

**MINUTES
DURHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION
DECEMBER 18, 2014**

The Durham Public Schools Board of Education held its regular monthly meeting December 18, 2014, at 6:30 p.m. in the Fuller Administration Building, 511 Cleveland Street, Durham, North Carolina.

Board Members present:

Heidi Carter, Chair; Minnie Forte-Brown, Vice Chair; Natalie Beyer; Matt Sears; Mike Lee; Leigh Bordley; and Sendolo Diaminah were present.

Administration present:

Dr. Bert L'Homme, Superintendent; Dr. Stacey Wilson-Norman, Deputy Superintendent of Academic Services; Hugh Osteen, Deputy Superintendent of Operational Services; Dr. Debbie Pitman, Assistant Superintendent of Student, Family, and Community Services; Tom Crabtree, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources; Chrissy Pearson, Chief Communications Officer; and Aaron Beaulieu, Chief Finance Officer, were present.

Attorney present: Deborah Stagner

Call to Order

Chair Carter called the meeting to order and presided over a moment of silence.

Be Our Guest

Leigh Bordley shared comments and thanked the Northern High School Culinary students for the meal during Be Our Guests. She invited the Board Members and Superintendent L'Homme to join her on the red carpet to pay tribute to the parents/guardians of students at Parkwood Elementary, Y.E. Smith Elementary, Southwest Elementary, Merrick-Moore Elementary, Brogden Middle, and Early College High Schools.

Celebrations

Board Members recognized students, parents, and community partners.

Chief Communications Officer, Chrissy Pearson, recognized the following:

Special Recognition – Ms. Pearson recognized and thanked the Riverside High School's string quartet, led by Ms. Sara Moore, for providing beautiful music this evening before and during the Be Our Guest dinner. She recognized the four students who played: Quavon Johnson, violin; Andrew Wilkison, violin; Marguerite Alley, viola; and Connor Rogerson, cello. Board Members thanked the students and invited them to walk the red carpet.

Duke University's DPS Student of the Month – This program spotlights students who distinguish themselves with character and integrity.

Molly Monsees – December Student of the Month.

Principal Matthew Hunt introduced Molly and shared comments. Molly holds a 5.3 weighted GPA and is never at a loss for activities to keep her busy. She is President of the Envirothon team, President of the National Spanish Honor Society, a member of the student council, a member of the cross country team, serves as a tutor to disadvantaged kids, and is a hostess at the Mellow Mushroom restaurant on weekends. Molly credits her drive and ambitious nature to her parents who she says inspire her every day. “My parents are really driven, motivated, passionate people so I learn from them” says Molly. After graduation, Molly hopes to attend either UNC - Chapel Hill or UNC – Charlotte and major in public health or nursing. She says she would love a career dealing with advocacy and women’s health. Molly was presented with a certificate, and she and her parents were invited to walk the red carpet.

Brother to Brother

Principal Rod Teal recognized the Brother to Brother mentoring program. The program aims to support and nurture the academic, social, physical and emotional growth of young boys of color attending Pearisontown Elementary School and offers students academic support and enhanced activities designed specifically with boys of color in mind. Approximately 12 volunteers from across Durham serve as mentors and are paired with students to assist them with academic support, self-esteem reinforcement, and social skill development activities. Mr. Teal recognized the following students Ashton Hayes, Chase Dawson, Cameron Tate, Maxwell Thornton, and Zane Crews. He said that over the past year, with volunteers like Mr. Harry Leak, and Reverend Michael Page, these young men wrote a book and presented a copy to Dr. L’Homme and each Board Member. They were all thanked and invited to walk the red carpet.

N.C. State Fair Art Awards

Ms. Mary Casey, Director of K-12 Fine Arts, recognized and congratulated the following winners from the N.C. State Fair Art Exhibit:

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

- 4th Place – Oak Grove Elementary School – \$350 – Art teacher: Christie Hollis; Principal: Aisha Howard
- 5th Place – Burton Elementary School – \$250 – Art teacher: Suzanne Brown; Principal: Dr. Kimberly Ferrell

MIDDLE SCHOOL

- 2nd Place – Durham School of the Arts – \$550 – Art teachers: Patrick Hitesman, Val Martinez, Carolyn Maynard, Brittney Soderman ; Principal: David Hawks
- 7th Place – Lakewood Montessori – \$100 – Art teacher: Delvecchio Faison; Principal: Sheldon Reynolds

HIGH SCHOOL

- 2nd Place – Durham School of the Arts – \$550 – Art teachers: Larry Downing, Carolyn Maynard, Darrell Thompson; Principal: David Hawks

2014 N.C. State Honors Chorus

Ms. Casey recognized and congratulated the following students who were selected for the 2014 N.C. State Honors Chorus:

MIDDLE SCHOOL

DSA Middle School – Chorus teachers Amy B Davis, Sean Grier, Sydney Sides; Principal David Hawks

Brogden Middle School – Chorus teacher Corinne Huber; Principal LaTonya Smith

Lucas Middle School – Chorus teacher Allison Thomas; Principal Tom Seckler

HIGH SCHOOL

DSA High School – Chorus teachers Amy B Davis, Sean Grier, Sydney Sides; Principal David Hawks

Riverside High School – Chorus teacher Jill Boliek; Principal Joel County

All students, teachers, and administrators were congratulated and invited to walk the red carpet.

Community Partners

GlaxoSmithKline

Ms. Pearson welcomed Principal Arrica DuBose, Fayetteville Street Elementary School, and Ms. Alycia Worthy, CTE teacher from City of Medicine Academy, and asked them to assist her in recognizing GlaxoSmithKline as the Community Partner for December. She introduced Ms. Mary Linda Andrews, a representative of GSK, and said that on October 30, also known as Orange Day, GSK team members volunteered at Fayetteville Street Elementary School. Scientists entered classrooms and completed science experiments with third, fourth and fifth grade students and discussed different science careers. They also talked with the students about the colleges they attended and what children can do to be prepared for college and science careers. Later the volunteers had lunch and visited with students. In addition, GSK Scientists, partnered with City of Medicine Academy students in career mentoring and job shadowing. Students participated in hands-on demonstrations and had a glimpse into the work day of a GSK scientist. Ms. Pearson thanked Ms. Andrews and GlaxoSmithKline for being such strong supporters of our students and schools. Ms. Andrews was presented with a certificate and invited to walk the red carpet.

Superintendent's Updates

Superintendent L'Homme shared the following updates:

- Hillside's Jason Jowers has been named NC Secondary Assistant Principal of the year! He will go on to national competition and he is a valuable instructional leader and member of Hillside's Leadership Team.
- Last Thursday, there was an outstanding choral performance by Hillandale, Brogden and Riverside choruses. Not only was there excellent artistic expression by 500 student singers, but also an example of elementary, middle and high schools working together.
- There has been excellent progress on truancy and suspensions.
 - Finalizing the Truancy Center and opening in January
 - Training is underway on behavior management, de-escalation training, and Time to Teach.

- The NC School Boards Association has encouraged Boards to take a stand against School Performance Grades.
 - School Performance Grades don't adequately reflect growth and progress.
- Following the demonstrations in Ferguson, Cleveland, and New York, there have been demonstrations in Durham and at two of our high schools. I am very proud of the students at Hillside and Northern High Schools for their peaceful demonstrations and their chance to voice the unjust actions and be a part of a community to try to correct these issues.
- Please remember the 16 year old student that was killed this past week, Delonta Hart. I feel sympathy and sorrow for his parents and he was gifted in so many ways; teachers from Carrington and Northern remember his smile. This is a tragedy for Durham; and as a community, we failed Delonta. We need to come together as a community and a school system to never let this happen again.

Agenda Review and Approval

The agenda was approved as written by common consent.

General Public Comment: None

Board of Education Meeting Minutes

Presented for approval:

- November 20, 2014 – Regular Monthly Meeting – Open and Closed Minutes

Sendolo Diaminah made a motion to approve these minutes as written. Mike Lee seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Consent Agenda

Chair Carter noted that the Consent Agenda items were thoroughly discussed in committee. She also thanked the Finance Department for their hard work on the 2013-2014 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR).

- a. **Communities in Schools Contract**
- b. **2013-2014 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report**
- c. **Information Technology – Cisco SMARTnet Maintenance Services**
- d. **Information Technology – IT Staffing for School Support**

Vice Chair Forte-Brown made a motion to approve Consent Agenda. Natalie Beyer seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Reports of the Board

- a. **Resolution Regarding the State's Proposal to Assign Letter Grades to Each Public School**
Recommendation: Action
Public Comment: None

Chair Carter shared comments about the State's proposal to assign letter grades to each public school. Board Members took turns reading as follows:

**DURHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION RESOLUTION
REGARDING THE STATE'S PROPOSAL TO ASSIGN LETTER
GRADES TO EACH PUBLIC SCHOOL**

WHEREAS, at the direction of the North Carolina General Assembly, the State Board of Education intends to issue "School Performance Grades" for each public school in the state beginning early next year; and

WHEREAS, both parents and taxpayers in North Carolina have a right to know how well our individual public schools are performing in their duties to educate our children; and

WHEREAS, the School Performance Grades for Elementary and Middle Schools will be based primarily on the results of the standardized End-of-Grade (EOG) and End-of-Course (EOC) tests in Mathematics, English Language Arts and 5th and 8th grade Science; and

WHEREAS, the School Performance Grades for High School will also be based primarily on students' performance on standardized tests in English, Mathematics, and Biology, as well as the ACT and the school's graduation rate; and

WHEREAS, extensive empirical analyses exist, demonstrating a preponderance of evidence that strongly correlates economic and demographic conditions of school's neighborhood with student performance on North Carolina's standardized tests, such that schools drawing from wealthier populations of students consistently do better than schools drawing from populations of higher relative poverty; and

WHEREAS, this correlation of performance to socio-economic conditions is reflected in the results of the students who attend Durham Public Schools; and

WHEREAS, it is clear that students who come from families with more resources are better prepared and equipped to learn; and

WHEREAS, Durham Public Schools, with higher percentages of students from lower income families, consistently show increases in student growth from the beginning to the end of a school year that meets or exceeds the average one year growth of North Carolina students; and

WHEREAS, the year-long measure of educational success that a child attains is the best indicator of the overall quality of instruction provided to that student; and

WHEREAS, the state's proposed grading system for schools under-emphasizes gains in yearly growth (i.e., what a child learns in a year) by a weight of 20%, while disproportionately emphasizing performance on standardized tests, a weight of 80%; and

WHEREAS, our district's alternative high school, the Performance Learning Center, has had a demonstrably superior track record of turning around the educational performance of hundreds of students who otherwise would have dropped out of high school, but instead are now valuable contributors to our community and economy; and

WHEREAS, as only one of many examples, the proposed state grading formula would assign the Durham Performance Learning Center a grade of D, thereby implying that a program that plainly is successful is (falsely) a 'near failure', giving the school an unwarranted stigma of low achievement which stands to be a negative deterrent for future potential students from recognizing the PLC as a 'life line' to their success; and

WHEREAS, other schools in the Durham Public Schools system would also be assigned a grade of D yet 90% or more of the teachers in those schools consistently are judged by the State as meeting or exceeding growth among their students.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Durham Public Schools Board of Education finds, for all of the reasons stated above, the North Carolina General Assembly's mandated School Performance Grading System is an ill-conceived, ineffective and potentially damaging approach to addressing otherwise legitimate needs to provide parents and taxpayers with accurate indications of school performance; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Durham Public Schools Board of Education believes North Carolina's reputation as a state with a strong education system will be unnecessarily damaged by the assignment of misleading and counter-productive 'grades' to many of its public schools; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Durham Public Schools Board of Education respectfully requests that the General Assembly delay the issuance of School Performance Grades until a new system, which gives a more accurate reflection of the true performance of a school, is put in place; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Durham Public Schools Board of Education respectfully requests that the Superintendent of Durham Public Schools work with the Superintendents of other school districts in North Carolina, as well as with the North Carolina School Boards Association, to develop an alternative grading system which can be used to give parents and taxpayers a truer vision of the performance of our schools.

This the 18th day of December, 2014.

Following Board discussion, the following changes were made:

- In the twelfth paragraph, third line, change the word “flow” to “low”.
- In the second BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED paragraph, change “delay” to “end” and leave out “until a new system, which gives a more accurate reflection of the true performance of a school, is put in place; and”.
- Strike the last BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED paragraph.

Leigh Bordley made a motion to approve the resolution regarding the State’s proposal to assign letter grades to each public school with the suggested changes. Matt Sears seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Reports of the Committees

I. Instructional Services Committee

a. School Improvement Plans

Recommendation: Action

Public Comment: None

Dr. Stacey Wilson-Norman, Deputy Superintendent of Academic Services, presented the school improvement planning process which allows schools to develop strategies that focus on increasing student achievement and improving overall school effectiveness. School Improvement Plans (SIP) are developed at the school level using feedback from a structured needs assessment process that informs data driven decisions and the implementation of research based strategies. School Improvement Plans are aligned to the strategic priorities identified by the North Carolina State Board of Education and the goals for Future Ready Students in addition to local District goals. Each School Improvement Team (SIT) consists of the principal of the school, the assistant principals, instructional personnel, instructional support personnel, teacher assistants, and at least two parents. Each member shall serve a minimum of one year and a maximum of three years.

The SIT shall develop a SIP that addresses the following areas:

- improved instruction and student outcomes;
- professional development;
- school climate, which includes student health, safety and discipline and working conditions;
- stakeholder satisfaction (students, parents, teachers); and
- duty-free lunch/planning time for teachers.

Dr. Wilson-Norman shared the following phases:

- Phase I – Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA): gather data, organize data, analyze data, draw conclusions, and establish next steps
- Phase II – Plan Development (August – September): Goal, Objectives, and Strategies
 - Title I Expectations – the ten components, budget alignment and budget worksheet, and focus and priority schools

- Phase III – Implementation (Ongoing): The implementation stage is the most difficult of all. Implementing an improvement plan really comes down to changing a complex organization in fundamental ways.
- Phase IV – Monitoring Check Points

Dr. Wilson-Norman explained the format of the School Improvement Plans and they can be found on the DPS website. Lastly, she shared the school assignments for each Area Superintendent, Mr. John McCain, Dr. Alisa McLean, and Ms. Jacqueline Ellis. She thoroughly answered all questions and concerns.

Mike Lee made a motion to approve the School Improvement Plans. Vice Chair Forte-Brown seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

II. Administrative Services Committee

a. 2015-2016 Budget Priorities and Guiding Principles

Recommendation: Action

Public Comment: None

Mr. Aaron Beaulieu, Chief Finance Officer, began the presentation and shared the recommended list of budget priorities and guiding principles to be used when building the 2015-2016 budget:

Provide funding that directly impacts our students and teachers.

- Promote transparency and accountability in development, presentation and management of the annual budget.
- Implement funding formula between DPS and Durham County.
- Reduce the dependency on committed fund balance to cover salary and benefits.
- Achieve efficiencies and savings within existing programming and funding levels.
- Provide accurate projections of student membership.
- Review all district personnel and allotments for potential savings.
- Review current staffing formulas across the district and strive to continue our investment in classroom teachers and staff.
- Review current non-salary allotments to individual schools.
- Reduce the dependency on lapsed salaries to balance the budget.
- Monitor further state mandates to cover salary and benefit increases and possible reductions in program funding.
- Review all contracts within the district for appropriateness and potential savings.
- Review all operational expenditures to maximize efficiency and potential savings.

Mr. Beaulieu thoroughly answered all questions and concerns.

Following Board discussion, Matt Sears made a motion to approve the 2015-2016 Budget Priorities and Guiding Principles. Vice Chair Forte-Brown seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

b. Durham County Capital Improvement Plan

Recommendation: Action

Public Comment: None

Mr. Hugh Osteen, Deputy Superintendent of Operational Services, began the presentation and shared that the County of Durham has requested an update from Durham Public Schools regarding the capital needs for the next ten years. He shared information and provided detail on Durham Public Schools' current Long Range Facility Plan (LRFP), the County's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and additional updates.

**An Overview of Durham Public Schools'
Capital Improvement Plan Submittal to Durham County**

December 2014

Every two to three years, the County of Durham updates its Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). This plan provides a ten year outlook on the purpose, amount and timing of capital funding and improvements for agencies and departments the County supports. DPS is typically the largest portion of these funds though, in recent years, the county has built a new courthouse and Health and Human Services Center.

DPS updates its Long Range Facilities Plan (LRFP) every two to four years. The data and projections in the LRFP are typically what generate DPS' submittal for the County's CIP. The County notified DPS in the fall of 2014 that it would be updating its CIP in the Spring of 2015.

DPS last updated CIP information for the County in November 2012. Having just updated the LRFP in November of 2013, DPS needed only to adjust the master list of projects and funding requirements in order to provide the County with an overview of our capital needs. As expected, most of the plan remained unchanged. However, there are several new or modified projects worth noting.

At the elementary level, we continue to project the need to build Elementary "C" as soon as possible. Bond funds from 2007 are covering the design costs now. Elementary "F" remains in the second half of the plan and the Elementary at Lowe's Grove creeps back into the plan due to the extension of years nine and ten. The most notable change is a new elementary at the proposed 751 South Development. As it is built out, this development will generate enough k-5 students to require a small elementary school. Timing of the funding and construction will depend on the pace of the development. For existing Elementary Schools, the most notable change is to replace Eno Valley with a new facility on the same site. The cost to solve Eno Valley's needs make it more feasible to replace rather than repair it.

At the middle school level, the most notable change is a plan to add a middle grades wing at the Creekside elementary site. Creekside houses roughly 100 students per grade. Therefore, a middle

school wing for 300 students would create a K-8 campus and could greatly reduce overcrowding at Githens Middle School.

At the high school level, Durham School of the Arts continues to have many needs as listed in the site's master plan. However, the biggest change to the group is at Northern High School. Often added to and modified over the decades, the administration recommends that the most prudent action for the future of Northern High is to rebuild it in its entirety on the same site on which it currently sits.

For central sites, The Hub Farm, located on Milton Road, is now mentioned independently and has several improvements listed.

The result of these few major changes and updates to the remaining improvements is a slight uptick in the ten-year value of the LRF. At its last adoption, the total value was approximately \$396 million. Today, with adjustments for what has been accomplished or funded plus the new changes, the value is \$450,543,992; approximately a ten percent increase.

All of this information is provided so that the County can plan and project its support of county-wide capital funding for the next ten years. There are many needs and the costs are high. However, the County must also protect the tax rate and the bond rating for the best fiscal health possible.

In discussions with DPS in 2013, the County indicated there would be a general obligation bond referendum for school and other needs in fall of 2015. With building asset values of roughly a half billion dollars, the numbers listed in the LRF and CIP don't seem so high. The community has invested a great deal into good school facilities. It also deserves and expects for them to be maintained and preserved properly. It is hoped that the 2015 bond offers a significant level of funding to care for the community's investment and to grow where needed for the future.

Mr. Osteen thoroughly answered all questions and concerns.

Following Board discussion, Natalie Beyer made a motion to approve the Durham County Capital Improvement Plan. Mike Lee seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Closed Session

On a motion by Sendolo Diaminah, seconded by Vice Chair Forte-Brown, the Board convened in closed session to consider confidential student information protected under NCGS 115C-402 and the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 USC 1232g, to consider confidential personnel matters under NCGS 143-318.11(a)(6) and 115C-319, and to consult with the board attorney to preserve the attorney-client privilege as provided in NCGS 318.11(a)(3).

The Board convened in closed session at approximately 8:13 p.m.

Open Session – Personnel Recommendations

The Board reconvened in open session at approximately 9:22 p.m.

Personnel Approval

Superintendent L'Homme recommended approval of the December 18, 2014, Personnel Reports. On a motion made by Natalie Beyer to approve the Personnel Reports dated December 18, 2014; seconded by Vice Chair Forte-Brown, the motion passed unanimously.

Chair Carter thanked everyone for coming and wished Happy Holidays to all! Having no further business, the meeting adjourned at approximately 9:24 p.m.

Heidi Carter, Chair
Durham Public Schools Board of Education

Dr. Bert L'Homme, Superintendent
Durham Public Schools