

Charlotte, North Carolina
January 9, 2001

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE
CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG BOARD OF EDUCATION**

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education held a Regular Board Meeting on January 13, 2001, in the Board Room of the Education Center. The meeting began at 6:00 p.m. and was televised by CMS Channel 21.

Present: Arthur Griffin, Jr., Chairperson;
John Lassiter, Vice Chairperson;
Wilhelmenia Rembert, Member At Large;
Wilma Leake, District 2; George Dunlap, District 3;
Louise Woods, District 4; Molly Griffin, District 5;
Lindalyn Kakadelis, District 6.

Absent: No Board members were absent.

Also present at the request of the Board were Eric J. Smith, Superintendent; James L. Pughsley, Deputy Superintendent; Frances Haithcock, Associate Superintendent for Education Services; Greg Clemmer, Associate Superintendent for Operations; other members of the Executive and Senior Staffs; Maurice Green, General Counsel; James L. Clark, Executive Director of Administration; and Carole Hamrick, Manager of Board Services, serving as Clerk.

Call to Order

Chairperson Griffin called the meeting to order and asked that the Board and members of the audience join in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. Mr. Griffin called upon Dr. Rembert who expressed her thanks to all applicants who had expressed an interest in the vacant Board position. Dr. Rembert commented on the impressive background and abilities of each of the applicants. **Upon motion by Dr. Rembert and seconded by Ms. Woods, the Board voted unanimously of those present to select Robert Simmons to fill the District I vacant Board position.** Mr. Griffin recognized Mr. Simmons at this time and stated that the installation ceremony for Mr. Simmons would be held Thursday, January 11, 2001, at West Charlotte High School.

Mr. Lassiter recognized Mrs. Sharnetta Gilmore as the November Bus Driver of the Month. Mrs. Gilmore is an eight-year veteran driver for CMS. Mr. Tom Latimer, her supervisor in the Independence Transportation Area, states that "Sharnetta's great care for the students who ride on her bus is revealed by her excellent performance. She is punctual, safety-minded and a positive example to others." Mrs. Gilmore says that she

MINUTES APPROVED 1-23-2001

“enjoys driving a school bus because of the children” and adds, “when I can do something to positively change the life of a child, it is all worthwhile.”

Sharnetta Gilmore will receive a monetary award for this recognition and will compete for Bus Driver of the Year in May. Mr. Lassiter presented Mrs. Gilmore with a certificate of appreciation from the Board of Education.

Mr. Griffin introduced Toni Freeman who is the Board's representative on the Citizens' Capital Budget Advisory Committee. She was selected by the Board at the December 12, 2000 Board meeting.

Action Items

Dr. Smith presented for approval the administrative appointment of Frances Boney Bessellieu as Director of Reading. Ms. Bessellieu received her B.A. in Communications from UNC-Wilmington, her B.A. in Education from UNC-Wilmington, and her M.A. in Education from UNC-Wilmington. She holds NC Certification in the following areas: Curriculum Instructional Specialist, Behaviorally Emotionally Disabled K-12, and Mentally Disabled K-12. Ms. Bessellieu held several positions in the New Hanover County Schools and also worked as a graduate assistant at UNC-Wilmington. **Upon motion by Ms. Woods and seconded by Ms. Griffin, the Board voted unanimously of those present to approve Ms. Frances Boney Bessellieu as Director of Reading.**

Dr. Smith shared with the Board that Angela Fryer has resigned her position as principal at Cochrane Middle School and will be relocating to Winston Salem. Effective January 16, 2001, Doris Wilson will be transferred from principal of Montclair Elementary School to principal of Cochrane Middle School. At that time, Ann Hardin will become acting principal of Montclair Elementary School.

Dr. Smith then introduced Betsy Williamson, Executive Coordinator, to introduce the proposed 2001-02 School Calendar. Ms. Williamson shared with the Board that all schools had responded in the selection process of the calendar and the schools overwhelmingly preferred Calendar B. **Upon motion by Ms. Woods and seconded by Dr. Leake, the Board voted unanimously to approve Calendar B as the 2001-02 School Calendar.**

Dr. Leake thanked Ms. Williamson and the Calendar Committee for their hard work and dedication. She asked about the protected school-based days for teachers; Ms. Williamson responded that schools have 3½ days protected for inservice and schools have the flexibility to select those days. Dr. Leake asked that the ½ day that teachers have to attend professional meetings be protected as well. Mr. Lassiter commented that he had liked the idea of the long fall break that was contained in Calendar A and asked that this possibility be considered in the future. He also commented that families needed to be informed about the shorter Christmas holiday break. Dr. Smith responded that this would be communicated to parents early and often.

Consent Items

Upon motion by Dr. Leake and seconded by Ms. Griffin, the Board unanimously approved the following consent items:

Approval of Minutes

The following minutes were approved:

- December 12, 2000 Closed Session
- December 12, 2000 Regular Board Meeting

Approval of Construction Items

- Approval of construction contract for Leadership Academy. This will add supplementary cooling to a meeting room at the front of the building. Perform associated mechanical and electrical work. Total use of funds is \$18,800 and Source of Funds is Capital Replacement.
- Approval of construction contract for Greenway Park. This will replace a section of 3" plastic water supply piping. Total use of funds is \$17,500 and Source of Funds is Capital Replacement.
- Approval of equipment purchase for West Charlotte High School. This contract will provide for the purchase of an HVAC and dehumidification system in the swimming pool building. Total use of funds is \$81,981 and Source of Funds is 1995 Bond monies.
- Approval of mechanical contract for Midwood High School. This will replace the hot water piping located in the crawl space under the administration offices. Total use of funds is \$29,500 and Source of Funds is Capital Replacement.

Approval of Student Reassignment

The Board approved 39 student reassignment requests in Category I; denied 17 student reassignment requests in Category II; and approved 1 student reassignment request in Category III.

Board Discussion of Consent Items

Dr. Leake asked when Piedmont Middle School would be on the agenda for their construction needs. Dr. Smith replied it was not clear when this construction would occur since those students at Piedmont would no longer be able to relocate to Hawthorne Middle School since the Choice Plan was not to be implemented. Plans for Piedmont are being reviewed and evaluated, Dr. Smith stated.

Ms. Woods asked if the construction at Greenway Park Elementary School would correct the water situation and Dr. Smith replied that it would.

Reports/Information Items

Low Performing Schools

Dr. Smith called upon Dr. James Pughsley, Deputy Superintendent, for an update on the low performing schools. Dr. Pughsley stated that the NC Department of Public Instruction had identified four schools in Charlotte-Mecklenburg that were low performing schools – Olympic High School, Thomasboro Elementary School, Wilson Middle School, and West Charlotte High School. Three of these schools – Thomasboro, Wilson, West Charlotte – were assigned state assistance teams; Olympic was assigned a team from CMS. The action plans to address the needs of each school were presented and approved by the Board in August.

Dr. John C. Fries, Regional Assistant Superintendent, focused on the support, areas of focus and the observed changes at Olympic High School. He noted the following evaluative conclusions:

- The newly appointed principal at Olympic High School is a strong and capable instructional leader. If given the necessary time and support, the needed improvements will take place.
- Transition and changes in the administrative team have somewhat delayed the smooth implementation of new procedures.
- Significant progress is evident but it is slow.
- Much of the first semester has been devoted to establishing order, maintaining discipline, and orienting staff and students to new expectations.
- The Local Assistance Team has been a valuable asset in supporting both administrators and teachers.
- To ensure success, the energies in second semester must be spent on enhancement and delivery of instruction.

Beverly M. Moore, Regional Assistant Superintendent, focused on the support, areas of focus and the observed changes at Thomasboro Elementary School. She noted the following evaluative conclusions:

- The administration has provided the leadership necessary to address the school's challenges.
- The lead teacher model, implemented by the administration, has proven effective in providing support for new and less experienced teachers.
- The quality and delivery of the instructional program has been positively impacted by the increase in the number of experienced teachers in the classrooms.
- Implementation of the A+ Initiative has been systematic and the quality of the instructional delivery continues to improve as well as the procedures for data collection and analysis.

Beverly Moore also focused on the support, areas of focus and the observed changes at Wilson Middle School. She noted the following evaluative conclusions:

- Schoolwide organizational procedures that ensure a structured operation of the campus and a supportive school climate have been inconsistently implemented.

- The quality and delivery of the instructional program, in many cases, is negatively impacted by the high number of lateral entry and novice teachers. Even with the support of three academic facilitators, the quality of the instructional programs remains largely unchanged.
- Despite increased administrative staff, student behavior continues to challenge the inexperienced teachers and negatively impacts the learning environment.
- Frequent teacher absences and lack of substitutes impair the instructional program.
- Unresolved afternoon daily bus delays affect available inservice time for teachers and increase discipline problems.
- The construction project and delays further compound the already fragile campus environment.
- Based on the first quarter assessment and the second quarter mini-assessments, overall academic performance indicates that approximately 40-50% of the students are performing on grade level. This compares with 44.1% of students on grade level on the EOGs in June 2000.
- Based on the available data and observable evidence to date, the changes that have been made are unlikely to sufficiently impact ABC goals. Therefore, the school is at risk for being named low performing for a second consecutive year.

Calvin Wallace, Regional Assistant Superintendent, focused on the support, areas of focus and the observed changes at West Charlotte High School. He noted the following evaluative conclusions:

- The principal and staff are positive and supportive of the school improvement efforts.
- Poor student attendance has contributed to the low performing levels.
- One-third of the teaching staff has less than three years of experience.
- A large number of students enter school without meeting proficiency levels requiring a large number of remediation classes.
- A concentrated, well-designed effort must be made during the second semester to assure significant academic improvement.
- The State Assistance Team has been extremely beneficial in supporting the administration and staff.
- Significant improvement in school operation and management is evident.

Dr. Pughsley summarized the reports by the Regional Assistant Superintendents by stating that these were mid-year reports and further information would be shared once the results from testing were received.

At this time, Mr. Griffin introduced members of Boy Scout Troop #99 who were attending the Board meeting as they work on their Citizenship in the Community merit badge. Their parent leaders are David Weeks and Lynn Latham.

Board Discussion on Low Performing Schools

Mr. Griffin commented that the intervention plans for the above schools generally lacked the necessary details to access measurable outcomes that would enable the Board to request additional funding from the County Commissioners. The need is evident, he

stated, to access the needs and request these additional resources from the community at large. In addition, Mr. Griffin stated that the school district needs to be more efficient with the dollars we have to be more strategic. Dr. Pughsley commented that additional information on Mr. Griffin's comments would be provided in the future.

Dr. Leake shared her concern of the same schools continuing to have the same problems for 2-3 years. She stated that Central Office needed to do a better job of providing quality, strong, and experienced teachers in these schools. She requested a definition of monitoring versus support. She also stated that parents should be held accountable for the progress at the schools as well. She stated that Wilson Middle School and West Charlotte High School have unique problems and encouraged staff to "roll up their sleeves" and exhibit how things need to be done at these two schools to ensure successes. She suggested using retired personnel and National Board Certified Teachers at these schools as well. Dr. Leake requested information on the number of students enrolled in the Management School and Learning Academy. She stated that expectations for public schools are lower than private, charter, and other schools.

Mr. Lassiter asked for information on teacher experience/exits at Olympic High School as compared to the other high schools in CMS. He also commented that family and community involvement is very obvious at Thomasboro Elementary School. How does this compare to other schools in the district, he asked. Mr. Lassiter also requested information and data on other schools in the district that might be in trouble next year and requested information on the status of the Ford Foundation Grant at Wilson Middle School. Ms. Moore responded that the Ford Foundation Grant is an eight-year program; there is a part-time person working with the 7th grade teachers; and the school is partnering with UNCC and Johnson C. Smith as a part of the grant. Mr. Lassiter asked about the "layering of programs" and commented that so many programs might be at cross-purposes for a school. Dr. Smith replied that the Board would be provided a list of the programs and initiatives at Wilson Middle School. Mr. Lassiter asked about the status and expectations at West Charlotte High School. Dr. Smith replied that staff expects success at all of the low performing schools and will continue to insist upon this success.

Dr. Rembert commented that teacher and staff quality in the low performing schools is paramount. There must be high expectations and rigorous curriculum, she said. There must also be consistent parental involvement and community involvement. Dr. Rembert stated that professional development for teachers is crucial for the purposes of recruitment and retention of these teachers. She stated that more balance in teacher assignments to schools was needed. She asked about the attendance and tardy problems at the low performing schools and their relation to the health needs of these students. Dr. Pughsley responded that the school district has focused its efforts in seven schools this year by including case managers to follow the attendance and tardy problems. He further commented that the drop-out rate has declined somewhat this year.

Ms. Woods suggested asking the Ford Foundation folks what they have found in the schools. Dr. Smith stated that the system stays in regular contact with these folks and has

integrated their suggestions and findings in the programs at these schools. Ms. Woods also stated that the school district has systemically failed these low performing schools when it comes to staffing issues. No school, she stated, should have 20% of its teaching staff as new teachers. Dr. Pughsley commented that the Board had approved funding last year for a program offering a Master's Degree to teachers in a partnership with UNCC and Winthrop. Eighty teachers from the low performing schools are enrolled in this program at UNCC. Lateral entry teachers are participating in partnerships with Johnson C. Smith University and Livingstone College. Ms. Woods requested information on the following for each school in the district:

- % of teachers with less than 4 years teaching experience
- % of teachers who are lateral entry
- % of teachers who are not at or above standard
- Why are teachers leaving (based on exit interviews)
- When are teachers leaving

Ms. Woods stated that parents at every school should have a basic expectation of the level of experience of every teacher. She commented on attendance issues at the schools and asked when parents are contacted with absences. She also asked about the challenge given to accelerated students at these schools.

Ms. Griffin stated that staff at West Charlotte High School should let parents know when there are attendance problems. She also said that she serves on the policy committee for implementation of the Ford Foundation Grant. As a part of this committee's function, they are looking at why teachers are leaving the low performing schools. She asked about the focus lessons being taught at these schools and how these lessons are integrated with the other programs being taught. Ms. Moore replied that the schools are using the focused lessons with the structured programs thus allowing the prescribed curriculum to work. Dr. Smith commented that high schools also have focused lessons.

Ms. Kakadelis asked if the case managers are meeting with parents and Dr. Pughsley replied they were meeting with parents if appropriate. Ms. Kakadelis stated that a child is the parent's responsibility and that teamwork between the case manager and parent will provide success for the student. She asked for information on the Ford Foundation teacher exit information. She also asked about the status of resources for students currently at Olympic High School who might be assigned to the New Southwest High School. Dr. Pughsley responded that the needed resources would follow the student.

AVID Results for 1999-2000

Dr. Susan Agruso introduced Sara Willis, Director of the AVID Program, and Terri Mozingo, the Middle School Coordinating Director. They are responsible, she said, for the AVID Program. AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination) was initially implemented in 1997-98. 41 high schools and middle schools are currently participating; the program includes students in grades 6-11 in 1999-00. AVID is a program designed to provide college preparation and motivation for students traditionally underrepresented in colleges and universities including minority students, economically disadvantaged

students, students with limited English proficiency (ESL), and first-generation college students. AVID methodologies include college tutors and study groups, Cornell note-taking, organization skills, test-taking and writing skills, motivational activities, and field trips to colleges. The four main aspects of the evaluation include student demographics, student achievement levels, student enrollment in higher-level courses, and teacher, student and parent perceptions of the program. The comparison group is comprised of a group of students similar to the AVID students in terms of grade level and 1996-97 Reading EOG achievement levels. Comparing the AVID students to this group of similar students allows the system to determine if the AVID program is successful in raising AVID student achievement levels and increasing the number of AVID students enrolling in higher-level coursework. Student demographics point out that high percentages of minority and economically disadvantaged students are enrolled, and that discipline and attendance records of students meet district program standards. Student achievement levels show that reading and math achievement levels of middle school AVID students generally increased over time, and reading and math achievement levels of middle school AVID students were usually higher than the comparison group and the CMS average. AVID teachers and students rate AVID students higher than non-AVID students in the following categories:

- Class participation
- Writing skills
- Motivation and eagerness to learn
- Preparation for college
- Completion of homework
- Enjoying school
- Regular attendance in class
- Fewer behavioral problems
- Study skills
- Vision and plan for college

Parent response to the AVID Program includes the following:

- 82% received adequate information about AVID
- 81% were invited to parent meetings and workshops
- 78% were well informed about AVID events
- 80% believe that AVID provides the necessary support for their children
- 78% indicate that AVID has been a positive influence on their children's attitudes toward school

AVID is recommended by:

- 97% of the teachers, who recommend the program to students
- 94% of the teachers, who recommend the program to other teachers
- 87% of the students, who recommend the program to other students
- 85% of the parents, who recommend the program to other parents and students

Summary of teacher, student, and parent perceptions include the following:

- All three groups recommend the program

- Parents are positive about the extent of parent participation in the program and the effect AVID has had on their children
- Teachers and students rate the program as effective

Board Discussion of AVID Program

Mr. Griffin asked Ms. Willis what the average 6th grader looked like. Her response included the average 6th grader has grades of Bs and Cs on grade level for their EOGs. Students are selected for the AVID Program by a selection rubric and they are interviewed for the program. They are taught organizational skills; their binders are checked weekly for an indication of their organizational skills.

Ms. Kakadelis asked for a breakout of the criteria used for the 4 categories of students in AVID and wants the specific numbers in the comparison group to see who the program is designed for. Ms. Griffin asked if the school district is reaching all students who could benefit from AVID. Dr. Smith replied that funding is an issue for this program. Ms. Kakadelis asked how many more students could benefit from the program who are not currently enrolled in the AVID Program. She suggested paying close attention to the low number of males enrolled in the program. She also asked for the first generation of college students in AVID as compared to the comparison group. Ms. Kakadelis asked about the impact of the program on motivated students. Ms. Willis replied that support groups make the difference and that students stay in the program because of the motivation received from the support groups.

Dr. Rembert commented on the wording of "students with average ability." She suggested that "students with average performance" might be more prescriptive. She also asked what makes the AVID Program cost prohibitive. Ms. Willis replied that the training for teachers and materials are very expensive. Mr. Lassiter asked if the college bound students in the AVID Program are taking the gateway courses they should take. Dr. Smith replied that information would be provided for Board members.

Dr. Leake suggested the AVID Program should be in the low performing schools as well. She asked how many AVID teachers are 1st, 2nd, 3rd year teachers; how many are lateral entry teachers; and where the AVID Programs are located. Dr. Smith replied that AVID is in all middle and high schools. Ms. Kakadelis also requested the SAT scores of the AVID students; the percentage of students who don't remain in the AVID Program; and a cost analysis of the use of tutors.

2001-02 Student Assignment Plan

Dr. Smith called upon Eric Becoats, Chief Officer for Demographics, for the presentation on the proposed 2001-02 Student Assignment Plan. Mr. Becoats introduced the planning staff and thanked them for their support.

Mr. Becoats stated the methodology for the above plan included the following aspects:

- The diversity (race, socio-economic status, EC and ESL status of students) of the school district was taken into account.
- Race will be categorized by white and non-white (black, Hispanic, Asian, Native American and multi-racial).
- EC – Exceptional Children and ESL – English as a Second Language.
- The capacity of each school was taken into account as well as new developments.

The highlights of the plan include increased stability for the majority of high school students; approximately 2,185 students were reassigned; the proposal will decrease the number of mobile units required at the high school level; boundaries of three current high schools were affected: North Mecklenburg, Olympic and South Mecklenburg; all other high school boundaries were unaffected by this proposal.

The 2001-02 proposed high school boundary changes are as follows:

- Programmatic – Move the French Immersion Program from Reid Park Elementary to Bruns Elementary. Move the Japanese Immersion Program from Sedgefield Elementary to Bruns Elementary. Beginning 2001-02 Bruns Elementary will house the French, Japanese and German Immersion Programs, in addition to Environmental Studies.
- Programmatic – Students currently in the IB Program at North Mecklenburg will be allowed to remain in the program at North Mecklenburg. Allow students in the new north or North Mecklenburg attendance areas to attend the IB Program at North Mecklenburg.

Mr. Becoats then explained the new boundary lines for each affected high school (maps are incorporated herein and made a part of these minutes).

Board Discussion of the Student Assignment Plan

Ms. Griffin wanted to verify that the IB Program would continue at North Mecklenburg for those students who wanted to participate in the program whether they are in the North Mecklenburg or new north high schools attendance boundaries; Dr. Smith verified this information. Dr. Leake asked if the IB Program at Independence High School was being maintained as well; Dr. Smith replied it was. Ms. Woods asked about the Greenville elementary school site and Piedmont Middle School site; Dr. Smith replied that the three new elementary schools would be utilized as swing space schools and that Piedmont Middle School students would remain at Piedmont. Ms. Woods asked about space availability at Hawthorne Middle School for the students at Piedmont and if there was any space available at the swing space schools for children in the community to attend these schools. Dr. Smith cited the problematic issues that face a school when two programs are housed at one location.

Dr. Leake asked how many children are within the walking distance of the Greenville site who could attend that school. She also asked how many students from Lincoln Heights will be assigned there as a swing space school. Could trailers accommodate a second

program at the site, she asked, so that the students in immediate area could attend as well as the students from Lincoln Heights.

Ms. Kakadelis asked for the criteria for a school becoming an Equity + school.

Mr. Griffin requested that planning staff be made available for Board members following the Thursday evening public hearing.

Reports from Board Members

Ms. Kakdelis reminded the Superintendent of her previous requests for two charts. Dr. Smith replied they would be provided.

Ms. Griffin attended the IB graduation at Myers Park High School and commented on the 78 students who passed the difficult exam. It was a very inspirational night, she said.

Ms. Woods shared a reading and commented that she sensed a strong commitment from the community to move forward on student assignment. She stated that it is important to reach a resolution for student assignment issues and equity issues for all children.

Mr. Lassiter expressed his concerns regarding the state mandate for weighted quality points and requested current feedback on this issue. Dr. Smith shared his concerns on this same issue with the Board. He stated that this issue is alive and seems to have a "life of its own." He indicated that this would lower the standards of NC high schools and reduce rigor in high school courses. Ms. Griffin asked if, by using local control, could the district promote rigor.

Dr. Leake thanked Ms. Woods for her comments. She also informed the Board that Ms. Nellie Love, teacher at Vance High School, had received her lung transplant, and reminded the community that the school district does care about teachers. She also attended the retirement reception for Judge Robert Potter.

Adjournment

Upon motion by Dr. Leake and seconded by Dr. Rembert, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn to Closed Session for the following purposes:

- **To instruct our staff and negotiating agents concerning the Board's position in negotiating the material terms of a proposed contract for the acquisition of real property. This is allowed under Section 143-318.11(a)(5) of the North Carolina General Statutes; and**
- **To discuss a personnel matter pursuant to Section 143-318.11(a)(6) of the North Carolina General Statutes.**

The Regular Board meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.



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Chairperson



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carol Harrick". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent loop at the end.

Clerk