

**GOOCHLAND COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD
REGULAR MONTHLY WORKSHOP
MAY 25, 2010
ANNEX BUILDING TRAINING ROOM
6:30 P.M.**

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER

Ivan O. Mattox, Sr., Chairman, called the meeting to order at 6:41 p.m.

Present were:

Ivan O. Mattox, Sr., Vice Chairman
Mr. Raymond A. Miller
Mr. James L. Haskell
Mr. Andrew A. Meng, III
Dr. Linda A. Underwood, Superintendent

Absent:

Maxwell G. Cisne, Chairman

Also attending were:

Peter M. Gretz, Assistant Superintendent
Tom DeWeerd, Director of Secondary Education
Lynne Venter, Director of Finance and Operations
Sonny Turner, Supervisor of Maintenance
Andrea Erard, Legal Counsel

The Media was represented by:

Amy Condra, *The Goochland Gazette*

ADDITIONS/DELETIONS/CHANGES TO AGENDA

Dr. Underwood presented additions and deletions to agenda.

STATEMENT BY MR. MATTOX:

Before we begin public comment this evening, I would like to make some comments on behalf of the School Board.

The budget process this year has been long, arduous and sad. Like other school divisions across the state and nation, we have had to develop our budget to live within the reduced resources available to us. We, as a School Board, have to make difficult budget decisions that are in the best interests of all of our students. Goochland County has, through the past many years, made great strides forward and we intend to continue that progress despite reduced resources, despite having to curtail services and programs that have been put in place to serve our students well.

As a historical perspective, the budget we will consider this evening is \$3.7 million less than the approved 2008-2009 budget, which is a 14% decrease. It is \$3.1 million less than the approved 2009-2010 budget. That is a 12% decrease. We had to make changes in

what we do, how we provide a quality education to all of our students, how we can continue to move forward despite budgetary constraints.

We have listened to the community. We have to make decisions that are in the best interests of all of our students for not only next year, but for future years as well. Those decisions are not going to be embraced by everyone. But know that no one is pleased at having to reduce the programs and services that have become a part of the Goochland County Public Schools.

The School Board is confident that every employee will continue to give her and his best for all of our students despite the challenges we face. And if we can face those challenges together, schools and community, we will be stronger for it.

FIRST PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

- Wils Hosken read a poem he wrote for the teachers titled "In the world I am a Loner." In the world I am a loner, in the salt I may pray for all the trouble I have, cause it's a dark destiny, my fate, the world sees me through, it's true, and I don't have anything but you, the light is fleeing, fear is rising, there's so much to do, and I don't have anything but you.
- Karron Myrick, Brandon Myrick and Rachel Myrick: Mrs. Myrick introduced her children and explained her son's reaction to the closing of the gifted center stating the discussion pulled at her heart strings. She explained to him that there is less money and her son suggested that Lego Robotics be cut rather than the center. She decided the process could be an education for her children and said her son wanted to speak for the program and for his little sister. She said she watched her children put together words that this is a "bad decision."

Brandon Myrick, a 6th grader at GMS, stated that if the gifted program is cut his sister will not have the same opportunities he had. He further stated the center gives them an opportunity to excel beyond their peers. He feels that cutting the program will be like cutting their success, not only affecting his sister but all students.

Rachel Myrick stated the program means a lot to her class and it inspires them to learn more and more.

- Emily Roby, a 4th grader at the specialty center said she wanted to go to the Board meeting rather than go to dinner for her birthday. She said her heart broke when she heard about the closing of the center. She asked the School Board to save the specialty center.
- Lauren Michel, a 4th grader at the specialty center, said she is upset that the center may be closing and worried about returning to a regular classroom. She said the work is more rewarding and she will not be able to see most of her friends. She said if the center is shut down she will be very upset as will the other children there.

- Olivia Bullard, a 4th grader at the center, said she will be homeschooled next year but will "fight for her friends." She also stated that everyone deserves a good education and asked the School Board to reconsider closing center.
- Helena Trevor, a 3rd year student at the center, stated she liked being in a class where it was okay to be smart. She feels it is important to keep the gifted center.
- Emily Dougherty said she will be sad to see her friends go to Randolph Elementary and Byrd Elementary and asked the School Board to keep the gifted center. She said she loves the center and hope it will not be taken away.
- Elle Rosenbaum, a Goochland Middle School student, said she would dislike it if center were taken away. She feels that other students will not have the same opportunity. She said the gifted center allowed her to excel and she was more challenged – she would not like it if the gifted center were taken away from other students.
- Katie Shedden, a Goochland High School student, said she went to the gifted center in 3rd, 4th and 5th grades, and her sister is currently attending. She said it upset her to see so many children at the meeting. She said she had a good experience at center that allowed her to excel and feels other children deserve to be in an environment where friends encourage them and it's okay to be smarter. She said it helped her and her peers and feels it would be a huge mistake to take it away.
- Shelby Greenburg, who attended center in 5th grade, said it was a challenge and she hopes the School Board keeps the gifted center because it helps kids excel.
- Beth Hardy, a parent of 4 children in GCPS, said she and her husband were drawn to GCPS and the willingness to help students. She said the needs of her children are distinctly different and all needs are being met, everything from gifted to having an IEP. She is sorely disappointed by the budget process this year and frustrated with the first round of budget cuts, specifically teachers vs. administrators. She disagrees with entire RIF process and guidelines why teachers would be cut. She feels GCPS should strive to keep very best we have. She feels we are doing the current students at the gifted center a disservice by cutting it; that it is disruptive to these students. She asked that the School Board allow current students to finish at the center. She also asked School Board to reconsider the budget cuts and to work with parents to come up with a program that will challenge the gifted children.
- Sekou Shabaka stated that at the last workshop he addressed School Board on disproportionality and provided a letter to the School Board. He asked that he receive a response to the letter. He asked that the School Board take it out of the daily operation and make it a project that stands alone. He feels no results can come from integration of important issues by delegating them to the day-to-day administration. He also stated there are models that are successful in terms of what they are asking the Board to do (Williamsburg Collegiate School). He once again asked School Board to be responsive and let him know their intentions regarding letter that was sent. He also thanked the young people for

speaking at the meeting. He stated it was difficult to follow the meetings and asked board members to please speak into the microphones.

- Jane Christie stated feels like the entire budget process has made a mockery of democracy from start to finish. She stated parents and citizens stood up during public comment throughout imploring the School Board not to target teachers, textbooks, and programs, but 91 letters to teaching staff, but only 4 to non-teaching personnel. The name of the Goochland Center for the Gifted was changed to the Goochland Elementary School Annex on the school's website months ago, even though parents were assured back in December this program would not be cut. She feels the intention was quite clear throughout this process and public comment has made no difference to the outcome. She summarized saying that on November 24 Dr. Underwood suggested eliminating the gifted center and 27 teaching positions. On December 15 Dr. Underwood assured everyone this was not on the agenda and has been denying it ever since. On May 11, two weeks before the final School Board vote on the budget, Dr. Underwood reintroduced the elimination of the gifted center and announced the elimination of 26 teaching positions and only 7 out of 200 non-teaching positions. She said that even though the closing of the gifted center seems to have been the intention all along, the Superintendent has never discussed options with the parents or presented any kind of plan for the gifted students. She said center-based program is the most efficient use of resources in rural counties like Goochland and returning gifted children to their home school will be less efficient. She stated that Dr. Underwood proposes the elimination 40% of the gifted teachers along with this program and claims it is possible to offer the same quality of gifted education. She feels logic dictates that cannot possibly be the case. She suspects the Superintendent will present a plan after the final public comment period denying anyone a chance to point out the flaws in this plan before the School Board votes. She asked School Board to represent them in their vote.
- John Wright stated that his thoughts and prayers go out to Max Cisne because he must be gravely ill not to be at the meeting on such an important occasion for both the parents and the Board. He also stated that with all of the people in the room it should be obvious to the Board that their legacy as board members really sits in front of them. He said they have all talked to the Board numerous times, many students have now talked to the Board several times, and they continue to hope that at some point their voices can be heard. He feels that thus far they have not. He stated he does feel that the Superintendent's legacy is somewhat sealed. He said he is aware it is time again for her annual review, and mentioned the fact that they have requested a special review, and that was denied. He said now is the time to consider all of the things they have mentioned before; things he believes have driven a wedge between the Superintendent and the community. He listed the following: giving out termination notices during Teacher Appreciation Week; the ever-widening breach of confidence between the Superintendent and the public; some of the blatant misrepresentations of fact on public record from her; the disregard for the Department of Education regulations; the abusive environment she has created for her staff and the students; and the fact that she used the county's email system to deliver an email to ask coaches and athletic boosters to rile up their followers, their boosters, in order to come at the parents all under the moniker of an email that says the

battle is on. He stated he finds it irreprehensible, even though it is only a one-time occurrence thus far - to our knowledge – that she chose to side with public relations rather than to enforce the law and do things that would truly teach a good lesson to our children about what is right and wrong. He said she circumnavigated the law and chose to save her position and the public position of the school system. He said he appreciates the opportunity to speak and hopes the School Board will consider these things as they make their vote.

- Margaret Reynolds spoke in favor of gifted center and said there are some people in the community who do not see the value of providing a center-based program. She said the county seems to be of two minds of intellectual excellence. She said no one questions value of honors program at Goochland High School, or questions resources provided to a child who is struggling with reading or math, but it is okay to question academic needs of advanced elementary students. She said the school system is responsible for meeting needs of all students across the spectrum. She said the center-based program meets the needs of students in grades 3-5 and is a core program. She said the program was established as a cost effective program. She feels the education of advanced students is core not elite and feels their needs are just as important as other students. She asked School Board to continue to support the elementary center-based program for advanced students.
- Brandon Myrick mentioned the number of people in room and how they must have other things to do but attend the meeting.
- Laurel Heiser mentioned concerns heard through the grapevine such as cutting more teachers and not administrative positions. She feels teachers are getting brunt of cuts rather than the cuts being spread out across the board. She is concerned that gifted students will not get enough.
- Kenya Mills drew pictures to explain her feelings. She said that Byrd, Randolph and Goochland Elementary Schools use teamwork to learn and that is what the gifted center is all about. The gifted center and GES makes kids smile. She said she hope the School Board votes to keep it. She said it is all about education.
- Becci Dougherty stated she feels there is a lack of communication between public and administration. She said it is also because they were all a bit spoiled by Dr. Morgan and he was always quick to respond and kept his blog updated on daily basis. She stated Dr. Underwood's blog has 3 or 4 times this year. She has noticed that since Dr. Underwood took over all teacher blogs are not updated as they should be. She feels blogs are a great tool for communication. She will email School Board with other concerns in the near future.
- Penny Palen said she stumbled upon a posting on the GCPS website outlining the vision and mission for the gifted program and said that one vote will undo what was done years ago. She quoted from the website regarding needs and asked what the current standard is for determining needs and asked where they are on the website. She said the goal of the goals of gifted program are to provide differentiated instruction, assist students in achieving their maximum potential, provide a continuum of service options, address the social and emotional needs of the gifted student, and support an educational environment

that enables students to perform at all levels. She said it seems as if the School Board vote will either keep or undo program they had originally set out to create.

- Angie Bowald said she chose not to put her 5th grader in the gifted program even though he was in gifted education when they lived in Georgia. Her 2nd grader was in a standard class in Georgia. She said that then they moved here her son went into the advanced program at GMS, but her younger child is not as challenged, which tells her that if he moved back into a regular education he would be bored. She said her point is that if they choose to eliminate the gifted center program and put it back in the elementary schools it will do the same thing to other children. She feels the School Board needs to keep gifted center in place. She said parents need the public school system to provide the program. she thanked School Board for their consideration.
- Christina Rosenbaum said she and her family moved here from Chesterfield and chose Goochland because of school system and how good it was. She said she was pleasantly with the education received and feels that some of the changes will take GCPS a major step backwards and asked School Board to rethink decisions made.
- Penny Palen said that because there is a video camera in the room and children present, she will get permission from parents to use video and will pixel out any necessary faces.
- Regan Harrahy, a 2nd grader at Randolph elementary, said she is supposed to go to the gifted center next year if available. She said she would be very pleased if they would keep gifted center open, stating it would provide more opportunity for more education.
- Michael McDermott mentioned the heat in the room and the option of using a more appropriate meeting room. He also spoke about school system goals and involvement. He said he had written a letter and asked that he get an answer. Said that the School Board is supposed to serve the public and the Superintendent is to serve at the pleasure of the School Board. He said he had sent an email and had asked for acknowledgement of receipt, and had only received two. He mentioned the presentation of recommended budget cuts and stated the presentation was illegible and unclear and that the presentation should have been available for the public to follow along. He said if the slides are in the Board packet there is time to make it available. He said there is a lack of communication and he has yet to hear one supporter of the proposed budget.
- Winfred Mills stated he thinks the gifted center program is doing the children good and asked the School Board to keep the program.

CONSENT ITEMS

PERSONNEL ACTIONS

The following Consent Agenda items were presented for approval:

Appointment:

Dianne Harris, RES, Custodian

Summer School Appointment:

Elementary: Leslie Neely

Approval for Probationary Contract:

Jennifer Erixon

Approval for Move from Probationary to Continuing Contract:

Blair Grigg
Amy Hartley
Amie Potter

Approval for Continuing Contract:

Jesse Hernandez

Resignation:

Kelly Ayling, GMS, Business/Ed Tech
LaWana Brooks-Huff, Driver
Christa Mott, GHS, Health Science

Mr. Haskell made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Miller, to approve the Consent items as presented. The motion was approved unanimously.

ACTION ITEMS:

FURLOUGH DAYS

Dr. Underwood presented information on the four furlough days for the SY 2010-2011. Andrea Erard advised that the School Board take action on the item.

Mr. Meng made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Haskell, to approve 4 days unpaid furlough that will be reflected on contracts to be issued for the SY 2010-2011. The motion was approved unanimously.

FY 2010-2011 BUDGET

Dr. Underwood presented a review of the proposed revisions to the budget, explaining it was the same budget that was presented on May 11, 2010. She requested approval as presented. The Board discussed the matter.

Mr. Meng made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Miller, to approve the Superintendent's FY 2010-2011 Proposed Revised Budget as presented. The motion was approved unanimously.

ADJUSTMENT TO AGENDA

Dr. Underwood asked the School Board to add an agenda item to approve new position titles in light of the FY 2010-2011 budget approval and the reorganization.

Mr. Meng made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Haskell, to adjust the agenda to accept new position titles as an action item on the agenda. The motion was approved unanimously.

APPROVAL OF NEW POSITION TITLES

Dr. Underwood explained that the FY 2010-2011 budget required significant reorganization. Each Board member was given a handout of new position titles, explaining that the six people on this list are current employees, but will be doing different jobs next year. With the reorganization they need new titles to reflect the new responsibilities. She feels next year there will be more reorganization so she has made some of the titles "interim." Mr. Miller asked that Dr. Underwood present a new organizational chart.

Mr. Miller made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Haskell, to accept the new position titles as presented. The motion was approved unanimously.

INFORMATION ITEMS

EPERITUS REPORT

Lynne Venter presented an overview of a study that was done that included a review and analysis of energy usage over a three year period and a recommendation for potential savings strategies to use as a basis for what we feel is a very sustainable energy management plan. Ms. Venter explained that over the past couple of years, Ms. Venter, Sonny Turner, and Dr. Underwood had been approached by a number of companies, and have met with some. She further explained that GCPS has been very proactive. She feels the stud shows that a lot has been accomplished, but also understand more can be done. She introduced Carl Chafin from Eperitus who presented highlights from the report.

Mr. Chafin stated they were very impressed with what is already in place to support capital improvements, particularly those related to energy. The approach taken was to go through schools, recognize what had been done and whether there were other areas where savings could be met. They liked the strategy of using our own expertise in identifying critical areas that would achieve energy savings and picking and choosing where outside expertise is needed. Some areas identified were window replacement in older schools; computer technology; identified a few areas of lighting; plumbing-replacing older less efficient units; and hot water heaters and types of controls. In particular when analysis was done the school that jumped out was the high school/middle school in that use in that facility has spiked. Mr. Chafin does not have a good answer as to why, but said it merits investigation. With respect to next steps they would submit spending time at GHS to pinpoint what has resulted in the energy use spike; do an analysis on computer technology and how it could be used more efficiently ; building a database that tracks energy usage so that over time and using BTUs for comparison you could take the database and continue to monitor it as improvements are made and use that as the "yardstick." Mr. Chafin stated they are willing to help us build that system but feels we have capability to do that now. He, again, applauded GCPS for job being done.

APRIL 30, 2010 FINANCIAL UPDATE

Dr. Underwood presented the April 30, 2010 financial update. Information with respect to unexpended funds will be presented at the June meeting.

