



**WAKE COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL CALLED BOARD MEETING MINUTES
August 30, 2010**

<u>Board Members Present</u>	<u>Staff Members Present</u>	
Ron Margiotta, Chair	Interim Superintendent Donna Hargens	David Holdzkom
Kevin L. Hill	Terri Cobb	David Neter
Chris Malone	Danny Barnes	Andre Smith
Deborah Prickett	Kathy Chontos	Mark Winters
Keith Sutton	Marvin Connelly	Bob Snidemiller
	Joe Desormeaux	Terri Kimzey
	Michael Evans	Russ Smith
	Stephen Gainey	
	Don Haydon	

Board Chair, Ron Margiotta, called the meeting to order at 12:05 p.m. Chairman Margiotta shared that the meeting was called to discuss the potential inequities created by the removal of end of day activity bus runs and consideration of reinstatement.

Chairman Margiotta read the following statement, *“Tomorrow is Kathy Chontos, Western Area Superintendent’s last day before she begins her retirement. She has been in Wake County and has served as an Evaluation and Research staff member, principal, and the Western Area Superintendent.*

While serving as a principal, she was president of the Wake County Division of Principals and Assistant Principals. Through these different roles, she has touched many students, parents, teachers, and administrators. Again, on behalf of the Wake County Board of Education, I want to congratulate Mrs. Chontos and wish her well. Mrs. Chontos served a number of schools in my district so I can attest to the kind of fine job that she did. Thank you for all that you’ve done.”

ACTION ITEM

FINANCE

1. DISCUSSION OF POTENTIAL INEQUITIES CREATED BY REMOVAL OF END OF DAY ACTIVITY BUS RUNS AND CONSIDERATION OF REINSTATEMENT

To meet funding reductions and cost increases, the 2010-2011 Wake County Public School System (WCPSS) Adopted Budget includes budget reductions in many areas. One such reduction was the elimination of after-school activity buses run by the Transportation Department. This service elimination creates potential inequities in after school educational opportunities available to all students. Board discussion to take place for possible consideration of reinstatement of these services.

If the Board desires to reinstate these services, funding could be used from the \$27.7 million Education Jobs Bill Grant Funding WCPSS will receive. Funding from this Federal

Grant can be used for school based personnel salary and benefits costs, including after school activity bus drivers, and can be used for allowed expenditures incurred after the enactment date of August 10, 2010. Fiscal Implications: \$185,000 of the Federal Education Jobs Funding can be allocated to re-instatement of the after-school activity bus runs that were eliminated. This Federal Grant is one time funding that will not recur. Reinstatement of after-school activity buses would not be sustained beyond 2010-11 unless other funding sources are identified. Recommendation for Action: Board discussion leading to possible action.

David Neter, Chief Business Officer, clarified that the actual physical buses being used for this service are “yellow” school buses. The service is called “After- School Activity Bus Runs” because they are taking students home from after-school activities.

Mr. Neter shared that the 2010-2011 budget did remove these after-school activity buses to meet overall budgetary needs. Staff has identified a primary source of funding, funding from the Federal Education Jobs Bill Grant that was recently received to be used for the salary and benefits costs associated with the bus drivers required for the after-school activity runs.

Wake County Public Schools will receive just under \$28 million of Federal funding under the grant. The grant was approved by the Federal House and Senate a few weeks ago and put into law around August 10, 2010. The grant can be used for any type of school-based personnel costs (salary and related benefits associated with school-based personnel). It cannot be used for non-personnel costs, or non-school based costs. Staff has clarified however; that activity bus drivers or any bus driver would be considered a school-based individual.

The funding can be used to cover any acceptable expenditure beginning August 10, 2010. The Transportation Department has estimated that it will take just under \$200,000 of salary and benefit costs to cover the salary and benefits associated with reinstating the drivers (actually using existing drivers) to reinstate activity bus runs.

Mr. Neter shared that the Federal funding is one-time funding, it does not recur. If the Board does choose to go forward and utilize the funding for the re-instatement, that re-instatement of activity buses can not be sustained. The Federal funding is targeted to be used during the 2010 2011 year, however, it can be used during the 2011-2012 year.

In addition to the salary and benefits costs to re-instate the after-school program, there are also non-personnel costs associated with re-instating the service. Those costs can-not be paid for out of the Federal Education Jobs Bill. The most significant is fuel. The total non-personnel costs required for re-instating after-school services are approximately \$500,000. Staff will be prepared to cover these costs as follows:

- Current fuel prices that have been budgeted for in the annual budget, are higher than actual fuel prices which creates a little spread, and if this trend continues, that spread would create savings that could be put towards the cost.
- In addition, the number of actual regular bus runs budgeted for the year (930) is slightly higher than the actual number of runs that are being required, which is 917 and will create savings.

Mr. Neter provided caution stating that, this would allow staff to re-instate the service, however, there are uncertainties as the year progresses. It is possible that fuel prices will spike and if that's the case, there will be an issue. It is also possible that there will be the need to add additional bus runs based upon a number of different circumstances during the year.

Staff believes it is possible to reinstate the after-school activity buses if directed by the Board using both the Federal Education Jobs Bill Grant funds as well as, the savings of local resources. If fuel costs spike, staff would come back to the Board mid-year when and if necessary, with the request for an undesignated fund balance appropriation, which would allow the program to be funded through the remainder of the year.

Mr. Neter shared that the only other real source of funding at this point to reinstate this, would be some other type of reduction.

Chairman Margiotta asked what kind of services do the activity buses provide. Don Haydon, Chief Facilities and Operations Officer, shared that the activity buses operate the fourth tier.

Mr. Haydon shared that most bus drivers are on a 6-hour normal work day. In order to run the fourth tier, the bus drivers are paid over-time (straight time) in additional pay. If the services are re-instated, staff will make it a standard limitation of 2 bus runs per middle school and 3 bus runs per high school.

After comments from Board members, Keith Sutton made a motion to reinstate the services and use of activity buses with funding coming from the Federal Education Jobs Bill Grant and using other sources of local funding. The motion was seconded by Chris Malone. The motion was unanimously approved.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business coming before the Board, Keith Sutton made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Chris Malone. The motion was unanimously approved. The meeting adjourned at 12:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ronald A. Margiotta, Chair, Wake County Board of Education

Donna M. Hargens, Interim Superintendent, WCPSS

Melissa R. Allen, Recording Secretary