

**SPECIAL MEETING
NORTHAMPTON COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION
Monday, September 26, 2011**

Members Present: Donald Johnson, Chair; Marjorie Edwards, Vice Chair; Bill Little, Erica Smith-Ingram, Lafayette Majette, Kelvin Edwards, Rhonda Taylor, Dr. Eric Bracy, ex officio
Others Present: Administration, press and interested parties

The Northampton County Board of Education held a Work Session on September 26, 2011 in the Board Room of the Northampton County Schools administrative building. Chair Donald Johnson called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m.

Approval of Board Agenda

On a MOTION by Ms. Smith-Ingram, SECONDED by Ms. M. Edwards, the Board unanimously APPROVED the Board Agenda, as recommended by the Superintendent. The motion passed by a vote of 5-0. Mr. Bill Little and Ms. Rhonda Taylor were not present for the vote.

Business Before the Board for Information

A. Title I SES Contracts/SES Data/NCPK Contracts – Ms. Brenda Taylor addressed the Board informing them that she would like to bring them up-to-date regarding Title I, SES Data and NCPK (North Carolina Pre-Kindergarten). Since two of our schools did not meet AYP, Squire Elementary and the feeder school, Gaston Elementary, we are offering SES (Supplemental Educational Services). Those of you who are familiar with the law, first we are suppose to offer the parents School of Choice, but because of our schools being so spread out so far in the district, it would not be cost effective for us to offer School of Choice. Therefore, the state has also approved a waiver from the federal government as a school waiver for those districts who choose not to offer School of Choice, but to offer SES first in the first year of School Improvement at Squire and Gaston. Because it would be more cost effective not to offer the School of Choice, we are offering Supplemental Educational Services (SES).

SES Data - Ms. Taylor also shared the SES data with the Board regarding the number of students who are eligible for SES at each school and the number of applications that were received. There are (19) students eligible at Squire Elementary and (10) applications received. There are 105 students eligible at Gaston Elementary and 42 applications were received. She stated that we have made a concerted effort to get parents to complete applications for their children. The parents must apply and students must be eligible to receive after school tutoring. As you can see, the application intake was not as good as we would have liked them to be, however, my state consultant said they were pretty good based on the percentages of other districts across the state. However, we know that all of these students are at-risk, low income and they need the services. Because we did not get all of the students, we are planning to have a second application sign-up in late November or December for services to begin in January to give those parents another opportunity, while some districts are not doing that. It will be for those who sign up first and will continue through second semester.

Ms. M. Edwards: Since the principals and the teachers see those parents more than you do, are they not able to get them to turn in applications?

Ms. Brenda Taylor: We have sent out three mailings that went to their post office and held a providers staff where the providers who will be delivering the services were able to meet with the parents and talk with them about the services so that parents would have a better perspective on how to select. We also sent another mailing home describing what each provider would be offering, whether it is an online program, whether they are capable of delivering services to students with disabilities and at what grade level so that they can choose from a brief description of each provider. We also held an evening for registration for signing up at Gaston Elementary for both of the schools and we did not have any parents to show up. We also sent out an *Alert Now* message, have sent out flyers and my state consultant said we went over and beyond what is required by law. I feel good about that, however, I do feel that when the program begins a red flag will go off and parents will wonder why my child is not staying after school. You as Board Members may receive the parent calls stating that my child needs that remediation, but they will not let my child stay. There is certain criteria that they have to meet, which is: 1) they must have received free and reduced lunch based on last year's data, and 2) must be at-risk academically (students in grades 3-6 had to make a Level I or II in math). We are only providing math, because they did not make AYP in math. If they retested and made a Level III, they will not be eligible.

Because Gaston Elementary is a feeder school and if Gaston does not make AYP, we would be offered SES at Squire Elementary also. Some districts opt not to even do that. However, we know the earlier we intervene the better off they are academically. SES is only offered to kindergarten students who were retained, all first graders who did not make a Level I or II on the North Carolina Math Assessment. Looking at the second chart you will see for both schools there are a total of 124 students in grades K-6 eligible for SES and 52 applications were received. We will not be accepting anymore applications at this point, but we will be sending notices home to the parents informing them that they can fill out the application and enroll their child for January. I just wanted you to be aware of this if you receive those calls. You can ask them, did you get your application in on time? The SES providers will start their services on October 4, 2011.

NCPK Contracts – Ms. Taylor informed the Board that the More @ Four Program is now North Carolina Pre-Kindergarten (NCPK). We have a contract with the Department of Health and Human Services, which is the first contract. They sent a cover letter back to us stating that they had approved our contract and they will give us \$474.00 per child who is in the program. We have 104 Pre-K slots and that number is down from 130 from last year. Out of those 104 slots, we will give the Northampton County Schools Exceptional Children’s contract with CADA Headstart eighteen (18) of those slots. The 18 slots that we give them, they cannot afford to pay \$474.00 so they will pay \$400.00 per child.

Last but not least, the last three contracts are the Supplemental Educational Services contracts: Sylvan Ace It!, Village Learning Solutions, LLC and 123 Online Learning. Please note that all of the contracts are the same. On page 3, #2 of the contract, you will see the districts’ obligation to pay all three providers \$46.83 per hour for a maximum of \$1,405.00 per student for services rendered. I just found out that next year if they offer supplemental services, a school system can be a provider and not have the outside people come in.

B. Finance Update

Fund Balance Report - Mr. Joe Holloway reviewed with the Board the following Fund Balance Report as of September 26, 2011:

Local Current Expense Appropriations – 2011-2012:

Amount Allocated by Northampton County -	\$3,161,538.00
Amount Transferred from Capital Outlay to Current Expense	<u>200,000.00</u>
Total Appropriations for 2011-2012	3,361,538.00
Amount Received as of September, 2011 (July 2010 through September 2011 Payments)	<u>(840,384.51)</u>
Amount Due Northampton County Schools	\$2,521,153.49

Capital Outlay Appropriations – 2011-2012:

Amount Allocated by Northampton County -	\$ 345,000.00
Amount Transferred to Current Expense from Capital Outlay	(200,000.00)
Amount Due Northampton County Schools	145,000.00

Cash Balances as of August 31, 2011:

Local Current Expense & Other Local Current Expense Fund -	\$ 1,586,511.74
Capital Outlay Fund	217,788.80

STIF Investment Fund:

Balance as of July 31, 2011 -	\$ 523,824.54
Interest Earned – July 2010 through August 2011	470.17
<u>Balance as of August 31, 2011:</u>	<u>\$ 524,294.71</u>

Mr. Little: What is the STIF rate at the present time?

Mr. Joe Holloway: I am not sure at this time, because it fluctuates. If you look at this rate, it doesn't look like it earns very much, but it is a great guaranteed account you can move money into.

ADM/Lottery Balances – Mr. Holloway reviewed with the Board the Public School Building Capital Fund stating that we currently have a remaining balance in ADM funds in the amount of \$10,471.25. In our ADM recap you will see for 2010-2011 an ADM balance of \$10,545.82 with a little interest. Our Capital Outlay balance we have available to draw down for Lottery funds is in the amount of \$159,911.67. Please also see last year's Lottery distribution for 2010-2011, which was \$188,257.00. Our estimated amount of Lottery funds we will get this year is in the amount \$164,118.00 of which we would get approximately \$41,029.00 per quarter.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: What is the Lottery based on, because it seems we get such a small amount compared to other school districts.

Mr. Joe Holloway: It is based on ADM number (Average Daily Membership) in all of the schools and a rate that goes to the county.

Mr. Matthews: I think you are referring to fact that some counties do get more based on their tax rate. We tax ourselves heavily so we get an extra appropriation. If you tax yourself low, you don't get the extra appropriation.

Mr. Joe Holloway: We have those two amounts that we can draw down from. We were cautioned not to zero out our ADM money last.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: Do we still get Fines and Forfeitures?

Mr. Joe Holloway: Yes, we still get Fines and Forfeitures and the budget that we did included approximately \$92,000.00 based on an estimate compared to last year.

Audit Report – Mr. Holloway informed the Board that he is prepared to review the Audit Report for Fiscal Year ended 2010 with them. He asked them to please review the audit further at their leisure and if they have any questions to please get in touch with him. The auditors are scheduled to present their findings on Monday night. Mr. Holloway highlighted the following areas regarding the Audit Report:

Major Funds

- Primary Concerns – On page 12 under, General, the amount left in our Fund Balance as of June 30, 2011 was \$1,001,005.00. On page 13, you will see that our beginning of the year Fund Balance was \$1,101,602.00 and the reserve for inventories was \$37,342.00 giving us an end-of-the- year balance of \$1,250,635.00. We saw an increase of about \$140,000.00. On that same page under the column, Other Special Revenue, you will see an increase of \$317,314.00. We have allocated \$142,000.00 this year, but still that is available that we can use now for this year's expenses if we so desire.

Child Nutrition Summary

- On page 20, the total operating expenses for Child Nutrition for the year was \$1,507,210.00 and there was an operating loss of \$1,250,374.00. Non-operating revenues in the amount of \$1,220,834.00 increased from previous years. The change in net assets, which is the change in the Child Nutrition Program, is in the amount of \$129,178.00.

Ms. M. Edwards: Mr. Holloway, I thought you said that Child Nutrition did not lose any money this year.

Mr. Joe Holloway – That is correct they did not lose any money, but for the first time in many years we took Indirect Cost this year in the amount of \$130,000.00. Somewhere in this report and it may be in the letter I handed out, you will see a recommendation from the auditors suggesting that we take the full amount of Indirect Cost this year. So the loss that you are seeing is basically expenses. There is not a physical loss of money. In fact, if you add the Indirect Cost of \$130,000.00 to the change in assets amount of \$129,178.00, you are looking at an approximate \$260,000.00 increase in Child Nutrition from about 3 to 4 years ago when we had to give them a substantial amount of money. Basically, now Child Nutrition has paid us back and is now making money.

Individual Schools Fund

- On page 42 is a recap of the various amounts of money left on the school accounts to include all of our schools. The total amount of those funds was \$59,692.00. Looking at the report, the only school I have a concern about is the Alternative School with a balance of about \$200.00. It is probably due to them not having that much activity such as fundraisers, clubs, etc. If they have a need for supplies in the past we just move money from PRC 69 At Risk into PRC 68 to cover that. Also, this is not the schools' money to spend because class rings, pictures, and senior dues could be included in those funds.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: I thought students paid dues every year? Looking at the money left in the school accounts, we should not have any complaints that we don't have any money to do this for a class, especially a senior class. Every school had money left over.

Mr. Little: So these are non-appropriated funds?

Mr. Joe Holloway: That is correct, these are funds generated from concession stands sales, fundraisers, and funds generated by the Booster Clubs.

Ms. M. Edwards – I am thinking about last year when they had the prom and they wanted to go on a trip, they said they did not have enough money for those things. When they have this large amount of money sitting there.

Mr. Joe Holloway – When some of the complaints did come in last year, I did look at this and provided information to the principal. Also, some of the accounts were old and it went back for 3-4 four years, such as senior dues 2004. We were able to move money from that particular line over to the regular general fund.

Ms. M. Edwards: How hard is it for the principals to get this money?

Mr. Joe Holloway: They sign a monthly statement every month.

Overall Summary

- On page 45 is the overall summary and it is a very good audit.
- On page 47 is indicating that there are no compliance areas and it is an unqualified audit.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: How did the schools receive our new accounting system for the Boosters and PTA's?

Mr. Joe Holloway: There is a statement in the report in reference to that. I have talked to NCHS-East already and will be going to NCHS-West on Wednesday. Our Auditing Firm, Anderson Smith & Wike PLLC, actually presented at a training session in Greensboro. I brought back the materials that I am going to share with both Booster Clubs. I feel that things are going well.

Mr. K. Edwards: I would like to revisit page 20 of the audit. For my knowledge, we raised the lunch price by \$.05 cents earlier this year. Give me the rationale again for that. I just want to make sure I am clear on this.

Mr. Joe Holloway: It is a federal mandate that certain prices be charged for meals. There is a range of prices that we can go with. Eventually, we are supposed to reach a price of \$1.85. We were going to slowly go into that by increasing the price on the margins or a percentage of that.

Mr. K. Edwards: Mr. Matthews, can you further explain that?

Mr. Matthews: What makes our Food Service work is the federal reimbursement for free and reduced lunch. There is a federal mandate out there that says your paid students, by a sunset date, must pay the price equal to what the federal government is reimbursing for free lunch. At the current time, we have not been doing that. For an example, if the federal government is reimbursing us \$2.00 per every lunch that we serve and we have only been charging \$1.50. The law says we have to charge the same amount they reimburse us for. The paying student must pay the same amount for their lunch that the federal government is paying us for a free lunch. We had an option. We could have kept our lunch price where it was and then when the sunset date came, jump it to \$.50 cents at one time or start adding \$.05 cents every year so that when the sunset date came you would be at the correct rate. I believe the Board voted to increase \$.05 cents each year rather than add it all at one time. At this time, I don't recall what the sunset date is, but I will be glad to find that for you.

Ms. M. Edwards: We had a child recently that went through the lunch line and she was short \$.19 cents and was told to put the plate down. I believe Dr. Bracy is aware that this happened. How is that okay and the child's parent is an employee of the school district. Rather than embarrass her, couldn't the lunch lady have said, can you bring the money tomorrow? It may not just have happened to that individual child. Can we not embarrass a child if they are short of lunch money and allow them to bring it the next day? Can we have a have a running register? I will even pay for their lunch before I see a child be embarrassed. We need to do something about these things. A lot of people are going through now financially these days. They throw out more food than that after the meals are over. We are not in a hole financially with the food.

Ms. Taylor: That has happened to my daughter and she called me. I told her to go and borrow the money from someone else. I know they told the parents the first week during open house that they were not going to allow you to charge anymore. The other things I wanted to say is that you also have parents paying for food and they run out of food. Both of my children eat during the last lunch. There are times when my daughter does not eat because they have run out of food. She does not want the sandwich they have because she wants what everyone had. Therefore, she goes to band practice not having eaten all day.

Chair Johnson: That is an administrative problem and the administration needs to talk to the Food Service Department. I don't think that is something we can do here.

Ms. M. Edwards: Chair Johnson, I know that we cannot solve it here, but Dr. Bracy is here and he is the CEO for this school district. I am asking him to pass it on down please, to whomever it needs to be passed down to. You can't do a thing if you are hungry.

Mr. Majette: When I was working, someone from the lunchroom would go around and they took a headcount of the number reduced and paid lunches each day. This would tell the person in charge how much food to prepare for the day. If they are not doing that they will always run out of food. I don't know what they are doing now.

Mr. Joe Holloway: I have taken a list of three items that you have discussed and I will get answers to. They are: running out of food, the sunset date on the lunch price increase, and the fee per lunch.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: I am sure the school has a system and there are some days that more kids eat than on other days. They are preparing food for the average number that has been eating and if they don't cook enough extra they will run out of food. They should not run out of food consistently. You need to see if this is a pattern, whether it is once or twice per month. I don't agree with giving them a substitute meal. There should be a system to account for a child who is short of lunch money.

Ms. Taylor: Ms. Williams explained it to the Board stating that they use to have a running tab. They stopped the running tab last year and if you did not have money in the computer you would get a peanut butter sandwich. This year, she said you cannot even get a peanut butter sandwich and you cannot get a running tab. I believe that the miscommunication is coming from where the principals did not let all of the parents know of these changes.

Chair Johnson: Mr. Holloway has been instructed to look into the concerns that we have. The principals should be instructed on how to follow procedures. That motion was made at the last meeting and I don't know how many of the principals were here.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: We should ask Mr. Holloway to report back to us at the meeting next Monday on October 3rd so that the public will know that we have addressed this.

Mr. Joe Holloway: I believe this is a good time for Mr. Matthews to present the agenda item from Ms. Carolyn Williams. I think it will help this situation.

Ms. M. Edwards: It is not on the agenda.

Mr. Holloway: I know that it is not on the agenda, but I think it is well worth what we at trying to do. It is a grant that Ms. Williams can receive and it will allow for some kids to eat free.

Chair Johnson: We will have to amend the agenda to add this item.

On a MOTION by Ms. Smith-Ingram, SECONDED by Ms. M. Edwards, the Board unanimously APPROVED to amend the agenda to add the Free Breakfast Grant item to the agenda, as recommended by the Superintendent. The motion passed by a vote of 7-0.

Free Breakfast Grant - Mr. Matthews informed the Board Ms. Carolyn Williams has obtained a grant to help pay for student breakfast in the amount of \$3,619.00. The cost of breakfast in Northampton County Schools last year was \$3,882.00. This leaves a difference between the grant and the cost of breakfast last year of \$263.00. The question before the Board is that the grant will not cover the cost of breakfast for the whole year. There are three options as to how the difference can covered:

- 1) direct the Child Nutrition Department to utilize part of the state revenue
- 2) supplement from local funding
- 3) discontinue the practice of free and reduced breakfast cost and have the parents/guardians start paying the \$.30 cents when the money runs out.

I would like to know the pleasure of the Board so that I can present an agenda item to the Board for approval on October 3rd, if you wish to pursue the grant.

Mr. K. Edwards: This is a grant that pays for breakfast across the county for all?

Mr. Matthews: That is correct.

It was the consensus of the Board to utilize a portion of the State Revenue Child Nutrition Match if the current allocation is inadequate to cover additional Reduced-Price Breakfast meal costs.

C. Consolidation Discussion

Ms. M. Edwards: I brought the consolidation item up the other night, because it keeps coming up. Different people have asked me and I know they have asked other Board Members. I brought about the same concern that Dr. Bracy had said that he was going to bring the sports, bands, etc. to get the children to start working together. They are already singing together from what I can remember last year. As we do those things, I ask the question why can't we start consolidating since our student numbers are low. We are at 380 to 390 at NCHS-E and 280 to 290 at NCHS-West. The concern came up that why don't we try to get them together. When are we going to start working towards the process? I believe the thought was thrown out to convert Central Elementary? I believe that Dr. Bracy or Mr. Matthews said it would cost about \$4 to \$5 million.

Dr. Bracy: Mr. Matthews corrected me and he said it is more like \$12 million.

Ms. M. Edwards: The concern keeps rolling around because if our children are ever going to get together and get adults out of the way. Whether it is this year or next year until we can get to the point to get one new high school. Your concern was that the County Commissioners are going to say we already have these two schools and we don't have that many students.

Dr. Bracy: I am sure they will ask that question, why are you building a new school when you have buildings to accommodate everyone.

Ms. M. Edwards: When are we going to start trying to see if that is something we can do? Make this school a high school. If you are saying this is something they are going to ask that question, why don't we start working on that process?

Dr. Bracy: Because the Board has not made the decision to say they want to consolidate.

Ms. M. Edwards: The discussion is open then.

Dr. Bracy: I think to move forward, the Board has to let me know they want to consolidate the high schools.

Ms. M. Edwards: I hear you and I am still asking the same questions. Why haven't we started letting the sports teams and bands get together? I think it is time to get them together. Go ahead and get shirts to represent Northampton County Schools as oppose to ordering West and East shirts. Instead of me having to be split between two shirts. If we are trying to put it out there, don't we need to start working in-house?

Dr. Bracy: I think it is dangerous right now. Sometimes when you combine sports and bands with the assumption that we are going to be one high school within one, two or three years. If the Board says on October 3rd or possibly in November that we are going to consolidate the high schools in 2014-15 then you put sports together in 2014-15. The fundamental thing is that Board has not said they want one high school.

Ms. M. Edwards: They did say they wanted one high school, but they did not say where.

Dr. Bracy: The Board has not taken action and said they want one high school. The Board has not taken action and tapped the gavel and said we want one high school.

Mr. K. Edwards: We had the meeting at Northampton-East on March 5th and we had the meeting at NCHS-West on February 24th. We did say what Ms. Edwards said and we also said at both of the forums that we would re-visit this issue in the academic year of 2011-2012.

Ms. M. Edwards: The reason why I keep bring it up is because we keep talking about we don't have any money. Look at East; it is steady falling down and we are getting ready to go into the cold season. I guarantee there is going to be heating problems. The air conditioning is not working properly. It is not fair to the kids. Even the President says the environment should be decent enough

for learning to take place. Cleanliness and uniqueness is not going on at East. There are some dangerous elements around that school. Even the waiting room is not inviting. I asked for tables and chairs and I was told that it got stopped by you. I was under the impression that they would be ordered.

Dr. Bracy: I thought we had tables and chairs at the Creecy Training Center that we can use. We bought tables and chairs through the Golden Leaf Grant and apparently they are just in storage at Creecy.

Ms. M. Edwards: We just need something nice when we go out there to eat, when they have band competitions, funerals, etc. The older people try to squeeze in those small cafeteria chairs and they are not comfortable.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: I don't ever want to be as hot as I was at East's graduation.

Chair Johnson: Never has this Board voted to put tables and chairs at NCHS-East. If you can show me in the minutes I will apologize. I was on the Facilities Committee and I drove two hours one way and two hours back. When I got here the committee (you) had already decided what was going to be done. I had no voice on anything. I called Mr. Holloway and Mr. Matthews and said I was not going to waste my time coming here if I have no voice on anything when I come to the meeting. Someone has already made the decision for me so I am wasting my time. I have heard you speak about it all of these months, but never once have I heard it presented to the Board to vote on tables and chairs for East. I have not seen anything come from East from Ms. Chamblee requesting tables and chairs.

Ms. M. Edwards: I am glad you got that off of your chest, but each time we had those meetings you were always informed of those meetings. I want you to know that whatever time you got here I could not make any decisions by myself. When I was in those meetings, whatever came up we went over it and we said we would bring it to the Board. Mr. Matthews, Dr. Bracy and Mr. Holloway were in some of those meetings as well. What decisions did I make about anything by myself?

Chair Johnson: Have you presented the tables and chairs to the Board?

Ms. Smith-Ingram: I call for the Point of Privilege Mr. Chair. You are off the subject. I think we had the discussion and everyone was in agreement that we need to move towards consolidation. What I am interested in now is that we need to move towards consolidation and can we get a consensus of the Board that we want to consolidate. We need to make this decision very early, because last year we waited around to the last minute. This is not a decision to be made in May to be implemented in August.

- a) Can we make a consensus that we do want to consolidate the high schools?
- b) Ask the Superintendent and the administration to come forward with a plan.
- c) Look towards allowing the appropriate Central Office staff members who will work on a consolidation plan for the team. Let it be a challenge for both student bodies to come together and recommend and vote on colors, mascots, etc.

We are at the point that we can do that now. Lets worry about the logistics later, whether it will be at Central or at West. We know that we have to close East, because the building is unfit, unsafe and unsanitary.

Mr. K. Edwards: According to my notes, we said on the February 28th that a strategic plan would be drawn up and we would look at the number of teachers. We even talked about the name, putting on the website the colors, mascot, uniforms, and the process for selecting faculty. Dr. Bracy said that the principals would need to apply. All of those things need to come within the 2011-2012 school year.

Mr. Little: I would suggest that we as a Board come to a consensus and request the administration to

come to the November Board Meeting with a plan for consolidation to be effective next fall.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: If we could add to that, complete with projected expenses for renovations of Central Elementary or NCHS-West.

Dr. Bracy: You are asking me to come with a plan and for plan (a) we are going to Central and plan (b) we are going to NCHS-West.

Mr. Little: Can we get a consensus on this? I am making it in the form of a motion if it is in order for this Work Session.

Ms. Smith-Ingram made a motion that the Board take a consensus on all who are in favor of consolidation vote aye and those who oppose vote nay. The motion died for the lack of a second.

Mr. Little: You need to include in the motion a timeline for the administration.

Dr. Bracy: The Board needs to say they want to merge.

Chair Johnson: Before we do that, I need to know where the location will be. All of the people who have been here to speak are not going to want to come from the western end to Jackson and that is where Central is.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: I think it is safe to say when we look at projections, ADM, and budget we don't have a choice. We are going to have to merge. East cannot continue to be in that substandard building. It is bad for the education of children. I hope we can all come to a consensus.

It was a consensus of the Board to merge the high schools.

Chair Johnson: The administration has been so instructed of the decisions of the Board.

Ms. M. Edwards: Chair Johnson, can I finish what you asked me about the tables and chairs? In October 2010, when the request came in for all of the materials that was need at NCHS-East and other schools Mr. Matthews was instructed to go back to Ms. Chamblee because it was a lot of furniture on there that was of mahogany like material. Do you recall that Mr. Matthews?

Mr. Matthews: NCHS-East requested no furniture in their capital outlay request and in the Facilities Committee Meeting the request for furniture was posed. I asked Ms. Chamblee to submit what furniture she wanted and she submitted a quite comprehensive list that included a lot of high-end office furniture.

Ms. M. Edwards: At that time when the list came with those high-end items, Conway Middle submitted a list with a lot of high-end items as well. We went back and talked to Ms. Chamblee in October and in November she came back with her response.

Mr. Little: Why are we rehashing this when we have been through this?

Chair Johnson: Also, it is not on the agenda.

Ms. M. Edwards: Can we amend the agenda like we have for the other items?

Chair Johnson: We can amend the agenda if you would like or wait until the end of the meeting.

Ms. M. Edwards: Chair Johnson, I wish to give you my opinion because you gave me yours. When you were in Finance, things went on in Finance and you made your decisions and came back and told us what you wanted us to do. It was the same thing with Facilities and it was the same thing when Mr. Tyner was in charge of Facilities and he came back with his recommendations. I know a lot of times you were not here, but we went on with the meetings. We would let you know and the rest of the body what we did. No one made any decisions in those meetings; we brought back recommendations. Mr. Matthews came back with the furniture order from East and we talked about it in the meeting.

Chair Johnson: I recall that meeting because he said he would check with Sam's on the furniture.

Ms. M. Edwards: Mr. Matthews did check with Sam's and he came back to report at the meeting.

When it came down to finally doing it, it was the first of December and Dr. Bracy was for it. When it came to the first of the year, they changed their minds because of finance. It was fine that they

changed their minds, but no one said anything and we were looking for those items. I just feel like if we are going to do something just let us know that you are not going to do it. Also, we never voted on the Ident-A-Kid program. I thought we were looking at Board Docs and no one came back and said we were not going to do it after we sat in a training for three hours.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: I feel it is not right how we do some things behind the scenes. Any other times some people have changed the agenda or the agenda is changed after it has been sent out. I am tired of finding out things after the fact. I don't like the Ident-A-Kid implementation one bit, because it is used as a clock watching mechanism. It does not make any sense that teachers have to sign in and wand their orange badge just so you know when the teachers get there and when they leave. Does the Central Office have to clock out where you are going?

Dr. Bracy: I do clock in when I go to the schools.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: Hourly means clocking in when you have an employee who is not salaried. My question is, if I clock in at 6:30 a.m. and don't wand out until 5:00 p.m., are you going to pay me overtime? But, I do know if I clock in late, you will dock my pay. I believe it is unfair. You want to raise the level of professionalism for teachers. That mechanism was used to identify for the safe keeping of students. To keep unauthorized people from coming in and stealing our children.

Dr. Bracy: So you are fine with that part?

Ms. Smith-Ingram: Yes, I am fine with that part, but we were never told that every teacher would have to wand in. I think it shows that you don't trust your teachers. You have got to trust your employees. I do know that you are allowed to leave to pick up your children. Every other employee is not allowed that opportunity.

Dr. Bracy: There is one other employee who does that everyday.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: The program cost \$4,500.00 and we did not approve it.

Mr. K. Edwards: I think it is a problem because it is used as a time mechanism. It is a jiffy pass. The safety part is over here, but it is being used as a timing piece. The concern is about clocking in, because that is what I hear.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: If I were a teacher in this district I would leave because of some of the things implemented by this district.

Dr. Bracy: You would leave because of Ident-A-Kid?

Ms. Smith-Ingram: I most certainly would leave.

Ms. M. Edwards: All have of us at this table have some concerns and I thought that was what a Work Session was for. I don't appreciate coming in here with an agenda with just as important things that the administration wants us to do. There are concerns that we don't want to air out in front of people. There are things that need to be addressed. A Work Session is a time for you to get things out on the table, deal with them and work them out. I did not think you were bound to the agenda during a Work Session like you are for a regular meeting.

Mr. Majette: Before we built this building there is somewhere in the records where all administrators in this building were asked to sign out and in to include the schools. Every teacher and employee signed in a book at the schools.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: Mr. Majette, how much does it cost to sign in?

Mr. Majette: It does not cost a thing.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: That is my point a sign-in sheet is free. Why did we have to spend \$4,500.00 when it is free?

Dr. Bracy: I thought that when that situation happened with the child at Central Elementary last year that the Board said we need to improve the safety in our buildings for security.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: It was meant for parents to sign children out. It was never meant for employees to sign in and out.

Mr. Matthews: I did not realize that people were signing in and using the wand. It was supposed to take place of the sign-in sheet.

Ms. M. Edwards: Why were we not notified about it before we started making our rounds, because I go to the schools? Why were we not notified and why we don't have our pins if it was already in place? It was not fair for us to go out there and be faced with that and not know ahead of time.

Mr. Matthews: I don't know.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: Does everyone in the Central Office have one?

Dr. Bracy: Everyone who goes to the schools in the Central Office has one.

Mr. K. Edwards: The concern is that it is being used as a tool to clock in teachers.

Chair Johnson: I had that when I worked in Wake County. I had the computer to take my picture so that when I go I have my tag that I put on it.

Chair Johnson: Is there anything other discussion on the consolidation

Dr. Bracy: I will be prepared to bring a merger plan to the Board the first Monday in November.

D. Board Conferences and Travel

Chair Johnson addressed the Board regarding board conferences and travel. I don't know how it has been done in the past, but I have had questions asked of me about people going to workshops and I have nothing to do with people going to workshops. When I started getting those questions, I decided to do some investigating on my own so I came to the Finance Office and found out what our workshop expenses and travel were for the year. Our workshop expenses were \$18,000.00 and travel was \$7,000.00 until the end of the school year. I have attended the workshops and meetings that if feel I should attend. Everyone can attend those that they feel they need to go to, but we are limited to \$25,000.00 total for travel and workshop expenses. If we as Board Members would look at how much we are allocated and we are now in the end of September. I am not trying to spring anything on anyone, but this is my reason for bringing this issue up. If we take the amount of \$25,000.00 that is budgeted to us as Board Members by our citizens and divide it by (7) seven, it gives us \$3,571.42 per person per year to be used for workshops and travel. This amount does not include dues, membership fees, periodicals, etc. Some Board Members have already given their desires to attend certain workshops and that is fine. Not knowing, this is only something I am offering and I have talked to Attorney Rod about this. As Chair, I can make a motion. I know some members have already made arrangements and that is fine. But, in my proposal we also have left the conference in Greensboro in November, the National Conference in April and I called our School Board Association today and there is a possible workshop the last week in June. It may be possibly at Kitty Hawk, as it has been at the beach in the past. Those who have to renew they will know next year that they have \$3,500.00 to spend anywhere you want to you can go. I don't want to go to Boston, because I have already been this year. If anyone needs any money and I may have workshop expenses that I don't want to use. If I want to give somebody some of my money that is running short this year that is up to me. Since my children paid my way to Boston on Jet Blue, I called my daughter and she said it was roughly \$400.00. If you look at lodging, air fare, meals and registration, I don't know how much that will cost. The conference in Greensboro last year cost roughly \$800.00 per person and travel, meals, registration is included in that amount. My recommendation would be that if we accept this \$3,500.00 per year, with the stipulation this year that if anyone needs any money, I would be glad to make sure they are not penalized for what they would like to do. I will be going to Greensboro, but I will be spending only one night. I would like to put that in the form of a motion.

On a Motion by Mr. Johnson, Seconded by Mr. Little for the Board Members to accept the stipulation of a \$3,571.42 allocation per Board Member for this year. If anyone needs any money I don't mind sharing my allocation with them.

Ms. Taylor: In regards to our training, we have to earn 12 hours per year. We already have 4 hours from the district meeting and I did not go to Greensboro last year. If I don't get to go to some of these workshops or conferences, can I gain hours by participating in webinars? How do we know how many hours these workshop provide?

Chair Johnson: Yes you can participate in webinars for credit hours.

Ms. Patricia Harris: The NCSBA website will give you each scheduled conference and at the bottom of that activity they usually put how many credit hours you would receive.

Ms. M. Edwards: The three years I have been on the Board, I have never have known for them to break it down and I have always known for people to go who wanted to go. No one ever came back and calculated at the end in regards to who did not go, how much money was spent and how much was left in the line item. I was instructed when I came on the Board to let (Pat) Ms. Harris know if there is a workshop or conference that I wanted to go to and she would get the papers ready. Never has it ever came back that Mr. Johnson has to sign the papers and never have I heard I have to check with Mr. Little or Ms. Grace Edwards. We always worked it out. We have some members who have not been a far distance away for whatever reason. Nobody told from my recollection that we have to travel in this way. The sheets that I can find that Mr. Holloway has given to us over the years, I see the figures in there for membership fees and dues for the Board is of the amount of \$17,100.00. I don't know how many memberships that we would have to use all of that money. I am putting it out there, because I have never heard of it before. What is different? That bothers me and I am concerned.

Mr. Majette: I heard what you said Chair Johnson. I was chosen in 1992 to be on this Board and Gregory Todd was the Superintendent. I took Ms. Audrey Garner's place on the Board. The Superintendent asked, what are you going to attend? I said I have no dogs and hogs to feed and I would be going to everything. Mr. Todd said, "Just tell Ms. Harris to make your reservations." I am going to do the same thing until I retire from this Board. You can make all of the recommendations that you want. I don't need your \$3,571.42, because I am going. That is what the NCSBA allotted money for and we voted to go to those workshops. You can't learn if you stay at home and you cannot delegate that money, because it is illegal. All I want is for Ms. Harris to make my reservations. That is not your job and I am not voting for it. We have been doing it the way we have for the last 20 years. I will be going to Greensboro, to Boston and maybe Asheville and if I spend over \$3,000.00, I will call Ed Dunlap. All I want Mr. Holloway to do is to approve the check.

Chair Johnson: I did not anywhere in my statement say I did not want anyone to go anywhere.

Mr. Majette: I can recall that when we were preparing to go to San Francisco last spring, two of our employees came to me and said, "Lott, you all are spending money going to workshops and you would not give us a raise. I told them, what do you have to do with it because I am going. We have people running their mouth about what the Board of Education is doing and they won't do their maintenance work they are supposed to be doing. I have been on this Board 20 plus years and I have never heard what your are talking about before.

Chair Johnson: Lott, you weren't on the Board when we were in financial difficulty and we voted not to travel out of state for four years.

Mr. Majette: What year was that?

Chair Johnson: That was when Ben Mann was on the Board.

Mr. Majette: I went with Ben Mann and Lynmore Gay to workshops.

Mr. Johnson: That was prior to your coming on the Board during that time.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: When I came on the Board there was one year when my schedule did not permit me to travel and that was last year. There was a lot going on in my family and my dad was sick. Two years prior to when I first came on the Board, we received a memo that said the state issued a moratorium on out-of-state travel due to budget cuts and there was going to be a fund reversion. Then there was one point during my tenure that we did not travel out-of-state because we did not have the funds. The second year we discussed in this board room that, in lieu of going to the spring conference, we would do something for the teachers. No one stated that they were going to the spring conference. I was pushing and advocating for our teachers to get some kind of incentive, gift certificate or thank you card, because I knew it would not be much. I spoke at an open session and said, "In lieu of me going to the national conference as a new Board Member and I would like for my travel to be deferred." According to our policy, I could go to the national conference of the National School Board Association but I said, "I am not going to go and would like for my travel to be deferred." There was a discussion about what other Boards were doing and that is when it came up about dividing up the training allotment. I know that came up in our discussion and it was prior to Mr. Edwards and Ms. Taylor coming on the Board. I brought it up in the meeting that you can just take my allotment and divide it up and do something for the teachers. Mr. Matthews helped me look at numbers and I went to see Mr. Holloway one day in his office with the same concern. I asked Mr. Holloway how much was the travel, but at that point there was not enough left. Do you recall that conversation Mr. Holloway?

Mr. Joe Holloway: Yes.

Mr. Smith-Ingram: I see part of the motivation behind this and part of me agrees with it for training. But, I was really disappointed that I for-went my travel and this administration did not follow through in trying to do something for the teachers two years ago. This year, I am planning to go and take advantage of the national conference. Chair Johnson, is that allocated amount going to give us enough to go to Greensboro and the national conference?

Chair Johnson: In looking at last year's figures as far as Greensboro it cost \$800.00, but it all depends upon how many days and how many nights you stay. As I stated before, the airfare would cost approximately \$400.00 and I don't know what the registration and meals would be for the national conference.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: I would say that even with \$1,600.00 for the national plus the \$800.00 for Greensboro, all of us would be within the \$3,500.00. I don't think we would run into a problem if we do it that way. It seems like a fair way to do it.

Ms. Taylor: You have to remember that some of that allocation has been used already. To date, how much has been used?

Mr. Joe Holloway: I don't have that figure with me, but I can get it.

Ms. Taylor: Have we ever run out of money in the Board's budget?

Mr. Holloway: Yes we have and if I might add a little information to this discussion that I think we are headed into the right direction and I hope I am not going against the grain on this. In Finance, we are put into a precarious situation when we have vouchers coming in after the fact to be paid and the money is not in the budget at that time to cover it. We go through it every year and some of the time money is freed up that we can move in the budget in most cases to be paid. The Finance Department and the Superintendent should not be dictating who goes where in my opinion.

Chair Johnson: I would agree with Mr. Holloway on that, but I never thought about it that way.

Mr. Majette: Mr. Malone should not have anything to do with it either.

Chair Johnson: The only thing I mentioned about Mr. Malone was that he said I could make the

motion. The only other reason that I mentioned this is, Mr. Holloway didn't the County Commissioners ask about our expenses?

Mr. Holloway: Yes, they asked for a detailed account of all of the Board's expenditures to include travel, registration, conferences, etc. at the mediation session.

Ms. Taylor: Mr. Holloway I am not trying to put you in the middle, I just asked does the Board go over their travel. That will help me make my decision about future traveling.

Ms. M. Edwards: What I can't understand is that it is already allocated and we are told to tell Ms. Harris the conferences we want to go to and that has been the practice. There should be no one telling us what to do. Now when I ask Ms. Harris is everything straight for my conference, she tells me we are waiting for Mr. Johnson. I have never heard that before. Why do we have to check with the Board Chair?

Dr. Bracy: I always check with the Chair whenever I get a request from a Board Member and for all the four years I have done that.

Ms. M. Edwards: Why do we have to check with the Board Chair?

Dr. Bracy: Rod Malone told me I have no business in the middle of where the Board goes and that is the honest truth.

Ms. Taylor: The only reason I was asking if we go over our budget is because a lot of the time people don't go.

Ms. M. Edwards: I agree with you Ms. Taylor and that is what I had looked at. I am not here to take anything that does not belong to us and the only thing I request is what I was told to request. I was also told that we could take part in different memberships. I have brought the paperwork and asked Ms. Harris if I could be a member of (x, y, z) and she said, "I don't know but I will find out." When we went to School Board 101, we were instructed to go to those trainings, including the national conference. As a new Board Member and new means to me that within four years I have not learned everything I need to know. I don't know if I will ever get back on the Board or not, but you still don't know everything, because things are changing. The people who work here don't know everything there is to know, but they know a lot because they work with it on a daily basis. It is not fair to say just because you don't want to go others should not go. That should be my right to go to something that I want to go to, especially if I enjoy it and there should be no problems. I am the one who asked for the request to go to Asheville and this is why this is coming up.

Ms. Taylor: I am just saying that I don't know where the other pot of money is coming from if we do go to Asheville.

Ms. M. Edwards: Mr. Holloway will do what he has been doing. When the line item runs out he just moves it from somewhere else.

Mr. Smith-Ingram: Don't find the money for one person you should find it for everyone else.

Mr. Majette: At this point, we are just talking about Asheville. If one person goes to Greensboro all of us are going.

Mr. K. Edwards: I know there is a motion on the floor. The concern I would like to bring up is when it comes to these conferences we need clarity on which conferences to attend, such as I could not attend the National Conference last year. I think there was some ambiguity about that. In touching base with what Mr. Majette said about peoples' conversation; the comment was made that Mr. Edwards is going to San Francisco for two days. I didn't go at all because I could not get a flight out. Just public things like that for clarity because ambiguity causes discontent. For that comment, we are required to get a certain amount of credit hours in. It did not ask where the training was it just said Board Members get (x) amount of hours in. So if the training is in San Francisco or wherever, we should be allowed to go there without ridicule from faculty members or

anyone voicing untruths.

Chair Johnson: I wish to make one statement before we go. No where did you hear me say I did not want anybody to attend any conferences. That is left up to the individual. Nobody tells me where to go and nobody tells me I can't go. If I don't want to go, I don't go. I just did not want us to be scrutinized where we don't need to be. I don't know why the Commissioners asked for that

information. When I was running for the Board eight years ago, I made a statement and I make this statement every time I have run for the Board that I would be a good steward of our money. A good steward means I am not going to do anything that is not good.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: I call for the question.

Mr. Johnson: You have heard the motion; you have heard the second and the discussion, all in favor of the motion please let it be known by raising your hand. The motion did not pass by a vote of 3-4 vote. Mr. Donald Johnson, Mr. Bill Little and Ms. Erica Ingram voted for the motion and Ms. Marjorie Edwards, Mr. Kelvin Edwards, Mr. Majette and Ms. Rhonda Taylor voted against.

E. Personnel

Closed Session

On a MOTION by Ms. Taylor, SECONDED by Mr. K. Edwards and APPROVED, the Board convened in a second closed session at approximately 7:15 p.m. pursuant to General Statute: 143-318.11(a)(1) to prevent the disclosure of confidential personnel files under G.S. 115C-321 or other information that is privileged or confidential pursuant to state or federal law, or not considered a public record and pursuant to General Statute: 143-318.11(a)(3) to consult with the Board's attorney in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege. The motion passed by a vote of 7-0.

Open Session

On a MOTION by Mr. K. Edwards, SECONDED by Ms. Smith-Ingram, the Board adjourned closed session. The motion passed by a vote of 6-0. The second closed session ended at approximately 7:50 p.m.

Board Information

- NC Caucus of Black School Board Members Conference – September 29-30 & October 1, 2011 – Greensboro, NC
- Next Regular Board Meeting – October 3, 2011 – Board Room – 5:30 p.m. (Closed Session) – Open Session beginning at approximately 6:30 p.m.
- NCSBA Annual Fall Law Conference – October 19-21, 2011 – Asheville, NC
- NCSBA Annual Conference – November 14-16, 2011 – Greensboro, NC

Adjournment

On a MOTION by Ms. Smith-Ingram, SECONDED by Mr. Little, the Board adjourned the meeting at 7:55 p.m.

Approved: January 9, 2012

Dr. Eric C. Bracy, Superintendent