

August 13, 2020  
6:00 p.m.

The Fannin County Board of Education met in regular session with the following members present: Chad Galloway, Chair; Terry Bramlett, Vice-Chair; Bobby Bearden; Mike Cole; and Lewis DeWeese. All members were present. The meeting was held at the Fannin County High School (FCHS) Performing Arts Center (PAC) to allow for adequate social distancing due to concerns with COVID-19.

The meeting was called to order by Chad Galloway, Chair.

Motion by Lewis DeWeese, seconded by Terry Bramlett, to approve the consent agenda. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Approve the agenda.

Approve the meeting minutes from July 9, 2020, at 5:30 p.m.; July 9, 2020, at 6:00 p.m.; and July 23, 2020, at 3:30 p.m.

Director of Applied and Integrated Instruction Lucas Roof shared the following special recognitions:

- Fannin County School System Maintenance Department for their work to get the new Welding Lab ready for the start of school.
- Fannin County's Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) Advisor Lauren Owenby and members who competed and placed in the top ten at the national level. These members include: Sierra Reynolds, Sydney Tarpley, Isabella Tocci, Bailey Pettit, Alexis Hill, Anna Rhodes, and Gracie Stewart.
- Mr. Charles Spencer from Tennessee Valley Robotics for providing \$5,000 to Fannin County Elementary Schools for robotics.

Motion by Terry Bramlett, seconded by Mike Cole, to go into Executive Session to discuss or deliberate upon the appointment, employment, compensation, hiring, disciplinary action or dismissal, or periodic evaluation or rating of a public officer or employee or to interview applicants for the position of superintendent; (O.C.G.A. § 50-14-3(b)(2)). All members voted yes; motion carried.

Motion by Bobby Bearden, seconded by Terry Bramlett, to resume the regular meeting. All members voted yes; motion carried.

No action was taken during Executive Session.

Motion by Lewis DeWeese, seconded by Mike Cole, to approve the minutes of the Executive Session on July 23, 2020. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Assistant Superintendent Sarah Rigdon provided an update on School Governance Teams.

Student Services Director Shannon Miller provided an update on Student Services.

Assistant Superintendent Sarah Rigdon provided an update on the reopening of schools.

Assistant Superintendent Darren Danner provided an update on facilities.

Assistant Superintendent Darren Danner provided an update on potential construction projects – Transportation Facility and Staff Development Center. Darren Danner reviewed the Staff Development Center with the Board and the different design choices, as well as the Transportation Facility. The Board gave their permission to pursue the continued study to construct both facilities. They stated their outside design preference for the Staff Development Facility so that additional work can be done and so that the Construction Manager at Risk can present the Board with a contract and a contracted price for their review.

Motion by Terry Bramlett, seconded by Bobby Bearden, to approve surplus property at the Toccoa Property. All members voted yes; motion carried. (**See attached.**)

Public comment. There was no public comment.

Motion by Lewis DeWeese, seconded by Terry Bramlett, to approve the school quarterly financial reports. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Motion by Bobby Bearden, seconded by Mike Cole to approve the fiscal year 2020 final amended budget. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Motion by Terry Bramlett, seconded by Lewis DeWeese, to approve the district's financial report for June 2020. All members voted yes; motion carried. (**See attached.**)

Director of Finance Susan Wynn stated the SPLOST check received for June 2020 was \$663,558.28.

Motion by Lewis DeWeese, seconded by Terry Bramlett, to approve the revised fiscal year 2021 tentative budget timeline and tentative fiscal year 2021 budget. All members voted yes; motion carried. (**See attached.**)

Motion by Terry Bramlett, seconded by Bobby Bearden, to approve the 2020 Millage Timeline, LGS computation of Millage Rate Rollback 2020, LGS FLPA Revenue Reduction Worksheet, LGS Tax Digest and Five-Year History of Levy 2020, and 2020 LGS Compliance Guide for Advertising Digest History and Public Hearings of Increases in Taxes. All members voted yes; motion carried. (**See attached.**)

Assistant Superintendent Robert Ensley shared an update on local board training.

Motion by Mike Cole, seconded by Terry Bramlett, to approve the resignation of Kathy Cannon effective July 23, 2020. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Motion by Chad Galloway, seconded by Bobby Bearden, to approve the resignation of Amber L. Grabowski, pending replacement of a certified teacher. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Motion by Terry Bramlett, seconded by Mike Cole, to approve the resignation of Connie K. Whitaker effective July 28, 2020, All members voted yes; motion carried.

Motion by Mike Cole, seconded by Bobby Bearden, to approve Tonya Burchfield as a paraprofessional, pending completion of paperwork and background check. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Motion by Terry Bramlett, seconded by Bobby Bearden, to approve Ashley Barton as a secretary, pending completion of paperwork and background check. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Motion by Chad Galloway, seconded by Terry Bramlett, to approve the transfer of Connie Knight to School Nutrition Department Cashier, pending completion of paperwork and background check. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Motion by Bobby Bearden, seconded by Mike Cole, to approve Yvonne Sams as a School Nutrition substitute, pending completion of paperwork and background check. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Motion by Bobby Bearden, seconded by Mike Cole, to approve Alicia Baugh, Katrina Jourdan, and David Queen as substitute teachers, pending completion of paperwork and background check. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Motion by Bobby Bearden, seconded by Chad Galloway, to approve Jeffery Holloway as a Transportation Department substitute, pending completion of paperwork, background check, and training. All members voted yes; motion carried.

### **Superintendent's Comments:**

**Superintendent Gwatney** congratulated Susan Wynn for her work on the budget and millage and thanked her for working with county officials. He also thanked Lynn Doss for her help in working with county officials. Superintendent Gwatney stated that the budget and the rolled-back millage rate includes 180 planned days for students, as well as no furloughs for faculty and staff. It seems unusual to see a recommended roll-back to a millage rate during a pandemic and with a 10% cut from the state. He thanked the conservative leadership of the Board for their help to make that happen. He commended the district leadership and principals for their hard work to control spending, and he said that the district is doing all of this while remaining debt-free.

Superintendent Gwatney stated that this has been a most unusual but phenomenal start of school in FCSS. He thanked the principals and directors for making that happen. He commended Board members for visiting schools on the first day. Preparation and hard work made it a great first day.

Superintendent Gwatney congratulated the FCCLA students and appreciated Charles Spenser and Tennessee Valley Robotics for the \$5,000 donation. He thanked Shannon Miller, Sarah Rigdon, and Darren Danner for their great presentations. He commended Lucas Roof, Heather Finley, and Robert Ensley for their work on the transparency of disclosing data and giving the public confidence in the things we are doing to help keep them informed. He appreciated Candy Sisson and Denver Foster and the excellent job their staffs are doing in developing and adjusting to new routines and making them flow seamlessly. He stated that he has enjoyed the peace of

mind provided by *Here Comes the Bus*. He appreciated Denver Foster for advancing the district to the next level in safety and technology. He thanked the Technology Department for all they are doing to make things run in the background. He thanked Matt Price for leading the pledge and Darvin Couch for the invocation. He recognized School Resource Officer (SRO) Darvin Couch and the City of Blue Ridge for adding the flashing lights and signs for the 20 miles per hour school safety zone.

Superintendent Gwatney stated that it is awesome to see all these departments, schools, personnel, and community members come together for the benefit of our students. We are blessed here in Fannin County.

#### **Board Members' Comments:**

**Terry Bramlett** commented that he was present at East Fannin Elementary on the first day and was able to see the excitement and anticipation on the faces of the children. It was truly inspiring to see them there, and he prays that we can keep them there safely. He is happy to hear so much good news in a pandemic. He stated that Superintendent Gwatney has many talents, and one of his greatest talents is identifying individuals who have the aptitude, spirit, and heart to fill a position. Superintendent is great at recognizing the strengths in others and then empowering them to be successful in their role. We have seen great examples of that in tonight's presentations. He thanked principals and directors for their diligence. He recognized Shannon Miller and thanked her; her love of the program is remarkable. He stated that it is an honor to serve and thanked those who allowed him to be part of this organization and part of this team.

**Lewis DeWeese** agreed with everything Mr. Bramlett said. He stated that his heart is still smiling from Shannon Miller's presentation. He appreciated her presentation and said it was apparent that she has love for her special program. He said that teachers are the most precious and important people in the world. He stated that teachers are essential. They change children's lives and the world. Teachers are very essential.

**Bobby Bearden** appreciated everybody who attended the meeting. He stated that he had the privilege of welcoming students at Blue Ridge Elementary School on August 7, 2020. He was pleased to see SRO Jim Burrell managing traffic. He said that there were no children crying on the first day, and they were all excited to be at school. His hope and prayer is that our children are safe, they receive a good education, and our staff stays safe.

**Mike Cole** thanked Lucas Roof for the great work he is doing. He said he is proud of the leadership team and thanked them for working so hard to get school started; their excitement and love for children is apparent. He welcomed students back to school at West Fannin Elementary School on August 7, 2020. He commended Alison Danner for doing such an awesome job at West Fannin Elementary. He appreciated members of the Maintenance Department for doing so well in getting all of the schools ready. He gave kudos to the cafeteria workers for doing extra work, making sure everyone is separated and has meals while working in sometimes hot environments. He appreciated the custodial staff for their extra work to sanitize buildings. He thanked Tori Arp for bringing excitement to his little girl who loves her class. His daughter

loves school this year. He thanked everyone for allowing him to be a part of this great school system.

**Chad Galloway** commended the district's incredible staff. He welcomed Fannin County High School students on August 7, 2020. Though it is a different start to school, he was pleased to see the excitement and hope exhibited by students. He appreciated all of the hard work put in by administrators and staff to get students back to school safely.

There being no further business to come before the meeting, a motion was made by Terry Bramlett, seconded by Mike Cole, to adjourn subject to being called into special session by the Chair when deemed necessary. All members voted yes; motion carried.

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Chad Galloway, Chairperson

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Michael Gwatney, Superintendent