



**WAKE COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION
MEETING MINUTES
February 4, 2014**

<u>Board Members Present</u>	<u>Staff Members Present</u>	
Christine Kushner, Chair	James G. Merrill, Superintendent	Karen Hamilton
Tom Benton, Vice Chair	Cathy Moore	Mark Winters
Monika Johnson-Hostler	Stella Shelton	Doug Thilman
Kevin L. Hill	David Neter	Edward McFarland
Keith Sutton	Marvin Connelly	Rose Anne Gonzalez
Jim Martin	Pamela Kinsey-Barker	Todd Wirt
Zora Felton	Clinton Robinson	
Susan P. Evans	Jacqueline Ellis	<u>Board Attorney Present</u>
Bill Fletcher	Lloyd Gardner	Jonathan Blumberg
	Andre Smith	

Chairwoman Kushner called the meeting to order at 5:42 p.m. Everyone recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chair’s Comments

Chairwoman Kushner shared comments related to the week being National Choice Week with Wake County being ranked strong in Choice by the Brookings Institute and thanking Dr. Merrill for his Direct Line Forums that have been held throughout the community. Chairwoman Kushner thanked the community and students for sharing their feedback with the school system.

Superintendent’s Comments

Dr. Merrill shared comments related to thanking the residents of Wake County for their forbearance last week during inclement weather days, make up days being established to meet statutory mandates and being as convenient as possible for parents and families, monitoring the suggested changes to the implementation guidelines being provided by the Department of Public Instruction as well as the State Board of Education concerning Read To Achieve, the Superintendent’s Direct Line and receiving excellent feedback, and congratulating the Communications staff for earning a number of awards from the North Carolina School Public Relations Association.

Board Members’ Comments

Board members shared individual comments related to the upcoming performance of Kidznotes, visiting elementary schools and enjoying the work around Black History Month, recognizing School Counseling Week, a great emphasis being placed on reading in Western Wake County which was highlighted in the Cary News and the News and Observer, being invited to attend the Holly Springs Chamber of Commerce Annual Banquet on January 24th, options available for the district regarding the Read to Achieve legislation, the District 3 Board Advisory Council meeting on Monday, February 10th at 5:30 p. m. at Wakefield Elementary, sharing a letter from a WCPSS teacher, sharing information from the NSBA Advocacy Institute ,the Braille Challenge being held on February 13th in Wake County with students from WCPSS participating, looking forward to the upcoming Board Retreat, and attending the upcoming Emerging Issues Institute,

MOMENT IN BLACK HISTORY – Walnut Creek & East Garner Kidznotes Performance

Elizabeth Grimes-Droessler, Senior Administrator for Arts Education shared that the after school program that began in October of this school year is based on a model of youth orchestras which began in Venezuela and has been featured on Sixty Minutes and has now spread worldwide.

The program is a collaboration between Student Support Services and Special Education Services and is designed to impact factors that lead to the disproportionate identification of students for special education.

Four afternoons a week and on Saturday mornings, Kidznotes provides free of charge, classical or kestrel music training to build resiliency and empower children and families. The intense focus on music is designed to counteract the disadvantages of poverty by fostering each child’s cognitive, social, and emotional growth.

Ms. Grimes Droessler introduced those providing leadership for the program and the parents of the students who participate in the program. The students in the program from East Garner Elementary and Walnut Creek Elementary performed selections using their string instruments.

APPROVAL OF THE MEETING AGENDA

Chairwoman Kushner added the Read to Achieve Portfolio Process Update from the earlier Work Session as an Information Item to the Meeting Agenda. Keith Sutton made a motion to approve the Amended Agenda. The motion was seconded by Susan P. Evans. The Board voted unanimously to approve the Amended Meeting Agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENT. The following persons offered public comments to the Board. There were no speakers.

INFORMATION ITEMS

BOARD

8. WAKE COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION BLACK HISTORY MONTH RECOGNITION

Marvin Connelly, Chief of Staff and Strategic Planning shared that the 2014 Black History Month Recognition Program will be a kickoff event to honor the pioneers of the Desegregation Movement of the 1960s-70s, “A Salute to the Trailblazers: This is My Story”. The event will be held Thursday, February 27, 2014 from 6:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. at Marbles Kids Museum.

Several community citizens will be participating on the program to include former Superintendent of the Wake County Public School System, Dr. Robert Bridges, Dr. Dudley Flood, County Commissioner Dr. James West, Mr. William Harris, Rev. Teresa Watkins, Mr. Wayne Baer, as well as other community citizens. Also on the program will be the Knightdale High School Gospel Choir and the Southeast Raleigh High School Jazz Band.

Dr. Connelly shared that the event is free and open to the public, however, staff requests that individuals RSVP no later than February 14th on the school system’s website or register by telephone at the number listed on the flier. Teresa Cunningham-Brown, Senior Director of Recruitment and Retention and Kristi Tally are the lead coordinators of the event.

Board Member Keith Sutton gave further comments about how the effort began and next steps for the yearlong effort.

The recessed at 6:25 p.m. The Board returned to Open Session at 6:33 p.m.

RECOGNITION ITEMS

HUMAN RESOURCES

9. EMPLOYEE EXCELLENCE AWARD

Doug Thilman, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources presented the six employees who were nominated for the Employee Excellence Award. Chairwoman Kushner congratulated and thanked the employees for their work and service.

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

10. SPOTLIGHT ON STUDENTS

Crystal Reardon, Director of Counseling presented the twenty-three students as Spotlight on Students award winners. Chairwoman Kushner congratulated and thanked the students for their leadership, their work, their perseverance, and courage.

The Board recessed at 7:05 p.m. The Board returned to Open Session at 7:22 p.m.

INFORMATION ITEM

SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

READ TO ACHIEVE PORTFOLIO PROCESS UPDATE

Todd Wirt, Assistant Superintendent of Academics provided an update on where the district is specific to the portfolio process for Read to Achieve. Options to be used were shared with districts from State Superintendent June Atkinson which outlined options good-cause exemptions to meet the requirements under the Read to Achieve law;

- Pass the NC Grade 3 EOG English Language Arts/ Reading Test
- Achieve a scale score of at least 442 on the NC Grade 3 Beginning-of-Grade English Language Arts/Reading Test
- Meet the requirements of the portfolio as defined in law
- Pass the state developed Read to Achieve alternative assessment
- Pass the State Board of Education approved LEA alternative assessment

Since January 16th, staff brought back the recommendations from State Superintendent, June Atkinson and shared them with the District Implementation Team and principals where feedback was received. Under the direction of Dr. Merrill, staff also surveyed year-round third grade teachers. Results of the survey were shared.

Based upon the feedback from the survey, staff recommended that

1. Students with a 442 or higher on the Beginning of Grade Test, staff would follow recommendations from DPI and the students would not be required to do the portfolio passages.
2. Extend 2 Identified Students – Special Education students that are currently identified to take the Extend 2 version of the End-of-Grader test are not required to complete the

portfolio process. They will still be required to take the appropriate End-of-Grade ELA test at the end of the school year. (Not yet official but expecting confirmation memo from DPI within the next 48 hours).

3. Case21 Benchmark Assessments – WCPSS did submit the 3rd grade bench mark assessments provided by Case 21 for approval by the State Board of Education. If approved, any 3rd grade student scoring a Level 3 or higher on any of the ELA benchmarks throughout the year have demonstrated proficiency and have met the reading comprehension requirement for Read to Achieve. (Not yet approved by the State Board)

Moving forward, teachers will have the autonomy to utilize the portfolio reading passages with the students that have a “good cause exemption” when they deem it appropriate for instructional purposes. Decisions about the use of the passages with these students should be discussed with school administration and PLTs.

Board members asked clarifying questions and made comments related to the process. The Board thanked staff for the update.

CONSENT ITEMS

Kevin L. Hill made a motion to approve the Consent Items. The motion was seconded by Bill Fletcher. The Board voted unanimously to approve the Consent Items.

CLOSED SESSION

Keith Sutton made a motion to go into Closed Session at 7:54 p.m. to consider confidential personnel information protected under G.S. 143-318.11 (a) (6) and 115C-319, to consult with the Board of Education attorney and preserve the attorney-client privilege as provided in G.S. 143-318.11 (a) (3), and to consider confidential student information protected under G.S. 115C-402 and the Family Educational and Privacy Rights Act, 20 U.S.C. 1232g. The motion was seconded by Monika Johnson-Hostler. The Board voted unanimously to go into Closed Session.

The Board returned to Open Session at 9:48 p.m.

ACTION ITEM

HUMAN RESOURCES

22. RECOMMENDATION FOR ADMINISTRATIVE APPOINTMENT(S)

Doug Thilman, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources presented the personnel report. Kevin L. Hill made a motion to approve the amended report. The motion was seconded by Monika Johnson-Hostler and unanimously approved.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business coming before the Board, Kevin L. Hill made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Susan P. Evans and approved unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Kushner, Board Chair

James G. Merrill, Superintendent

Melissa R. Allen, Recording Secretary