

Special Session
January 19, 2005

The Randolph County Board of Education met for a special work session on Wednesday, January 19, 2005, at 8:30 a.m. at Pinewood Country Club.

Call to Order

Chairman LaVerne Williams called the meeting to order. Board members in attendance were as follows: P. Guthrie, G. Cook, T. McDonald, G. Lawson, J. Johnson, and B. Coltrane.

Maintenance/Facilities

Executive Director of Facilities and Construction Bob Scherer distributed information on parking fees for high schools in other counties. Randolph County high school students are only paying \$10 per year for parking and high schools keep the money in their general fund. Lt. Col. Scherer proposed increasing the fee to \$20 annually and increasing the capital outlay budget to \$50,000. This would provide approximately \$85,000 per year to pave and repair high school parking lots on a four or five year rotating basis. Superintendent McRae will discuss with high school principals how these funds are used and the need for paving at their schools.

Auction

Lt. Col. Scherer reported that proceeds from auction sales for surplus property do not cover costs involved. A policy is being developed for Board review and approval which would allow for surplus items to be sold at fair market value by various departments and/or schools.

High School Facilities

Superintendent McRae reminded the Board that a trip was planned for January 27 to Nash Central High School which is a prototype of facility being planned for Northeastern Randolph High School.

With COPS funding recently approved by the Randolph County Board of Commissioners, a high school for the Archdale-Trinity Area will also be planned for 2008. Realtor, land, and architect selection will need to occur in the near future. Dr. McRae asked the Board to consider suspending Board policy on the process of selecting an architect to prevent the Board from having to hear proposals from various architectural firms. This request will be based on the fact that the Board heard architectural proposals for Northeastern Randolph High School approximately six months ago and selected Boney Architects. This firm has thus far done a good job for the system, can use the prototype for Northeastern Randolph High School in designing a high school for the Archdale-Trinity schools, and there is not another qualified architect within the county. There was a consensus of the Board to go ahead with Boney. Attorney Bob Wilhoit will research the issue of legally suspending current policy and will make a report to the Board. Superintendent McRae reported that he would be asking the Board to select H. R. Gallimore with ReMax to serve as a realtor for the Archdale-Trinity high school facility. Dr. McRae also reported that the Board needs to take a look at disposal of property donated to the school system on Surratt Drive in the Archdale-Trinity Area, possibly selling or trading the property for something more suitable for a school facility.

Superintendent McRae reported that some citizens in the area of the York property, which has been targeted as the next possible location for a high school, had assembled and expressed concerns about location of a high school on the property. He stated that he was expecting a request from the group to meet with the Board at the February meeting. While the group seems concerned about the existence of wetlands, this is not a huge issue. Purchase of the property is contingent on soil testing. Board members stated that they felt some of the concern was due to loyalties to Eastern Randolph High School.

Attendance Lines

Superintendent McRae stated that the major task next year would be to draw attendance lines for the high school in the northeastern part of the county, which will serve Liberty, Grays Chapel, and Level Cross Elementary Schools. The Board may want to work with an outside consultant to accomplish this task.

Miscellaneous Issues

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1. Guil-Randolph Fire Department has requested a corner of the property at Hopewell Elementary School to build a substation. Currently a study is underway regarding services provided by Fairgrove and Guil-Rand Fire Departments. Donation of the land will be tabled until the study is complete. Board members asked the neighbors in the area of the school be consulted before any land transfer occurs.
2. Superintendent McRae reported that the deadline for receiving applications for Finance Officer had passed and he planned to interview three candidates the following week. He stated he hoped to make a recommendation for Finance Officer to the Board at the February meeting.
3. Dr. McRae reported that he had talked with Sheriff Hurley about the drug raid recently made in the county and subsequent information shared with the press concerning talk about "blowing up a school." Dr. McRae shared with the Board information he shared with parents and school personnel that the Sheriff's Department had worked with the school system to assure citizens that schools were safe and secure.
4. Superintendent McRae stated that he did not expect significant additional money from county, state, or federal sources for the coming year, and anticipated some state cuts. An issue of providing alternative education for students recommended for long-term suspension could be a costly budget item if it gains approval.
5. Dr. McRae reported that the fund balance was healthy and funds would be available to assist in retaining employees if budget cuts were experienced.

Auxiliary Services

Executive Director Russ Gobble described ConnectEd, an on-line program which allows the school system to make a call to every student and staff member of the county schools. Principals and the superintendent have used the system to make general announcements. The system will also be used in inclement weather and emergency situations.

Dr. Gobble reported that the Safe School Survey will also be done through ConnectEd.

Dr. Gobble reported that intervention center attendance had decreased as other alternatives had been used for discipline and bus discipline suspensions had increased, probably due to a better reporting system.

Dr. Gobble stated that a request would be made of the Board to approve placing Woodfern Road in the Seagrove/Southwestern Randolph Attendance Area. The road is now in the Coleridge/Eastern Randolph Attendance Area. Citizens on this road have made this request and it will assist with bus routing and help with overcrowded conditions at Coleridge School.

Child Nutrition

Child Nutrition Director Donna Osborne reported she had employed two new supervisors for the program, both graduates of Southwestern Randolph High School. She described her goals for the year: 1) Managers and office staff will become members of the National School Food Association; 2) Establish additional training programs; 3) Determine method for back-up of Child Nutrition information daily; 4) Free and Reduced Applications will be received in the Central Office rather than individuals schools; and 5) Lower sodium and fat content in meals served. She reported that a nutritional analysis is conducted on menus to assure that meals are within federal guidelines. Ms. Osborne is a member of the Community Schools Health Advisory Council, which works to implement healthy choices for students. Schools will take part in a program called Winner's Circle Dining Program. She stated she hoped the system could participate in a vegetable/fruit cooperative run by the Department of Defense. Ms. Osborne stated one of the biggest challenges for the program will be to introduce and promote healthy a la carte items for students.

Remediation Programs

Assistant Superintendent Pat Foust presented information on how remediation and low-wealth money was being used by schools to have successful remediation programs. Schools are working through small groups, tutoring, instructional software, Reading Together Program, after-school programs, CIS volunteers, GROW Program, Saturday School, Light Span, Evening Academy, etc. to provide opportunities for

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remediation. A budget of \$800,000 is also used for provide staff development for teachers to be prepared to successfully conduct these efforts.

No Child Left Behind and AYP

Executive Director of Elementary Education Linda Bassetti and Executive Director of Testing and Accountability Vicki Moss explained Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and its importance for groups and subgroups for the No Child Left Behind Act. In the spring of 2003-04, Randolph County had five schools that made their AYP goals and were removed from the watch list. Elementary schools made 94% of their AYP targets, middle schools 57%, and high schools 75%. The LEA is also held to the same standards as a school and must meet target goals for the system and may have subgroups that individual schools did not have. In 2002-2003, 60% of met AYP goals (61 targets – 53 met) and in 2003-2004 82.1% met AYP goals (57 targets – 53 met). In 2004-2005, Randolph County Schools did not make AYP in the same subject in both grades 3-8 and grade 10 for two consecutive years; therefore, it is in LEA improvement. Ms. Bassetti reviewed increasing target goals and AYP changes for 2004-2005. Randolph County will review its LEA plan to improve academic achievement. At least 10% of Title I funds will be used for staff development to assist in academic improvement. The Board received information on strengths, improvement needs, and target suggestions for meeting AYP goals.

Update on Superintendent Selection

Dr. Frances Jones met with the Board and reported she had received 12 applications for superintendent. She reported that she had received additional inquiries and expected more applications, particularly within two weeks before the deadline. She reported she had provided forms in each school requesting input from citizens, parents, and staff on qualities desired in a superintendent and that forums were planned for each attendance area during February. Dr. Jones will serve a moderator at the forums. The deadline for applications is February 15. Dr. Jones will deliver packets on candidates to the Board on February 17. She will meet with the Board again on February 21.

Secondary Education

Executive Director of Secondary Education Park Allen reported to the Board that high school principals were not interested in Saturday graduation dates at this time. He reported that he was also the Safe and Drug Free Budget Coordinator and issues of tobacco on campus were being discussed and reviewed. Drew Maerz, Principal of Tabernacle School, presented a case study for tobacco-free schools, as part of his internship for his doctorate.

ESL Program/Migrant Education

Deputy Superintendent Cindy Schroder provided information on the ESL Program. She stated that system serves 345 Migrant Education students and provides three tutors. Funding comes from federal sources. Dr. Schroder also provided information on her duties and responsibilities for information to the Board as they consider filling the vacancy that will be created when she retires in July, 2005.

Exceptional Children

Executive Director Carol VonCannon reported that as of December 1, 2004, 2,193 exceptional students were served by the school system. In addition, Level Cross, Southmont, and Trinity Elementary offer pre-school exceptional children programs. She briefly described the IEP process and provided a copy of the Parents' Rights Handbook for Exceptional Children.

Chairman

Secretary