

**WIL LOU GRAY OPPORTUNITY SCHOOL  
MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 11, 1987  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

The Board of Trustees convened for a scheduled meeting on November 11, 1987, in the Research and Training Center at 6:00 p.m. Trustees in attendance were: Mrs. Hannah Meadors, Mrs. Elizabeth Thrailkill, Ms. Wilhelmina McBride, Dr. Louise Scott, Mr. Vince Rhodes, Ms. Linda Spivey, Mrs. Mickey Lindler, Dr. Marvin Efron, Mrs. Olive Wilson, and Mr. Walter Dahlgren. Staff members present were: Mr. Sam Drew, Mr. George Smith, Mr. John King, Mr. William Walters, Dr. Jonnie Spaulding, Mrs. Carolann Murdaugh, Ms. Millercin Weeks, Ms. Gloria Lloyd, and Mr. Pat Smith.

Mrs. Meadors called the meeting to order and stated for the record that notice of the meeting was provided to the public in conformance with the requirements of the S.C. Freedom of Information Act. Section 30-4-80(d) of the S. C. Code of Laws, 1987 as amended. Notice of the meeting was published in the State Newspaper and The Columbia Record in Columbia, The Journal in Lexington, and The Lexington Dispatch in Lexington.

Mrs. Meadors introduced the following guests: Dr. George Lackey, Professor of Educational Psychology at the University of South Carolina, and Dr. Dick Hamby who is acting director of the Clemson National Dropout Prevention Center. Mrs. Meadors explained Dr. Lackey is serving as Chairman of the Advisory Committee for Wil Lou Gray Research and Training Center. Mrs. Meadors also welcomed Mrs. Vivian Brackett, a member of the Opportunity School's faculty. Mr. Drew explained that Mrs. Brackett was assisting with the work on the Policy Manual.

Mr. Bill Walters, the new Principal of the Opportunity School, was also welcomed by the Board at this time. Mr. Walters said he felt very positive about assuming the position and was looking forward to the work at the Opportunity School.

A motion was made by Dr. Scott that the agenda be adopted. The motion was seconded by Mr. Rhodes. The motion was passed.

The next order of business was approval of the Minutes of the September 9, 1987, Board meeting. A motion was made by Dr. Efron that the Minutes be accepted as written. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Wilson. The motion was passed.

Mrs. Meadors called for the Superintendent's Report. Mr. Drew first explained that the Development Report the Board received in the mailout was a draft and is to be replaced with the revised Development Report in their folders. In reference to the Case Management Report on student enrollment statistics, Mr. Drew wanted to make the Board aware that we have 150 students actually enrolled at this time and yet we have a waiting list in some areas. Specifically, he listed female students and diploma students, male and female, as comprising the waiting list. He said that some school districts had expressed concern especially with respect to getting females in. Mr. Drew cited two reasons for the waiting list for these two groups of students. He explained first that we were getting more traditional dropouts this year which is a diploma oriented student who is behind academically. We are getting fewer GED students and fewer vocational students. We therefore have more applicants than we can serve in the diploma program. Mr. Walters presently is analyzing staff credentials to see how staff can be shifted or utilized differently in order to provide for additional diploma students.

The second factor, and the one with direct bearing on the waiting list of females is the conversion of one of the dorms into the RAP dorm so that we could hold students longer who were experiencing more severe adjustment problems. He said this was successful, however, as he explained earlier to the Board when the RAP dorm was planned this approach would have to be analyzed at the end of the year in terms of its effectiveness to and impact on the overall program. Eventually we will move the RAP program into the facilities that are now housing the Vocational Rehabilitation computer training clients. When this takes place, we would gain space for 35 - 40 more female students. After some discussion among the Board about the profile of current applicants, Mr. Drew stated that he felt this was a trend and that this will comprise the makeup of our base population over the next several years. Mr. Drew explained that the profile of our students reinforces the need for multi-certification of the teaching staff working here. We are exploring the possibility of offering some certification courses on campus for next semester.

Mr. Drew added that during a recent Ad Hoc Policy Committee meeting, he and Dr. Efron discussed the possibility of a policy that dictates multi-certification.

Mr. Drew called on Dr. Spaulding for a progress report on the Research and Training Center. A Research and Training Center report was previously provided to the Board for their review which included: Activities to November 1987, List of Members of Wil Lou Gray Research and Training Center Advisory Committee, Agenda of Advisory Committee Meeting, Minutes of Advisory Committee Meeting, Up-date on Survey-Resources Available for At-Risk Youth, copy of Survey form, Up-date on Survey-Indications of At-Risk Youth, Summary of Survey-professional Improvement for Faculty and Staff. Dr. Spaulding said she was pleased with the Advisory Committee. She commended Dr. Hamby and Dr. Lackey, as well as the other members of the committee for their contributions to the center's present and future work. She further explained that the next Advisory Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday. The committee has decided to meet once every month for the first six months and quarterly thereafter. At this time Dr. Spaulding called on Dr. Lackey. Dr. Lackey said he was very honored to serve on the Committee. He said he was very excited about the concept of the Center and the committee was trying to develop recommendations for a general strategy to pursue the prospective research and hoped to have a coherent plan in the near future.

At this time Dr. Spaulding called on Dr. Hamby who is the director of the National Drop-out Prevention Center in Clemson. Dr. Hamby said he was also pleased to be a part of the Wil Lou Gray Research and Training Center Advisory Committee. He also announced that Mr. Drew had been asked to serve on the Advisory Committee for the Clemson Center and that he was extremely pleased that Mr. Drew had agreed to do so. He explained that Clemson is trying to serve as a clearinghouse and a networking facility and are trying to do this nationally and statewide. The Clemson Center has a grant from the Governor's Office for the network in South Carolina. He said he believed the relationship with the Wil Lou Gray Research and Training Center will be one of the keys to a successful network and is one of the first linkages that they have made. He also said that he felt that the specific focus on Research and Training that could be accomplished here could feed back into their simulation process at Clemson and with their national focus

they could serve as a conduit for us to the national effort which could serve the Training Center very well.

Dr. Spaulding informed the Board that a meeting of the Advisory Committee for the Drop-out Center will be held in our Training Center on November 12.

In reference to the survey being conducted by the Wil Lou Gray Research and Training Center pertaining to what is available within our State for at-risk youth, she explained this survey was sent to all school districts and the results would be combined with a similar survey conducted by Clemson. When the data is collected, the information will be shared with the Board.

She further explained that the survey in reference to staff and faculty needs for in-service has been completed and a copy was provided to the Board.

Dr. Spaulding further explained that a Resource Roster of persons to work on Research and Training Center projects has not been completed at this time but the Committee will be working on this at the next meeting. She asked the Board for their input on this matter.

Mrs. Meadors asked if it would be appropriate if any of the Board members would like to attend the in-service training sessions. Dr. Spaulding said they would be welcomed. She said the first thing that would be addressed would be the problem of Burnout and Stress. Other in-service training would focus on successful counseling techniques with at-risk youth.

Mrs. Meadors thanked Dr. Spaulding for her report.

At this time Mr. Drew related information to the Board regarding a recent meeting he held with alternative school proponents. Several weeks ago some people involved in alternative education in the State, among them Nancy Prince from Greenwood District 50 who directs an alternative public school, Jerry Reeves the Principal of Lower Richland High School, and some of our staff met to begin some discussions on alternative education practices. In reference to future funding, they

examined areas of the Education Improvement Act. The group concluded that when the survey results of the Research and Training Center Survey are collected, a first activity would be to pull together a larger group of people who direct exemplary projects with alternative education - to initiate some continuing dialog and to assist in planning for a statewide conference on at-risk youth. The group recommended that this would be a cooperative effort among a number of agencies. Mr. Drew further explained that lack of funding is the problem with alternative education programs and there are a number of districts who want to initiate alternative programs but don't have the funding for it.

In conjunction with this, Mr. Drew explained that in December there will be a meeting of the Midlands Superintendents' Association. The discussions there will focus on alternative education and the Opportunity School will be leading the agenda. AASA will have staff at the meeting to report on a nationwide Dropout Prevention Study. He said he would provide the Board with an update on this meeting at the next Board meeting.

On the topic of coordinating resources, Mr. Drew said that he and Mr. John Shiflet and Mr. Joe Finnegan met last week at John De La Howe to do some preliminary work prior to the Steering Committee meeting. A tentative date of March has been set for the Tri-Boards' meeting. Mr. Drew, Mr. Shiflet and Mr. Finnegan will be meeting again at the Agency Directors' Conference in December and will set a date, as well as a date for the Steering Committee meeting. He said the Schools were not trying to impact any joint budget issues this year, but they were trying to get some attention from the legislature for these cooperative efforts. The Directors felt March would be a good month to get some key legislators to meet with the three Boards.

He further explained that they would attempt by the time of the Tri-Board meeting to have a joint statement of cooperation prepared. They are also exploring additional funding for the special schools through the Education Improvement Act and also expect to have a report on that for the March meeting. A listing will also be prepared of the efforts of cooperation already underway or accomplished and also some future projects that would be presented to the three Boards for their approval.

Mr. Drew further explained that one project is in development relating to training. John De La Howe has available to them each year some Duke endowment funds on a matching basis. We are exploring the possibility of pooling funds to match the Duke endowment to provide training activities for the staffs of the three schools based on overlapping training needs.

In reference to the progress of the 1988-89 budget, Mr. Drew explained that, to date, the Budget and Control Board has not officially reported out. He said that on November 10 the Budget and Control Board did vote to adopt the Governor's budget. He said in this State traditionally we have not had an executive budget. The Governor's budget was favorable for education, but also called for a 5% cut in administrative costs within agencies. He said a 5% cut in this agency would mean administrative RIFS. Some new wording was adopted by the Budget and Control Board that called for 3% cuts for those agencies that could afford it. Mr. Drew stated that this is all of the information he has been able to obtain about this budget at this time, however, he would have more information for them at the next meeting.

Mr. Drew said Mr. King mailed to the Board the Agency Expenditure Budget Summary for Period Ending September 30, 1987. At this time Mr. Drew called on Mr. King. Mr. King reviewed the report. There were no questions from the Board concerning his report.

The next item on the agenda was the Annual Report to the Legislature for 1986-87. A copy of this report was provided to the Board for their approval. Mr. Drew explained the report has been sent to General Services for printing. The Report had to be sent in by a certain date in order for us to receive free printing. He said we included long range goals and objectives and each departmental report includes goals and objectives as progress is made towards meeting these goals and objectives. The new organizational chart is also included which was previously approved by the Board. Dr. Efron commented that expiration dates in the report for new re-elected Board members should be changed. Mr. Drew said that this report covered through June 30, 1987, so the current dates are correct. He said changes in dates would be made in the 1987-88 report.

Mr. Drew asked the Board for their formal approval of this Annual Report. A motion to that effect was made by Dr. Efron. The motion was seconded. The motion was passed. After the motion passed there were questions raised by Mr. Rhodes concerning the listing on page 3 of Bill Walters as Principal and the new Organizational Chart. Mr. Rhodes felt we should be consistent with the 1986-87 dates. Mr. Drew agreed, but said the new Organizational Chart was approved by the Board in the fiscal year and should stay. All agreed. After some further discussion Dr. Efron suggested that other corrections having to do with dates could be made by the Administration and reported to the Board. No objections to this were aired by other board members.

Mrs. Meadors next called for Committee Reports. She first called on Mrs. Thrailkill for the Personnel Report. Mrs. Thrailkill said how appreciative she was for the Positions Directory of the Opportunity School she received and found it to be very helpful. Dr. Efron commented he had discussed with Mr. Drew about inserting this personnel information in the form of yearly updates in the Board Policy Manual. He said we could include it without names or salaries. Mr. Drew said that each of the Board members had been given a directory with the information Dr. Efron was talking about. Dr. Efron restated that he would like to have the information in the Policy Manual. Mrs. Thrailkill said she liked the manual, and that it helped her keep the information separate. There was no further discussion and no formal action was taken on this issue.

In reference to the Personnel Actions Report, Mrs. Thrailkill explained that a copy of this report was previously submitted to the Board for their review and the committee was formally making the recommendations presented in the report. A motion was made by Dr. Efron that the Board implement the Personnel Actions as recommended by the Personnel Committee. The motion was seconded by Mr. Rhodes. The motion was passed.

Mrs. Meadors called on Mrs. Wilson for the Program Committee Report. Mrs. Wilson referred the Board to the report sent to them before the meeting and asked Mr. Walters for any comments. He said that after the Thanksgiving holidays, he will

have the teacher vacancy filled so as to accommodate more students in the unit of credit program. He said a recommendation will be made to the Superintendent shortly.

Next, Mrs. Meadors called on Dr. Efron for the Ad Hoc Committee Report on Policy Revisions. Dr. Efron made a motion that the following policies be accepted for a second reading: EB, EB-E, EBG, EC, ECF, EDAA-R, and JS. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Wilson. The motion was passed. The following policies were also submitted to the Board for their review and Dr. Efron also recommended these policies be accepted for a first reading: BBBB, BBBC, GAIB, GAHB-R, GBK, JK, JL, and KNBA. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Lindler. The motion was passed.

Dr. Efron also commented that approximately a dozen policies remain that are being revised. These will be presented at the next Board meeting. The revision of the manual will be complete after these policies are passed by the Board. A study is also being made now of policies regarding AIDS. A recommendation for such a policy will be made at the next Board meeting.

Mrs. Meadors next called on Mr. Dahlgren for a report on the Foundation fund raising effort. Mr. Dahlgren reported we were considering several fund raising possibilities. In reference to the sponsoring of the air show, Mr. Dahlgren said that idea was scrapped due to the risks involved with that type of project (e.g. the weather). In looking at other fund raising projects, he said that Anderson College has one day during the year called "A Day" which has been very successful for the past three years. Key people from local businesses visit the college for the day, beginning with a 7:00 a.m. breakfast. Through this effort including advance gifts, they raised \$85,000.00. He felt this type effort would be successful for the Opportunity School Foundation.

Mr. George Smith reported as of today the Foundation has a balance of \$687.75. A bill of \$300.00 has been paid to the Food Bank with a balance due of \$1,100.00. He said we have received three \$100.00 contributions and one \$150.00 contribution. The Foundation has also been receiving contributions from the staff. Mr. Drew commented that we have challenged each of our staff to raise \$15.00. By



so doing the staff would raise approximately \$1500. He would then ask each of the Board members to match this \$1500.00. This would raise another \$18,000. He further explained we will then challenge the Foundation Board members each to raise a like amount. This would give us approximately \$100,000 by the end of the year. This money would fund a major fundraiser for a permanent corpus. Mr. Drew said that by year's end or shortly thereafter, the Foundation has to become self sufficient. Mr. Dahlgren commended Mr. Drew and Mr. George Smith for their extensive efforts on behalf of the Foundation.

Mrs. Lindler asked about the criteria for the Wil Lou Gray Award. Mr. Dahlgren said he had met with Mr. Drew concerning this and plans are still in process and hopefully would have a recommendation for the Board at the next meeting.

Mrs. Thrailkill said she has had several requests in the past few weeks regarding memorials which were to be sent and she asked if the Foundation had stationary to accommodate these requests at this time. Mr. Smith said the Foundation does not have the financial means to purchase stationary but that any checks sent to the Opportunity School for the Foundation should be made payable to the Wil Lou Gray Foundation. Mr. Rhodes said he felt the Foundation should order cards for memorials. Mr. Drew said he agreed and felt the Foundation could afford this or arrange for printing to be donated, however, Mr. Smith would need to discuss this with Mr. Nunnery. It was the consensus of the Board that this be recommended to Mr. Nunnery as soon as possible.

Under new business, Mrs. Meadors stated she has been approached by several Board members regarding the possibility of Wil Lou Gray Board license plates. She said she felt it was good advertisement for the school. Mr. Pat Smith said he thought the State required a minimum of 5 or 6 people to order the personalized plate before it would be acceptable. Mr. Drew asked Mr. Smith to obtain the information necessary for ordering the license plates, and report back at the next meeting.

Mr. Drew informed the Board that the S. C. School Boards Association has asked that we submit biographical data on each Board member to update their files. He

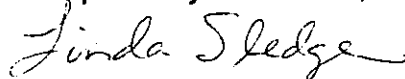
said he felt this would be done by each Board member more expeditiously than by his office. Mr. Drew distributed these reports to the Board for their completion.

Mrs. Wilson suggested that rather than have the Board send flowers in the event of a death of a family member, that money be sent to the Foundation as a memorial. A motion was made by Mrs. Wilson that in lieu of flowers being sent to the family that a memorial be made by the Board. The motion was seconded by Mr. Rhodes. Mrs. Lindler expressed concern that the family should receive some communication indicating that the Board had given a memorial in lieu of flowers. She asked if the Board could send a card. Mrs. Thrailkill said she really appreciated seeing the flowers from the Board. After some discussion among the Board Mrs. Wilson amended her motion for the Board to send a card to the family indicating a memorial had been sent. There was additional discussion after which Mrs. Wilson withdrew her motion pending further thought and study by the Board.

Mrs. Meadors asked the Board to bring their Policy Manuals to the next Board meeting.

A motion was made by Dr. Efron that the Board adjourn. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Wilson. The Board adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Linda Sledge

/bgs