

March 8, 2018
6:00 p.m.

The Fannin County Board of Education met in regular session with the following members present: Lewis DeWeese, Chair; Chad Galloway, Vice-Chair; Bobby Bearden; and Steve Stanley. Terry Bramlett was absent.

The meeting was called to order by Lewis DeWeese, Chair.

Motion by Bobby Bearden, seconded by Steve Stanley, to approve the consent agenda. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Approve the agenda.

Approve the Board meeting minutes from February 8, 2018, at 4:00 p.m., and March 6, 2018, at 8:00 a.m.

Approve school field trip requests.

- Mountain Education Charter High School to North Georgia Technical College, Blairsville, Georgia for the Accuplacer Test Administration
- Mountain Education Charter High School to the Georgia Aquarium, Atlanta, Georgia for a field trip

Dr. Scott Ramsey, Assistant Principal/Athletic Director of Fannin County High School, gave an update to the Board on Fannin County High School extracurricular activities.

Benny Long, Assistant Superintendent, gave an update to the Board on School Safety.

Public Comment:

Brooke Campbell spoke about school safety.

Jessica Collins spoke about the school safety.

Tiffany Roath spoke about the school safety.

Sara L. Neeley, Business Development Consultant, REACH, Georgia, gave an update to the Board on REACH. REACH stands for Reaching Educational Achievement Can Happen.

Motion by Chad Galloway, seconded by Bobby Bearden, to approve the district financial report for January 31, 2018. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Dr. Gwatney stated the SPLOST check received in February for January was \$385,578.71.

Motion by Steve Stanley, seconded by Chad Galloway, to approve the recommendation of Option 1 for the Fannin County School System 2018-19 Calendar. All members voted yes; motion carried (see attached).

Motion by Chad Galloway, seconded by Bobby Bearden, to award mowing bids to Pro Turf & Landscape Maintenance, LLC at Blue Ridge Elementary School for \$550, East Fannin Elementary School for \$1,700, West Fannin Elementary School for \$900, Fannin County Middle School for \$1,000, and Fannin County High School for \$2,000. This mowing bid will cover a seven month period from April 2, 2018, through October 29, 2018. Lewis DeWeese, Chad Galloway, and Bobby Bearden voted yes. Steve Stanley abstained; motion carried (see attached).

Motion by Bobby Bearden, seconded by Steve Stanley, to approve the Fannin County High School camera project including a server and multiple high definition cameras at a cost of \$42,294.48 from Ellijay Telephone Company. This amount from the vendor is considered “turn-key” for all equipment, including installation and related services. This will be purchased out of SPLOST funds. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Motion by Bobby Bearden, seconded by Chad Galloway, to approve the Fannin County High School Performing Arts Center orchestra pit project for the installation of a fixed orchestra pit in the amount of \$73,200 from Productions Unlimited, Inc. This amount from the vendor is considered “turn-key” for all equipment, including installation and related services. This will be purchased out of SPLOST funds. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Motion by Chad Galloway, seconded by Steve Stanley, to approve of the purchase of computer hardware (50 desktop computers) from ByteSpeed for \$31,040. These will be purchased using SPLOST funds. All members voted yes; motion carried (see attached).

Motion by Steve Stanley, seconded by Chad Galloway to set the 2018 Fannin County High School Prom for Saturday, May 5, 2018, at North Georgia Technical College from 7:00 - 11:00 p.m., and to the graduation date for Friday, May 25, 2018, at 8:00 p.m. in the stadium. In the event of inclement weather, the ceremony will be held in the new gym on Friday, May 25, 2018, at 8:00 p.m. All members present voted yes, motion carried.

Robert Ensley, Curriculum Director, discussed the Local Board Training on Legal Issues and Ethics to be held on April 12, 2018, beginning at 4:00 p.m.

Motion by Bobby Bearden, seconded by Steve Stanley, to approve Crystal Clore as a Paraprofessional. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Motion by Steve Stanley, seconded by Lewis DeWeese, to approve Amanda Gilliam as a Paraprofessional. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Motion by Bobby Bearden, seconded by Chad Galloway, to approve David Henson as Athletic Director effective SY 2018-2019. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Superintendent’s Comments:

Dr. Michael Gwatney, Superintendent, expressed his appreciation for those making public comments and visitors to the meeting. He thanked Dr. Scott Ramsey and the coaches for all they do for students in the Fannin County School System. Dr. Gwatney congratulated the Ignite Grant winners and thanked Ellijay Telephone Company (ETC) for making these grants possible. He thanked Benny Long and local government officials for their support of the school system.

He thanked Sara Neeley for sharing information on the REACH program and the REACH scholars. Dr. Gwatney expressed his appreciation to the central office staff and Darren Danner for coordination of projects. In closing, Dr. Gwatney recognized the Board of Education members by presenting certificates in recognition of Board Member Appreciation Week, March 12-16, 2018. Board Members are advocates for our community's most precious asset: Our students.

Board Members' Comments:

Mr. Chad Galloway appreciated Darren Danner, Scott Ramsey, Benny Long, and those that spoke during Public Comment. Brooke Campbell touched his heart by what she had to say and her words did not fall on deaf ears. Mr. Galloway appreciated everyone coming out to the meeting.

Mr. Bobby Bearden thanked Dr. Scott Ramsey and congratulated him on his new role at Fannin County High School. He stated that he was amazed with Benny Long and his presentation. It was a great presentation and what is needed to keep schools safe. Mr. Bearden appreciated Mrs. Brooke Campbell's words and, just like she is, he is here for the kids. Mr. Bearden also stated that Dr. Gwatney and all members of the central office are here for the kids. Mr. Bearden thanked Sara Neeley who spoke about how good the system is and stated that this is because of everyone in Fannin County working together. He appreciated Ms. Jessica Collins and Ms. Tiffany Roath for speaking during Public Comment. Mr. Bearden stated that communication is what makes things happen. Coming and saying what you did about safety is important. He stated that "there is no one that cares more about safety than I do." Things that happened in other schools, I hope and pray they never happen here, but if it does, I hope this system is ready for that – to take care of our children. Mr. Bearden has grandchildren in Fannin County Schools. Mr. Bearden went on to say that ten people came to last meeting and expressed a concern. He has been on the Board 16 years and takes one person talking as one thing; two people talking is another thing; but when you hear ten people talking on the same thing, then there is something to it. He wished to express tonight that when we make the statement on public comment that the superintendent or one of his/her representatives is going to contact the speaker that will be done. It was his understanding that the things that needed to be addressed to those ten people were addressed. He thinks communication is what it is all about and encouraged everyone to communicate. We have a new Athletic Director as of tonight. I don't think that everyone is going to accept Mr. Henson as Athletic Director. Some may not like him, some may love him. If all pull together for the interest of our children, then it will work. Mr. Bearden appreciates everyone being there tonight and invites everyone back. Mr. Bearden added that he had a moment to speak with Dr. Gwatney recently about a concern. Dr. Gwatney's response was "Well, my daughter is there."

Steve Stanley thanked Mrs. Brooke Campbell for coming tonight. He finds it hard to disagree with anything that any of our presenters said here tonight and hopes that we can see if some of the ideas can be integrated (the public, the school system, law enforcement.) Safety is very important right now. There is nothing more dear to him than the children. Parents expect from the time children board the school bus until the time they step off the school bus that their kids are in a safe, secure, and comfortable environment. The School Board does everything in their power to make sure that those children are treated that way. I cannot say enough about the community when it comes to our children. We love our children. They are God's gift to us.

Grandkids come along, and you really feel it then. They are a special gift. Thanks to Mr. Couch and the School Resource Officers. They do a great job and have a lot of ground to cover. Thanks to everyone for coming out tonight. Mr. Stanley welcomed Mr. Darren Danner to the central office wished Dr. Scott Ramsey good luck in his new roles, and is proud to be on the Fannin County Board of Education.

Lewis DeWeese stated that it is an honor to be on the Board, and he respects his fellow board members. Their comments had him close to tears because he believes in them and trusts them. He guarantees to all those present that children are their (to include all of the Board) main objective. These (central office) people make it so easy to be a BOE member. It goes far beyond a business meeting. One decision causes a child that is hungry to have something for breakfast. As Benny Long alluded, a decision sets a policy that a child has a new bus that is safe to ride in. We have elite teachers, supervisors, and a Central Office that is like a well-oiled machine. A caring, loving, kid machine that puts kids first. This is a special school system. We are proud of all persons in system as they are helping children change their lives.

There being no further business to come before the meeting, a motion was made by Bobby Bearden, seconded by Chad Galloway, to adjourn subject to being called into special session by the Chair when deemed necessary. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Lewis DeWeese, Chairperson

Michael Gwatney, Superintendent

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