

**ALLENDALE COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF TRUSTEES – REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING**

**MONDAY – JUNE 24, 2013 – 6:00 P.M.
ALLENDALE-FAIRFAX HIGH SCHOOL – MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM**

The Regular Monthly Meeting of the Allendale County Schools Board of Trustees was held on Monday, June 24, 2013. At 6:00 p.m. the Board went into Executive Session to discuss Personnel, Contractual and Legal Matters. The Meeting was held at Allendale-Fairfax High School in the Multi-Purpose Room. The news media was notified and present.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Alonzo Frazier, Vice Chairman
Timothy Hall
Willie Priester
Wilda Robinson, Chairperson
Valaree Smith, Secretary

FROM THE DISTRICT OFFICE: Dr. Walter Tobin, Interim Superintendent
Kedra Rivers, Director of Personnel
Charlie Tillotson, Interim Director of Finance
Patricia W. Pringle, Recorder

CALL TO ORDER: Chairperson Robinson called the Meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

MOMENT OF SILENCE: A Moment of Silence was observed.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Mr. Hall moved to approve the Revised Agenda as presented. Mr. Frazier seconded. The motion was approved by all.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Mr. Frazier moved to go into Executive Session at 6:04 p.m. to discuss Personnel, Contractual and Legal Matters. Mr. Hall seconded. The motion was approved by all.

OPEN SESSION: Mr. Hall moved that the Board return to Open Session at 7:20 p.m. Mr. Frazier seconded. The motion was approved by all.

Mr. Priester moved to accept the resignations of employees A and B pending suitable replacements, to fully accept the resignation of employee C, and accept the other personnel recommendations for employment. Mr. Frazier seconded. The motion was approved by all.

LEGAL UPDATE: Mr. Frazier moved to allow the Law Firm of Boykin and Davis to file a declaratory judgment action to clarify a point of law on a personnel matter. Mr. Hall seconded. The motion was approved by all.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Mr. Hall moved to accept the Minutes of the May 20, 2013 Regular Monthly Meeting and June 4, 2013 Budget Meeting. Mr. Priester seconded. The motion was approved by all.

CHAIR'S REPORT: Chairperson Robinson asked everyone to observe the quote on the Agenda tonight. *“When planning for a year, plant corn. When planning for a decade, plant trees. When planning for life, train and educate people.”* The quote applies to everyone, teachers, parents and the community.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Mr. James Cohen asked about “Vocational School Private Courses” and said he does not need a response. What will happen on the Federal level in the next few years with the pushing of infrastructure restoration? Is the District in 3-5 years looking to expand the vocational courses, plumbing and electrical? Not all students are going to college, is the District working on putting students out of high school and into the workforce.

Ms. Katherine Sobey said she appreciates what the District is doing and asked about the climate in the schools now since January. Are staff members feeling optimism and hope, defeat or hopelessness? When does the public hear answers to the questions they ask?

Mr. Paul Morse said he is concerned about “teacher turnover” – this has a big impact on student achievement. Excessive paperwork for teachers, teachers have so much paperwork they cannot teach students and teachers are required to put a great deal of information on-line. To be effective in the classroom teachers need time to plan, not staying up to midnight working on this. Teachers leave in large numbers because they are unhappy and students conduct. They go to Hampton, Barnwell and Blackville. Eliminate the time teachers must do paperwork.

Ms. Vernia Gadson asked when they can expect School Board Minutes on-line or posted in the Allendale Sun and parents can see what is happening with their children. What procedures are used to increase or elect more members to the School Board?

Mr. Frank Lewis asked what is the source of funding to pay two superintendent’s salaries and what are the plans for consolidating the District’s excessive square footage. Is there a committee to work on this?

Chairperson Robinson said the Board takes the purple “Public Comment” sheets into consideration and will have an open forum before the start of school.

GOOD NEWS

State Department of Education Library Book Donation to Allendale Elementary School – Principal Leath said AES, FES and AFMS received 8-9 books per student from the SDE for summer reading. The books had a log for students and teachers to write the name of the books students received; books were categorized by grade level, and a calendar for parents to read to students each night and information for each day of the week thru August. Students are to return the form when school starts. They are using the District's phone calling system to inform parents about the books received.

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

Discipline Reports: for information only.

DRAFT 2013-2014 Regular Scheduled Board Meetings – Dr. Tobin said the Board wanted to alter the sites where meetings are held. Chairperson Robinson said they wanted the schools to decide where the Meetings will be held, starting in September (December is a short month; January is a coming back month, so Meetings should be held at the Regular site during these months). Students could perform, or schools can do a quick 20 minutes presentation.

SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE

Little New Steps (LNS) Update – Ms. Youmans, Director said LNS is a local Daycare providing services to children 6 weeks to age 4. A PowerPoint was included in the Board's packets. Ms. Youmans highlighted: 1) all the LNS staff are excellent caregivers and are willing to go above and beyond for students; 2) LNS must meet so many recommendations and guidelines from the State Level; 3) all Level A staff must have planning and time away from students for lunch and break time as required by ABC guidelines; 4) the Daycare does not have any DSS and ABC deficiencies; 5) they will be going thru ABC licenses for the next few weeks; 6) phase 2 of ABC is administrative documentations (training, etc.); going into phase 2 monitors will come in the classrooms for 3-6 hours. She will talk with the Superintendent and finance director about supplies because they use a lot of supplies; 7) in the Babies Room there are steps you must go thru before you are allowed to enter. For example, if you step inside you must put on shoe covers and we must also show you the procedures for washing your hands; 8) when students leave LNS they go in Headstart or the elementary schools and when they leave LNS they are ready for school; 9) LNS has been in existence for 12 years and 10) all doors at LNS are locked, but you are invited to stop by and visit.

Chairperson Robinson applauded Ms. Youmans and her staff. She was down there a few weeks ago and the staff was kind and welcoming and showed her how to wash her hands. She would like to see the program expanded. The day she visited LNS it rained and it was hard to get into. Mr. Frazier reminded everyone about LNS graduation on Friday, June 28th at 6:00 p.m. he would also like to see the program expanded. Thanks to the staff for coming out tonight and supporting

LNS. He asked for the information on how many LNS students are promoted, in the scholars programs, etc.

Curriculum & Instruction Report – Mr. Flowers presented a Power Point and highlighted: 1) the great students, caring teachers, determination, resilience, adequate resources and thoughtfulness and opportunities for growth; 2) successes this year with a District-wide focus on data; 3) the next steps will be bumping it up with Common Core Standards; 4) refine the coaching model to increase student learning; 5) one of the roles of Curriculum and Instruction is to provide leadership and support for principals; 6) Common Core standards help level the playing field for all students, no matter what State and help them compete in a global society; 7) this year's Summer Institute focused on Common Core State Standards and instructional technology and 8) about 65 teachers, principals and media specialists participated in Summer Institute.

Dr. Tobin said teachers had 3 days of training and they worked hard and he commended them, some were at USC-Aiken and in Hampton for training. Some session's people did not leave, because they were exposed to outstanding opportunities presented to them thru technology. There is some national push back to Common Core, but hope they stay the course because it raises the expectations for students. The Board had an example of what a Common Core lesson would look like for a 5th grade class.

Mr. Frazier asked how Common Core and STEMs match up? Mr. Flowers said increase rigor, build critical and creative thinking and application of knowledge are tied to Common Core. Mr. Frazier said he would like to see STEMs at the other schools besides the High School. Dr. Tobin said Common Core addresses Science and Math and expand the pre-engineering program to the Middle School and other opportunities with SRS and getting these down to the elementary schools. Dr. Tobin said this is why Professional Development is critical. He sat strategically with teachers to hear what they are talking about and thinking. Teacher turnover was very low this year. Currently the District has an opening for Science, Language Arts, and early childhood and right now there are only 3 openings this year. Ms. Smith suggested doing the Professional Development later, before school starts and not right after the school year has ended. Dr. Tobin said some of the people presenting the PD will be coming back later in the school year. On Early dismissal days there will be clear, delineated expectations on these days. Mr. Frazier said with SRS, Common Core, STEMS add the Ruth Patrick Science Center in Aiken.

Dr. Tobin said Professional Development information is in the Board packets including the Ruth Science Center ITQ program, Math and Science teachers on the secondary level, 2 year framework which started last June and Summer Institute feedback from teachers.

Dr. Tobin said teachers requested more time for planning to continue the revision process will continue on August 14th and use the ½ day for Common Core Lesson Planning. Ms. Smith asked that those attending training come before the Board to present what was learned

Alternative School Students – Bus Transportation: Dr. Tobin said most districts don't provide transportation for students attending the Alternative School.

Alternative School Students – Extracurricular Participation: Chairperson Robinson said the issue is a student, who was in the Alternative Program, a senior, was allowed to march and participate in the high school graduation ceremony. The practice in the District is to allow these students to march and participate. The same thing happened with several football players and they were allowed to play football and participate in high school activities. She said when you violate the regular school rules and is placed in an alternative setting you lose your privileges to participate at this level. Not allowing them to participate would be an incentive for students to behave better in the regular school setting. Chairperson Robinson said she would like something to be in place for these situations at the beginning of the school year.

Student Release Requests: Mr. Priester moved to accept the recommendation to release the students before the Board tonight and attend the District their parents are currently serving in as teachers. Mr. Hall seconded. Ms. Smith asked how long the release is for. Dr. Tobin said the release is annually. These students have never been enrolled in Allendale County Schools. The motion was approved by all.

FOR INFORMATION

Challenge to Achieve Plans: Dr. Tobin said AFMS and AFHS have not received their training yet from the SDE. However, AES and FES have received training.

AFHS Senior Scholarships: Chairperson Robinson asked if the information will be provided to the press and to the community.

Professional Development Update: Was given during the Curriculum and Instruction Report.

SDE AES Letter – Palmetto Priority School: Ms. Leath, Principal said AES has been removed from the Palmetto Priority School list because of the improvement in the test scores. AES has been moved to the "Below Average" list. The school does not get the funds that come with being a Palmetto Priority School. She said Mr. Duren is coming in tomorrow and help with what the new test results will look like. Chairperson Robinson said look at grants to get some of the funds the school is losing

AFHS Career & Technology Education Information: Dr. Tobin said information was included in the Board packets. He said in a discussion earlier tonight about expanding CATE, the issue is finding instructors because plumbers make so much money they do not want to teach. But the District is trying to expand the program.

Town of Fairfax Letter – FES Park Concerns: Dr. Tobin said the Town of Fairfax was asking for permission to put up signs, because of people bringing animals to the park. The District owns the property.

McAbee, Talbert, Halliday & Co.: Dr. Tobin said the Auditors will be in the District in about 2 weeks.

APPROVALS

Teacher’s Technology Update: Dr. Tobin this is something he would like the Board to consider down the road. He will provide more information and have a time for a discussion.

Promotion & Retention Policy – 2nd Reading: Dr. Tobin said the Policy is keeping with State guidelines and laws. Mr. Priester moved to accept the 2nd reading. Mr. Hall seconded. Ms. Smith said looking at the Policy she did not see anything about absences. Mr. Flowers said it is in the Policy, see Attendance, more details and spelled out more. This is in the Attendance Policy. Dr. Tobin said they could reference the Attendance and Promotion Policies. The motion was approved by all.

GREAT – Gang Resistance Education and Training: Ms. Katrina Williams, Parole Officer outlined: 1) we have gangs in Allendale and in the prison; 2) starts in the middle school and younger; the gang is usually the child’s family; 3) this program is designed to deter children from viewing the gang as the family they want and keep them from entering the Juvenile Justice system and 4) the Program tries to turn students around and put them on the right path. Once they finish their sentence they can have their records expunged; some passed the GED and working on work keys and getting CDL license, so these are smart young people.

Chairperson Robinson asked if they will be working with teachers and school staff to let them know what to look for and student behaviors. Ms. Williams said she is going thru training to teach other people and explain to them what to look for. But this program tries to deter students from gang activities, bullies and making the right choices. She works with all the students – whoever the schools allow her to work with – she works with these students, but does not identify any students. Dr. Tobin said this would be part of the guidance dept. and work in conjunction with the DARE program. Ms. Williams said the curriculum is all over the country, operated by law enforcement and they saw the need for the program because it is in small areas, not just large cities. Mr. Frazier said this is needed and as Ms. Williams learns more about what the District need to do, work with Ms. Williams and bring more information back to the Board. Mr. Frazier moved to approve the GREAT Gang Program. Mr. Priester seconded. The program is at no-costs to the District. Dr. Tobin said the District will work out the details and strategies for the program. The motion was approved by all.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

3rd Reading of the 2013-2014 Budget: Mr. Tillotson, Finance Director gave a handout, a Power Point presentation and reported: 1) the 6:00 P.M. Public Comments on the Budget process was advertised in the newspaper as required by law; 2) increase 2% cost of living for all employees and a step increase where appropriate; 3) \$13.8 million dollar budget; 4) awaiting a decision on the appeal of the SIG funds at the Federal level. Chairperson Robinson said the attorney was at the meeting tonight and said they have not heard any news on the appeal; 5) looking to the future the 2 areas that will benefit the District most is Federal/State moneys and local control because of the tax base increasing 10 mils does not bring that much money and puts a tax burden on the citizens; 6) 1207 is the projected student enrollment for the upcoming year and 7) looking for ways to reduce the footprint of the District.

Mr. Frazier said according to the last 2 Budget Meetings in 2016 its projected the District will run into a \$1 million dollars deficit; how will it affect the District if State and Federal funds are lacking. Mr. Tillotson said in July may bring the Architects to come in and look at how the District is managing the facilities and looking at expense control and using the fund balance. He will dig into this more over the next several months. Mr. Frazier said is he concerned about the budget and some items they should be looking at the budget to make a good, sound decision. Ms. Smith said with salaries, they were to look at a list and make some comparison. Just because they approve the budget, some salaries they were talking about, does not mean it is in stone or those salaries. Mr. Tillotson said a budget is a roadmap. Must have assumptions for if there are openings, people will be paid from a range. Mr. Priester said some coherent planning will be needed to help with the process. Mr. Tillotson said the District must look at staffing and enrollment, and the number of buildings being operated. Mr. Frazier said if the District does not look at the budget, the District could see an increase in class sizes. Chairperson Robinson said the concerns seems to be the Board made a commitment instruction wise to keep the class sizes 22 and below; trying to help teachers and administrators to move into the 21st century with technology and training; must look at in the next couple of years how the District will continue with those commitments, must always put children first, kindergarten classes should not have 25 students in a class, but they have a tough task ahead. Mr. Priester moved to accept the 2013-2014 Budget as presented as a 3rd reading. Mr. Hall seconded. The motion was approved by a vote of 4-1. Mr. Frazier voted against the motion.

Budget Changes Report – May 1-31, 2013 – Mr. Tillotson said he will be at the Treasurer's office tomorrow and hope they have the final reports for the year. He has had several conversations with the Treasurer final allocations should bring things in-line. Several changes in the Budget Report, but they are minor. July 8th for about 2 weeks the Auditors will be in the District and the District is in good shape so they expect a good visit.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Tillotson said a “Silent Auction” is scheduled for Wednesday, June 26th – for food service inventory. The District is following the procurement code; and some IT items will be on sale and for the public they will have some books (instructional materials) for sale from 2:00-5:00 p.m. at District Office Warehouse.

Board Retreat Phase II – Thursday, June 27, 2013 – USC-Salkehatchie

Board/Administration Retreat – TBA

Mr. Frazier said he wanted the Board to talk about the Track Field and Weight Lifting Room at AFHS. Chairperson Robinson said this will be on the Agenda for the Board Retreat.

Chairperson Robinson said Dr. Tobin was serving the District with a Letter of Agreement, not a contract. No ending date was stipulated in the Letter of Agreement. He will remain with the District until December 2013 and the Board will be tightening up the Supt search process and procedures. His Letter of Agreement did not have an ending date and does not require an approval process. She thanked Dr. Tobin for working with the District because some good things are going on. We want to keep the fire burning hot. When the Board asks for information, they are not on anyone’s case, they are just doing their job and what is right for children. They are not a rubber stamp Board. She applauded the Board for their input.

ADJOURNMENT: The Meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.