

September 9, 2021
6:00 p.m.

The Fannin County Board of Education met in regular session with the following members present: Chad Galloway, Chair; Terry Bramlett, Vice-Chair; Bobby Bearden; Mike Cole; and Lewis DeWeese. A quorum was present. The meeting was held at the Fannin County Board of Education.

The meeting was called to order by Chad Galloway, Chair.

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

Approve the agenda.

Approve the Board meeting minutes from August 12, 2021, at 6:00 p.m.

Superintendent Michael Gwatney presented Director of Learning & Achievement Lucas Roof with the Fannin County School System's annual certificate from the Georgia Accrediting Commission (GAC). Mr. Roof then presented each of the five school principals with their school's certificate.

Deputy Superintendent Sarah Rigdon reviewed summaries of recent activities at all five Fannin SGTs.

Blue Ridge Principal Dr. April Hodges presented school happenings.

Director of Learning & Achievement Lucas Roof shared a district health update including current COVID data, the Fannin County School System (FCSS) reopening plan for the American Rescue Plan (ARP), and contact tracing.

Director of Instructional Technology Heather Finley provided a central office update regarding district communications, both audio and visual, with the public.

The Board heard public comment from one individual.

Assistant Superintendent Darren Danner provided a facilities update with photographs.

Assistant Superintendent Darren Danner provided a construction update with photographs.

Motion by Terry Bramlett, seconded by Mike Cole, to approve bid for surplus equipment at Fannin County Middle School. The winning bid was provided by Bobby Bearden. Chad Galloway, Terry Bramlett, Lewis DeWeese, and Mike Cole voted yes, Bobby Bearden abstained; motion carried. **(See attached.)**

Motion by Lewis DeWeese, seconded by Bobby Bearden, to approve two Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with the Fannin County Department of Public Health (FCDPH) to provide a facility, if needed, as a result of a local health emergency, effective from October 1, 2021, through October 1, 2022, which may be renewed on an annual basis if mutually agreed upon by both parties; and to approve FCDPH to provide scoliosis screenings of public school children in the at-

risk population, ages 10–15 years. The terms of this agreement shall be for the period of one year commencing on October 1, 2021. All members voted yes; motion carried. **(See attached.)**

Motion by Bobby Bearden, seconded by Terry Bramlett, to approve to seek requests for property management proposals. All members voted yes; motion carried. **(See attached.)**

Motion by Terry Bramlett, seconded by Lewis DeWeese, to approve district financial reports for the period ending July 31, 2021. All members voted yes; motion carried. **(See attached.)**

Director of Finance Susan Wynn informed the Board that the SPLOST check received for July 2021 was \$838,070.37.

Motion by Bobby Bearden, seconded by Mike Cole, to approve bus use request from the Fannin County Recreation Department. All members voted yes; motion carried. **(See attached.)**

Motion by Lewis DeWeese, seconded by Terry Bramlett, to approve bus use request from the Mountain Education Charter High School. All members voted yes; motion carried. **(See attached.)**

Motion by Lewis DeWeese, seconded by Bobby Bearden, to approve the district's vision, mission, beliefs, and the SY 2021-2022 FCSS Strategic Plan. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Motion by Terry Bramlett, seconded by Chad Galloway, to approve the Georgia Department of Education request for Georgia Public Broadcasting to video FCSS teachers Karen Goode, Amber Mitchell, and Kelly Hulsey. Each of the teachers will be considered contract workers for the Georgia Department of Education and will receive \$1,000.00 (pre-tax). All members voted yes; motion carried.

Motion by Bobby Bearden, seconded by Lewis DeWeese, to approve to table a revision to Policy JBCA (regarding Resident Students) until October 2021. The proposed change allows a resident student to remain in their current school until the end of the school year should they move outside of the school's attendance zone (parents would be responsible for transportation). All members voted yes; motion carried.

Deputy Superintendent Sarah Rigdon presented the local board planning calendar and plans for an October Board retreat to be facilitated by Pioneer RESA to discuss "Facilities Planning for Local Boards of Education."

Motion by Terry Bramlett, seconded by Chad Galloway, to approve for surplus of technology items. All members voted yes; motion carried. **(See attached.)**

Motion by Bobby Bearden, seconded by Mike Cole, to approve for salvage of technology items. All members voted yes; motion carried. **(See attached.)**

Motion by Bobby Bearden, seconded by Terry Bramlett, to go into executive Session to discuss or deliberate upon the appointment, employment, compensation, hiring, disciplinary action or

dismissal, or periodic evaluation or rating of a public officer or employee or to interview applicants for the position of superintendent; (O.C.G.A. § 50-14-3(b)(2)) **and** to discuss or vote to authorize negotiations to purchase, dispose of, or lease property; authorize ordering an appraisal related to the acquisition or disposal of real estate; enter into a contract to purchase, dispose of, or lease property subject to approval in a subsequent public vote; or enter into an option to purchase, dispose of or lease real estate subject to approval in a subsequent public vote; (O.C.G.A. § 50-14-3(b)(1)) **and** to consider a matter involving the disclosure of personally identifiable information from a student's educational records; (20 USC § 1232g). All members voted yes; motion carried.

Motion by Bobby Bearden, seconded by Mike Cole, to resume the regular meeting. All members voted yes; motion carried.

No action was taken during Executive Session.

Motion by Terry Bramlett, seconded by Mike Cole, to approve the minutes of the Executive Session for August 12, 2021. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Motion by Bobby Bearden, seconded by Lewis DeWeese, to approve the resignation of Sherman Ray effective October 1, 2021. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Motion by Terry Bramlett, seconded by Mike Cole, to approve the resignation of Kelly Wenzel effective October 14, 2021. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Motion by Chad Galloway, seconded by Bobby Bearden, to approve Jeffrey Holloway and Kayla Majors as teachers pending completion of paperwork and background check. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Motion by Mike Cole, seconded by Terry Bramlett, to approve Donna Rivera for school nutrition food service assistant pending completion of paperwork and background check. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Motion by Bobby Bearden, seconded by Lewis DeWeese, to approve Tim Wooten as a part-time custodian (at 25 hours per week) pending completion of paperwork and background check. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Motion by Lewis DeWeese, seconded by Terry Bramlett, to approve Kathy Henson, Samantha Henson, Brianna Hemphill, Ruth Holland, Alison Holloway, Carolyn Howard, Joi Marques, Heather Ralston, Brian Tesoriero, and Amy Urano as substitute teachers, and also approve Kelly Wenzel substitute teacher effective October 15, 2021, pending completion of paperwork and background check, and training. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Motion by Chad Galloway seconded by Bobby Bearden, to approve Christy Cook, Terri L. Ingram, Renita J. Staton, and Brenda Thomas as nutrition substitutes, pending completion of paperwork, background check, and training. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Motion by Lewis DeWeese, seconded by Mike Cole, to approve James Anthony Cheatham as substitute transportation, pending completion of paperwork and background check. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Motion by Terry Bramlett, seconded by Bobby Bearden, to approve Linda S. Chastain as substitute custodian, pending completion of paperwork and background check. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Motion by Bobby Bearden, seconded by Chad Galloway, to approve transfers of Heather Ades, Emily Adams, Milly Rice, and Julie Thompson to positions of Intervention Coordinator. All members voted yes; motion carried.

Superintendent's Comments:

Superintendent Gwatney congratulated principals on the introduction of Intervention Coordinators to their schools. He went on to say that this is one of his favorite times of the year; our Teacher of the Year (TOTY) ceremony will be held on Tuesday evening, and a new TOTY will be unveiled at the event. Dr. Gwatney then asked Mr. Robert Ensley to name the teachers that will be recognized as TOTY candidates. They are: Chris Parker from Blue Ridge Elementary School, Christie Holtman from East Fannin Elementary, Karen Goode from West Fannin Elementary, Brittany Newton from Fannin County Middle School, and Sabrina Howard from Fannin County High School. Mr. Lucas Roof also stated the REACH ceremony and reception have been scheduled for October 27 from 9:00-10:30 AM at Fannin County Middle School.

Dr. Gwatney thanked tonight's presenters and Aaron Lewis for his public comment. During Ms. Finley's presentation about communications, she eluded to the FCSS radio station. Dr. Gwatney took the opportunity to thank Dr. Scott Barnstead and Bubba Gibbs for their work with Rebel Radio 92.7FM and the students that also support the radio program. Last Monday, Dr. Barnstead, Dr. Gwatney, and Director of Student Services Shannon Miller went live on air for a radio show. He and Ms. Miller enjoyed working with Dr. Barnstead and were impressed with his professional skills. Dr. Gwatney thanked the Board and SPLOST for 92.7 Rebel Radio.

Dr. Gwatney thanked the Board and Deputy Superintendent Sarah Rigdon for their work to be a GSBA Exemplary Board. He acknowledged that they do this for the children and citizens of Fannin County, and he appreciates them for that.

Dr. Gwatney stated that tomorrow is the 30th day with students in class, which is over 1/8 of the school year. Dr. Gwatney stated we could not have done this without strong and dedicated faculty and staff members who love our kids and our county; we also could not have done this without the support of our parents and the medical community. He thanked all for their thoughts and prayers.

Board Members' Comments:

Terry Bramlett thanked everyone for their reports and for working so hard in such difficult circumstances. He stated that the children are the beneficiaries of everyone's efforts. He is grateful

for the efficient and dedicated team and thinks of all as his family. He thanked all for their support and prayers.

Lewis DeWeese stated that he is looking forward to the Teacher of the Year banquet because it is his favorite since the best of the best are present.

Bobby Bearden thanked all who were present. He told Mr. Roof that he always looks forward to his presenting the COVID information. The team that is tracking everything will pull children out of school if it becomes necessary. He stated that we are a family that looks after one another.

Mr. Bearden thanked all principals for being present and especially Dr. Scott Ramsey. He stated that he had heard good things about Dr. Ramsey and told him he was doing a great job and was appreciated. Mr. Bearden also thanked Mr. Lewis, public comment, for being present and standing up for children; that is what all of us are here to do. Mr. Bearden also thanked Mr. Danner for contributing and being a “doer.” Mr. Bearden stated our team is successful because we are doers, not just talkers.

Mike Cole thanked Mr. Lewis, public comment, for participating in the meeting. He told him the Board is working hard and doing their best, but they are not perfect. The Board always wants to improve.

Mr. Cole stated that a teacher had texted him about Mr. and Mrs. Danner taking out the garbage after hours. He was reminded of this after Mr. Bearden discussed “doers.” They are a good example of those who go above and beyond, and we have many like them. Mr. Cole went on to say that it would be easy to let little things spoil all of the good things that are going on.

Mr. Cole said he is grateful for the dedicated work of our school system and that we are in school.

Chad Galloway thanked all who were present and especially principals and directors for staying late on a school night. He thanked Mr. Lewis for coming to speak. He also thanked Dr. Ramsey and Mr. Danner for stepping up. He appreciates all for what they have done.

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

Chad Galloway, Chairperson

Michael Gwatney, Superintendent

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