

CCSD BOARD OF TRUSTEES
May 6, 2014
SPECIAL CALLED MEETING
followed by a
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING
75 Calhoun St., Charleston, SC 29401

I. OPEN SESSION

CALL TO ORDER

II. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mrs. Coats called the Special Called meeting to order at 4:36pm. Then she called for a motion to go into Executive Session to discuss a legal matter.

2.1: Legal Matter

The Board will consider taking action on pending litigation.

III. OPEN SESSION

The Board reconvened in Open Session at 4:48pm with the following members present—Mrs. Cindy Coats – Chair and Mr. Tom Ducker – Vice Chair. The following members participated by phone Mr. Craig Ascue, Rev. Chris Collins, Mr. Chris Fraser, Mr. Michael Miller, and Mrs. Elizabeth Moffly. Dr. Nancy J. McGinley, Superintendent and Executive Secretary and Mr. Tripp Wiles were absent.

3.1: Adoption of Agenda

Mr. Ducker moved, seconded by Mr. Ascue to adopt the agenda. The motion was approved 8-0.

3.2: Legal Matter – Apple Charter Revocation/Settlement.

The Ad Hoc committee of the Whole will discuss the middle school options for District 20 and make a recommendation to the board.

Mr. Ducker moved, seconded by Mr. Ascue to accept the proposed agreement from the Apple Charter School.

At this time, Mrs. Coats announced that the of the Committee of the Whole, chaired by Mr. Ducker, would address issues related to the District 20 Community Task Force and make a recommendation that would go to the Board on May 12, 2014.

3.3: District 20 Community Task Force Discussion

The Committee of the Whole meeting was chaired by Mr. Tom Ducker – Vice Chair. Mr. Ducker called the meeting to order at 5:00pm. The following members were present – Mrs. Cindy Coats – Chair, Mr. Todd Garrett, and Mr. Tripp Wiles. Mr. Craig Ascue, Rev. Chris Collins, Mr. Michael Miller, and Mrs. Elizabeth Moffly participated by phone. Dr. Nancy McGinley, Superintendent and Executive Secretary also participated by phone.

The following staff members were present. Mr. Michael Bobby, Dr. Lisa Herring, Mr. Lou Martin, Dr. Brenda Nelson, Mr. Walt Pusey, Mrs. Terri Nichols, Mrs. Erica Taylor, and Mrs. Michele English-Watson. Mrs. Latisha Von Brandon participated by phone. And, Principal Anthony Dixon – Sanders Clyde ES, Maurice Cannon – Burke HS, and Dr. Corel Lenhardt.

Mr. Ducker explained the Committee of the Whole process and said a committee recommendation would be taken to the full Board on May 12th.

Mrs. Coats distributed copies of the District 20 Constituent Board meeting minutes, District 20 Task Force Committee meeting minutes and information Mr. Walt Pusey presented to the Strategic Education Committee. Then she said based on the information she provided, the Constituent Board continued discussing a stand-alone middle school. However they did not say if it should be on the Burke campus or not.

Mrs. Michele English-Watson said Tuesday, Feb 25th was the date of the last Task Force meeting. They recommended a free-standing middle school downtown to be included in the Capital Bldg Program. All District 20 sixth grade classes would move to Burke. Mrs. English-Watson shared other details on how the Task Force arrived at the decision that was made. While the Task Force tossed around the priority order of the program, location and discussed what it meant for other schools in the district. Several recommendations were made throughout the process. The three that surfaced the most were the ones the Task Force recommended. Mrs. English-Watson spoke of participants' frustration that resulted in the separation of some members.

Mr. Ducker said initially he was a proponent of the K-8 option. However, after Mr. Pusey's presentation, he was open to other options. He spoke of a recommendation made during an earlier meeting with Mr. Miller, Mr. Edward Jones, and Mr. Peter Lawrence.

Mr. Garrett said he attended a meeting in January or February that approximately 100 community members attended. He thought the recommendation made at that time was the final recommendation. Mrs. English-Watson said that was the night they shared a survey of the community for input. That was a public meeting for community participation. The results of the survey were included in the initial report she made to the Board. Some parents used hard copies, others did the survey electronically.

Mr. Bobby said Mr. Walt Pusey shared four different scenarios. Regardless to how it is sliced, unless every student attending District 20 schools are sent back to their home schools, there wouldn't be enough space to accommodate all students in K-8 programs.

During Mr. Pusey's overview of District 20 enrollment, Mr. Garrett pointed out an error in the enrollment number for James Simons. Mr. Lewis said while J Simons has an attendance zone but it's a district magnet.

Mr. Pusey continued sharing the enrollment information young students residing in District 20; non-district students attend District 20 schools, and the number District 20 students that attend schools in other districts. Mr. Lewis said that number was large because of performance issues both African Americans and Caucasians have chosen to transfer out of the district. However, the number of students leaving and those coming in are similar. There is a lot of movement going on in District 20.

Mr. Lewis said the Charleston County School of Math and Science School was established because of the need to have a good middle school downtown. Since the district didn't address it, the charter did. There are only 8% District 20 students at that school. It's a long-term continuity purpose that hasn't gotten be addressed.

Mr. Pusey said the assumption is that there would be no changes in enrollment. Therefore, the focus is on Memminger, Mitchell, and S. Clyde because the other District 20 schools are specialty schools. The Mitchell facility is the oldest and it was designed before the education specifications were enforced. The school was built in the late 80s is three story building. The recently built Sanders Clyde facility was constructed with middle school classes. S. Clyde was built for 500 for students in E. Childhood through grade 8. Therefore, smaller classes would not make a difference.

Mrs. Coats asked why Memminger wasn't built as a K-8 facility. Mr. Lewis said because there was no consensus from the Board to build it that way. Middle schools at that time were violent and a lot of the urban schools moved away from K-8 because they couldn't afford it. At the time when it was done, the district was desperate for solutions because nothing was working. The circumstances were different and there were crime in schools at that time. Different administration was in place at that time. There were even questions about keeping S. Clyde with the crime rate issues and flooding. The community supported the school and the building of S. Clyde has been positive. The community supported the school.

Mrs. Coats said she is looking for consistency with school size. Dr. McGinley said in hindsight it seems inconsistent. However, with S. Clyde, the school was failing and Memminger was making progress. It was on the heel of the closure of Rivers Middle. It seemed to be a good idea at that time and a trend used by major cities that had issues in MS. When Memminger was rebuilt, the district was in a different place at that time and 7-12 grade programs had already been established and successful. The cost of having MS and HS faculty was also a factor. S. Clyde recommendation was made to keep students safe.

Mr. Pusey said Title I schools receives extra funds that was used to purchase additional teachers. If more kids are assigned to a classroom, that would not work because 29 desks could not fit into classrooms at Mitchell. The scenario of having 256 students in a school with one teacher per class was explored.

Mrs. Coats suggested looking at data of the number of students residing in District 20, without increased students in classrooms. She asked what would happen. Mr. Pusey shared the enrollment assumptions to include students from other districts and said it would be difficult to add 7th and 8th to each school. Also, the space configuration is not there. There are core basic classrooms that would not accommodate the needs of students in 8th grade. Due to program issues, many students opt to attend schools elsewhere. Mr. Lewis said the analysis was reviewed and different scenarios were considered. The math would work if all the District 20 schools configured for K-8.

Mrs. Coats asked about enrollment numbers for District 20 students residing in the District. Mr. Lewis said students attending private schools would not impact the decision. It is necessary to only look at the students that attend public schools. Mrs. Coats asked for the live in and attend out data.

Mr. Garrett said he understood the numbers. To run failing schools is costly. There are segregated minority schools. Parents that could transfer children out do transfer them out. It is expensive to run schools when the results are not the same. Results at segregated schools are much lower. Mr. Garrett shared the statistics and said the expensive situations reveal poor results. He asked Dr. McGinley if parents trust to send their children to the schools. He asked her recommendation to reach the needed results in five year. He said 30% residents attend other schools. Dr. McGinley said there has been an exodus of middle school students and students at other levels. Schools have been racially unbalanced except for Buist. Now progress is being made with the Montessori program at James Simons. She said a stand-alone middle school is what she recommends and it is what the parents have been asking for. The Senior Leadership Team spoke about it last week. The plan is to move middle school students from Burke to the Rhetts facility. There they would have exposure to an advanced program. She also supports that S. Clyde shouldn't be dismantled since they are showing strong academic gains. However, Sanders Clyde is not the solution. A K-8 program at Memminger would be problematic because there is no room. A K-8 at Mitchell could not be done unless a separate building is built. The community wants a stand-alone program separated from Burke similar to Mt. Pleasant and what is planned for District 10. She wants to accomplish with dignity and respect. S. Clyde has shown strong results with the MS program. She said if parents in D20 want to keep their kids in K-8 that's fine. The stand along middle program could be done without S. Clyde.

Mr. Garrett said he has heard from the Superintendent and Principals. The K-8 program is a short term temporary solution. He said if it achieves what is needed he would support it. Dr. McGinley said it is a short term temporary solution that wouldn't work in three years. She said elementary certification would not provide the academic MS experience that is needed. MS students need the transition experience in a MS setting. She served as principal at a middle and high school levels. The members of the District 10 Task Force with Mr. Paul Padron and Mrs. Mary Runyon are serious working to sell the middle school in the West Ashley area. That's what needs to happen in District 20. However, that can't happen by August 2014. But could happen in August 2015.

Mr. Ascue said he supports the stand-alone middle school. However, he doesn't want to rush through it. He wants the community to weigh in to get more support for it.

Mr. Lewis said the area has transitioned in District 20. He spoke about the development taking place in Burke's back yard. He said folks will want to get into school that would help students link up with MUSC. He wants to build a program that the community would benefit from.

Mr. Wiles said since his tenure he has seen all the things that cost money. He asked if there is money to do all of what was being requested. Mr. Garrett concluded that there was enough space at Burke.

Mr. Ducker asked Mr. Martin to share the recommendation made at the meeting held earlier with Mr. Michael Miller, Mr. Lou Martin, Mr. Edward Jones, Mr. Tony Lewis and Mr. Peter Lawrence. Mr. Martin shared the following:

Beginning 2014 - 2015

1. 6th grade from Memminger and Mitchell will move to Burke Middle School beginning 2014 - 2015.
2. Burke Middle School will remain as part of the 6 - 12 Burke MSHS for 2014 - 2015.
3. S-C parents in grades 6, 7, and 8 will have the option of transferring to Burke for 2014 - 2015 - the County Board will facilitate this transfer process.
4. The Burke Middle School Curriculum will include an Advanced Studies Program (Haut Gap Model) in addition to a standard curriculum for implementation in 2014 - 2015.
5. Summer programs will be implemented for grades 6 - 8.
6. Dr. Lenhardt will initiate a marketing plan for the dissemination of the middle school curriculum to stakeholders in the community.

Beginning 2015 -2016

1. The Burke Middle School at the Rhetts Campus will be a 6 - 8 stand alone middle school with a separate BEDS code and disconnected for the Burke High School.
2. Sanders - Clyde grades 6, 7, and 8 will move to the Burke Middle School at the Rhetts Building.
3. The County Board will consider following successful adoption of the tax referendum and potentially construct a new building for the Burke Middle School.
4. For 2015 - 2016 the County Board will sustain the funding for Burke High School as it existed for 2014 - 2015.

Mrs. Coats said the intent is to not operate two MS programs and pull Sanders Clyde in the following year. Mrs. Coats said the decision is based on what would produce the best quality education.

Dr. McGinley said the S. Clyde population is 99% poverty and because of needs there is a difference. She asked

the board to consider that one size may not fit all. Parents could have the option of sending their children there or not. The Board has been good with extending input to parents. She would like to see that happen at S. Clyde and learn if they are satisfied with the K-8 program.

Mrs. Coats said if two K-8 schools were downtown, they would still land in the same 9th grade class.

Note: Mr. Garrett left the meeting at 6:16pm. However, he called in at that time.

Dr. McGinley said a comprehensive of the middle school program that offers wrap around services to a high poverty group. Mrs. Coats said they have the same situation in N. Charleston.

Mr. Miller who participated by phone earlier arrived at 6:18pm. Mr. Garrett said he would move to approve a motion to postpone decision on moving the students at Sanders Clyde prior to 2015.

Mr. Miller said the Board has to address the issue of race in District 20 schools. There has always been an issue with race in District 20. There are only two good schools in District 20, Charleston Development Academy and Buist. However, only African Americans attend Charleston Development Academy. So they may not be comfortable sending their students there. He suggested the elephant in the room be addressed. Must ask why parents aren't sending students to schools that are performing in District 20. McGinley agreed that District 20 schools have been segregated. She was at J. Simons and Memminger ribbon cutting and those are starting to reflect the racial composition of individuals living in District 20. She said College of Charleston parents are sending their children there. Those schools are on the move. Changes come with improvement in what is being offered. She suggested it be done strategically similar to what was done at H. Gap. She said it could happen. There is an influx of those that came from integrated schools up north where students go to school together and play together. As recommended by Mr. Garrett, she attended a soccer game and saw racially integrated sports team. If kids are playing together, why can't they go to school together?

Mr. Lewis said Charleston Charter School of Math and Science is concerned that it is as much a class issue as it is a race issue.

Mr. Ascue said the door-to-door approach is needed to sell the academically rigorous program that has something for everyone. He suggested it not be rushed because it is not the same Jim Crowe South. The District must force the change with academically rigorous programs. He said the process should be slowed down. Mrs. Coats agreed with Mr. Ascue. She said the wrap-around services are necessary for poverty students and it is not a rushed project because it has been in motion for 24 months. Mr. Ducker said the provision of the proposal is to do a marketing program. It may not be successful if she is saying it may be done. She must be able to say it will be done. Mr. Miller said it should be moved at light speed. He said he worked with staff on the West Ashley merger. Implementing part of it in August is not too fast when the D10 project is moving ahead.

Mr. Ascue said he may have used the wrong term when he mentioned rushing the project. But the dynamics are different downtown from West Ashley. He wants someone to ask what the school should look like. Mr. Ducker said Dr. Lenhardt is only waiting on a Board directive to proceed.

Mr. Lewis said from a staff perspective, there is a lot on the district's plate. If a project hasn't gotten started, it may not happen. He said H. Gap and West Ashley projects are the results of deliberate projects. Staff could not make it happen quickly. If considered, the Board would be planning for failure.

Mr. Garret said the program should be sold to the community beforehand because teacher contracts went out April 15th. Moving 6th grade now is okay. However, the other part shouldn't be determined. Mrs. Coats said the Board has a tendency of changing the plans. Mr. Miller said there could potentially be five new members in November.

Mr. Ducker said the community is tired of "the can being kicked". They want a decision from the Board. Mrs. Coats said a commitment should be made now. The only thing that could happen is putting the 6th grade at Rhett.

Mr. Garrett moved, seconded by Mr. Ascue to make a recommendation to the full Board to implement a stand-alone middle school that would open August 2015 at the Rhett facility. The middle school would start with 6th grade middle school students from Memminger and Mitchell. Parents at S. Clyde would be allowed to make a voluntary transfer decision if they chose to move a student to the stand alone middle school.

Dr. McGinley suggested the Board make a stronger statement by asking staff take concrete steps by doing the following

- Apply for MS Beds Code
- Establish a Project Team to plan for a program that mirrors the one in the West Ashley area and bring a report

back to the board five months later on marketing, etc.

_ Establish a timeline for implementation.

The vote was 5-1 (Ascue, Coats, Ducker, Garrett, and Wiles supported the motion; Miller opposed).

The following Staff and Community Members addressed the Board

1. Ms. Jennifer McMillan, a Burke MS teacher, addressed the committee in support of the recommendation.
2. Mr. Peter Lawrence thanked the Board and Mr. Martin for including him in the process. He said the Horizon Proposal would bring in 2,000 and the Spring St. Development would bring in 200 students. Another huge development is coming that would move students in. Many white families support what the Board Committee is recommending. If it is not approved, they will send their children elsewhere. He said they are looking for Early Childhood programs at Mitchell. They are behind the proposal. Other individuals from other areas may try to say what is best for District 20.
3. Mr. Zachery Viscidi, a S. Clyde teacher, opposed to a stand-alone middle school. He said a building would not cure the problem. He shared a handout to support his concern.
4. Mr. Anthony Dixon shared a handout with the Board and said he supports the decision and allowing parental input. He shared an overview of middle school options.
5. Dr. Corel Lenhardt shared information on the comprehensive curriculum. She has been shadowing principal at H. Gap and has done her homework. She suggested the Board consider a well thought out program. Mrs. Coats asked if the curriculum shared was being taught at S. Clyde. Dr. Lenhardt said this is part of the University Program. She said it is well thought out to prepare students to be successful in high schools. It's a Pre AP program. CBC asked if some of the curriculum could be integrated in Middle Schools now. Dr. Lenhardt said she would look at it. Mr. Cannon said they are already doing some of it now. MM asked Maurice Cannon what is being done now to prepare students. Mr. Cannon said they implement some aspects of what Dr. Lenhardt spoke of at Burke. Dr. Lenhardt said that's the reason for success. Literacy done by the district is closing the gap. He spoke of curriculum advantages offered to 7-8th grade students. He said students in MS are taking Foreign Language and other HS courses. They have pockets at Burke but the effort is to expand the program.
6. Mr. Edward Jones said they want the same opportunity in D20 offered in other districts. He suggested the Board move forward with the proposal. He wants what is best for the kids in District 20.

The meeting adjourned at 6:55pm.