

WAKE COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION  
OPEN MINUTES  
April 2, 2001

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Board Members Present:

Bill Fletcher, Chair  
Beverley Clark  
Rosa Gill  
Judy Hoffman  
Tom Oxholm  
Susan Parry  
Kathryn Quigg

Staff Members Present:

Karen Banks  
Jo Baker  
Del Burns  
Mike Burriss  
Linda Isley  
Cindi Jolly  
Ray Massey  
Toni Patterson  
Janice Shearin  
Walt Sherlin  
Jonibel Willis

Board Attorneys Present:

Ann Majestic

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Bill Fletcher called the meeting to order at 3:15 p.m. Everyone recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

## **INFORMATION**

### **Chairman's Comments**

Mr. Fletcher asked the Board to review a document concerning the Leandro decision.

### **Superintendent's Report**

Mr. McNeal also reiterated that he and his staff would be reviewing the Leandro case with attorneys and surrounding school districts to determine what the impact will have on Wake County. He informed the Board that he will be a presenter at the National Education Association seminar in Washington, D.C. on April 3. He also reported that the Quality Kid Conference was outstanding and thanked the schools and staff that participated, including Olds, Underwood, Northwoods, Lacy, West Cary, Southeast Raleigh, Rolesville, and Yates Mills. It was the largest school quality conference ever held to date.

*Kathryn Quigg* attended the National School Boards Association Annual Conference March 24-27 in San Diego, California and commented on the powerful presenters such as

Madeline Albright, John Glenn, and Jonathan Cosall, who spoke about dropout rates among high school students. He reported an alarming statistic that in the Bronx, approximately 1200 students begin together as freshman, 90 move to their senior year, and about 65 actually graduate from high school. Ms. Quigg added that she prepared handouts from the conference on how to handle the media, and the work of school boards.

*Ms. Parry* also attended the NSBA Annual Conference, and commented on the high quality level of presenters, such as John Goodlight. She felt two themes were dominant at the conference: the importance of public education in maintaining a sound democracy, and cultivating more public engagement in the educational process. Ms. Quigg agreed and noted that an important aspect of public relations is to include the elderly in activities, through volunteering, and passes for plays and athletic games.

*Calendar notes:* April 5 at 8 a.m. Wake Education Partnership is releasing their audit of the school system at the Cary Chamber, and a budget work session is being held in the Board Room from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. PTA Awards Night is at 7:00 p.m., April 19 at Carroll Middle School. On May 3, Fletcher and Oxholm will present to Citizens of a Sound Economy.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

*Tom Oxholm* reported that a Finance Committee meeting was held on March 29<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 p.m. in the Board Conference Room. Discussion focused on a report from staff about Community Use of Schools, the conclusion of a year-long study group assessing the methods of computing fair and reasonable charges to be made to the community. Minutes will reflect recommendations from the Finance Committee, primarily to accept the staff report and suggested changes. Draft 5 received unanimous support for implementation this year, with some concern about delaying dates for programs that have already started registration. The fee increase is not expected to raise any more money in total than in the previous budget, and could raise less due to a usage drop and several campuses undergoing renovations. The report will be brought forward for approval on April 23<sup>rd</sup>. The next meeting of the Finance committee will be on April 24 at 3:30 p.m., and the agenda will return to compensation issues.

As a side note, Mr. Oxholm invited the Board to a fundraiser barbecue lunch on April 27 from 10:30 to 1:30 at Longview High School.

*Susan Parry* reported that the Policy Committee met on March 29<sup>th</sup> at 8:30 a.m. in the Board Conference Room. Discussion by board members, board advisory council chairs and staff was continued on the role of advisory councils. A follow-up Policy committee meeting will be held on April 19<sup>th</sup> at noon in the Board Conference Room.

*Judy Hoffman* reported that a Program Committee meeting was held today at 1:00 p.m. in the Board Room. Information items presented included Preparation of the Traditional Instructional Calendar and Calendar Conversions. The reports entitled Changes in North Carolina Testing and ABC Programs, and an Update on Project Achieve would be presented under Information Items.

## **APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA**

The order of the Public Hearings was changed to Public Hearing on Guidelines for Redistricting, Public Hearing for Items on the Agenda, and Public Hearing on the Superintendent's Budget Request (4:30 p.m. or later). A Closed Session was added at the end of the agenda to discuss confidential personnel information and a purchase contract. Under Finance, consent item #1

(Retainer Agreement with Tharrington Smith) was moved to an action item. Under Facilities, consent item #7 (Design Consultant Agreement: East Wake High Addition and Renovations) had revised information handed out for clarification. Under Program, Assignment of New Subdivisions to Schools was moved to consent.

*With these revisions, Judy Hoffman made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Rosa Gill. The vote was unanimous.*

## **PUBLIC HEARING ON GUIDELINES FOR REDISTRICTING**

None

## **PUBLIC HEARING FOR ITEMS ON THE AGENDA**

None

## **CONSENT ITEMS**

*Kathryn Watson Quigg made a motion, seconded by Rosa Gill, to approve all the consent items. The vote was unanimous.*

## **PROGRAM**

### **1. Grant Proposals**

Competitive (#533): United Arts Council of Raleigh and Wake County, Arts Education Initiative / Individual schools (e.g., Bugg, Douglas, Mt. Vernon, Olds, Partnership and Wakefield @ approximately \$2,500 each); Competitive (#534): North Carolina Arts Council, Presenting Artists in Schools / Individual schools (e.g., Bugg @ approximately \$10,000); Competitive (#535): North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, Technology Literacy Challenge Fund, Year 3 of 3 / Collaboration among Lead Mine, Ligon and Broughton (\$50,000); Competitive (#536): State Library of North Carolina, School Library Collection and Development Grant / Individual schools (e.g., Wiley @ approximately \$10,000); Competitive (#537): State Library of North Carolina, Powerful Partners Collaboration Grant / Individual schools (e.g., Wiley @ approximately \$30,000); Competitive (#538): North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, K-12 School-Based Learn and Serve America / Individual schools (\$10,000); Competitive (#539): North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, K-12 School-Based Learn and Serve America / Ligon MS 3<sup>rd</sup> year continuation (\$7,000). Funding varies by grant. Recommended that the board approve the applications.

## **PERSONNEL**

### **1. Recommendations for Employment**

Professional List #14, 2000-2001; Support List #14, 2000-2001

### **2. Requests for Leave**

*Elizabeth Mata* – request for leave to participate in the Fullbright Teacher Exchange Program for one-semester of the 2001-2002 academic school year with Liliana Recayte of Argentina.

*Gayla Gentry* – request for leave for one year to serve as a member of the state assistance teams that will be working with designated, low performing schools mandated for assistance by the State Board of Education.

### **3. Recommendation for Administrative Appointment**

*Desmond G. Cornell*, administrative intern at West Lake Middle School, to assistant principal at East Wake Middle School, effective date June 1, 2001.

## **FINANCE**

### **1. Budget Amendments and Transfers, 2000-2001**

To report changes in the budget resolution for the month of February. Fiscal Implications:

Adjust State Public School Fund	+\$7,807,933
Adjust Local Current Expense Fund	+\$ 2,500
Adjust Federal Programs Fund	- \$ 310,099
Adjust Capital Outlay Fund	+\$ 20,940
Adjust Multiple Enterprise Fund	+\$ 0

### **2. Activity Bus Purchase**

To appropriate restricted fund balance for purchase of three activity buses for the central fleet that serves all schools. Fiscal Implications: \$150,000.

### **4. Authorization Forms**

These authorization forms designate the persons authorized to sign vouchers for the payment of money on behalf of Wake County Public School System 401k account. Fiscal Implications:

These authorization forms are required for bank records.

### **5. Router and Switch Configuration Audit and Inventory Service**

#### **Agreement: Alphanumeric Systems, Inc.**

Technology Services requested that Alphanumeric Systems, Inc. be awarded a contract to audit and inventory every router and switch throughout the WCPSS. This satisfies one of the recommendations of the Technology Services' Audit Report submitted to the WCBOE Audit Committee on January 3, 2001. This will include:

1. Creating a database to record the inventory and installation of the database at a WCPSS site(s) of Technology Services' choosing. The database will allow for future system growth and will include no less than the manufacturer, model number, serial number, site location, building location, room location, configuration verification, IP address, port count and date purchased. All equipment will be labeled to WCPSS specifications. Alphanumeric will reconcile equipment already purchased and warehoused. This process will allow a more thorough record of the system's fixed assets.
2. WCPSS will provide all documentation and information to Alphanumeric necessary for successful completion of this project. Fiscal Implications: Funding in the amount of \$47,235.00 is requested. This is a not to exceed amount and may be reduced dependent upon actual hours expended. Funding is available through the Technology Services Division current expense budget.

## **FACILITIES**

### **1. Bids: Cary High Renovations**

Bids were received on March 13, 2001 for phase four of the state bond renovations at Cary High School. The low bidder, Blair Construction, Inc. requested to withdraw their bid due to an error on the bid proposal. After review and having conducted a hearing, staff and AlphaCollier Design, Inc. recommend award of the single-prime general contract to McDonald York, Inc., in the amount of 411,575. Fiscal Implications - Funds are available from the total project budget of

\$2,750,805. The total project budget consists of \$2,613,050 from the board-approved 1996 State Bond Project budget and \$137,755 from the ADA component of the 1996 State Bond Program. Recommendation for Action - Board approval was requested.

**2. Bids: Cary High Asbestos Removal**

Bids were received on March 20, 2001 for the asbestos removal associated with phase four of the state bond renovations at Cary High School. Staff and Childress Environmental Consultant, Inc. recommend award of the asbestos abatement contract to Kein Contracting Corporation, in the amount of 106,444. Fiscal Implications - Funds are available from the total project budget of \$2,750,805. The total project budget consists of \$2,613,050 from the board-approved 1996 State Bond Project budget and \$137,755 from the ADA component of the 1996 State Bond Program. Recommendation for Action - Board approval was requested.

**3. Bids: Knightdale Elementary Heat Pump Replacement**

Bids were received on March 20, 2001 for Knightdale Elementary water source heat pump replacement. Staff and Padia Consulting, Inc. recommend award of a single-prime mechanical contract to Mid-South Mechanical, Inc., in the amount of 296,537. Fiscal Implications - Funding is available from the total project budget of \$412,000 from Phase IIIB deferred maintenance funds. Recommendation for Action - Board approval was requested.

**4. Bids: Martin Middle Renovations**

Bids were received on March 15, 2001 for the Martin Middle School building renovations. Staff and Pearce, Brinkley, Cease & Lee, PA recommend award of the single-prime general construction contract to Jedco Construction Inc., in the amount of \$410,554. There were not sufficient multi-prime bids to open. Fiscal Implications - Funds are available from the total board-approved 1996 State Bond Program budget of \$2,340,650. Recommendation for Action - Board approval was requested.

**5. Bids: 2001 Relocation of Mobile Classrooms – Package “A”**

Bids were received on March 13, 2001 after re-advertisement for the 2001 Relocation of Mobile Classrooms – Package “A”. Staff and Pearce, Brinkley Cease & Lee, PA recommend award of a single-prime contract to C. Blake Lewis Construction, in the amount of \$370,995. Fiscal Implications - Funds are available from the board-approved 2000-2001 Capital Outlay budget of \$1,300,000. Recommendation for Action - Board approval was requested.

**6. Bids: West Cary Middle Renovations**

Bids were received on March 20, 2001 for the West Cary Middle School, Building 3 Renovations. Staff and The New Synergy, Inc. recommend award of the general construction contract to Polovick Construction Co, Inc., in the amount of \$91,399; mechanical contract to Mid-South Mechanical, Inc., in the amount of \$187,887.00; electrical contract to Jones, Inc. of Wilson, in the amount of \$52,142. The total of these multi-prime bids is \$331,428. The lowest single-prime bid was \$354,520. Board approval is requested. Fiscal Implications - Funds are available from the board-approved total state bond project budget of \$1,561,992. Recommendation for Action - Board approval was requested.

**7. Design Consultant Agreement: East Wake High Addition and Renovations**

Negotiations have been completed with Pearce, Brinkley, Cease & Lee, PA for the design of the East Wake High School addition and renovations. This project includes the master planning of the entire site. The form of agreement is the standard form approved by the board attorneys. Fiscal Implications - The total project budget is \$8,130,061, which is funded under PLAN 2000. The project includes proposed compensation for the design consultants of \$488,038 and \$17,000 for the site master plan. Recommendation for Action - Board approval was requested.

## **8. Design Consultant Agreement: Stough Elementary Addition and Renovations**

Negotiations have been completed with Brown & Jones Architects, Inc. for the design of the PLAN 2000 addition and renovations at Stough Elementary School. The form of agreement is the standard form approved by the board attorney. Fiscal Implications - The total project budget is \$1,728,405, which is funded under PLAN 2000. Total project budget includes proposed compensation for the design consultant of \$108,498. Recommendation for Action - Board approval was requested.

## **PROGRAM**

### **1. Assignment of New Subdivisions to Schools**

Staff presented recommendations for the following subdivisions: Falls Glen, Ashley Park Apartments, Brighton, Camden Crossing, Falls Creek Apartments, and The Park at Perry Creek. Transportation costs will increase due to travel distance. Other facilities- related costs would be avoided. This was presented for approval.

***Judy Hoffman made a motion to both amend the agenda and approve the following minutes as consent items. It was seconded by Beverley Clark, and the vote was unanimous.***

The minutes approved for 2001 were as follows: January 8 Closed Session, February 12 Closed Session, February 26 Closed Session, March 12 Closed Session, March 1 Finance Committee, March 5 Program Committee, March 12 Board Meeting, March 15 Finance Committee and March 19 Board Meeting.

## **ACTION**

## **FINANCE**

### **1. Retainer Agreement with Tharrington Smith**

The rates billed by Tharrington Smith for legal representation for the Wake County Board of Education have not changed since 1993. The current monthly retainer rate is \$2,500 and the current hourly rate is \$120. The proposed contract increases the retainer to \$3,000 per month and the hourly fees increase to \$135 for partners, \$125 for associates, and \$60 for paralegals. Fiscal Implications: The proposed rate increases will be paid from funds budgeted for fiscal year 2001-2002. The Superintendent's 2001-2002 Budget Request includes an increase of \$340,509 to \$900,000 for legal fees.

*Tom Oxholm relayed a recent discussion with Dr. Burns. The new hourly rates and monthly retainer for service from Tharrington Smith remain reasonable and below market value for legal assistance in Wake County. Referencing the budget request increase, he noted that last year the Board requested the legal budget be cut from approximately \$800,000 to \$400,000. This year requests an increase of \$340,509 to \$900,000. Most of the Leandro legal work should have been completed. Dr. Burns estimated that through mid-March \$444,000 was spent, and approximately \$600,000 or less would be needed. By approving this, it does not mean approval of the \$900,000 budget for legal fees. The legal budget is on the low side for a system this size. Other comparable urban districts are spending more in legal budgets, such as Charlotte-Mechlenberg which budgeted \$2.8 million and spent \$3.1 million.*

***Mr. Oxholm made a motion to approve, seconded by Susan Parry. The vote was unanimous.***

*In a side note, Mr. Oxholm referenced a news article that reported Coca-Cola was removing all commercialization in the schools nationwide, which means that Wake County got the last exclusive vending contract in the country for a number of years; and the timing of the Pepsi contract was good from a fiscal standpoint.*

## **INFORMATION**

### **PROGRAM**

#### **1. The Preparation of the Traditional Instructional Calendar**

The calendar committee typically consists of twenty-five to thirty people representing diverse staff, teaching and community representatives. This committee has traditionally been convened in August or September, and has made its recommendation to the Board in November. State law, state calendar guidelines, and WCPSS policies are guiding points during the planning of the calendar. No fiscal implications. The item was presented and discussed during Program Committee at 1:00 p.m.

#### **2. Calendar Conversions**

The parameters for schools requesting calendar conversions were presented and discussed during the Program Committee meeting at 1:00 p.m. No fiscal implications.

#### **3. Changes in North Carolina Testing and ABC Programs**

Several significant changes in the North Carolina testing program are being implemented during the 2000-2001 school year. Changes include the following: (1) Special education students will no longer be exempted from state tests. Testing options will include a Computer Adaptive Testing System, an "Alternate Assessment Academic Inventory", and an "Alternative Assessment Portfolio." New forms of EOG and EOC mathematics tests aligned with the revised Standard Course of Study will be administered. New tests will require new scoring "scales". (2) Several changes will also be made to the ABC Accountability Program for 2000-2001. A "prediction" model will be used to establish target scores for all multiple-choice EOC tests. Changes in dropout rates over time will be added to "Growth" reports. Components of growth calculations will be "weighted" to reflect the number of students measured. A test taken by more students will count more than a test taken by fewer students. Computer skills test results at grade 8 will be added to school "Performance" composite scores. An update on any changes in the testing program and state accountability program will be presented. This item is presented for information. We expect a substantial increase in costs for overtime and temporary help for the Testing Office. *(Exhibit A)*

#### **4. Update on Project Achieve**

Project Achieve is a support project for schools that are facing unusual challenges. Schools identified to participate in Project Achieve include Cary Elementary, Creech Road Elementary, Hodge Road Elementary, Rand Road Elementary, Smith Elementary, East Garner Middle and East Wake Middle. To date, a meeting has taken place with principals, as well as a visit to Brazosport Independent School District. Debriefing and planning sessions with principals followed. Next steps include development of school plans and implementation of the 8-step process for improvement, a presentation by the former superintendent of BISD, training for selected school staff and ISD staff and preparation/identification of instructional materials. *(Exhibit B)*

### **PUBLIC HEARING ON SUPERINTENDENT'S BUDGET REQUEST**

*Julie Nau*, Wake NCAE, reported that teachers understand the challenge of doing more with

less. However employees are feeling overworked and under-appreciated. They ask again that dental benefits not be taken away. The 4,000 member association is working diligently to spread the word about WCPSS funding needs to the County Commissioners.

*Jennifer Lanane* is a 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher at Holly Springs Elementary and a highly credentialed educator. She asked that the board not abandon teachers, their greatest resource.

## **PUBLIC HEARING FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA**

None

## **CLOSED SESSION**

***Kathryn Watson Quigg made a motion to move into closed session:***

To establish or instruct the Board's staff or negotiating agents concerning the position to be taken by or on behalf of the Board in negotiation of (i) the price and other material terms of a contract or proposed contract for the acquisition of real property by purchase, option, exchange, or lease; or (ii) the amount of compensation and other material terms of an employment contract or proposed employment contract. G.S. 143-318.11 (a)(5), and

To consider confidential personnel information under G.S. 115C-319.

***It was seconded by Judy Hoffman, and the vote was unanimous.***

The Board reconvened into open session at 5:46 p.m.

## **PERSONNEL – ACTION**

### **1. Recommendation for Administrative Appointment**

Valerie M. Howe, teacher and intern at Leesville Road Middle School, to assistant principal at Leesville Road Middle School, effective April 3, 2001.

***Tom Oxholm made a motion to approve, seconded by Kathryn Watson Quigg. The vote was unanimous.***

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Bill Fletcher adjourned the meeting at 5:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Annette Maret, Recording Secretary

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Bill McNeal, Secretary

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Bill Fletcher, Chairman



