

October 8, 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 Bobby Bearden, seconded by Mike Cole, to approve the consent agenda. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Approve the agenda.

Approve the meeting minutes from September 10, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.

Assistant Superintendent Sarah Rigdon reviewed summaries of recent activities by Fannin County School System School Governance Teams.

Fannin County High School (FCHS) Interim Principal Debby Decubellis shared an extracurricular update.

Blue Ridge Elementary School (BRES) Principal April Hodges presented school happenings.

Director of School Nutrition Candice Sisson shared an update on the *Realizing Educational Achievement Can Happen* (REACH) Scholar program.

Director of Applied & Integrated Instruction Lucas Roof and North Georgia Health District Director Dr. Zachary Taylor provided a COVID-19 response update including changes to the weekly case report. Dr. Taylor was presented with a certificate of appreciation.

Public Comment. There was no public comment.

Assistant Superintendent Darren Danner provided an update on the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) transmission line route.

Assistant Superintendent Darren Danner provided an update on facilities.

Assistant Superintendent Darren Danner provided an update on construction.

Motion by Terry Bramlett, seconded by Chad Galloway, to approve as salvage any remaining items at the Toccoa Property. All members voted yes; motion carried. **(See attached.)**

Motion by Lewis DeWeese, seconded by Bobby Bearden, to approve the finalized fiscal year 2021 budget. All members voted yes; motion carried. **(See attached.)**

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

Director of Finance Susan Wynn stated the SPLOST check received for August 2020 was \$1,051,294.72. Mrs. Wynn explained that the August tax collection was \$658,537.52 and that misallocated sales tax on returns from 2015 through January 2019 resulted in an additional \$392,757.20 being received.

Motion by Mike Cole, seconded by Lewis DeWeese, to table the proposed policy actions listed below. All members voted yes; motion carried. **(See attached.)**

One potential new policy proposed for adoption:

BCBI: Public Participation in Board Meetings

Four existing Board policies proposed for revision:

GAAA: Equal Opportunity Employment; GAEB: Sexual Harassment of Employees; JAA: Equal Opportunity Education; and JCAC: Sexual Harassment of Students

Motion by Bobby Bearden, seconded by Mike Cole, to approve technology hardware as salvage. These items have met their intended usage and life expectancies, and they are no longer in service. All members voted yes; motion carried. **(See attached.)**

Motion by Terry Bramlett, seconded by Chad Galloway, to approve technology equipment as surplus. These items have become antiquated, and they are no longer in service; however, they may have some value outside the school system. The surplus items will be auctioned through *Govdeals.net*. All members voted yes; motion carried. **(See attached.)**

Motion by Bobby Bearden, seconded by Mike Cole, to approve the Career, Technology, and Agriculture Education (CTAE) equipment as surplus bid of Jeffrey Dale for Lot 3 for \$50.00. All members voted yes; motion carried. **(See attached.)**

Motion by Mike Cole, seconded by Terry Bramlett, to approve CTAE equipment as salvage. These items received no bids; they have met their intended usage and life expectancies, and they are no longer in service. All members voted yes; motion carried. **(See attached.)**

Motion by Lewis DeWeese, seconded by Terry Bramlett, to approve transportation property for surplus. The items will be sold at auction through *GovDeals.com*. All members voted yes; motion carried. **(See attached.)**

Motion by Bobby Bearden, seconded by Mike Cole, to approve the use of a school bus and driver by the Fannin County Recreation Department (FCRD) for the following 2020 dates: October 19, October 20, November 23, November 24, and November 25. The FCRD will carry insurance, provide fuel, and pay the bus driver. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Assistant Superintendent Robert Ensley shared the local board training plan for SY 2020-2021.

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

No action was taken during Executive Session.

Motion by Lewis DeWeese, seconded by Terry Bramlett, to approve the minutes of the Executive Session on August 13, 2020. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Motion by Terry Bramlett, seconded by Bobby Bearden, to approve the resignation of Matt Storey effective October 8, 2020. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Motion by Chad Galloway, seconded by Terry Bramlett, to approve the resignation of Lauren Davis effective October 15, 2020. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Motion by Bobby Bearden, seconded by Mike Cole, to approve the resignation of Angie Young effective December 1, 2020. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Motion by Lewis DeWeese, seconded by Terry Bramlett, to approve the resignation of Lorene Locke effective January 1, 2021. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Motion by Chad Galloway, seconded by Bobby Bearden, to approve Tiffany Ingle as a teacher. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Motion by Mike Cole, seconded by Lewis DeWeese, to approve Keisha Green and Tyler Messer as Title I Paraprofessionals. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Motion by Bobby Bearden, seconded by Mike Cole, to approve Jeffrey Holloway for the Transportation Department. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Motion by Terry Bramlett, seconded by Mike Cole, to approve Crystal Saunders as a substitute teacher, pending completion of paperwork and background check. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Motion by Bobby Bearden, seconded by Mike Cole, to approve David Frazier and Amber Wright as Nutrition Department substitutes, pending completion of paperwork, background check, and certification. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Motion by Mike Cole, seconded by Lewis DeWeese, to approve David Frazier as a custodial substitute, pending completion of paperwork, background check, and training. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Motion by Bobby Bearden, seconded by Terry Bramlett, to approve Julie Johnson as a substitute for the Transportation Department, pending completion of paperwork, background check, and training. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Superintendent's Comments:

Superintendent Gwatney thanked Larry Williams for the pledge, Rev. Mike Cole for the invocation, and Principal Debby Decubellis and the FCHS audio video students for the video. He commended and thanked Principal April Hodges for her update on school happenings. Superintendent Gwatney

thanked Director Candice Sisson for the REACH update and is looking forward to seeing the students honored at the upcoming signing ceremony. He thanked Director Lucas Roof and Dr. Zachary Taylor for the COVID-19 information. Superintendent Gwatney thanked everybody because tomorrow is the end of the first quarter of the school year, and it could not have happened without everyone in this school district. To complete nine weeks of school in the middle of a pandemic, says so much about you – the faculty, staff, students, community – being careful, following the guidelines, and working together to make a difference, not only for the children but for this community. For all these reasons, he said “Thank you so much.”

Board Members’ Comments:

Terry Bramlett stated that there is much to celebrate. He hears on the news of systems that are talking about how they can get their students back in the classroom, and you all (Fannin County School System) have completed nine weeks. This is remarkable; thank you for the extra work and countless hours of extra time completed. It is much appreciated, even more so by our students. Thank you all.

Lewis DeWeese stated that he only had one comment: “I hereby announce that this is ‘Teacher of the Year’ for every teacher, every administrator, every school personnel, in the whole system. Y’all are all ‘People of the Year’ because we can’t have my favorite meeting, the Teacher of the Year meeting. So God bless you folks.”

Bobby Bearden thanked everybody for being here. He thanked April Hodges for the school happenings report on the great things that are going on at Blue Ridge Elementary School. He is thankful for REACH – really thankful that those children have the opportunity to excel. He thanked Dr. Taylor for coming and answering each question on COVID. He thanked Lucas Roof for his presentation on COVID-19 and said that he agreed with the remarks he made about his dad, totally.

Mr. Bearden stated: “Other than that –Facebook, I’m not a big fan of Facebook. The reason I got on Facebook was where I could buy stuff. But there was an ad that I saw the other day, and I usually don’t do this, and I apologize, but I’ve got to. There was an ad on there that kind of insinuated that I was kind of for the person that’s running against Mr. Galloway, and that’s the farthest from the truth.” He went on to state that he is for Mr. Galloway, Mr. Bramlett, and Mr. DeWeese, and when it comes Mr. Cole’s time, he will be for him. He extended his appreciation to everyone.

Mike Cole recognized Mr. Larry Williams. He thanked the School Resource Officers (SROs) and said that they do a lot of things. He had visited BRES with the SRO and went to a class with him. He stated that it really got him when his child came home and told him about a class with SRO Summers and the topics were “stranger danger” and kidnapping. He told his daughter that these things are very real, and he is glad that the SRO is teaching her that. He said that this is helping his daughter to understand why, when they go to a store, that dad’s always watching. A little bit of that is Marine – a little bit of it is dad – but we are always watching. Mr. Cole thanked each one of the school resource officers for the work they do. He thanked the principals: April Hodges, Alison Danner, Mathew Price, Keith Nuckolls, and Debby Decubellis, and he commended them for the awesome job they do, especially with the load that they are carrying in these trying times. He is very proud of you. Mr. Cole thanked Darren Danner for the 551 work orders completed by the Maintenance Department. He is proud of Mr. Danner and the work he does. He commended Luca Roof for the work he does with CTAE and for all the other things for which he is responsible. He thanked this Board for the work they do and for the superintendent, who is awesome as a friend and co-worker. He stated he is glad that he is able to link arms with these men here, and they have a vision for school and to see our kids grow and become all that they can be. Mr.

Cole stated that he is proud that administrators were still there at 9:30 p.m. and thanked them for being there. It shows that they care, and it's not just a job.

Chad Galloway said that he would not try to add anything to what had been said or make it any longer than it has to be. He thanked all of those who have stayed for the meeting; he appreciates the dedication and everybody in the system. He reiterated Superintendent Gwatney's statement regarding the milestone of completing nine weeks and noted that there were some who said we would not make it because we would have to shut down. All school personnel are to be commended for this accomplishment. Mr. Galloway is appreciative and thankful to be a part of it with you. He stated that he is thankful to be a part of this Board for the vision; it's a great group of guys to work with, and he couldn't be more thrilled to be with them. Mr. Galloway told Lucas Roof he was doing a wonderful job and that he was in his third quarantine with his children. He stated that for those parents saying they are having a hard time, this is our third one. He said that neither of his children have COVID; they are quarantined because of contact tracing. Many sacrifices are being made, and this is one that he is willing to make with his children so that we can continue to keep the schools open. If it means his family has to do it again, it is alright. They will do it for another 14 days; as long as it means that we can keep kids in schools and we can keep doing what we are doing, then so be it. Bring it on.

There being no further business to come before the meeting, a motion was made by Bobby Bearden, 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.

Chad Galloway, Chairperson

Michael Gwatney, Superintendent

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