

DATE: May 2, 2011 PRESENT: Billy Peaden, Chair
Jill Camnitz
Worth Forbes
Benjie Forrest
Sean Kenny
Jennifer Little
TIME: 7:05 P.M. Barbara Owens
Matthew Ward
Christine Waters
Marc Whichard
Mary Williams
PLACE: D. H. Conley High School Cafeteria
ABSENT: Ralph Love, Sr.

Chair Billy Peaden called the Board of Education to order in Regular Session at 7:05 P. M.

Dr. Matthew Ward led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Dr. Ward then followed with a Moment of Silence asking that we remember anyone who has suffered a tragedy, sickness or loss of a loved one in our Pitt County Schools system.

Chair Peaden then offered the Agenda for consideration. Ms. Mary Williams moved, second by Dr. Matthew Ward, that the Agenda be accepted as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

There were two members of the audience who wished to speak during Public Expression. The first was Ms. Jannie Wood who addressed reduction of AIG funding. She explained that she has two children in Pactolus School with her oldest being in the AIG Program. Ms. Wood commented that her son is bored with his regular classroom work with the many differentiations in student learning abilities, but the time he spends with the AIG teacher challenges him and has made him a different child in his attitude toward going to school. She asked the Board not to hurt these children with a reduction in AIG funding, but to keep programs that challenge students and develop an interest in school.

The second speaker was a teacher at D. H. Conley, Coleman Bailey, who welcomed everyone to the meeting and shared thoughts regarding the Reduction in Force Policy. He commented that there are many hard working educators across the district and asked the Board and Superintendent to “think outside the box” with a tight budget and serious decisions needing to be made. Mr. Bailey asked that decreased funding not affect the classroom directly, but knew that larger class sizes and a reduction in teacher assistants were already being strongly discussed by the legislators.

Several recognitions followed with the first being E. B. Aycock Principal Jennifer Poplin who introduced Accelerated Sixth Grade Math/Social Studies Teacher Virginia Pou. Ms. Pou recognized students for their participation in the North Carolina District I Regional History Day Competition at East Carolina University on March 30, 2011. She stated 22 students attended the

event and three will compete at the State level later in the year. Each student was presented a certificate by Board Member Jennifer Little.

Director of Career and Technical Education Chena Cayton thanked D. H. Conley Teachers Watkins and Brown and the Culinary Class for the wonderful meal prepared for Board members involved in four back-to-back meetings earlier tonight. She then introduced teachers in all six high schools involved with HOSA, FCCLA, DECA and FBLA who recognized students that placed in State competitions in each area. Board members from each attendance area presented certificates to each student as his/her name was called. Ms. Cayton informed the Board that several students were advancing to National competitions, and she will follow-up with a report from those events at a later date.

Regarding the Spotlight on Teaching and Learning, D. H. Conley Principal Mary Carter and Instructional Coach Lisa Smith shared with the Board the implementation of Conley's common assessments and how the teachers utilize data once it's been received. In implementing several new strategies for student improvement, Ms. Carter stated individual departments met looking at data retrieved to determine teacher strengths and growth. She explained that staff development was held to better understand growth and proficiency. Ms. Smith stated that implementing common assessments needed strong leadership and use of tools available, i.e. Study Island. As with most unknowns, resistance was noted at the beginning of the process because teachers were uncertain as to how data would be used. Ms. Smith added that now that staff understands the data is used solely to help students grow, the fear factor is gone. She commented that as each student was tested using Study Island; each grading period was targeted for a specific purpose – goals teachers review for a common assessment, benchmark testing and data meetings to discuss growth and proficiency differences. Ms. Smith stated that students and teachers receive immediate feedback with a breakdown of details by class, student, different goals taught, etc. Use of this data helped with students in need of remediation as the subject matter was more targeted to a child's particular weakness. Ms. Smith closed by saying that growth was also noted amongst teachers as specific areas in which a teacher struggled were identified and strong teachers in that particular area shared ideas to improve their performance.

Mr. Sean Kenny stated he attended a PAGE meeting earlier and was informed that Conley had 65 seniors graduating with a 4.0 or greater GPA. Ms. Carter commented that this is correct with a total of approximately 320 students graduating.

Mr. Marc Whichard stated that driving a common assessment throughout the school was a great idea and hopes more schools will implement the practice.

Under Consent Items, Ms. Jennifer Little, second by Ms. Jill Camnitz, moved that the Board approve the Minutes from the Regular Meeting held April 4, 2011, the Personnel Report for May 2011 including Reappointments, Non-Reappointments, and Career Contracts, the Proposed Resolution Regarding Excess Property at Pactolus School and the Property to be Declared Surplus List. Motion carried with a negative vote by Mr. Worth Forbes.

As the first item listed under New Business, Chair Benjie Forrest and Assistant Superintendent of Finance Michael Cowin updated the Board following a Finance Committee Meeting held April 28, 2011. Mr. Cowin stated the first item discussed was paperless technology use for

Board members/Board meetings. He shared data regarding paper copies, travel for delivery of packets and time involved versus the cost of technology set up for each Board member and as a group for the system. The Committee felt further analysis of data, additional research and contact with other Boards of Education regarding this issue needed to be carried out before a final decision is made.

The second item discussed was a continuation from the March 17, 2011 meeting when the budget for school year 2011-12 was presented. Many budget redirections involving K-12 instruction have been mentioned with probable reductions in clerical, custodial, central office personnel, assistant principals, and teacher assistants. Shifting costs to local educational agencies for workers' compensation, tort claims and bus transportation have also been discussed. Pitt County Schools proposals to minimize classroom reduction include: no supplements for newly hired teachers/school administrators until tenure/end of first contract or for those teachers/administrators who have been placed on action plans; decreased travel/workshop expense/administrative dues/advertising costs; delay of Facility Services projects; decreased outside legal counsel support; child nutrition administrator salary moved to child nutrition funding; liability insurance reductions; no mentoring allotment and other miscellaneous reductions.

The attached proposed Local Budget for School Year 2011-12 was then discussed by Mr. Cowin with minimal questions following. Mr. Benjie Forrest moved, second by Ms. Mary Williams, that the Board approve the proposed Local Budget, and all local redirections included, for School Year 2011-12 as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

Vice-Chair Matthew Ward, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources Delilah Jackson, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Programs and Services Cheryl Olmsted and School Improvement Grant (SIG) Coordinator John Coleman began discussion of recruiting teachers from outside the state, incentive pay criteria of the SIG Grant and implications for staff performance pay in other schools with the Board. Ms. Jackson shared that several staff members visit local colleges in the spring to make contact with prospective teachers and recruit highly qualified teachers for the district. Mr. Coleman explained that by using the Transformation Model of the SIG Grant, there is a monitoring instrument which provides an implement/compliance check list. He added that LEAs have flexibility and support to compete with other school districts including Wake, Charlotte/Mecklenburg and Guilford Counties. Mr. Coleman stated there is a critical need for Algebra I, other math teachers, highly qualified teachers in all core subjects and Exceptional Children Teachers – especially those who administer end-of-class exams. He commented that our goal is to retain the best teachers and not lose them to another system. With only two more years of the grant, Mr. Coleman stated we do not want to compete with ourselves and need to keep up the moral of our staff to get the most qualified teachers. He shared that Guilford County added a \$10,000 hiring bonus for Algebra I teachers and their lowest performing students became high performing students. Mr. Coleman explained that teachers already employed in SIG Grant schools will not receive a hiring bonus, however there are other incentives they can receive. He also added that teachers who do not meet requirements set forth in the grant can be removed from teaching.

Mr. Marc Whichard felt that a morale issue could be raised if teachers in other schools have shown consistent growth with no incentive while new teachers coming in are given incentives.

Mr. Coleman feels with an incentive, we will have a larger pool to hire from and teachers will stay because they like working in Pitt County Schools.

Mr. Worth Forbes added that if you have a dedicated teacher who works hard and even stays late to accomplish her goals but receives no incentive, this new idea would be “hard to swallow”.

Ms. Cheryl Olmsted then stated she is going to present a plan that will compensate the teachers Mr. Whichard and Mr. Forbes have referred to. She explained that the incentive concept is separated into two parts. The first will be associated with a hiring bonus through the SIG Grant as Mr. Coleman has described. The second part will be incentive pay for performance for teachers who are already in place and doing a great job. Ms. Olmsted explained that a chart will be prepared implementing several factors which will be monitored for incentive pay including: attendance, End-of-Grade/Class teacher, high growth accomplishment, positive data in EVAAS and others will be considered. She informed the Board that the SIG Grant and Title I K-8 Schools are funded by Federal dollars which require funding for high growth, remediation/transition and positive EVAAS results for teachers. Ms. Olmsted stated that Title I schools have been visited by Federal representatives, and now we are waiting to see what dollar amount will be allocated.

Mr. Forbes asked for this first year, would there be no incentive pay. Ms. Olmsted explained that we will be able to implement this during the current year with Dr. Reep adding that those already employed will receive their incentive pay before the new hires receive bonus pay.

Mr. Whichard asked what amount will be paid with Ms. Olmsted responding that through EVAAS, we will be able to determine how many teachers reached the required goals and then a dollar amount will be decided. Dr. Reep explained that services available to students will not be squeezed to allow for this incentive for teachers. Mr. Whichard commented that teachers who will be paid for performance have contributed significantly in their jobs to demonstrate student growth. Mr. Forbes added that highly qualified teachers are worth their weight in gold and needed to be rewarded for a job well done.

Mr. Benjie Forrest then asked what did the Board need to approve to use the Federal grant money as described. Ms. Jackson responded that there are two separate requests – the first is to be able to recruit teachers who live outside the state and the second is to approve incentive pay relative to the SIG Grant and for teacher performance. Dr. Matthew Ward, second by Ms. Mary Williams, asked that the Board approve recruiting teachers who live outside North Carolina. Ms. Christine Waters asked what is the logic of hiring teachers who do not reside in North Carolina with Ms. Jackson responding that we want to hire the best of the best. Motion passed unanimously.

Dr. Matthew Ward, second by Ms. Mary Williams, moved that the incentive pay plans as presented be approved by the Board. Mr. Worth Forbes asked will this involve only Federal

money and not local with Ms. Jackson responding yes, only Federal dollars will be used. Motion passed unanimously.

In-House Attorney Rob Sonnenberg, Pitt County Attorney Janis Gallagher and County Planning Director James Rhodes shared with the Board a Proposed Resolution Determining that the Pitt County Board of Education Must Redraw Its Electoral Districts following the results of the 2010 Census. Attorney Sonnenberg introduced Attorney Gallagher who explained that on April 4, 2011 the Board of County Commissioners had adopted a Resolution to proceed with redrawing of voter districts within Pitt County to be in compliance with the Equal Protection Clause of the US Constitution (One Person, One Vote) ensuring substantial equality in population among districts using the "10% Rule" and compliance with the Voting Rights Act Sections 2 and 5 ensuring that the plan is not retrogressive by ensuring that it will not be more difficult for minority voters to elect candidates of their own choice than before. She also stated that the County Commissioners authorized County staff to contract with outside legal counsel for objectivity with assistance in this endeavor and provided consent on the working assumptions to be used in preparing the draft redistricting maps. Mr. Rhodes then reviewed data obtained from the 2010 census showing each Pitt County jurisdiction, the population changes for 1990, 2000 and 2010 and percent changes from 2000 to 2010. The "10% Rule" was easily identified within the different jurisdictions as many were well beyond or below 10% deviation for the population of a district assuring one person/one vote fairness. He stated the Department of Justice affirms that counties cannot do anything prohibiting minorities not participating in the one person/one vote ruling and for minorities to have a voice in elections. Mr. Rhodes also added that the next district lines will use existing boundaries when possible and protect incumbents as much as possible.

Mr. Sean Kenny asked does the Board of Education have to do anything with Attorney Gallagher stating that the Board is required by law to redistrict, but explained that the Board of Education can "piggy back" the County process. Mr. Rhodes explained that within a ten year span, there is always unequal growth within a county and provided data demonstrating Pitt County changes. In demonstrating the "10% Rule", he gave the total population for Pitt County of 168,148 divided by the six districts equaling 28,025 people per district. In comparing this number to the least populated district and the most populated district total (35.54%), the total far exceeds the "10% Rule" for electoral districts to make them substantially equal in population as mandated by the Equal Protection Clause of the United States Constitution. The County's proposed timeline for the redistricting efforts was also shared with the Board of Education with anticipated submission of the final redistricting map to the Department of Justice for preclearance to be completed in the fall well in advance of the May 1, 2012 election day.

After a brief discussion, Attorney Sonnenberg asked for a motion to approve the proposed Resolution and for retaining Tharrington Smith as outside legal counsel to assist with the electoral redistricting. Ms. Jill Camnitz, second by Ms. Jennifer Little, asked that the Board approve the proposed Resolution and retaining of Tharrington Smith, LLP to assist with the electoral redistricting process as requested by the Board of County Commissioners. Motion passed unanimously.

Superintendent Beverly Reep commented that Policy 7.108 - Reduction in Force requires that a plan for reduction in force of licensed personnel (teachers, instructional support, administration) be outlined for the Board in anticipation of a reduction mandated by budget cuts. Dr. Reep stated she appreciated all comments and suggestions she had received since the last Board of Education meeting when the recommended plan for reduction in force had been introduced. She stressed that a reduction in force will be the last action taken as deemed necessary in regards to budget reductions. Non-reappoints, retirement, resignations and other natural attrition moves will occur first. Dr. Reep stated the Reduction in Force Policy had been assisted by the Human Resources Department this year with temporary contracts signed by new employees in anticipation of budget deficits for school year 2011-12. With a turnover of approximately 100 teacher positions annually, it is hoped there will be minimal reduction in force actions taken. In hearing the latest budget updates from Raleigh, teachers seem to be protected for the up-coming school year.

Several Board members responded that they are glad to see that multiple years of evaluations will be studied before placing someone's name on the reduction in force list, and also that **all** licensed personnel will follow the same standards for reduction in force.

Ms. Jill Camnitz then moved, second by Ms. Christine Waters, that the Board approve the revised Reduction in Force plan as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

As Comments, Superintendent Reep reminded everyone that it is National School Breakfast/Lunch Week, National School Nurse Week and National School Teacher Appreciation Week. She thanked each staff member for their hard work and support for the students of Pitt County.

Dr. Reep informed the Board that an application for a \$2.7 million School Improvement Grant had just been completed for Northwest Elementary School, which would be implemented over a three-year period. A response will be received in approximately two weeks. Superintendent Reep also stated that Title I had just been audited and for the first time, Pitt County Schools was in 100% compliance with no recommendations or citations received. She thanked Title I Director Sylvia Mizzelle and Assistant Superintendent of Finance Michael Cowin for their collaborative efforts in making this happen.

Superintendent Reep then thanked Mr. Marc Whichard for his idea of completing a survey of employees to see if anyone had been affected by the tornadoes which passed through the area recently. There was one employee from Greene County who lost everything. She also reported that Hope Middle School Counselor Celeste Crawford had worked several days over her Easter break helping Greene County Schools and enlisted others to form a team to spend all day helping Greene County school staff and students in whatever capacity was needed. Dr. Reep added that some of our students wrote notes to Greene County students welcoming them back and sending them positive messages.

Superintendent Reep shared with the Board that two meetings have been planned at different times in an effort to share budget information with teacher assistants and explain that budget cuts discussed are not a local issue, but are coming directly from the State. She stated the teacher

assistants will be asked to contact their legislators and also asked for their input regarding suggestions to keep more teacher assistants employed.

Dr. Reep thanked Principal Mary Carter and the D. H. Conley Staff for hosting our Board meeting tonight and commented on the clean, welcoming campus and delicious meal served.

In closing, Superintendent Reep congratulated all the Math Masters winners and thanked them for their hard work and extra efforts.

Chair Billy Peaden stated Attorney Sonnenberg had contacted NCSBA Attorney Allyson Schafer who will present Board Training beginning at 4:00 p.m. May 16 regarding being a better Board member and chair.

Ms. Mary Williams thanked all teachers who are doing a great job and for their devotion to our students. She also thanked D. H. Conley staff for hosting the meeting, South Central High School for their “walk for cure”, Dr. Reep for helping her better understand the RIF Plan and for those who expressed concern for her loss during the recent death of her cousin.

Mr. Benjie Forrest added that the teacher assistant cuts being discussed were definitely from the State level. He stated that he had taught for 19 years and he knew the importance of a teacher assistant. Mr. Forrest also shared that he graduated from D. H. Conley and is as proud of Conley today as he was when he graduated. In the awards presented to students in all areas tonight, he stated these recipients will travel all over the country representing Pitt County Schools and thanked parents for their support and teachers who prepared them.

Mr. Sean Kenny thanked all teachers for working with the students of Pitt County. He also mentioned the PAGE meeting held at C. M. Eppes and discussed AIG funding. Mr. Kenny was also glad that the Diversity Task Force had met recently and stated the Math Masters was great. He again expressed to Ms. Carter that having 65 seniors graduating with 4.0 or higher GPA was outstanding and demonstrated dedicated staff working with students to achieve these results. In closing, he thanked the E. B. Aycock staff for dealing with a fire in the school in a calm manner and having no one injured in the process.

Ms. Barbara Owens reminded everyone that Ms. Mary Carter was at Farmville Middle School first!!

Mr. Worth Forbes stated he was glad to hear about the meetings with the teacher assistants to help them better understand that the budget cuts were directly from the State and not a local decision. He also commented that he’s glad he can support the revised Reduction in Force Plan with this plan being the last option to be used for position cuts and that all licensed personnel will be under the same standards for a reduction in force.

Mr. Marc Whichard thanked all the principals in his district schools, which he visited this past week, for their positive receptions, quality of instruction and hard working staff during these difficult times. He also expressed to teacher assistants that they are valuable assets. Lastly, he

discussed the devastation across our country due to recent weather and if so inclined, asked that we remember individuals involved in these tragedies.

Dr. Matthew Ward thanked Mr. Michael Cowin, Mr. Aaron Beaulieu, Ms. Delilah Jackson and Ms. Brenda Pippin for the great job they do. He added that he knew teachers, teacher assistants and all Pitt County School employees are nervous about their future. Dr. Ward stated that locally, we are trying to find money to save as many jobs as possible. In closing, he thanked the D. H. Conley staff for the wonderful meal he ate prior to the meeting and stated it was just what he needed.

Ms. Barbara Owens then moved, second by Mr. Marc Whichard, that the Board enter into Closed Session to: 1) establish or instruct the staff or agent concerning the negotiation of the amount of compensation or other terms of an employment contract. [N.C.G.S. §143-318.11(a) (5)] and 2) consult with our attorney to consider and give instructions concerning judicial actions titled Rhonda Everett, et. al. v. Juvenile Female 1, et. al. v. The Pitt County Board of Education, et. al. and Pitt County Board of Education v. Adrian A. Garcia. [N.C.G.S. §143-318.11(a) (3).] Motion passed unanimously. Time was 9:20 p.m.

Upon returning to Open Session and with no further items for discussion, Mr. Benjie Forrest moved, second by Mr. Sean Kenny, that the meeting be adjourned at 9:28 p.m. Motion was unanimous.

Respectively Submitted,

Mr. Billy Peaden, Chair

Dr. Beverly B. Reep, Superintendent