

ALLENDALE COUNTY SCHOOL
BOARD OF TRUSTEES – REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING MINUTES

MONDAY – APRIL 24, 2017
ALLENDALE-FAIRFAX MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL – MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM

The Allendale County Schools Board of Trustees Regular Monthly Meeting was held on Monday, April 24, 2017. At 6:00 P.M. the Board went into Executive Session #1 for Personnel/Contractual Matters and Student Release Requests. The Meeting was held at Allendale-Fairfax Middle/High School in the Multi-Purpose Room. The news media was notified.

CALL TO ORDER: Chairperson Patricia Jenkins called the Meeting to Order at 6:00 P.M.

ROLL CALL: Terry Hall
Patricia Jenkins, Chairperson
Willa Jennings, Vice Chairperson
Wilda J. Robinson
Catherine Russell, Secretary

FROM THE DISTRICT OFFICE: Dr. Secaida D. Howell, Interim Superintendent
Angela Grant, Director of Finance
Kedra Rivers, Director of Personnel
Patricia W. Pringle, Recorder

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Mr. Hall moved to approve the Agenda as stated. Ms. Russell seconded. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

EXECUTIVE SESSION #1: Ms. Russell moved to go into Executive Session #1 at 6:01 P.M. for Personnel/Contractual Matters and Student Release Requests. Mr. Hall seconded. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

OPEN SESSION: Mr. Hall moved that the Board return to Open Session at 7:15 P.M. Ms. Russell seconded. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/MOMENT OF SILENCE: AES Student, Taylor Isham led in the Pledge of Allegiance and A Moment of Silence.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Ms. Russell moved to approve the Special Called Meeting Minutes of Wednesday, April 19, 2017; Wednesday, March 29, 2017; Wednesday, March 22, 2017 and the Regular Monthly Meeting, Monday, March 20, 2017. Mr. Hall seconded. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Mr. DeWayne Ennis: said he wanted to talk about Accreditation. He received a letter on March 16th from Ms. Williams telling him that everything was okay with Accreditation. He wants to know the status of schools Accreditation. He heard announcements on the radio station about this. He has two students in the school system and wants to know what is going on with this. Also a group came before the Board about the restrooms at FES and AFHS and he wanted something in writing to make sure these areas are improved. For those with daughters, he hates to hear his daughter say she hates to use the restrooms at schools. The smell, no toilet paper and the situation is deplorable. He knows they are near the summer, but make improvements where they can be made.

Ms. Shaletha Akins: she is concerned about her children, the students and the entire school district. When packets are sent home with students for signatures, with students in and out, maybe they can get a computer system in place for this. Some of these forms have social security numbers on these for signing people in and out. Student spotlight, she did a little bit of research and know they have the Scholars Program in the District, but what about students who work hard and bring their grades up. This could be used as incentives for these students. This could be different from the honors and awards program. She does not mind volunteering in the school.

Mr. Paul Morse: said his topic was Board Priorities. He read a letter. He also cited the Graduation and EOC Rates. Suggestions: 1) does the results reflect the mission; 2) why is the graduation rate so low; 3) what specifically is being done to help the students become thinkers; and 4) what can be done to get more volunteers in the District.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Recognition of Dr. MLK Essay and Art Contest Winners: Board Member Ms. Robinson said in January 2017 on Dr. King Day the Democratic Party sponsored the annual breakfast for the community. Tonight we have 20 young people who are winners in the Essay and Arts category. She said 131 students entered the Essay and 59 students entered the Arts contest. The winners present received cash prizes.

NSBA Annual Conference – Denver, CO – March 24-28, 2017

Chairperson Jenkins reported: 1) she attended so many classes; 2) how to make changes in turbulent times, make sure your priorities are the same; make sure people feel appreciated and valued as the changes come about; 3) look at how we work together and as a District; 4) make sure the Board know their expectations and measuring the work and having action items in place.

Ms. Jennings reported: 1) the food was expensive. The keynote speaker, Astronaut Scott Kelly, reminded her of students in Allendale. He said he was not a model student in school, did not do well with his grades, played around a lot, but the teachers did not give up on him; 2) he was an engineer, captain in the navy – this is an example of how we should treat our students; 3) we should not give up on any of our students. Though students may have challenges, when they fall we should pick them back up.

Ms. Russell reported: 1) the conference was very educational; 2) they talked about how board members should impact students and making sure students get what they need and they are ready for the real world.

Ms. Robinson reported: 1) the theme was “Elevate and Inspire” as school board members not just crossing the t’s and dotting the I’s, what are we here for – the young people; 2) we must challenge the students and challenge ourselves as board members, teachers and staff; the motto is not enough; 3) Denver was expensive, the food items included buffalo burgers, bison strips and elk; 4) she thanked the District for giving them the opportunity for training.

Mr. Hall: said he had no report.

CONSENT AGENDA ITEM

Discipline Reports: Dr. Howell said from the reports it looks like Wednesdays are difficult days. Mr. Hall asked Administrators if there are any referrals that sit in the system for any reason. And if so, why. Ms. Leath said there are about 62 at AES that are just sitting there. She spoke with Dr. Howell about this and it is too late to do anything about it. Dr. Howell said they are sitting there because of adults. Ms. Hall said there are about 126 at AFHS and none at the Middle School. They range back from late August to early September. She concurs with what Dr. Howell said, it is the adults. Some are for profanity or will not sit down. She met with Ms. Anderson and Mr. Bryan to go back and process some of these. Some are so old you cannot go back to September. It is also the accountability of the staff and she has addressed this. She may have to go back and delete some of the old ones and start from the point where she took over at AFHS. Chairperson Jenkins said if students are having disciplinary issues they need to be processed and addressed. This affects student achievement and teacher moral.

Ms. Robinson said the Interim Superintendent is reporting, but he has never been introduced to the audience. Chairperson Jenkins introduced Dr. Howell and said he was a former superintendent in Denmark and he has experience with working with districts similar to ours. He is a consultant and been in education for many years. It is an honor to have him in the District, and he has done a lot of work in the District for such a short time. Dr. Howell said he is elated to be working with the School Board. They have been cordial and direct. And he will be direct to them as it relates to their children. He has been a music teacher, principal and superintendent.

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT/Dr. Secaida D. Howell

Dr. Howell asked AFMS Teacher Ms. Bianca Woodard to come forward and be recognized for being an Apple Distinguished Educator. She will be trained in Instructional Technology during the 2017-2018 year. This all expense, paid training will take place in Texas.

Accreditation: Dr. Howell said it would be a travesty if the boys and girls cannot attend a school that is accredited by the State of SC. This is a sad state of affairs. When he came to the District about 3 weeks ago he learned AFHS had been denied Accreditation by the State of SC. He could not fathom how this could have happened.

He inquired with the SDE and they were very direct, some things just did not happen. Things as simple as turning documents in on time did not happen, documents that should have taken about 30 seconds to complete as a check-off. Our children deserve to be taught by an appropriate, certified teacher. He does not want teachers in his child's classroom who are teaching things they are not certified to teach. He did some digging and found some of the same things were just on going. He met with the SDE and asked the Board to join him and they did. They had a heart-to-heart about some things. A denial of State Accreditation would mean on graduation night, he as Superintendent could not confer diplomas. The diplomas students would receive would be worth nothing. They would attempt to go to college with a diploma that is worthless. They had to complete some paper work and the staff at the District Office worked tirelessly to get some things together by the deadline. He followed up with the SDE to make sure what they got was correct. They will remove the "Denial" and it will become "Advised". And his prayer is that on graduation on June 2nd, he can give students a diploma that is truly conferred. He takes no mess when it comes to children and if it comes to moving adults that is what will happen. He does not play favorites and it does not matter who is kin to whom. The students deserve the right to a free and appropriate education and we are obligated to make sure that happens. It takes strong leadership from the superintendent, board and principals. He met with principals and let them know he does not run the schools, but he supervises the work of principals. Our children must be at school on time every day. There should be no more issues with the school buses.

Fairfax Elementary Grant Award: Dr. Howell said Ms. Leath and FES received from the Tri-County Foundation a \$1,000 for their project "Ain't Misbehaving." Ms. Leath and Ms. O'Banner also received \$70,000 from the SDE for the Summer Reading Camp Community Partnership Grant.

MAP Scores & Growth Indicator: Dr. Thomas-Dixon, Director of Curriculum and Instruction presented a Power Point presentation, which was in the Board Packets. She highlighted the grade/school performance. The scale ranges do change; 2-8th grade Reading in the Fall all grades scored "Approaches"; in 3rd grade the score was 186, "Not Met" and they missed "Approaches" by 1 point. The results for 7th and 8th grade had not come in when she was preparing the Power Point. But the information came in later. Ms. Jennings said when you said "Not Met", what is the score they should meet. Dr. Thomas-Dixon said for example 3rd grade reading "Not Met" is 186. If they had scored 187 or better, they would be in the "Approaching" category. See the 2nd page which is listed by category, which are "Does Not Meet; Approaching; Meets and Exceeds". For 3rd grade students need to score a 203 which aligns with SC-Ready. Chairperson Jenkins said go back to the School Performance page, for reading the kindergarten students score in the fall was 137, but in the spring the same students scored 153 collectively which is "Met" proficient. Mr. Hall said this is similar to the same question he had in the fall. What strategies are you using to get students at the level where we want them to be? Dr. Thomas-Dixon said Afterschool programs and classroom labs. Principal Leath said the schools are also

using MAP. Mr. Hall asked what strategies are we using if this is not working. Dr. Howell said it goes back to adults. We have a number of programs in the District, and they are great programs, but programs do not teach children. Adults teach children. And this has to do with leadership in the schools. They will be honing in on supervising instruction over the summer. We have to deal with adults. We cannot fully depend on programs. This is a system wide thing. We must hold adults accountable and they have a tendency to do better when they are held accountable. Ms. Russell asked principals if they had a written improvement plans at their schools. Ms. Hall said the last 6 or 7 weeks of school she has teachers do focus calendars. And this is what will be on state mandated tests and they zone in on skills students score weak in. The four content teachers had to do calendars. Dr. Howell said Ms. Hall used the words focus and re-focused. And one of the things they are looking to do this summer, a direct strategy – is time to teach. Ms. Robinson said it would benefit the Board to have a deep dive in this topic. Which should offer the Board a time to do a deep dive in the data. What are the specific strategies being used for 3rd grade reading to move the students from here to there? Have this deep dive before the next school term starts.

End-of-Course Results for the Last 4 Years: The Power Point information was included in the Boards Packet. Dr. Thomas-Dixons said the information is very detailed and she needs to study the information a little more. She used plus and minus signs to show improvements and which courses stayed the same. This should be part of the data deep dive meeting.

AES After School Grant: Dr. Thomas-Dixon reported 1) AES had a monitoring visit on March 28th and they recommended that the program be extended by two weeks. She spoke with Ms. Leath about this and not losing funding; 2) about \$23,000 is left which will carry them for two weeks; 3) extend the program until May 1-12, 2017. Ms. Jennings asked about the After School Program at AES. Dr. Thomas-Dixon said it was a 21st Century Grant Program focusing on reading and math. Chairperson Jenkins asked how do they determine how effective the After School Program is. Dr. Thomas-Dixon said they look at students and see what was done to improve the students, they may pull the student out of class; they had small group sessions; this was housed under Federal Projects so she is just learning some of the information. Ms. Jennings said in reference to the EOC Report, is there any reason why the scores would be much lower than the graduation rate. Dr. Howell said the two do not go hand in hand. Graduation is determined over a 4-year period and students must have so many units of math and Algebra I, while EOC is a test. Mr. Hall asked with the 21st Century Grant, are certified teachers in the classroom and who is monitoring these teachers. Dr. Thomas-Dixon said the site coordinator for AES is not certified. In the program there are 3 certified teachers and 3 teacher assistants. Mr. Hall asked why a certified teacher instead of a site coordinator was over the program. Dr. Thomas-Dixon said a principal could not do this because they are double dipping and the former superintendent appointed the current site coordinator. Ms. Robinson said this a conversation they would like to have further comments about with the superintendent. Ms. Russell said the recent conversation

with the SDE was not good. They need to come together and do more to make sure students get what they need. She said if the schools need her to come in and help tutor, let her know.

Ms. Akins, a parent said some of this starts at home. Parents need to come out and hear what is going on with the school. In December 2016 she started "Reading from the Heart," it was not accredited, but it was to draw the community attention to take 10 minutes to read to students. She ran off about 700 copies for students and only about 55 came back. Part of the problem is we do not take time to sit down and read to our children.

Dr. Howell asked Mr. Ennis, Mr. Morse and Ms. Akins to contact him and make an appointment to meet with him directly.

Mr. Lott said he has been in the school system about 20 years and this did not happen overnight. He is happy they went to the SDE. There is nothing like seeing things for yourself. He has talked about the Volunteer Program, but it fell apart. He said the Board Chairperson assured him that something would be done. It did not and this was not her fault. Let's get the Volunteer Program going and he wants to be allowed an opportunity to help students.

Senior Dinner Update: Principal, Ms. Hall reported she met with the High School staff. The class has 75 seniors and each was given 2 tickets. Each board member and the superintendent will be given 2 tickets. And there are 32 tickets for faculty and staff. The cost for catering and decorations is between \$2500-\$3000, with the entire cost for the Senior Dinner between \$3500-\$4000. She will get with Mr. Baines and look through the High School budget and see where funds can be pulled from. Ms. Robinson said the previous price was \$17,000 for the Senior Banquet. How did this get down to \$3000? Ms. Hall said she would use the resources in the school, chairs, catering from local people and let the staff do the decorations. Ms. Robinson said they could use the Democratic Party table clothes. Ms. Hall said they would use hard plastic tableware and small centerpieces. The District's Food Service Department is one of the caterers being considered.

District Strategic Plan for 2016-2021: Dr. Howell said these must be submitted to the SDE or the District can get a "Denial of Accreditation." The Plan must be uploaded by April 30th. They need the Board's approval and it can be revised. Ms. Robinson said after the District's Strategic Plan is approved they must see the school plans. These must be approved by April 30th also. She asked for a copy of the schools' plan.

Dr. Howell said as it relates to security, the information parents may have received was incorrect. The other day a husband went into a school and we all saw what happened. With visitors in the school to meet with the teacher, he has asked administrators to have that teacher come to the office or closer. Ms. Robinson said persons who have been vetted as volunteers must still come to the office and sign in. Ms. Robinson moved to approve the District Strategic Plan for ACS as presented. Ms. Jennings seconded. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

PERSONNEL: Ms. Rivers, Director of Personnel asked the Board to approve the certified recommendations made in Executive Session. Ms. Russell moved to approve the recommendations. Mr. Hall seconded. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

APPROVALS

Student Release Requests: Mr. Hall moved to approve the Student Release Requests discussed in Executive Session. Ms. Robinson seconded. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Voluntary Sick Leave Donation Policy – GCCBA, GCCAA/GDCA – 3rd Reading: Ms. Jennings moved to approve the 3rd Reading. Ms. Russell seconded. Ms. Robinson asked if this Policy would go into effect immediately. The answer was yes; it will be effective immediately. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Professional Staff Contracts and Compensation – Policy GCB – 2nd Reading: Mr. Hall moved to approve the 2nd Reading. Ms. Robinson seconded. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Student Dress Code – Policy JICA: Ms. Jennings moved to accept the 1st Reading of the Student Dress Code Policy. Ms. Russell seconded. Mr. Hall said on footwear, does this mean any color combination of shoes, sneakers or boots. Ms. Robinson said the attorney reviewed the Policy and in light of new laws this is the recommendation that we remove some things to not violate or discriminate against any one's rights. Chairperson Jenkins, Ms. Jennings, Ms. Robinson and Ms. Russell approved the motion. Mr. Hall opposed. The motion passed by a 4-1 vote.

Dr. Howell said as discussed in Executive Session, the Board entered into Executive Session to discuss Personnel and Contractual matters and contractual matters as related to legal counsel contractual retention and compensation. I would like to present this to the Board as a recommendation to follow through. Ms. Robinson moved to accept the recommendation from the Interim Superintendent and with the request that an overview of our discussion, what he is specifically asking for be provided to the Board Members. Ms. Robinson said the previous motion is muddled up. She restated her motion say, that the Board approve the recommendation with the caveat that he provides us with a written review of what was discussed. Mr. Hall seconded. Chairperson Jenkins said it was moved by Prof. Robinson and seconded by Mr. Hall that the Board accept the recommendation by Interim Supt. Dr. Howell regarding contractual retention and compensation for our legal counsel. Ms. Russell said Dr. Howell said about how much, but can we table this until we get it in writing. Dr. Howell said what is that. Ms. Russell said what it is going to be. Dr. Howell said what we discussed tonight. Ms. Russell said but you are going to put it in writing. Dr. Howell said that is what Prof. Robinson is asking for. Ms. Russell said that is what she is saying. Can they wait until they see it in writing before we vote on it are is it something that must be done tonight. Dr. Howell said can we do this, if that is the case. Ms. Robinson said we have a motion and a second. She would have to

withdraw her motion. Ms. Russell said she could just abstain from it. Go ahead, she will abstain. Dr. Howell said he would provide that information. Chairperson Jenkins, Ms. Jennings, Mr. Hall and Ms. Robinson voted to approve the recommendation. Ms. Russell abstained. The motion passed by a vote of 4 with 1 abstaining.

FINANCIAL REPORTS: Ms. Grant reported 1) the revenue and expenditures reports are on pages 1-10; 2) the audit team will be in the District the week of July 10th. There are more expenditures than revenues. She provided the Board information as it relates to local taxes not being received. 3) see page 5, the total revenue for March 31, 2017 was \$5,735,437 and the total expenditures was \$8,067,933 for a deficit of \$2,332,496; 4) the District has received no local tax revenue yet this year which is highly unusual. We should receive local tax revenue each month; 5) pages 13-16 are copies of, which are in the audit books, revenue fee in lieu of; 6) see where the District budgeted for these line items, but actual revenue received is \$0. Some are still pending from the County.

Ms. Robinson said the Finance Director has kept the Board abreast of this, but while looking at Dr. Howell's resume, she noticed when he was in one district they were in the red and he got them in the black. In regards to local tax revenue, this is an urgent matter that needs to be looked at as soon as possible since we have not received any local revenue in several years. Ms. Grant said she speaks with the County Treasurer regularly and she said she would handle this, but this has not happened.

Mr. Hall said at several Board Meetings, the Finance Director had Title I funds and with carryover. He does not see that this month. Ms. Grant said she could share this with the Board if Dr. Howell will allow this. Dr. Howell said Ms. Grant has been sharing with him fund by fund, he asked her to put this in a spread sheet, how much spend, carryover, they are currently working on this and will send it to the Board.

Ms. Grant said the budget change report pages are 17-18; 7) pages 19-21 are the Superintendent and Board travel expenditures; 8) pages 22-22A are invoices for legal services; and 9) pages 23-25 are copies of the latest reports from the SDE as it relates to EIA and EFA revenue.

Ms. Russell said on page 2, Foodservice #256, what does the 0 balance mean. Ms. Grant said nothing was budgeted in the general fund for Foodservice. But when Hurricane Matthew came through they had to pay the Foodservice employees who worked, but this could not be paid from Federal funds. Ms. Russell said on page 4, Transfers to other Districts/SDE. Ms. Grant said the \$50,000, she referred to the EIA report on page 23. Look at first line item #0720 Medicaid has a negative \$15,000. This is a portion of what must go back to SDE. You cannot send cash, but back it out of EIA. That is our portion back to SDE. With Occupational Therapy and Speech Therapy the District must pay back a certain portion.

Ms. Robinson said for the record the Board knows Parliamentary procedures.

Mr. Ennis said Ms. Grant said local taxes. It is Allendale County, not the Town of Allendale.

Ms. Robinson said on Tuesday at the State Capitol a retired educator from Allendale will be recognized by the General Assembly. Ms. Lillian Carter Lawton is over 90

years old, still active and competent. She encouraged everyone to come early because there will be a crowd. They will honor Ms. Lawton at the May Board Meeting and will work with others. She said the Cooter Fest is on Saturday, May 6, 2017. She encouraged anyone who has children to participate in the parade. We want to have good, broad participation. Board Members we need to be in the parade.

The Senior Dinner is after Baccalaureate, Sunday, on May 21, 2017.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SCSBA 2DAC - Tuesday, April 25, 2017 - Columbia

Sunday, May 21, 2017 AFHS Baccalaureate Ceremony - 4:00 P.M.

Friday, June 2, 2017 - AFHS Graduation - 7:00 P.M.

EXECUTIVE SESSION #2 - If Needed: not needed

ADJOURNMENT: The Meeting was adjourned at 9:30 p.m.