

Note: A full recording of the meeting is on file in the Clerk's Office and on the School Division website.

A Special Meeting of the Albemarle County School Board was held on January 29, 2009 at 6:30 p.m. in the Lane Auditorium, County Office Building, 401 McIntire Road, Charlottesville, Virginia 22902.

PRESENT: Mr. Brian Wheeler; Mr. Jon Stokes; Mrs. Pamela Moynihan; Mr. Steve Koleszar; Mr. Ron Price; Mrs. Barbara Massie Mouly (arrived at 6:50 p.m.); and Mrs. Diantha McKeel.

ABSENT: None.

STAFF PRESENT: Dr. Pam Moran, Superintendent; Dr. Bruce Benson, Assistant Superintendent for Student Learning; Mr. Jackson Zimmermann, Executive Director of Fiscal Services; and Mrs. Pauline Meehan, Deputy Clerk.

Agenda Item No. 1. Call Order.

At 6:31 p.m., Mr. Wheeler called the meeting to order.

Agenda Item No. 2. Pledge of Allegiance.

The Monticello High School Air Force ROTC presented the colors.

Agenda Item No. 3. Moment of Silence.

Agenda Item No. 4. Agenda.

Mrs. McKeel offered a **motion** to approve the agenda. Mr. Price **seconded** the motion, **and the motion passed with Mrs. Mouly absent.**

Agenda Item No. 5. Budget Public Hearing.

Mr. Wheeler spoke of the procedures of the public hearing and the budget process.

Dr. Moran said that she is pleased that the division has had little impact in terms of the budget that has been presented to the School Board. She noted that while Albemarle County Public Schools has had some losses that will take some time to recover, this is a Funding Request that preserves the core work of the school division, which is the students in the classrooms.

Mrs. Mary Huffard Kegley Scott spoke on behalf of the Albemarle County Parent Council. She commended the School Board and staff on their commitment and leadership on behalf of the schools and added that their investment in the community and partnerships is the crucial ingredient necessary for continued success to establish the community of learner's, one student at a time. She said that the Parent Council supports Dr. Moran's Funding Request including maintaining small class sizes, the efforts to maintain funding for the arts, physical education, media specialist, and school counselors. She said that the assistance to employees with health and dental care and the Voluntary Early Retirement Incentive Program (VERIP) is a step in the right direction to create some basic relief. The proposed instructional coaching model plans to increase efficiency while protecting direct services to students and classrooms. The Parent Council requested that the School Board support Dr. Moran's proposal.

Ms. Sylvia Henderson is a retired principal of Albemarle County Public Schools. She spoke of her visit to an International Baccalaureate (IB) school in Williamsburg, VA and suggested that IB be implemented in Albemarle County Schools. She said that the instructional coaching model will be a challenge, but staff will do the job.

Ms. Diane Harding is a Curriculum and Technology Integration Partner (CTIP) at Cale Elementary School. She said that one thing the instructional coaching model will bring is the ability for full-time staff to be dedicated to one job and not torn between several jobs. The coaches will be able to work with principals for a shared vision to drive work forward. Teams of coaches will mean schools will be less isolated from each other which will encourage better communication. She said for the model to work, staff will have to be proactive so it can enable teachers to be better teachers. She added that she hopes the model does not take away the teacher/student relationship.

Dr. Dewey Cornell expressed his concern of the proposal to cut the Office of Community Engagement by 52%. He said that the department offers valuable services to the schools and with the cuts the services will be damaged or lost. He said the bullying program is based in the Office of Community Engagement and the proposed budget will cut the certified trainer in the bullying prevention program for all schools. Without central organization and training the program would not have got off the ground and without continued central support it will never be successful. He said that bullying continues to be a serious problem in the Albemarle County Schools. Last fall the bullying survey stated over five hundred students in grades three through eight reported that they are being bullied at least once per week; on the teacher survey over 90% of the teachers reported they had to take action to deal with bullying in the past month, however, the majority of the teachers indicated a need for training as many of the schools have not fully embraced the program. He added that with these cuts the volunteer programs with the school division are in jeopardy. He requested that the School Board ask staff questions and not accept the quick answers that it will be taken care of.

Mr. Bob Beard is co-president of the Meriwether Lewis PTO. Speaking on behalf of the PTO, he commended Dr. Moran and her staff for devising a responsible budget during very difficult times. He spoke of the budget keeping cuts out of the classroom with no teacher layoffs, and keeping fine arts a priority. He asked the same be done for at-risk students and families and preserve funding for assistant principals. He urged the School Board and Superintendent to communicate with parents on the coaching model.

Mr. Randy Switz is co-president of the Meriwether Lewis PTO. Mr. Switz spoke on behalf of the PTO stating that they believe that classroom size in the Albemarle County Schools should remain at the current levels which include the core classrooms, fine arts, and physical education. The PTO would like the School Board to know that the assistant principal position recently filled at Meriwether Lewis has brought stability to the school. He urged the School Board and Superintendent to communicate with parents on the coaching model.

Ms. Margie Shepherd is a teacher at Henley Middle School. She said that non-monetary perks are needed for teachers and teachers need more answers.

Mr. Randy O'Neill is a resident of Albemarle County. He spoke about eliminating the health gap with middle school students as they are meeting the minimum standards for physical education. He asked the Board to remember the key issues of health and wellness and consider programs on life long health practices.

Ms. Ashby Kindler is principal of Stone Robinson Elementary School and chairman of the Building Level Administrators Association. She said reorganization will help keep new teacher mentors and math specialists in place which will help teachers do more with less and take them forward. She added that the principals are in a place to meet the challenge.

Ms. Delores Thompson is a bus driver for the Division. She said the mission of Transportation Services is to provide for the safety of transporting students to and from school. She noted that the transportation department employs approximately 250 people; the annual budget is \$10 million; the five divisions of the transportation department include student transportation, vehicle maintenance, bus routing, training, and administrative services; and buses travel over 11,000 miles a day.

Ms Joyce Wine, Ms. Kathy Nelson, Ms. Susan Newmen, and Mr. Lamar Lewis are bus drivers for the Division. They spoke on behalf of the Albemarle County School bus drivers and recommended that the cuts in the transportation department not jeopardize the safety of the students and bus drivers. The following are the cuts

that were recommended: One dispatcher with supervisors to fill in when needed; one person in routing during the summer; eliminate the position of Transportation Specialist; eliminate the greeter's position; have supervisors take a more active role; eliminate the catered luncheons in the department; discontinue the \$50 gift card award for perfect attendance; stop buses from being used as personal vehicles; reduce the number of times dumpsters are emptied; limit the washing of buses; cease the buying of furniture and redecorating of the VMF office staff; reduce paper usage; have the new director take on more responsibilities; utilize the management analyst as a trainer; stagger hours of the mechanics; discontinue the practice of using full time employees from other departments as drivers; temporarily suspend the evening activity school buses that service the three high schools; and evaluate the service department for reductions. Mr. Lewis added that bus drivers are the first people the students see on their route to school and parents need peace of mind that their children are safe on the bus ride to and from school. He said drivers are doing double the work and double the load and asked the School Board to make sure that the cuts are across the board.

Mr. Peter Wurzer is a resident of Albemarle County. He commended Dr. Moran and staff for their creative approach to the coaching model that has been proposed. He said the coaching model shows creativity to do more with less. His concern is that things are not going to get better in the near term and with teachers being the most important thing in the system he asked the School Board look at a way for teachers to get a raise next year. He asked that the Board look over the Resource Utilization Study (RUS) for suggestions and recommendations and added that the public needs to see a systematic, disciplined review of what has been accomplished and what is yet to be accomplished.

Mr. Wheeler closed the public hearing.

Mrs. Mouly said that she appreciated the thoughtful comments and the range of comments that were heard. It shows that the citizens have expertise that the Board can draw upon and also shows that the staff has done research. She said that all of the comments will be considered soberly.

Mr. Koleszar asked how the Division plans to list the teacher scale, since there are no step raises does it mean that it will be showing a lower pay at each step level. Mr. Zimmermann referred the Board to page F33 of the budget book which shows the Division is proposing to move to a thirty one step teacher scale for next year to insure when there is new staff hired they will be hired at the appropriate level.

Mrs. McKeel thanked everyone for attending and for their thoughtful remarks. She said the Board has many issues to address. She asked if there is anything on the timeline that needs to be considered at this meeting. Dr. Benson said that the Division has been working with principals to begin putting details into the Instructional Coaching Model. One of the challenges with the timeline is notifying staff that their positions will be impacted by a shift to this model. The timeline for advertising the new positions, the interview process, and how the new model will be put into greater focus needs to be put into a manner that causes few negative impacts on staff members. He said that staff would like to begin that process as soon as the Board feels confident enough to provide consensus for staff to move forward. Mrs. McKeel asked for more information on the coaching model to be made available to the community. Dr. Benson said that the principals are in a good place in order to have discussion with their individual school communities and Central Office staff will provide additional information. There are still logistics to work out but there is a broad scope of what is to be accomplished as well as job descriptions and credentials necessary for the positions. Dr. Moran added that the sooner the Board can have consensus to move forward the faster staff will be able to have some of the questions from the community addressed.

Mr. Price thanked everyone for attending the public hearing. He said the Instructional Coaching Model is going to be a great tool that will eliminate the achievement gap.

Mr. Stokes said that he appreciated the bus drivers coming and being proactive with their suggestions. He asked that the bus drivers supply a list of their suggestions to the School Board for evaluation. He commended Mr. Wurzer's comments on the RUS and said that he would like the Board to receive an update from staff on what the division has saved by implementing and what is going to be implemented with the RUS recommendations.

Mrs. Moynihan thanked everyone for attending the public hearing and commended the bus drivers for their concern for the safety of the students and said that no matter what occurs with the budget, the Board appreciates their service. Dr. Moran noted Mr. Davis', Transportation Director, attendance at the meeting. She added that the Instructional Coaching Model is something that needs to be tried as a means to reduce the achievement gap. Information on the coaching model needs to be provided to the community.

Mr. Wheeler informed the public of other options in giving the Board feedback in response to matters discussed during the public hearing. He also informed them that there is extensive information on the current Funding Request on the School Board's web page.

Agenda Item No. 6. Other Business by Board Members/Superintendent.

Budget Discussion: Mr. Wheeler said that the Board has two work sessions scheduled in the week coming and asked for the Board's feedback on that. He suggested the Board give consensus for staff to move forward with the Instructional Coaching Model.

Mrs. McKeel said that she does not have a problem with staff moving forward with work on the coaching model.

Mrs. Mouly asked if the rank and file teachers have had input on the Instructional Coaching Model. Dr. Moran said that staff has gone to the schools and asked them what is important to them to maintain the core work in the division. The responses from the survey was if there had to be reductions in the division, Central Office was the first place they said reductions should be made and if it had to move into the schools their vote was to be that specialist be reduced; music, art, physical education, guidance counselors, and classroom teachers were a priority. Dr. Benson said that it has been discussed with every group of teachers that would be impacted by implementing the model. He added that if there is consensus from the Board to move forward there would be a broader communication plan implemented. Dr. Moran said using the Division Compass on a bi-weekly basis the Division is able to put out direction on anything that is going to impact the rank and file.

Mr. Koleszar said that going to the coaching model is an effective way to use those resources, but he is concerned with the ten important positions that are being cut. He also said that he is concerned with the reorganization of the certified trainer for the bullying prevention program in Community Engagement. He agrees with implementing the change but is hopeful that resources can be found so the ten positions will not need to be cut.

Mr. Wheeler stated that Board members could express support for the model and concerns for other parts of the budget could be addressed separately before the Board finalizes their funding request.

Mr. Price said it is critical that the model be implemented to hone in on the problems with literacy.

Mrs. Moynihan said that most people have felt there needed to be a reduction in Central Office staff in order to get more people to where they are teaching students or teaching teachers.

Dr. Moran shared the job descriptions of the CTIP, new teacher mentors, math specialists, and literacy specialists with the Board to use as a reference point to what those positions currently do. Dr. Benson added that the people in these positions have done tremendous work to move the school division forward and are valued employees; the restructuring is to give them more time doing the work of coaching. He said the Division needs to change its model in order to achieve the next level of education. Dr. Moran said it is important to let staff in these current roles know that their positions may change next year. With the staff in good standing the division should make sure that they are matched with positions that that they are capable or certified to do. She added the earlier that process can begin the better it will be in keeping the school division as secure as possible.

There was Board consensus for the staff to move forward with the Instructional Coaching Model.

Dr. Moran summarized the questions asked by School Board members in previous work sessions, which is on file in the School Board Office.

Mr. Zimmermann summarized the Triennial Census and the distribution of sales tax, which is on file in the School Board Office. Mrs. Moynihan asked how the Triennial Census would affect the Division's requirement in allowing home and private schooled students to take classes in Albemarle County schools. She asked if it would be counted as Average Daily Membership (ADM). Mr. Zimmermann said that the students who take classes in Albemarle County Schools are counted as partial ADMs which makes them counted as students attending county schools a portion of the day.

Mr. Wheeler asked the Board if there is information that they will need from staff before Tuesday's meeting. Dr. Moran stated that there has been discussion on the Composite Index and said that the Composite Index and Triennial Census are related.

Mrs. McKeel asked what was planned for Tuesday night's meeting. Mr. Wheeler said that staff had not planned for anything at that meeting. Mrs. McKeel asked if the Board could have budget discussion. She asked if the Division is providing money to the business partnership at Piedmont Virginia Community College (PVCC) and how much it is. Dr. Benson said that is being operated on carryover monies and that there has been no monies contributed to it this year.

June 2008 Financial Report: Dr. Benson said that the next agenda will include the audited June 2008 financial report and asked that the Board's questions be asked in advance of the meeting.

Mr. Wheeler reminded the Board that the agenda will be coming through ElectronicSchoolBoard (ESB). He asked that the December monthly financial report be placed on the consent agenda and that the audited June report be placed on the main agenda.

CIP Oversight Committee Meeting: Dr. Benson said the CIP Oversight Committee meeting has been rescheduled for Monday, February 2, 2009. There is one item on the agenda which is discussion for the additional monies on the Brownsville Elementary School project.

Agenda Item No. 7. Adjournment.

At 7:56 p.m., Mrs. McKeel offered a **motion** to adjourn the meeting of the Albemarle County School Board. Mr. Price **seconded** the motion, **and the motion passed unanimously.**

Chairman

Clerk