

# **CHEROKEE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 1**

## **BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

### **CALLED BOARD MEETING**

**MAY 2, 2011**

The Cherokee County School District No. 1 Board of Trustees conducted a called board meeting and workshop for the Cherokee County School Board on Monday, May 2, 2011 at 6:30 PM in the Board Room at the District Administrative Office. Board members present were Chair Mr. Donnie Smith, Vice Chair Ron Garner, Secretary Mr. Willie J. Crosby, Mr. Barry E. Bailey, Mr. Billy Blackwell, Mr. Mike A. Ellis, Mrs. Robin D. Harper, Mr. C. Alan McEntire, and Ms. Cheryll D. Smith. Administrators present were Superintendent Dr. Edgar C. Taylor, Associate Superintendent Dr. Carlotta Redish, and Director of Finance Mr. Brock Heron. News media present was Mr. Scott Powell – Gaffney Ledger.

In accordance with South Carolina Code of Laws, Section 30-40-80(d), as amended, the following have been notified of the time, date, and agenda of this meeting: The Blacksburg Times, The Cherokee Chronicle, The Gaffney Ledger, the Shelby Star, the Spartanburg Herald-Journal, Radio Stations WEAC-AM and WFGN, WSPA-TV, WYFF-TV, and WSOC-TV.

Chair Mr. Donnie Smith called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM and recognized the news media present. Mrs. Duncan led in the opening prayer.

Approval of the Board Agenda was the next item on the agenda. **Mrs. Duncan made the motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Ms. Smith. Trustees voted unanimously for the motion.**

Alternative Program Proposal was the next item on the agenda. Mr. Pat Wright and Mr. Dan Spruill with The Citadel Group, Inc. presented a proposal for an Accelerated Learning Academy, a non-traditional learning environment for students who have been unable to succeed in the traditional middle or high school setting. The program provides a rigorous learning environment and provides an individualized course of study tailored to the needs and objectives for each student as well as providing remedial assistance as needed. This high performance learning environment relies heavily on the latest expert computer systems to provide instruction. The core of the program is essential literacy with emphasis on reading skills and comprehension. The program would be housed at the learning center although the group would hire and train their personnel. The current staff at the learning center would be transferred to other positions within the district. The projected cost of the program would be based on a per pupil cost but would be within the budgeted expense for the operation of the current alternative program. The consensus of the board was to authorize the superintendent to discuss contract negotiations with The Citadel Group and bring the projected cost and program specifics back to the board for consideration. **This item was received for information only; no action was required.**

Fiscal Year 2010-2011 Budget Update was the next item on the agenda. The total estimated revenue for FY 2010-2011 is \$55,732,795. The total estimated expenditures for FY 2010-2011 is \$55,304,086. The district received approximately \$428,709 more revenue than expenditures. The FY 2011-2012 budget will be built without the \$2 million in stimulus/stabilization funding since these funds will no longer be available. It is projected that approximately \$.5 million will be absorbed by EIA, Title I, etc.; another \$.5 in nonrecurring expense; and approximately \$1.0 million will be absorbed by the general fund. There will be additional state funding for 2011 – 2012 as follows: EFA – \$900,000 additional funding; hold harmless – \$575,000; employer contributions – decrease of \$245,000; consolidated funding – decrease of \$270,000; new EIA category Aid to Districts – \$215,000; and new EIA Category Aid to Districts – Special Ed of \$445,000. It was noted that the amount of revenue generated by a one mill increase is \$100,000. By law, the maximum millage increase is 3.4 mills, which could generate an additional \$340,000 in revenue. Technology upgrades of approximately \$1 million need to be budgeted to replace the oldest computers in the district. The district currently has approximately \$675,000 in state funds for capital needs and the other \$325,000 would come from bond sales. The district could use \$325,000 of the debt service fund balance to issue debt to pay for the computers without an increase in debt service millage. The administration is also discussing a lease agreement to implement an integrated printer/copier program to cut printing and copying costs within the district. The board will discuss the proposed FY 2011-2012 budget in detail on May 23<sup>rd</sup>. **This item was received for information only; no action was required.**

School Board Policy GCF – Professional Staff Hiring was the next item on the agenda. Dr. Taylor requested direction on the administrative rule regarding the hiring of post-TERI employees. The current administrative rule basically states the district should hire staff members who are non-retirees whenever practical; however, the rule provides exceptions to the directive of hiring post-TERI employees under specific circumstances. Since there seems to be some confusion and concern over the administrative rule, Dr. Taylor asked for clarification. After lengthy discussion, **Mrs. Harper made the motion for the principals to evaluate staff and recommend the best qualified individual for their respective school regardless of whether the individual was a post-TERI, a TERI participant currently, or a retiree. Mr. Bailey seconded the motion.** After further discussion regarding the fact that individuals who entered the TERI program did so voluntarily with the understanding there was no guarantee of continued employment at the end of 5 years, the possibility that such action would discourage young people from entering the educational system, the concern that such action would reduce opportunity for internal promotion in the district, the legality and possible ramifications of this stance, and the fact this stance would be in violation of the superintendent's contract and policy, **Mrs. Harper withdrew her motion and Mr. Bailey withdrew his second.** Trustees then discussed advertising and interviewing for all positions, delaying any action at this point, revisiting the issue next year, and/or employing all retirees or no retirees for next year. **Mr. McEntire made the motion to keep current working retirees for one more year and allow the new Personnel Director the opportunity to assess current staff next year. Mr. Ellis seconded the motion. The following trustees voted in favor of the motion: Mr. Ellis, Mrs. Harper, and Mr. McEntire. The following trustees voted in opposition to the motion: Mr. Bailey, Mr. Blackwell, Mr. Garner, Ms. Smith, and Mr. Smith. The motion failed due to majority vote.**

**Mr. Bailey made the motion to leave the decision up to the principal and superintendent, seconded by Ms. Smith. After additional discussion on the matter, Mr. Bailey withdrew his motion and Ms. Smith withdrew her second. Mr. Bailey then made the motion to authorize the superintendent to hire retired employees to work in the district on an “as needed” basis when their employment would serve the best interests of the school system. In such cases, the superintendent will notify the employee of the at-will status of his/her employment. The continued employment of retired employees will be at the discretion of the superintendent, who will make such decisions in the best interests of the district. The decision to employ or not employ retired employees will not be subject to the district’s grievance procedures. All positions will be advertised and interviews conducted accordingly. Ms. Smith seconded the motion. The following trustees voted in favor of the motion: Mr. Bailey, Mr. Blackwell, Mr. Crosby, Mr. Smith, and Ms. Smith. The following trustees voted in opposition to the motion: Mr. Ellis, Mr. Garner, Mrs. Harper, and Mr. McEntire. The motion passed by a majority vote.**

The next item on the agenda was School Board Policy Revisions - Section A – Foundations & Basic Commitments and Section B – School Board Governance & Operations. Dr. Taylor reviewed the proposed revisions to Section A. The administration asked for legal advice on ADB – Drug-Free Workplace and Schools to determine if the district could require an individual to be drug/alcohol tested. The district cannot force an employee to be tested but may suspend and/or terminate the employee based on behavior if the employee’s actions are strange or inconsistent. Students can be tested if they participate in any type of sports or extra-curricular activities. **Mr. Garner made the motion to accept Section A for first reading approval, seconded by Mr. Blackwell. Trustees voted unanimously for the motion.** Due to time restraints, Section B was not discussed at the meeting and will be an agenda item at the next meeting.

Mr. McEntire asked that trustees revisit the issue of teacher school supply money at the next meeting. Mr. Smith called for a motion to adjourn. **Mr. McEntire made the motion, seconded by Ms. Smith. Trustees voted unanimously to adjourn.** The meeting adjourned at 8:47 PM.