

**ALLENDALE COUNTY SCHOOLS – BOARD OF TRUSTEES
REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING**

MONDAY – MARCH 25, 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, March 25, 2013. At 6:00 P.M. the Board went into Executive Session to discuss Personnel. 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
Willie Priester
Wilda Robinson, Chairwoman
Valaree Smith, Secretary

ABSENT: Terry Hall, Military Reserve Service

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

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

MOMENT OF SILENCE: A Moment of Silence was held.

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Mr. Priester moved to go into Executive Session at 6:05 p.m. for the purpose of Personnel. Mr. Frazier seconded. The motion was approved by all.

OPEN SESSION: Mr. Priester moved that the Board return to Open Session at 7:11 p.m. Mr. Frazier seconded. The motion was approved by all.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Mr. Priester moved to approve the Minutes of the February 25, 2013, Regular Monthly Meeting. Mr. Frazier seconded. The motion was approved by all.

CHAIR'S REPORT: Chairwoman Robinson reported: 1) March is Women's History Month and please see the quotes on the Agenda referencing 2 women, Elizabeth Evelyn Wright and Mary McLeod Bethune who made significant contributions to education and sacrifices for young women; 2) the ACS Board held a Retreat on Saturday, March 16th and felt a lot came out of the meeting; 3) Mr. Frazier said at the Board Retreat they worked to come together on ideas for the future and bonding. A report of the Retreat will be available for the public shortly; 4) Ms. Smith said the Retreat was enlightening. All Board Members stated how we felt and in the end we came out on the same sheet of music. It was also a "*breaking of the ice*" coming together to mend and doing what we need to do for the schools and community. No matter what others say we have the best schools, community, and children; 5) Mr. Priester said the Retreat was an invaluable experience for all the Board Members. We had a chance to give individual viewpoints to collectively come together as a Board to ensure we are going in the same direction. The main focus was repositioning ourselves for success and seek accountability for putting children first; we must show this by our action; 6) Chairwoman Robinson said they are working on a document and doing finishing touches on and will make this available to the public and community. We looked at Board growth and responsibility; standards for effective boards; beliefs, values, mission and vision, looked at strengths and weakness; concerns and goal statements, which will be to measure our effectiveness as a Board; 7) Chairwoman Robinson also reported on Wednesday, March 20th "*A Day at the Capitol*" sponsored by the SCSBA; board members were briefed on legislation coming up before the SC General Assembly and how it affects public schools; one House bill does have increase of appropriations for school districts; board members meet and interact with members of the Legislative Delegations; we spent time with Rep. Hosey who is on the Ways and Means Committee; we did not interact with the Senators who were coming in later; we interacted with other representatives like Reps. Govan and Cobb-Hunter.

Mr. Frazier said: 1) the Republicans are bringing up choice, for example instead of sending your children from AES to FES, you can send your child to any school you want to. Allendale is experiencing student "flight" issues and if this bill is passed it would make this situation worst and hurt funding; 2) funding was increased to \$2100 (the expected amount was \$2800); 3) the SCSBA asked that SRO Officers be funded since they may be placed in all schools and 4) with the FOIA they are looking at opening this up, but the SCSBA will fight this because anyone can come in and ask for any amount of information and districts not receive payment for providing the information.

Chairwoman Robinson said: 1) the Board would like to have regular meetings with the Legislative Delegation; 2) at the March 21st County Council Meeting she spoke with them about the redistricting of Council/School Board Lines, which put Mr. Hall and Mr. Priester in the same district; 3) County Council became aware of this and the School Board based on the 1978 Act – makes the School District and County Council lines the same. Therefore, the Board should have an equal, cooperative partnership in developing the lines; 4) County Council will look at the issue again, maybe forming a committee with the Board and community looking at Map 3 which disenfranchised a lot of people and 5) the High School is being reviewed by the Southern

Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) team for accreditation purposes. We had dinner with the SACS team last night, and let them know we support the High School. They asked if the District would be interested in having all the schools getting SACS accreditation. We will look at this as the District moves forward.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Mr. Joey Espinosa (high quality teachers) said: 1) he attended the National Youth At-Risk Conference in Savannah; 2) the data showed that children from poverty underperform those who are from middle class, but if the child has an above average teacher for 3 years the gap is closed; 3) this can happen in Allendale if we recruit, train and empower high quality teachers; we have great local teachers, but talented teachers in other places want to come to Allendale and make a difference; 4) give teachers a bonus for living in Allendale or surrounding areas; 5) classroom management and poverty, teachers are not receiving training on this subject; 6) training about the topic is available and make it part of all teachers professional development and 7) teachers leave because of pay, support of administration and teacher empowerment.

Dr. Eric Robertson said: 1) he is a resident of Allendale and teacher at Wade Hampton High School; 2) the purpose of iFocus Allendale is to fill the proverbs *"It takes a Village to Raise a Child"* and close the gap between teachers, parents and the community; 3) an iFocus kickoff event will be held at the B&G Civic Center on April 6 and 7th; 4) close the gaps to form an equal-lateral triangle.

GOOD NEWS

AES – Grants: Ms. Leath, Principal said Ms. Johnson, the Success for All Facilitator wrote a Grant to the Savannah River Nuclear Facility. The Grant addresses the standards for motion and design. Teachers will build an amusement park to teach the standards of motion and design. The Grant award is \$875.

Ms. Leath wrote a Grant sponsored thru the Greater Savannah River Community Foundation for Kidwriting in Kindergarten. The focus is to teach phonetics, holistically and in context through writing. The Grant award is \$786.

Student Recognitions – AFHS Debate Team – Mr. White, Assistant Principal asked Sponsor Mr. Sarma and the students present to come forward. He said 29 teams competed in the tournament in Tennessee and AFHS finished in 8th place. Two students made it to the quarter finals in the competition. The Board thanked the Team for their excellent work.

JROTC Award – Mr. White said AFHS JROTC is nationally ranked as a program. Student Alexandria Gibbs thanked the Board and community for inviting them and their support. SFC Tyler said the JROTC Program had a formal inspection. People come from Ft. Knox and Ft. Bragg to perform the inspection and out of many schools 1645 programs, AFHS rank in the top 3%. The Gold Star shows we are a top level program. JROTC is a student driven program. Chairwoman Robinson said this program is one of the bright stars of the District and commended

the instructors, students and the parents of these students. SFC Tyler said the significance of a Gold Star shows how schools are ranked with others across the nation. The Gold Star also shows students are leading the program and taking charge. MAJ Howard also said the Gold Star Certificate is signed by the Secretary of Defense; the Gold Star allows students going to West Point or the Naval Academy to bypass getting a recommendation from a senator. Other JROTC students present were MAJ Kendra Robinson, Symone Walker and Reginald Smith.

Dr. Tobin said tonight all the focus has been on the children, the discussions and public comments. At the Board Retreat they established goals for themselves and for the school district. There was a great deal of commitment, cohesiveness and a focus on children. Going forward the Board discussed conducting a series of workshops to get more focus and integral part of what is done in the school district. The theme “*Why not Allendale*”, the second part is “*it begins with me*”. Each of us has a responsibility, the Board, community, parents, administrators, teachers and staff.

CONSENT AGENDA ITEM

Discipline Reports: for information only

SUPERINTENDENT’S OFFICE

Attendance Process – Dr. Tobin said the School Attendance Procedures Manual is listed in the Board Packets. However, they are working on refining these duties and procedures.

Dr. Tobin said in the past the General Assembly has issued a proviso that teachers and administrators contracts be issued in May. That has not been passed yet this year and he is asking the Board to set aside April 8th for a Special Called Board Meeting to make recommendations on contracts.

Paperless Board Meeting – Ms. Jamison, Technology Director presented a Power Point presentation which highlighted: 1) current Board Packets are hand delivered; over 50 miles of travel for delivery; packets consists of at least 100 pages; 2) going paperless would reduce the delivery time; efficiency; transparency and information access; 3) the cost ranged from \$1860 to \$4,000 for the Lite version up to \$13,000 for the Pro version. Chairwoman Robinson said Paperless Board Meetings does not mean the Board will not come together physically for meetings. What it does is cut down on the use of so much paper and an advantage would be the Board could access its Policies and other districts policies during meetings. Ms. Jamison said Policies and when a Policy was discussed at a Board Meeting could also be accessed. Chairwoman Robinson asked about the voting process using paperless devices. Ms. Jamison said this is in the Pro version with each Board Member having an iPad or other electronic device. Once a motion is typed up, the Board can then go in and vote yes or no. The cost shown is only for the service. iPads cost about \$400 and laptops about \$800. iPads are difficult to print from. Ms. Jamison suggested the Board start with Boarddocs Lite version, get use to it and then move up to the Pro version when the Board is more comfortable. The Board Recorder will be entering the needed information into the system and uploading information for the Board Meetings. Ms.

Smith asked about SchoolBoard Net, seeing how it works and if they are not happy with it, can they change to BoardDocs. Ms. Jamison said this could be done, once the contract was up. Mr. Frazier asked about internet connection, since he lives out in the country and using his cellphone as his Hotspot. Ms. Jamison said it is at the Boards discretion to be provided a Hotspot by the District. The cost would be about \$40 a month for the District and since the District is eligible for E-rate about 90% would be received back. Mr. Priester asked what is the time frame from approval to start time. Ms. Jamison said she would have to check the vendor schedule, get all the Board Members together for training, so maybe a few months. Mr. Priester asked how long it would take to archive all the Board information from 2 years ago. Ms. Jamison said maybe the information could be uploaded in a day. Ms. Smith said she would like to see Technology come back with a rough figure on what the cost will be for iPads, laptop, internet cost, a true cost. Mr. Priester asked what the Technology Dept. is recommending for consideration. Ms. Jamison said the preference is for Boarddocs because she has seen them in action; they will bring a person to work with the Board and has sat through several webinars. Mr. Frazier said Mr. Hall strongly recommends Boarddocs. Chairwoman Robinson asked that all information including costs come to them at the Call Meeting.

APPROVALS

Textbook Adoption: Mr. Scott Flowers presented an overview for the K-8 Mathematics Textbook Adoption. He highlighted: 1) information on how teachers came up with their decision; 2) the State timeline, March 14th teachers who teach Math met at AES and looked at 8 products; 3) the group came up with “Go Math” (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt); 4) teachers said they could implement the product with fidelity and 5) the decision must be submitted to the State by April 1st. Chair Robinson asked about supplemental, free items that come along with the textbooks. Mr. Flowers said supplemental materials are included if it is an adoption year. Mr. Frazier said he is glad teachers were involved in the process and in the past purchased textbooks sat on the shelves. Mr. Frazier moved to adopt the new text books for Mathematics. Mr. Priester seconded. The motion was approved by all.

2013-2014 School Calendar – 1st Reading: Dr. Tobin said they are continuing to review the Calendar with the Leadership Team. Teachers will also view the Calendar. It is not a final document. Ms. Smith said students will be coming back from Easter/Spring Break 1 week before PASS testing and that is not good. Dr. Tobin said this has been discussed by the Leadership Team, he talked with neighboring districts and they are discussing these issues also. Ms. Smith said Graduation should be listed on the calendar.

PERSONNEL REPORT: No action was necessary from the Executive Session discussion.

FINANCIAL REPORT

FY 2014 Budget Workshop Presentation – Mr. Tillotson presented a Power Point presentation and highlighted: 1) at the Special Called Budget Workshop scheduled for April 29th he will present a detailed budget that will include staff, operational expenses, summary and all the details; 2) the projected revenue is \$13.6 million dollars and the District should not have any problems unless something dramatic happens at the State it will be a balanced budget; 3) will share enrollment projections; the House has not begun debates, which will not start until about the 10th of April; 4) operating with a target 22-1 class size ratio but for kindergarten 18-1; 5) no change in the teacher salary scale by the House; 6) 8% increase in medical costs for staff; 7) the base student cost increased by 4.4%; 8) not recommending an increase in the millage rate; 9) total projected expenditures is about \$13.6 million dollars; 10) bus drivers salaries, EFA and State Tax Reimbursement these numbers may not change much.

Mr. Frazier asked about teachers (all four schools are Palmetto Priority Schools and are part of the bottom) on a short term basis he would like to see the District focus on teachers and helping students get caught up. We have a number of people in the District who are considered the working poor and would like to see this item looked at in the budget. Focus on the non-certified staff, custodians and foodservice staff.

Mr. Tillotson said: 1) the enrollment projections for 2014 is about 1207 students; 2) page 8 is the expense assumptions looking at a step increase, plus a 1 to 2% living adjustment; 3) the District is currently 2 steps behind on the salary schedule because of previous budget cuts; 4) a reduction of 10 to 11 positions through attrition and 5) the total cost of a step increase for everyone in the general fund is about \$200,000.

Mr. Frazier said he would like to discuss why the student population is constantly dropping. The District should look at trying to be proactive with this situation. Mr. Tillotson said term issues facing the District include: 1) declining enrollment; 2) the cost of operating four schools in the face of declining enrollment; 3) salary schedules are 2 years behind in term of the step increases and 4) uncertainly over the direction of Federal/State support. Sequestration will affect the District in 2014. The next workshop is scheduled for April 29th when more details will be provided. Chairwoman Robinson said in 2014 the State will look at full implementation of Common Core testing which will require enhanced testing, are we looking at positions or people who can work with teachers and assist them on how to use technology. Ms. Jamison said the District is MAP testing and using Smarter Balanced and they have been talking about instructional personnel to help teachers with this issue.

Ms. Smith asked about using certain students for example the Scholars Class at AES as part of a test pilot for students using technology. Chairwoman Robinson said this would have to be voted on this school year for implementation in 2014.

Dr. Tobin said Mr. Frazier asked about the loss of students. It looks like the District loses about 60 students a year. Look at your census, the whole population is declining. Growth is where people are moving in for example Rock Hill and Spartanburg.

Mr. Frazier asked for a simpler format for the Finance Report and asked the Board to consider a line item for student activity.

NEWSLETTERS

AES Tiger Tales – February/March 2013

AFHS Tiger Times – March 2013

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Spring Break – April 1-5, 2013

NSBA – April 12-16, 2013 in San Diego, CA

Ms. Smith said she would like to see the Board Meetings move from school to school and allow time on the Agenda for students to perform. Mr. Frazier said he would like to see the Board hold Meetings in the community. Mr. Priester said in the past Board Meetings were moved from school to school, however, there were problems with sound systems at the schools. He would like to make sure the sound systems at the schools are improved before this is done.

ADJOURNMENT: The Meeting was adjourned at 9:16 p.m.