

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

**MONDAY – DECEMBER 14, 2009 – 6:00 P.M.
ALLENDALE-FAIRFAX HIGH SCHOOL – MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM**

The Allendale County Schools Board of Trustees Regular Monthly Meeting was held on Monday, December 14, 2009. 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: Terry Hall, Vice Chair
Cheryl Mole, Secretary
Alexis Zeidan, Chair
Willie Priester
Charlie Cave

FROM THE DISTRICT OFFICE: Dr. Ora L. Watson, Superintendent
Charles Harney, Assistant to the Supt. Operations
Kevin Robinson, Finance Director
Patricia W. Pringle, Recorder

ATTORNYNS: Charles Boykin, Esq.
Reagan Flemming, Esq.

CALL TO ORDER: Chairperson Zeidan called the meeting to order at 7:12 p.m.

INVOCATION: The invocation was given by Mr. Priester.

Executive Session: Secretary Mole reported no action taken on the item discussed in Executive Session.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Mr. Priester moved to amend the Agenda and move Personnel from item #11 to #6 and Public Comments to #7 and so forth to follow. Mr. Hall seconded. The motion passed with a vote of 5-0 yes.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Mr. Cave moved to approve the Minutes of November 23, 2009. Mr. Priester seconded. The motion passed with a vote of 5-0 yes.

Superintendent Dr. Watson asked the Board – said she has done a lot of thinking – Allendale has been wonderful, her experience has been wonderful and she has learned a lot, been challenged a lot and has grown a lot and to love the rural area. But she has asked the Board not to extend her contract beyond June 30, 2010. They are moving in the right direction and this Board and the leadership can continue the core movement that Allendale is currently experiencing. Chairperson Zeidan asked for a motion to approve the recommendation. Mr. Cave moved to accept the recommendation. Mr. Hall seconded. The motion was approved by a vote of 5-0 yes.

Mr. Priester said on behalf of the Board he wanted to thank Dr. Watson for her dedication and creativity during the period of time she has been with the District, almost two years. They appreciate the efforts put forth in improving the conditions of Allendale County Schools and wish her the best in her endeavors. Chairperson Zeidan thanked Dr. Watson for her efforts she put forth with Allendale County Schools and helping them excel with the students and the data collection they needed and good luck.

Chairperson Zeidan asked for a motion to start a superintendent search. Mr. Cave moved to accept the recommendation. Mr. Priester seconded. The motion was approved by a vote of 5-0 yes.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Chairperson Zeidan said she received 1 public comments slip that would be discussed with Dr. Watson.

BOARD REPORT – SCSBA LEGISLATIVE & ADVOCACY CONFERENCE: Mr. Hall reported: 1) lots of good information passed along; 2) schools and boards should look forward to tough times coming up – most of the conversation was cutting funds – as a small, rural school district Allendale will have tough times in the next few years.

Mr. Priester reported: 1) advocacy was discussed – advocate for the school and public education – contacting your legislators – and having a good relationship with your legislators – which helps Districts when it comes to voting; 2) devastating cuts that appears to be on the horizon – the District has already taken multiple cuts, but the projection for funds are not improving at this time; 3) Education in SC is showing some improvement and even the Chamber of Commerce is talking about how education is improving and this helps attracts business to areas.

Mr. Cave reported: 1) lots of information was given – glad they got to hear the same things at the meeting; 2) looking for improvements and the best for ACS. He regrets that it was stated that they will be in search of a superintendent, but hope they will leave the meeting tonight with one thought – that in order for the District to make it – they must be together.

Chairperson Zeidan reported: 1) one speaker talked about going to a Nation's conference and they discussed education – lots of countries pledged \$1 billion for schools, quality teachers and developing their human capital. The Arab nations with the oil money can put a lot of money in

and their systems are coming up. India put a lot into their human capital which is their students. And the speaker wondered if we could compete with this; 2) a grant pledging \$1.3 billion Race-to-the Top for the USA to put money in to help develop teachers, students and schools to stay competitive – the USA is losing its edge – and they must do something and everyone is looking at the schools; 3) Black Caucus – in February will have a choice for vice president – Dr. Ernest White, Jr. or Ronald J. Brown – make sure the District fees are pay only those paying their fees will be allowed to vote. SC has legislation that allows for Charter Schools – must look at how they as a community can help the schools come up, what can they be doing and coming together with things to help all the students. The Black Caucus also have a \$500 scholarship fund per year – and this is for 4 years and students can go to a school in or out of state – last year they only had 32 applications – so people need to watch the website for information on this – applications should be out the first of March.

GOOD NEWS

SCASA Palmetto Administrators – Fall 2009 – Allendale-Fairfax Middle School – Dr. Watson said they are very proud of the article in the magazine. Principal Mr. Newsome, AFMS said they put the article together last year. The article talks about the positive – some students went up 75% and some 10 points or more on MAP. The article in the state-wide magazine shows what they are trying to do and students are making progress.

Clean Sweep Award – Mr. Harney presented the award to the 301 Campus. Ms. Kennedy accepted the award for the school.

CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS:

Discipline Reports: For information only.

Dr. Watson said for information only – several parents who students had been assigned to the AFLC – the students are happy for the experiences they are having at this school. And parents are happy with the progress some students are making and have asked that their child stay at the AFLC. This has to do with the dedication of the teachers and the small class sizes.

SUPERINTENDENT’S OFFICE

Update AFHS Roofing – Mr. Harney, Assistant Supt. Operation reported the information was in the Board packets. He said there will be a lot of activity at the school during the Christmas holidays. Present tonight was Mr. David Loadholt and Mr. Bill Powers, Site Manager. Mr. Loadholt said he is glad construction has started – the hot water heaters are in. When students and staff go home at Christmas the crew will be going wide-open they are trying to accomplish a lot. They are hoping to have air in the gym after the Christmas break. Mr. Priester asked when they look at the building itself and the work that have been done – a lot of traffic in the area – the road to the back of the building are they going to work on the pot holes, etc. Mr.

Powers said “yes” because of the fork-lifts and trucks they plan on cleaning this up with some crush and run.

Dr. Watson asked about the air at FES – Mr. Harney said they are waiting on the bid cycle – which they received the last one tonight.

PERSONNEL: Ms. Rivers, Personnel Director said they will be sending out Intent Letters soon to get a feel for what the staff will be doing and what their intent is. She and Dr. Watson have already talked with people at the Palmetto Priority Schools about recruitment efforts for teachers who come to the area. Dr. Watson said with recent applicants they have started asking for samples of written work and are doing more intense scrutiny of references and recommendations. Ms. Rivers said applicants are also doing an essay on-site after their interview – the topics include their educational philosophy or what should they do in the classroom as far as planning.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Index of Taxpaying Ability (ITA) – Resolution: Finance Director Mr. Robinson said the information was included in the Board packets. He read the “Index of Taxpaying Ability” – and said the calculations will change beginning in February 2010 and will affect the funding for all school districts for the fiscal year 2011. This change will result in half of the school districts losing funding and half will receive an increase in funding. Allendale is projected to lose over \$100,000 in the Education Finance Act funding as a result of this change. There is a solution to avoid this – the Dept. of Revenue has decided because residential property is no longer taxed – not included in the calculations for the index – however, there is a precedence for which the Dept. of Revenue currently uses “Fee in lieu of tax” – which are included in the calculations. They could do the same with residential property which would keep the fluctuation in revenue from happening next year. School districts should not be penalized because of how taxes are allocated. The attached Resolution – which Mr. Robinson read – and asked if the Board had any questions. Chairperson Zeidan asked for a motion to approve the Resolution. Mr. Priester moved to adopt the Resolution. Mr. Hall seconded. The motion was approved by a vote of 5-0 yes.

BETA Club Update: Mr. Robinson said this club has approximately \$339 in their student activity account – no funds were included in the budget this year for the Beta Club. They are proposing using \$3,000 of the Palmetto Priority or Technical funds to supplement the club for the 2009-10 fiscal year. The expenditures would have to be part of the academic plan for Palmetto Priority or TA and this plan would have to be approved by the SDE. If the plan is not approved then they will work with the principal to utilize school canteen funds or transfer funds from another source at the school. Chairperson Zeidan asked when will they know the funds have been approved because a convention is coming up the end of January or February. Mr. Robinson said he is not sure how long it will take for them to approve the funds. Mr. Priester asked if the funds are needed prior to approval could the funds be advanced and then once the

approval takes place – that account could be tapped or move funds from some other area. Mr. Robinson said this could be done.

Budget Report by Fund – Nov. 1-30, 2009 – Mr. Robinson said on page 2 – the current revenue for November is \$1,205,718.00 year-to-date is \$3,141,116 and expenditures for the month are \$1,013,807 and year-to-date expenditures total \$4,073,520.

Chairperson Zeidan said on the accounts with negative balances how are they being cleared up. Mr. Robinson said some of the accounts are salary accounts, which things have been moved around since the budget was enacted and some are being cleared up. They will see a major change next month.

Budget Changes Report – Nov. 1-30, 2009 – is for information only.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Friday – December 18th – ½ Day for Students – Last Day for Staff

Monday – January 4, 2010 – 240 Day Staff & Teachers Return

Tuesday – January 5, 2010 – Teachers Workday

Wednesday – January 6, 2010 – Students Return

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 7:47 p.m.