

March 22, 2010

A regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Charleston County School District was held on Monday, March 8, 2010 in the Board Room at 75 Calhoun Street with the following members of the Board present: Chair – Mrs. Ruth Jordan, Vice Chair - Mr. Ray Toler, Rev. Chris Collins, Mr. Chris Fraser, Mrs. Toya Hampton-Green, Mrs. Elizabeth Kandrak, Mr. Gregg Meyers, Mrs. Ann Oplinger, Mr. Arthur Ravenel and Dr. Nancy J. McGinley – Superintendent of Schools and Executive Secretary. Staff members Mr. Michael Bobby, Dr. Doug Gepford, Mrs. Audrey Lane, Mr. Bill Lewis, Dr. Brenda Nelson, Mr. John Emerson, and Mr. Elliott Smalley were also in attendance.

The news media was duly notified of the meeting and representatives were present.

Board Chair – Mrs. Ruth Jordan called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. Mr. Meyers motioned, seconded by Mr. Fraser to convene into Executive Session to discuss agenda items listed below. The motion was unanimously approved.

Executive Session Agenda Items

- 1.1: Student Transfer Appeals
- 1.2: Student Expulsion Appeal
- 1.3: Legal Matters

II. CALL TO ORDER, INVOCATION/MOMENT OF SILENCE, AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Board reconvened in Open Session at 5:15 p.m. Chairperson – Mrs. Jordan called the meeting to order. Since Reverend Michael Wright, Rector of Grace Episcopal Church had not arrived Rev. Chris Collins led the invocation, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

After Reverend Michael Wright arrived, he offered a second invocation.

III. SPECIAL RECOGNITION

3.1: Teacher Cadets – Wando High School

The Board recognized Teacher Cadets from Wando High School. Betsy Wilson is the instructor.

3.2: Wando Band

The Board recognized Mr. Scott Rush and Wando Band members for their participation in the Grand National Finals.

3.3: Dr. Anne Dukes Recognition

The Board recognized Dr. Ann Dukes for receiving the South Carolina Counselor Administrator of the Year recognition.

3.4: East Cooper Montessori

The Board recognized Alec Robinovitz, a student at East Cooper Montessori Charter School for collecting 10,000 books which were donated to Medical University of South Carolina Hospital.

3.5: Presentation by Mr. Jim Braunreuther

Mr. Jim Braunreuther recognized Dr. Nancy McGinley, Chairperson Jordan and Mr. Ray Toler for their support to the district's Fine Arts program. Mr. Braunreuther also invited Board members to an upcoming fine arts event.

3.6: Burke High School Boys Basketball Presentation

The Board recognized Coach Earl Brown and members of Burke Boys Basketball Team for their participation in the 2010 Lower State Championship Competition.

IV. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

4.1: Superintendent's Report

Dr. McGinley shared the following:

- Mount Pleasant Academy recently won a 2010 Design Award by the South Carolina Chapter of Education Facility Planners. The school earned the top "Honor Award", and the new Moultrie Middle also received "Special Recognition" for collaborative planning efforts between the district, school, and Town of Mount Pleasant.
- Sanders Clyde, another school that should be in line for design awards held its dedication ceremony last week. It included the unveiling of Jonathan Green's mural created with the help of students.
- The district held a joint meeting of County and Constituent Boards which was productive meeting last Monday. The importance of communication was discussed. Dr. McGinley commended Chairperson Jordan for bringing the groups together and mapping out a vision for collaboration. She said this meeting represented a positive step.
- The district recently joined hands with various partners to launch its "Help for Haiti" campaign and approximately \$47,000 was raised to help families of Haiti.
- The Lewis sisters who were considered homeless students at Sanders Clyde recently won first and second place in the county's spelling bee. A newspaper article sparked an outpouring of generous kindness from the community.
- Homelessness is a significant and pervasive challenge in the district. Many families have been devastated by the recent economic recession. The number of homeless students has doubled in the last year. The District and Homeless Education Coordinator, Sonya Jones are working on a "March for Homeless Children" campaign that will place donation boxes in all schools and offices for staff to fill with basic hygiene supplies like shampoo, soap, and deodorant. This is the kind of work that many schools have taken on but the district's goal is to galvanize these efforts around a specific time sensitive campaign.
- Dr. McGinley congratulated Dr. Vashti Washington on her new appointment to the position of Superintendent of Jasper County Schools.
- The most significant development over the last two weeks was the Board Workshop. Engineers from three different firms briefed the Board on seismic conditions of downtown schools. The engineers found that while Buist, Memminger, James Simons and Charleston Progressive buildings are well maintained, they are not built to today's seismic standards. Presentations from the workshop were immediately posted on the district's website, phone calls were made, fact sheets and letters were sent home to parents.
- Dr. McGinley said she believes it to be a moral imperative to ensure students and faculty are in safe buildings, even if it means temporarily relocating them to swing space. The district is reaching out to parents of studied schools, and beginning to research viable, short-term swing space options which will be brought back to the Board for information later in the month.
- Tuesday night - March 9th, the district will hold the first of four downtown meetings at Buist Academy. This will allow parents a chance to hear the school's report directly from the engineers. Although no options have been prepared for discussion at these meetings, the district will facilitate a survey with parents about which swing space factors concern them most. Parents will rate factors like proximity, timetable for return, and facility offerings which will be used to create a list of draft options for the Board on March 22nd.
- Following the March 2nd Board meeting, a second round of meetings with parents will be held to get direct feedback on proposed options. Feedback will be incorporated into the creation of final recommendations that will be brought before the Board for action in April.
- CCSD goals are to ensure student and faculty safety, to communicate, inform, and involve parents in the options development process; and bring the board a plan that includes not only viable short term options for downtown families, but a future vision to strengthen education and return them to the peninsula.

- In closing, Dr. McGinley said last Thursday the state of South Carolina was named a finalist in the highly competitive “Race to the Top” grant from the U.S. Department of Education. Forty one states applied, and only sixteen were selected finalists. If South Carolina makes the final cut, this would mean significant dollars—the “Race to the Top” pot of money exceeds \$4 billion and is in support of strategic teacher effectiveness systems, student achievement databases, and other reforms for the state and district.

V. VISITORS, PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS

5.1: Visitors, Public Communications

1. Mrs. Beverly Birch, a member of the Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance, addressed concerns about the recent seismic study and the impact it has on plans for Low County Technical Academy. Mrs. Birch urged the Board not to put plans for LCTA on hold. While she is concerned about the safety of students, she wants the Board to be sensitive about student needs and do what is in the best interest of the children. She also added that the entire state of South Carolina is earthquake prone and questioned why Sullivan’s Island Elementary was included in the District 20 seismic study.
2. Ms. Donna Murphy, a law student at the Charleston School of Law, addressed the Board about a volunteer effort at Burke. The effort is to create a system to help with interaction of parents with the law. She urged the Board to support the effort.
3. Ms. Barbara Taylor – PTA President at St. Johns High, Ms. Ann Jenkins – parent, and Ms. Elizabeth Robinson – student, expressed concerns related to the transfer of a Guidance Counselor at the school.

XI. APPROVAL OF MINUTES/EXECUTIVE SESSION AGENDA ITEM

Mr. Toler motioned, seconded by Rev. Collins approval of the Open and Executive Session minutes of February 1, 2010 and February 22, 2010. The motion was approved 9-0.

6.2: Motions of Executive Session of March 8, 2010

The Board approved the following motions that were made in Executive Session:

- 1.1: Student Transfer Appeals – The Board approve student transfers A, E, I, M, O, P, Q, S, and U. with a vote of 9-0. Student transfer appeals B, C, D, F, G, H, J, L, N and R were denied with a vote of 8-1 (Kandrac opposed). Student transfer appeals T and K were pulled for additional information.
- 1.2: Student Expulsion Appeal – The Board identified a date to hear a student expulsion appeal. No action was taken.
- 1.3: Legal Matters – The Board approved a motion to notify Susan Boykin Academy of the intent not to renew the school’s charter application. The motion was approved 8-1 (Kandrac opposed).

6.3: Financial Minutes of February 22, 2010

Mr. Toler motioned, seconded by Rev. Collins approval of the financial minutes of February 22, 2010, 2010. The motion was approved 9-0.

VII: MANAGEMENT REPORT

7.1: CCSD Property Management

The Board received the CCSD Property Management Report from Mr. Troy Williams as information.

VIII: CHARLESTON ACHIEVING EXCELLENCE UPDATE

8.1: Third Grade Academy Progress Update

Dr. Doug Gepford, Chief Academic Officer presented an update the progress of the Third Grade Academy Progress.

8.2: Sixth Grade Academy Progress Update

Dr. Doug Gepford, Chief Academic Officer presented an update on the progress of Sixth Grade Academy. This update was in response to MAP data requested by Rev. Collins and Mrs. Kandrac.

IX. POTENTIAL CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

9.1: 2010-2011 Academic Calendar Revision for Non Teaching Staff – *A recommendation to approve the 2010-2011 Academic Calendar Revision for Non Teaching Staff.* Mr. Meyers motioned, seconded by Mr. Fraser approval of the 2010 – 2011 Academic Calendar. The motion was approved 9-0.

9.2: Charleston Promise Neighborhood Three Year Commitment – *A recommendation to implement and provide startup funding for Charleston Promise Neighborhood. The funding source is General Operating Funds in the amount of \$50,000 in 2010, \$100,000 in 2011, and \$150,000 in 2012.* Mr. Meyers motioned, seconded by Mr. Fraser approval of the recommendation to implement and provide startup funding for Charleston Promise Neighborhood. The motion was approved 8-1 (Kandrac opposed).

9.3: Spring Break Shut-Down and Furlough - *A request to approve the closing of all schools and offices over Spring Break (April 2nd – April 9th). It is also recommended that the Board of Trustees approve all four days over Spring Break as voluntary, non paid days or allow the use of appropriate leave to be used for the otherwise scheduled work days.* Mr. Meyers motioned, seconded by Mr. Fraser approval of the Spring Break Shut-Down and Furlough. The motion was approved 8-1 (Collins opposed).

9.4: CCSD Board of Trustees Funding Resolution – *A recommendation to approve the following Funding Resolution.* Mr. Fraser motioned, seconded by Mrs. Oplinger approval of the funding resolution as indicated below. The motion was approved 7-2 (Kandrac and Ravenel opposed).

A RESOLUTION OF THE CHARLESTON COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF TRUSTEES

WHEREAS, South Carolina is experiencing a severe economic crisis that is significantly impacting state revenue; and

WHEREAS, over the past two fiscal years South Carolina K–12 public schools have received General Fund budget cuts totaling \$484 million which equates to more than a 20 percent reduction; and

WHEREAS, these budget cuts have reduced the base student cost to \$1,764 per student, reflecting 1996–1997 funding levels; and

WHEREAS, Education Improvement Act funds have been reduced \$112 million over that same two-year period; and

WHEREAS, the most recent figures for the proposed 2010-2011 state budget include additional EIA cuts of \$9 million, and EFA cuts of \$85 million, reflecting a base student cost of \$1,630 (1995 funding level); and

WHEREAS, further cuts in revenue will harm the education of every child in South Carolina, threatening the State's decades-long effort to raise the levels of educational achievement and personal income of the people of our State; and

WHEREAS, the negative impacts to educational achievement and personal income will significantly impair economic development efforts in our State; and

WHEREAS, Act 388 (property tax relief act of 2006) has severely hampered school districts' ability to raise local revenue to offset state funding shortfalls, and has had consequences that will, unless addressed legislatively, cause unintended shifts in the distribution of EFA funds; and

WHEREAS, the General Assembly continues to give favorable consideration to legislation such as H.3272, the point-of-sale bill, and H.4243, the charter school bill, that will negatively impact local school district revenue; and

WHEREAS, it is apparent to this Board that the K-12 educational system is at risk of significant damage due to the failure to take any action, either immediate or long-term, to address our State's fiscal crisis.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE CHARLESTON COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF TRUSTEES, DOES HEREBY STRONGLY URGE the South Carolina General Assembly to support public schools during this economic crisis and prevent the loss of more teacher jobs by providing new revenue streams such as removing tax exemptions, enforcing online sales tax collections, and increasing the State's lowest-in-the-nation cigarette tax to the national average while directing a portion of the proceeds collected from the increase in the cigarette tax to K-12 public education.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the South Carolina General Assembly place an immediate moratorium on the passage of any further laws that will grant additional tax exemptions, or increase school district financial obligations at the local level without adequate and recurring state funding.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Charleston County School District Board of Trustees supports the immediate enactment by the General Assembly of maximum financial flexibility for local school districts.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Charleston County School District Board of Trustees supports Legislative action this year to hold temporarily (for one year only) the Index of Taxpaying Ability published in February 2009 and use it for funding fiscal year 2010–2011.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be furnished to our members of the Legislative Delegation and communicated to our parents, businesses and school supporters.

APPROVED by the Charleston County School District Board of Trustees at its March 8, 2010 Board Meeting.

There being no further business to come before the Board, at 7:10 p.m. Mr. Fraser motioned, seconded Mr. Meyers to adjourn the meeting. The motion was approved by consensus.

Approved:

Nancy J. McGinley, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools