

OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE CALDWELL COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

The Caldwell County Board of Education met in special session for a Board Retreat at 3:00 PM on January 25, 2010, in the Staff Development Room of the Education Center, Lenoir, North Carolina.

The following members were present:

Dr. Sharon S. Pennell, Chairman
Dr. Helen Hall, Vice-Chairman
Chris Becker
Linda Coffey
Dottie Darsie
Tim Hawkins
Mike LaBrose

The following administrative staff members were present:

Dr. Steve Stone, Superintendent
Dr. Jeff Church, Assistant Superintendent for Auxiliary Services
Dr. Caryl Burns, Associate Superintendent for Educational Program Services
Karla Miller, Finance Officer
Libby Brown, School-Community Relations Director
Ed Blair, School Board Attorney

Chairman Dr. Sharon S. Pennell called the meeting to order at 3:00 PM.

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME/INVOCATION

Chairman Dr. Sharon S. Pennell welcomed the board, administrators and the press to the Board Retreat and Board Member Tim Hawkins gave the invocation.

MB KAHN PRESENTATION

Carrie Winter, Sales Representative with MB Kahn, introduced guests from MB Kahn: Rick Ott, Senior Executive Vice President, Chuck Saylor, National PTA President and Craig Bolin, Site/Construction Manager. Rick Ott gave a brief overview of the company and advised the board that 95% of their work deals with K-12 education. Although MB Kahn does not actually construct the building, their role is to manage the construction site and have a “hands-on” approach. They are currently working in Avery County, as well as other North Carolina School districts. The average costs savings to a school system is 10 to 15% of a construction project. Mr. Ott advised there was no better time than now to build a new school as it is a buyer’s market. Tax payers are getting a wonderful deal and dollars are being put back into the local economy. Every job and dollar created locally is money multiplied approximately 8 times for the community. Mr. Ott reviewed several examples of schools they have managed, saving one system 2.5 million dollars, and another system 1.2 million in site design alone. MB Kahn’s practice is to actively recruit and maximize local contractors within the community in which they build; then meet with those contractors to determine the best way to package the project. Their fees are incorporated in the cost of the entire project. Mr. Ott also answered questions proposed by the board and others.

BUDGET OUTLOOK FOR 2010-2011

Finance Officer Karla Miller gave a brief presentation of the budget outlook for 2010-11. Revenues are good and costs saving measures are working. The Governor's Office does not foresee any reversions, however if reversions occur they will come in January or February. Ms. Miller also noted that discretionary reversions will increase in state funding. In 2009-10, reversions totaled \$1,998,000 dollars. For 2010-2011, expected reversions should total an additional \$699,500 dollars for a total reversion of about 2.7 million dollars. Additional stabilization funding is expected; although there are sufficient funds for 2010-2011. Superintendent Dr. Steve Stone noted that Federal Stimulus money is what saved many of the state's jobs and President Obama is being aggressively lobbied to place funding in education if more stimulus funds becomes available. He noted that the "Race to the Top" grant could also mean an additional \$370,000 to supplement funding. Dr. Stone advised the board that the school district is closely monitoring spending, as well as freezing vacancies. He also advised that the Governor's Office announced at a recent superintendent's meeting that lottery and/or ADM money would only be taken if there is a "cash flow" problem; however, there is not one seen in the foreseeable future. There is also an initiative to reinstate the teacher salary scale.

FACILITIES REPORT

Assistant Superintendent for Auxiliary Services Dr. Jeff Church introduced Steve Walker with CBSA Architects regarding the new Hibriten District Middle School. Mr. Walker reviewed the plan proposed late last year that carried a site cost of over \$3,000,000 dollars due to the wet lands on the property and a hill that needed grading. To cut costs, the baseball and practice fields were moved to a lower area where the current corn field is located. A smaller practice field was placed above the gymnasium cutting grading costs by \$2,750,000 dollars. The bus parking lot was engineered to be one continuous loop without a separate road and the site will be built on original soil with no rock to contend with. The floor plan "core" was reduced from 900 students to 750 students, which cut the square footage out of the media center. However classroom capacity will hold only 680 students, which would require an additional six classrooms and expanding the dining room at an additional cost of approximately two million dollars. (The current William Lenoir enrollment is 520.) The gymnasium will hold 750 bleachers, with an alternate for an auditorium. The fine art wing was reviewed with the current principal and staff and was reduced to some extent. The two-story element has been simplified with stairs on either end, as well as in the middle. The plans have been cut to 107,000 square feet. The auditorium is approximately 11,000 square feet and would cost close to 1.6 million dollars. This plan also has various areas that would allow additions for future growth, as well as additions to the dining room area which currently holds 250 people. Mr. Walker also reviewed the exterior elevations for the project and is concentrating on utilizing as much natural light as possible.

PROPOSED NEW POLICY – 4600 – INTERSCHOLASTIC COACHES

Assistant Superintendent of Auxiliary Services Dr. Jeff Church reviewed the proposed attached new policy, 4600, Interscholastic Coaches. The policy states that coaches should be faculty members or school system employees. Volunteer coaches, or non-school system coaches, would be used on an "emergency" basis or as a last resort. If volunteer or non-school coaches are used, they will be required to take NCHSAA training. This policy would begin with the 2010-2011 school year and persons serving currently as "long-term" coaches would not be required to meet these requirements. Dr. Church noted, however, that ethics training is being developed for all coaches, tenured and/or new, to participate in this summer. The board will place this new policy on a one month comment period at the February 8, 2010, board meeting.

REVISIONS TO BOARD POLICIES 3140, STUDENT ATHLETIC ELIGIBILITY, 4340, DISPOSAL OF PROPERTY AND 9120, SCHOOL VOLUTEERS

Assistant Superintendent of Auxiliary Services, Dr. Jeff Church, reviewed the proposed attached changes to Board Policy 3140, Student Athletic Eligibility, 4340, Disposal of Property and 9120, School Volunteers, to be placed on a one-month comment period at the February 8, 2010, board meeting.

OTHER FACILITY UPDATES

Assistant Superintendent of Auxiliary Services Dr. Jeff Church presented a proposal by Caldwell County Pathways to request permission to continue the current paved greenway that ends at Hudson Elementary School. This 1,400 foot connection would allow safe pedestrian traffic between Hudson Elementary and Hudson Middle Schools and Pine Mountain Road. This proposal will be placed on the February 8, 2010, board agenda for approval.

Assistant Superintendent of Auxiliary Services, Dr. Jeff Church, advised the board that the projects at Hudson Elementary and Sawmills are behind schedule.

Assistant Superintendent of Auxiliary Services, Dr. Jeff Church, advised the board that the owner of the Meedo's property adjacent to Hibriten High School has been offered as a possible building site for the new Hibriten District Middle School. The board has considered this property before but was unable to get grading costs down due to the flood plain. They did not want to revisit this proposal at this time.

STUDENT APPOINTED AS BOARD MEMBERS

Ed Blair, School Board Attorney, addressed the proposal to elect a student to participate as a board member. Mr. Blair shared his concerns from a legal prospective using various scenarios and did not feel comfortable advising the board to adopt this proposal. Dr. Stone suggested a possible alternative would be to meet with student council representatives prior to each Community Board Meeting if students wish to meet with board members to address issues.

DINNER

The board recessed for dinner at 5:00 PM and Tim Hawkins returned thanks for the meal.

EXAM EXEMPTIONS

Associate Superintendent for Educational Program Services Dr. Caryl Burns reviewed the attached exam exemption policies for Hibriten, South Caldwell and West Caldwell High Schools, as well as the Career Center Middle College. It was noted that plans are being developed to remove exam exemptions in the near future.

FIVE YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

Associate Superintendent for Educational Program Services Dr. Caryl Burns discussed the current process of the Five Year Strategic Plan that has been used thus far in meeting with administrators and community leaders. She also reviewed the future course of action to be used from now until the plan is complete.

BRIEF LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Superintendent Dr. Steve Stone discussed the attached information regarding the changes in the 2009 legislation regarding local board policies and school district practices.

SUPERINTENDENTS' NEW EVALUATION INSTRUMENT AND PROCESS

Superintendent Dr. Steve Stone discussed the attached information regarding the new North Carolina Standards for Superintendents' as approved by the State Board of Education in September of 2007.

CLOSED SESSION TO DISCUSS PERSONNEL MATTERS PURSUANT TO N.C.G.S. SECTION 143/318.11 (A) (1)

Upon motion of Vice-Chairman Dr. Helen Hall and second by Linda Coffey, the board unanimously agreed to go into Closed Session at 5:31 PM.

RECONVENE

Upon motion of Mike LaBrose and second by Tim Hawkins, the board unanimously agreed to adjourn the closed session at 5:47 PM and return to open session.

OTHER INFORMATION/DISCUSSION

The board discussed South Caldwell High School's request to develop alternate times for graduation on June 10 in case of inclement weather. The board appreciates the South Caldwell Staff looking for ways to ensure that the graduation process runs smoothly.

The board discussed floral deliveries addressed in Board Policy 6560 and decided not to revise the policy.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon motion of Chris Becker and second by Dottie Darsie, and upon unanimous approval of the board, the meeting was adjourned at 6:10 PM.

Signed:

Chairman, Caldwell County Board of Education

Attest:

Secretary, Caldwell County Board of Education