worth Forbes stated at the Facilities Committee meeting held January 24, 2011; discussions were held regarding the Third Street Center, bus garage, the

Facility Needs Survey, Chicod School and mobile units/surplus items. He stated that the Belvoir Fire Department has offered to take PCS surplus items to be sold at their auction. Mr. Forbes informed the Board that the Fire Department staff also stated they will move the PCS materials to the Belvoir site. Their charge will be 10% of the sale. Mr. Forbes stated this will save PCS the cost of having our own auction and paying an auctioneer to come.

Mr. Forbes then stated Associate Superintendent of Operations Aaron Beaulieu will share further details with the Board following the meeting. Mr. Beaulieu informed the Board that closing the Third Street Center under General Statute 115C-72 requires that a public hearing be held to announce the closing by the local Board of Education. With the Board's approval, the Facilities Committee asked to have this public hearing at 6:30 p.m. before the next regular Board meeting February 21, 2011 in the Board Room. Mr. Worth Forbes made motion, second by Mr. Sean Kenny, to have the public hearing regarding closing of the Third Street Center at 6:30 p.m. on February 21, 2011 in the Board Room prior to the regular Board meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Beaulieu also informed the Board that under G.S. 115C-518A real property has to be made available to the County Commissioners for the first right of refusal. The Facilities Committee recommended that this first right of refusal be presented to the County Commissioners upon approval by the Board. Mr. Worth Forbes made motion, second by Mr. Benjie Forrest, that the first right of refusal for the Third Street Center property be presented to the Pitt County Commissioners. Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Beaulieu also stated the Facilities Committee had reviewed the Chicod construction project cost and timeline and after discussion, it was recommended that Chair Benjie Forrest bring this matter up at the next Finance Committee meeting on February 17, 2011. Mr. Beaulieu stated that Ms. Jill Camnitz cautioned the Committee members regarding a previous meeting with the County Commissioners and the Board of Education when it was stated that we will wait before taking any action regarding Chicod until we know what the 2011-12 budget will be. Mr. Forbes announced the next Facilities Committee Meeting will be held at Chicod on February 28<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 p.m.

Chair Peaden asked did a motion need to be made to sell the surplus items at the Belvoir Fire Department with Mr. Beaulieu stating no, it had already been declared surplus which meets public auction requirements. There projected estimate for attendance is probably between 2,000-2,500, which will be a very good audience, and we may need to put this item on an annual basis for consideration. Mr. Forbes stated when you get two people out there bidding against each other, the price may keep rising depending on who's doing the bidding.

Ms. Jennifer Little then asked had anything been planned for the unveiling of the new addition to Eastern Elementary School. Mr. Beaulieu reported that the parking area was not complete and the modular unit also has to be moved. Public Information Office Heather Mayo stated the reception for Eastern's completed construction will probably be held in the fall of 2011.

Chair Marc Whichard and Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services and Programs Cheryl Olmsted then shared a report following the EPS Committee Meeting held February 3,

2011. Mr. Whichard stated a long discussion was held regarding the high school exam schedule and the tight turn-around time this presents as well as a hodge/podge of schedules among the schools which need to be cleaned up. It was decided to ask for input from principals and SIT teams after reviewing the county exam schedule and other suggestions and presenting it at faculty meetings with feedback given to Ms. Olmsted.

The second item of discussion was school tardies and how they are addressed across the district. Mr. Whichard stated the committee wanted a more consistent tardy policy across the district for elementary and secondary schools with each having uniform consequences. He also commented that parents need to be made aware of the policy and the consequences. Mr. Whichard stated the district is governed in large part by State policy that has a clear enforcement path. Ms. Olmsted informed the Board that tardiness will be discussed at the K-12 principals' meeting asking for principals who may be interested in attending the Policy Committee meeting to discuss tardies. At the 9-12 principals' meeting, she will bring up the exam schedule with examples provided to carry back to the SIT teams in their respective schools. Ms. Olmsted stated in the past, each school developed their own tardy policy which was discussed in their student handbook. Mr. Worth Forbes then commented that the tardy policy will only be as good as the person enforcing it, which goes back to being held accountable.

Chair Benjie Forrest and Assistant Superintendent of Finance Michael Cowin then shared details of the Finance Committee Meeting held January 19. Mr. Cowin shared the 2009-10 school year financial audit, which had been presented to the Finance Committee by Mr. Michael Jordan of Pittard, Perry and Crone, Inc. He stated that the "unqualified audit opinion" received the Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting awarded by the Government Finance Officers Association and the Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting awarded by the Association of School Business Officials International. Mr. Cowin commented that the internal audit program implemented over the last year and a half holds principals and bookkeepers in schools more accountable for their monthly financial reports.

Mr. Cowin then stated the Facilities Committee recommends approval of the Board for the proposed 2010-11 Budget Amendment #1. Budget Amendment #1 involves the following funds followed by an explanation for each:

**1. Stated Public School Fund:**

The first Amendment to the State fund represents an increase of \$2,704,150.00. This increase represents amounts appropriated from the State Public School Fund through allotment revision #18.

**2. Local Current Expense Fund:**

The first Amendment to the Local fund does not represent an increase from the Fiscal Year 2010-11 Budget Resolution. Budget Amendment #1 represents adjustments at the purpose code level to reflect actual operating activity through December 2010.

**3. Special Revenue Fund:**

The first Amendment to the Special Revenue fund represents an increase of \$180,049.00. The increase represents increases in funding related to State, Federal and/or Local Grants accounted for in the Special Revenue fund.

**4. Federal Programs Fund:**

The first Amendment to the Federal fund represents an increase of \$5,534,431.94. The increase represents an increase related to dollars allotted PCS through the Education Jobs Bill as well as various program increases to adjust the Federal planning allotments to actual.

**5. Capital Outlay Funds:**

The first Amendment to the Capital Outlay fund represents an increase of \$5,952,000.00. The increase represents the budget for the Sadie Saulter renovation project.

Following brief discussion by the Board, Mr. Benjie Forrest moved, second by Mr. Sean Kenny, that the 2010-2011 Budget Amendment #1 be approved as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Forrest also reported that Mr. Cowin had been asked to research several Chicod project scenarios involving budget issues with Mr. Cowin stating he is in the process of pulling this information to provide a report for the Board.

Chair Peaden then stated he has spoken with Attorney Rob Sonnenberg regarding in-house training sessions for Board members to earn their 12 credit hours mandated by the North Carolina School Boards Association. Attorney Sonnenberg commented that the 12 credit hours for Board members are stated in G.S. 115C-50, and he has asked if these credits may be received through in-house training with the answer being yes. The statute states the training can be provided by the NC School Boards Association, the University of NC School of Government or other qualified sources at the choice of the local BOE. He emphasized that these sessions have to be actual training sessions, i.e. student or employee privacy. Attorney Sonnenberg stated if the Board approved these training sessions, they will be held one hour before the second Board meeting of each month.

Mr. Marc Whichard thought this plan is a great idea and stated NCSBA Attorney Allison Schafer has presented several good seminars that might be a possibility. Mr. Sean Kenny stated that four of the new Board members have received their twelve hours of credit at the 101 New Board Member Training. Mr. Benjie Forrest stated this will be a more economical way to earn the twelve credit hours.

Mr. Marc Whichard moved, second by Mr. Sean Kenny, that the Board approve the one-hour training session for Board members before the second Board meeting each month. Motion passed unanimously.



Superintendent Reep stated the training sessions will have to begin in March as the public hearing involving the Third Street Center will be held February 21<sup>st</sup> before our second Board meeting in February.

Mr. Kenny asked regarding topics for the training sessions. Chair Peaden asked any Board member who had an issue in mind that they would like to have studied, to please contact Attorney Sonnenberg. Dr. Reep stated she had received a list of topics for consideration previously through her evaluation as well as topics received from the December meeting. Ms. Barbara Owens stated we need to consider the NC School Boards Association's list of topics which they consider appropriate. Attorney Sonnenberg stated he will contact Attorney Allison Schafer for appropriate procedure and ideas.

Chair Ralph Love and Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources Delilah Jackson then began discussion regarding the School Calendar Options for 2011-12. Ms. Jackson reported that 1,302 votes were received for Option 1 and 481 votes were received for Option 2. She further informed the Board that there was an increase of between 300 and 400 responses regarding the calendar options this year as compared to last year's survey. Ms. Jackson also commented that the calendar included early release days, which were very successful this year in that many parents attended scheduled parent conferences on these dates. With early release, the teachers were required to leave and have a break before conferences began with parents. Ms. Jackson also reminded the Board that teacher assistants work ten days less during the year as set forth in policy 7.013. Superintendent Reep stated this shortened schedule for teacher assistants when students are not on campus had been done due to budget cuts by the State – it was felt cutting the ten days from the TA schedule was a way to save more jobs for teacher assistants, but also cut the budget as mandated by the State. Ms. Mary Williams asked regarding cutting the ten days from the TA's work schedule – was this a local decision. Ms. Jackson reported that it was, but commented that now the State is looking at pursuing the same option of cutting TA workdays in their search of areas to cut the budget. Dr. Reep stated if this occurs, it will present a problem for us as we have already put this practice into place as a means to cut the budget. Ms. Jackson did comment that a public forum had been held with the teacher assistants who gave a lot of input for this decision.

Ms. Jackson stated a lot of the questions on the frequently asked question sheet were relative to school starting August 25 and ending June 10 – which are the dates set by the Department of Public Instruction. She informed everyone that if there is a concern, our legislators need to be contacted.

Ms. Mary Williams asked had exams been considered when proposing the 2011-12 school calendar with Ms. Jackson responding yes. She informed the Board that getting exams in place is restricted to a very tight schedule due to there only be 86 school days in the first semester. Ms. Jackson reported that by law, there has to be one protected workday each quarter.

Ms. Christine Waters applauded the make-up days provided in the first semester, but stated there is only one make-up day listed in the second semester. Ms. Jackson explained that for years, we have used Memorial Day as a possible option but with the problems arising this past year, this date has been changed. She reminded everyone that we do have the option to use Saturday to

make up work if a day of school is missed during the week. Ms. Waters commented that she wished parents would not complain about taking their holidays and would like to see the Board put a little more emphasis on maintaining instructional time. She also stated that while serving on the EPS Committee, it had been noted that tardies are directly related to the parents who drive their children the school.

Mr. Whichard proposed the Board draft a Resolution to the Legislature regarding changing the calendar bill. He stated he had heard many students talking about how they really wished they could take exams before Christmas break. Ms. Waters stated that students who complete their high school requirements mid-year and are taking college classes have begun these classes before finishing her high school exams.

Bishop Ralph Love informed the Board that the 2011-12 School Year Calendar has been presented to the Board tonight for First Reading. He asked if there are more questions, to please contact Ms. Jackson before the next Board meeting when the calendar will be presented for a Second Reading.

Under comments by the superintendent, Dr. Reep thanked Ms. Mary Robinson for the good job she is doing and congratulated her on being the only teacher in DPI's Teacher Effectiveness Work Group. She also informed the Board that Administrative Assistant Brenda Pippin has been working with our legislative folks, and we have a meeting with our five legislators scheduled for March 1 at 11:30 a.m. in Raleigh. Dr. Reep asked any interested Board member to let her know if they would like to be involved with the meeting, and also thanked Representative Marian McLawhorn's office for her assistance in setting up the meeting.

Superintendent Reep stated she wanted to publicly apologize to the staff and students of Sadie Saulter School who are involved with the Strings and Spanish programs. She commented that in a rush to get out the Transition Plan pertaining to student reassignment, they had overlooked a meeting informing Sadie Saulter staff of changes in these programs before announcing this to principals and others. Dr. Reep stated that any indication of low enrollment in our strings program at Sadie Saulter is in no way a reflection on the fine teacher there and the quality of the program that has gone on.

Dr. Reep then addressed notes placed at each Board seat which showed the response of students on the Student Advisory Council regarding student attentiveness for the proposed Moment of Silence policy discussed at the last Board meeting. She briefly mentioned the materials regarding the Guiding Principles for the 2011 Legislative Session adopted by the State Board of Education. Superintendent Reep congratulated Coordinator Tara Parker and the Health Science Academy for being chosen number one in innovative health care initiative in the state of North Carolina and being featured in Glimpse Magazine. She then congratulated Public Information Office Heather Mayo for receiving four awards at the recent NC School Public Relations Association ceremony in Durham. The Blue Ribbon Awards areas were:

Internet Website Category – [www.pitt.k12.nc.us](http://www.pitt.k12.nc.us) and Student Reassignment Communication  
Photography Category – Kindergarden Students at Elmhurst  
Special Purpose Category – School Overviews

Dr. Reep then stated that she had been at North Pitt High School earlier today to congratulate the first Employee of the Month Award winner who is Ms. Laura Mangum, Media Coordinator. She stated there were over 60 nominations for the first time occurrence of this event. Ms. Mangum is described as a student focused employee who mentors students each year for their Senior Projects each semester and helps students with eating issues in the cafeteria by finding a special place for them. She's also found to be a media coordinator extraordinaire by her peers. Ms. Mangum received a gift certificate from Texas Steakhouse as well as a \$50 gift card from Fresh Market. Superintendent Reep thanked Ms. Heather Mayo and Ms. Brenda Strickland for their endeavors in putting this project together to help recognize employees who go above and beyond the job responsibilities.

Chair Peaden thanked the two County Commissioners – Ephraim Smith and Tom Johnston – for their presence tonight at the Board meeting. He also thanked them for offering the Board use of the County Commissioner auditorium for our Board meeting site and asked members to give some thought to possibly switching our third Monday night meeting to another night. He explained that if we decide to start using the auditorium, the County Commissioners hold a meeting on the third Monday night thus we would have to choose a different night for our second meeting of the month. He stated there will be no cost for use of the auditorium and PCS staff will be trained to work the equipment for taping the sessions.

Mr. Benjie reminded everyone that the Future Farmers of America Alumni Meeting had been canceled due to the weather and was changed to February 15 at 7:00 at the Pig Palace with Mr. Norris Tulsan speaking on biotechnology. He thanked Farm Bureau for their support in sponsoring the Teacher of the Year Ceremony. Mr. Forrest closed by thanking the County Commissioners for use of their auditorium to hold our BOE meetings.

Ms. Jennifer Little congratulated the J. H. Rose Mock Trial Green Team as they were selected first runner up in regional competition in Fayetteville. Ms. Knight continues to do an excellent job with this program. They usually go on to the National Level later in the year. She also discussed the Curriculum Fair for incoming 9<sup>th</sup> graders at J. H. Rose where students and parents are able to meet different teachers and maybe set up schedules they might like. In closing, Ms. Little commented that based on the decision made not to allow a survey regarding reduction in size, time to serve and election terms of the Board of Education, she called on the public to call or e-mail Board members stating their opinions. She further stated that we keep asking our principals and teachers to be accountable and want to hold ourselves up to a high standard of leading our county, but feels the Board is contradicting ourselves by our actions. Ms. Little strongly echoed the comment that public comment should not be controversial.

Dr. Matthew Ward thanked Administrative Assistant Brenda Pippin for her efforts in preparing materials for the Board and seeing that they were kept well informed on issues as they happen. He stated that Ms. Pippin is someone he can rely on. Dr. Ward also thanked In-House Attorney Rob Sonnenberg for being a good guy who makes you feel good and always greets you with a smile.

Dr. Ward then commented that as he continues to observe at meetings and knows the Board has lots of work to do – Unitary Status, preparing for redistricting to be implemented and

construction in our schools. Dr. Ward informed the Board that we need to settle down and focus on what we need to do and stop the controversy “stuff”. He feels we are being watched and stated we are not here to win a popularity contest. His personal feelings are picking up bad vibes between Board members which is wrong, and Dr. Ward stated that we are twelve people who need to work together and function for the betterment of the students in Pitt County. He ended by saying he is not comfortable on this Board as we are not all together.

Ms. Jill Camnitz stated the Board issues are a problem and we need to put them to rest. She stated perhaps we can put this issue to rest by the Board having a conversation separate from any one issue about how we feel about public input. We all care about what the community thinks about the decisions that we are making and issues we’re facing, so maybe as a Board we can find a way to agree on how we use new tools which have been made accessible to us.

Mr. Marc Whichard thanked the County Manager for his offer to use the County Commissioner auditorium for our meetings and felt this would be a good idea as we would have more room for public attendance. He stated if all the principals in our schools wanted to attend a Board meeting, there would be room in the auditorium for this to be accomplished. In terms of public input for the BOE factors, Mr. Whichard feels “we are putting the cart before the horse.” He feels some questions need to be answered first in terms of possible legal issues, possible challenges that could arise whether Office of Civil Rights or otherwise, but it will also be cutting our representation in the county and minority representation. Mr. Whichard stated we need to gather information as Attorney Sonnenberg has described and study what other counties have done in like situations and how it affected representation, and then conduct a public survey if we proceed on the three issues for the Board of Education as previously described.

Ms. Barbara Owens also stated that representation of all areas in Pitt County is a great issue. She asked what’s wrong with twelve people serving on the Board of Education when we’re serving 23,000 little people. She stated this is an incredible place to be and does not understand what the issue is.

Ms. Owens also congratulated Ms. Julie Brickhouse, a multi-handicapped teacher at Eastern Elementary School, as the 2011 NC Council for Exception Children’s Teacher of the Year. She stated this is the second consecutive year that a Pitt County teacher has received this honor.

Mr. Sean Kenny also thanked the County Manager and County Commissioners for the use of the County Commissioner Auditorium for our Board meetings. He stated he serves on the Finance Committee and knows he has a lot to learn, but wants to thank Mr. Michael Cowin for the work he does and knows he’s the right person for his position. Mr. Kenny also shared the highlights of the PAGE projects at C. M. Eppes and commented on the great activities that were put into place. He thanked President of the PCAE Mary Robinson for all her endeavors in a great organization. Mr. Kenny also discussed the Resolution requested by Mr. Whichard and feels that is a great idea to send our legislators. Mr. Kenny stated the 101 New Board Member Training was very informative and much enjoyed. After attending the meeting and seeing Dr. Matthew Ward in action, Mr. Kenny stated he feels he’s met the next Chair of the Board!! In closing, he commented that he will support anyone who would like to place an item on the Agenda and follow up with discussion.

Ms. Mary Williams thanked the County Commissioners for their offer of letting us use the auditorium for our meetings and thinking of our safety. She also informed everyone that A&T State University will have recruitment night at the Greenville Hilton February 10<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m.

Ms. Christine Waters stated she had received an e-mail from a parent regarding an after school program and was most impressed with the quick professional response she received from Ms. Cathy Keeter.

Ms. Waters also reminded everyone that the Board make-up of members was only one-third of the issue; the term length (which does not cycle off every three years) and time period between being elected and sworn in should also be presented to the legislature. She mentioned that the State School Board are 100% appointed by the Governor and serve eight year terms. Ms. Waters went on further to say this Board is not responsive to anyone and has no one's bidding to do but the Governor's. While many thought the problem was the elected Superintendent, they are beginning to change their thinking in that the problem is on the appointment of the State School Board for a long period of time. Ms. Waters asked wouldn't we be more responsive to the public that we represent if we in fact have four-year terms and were able to roll over district seat As and seat Bs. She also stated the public does not understand why we are elected in May and not seated until December and felt it would be good to put out a paper explaining what the merits are. She stated if reducing representation is not an issue that we are comfortable addressing, we should present the other two factors which need to be addressed.

Mr. Worth Forbes commented that reducing our Board is an issue that's going to take up a lot of time to deal with; but until Pitt County Schools is in the top ten percent of school systems across the state, he's not willing to look at it. He further stated he's not here to run for re-election, he's here to do what's best for the kids. Mr. Forbes stated he may hear from a handful of parents regarding a certain issues, but that does not mean he will make his decision based on that handful of parents. He stated he does represent his district and listens when they call, but makes his decision on what's best for the students. Mr. Forbes congratulated Public Information Office Heather Mayo for the great work she is doing and has done in the past with public information. Mr. Forbes also stated that Ms. Lynly Martin demonstrates good leadership in Pitt County Schools; and we should not seek trainers outside our county but use our resources that we have within our county. He told Ms. Mary Robinson that she's a strong advocate for teachers; and asked her to let all teachers know that anytime they have questions regarding an issue, please call or e-mail him at any time. Mr. Forbes also commented to Dr. Reep that the Student Advisory Council members deserve blue ribbons, because they always say it depends on what teachers and principals do – we need accountability and behavior control. He stated he had visited G. R. Whitfield, Chicod and D. H. Conley this past week and feels they have strong administrators and faculties.

Bishop Ralph Love, second by Mr. Marc Whichard, then asked that the Board go into Closed Session to: 1. establish or instruct the staff or agent concerning the negotiation of the price and terms of a contract concerning the acquisition of real property [N.C.G.S. §143-318.11(a)(5)] and 2. consider the qualifications, competence, performance, condition of appointment of a public officer or employee or prospective public officer or employee; or hear or investigate a complaint,

charge, or grievance by or against a public officer or employee. [N.C.G.S.§143-318.11(a)(6)]  
Motion was unanimous. Time was 9:05 p.m.

Upon returning to Open Session, Mr. Benjie Forrest moved, second by Mr. Worth Forbes, that  
the meeting be adjourned at 10:15 p.m. Motion was unanimous.

Respectively Submitted,

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Mr. Billy Peaden, Chair

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Dr. Beverly B. Reep, Superintendent