

September 10, 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 Mike Cole, seconded by Bobby Bearden, to approve the consent agenda. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Approve the agenda.

Approve the meeting minutes from August 13, 2020, at 5:30 p.m.; August 13, 2020, at 6:00 p.m.; and August 18, 2020, at 4:00 p.m.; and August 27, 2020, at 4:00 p.m.

Motion by Chad Galloway, seconded by Terry Bramlett, to amend previously adopted minutes with these two clarifications. All members voted yes; motion carried.

1. The June 11, 2020, minutes for agenda item number 16 reflect that the Board approved the “updated Policy JCDA – Code of Conduct.” The Policy JCDA was not updated or changed in any way. Instead, the Board approved each School’s Code of Conduct, which is required by Policy JCDA.
2. The July 9, 2020, minutes for agenda item number 13 reflect that a motion and second were made to approve the purchase of a serving line for West Fannin Elementary School (WFES). The minutes regarding agenda item number 13 should have included the results of the vote: “All Board members voted yes” and also indicated the “motion carried.”

Motion by Terry Bramlett, seconded by Chad Galloway, to approve the revised Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia by and on behalf of the University of Georgia Cooperative Extension and the Fannin County Board of Education. All members voted yes; motion carried. **(See attached.)**

Special recognitions were made for the following:

- Assistant Superintendent Sarah Rigdon recognized school principals for receiving Georgia Accrediting Commission (GAC) certificates.
- Fannin County High School Interim Principal Debby Decubellis was introduced to the Board.
- Fannin County’s Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) Advisor Lauren Owenby and members Sierra Reynolds, Sydney Tarpley, Isabella Tocci, Anna Rhodes, and Gracie Stewart were recognized for placing in the top ten at the national competition.
- Director of School Nutrition Candice Sisson recognized School Nutrition managers for receiving gold level certificates from the Georgia Department of Education in school year 2019.

Director of School Nutrition Candice Sisson announced that meals (breakfast and lunch) are free to all children from September 2020 through December 2020, as long as funding from the United States Department of Agriculture remains available.

Director of School Nutrition Candice Sisson shared that the Teacher of the Year (TOTY) Program has been suspended this year due to COVID-19. Current TOTY representatives will serve a second year.

Assistant Superintendent Sarah Rigdon reviewed summaries of recent activities by Fannin County School System School Governance Teams (SGTs) and shared upcoming trainings for SGTs.

Director of Applied & Integrated Instruction Lucas Roof provided a COVID-19 response update, including the recent Executive Order and changes to the weekly case report. He also discussed student attendance and extracurricular activities; Mr. Roof recognized school nurses and administrations for their work during this time.

Fannin County Middle School (FCMS) Principal Keith Nuckolls presented school happenings.

Public Comment. There was no public comment.

Assistant Superintendent Darren Danner provided an update on facilities.

Assistant Superintendent Darren Danner provided an update on construction.

Motion by Bobby Bearden, seconded by Terry Bramlett, to approve the Toccoa Property surplus property bid from Pete Gray for a total of \$590.00. All members voted yes; motion carried. **(See attached.)**

Motion by Terry Bramlett, seconded by Chad Galloway, to approve the Fiscal Year 2022 Capital Outlay Planning System Application. All members voted yes; motion carried. **(See attached.)**

Motion by Lewis DeWeese, seconded by Terry Bramlett, to approve the intergovernmental agreement between the Board of Education and the Fannin County Government to make a site available on the East Fannin Elementary School campus to temporarily store and/or reduce disaster debris. All members voted yes; motion carried. **(See attached.)**

Motion by Mike Cole, seconded by Bobby Bearden, to approve a MOU with the Fannin County Department of Public Health (FCDPH) to provide a facility, if needed, as a result of a local health emergency, effective from October 1, 2020, through October 1, 2021, which may be renewed on an annual basis if mutually agreed upon by both parties; and to approve a MOU with the FCDPH to provide scoliosis screenings of public school children in the at-risk population, ages 10–15 years. The terms of this agreement shall be for the period of one year commencing on October 1, 2020. All members voted yes; motion carried. **(See attached.)**

Motion by Bobby Bearden, seconded by Chad Galloway, to approve salvaging Career Technology and Agriculture Education (CTAE) equipment. All members voted yes; motion carried. **(See attached.)**

Motion by Terry Bramlett, seconded by Mike Cole, to approve three lots of CTAE equipment for surplus. All members voted yes; motion carried. **(See attached.)**

Motion by Lewis DeWeese, seconded by Bobby Bearden, to approve School Nutrition equipment for salvage. All members voted yes; motion carried. **(See attached.)**

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

Director of Finance Susan Wynn stated the SPLOST check received for July 2020 was \$696,867.63.

Finance Director Susan Wynn informed the Board of the annual Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) audit.

Motion by Mike Cole, seconded by Lewis DeWeese, to approve the purchase of 33 Bytespeed Extreme Z390A desktop computers with 32 GB of memory and 193.1 GHz Intel processors from Bytespeed for \$52,710.00. This purchase will be made with SPLOST funds. All members voted yes; motion carried. **(See attached.)**

Motion by Lewis DeWeese, seconded by Terry Bramlett, to approve the purchase of four 72-passenger school buses from Thomas Bus Sales of Georgia. The purchase price is \$383,740.00. Three buses will be purchased with SPLOST funds totaling \$287,805.00. For the remaining bus, the Georgia Department of Education is providing bond bus funds for \$77,290.00. The remaining \$18,645.00 will be paid from SPLOST funds. All members voted yes; motion carried. **(See attached.)**

Motion by Terry Bramlett, seconded by Bobby Bearden, to approve the district's vision, mission, beliefs, and the SY 2020-2021 FCSS Strategic Plan. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Assistant Superintendent Robert Ensley reviewed the annual calendar of activities.

Motion by Terry Bramlett, seconded by Chad Galloway, to approve local board training selections. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Motion by Bobby Bearden, seconded by Lewis DeWeese, to approve the request from the Georgia Department of Education (GADOE) to contract with WFES teacher Kim Patterson to create STEM/STEAM micro tour videos that showcase the WFES Adopt-A-Stream and Orchard Community Partnerships programs. Kim Patterson will receive payment from the GADOE for the contracted work. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Motion by Terry Bramlett, seconded by Mike Cole, to approve the resignation of David Pelfrey effective August 31, 2020. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Motion by Chad Galloway, seconded by Terry Bramlett, to approve Tanner Davis, Michael J. Waranis III, and Shelia Lynn Wilson as substitute teachers, pending completion of paperwork and background check. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Motion by Bobby Bearden, seconded by Mike Cole, to approve Keri Callihan, Bailee Cobb, and Helen Fair as a Nutrition substitutes, pending completion of paperwork and background check. All members voted yes; motion carried.

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

**Superintendent Gwatney** thanked those present and those watching on Rebel TV. He thanked Candice Sisson, Lucas Roof, Sarah Rigdon, Keith Nuckolls, and Darren Danner for their presentations. He appreciated Commissioner Glenn Patterson for leading the invocation and Major Keith Bosen for leading the Pledge of Allegiance. Superintendent Gwatney expressed that it was great to recognize the students and the School Nutrition managers at the meeting. He thanked Susan

Wynn for her hard work on the budget as well as this Board for approving that budget and also voting to adopt the millage roll back rate during the special called meeting on August 27. He appreciated Robert Ensley for work on the Board calendar and training to keep the Board “Exemplary.” Superintendent Gwatney welcomed Debby Decubellis and thanked all the principals for everything they have done, as well as the entire FCSS faculty and staff, for their hard work to make this year a reality. He thanked the Fannin County community for their support. Finally, he paid respect to what Patriot Day means by remembering the events of September 11, 2001. He stated that on September 11, 2020, at 8:46 a.m. there would be a statewide moment of silence. He said that no matter what we face – COVID, social unrest, terrorist attacks – America still stands strong. Superintendent Gwatney stated that he is thankful for our country, our form of government, our schools, and for the attempts that are being made to bring our society back to as normal as possible. America stands strong, and as stated in Joshua 1:9, we will stay strong. We will get through this together.

### **Board Members’ Comments:**

**Mike Cole** stated that it is good to be a part of this fine school system and asked those curious about how well we are doing in regards to the 93% attendance to go online and start looking it up because others have their numbers posted just as Fannin does. He thinks we are doing a tremendous job but does not want to get overly confident. He is thankful for the 93% attendance. He thanked the Nutrition staff and stated that they do an excellent job. He has had the pleasure to watch them work, and during this time, they are actually doing extra duty to make sure all of the food is given out properly and proper sanitation followed. He is thankful for the custodial staff and the extra work they do. He had spoken to his wife about the atomizer that allows spraying to sanitize rooms. He stated that he enjoyed Keith Nuckolls’s presentation and excitement. Sarah Welch’s enthusiasm is missed, and Mr. Nuckolls took that place. He thought about Mr. Nuckolls’s comment regarding “pulling the reigns back” on some of his new, excited staff members. He had purchased his wife a new sleigh, and his daughter sat in it and said she needed some of those “yah sticks,” referring to the reigns. Mr. Cole stated that it is good to have people that you do not have to get the “yah sticks” to because they are ready to go. He stated that it was very exciting to hear the update from the middle school; we have a tremendous school. He is grateful to be a part of the Board and work with these great men that he has grown to love. He is thankful for his fellow Board members.

**Bobby Bearden** stated that Superintendent Gwatney and Mr. Cole said what he needed to say. He appreciated everyone being at the meeting. He appreciated Mr. Nuckolls’s enthusiasm, and he appreciates all of our schools. He knows that the principals at each one of the schools has enthusiasm, just as Mr. Nuckolls does. He appreciated all FCSS employees. He stated that he appreciates being on the Board with his fellow Board members.

**Lewis DeWeese** complimented those for going the extra mile to correct the situation about teachers being essential or non-essential. He thanked those who made the effort to make teachers know that they are essential. In regards to those that lost their lives during September 11, 2001, Mr. DeWeese thinks about teachers and school people who care about children and put their lives’ work into it. That is the spirit that he thinks teachers have. He has always said that you all are so busy serving children that you do not realize how important your position is and how wonderful what you do is; you change the world of young people and give them a future. The very least that they receive is a whole different world reality for each child. The ones who are really encouraged and have parents that are supportive can benefit fully from it; it is astronomical to him the people who give their lives to let children have

a better life. He appreciates all FCSS staff – custodian, bus driver, teacher – if you serve children, he thinks you are doing wonderful.

**Terry Bramlett** stated that it is an honor to serve on the Fannin County Board of Education, and there was a lot to celebrate tonight. He congratulated all of the school principals. He thanked Keith Nuckolls for leading the middle school with such dedication and zeal. He thanked Candice Sisson and the Nutrition Department staff for an incredible mark of excellence and for providing for our students. He thanked Lucas Roof and the entire staff for a remarkable effort to keep our students healthy and for all of the extra work keeping our students safe and allowing them to attend school. Your dedication is remarkable; thank you.

**Chad Galloway** thanked everyone who showed up for the meeting tonight and those that are watching. He wanted to reiterate what other Board members had said. Mr. Galloway thanked Keith Nuckolls for his presentation and told him that he holds a special place in his heart. Both of his children are at Fannin Middle and he can't think of anyone more qualified, that would show more love than Mr. Nuckolls shows them. If Mr. Nuckolls does that for all of the students, and Mr. Galloway knows Mr. Nuckolls does, then we are truly blessed. He thanked all faculty and staff for the hard work that they are doing to keep our students here. He thanked Lucas Roof for tracking the COVID and is aware that it is hard and Mr. Roof is having to make hard decisions and he appreciates him. Mr. Galloway appreciated the leaders for doing their jobs and what they are doing for the children. He stated that it is a true pleasure to be on the Board. He has grown to love his fellow board members and is thankful for them.

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

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