

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

A Budget Work Session of the Albemarle County School Board was held on February 16, 2010 at 6:30 p.m., Room 241, County Office Building, 401 McIntire Road, Charlottesville, Virginia 22902.

PRESENT: Mr. Stephen Koleszar; Mrs. Diantha McKeel; Mr. Brian Wheeler; Mrs. Barbara Massie Mouly (arrived at 7:35 p.m.); Mr. Eric Strucko; and Mr. Ronnie Price.

ABSENT: Mrs. Pamela Moynihan.

STAFF PRESENT: Dr. Pam Moran, Superintendent; Dr. Bruce Benson, Assistant Superintendent for Operations and Planning Systems; Mr. Billy Haun, Assistant Superintendent for Student Learning; Mr. Jackson Zimmermann, Executive Director of Fiscal Services; and Mrs. Jennifer Johnston, Clerk.

Agenda Item 1.1. Call Order.

Mr. Price called the meeting to order at 6:39 p.m.

Agenda Item 1.2. Agenda.

Mr. Wheeler offered a **motion** to approve the agenda as presented. Mr. Koleszar **seconded** the motion, **and the motion passed with Mrs. Mouly absent.**

Agenda Item 2.1. Budget Work Session.

Mr. Zimmermann said that we are wrapping up the budget process in terms of developing a funding request to send forward to the Board of Supervisors. He asked for Board input on the type of request the Board wished to provide to the Board of Supervisors.

Mr. Strucko said that the funding request needed to acknowledge the tighter economic times. However, he is not wedded to a specific revenue allotment. It is the responsibility of the Board of Supervisors to look at what they want to do in terms of education investment. We should give the Board of Supervisors the opportunity to demonstrate that they want to make a significant investment in public education and hold true to their self-imposed directive that they want to encourage business development in the County. He would like for the Board to look at a needs based budget proposal but should reflect some of the cuts proposed by Dr. Moran. Mr. Koleszar, Mrs. McKeel and Mr. Wheeler agreed.

Mr. Zimmermann said that the Board would be working through some balancing spreadsheets starting with the Superintendent's recommendation to review changes and establish a starting point based upon that recommendation.

Mr. Koleszar asked how much it would cost to keep the Family Support Workers in just the elementary schools. Mr. Zimmermann said that he has not been able to determine that at this point.

Mr. Wheeler said that he would not implement the cut to the Family Support Workers in the funding request. He thinks that they contribute a lot to our schools. He would put that \$190,000 back into the request. Dr. Moran asked what Tier he would put it in. Mr. Wheeler said that he would pick the lowest Tier if he had to pick one. Mr. Koleszar said that the Board should not be worrying about Tiers, we should be worrying about whether it should be a reduction or not. **There was Board consensus to place this item at the Tier III level.**

Mr. Wheeler said that he has had some feedback on eliminating the 9th grade sports. He would suggest that moving that to a Tier III reduction. Mr. Strucko said that the \$24,000 savings on this item would have a greater emotional cost than the actual dollar savings. Mr. Wheeler said that he does not support the reduction and it is harder to pull it out later. Mrs. McKeel said that the athletic directors agreed on this reduction. Mr. Haun

said that the athletic directors offered that reduction. The detail that stood out to him is that when you look at 9th grade students there were only 31 students involved in those teams the rest of those teams were made up of 8th graders. There is also difficulty with scheduling for 9th grade teams. Mr. Wheeler asked about capping for indoor track and elimination of the assistant coach. Mr. Haun said that he is not in favor of the track recommendation. Mr. Wheeler feels that we are eliminating opportunities for students. Mr. Haun said that the track coach reduction is only at Albemarle High School. There is no savings to keeping 25 students on the track team. Mrs. McKeel asked if Mr. Haun is recommending pulling out the cap on student participation in track. She would also agree with that recommendation. Mr. Koleszar said that he does not support moving that item. Mr. Price also agreed that the cap should be eliminated but the rest of the recommendation intact. Mr. Koleszar said that this may change if the Board does the Albemarle redistricting. Mr. Strucko said that he would agree with Mr. Wheeler. Mr. Price said that we can discuss it further once we finish going through the list.

Mr. Wheeler said that the instructional coaching model is something the Board rallied around. He is concerned that some of the positions will be eliminated. He asked for more information on Instructional Coaching and Instructional Support reductions. Dr. Moran said that we had growth this year and some positions were redirected back to schools, so staff is putting those on the table for reduction. Mr. Strucko said that the positions are not filled currently. Mr. Price said that the positions were not filled last year because staff did not feel that there were qualified candidates to fill the positions. Mr. Wheeler said that more teachers may be willing to step up if the model is working. Mrs. McKeel asked where the gap is in instruction which these positions would fill. Dr. Moran said that it would allow us to not spread our staff out so thinly.

Mr. Wheeler asked about instructional support reductions. Mr. Haun said that this would include \$40,000 for an Office Associate position as well as some other reductions in operational expenses. He said that Destination Imagination will not be eliminated; there may be some reductions.

Mr. Wheeler said that is okay with the class size increase for grades 4 -12. Mr. Strucko said that he is okay with that as long as the schedule change is implemented. Staff said that would help mitigate the impact. Mr. Haun said that it would not make it go away but it will help students deal with it by having fewer students to deal with at one time. If class size were to be hit again, then it is going to have to be in grades K-3. Mr. Strucko said that he links this issue with a 4X4 schedule. Mrs. McKeel said that she links them too but only if the Board takes Albemarle High School to AA. If we make the schedule change and allow those students at Albemarle to miss 101 dismissals through their year, there will be more issues. Mr. Strucko said that he agreed with moving Albemarle to AA.

Dr. Benson said that there are several issues that are connected. If class size is tied to a school schedule and we are looking at a possibility of a 4X4 time is of the essence given that we are in the midst of brining on a new student information management system that will have to be reconfigured initially to support some kind of modified 4X4 schedule. There is work that will need to be done with teachers and administrators to move that forward. There is also the redistricting piece, in which case, we would need to make a commitment to the Virginia High School League if we are going to do that by March. We would also need to move approximately 300 students from Albemarle. Depending on how that is done we may max out one or both of our other two comprehensive high schools based upon current capacities.

Mr. Strucko said that there are some misperceptions about what the impact of this is going to be out there. Dr. Moran said that Mr. Haun was very clear last week t hat there were a couple of areas that were going to cause this to be controversial – one of which was communication. She said that this would be a quick turn-around, top down management decision versus what we typically go through. Mr. Haun also spoke about what might work against staff in moving forward as they would like. Mr. Haun said that the communication is the big piece because we have already started registration for students and the student information system is already in progress. If we want to move forward with this change, then it needs to be done immediately to get the division where it needs to go. There are a lot of misperceptions out there about the schedule change. Mr. Strucko said that he is hearing directly contending assertions: 1) it will really help prepare students; it enhances their learning opportunity and a format where they can command a subject, or 2) it diminishes the learning opportunity and it actually does not prepare students well to command the subject. He is no expert and he can understand the

argument that if a student can take Algebra I in one semester and Algebra II in a second semester then they are immersed in the subject for a full year and the only break is the summer. Mr. Haun said that he reviewed some additional information. If you go to the AP website, there is a report that shows that block scheduling will harm your AP scores, but if you read the report, it harmed it because people did it by 4X4s. We do not plan on doing that, we plan on keeping our AP classes as yearlong classes. Mr. Koleszar said that the savings is coming in from teachers teaching six out of eight classes. Dr. Moran said that four of our five middle schools have been using a modified 4X4 schedule for at least the last 10 years. She referenced the research of Mike Reddick on 4X4 schedules. Any time there is something proposed in this sort of a period of time, the community has not had the opportunity to wrap themselves around it. There is a lot of rumor focus. Typically we would probably spend a year working with a community of educators and parents to bring a recommendation like this to the Board. This is fast tracking, but it is fast tracking in a period of time when we have to make some tough decisions. The bottom line is that this recommendation is one that allows us to potentially both meet the needs of learners in a way that will strengthen some areas of our program as well as help us capture some savings at a time when we need to find savings. Mr. Strucko said that with fast tracking, we are fast tracking the communication piece. We are not fast tracking the research and confidence that staff has in that this is the way to go. Dr. Moran said that is correct. The Board has had this issue on the table for several years. This is not a new news conversation to look at commonality of schedule. This is a quick turnaround. If this would have been in Tier III where it sat then staff would be building it out for a second year. Mrs. McKeel said that instructionally this is not something that we are doing that Dr. Moran feels is a bad thing to do; the Board would just be fast tracking it. Dr. Moran said that if you look at evidence based research you are going to see that this schedule has some real merits to it. Mr. Strucko said that he would move toward the 8-period day. Mr. Haun said that he needs to be clear. There may be times when students will not be able to get a math class one semester then the next semester get the next math class. There are going to be students who take math first semester and then not take the next math class until the first semester of the next year. Mrs. McKeel said that schedules right now are not always perfect. Mr. Haun said that guidance counselors, principals and teachers are going to have to know who their students are in terms of needs. Everybody is not going to get sequential courses semester by semester. He said that we will need to reevaluate how we are teaching in order to address homework issues. Mr. Strucko said that however you allow the student to grasp the concept is the key. Mr. Strucko said that we are going to face some situations where parents and/or students will want to have sequential courses each semester, how available will that be? Mr. Haun said that there will be an opportunity to do that for some kids but he cannot say how many will be able to have that unless they sit down and build a schedule. Dr. Moran said that one of the most important things that comes out of Mike Reddick's research is that he says that there is no schedule that is going to benefit kids well if you are not building a course plan that sets out where you want to end up as a graduate of a particular school and what are the courses that you want to make sure you have taken. It is important to make sure we are backing up the process of thinking about where we want to be when we graduate. Mr. Koleszar said that the other thing is that the 8-period day gives the students to take four more courses in the course of their high school career. With greater requirements for graduation and less opportunity to take electives, we are increasing the ability for kids to take courses. We are also providing an alternative for people who want to graduate early there is the opportunity. Mr. Haun said that there is also the opportunity for students to have internships.

Mr. Koleszar said that he is willing to go to an 8-period day, but he does not couple it with redistricting. Mrs. McKeel disagreed. Mr. Wheeler agreed with Mr. Koleszar.

Dr. Benson said that if we move to a 4x4 then the Board may want to consider revisiting the division calendar by starting school earlier in August. Mr. Haun said that currently we would be ending the semester nine or ten days after we come back from Winter Break. Mr. Koleszar asked if in the interim year the division could do an 8 A/B schedule rather than a 4X4? Mr. Haun said that he feels that once the change is made you are going to stay with what you changed to initially. You lose some of the advantages of the 8-period day. You would still keep the financial advantage of a going to an 8 A/B schedule, but you would lose scheduling flexibility when you are looking at students who take classes at PVCC and UVA. Mr. Wheeler asked what day in August staff would look at for a start date. Dr. Moran said that one of the biggest issues is that we are talking about some of the biggest issues in the school community and we have to be focused on bringing people together, working through the issues and making sure that we are able to moderate stress on this issue. Mr. Wheeler asked Dr. Moran if this was a process that she could manage. Dr. Moran said that it will challenge our system to manage this process but

in tough times you are faced with having to lead in a way that puts you out in front of some critical issues. These are critical issues but she does think that the Board needs to make sure that we are cognizant that these are not snap your fingers and make it happen decisions. We are going to have to take some time to really work through this with our community. Mr. Koleszar said that given the financial stress that we are under, if you would have known the revenue picture when you preparing your budget would you have bumped this up? Dr. Moran said that we are going to go through everything in Tier I, II, and III and it does not matter where it is going to fall because we are going to have to do most of this due to revenue forecasts. After we go through these lists, we could still have some additional cuts to make if there are no forthcoming revenues. Mr. Haun said that August 11th would be the start day for students if the calendar changed – back the start date up two weeks. Mr. Zimmermann said that there are other reductions that may impact the calendar as well.

Dr. Benson said that if there is consensus among Board members for staff to pursue the schedule for next year, we could make a shift in our work session topic for next week. You could tentatively include it as a part of the funding request. We could bring a proposal to the Board on what a 4X4 modified schedule would look like after staff received input from administrators and teachers. We could also address the calendar issue at that time. Mr. Haun said that we can make the schedule work for this year but in the future we may need to look at starting school earlier.

Mr. Koleszar offered a **motion** to adopt the 8-period day for school year 2010-11 for our high schools. Mr. Strucko **seconded** the motion. Mr. Price asked for discussion. Mrs. Mouly said that she is not prepared to vote on it. Mrs. McKeel said she is not either because she is not sure where the Board stands with some of the other issues. Mr. Koleszar said that if staff is going to make this happen then they need direction to do it and more than consensus. It is not to say that we could not come back and change the decision but the Board needs to be on record that while we do not want to rush the decision being where we are we have to do it. Mr. Strucko said that he is willing to move Albemarle from AAA to AA. Mrs. McKeel agreed. Mr. Koleszar said that they are two separate motions. **The motion passed with Mrs. Mouly abstaining.**

Mr. Price said that this topic should be discussed at the next work session.

Mr. Strucko asked about the timeline for making a decision regarding moving Albemarle High School from AAA to AA. Mr. Haun said that a letter needs to be provided to the Virginia High School League by March 17th. Mrs. McKeel said that she hears Board members saying that they are concerned about the other high schools being over capacity even though Albemarle High School has been over capacity for years. Mr. Koleszar said that between the two schools we have 2,900 students. If split them to 1,450 then they are kept in AA. Mr. Strucko asked why we could not shift some to Western Albemarle. Mr. Koleszar said that it is too far away. He does not feel that there would be a lot of students that could be moved to Western Albemarle. Mr. Haun said that approximately 300 students will need to be moved. Mr. Koleszar said that if we move 300 students to Monticello then they are just under the line. How many students can be reasonably redistricted to Western? Dr. Benson said that Monticello would be over capacity if you move 300 students there. Mr. Haun said that we need to work with transportation to see where geographically where the logical moves are that would balance the students moving. Dr. Benson said that staff will work with the Transportation Department to put together a proposal. There would likely be a split of students to Western Albemarle and Monticello. Mr. Wheeler said that he thought Mark Echelberger provided great input on why the Board should not go down this path right now. We renovated Albemarle High School to address the challenge that Albemarle has had for years. If we had a capital budget that said we could make improvements at Western Albemarle to expand its capacity then he may feel different about it. Redistricting makes no sense to him right now. This battle should be fought head on with the Virginia High School League. Mrs. McKeel said that we have been fighting this battle with the VHSL for at least 12 years. Mr. Wheeler said that VHSL should be coming to the table in times like this asking how we can do student athletics better. Mr. Price said that Fitz Barnes said that this is not a VHSL problem. Dr. Moran said that when she came on board as the Superintendent one of her first tasks was to try to negotiate this with VHSL and the principals/athletic directors in high schools that would need to agree. It was a waste of time; these schools are not interested in the change. Mrs. McKeel said that the last time we appealed we used test scores and other educational data and the VHSL still denied the request. Mr. Price said that we hold certain communities harmless when it comes to redistricting, and when they show up we back down. This is a perfect opportunity that we are

going to do something about it or we are going to back down. If we back down then we are going to see some things happen based on the vote to change the schedule. Mr. Strucko said that there are compelling arguments on both sides. He thinks that there is an immediate need that we need to address and redistricting can deal with the issue. Mrs. McKeel asked about the infrastructure at Albemarle. Dr. Moran said that the renovations were more about replacing the trailers rather than adding significant capacity at the school. Mr. Koleszar said that we voted to expand Albemarle because the Board decided not to redistrict. He was in favor of redistricting, but he is concerned now that we will not be able to get the enrollment under 1,500. Mrs. McKeel said that she does not think that staff would have put it on the table if they did not feel that they could achieve it. Dr. Moran said that she feels that it can be achieved. The big issue is that this is really hurting our children. Mr. Koleszar said that in order to get Western Albemarle up to 1,300 in capacity then there are going to be long bus rides for students from the other side of the County. If we tell the VHSL that we are going to redistrict when will it be by? Mr. Haun said 2011-12. Mrs. McKeel asked if staff should bring back further information about this issue to the Board. Mr. Price said that he does not think that this has been studied enough. Dr. Moran said that with the growth this year, it occurred at Monticello High School.

Mr. Wheeler said that it bothers him that the Hispanic/Latino Coordinator position was cut. It does not show up as a cut because it was a School Board initiated addition. It is not on there because it came out of the reserve. Dr. Benson said that it was in the budget as a half-time position and the Board funded the rest of the position to make it whole. Mr. Wheeler said that the budget should make the position a full-time position in the budget. Mrs. McKeel said that there is value in the position. Mr. Koleszar said that he does not feel strongly one way or the other on this request. Mr. Price asked if we were seeing any reductions in the number of Latinos in the area. Mr. Haun said that there is little change even with the economic times. Mrs. McKeel said that we have seen some changes in their data from tests. **There was Board consensus to add this back into the budget (make it full-time).**

Mr. Strucko asked about the restructuring of the Albemarle Resource Center. Is the position being eliminated a position that is currently filled? Dr. Moran said yes, it is currently filled.

Mr. Strucko asked about the reductions for Murray High School. Mr. Haun said that we are looking to move the Community Public Charter School into the same building as Murray High School and moving the Resource Center out. This may assist with staffing as well. The other part of the consolidation is to move the leadership of the Enterprise Center under the Principal of Murray High School and eliminating the administrative position for the Enterprise Center. Mrs. McKeel asked if there may be a safety issue. Dr. Moran said no.

Mrs. Mouly said that she agrees with restoring the Family Support Workers.

Mrs. Mouly asked about the Safety/Security Officer and Literacy Specialist elimination at CATEC (pg. A-39). She would support adding those positions back in. Mr. Koleszar said that the Safety/Security Officer is for directing traffic and they will have a light added with the Meadowcreek Parkway. Mrs. Mouly asked about the Literacy Specialist position. Mr. Haun said that having taught English at CATEC and being successful. Mr. Bonham is confident that the current teachers can do the work. Mr. Wheeler said that the CATEC Board did not have concerns about the recommendations.

(There was a break from 8:24 p.m. until 8:46 p.m.)

Mr. Zimmermann reviewed with the Board the revisions that had been made prior to the break.

Mr. Koleszar asked what the impact is on reducing principal time on teacher performance appraisals. Dr. Benson said that the workload would not increase more than some other principals already have. Dr. Benson said that the elimination of the middle school assistant principal is overstaffed at this time.

Mr. Koleszar said that he is willing to consider shared principals in the southern feeder pattern as there may be some advantages. Mr. Price said that he would also look at sharing between Red Hill Elementary and Murray Elementary. Mr. Wheeler said that he would not support this recommendation. Mrs. Mouly said that she

thinks that it could work. Mr. Strucko said that it needs to be site specific. He feels that he could agree. Mr. Price said that he could agree.

Mr. Koleszar offered a **motion** to move the items regarding the shared elementary school principals to Tier I (sharing would be between Murray Elementary/Red Hill Elementary and Scottsville Elementary/Yancey Elementary). Mrs. McKeel **seconded** the motion, and **the motion passed with Mr. Wheeler and Mr. Strucko voting no.**

Mr. Koleszar asked what the Executive Services reduction included. Mr. Zimmermann said that it includes operational expenses and support for the Hearing Officer.

Mrs. McKeel asked about the Human Resources reductions. Dr. Benson said that we are eliminating a middle management position, then operational expenses.

Mrs. McKeel said that she would not eliminate the ROTC program at Monticello High School. Mr. Haun said that this is eliminating the subsidy to keep staffing. The staffing will come from Monticello High School in order for the position to be funded. If Monticello does not pick up the funding then there will not be enough staffing to run the program. The Board asked that the description be reworded to reflect what is actually happening.

Mr. Strucko said that he would move the operational cuts into Tier I. Mrs. McKeel said that these reductions are on top of 15% reductions. Mr. Strucko said that if we are increasing class size he does not see how he can justify staff development funding for the Executive Services budget. Mr. Wheeler said that we have been cutting these areas for the last couple of years, and it will be difficult to put these monies back into the budget. Dr. Moran said that the Board is required to participate in training through State Code. Mr. Strucko said that he was not aware of that requirement.

Mr. Strucko asked about the elementary school assistant principal reduction in Tier II. Dr. Moran said that we would eliminate an assistant principal at the elementary school. Mr. Haun said that one position would be shared between two schools. Mr. Koleszar asked which two schools would be looked at. Dr. Moran said that it would have to be a school with an assistant principal.

Mrs. McKeel asked about the Tier III reduction of redistricting middle schools. Dr. Moran said that we have Walton that is under 400 students and we could redistrict to recapture the hold harmless staff. Mr. Koleszar said that we would redistrict the families that we just redistricted to Burley.

Mr. Strucko offered a **motion** to move the reduction of an elementary school assistant principal to Tier I. Mr. Koleszar **seconded** the motion, **and the motion failed with Mr. Strucko and Mr. Koleszar voting in favor of the motion.**

Mrs. McKeel asked if we reduce the Board Reserves by \$75,000 what would that leave the division. Also, how much money would be in fund balance? Mr. Zimmermann said that we are not projecting carrying over a large amount of fund balance from the current year. Board reserves would be eliminated if it were to be reduced by \$75,000.

Mr. Strucko asked what is worse increasing class size by three students or eliminating elementary staffing for art, music and physical education over the required levels. Mr. Haun said he would say eliminating staffing for art, music and physical education.

Mr. Strucko asked what was included in differentiated staffing. Mr. Zimmermann said that in the staffing formula we staff students on free and reduced lunch at a smaller class size.

Mr. Koleszar said that it is the Board's responsibility under the Code of Virginia to report to the Board of Supervisors the needs of the division. We have cut too much as it stands.

Mrs. Mouly asked if there was any value to factoring in system-wide furloughs earlier rather than later. Mr. Price said that he does not see the need for the Board to implement that currently. Mr. Strucko agreed.

Agenda Item 3.1. Other Business by Board Members/Superintendent.

Mr. Wheeler thanked staff for their work and hanging in there on the tough initiatives. He said that all would benefit from some communication on the schedule change.

Agenda Item 4.1. Adjournment.

At 9:52 p.m., Mr. Strucko offered a **motion** to adjourn the meeting of the Albemarle County School Board. Mrs. McKeel **seconded** the motion, **and the motion passed.**

Chairman

Clerk