

January 09, 2020
6:00 p.m.

The Fannin County Board of Education met in regular session with the following members present: Lewis DeWeese, Chair; Chad Galloway, Vice-Chair; Bobby Bearden; Terry Bramlett; and Mike Cole. All members were present.

The meeting was called to order by Lewis DeWeese, Chair.

Lewis DeWeese, Chair, relinquished the Chair to Superintendent Michael Gwatney for reorganization of the Board.

Motion by Lewis DeWeese, seconded by Bobby Bearden, to open the floor for nominations for Board Chair. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Michael Gwatney, Superintendent, called for nominations for Chair for the 2020 calendar year.

Bobby Bearden nominated Chad Galloway.

Motion by Lewis DeWeese, seconded by Mike Cole, to close the floor for nominations. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Chad Galloway was elected as Chair for the 2020 calendar year by a show of hands in favor. Bobby Bearden, Terry Bramlett, Mike Cole, and Lewis DeWeese voted yes; Chad Galloway abstained; motion carried.

Superintendent Michael Gwatney transferred the meeting to the newly elected 2020 Chair Chad Galloway.

Motion by Bobby Bearden, seconded by Terry Bramlett, to open the floor for nominations for Board Vice-Chair. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Lewis DeWeese nominated Terry Bramlett as Vice-Chair.

Motion by Bobby Bearden, seconded by Mike Cole, to close the floor for nominations. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Terry Bramlett was elected as Vice-Chair for the 2020 calendar year by a show of hands in favor. Bobby Bearden, Mike Cole, Lewis DeWeese, and Chad Galloway voted yes; Terry Bramlett abstained; motion carried.

Upon the recommendation of Superintendent Michael Gwatney, a motion was made by Lewis DeWeese, seconded by Bobby Bearden, to set the regular monthly Board of Education meetings for the 2020 calendar year on the second Thursday of each month at 6:00 p.m. All meetings are to be held at the office of the Fannin County Board of Education: 2290 East First Street, Blue Ridge, Georgia. All members voted yes; motion carried.

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

Approve the agenda.

Approve the Board meeting minutes from December 12, 2019, and January 7, 2020.

Superintendent Michael Gwatney made special recognitions for the following:

1. Fannin County Sheriff Dane Kirby and the Fannin County School Resource Officers for Law Enforcement Appreciation Day.
2. Alison Danner for being selected as the Principal of West Fannin Elementary School.

Deputy Superintendent Betsy Hyde reviewed information from recent School Governance Team meetings. **(See attached.)**

Fannin County Middle School Principal Keith Nuckolls presented on Fannin County Middle School happenings.

Public Comment: There was no public comment.

Assistant Superintendent Darren Danner shared a facilities update.

Assistant Superintendent Darren Danner provided an update on safety drills, as well as the SAFE School Alert communication system and mobile app. Transportation Director Denver Foster presented an update on the recent “Stop the Bleed” and human trafficking trainings for transportation employees.

Motion by Lewis DeWeese, seconded by Mike Cole, to approve the district’s financial report for November 30, 2019. All members voted yes; motion carried. **(See attached.)**

Dr. Gwatney stated the SPLOST check received for November 2019 was \$574,371.36.

Motion by Mike Cole, seconded by Terry Bramlett, to table proposed policy revisions listed below. All members voted yes; motion carried. **(See attached.)**

Four potential new policies for adoption:

- *BCBD: Board Meeting Agendas;*
- *GAD: Professional Development;*
- *IBB: Charter Schools; and*
- *JBCCA(2): Unsafe School Choice Option*

Policies to consider rescinding:

- *BDG: Administration in Policy Absence;*
- *CMA: Administrative Rules;*
- *DCC: Budget Preparation Procedures;*
- *DIA: Accounting System;*
- *IHF(5): Graduation Requirements – Entering Fall 2002-03 through 2007-08;*

- *IHF(6): Graduation Requirements – Entering Fall 2008-09 and thereafter;*
- *JBCD: Transfer and Withdrawals;*
- *JCDAC: Student Drug Use;*
- *JCDAF: Use of Electronic Devices by Students;*
- *JKB: Solicitations by Students;*
- *LEBA: Parental Involvement in Education*

Motion by Bobby Bearden, seconded by Mike Cole, to approve Fannin County School Nutrition equipment as salvage. This equipment includes Fannin County High School (FCHS) booster heater – inventory #0400050. All members voted yes; motion carried. **(See attached.)**

Assistant Superintendent Robert Ensley provided information on the Board Self-Assessment.

Assistant Superintendent Robert Ensley reviewed local Board training selections and furnished a recap of the retreat held on January 9, 2020.

Motion by Bobby Bearden, seconded by Mike Cole, to approve JoJo Pack and Kelly Wenzel as paraprofessionals effective January 10, 2020, pending completion of paperwork and background check. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Motion by Terry Bramlett, seconded by Lewis DeWeese, to approve Deborah Decubellis as an Interim Administrator effective January 13, 2020, pending completion of paperwork and background check. All members voted yes; motion carried.

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

Superintendent's Comments:

Superintendent Gwatney thanked Mr. DeWeese and Mr. Galloway for their past service as Board Chair and Vice-Chair, and he congratulated the new Chair Chad Galloway and new Vice-Chair Terry Bramlett. He also thanked the Boy Scouts from the Order of the Arrow Chapter for the Mountain District for leading the Pledge and the Invocation.

Superintendent Gwatney stated that the White Christmas programs at the PAC were awesome. He commended those who helped coordinate the programs, including Elden Moates, FCHS, the FCSS Transportation Department, and the elementary schools for organizing the programs. Superintendent Gwatney is thankful for the parents and grandparents who came to enjoy the programs.

Superintendent Gwatney congratulated Principal Alison Danner, and he thanked the WFES SGT members for their hard work with the process. He recognized Betsy Hyde for serving as the Interim Principal of WFES.

Superintendent Gwatney commended FCMS Principal Keith Nuckolls, Assistant Superintendent Darren Danner, and Transportation Director Denver Foster for their presentations at the Board meeting, and commended Director of Instructional Services & Policy Sarah Welch for her work with policy revisions.

Superintendent Gwatney commended those in the district who organized the incredible professional learning that occurred at the schools last Monday and Tuesday. He thanked Mr. Danner for organizing school safety drills.

Superintendent Gwatney thanked Robert Ensley for the outstanding Board retreat. He appreciated Pioneer RESA Consultant Brian Buffington for working with FCSS and participating in the retreat, and he expressed thanks to Pioneer RESA Executive Director Justin Old for allowing Mr. Buffington's presence today. Superintendent Gwatney recognized the three schools visited: FCHS, WFES, and BRES. He also lauded the afterschool activities that were witnessed: Mock Trial (with Attorney Coaches Gwatney, Doss, and Sosebee) and E-Sports (Coach Mathis). The number of opportunities afforded to our students is incredible. He is excited to see the new pianos purchased with a grant at BRES and was happy to hear Mr. Bramlett sing "Let It Be."

Superintendent Gwatney asked that we remember Homer Johnson, a former FCSS educator and FCHS Band supporter, who passed away.

Superintendent Gwatney said that he and the FCSS are thankful for our area law enforcement officers, especially our School Resource Officers and Sheriff Dane Kirby, who is truly a partner of education. He pointed out that Sheriff Kirby also serves on the FCMS SGT, provides guidance on safety policies, and is always ready to help.

Superintendent Gwatney recognized that it is the time of year for resolutions and said that one of his is to remember why we are so blessed here in Fannin County – the people, including the Board and the other leaders at the meeting. Thank you.

Board Members' Comments:

Lewis DeWeese stated that if he had needed assurances about FCSS after today, he can go home and rest easy; he is thankful. Today's retreat showed him pure and safe children with no frowns in sight. Mr. DeWeese thanked administrators for what they do and what they do for the benefit of students.

Terry Bramlett stated, "What a team and what a day!" He reiterated Dr. Gwatney's comments. He said that all of the district's administrators are remarkable. The fruition of work, talent, dedication, and behavior is a model and supports the students being thoroughly engaged. It is impressive. Mr. Bramlett thanked all for the day's retreat and Lewis DeWeese for his leadership by serving as Board Chair for the past two years.

Bobby Bearden said ditto to what Superintendent Gwatney expressed. Mr. Bearden thanked those in attendance at the meeting. He wished Alison Danner the best as principal at WFES. Mr. Bearden thanked the Boy Scouts for leading the Invocation and the Pledge. He thanked Mr. Bramlett for all the work he has done and is doing with the Boy Scouts of America; he believes it is a great organization. He thanked Keith Nuckolls for the great job he does and his presentation. He appreciated Denver Foster's presentation and commended him for keeping things running smoothly in the startup of the new semester. He thanked school administrators, Betsy Hyde, and Sarah Welch. He was amazed to see the E-Sports team playing other teams throughout the state.

Mike Cole recalled that this is his third retreat as the “new guy.” His first one left him in awe, and he continues to see competitiveness and technology available that causes the creative juices to flow. He stated that he is excited to see Mrs. Danner and Mr. Roof being creative in their new roles. Mr. Cole expressed his delight for trade-based scholarships available from the community for our students. He stated that it was great to see his escorts at WFES, Clay and Brody, blossoming as students.

He was proud to see Brian Buffington from Pioneer RESA so amazed at the FCSS. He stated that he is glad to be a part of the school system and that more individuals should see what goes on in our schools and what the students are doing. He thanked Dr. Gwatney for his work.

Chad Galloway thanked Board members for the opportunity to serve as Chair. He thanked all those present. He thanked Robert Ensley for organizing the retreat and Sarah Welch for taking on the task of revising policy. He congratulated Alison Danner for being selected to lead WFES.

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