

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

The Board of Trustees convened for a scheduled meeting on March 11, 1987, in the Archives Room of the William T. Lander Administration Building at 7:00 p.m. Trustees in attendance were: Mrs. Hannah Meadors, Mrs. Olive Wilson, Dr. Marvin Efron, Ms. Wilhelmina McBride, Mr. Vince Rhodes, Mr. Walter Dahlgren, Mrs. Elizabeth Thrailkill and Dr. Robert Fulmer from the South Carolina Department of Education representing Dr. Charlie Williams. Staff members present were: Mr. Sam Drew, Jr., Superintendent; Mr. John Robinson, Principal; Dr. Jonnie Spaulding, Director of Educational Support Services; Mr. George Smith, Development Officer; Ms. Millercin Weeks, Case Manager; Ms. Gloria Lloyd, Personnel Specialist; Mrs. Thelma Bailey, Special Project Coordinator; Mr. John W. King, Jr., Fiscal Affairs Officer; and Mrs. Brenda G. Stork, Secretary.

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 South Carolina Code of Laws, 1976 as amended. Notice of this meeting was published in The State Newspaper and The Columbia Record in Columbia, The Journal in Lexington, and The Lexington Dispatch in Lexington.

A motion was made by Mr. Rhodes that the agenda be adopted with no corrections. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Wilson. The motion was passed.

At this time Dr. Efron asked if the Governor had appointed a representative for our Board of Trustees. Mrs. Meadors stated that Dr. Floride Martin would be our representative. Mrs. Meadors stated that any members wishing to contact Dr. Martin and welcome her aboard should please feel free to do so.

The approval of the Minutes of the January 21, 1987, Board meeting was the next order of business. Dr. Efron made a motion 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. In reference to the progression of the 1987 Agency budget request, Mr. Drew explained that the Ways and Means Committee has completed its work and the bill is about to be debated by the House. He explained that he was pleased to report that as of the completion of the bill through the Ways and Means Committee we have achieved a restoration of our 3.4% cut. He felt our budget arguments prevailed. Mr. Drew further explained that the danger now is that the Senate may decide to write its own bill rather than start with the House version.

Mr. Drew, called on Mr. King to present information to the Board on the Expenditure Report. A copy of the Agency Budget Summary for Period Ending 2/28/87, the Agency Budgetary Source Worksheet, and a copy of the Budget Summary - Quick Reconciliation @ 2/28/87 had previously been mailed to the Board and Mr. King reviewed same. A copy of these reports are attached and become a permanent part of these Minutes. Dr. Efron asked if the figures Mr. King reviewed took into consideration the budget reductions that the State has mandated. Mr. King said yes. He was showing the appropriation reduction as a figure by itself. Mr. King asked the Board to keep in mind that the figure of \$81,331.00, representing the cut to our budget, continues to be included as a part of our budget in the State Report, however, we are not entitled to spend that amount.

In reference to the next item on the agenda, Report on Programs, Mr. Drew commented that on the BEDS Report we have been issued an advised status this year and since this is the first time this has occurred during his tenure as Superintendent he asked Dr. Fulmer to comment to the Board on this matter (i.e. why it has occurred and the steps we need to take in order to have the deficiency removed within a year). He said he would call on Dr. Fulmer to report to the Board at the appropriate time.

Mr. Drew then called on Mr. Robinson for the presentation of the Education Program Report. As it related to the Annual Report Needs Assessment, Mr. Robinson distributed copies of this information to the Board and reviewed same. These handouts included items in which our school was strong in as well as items that needed improvement by both the students and faculty. Strategies would be developed by the School Improvement Council, Faculty, Staff, and the Annual Institutional Planning Committee to address the items needing improvement. Mrs. Meadors asked if we as a residential school were judged by the same criteria as regular schools are. Mr. Robinson explained that this criteria presented to the Board was judged by the same criteria as a public school.

Mr. Robinson also presented to the Board and reviewed the School's calendar of events and the baseball schedule. Mr. Robinson also distributed to the Board a copy of the Accreditation Classification 1986-87 as it pertained to the BEDS Report. He explained that the Accreditation Classification was an advised status due to the fact that 12.6% of classroom instructional time is taught by teachers who are not properly certified. At this time Mr. Drew called on Dr. Fulmer to discuss the background on what is happening statewide with respect to accreditation standards and what specific action we need to take to remove the advised status.

Dr. Fulmer explained that the special schools fall into a category that is unique. Several years ago the defined minimum program for each special school were reviewed and revised and the standards that were placed into these defined minimum programs were standards necessary to control the

programs operated by each school. He further explained that Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School operated under a set of standards that is specifically designed for this school and for the programs operated by the school at the time the DMP was devised. It is still a very appropriate set of standards. He explained that the Department of Education collected information on the DMP statewide in September. A computerized editing process gives them data to review by November. He explained that many of the standards that our school operates under cannot be assessed through computer programs because the standards differ from other schools. Therefore much of the review of our DMP is done by hand. The reviews are developed into preliminary status report around January 1 and this information is communicated to the school. The school then has between that date and the 15th of February to make adjustments and replies to the preliminary analysis of this data.

Dr. Fulmer further explained that the problem that arose this year with the Opportunity School is not uncommon for many of the schools. Mr. Robinson found that in the program of operations for our school for this year there were some courses being taught for which certain teachers did not have proper certification to teach. One teacher is teaching with a permit. This means that the teacher is not fully certified to teach the courses we need in our program. The State has issued that teacher permission to teach those courses by virtue of having a minimum number of hours in the subject area. He explained that the problem arises when more than ten percent of that total program is taught by people who are teaching on permits, have expired certificates or who are not certified at all (i.e. if we had twenty teachers in a regular school all of whom teach five classes a day for a total of 100 classes, only two of these teachers teaching on permit, would exceed the ten percent limit. The ten percent rule means that you cannot have more than one out of every ten classes being taught by a teacher teaching out of field.

Dr. Fulmer explained that he had advised Mr. Drew and Mr. Robinson not to disrupt any of the programs that are in operation, by trying to re-schedule classes or bringing in new personnel at this time. He felt this would be more of a detriment to the educational program. We should simply accept the deficiency for this year and take whatever action is necessary to eliminate it for next year. He said Mr. Drew and Mr. Robinson accepted his advice, therefore the accreditation classification remains as an advised status. Dr. Fulmer said this simply means that there are minor deficiencies present in the school's program that can be corrected with reasonable certainty within the years time. This does not indicate long term deficiencies or fault in the area of Mr. Drew's administration or Mr. Robinson's assignments. This situation needs to be taken into consideration for next year and corrected if at all possible.

Dr. Fulmer also explained to the Board that the State is looking at a new accrediting system. It has not only a quantitative component similar to the one that we are presently operating under, it also has a leadership and management component. This system is presently being piloted in four districts this

year. He felt the system is more comprehensive and tends to take input factors and output factors and join them together with a leadership in management component. If this system is approved by the State Board it will be extensively piloted next year in the public schools and will be slated for full implementation the following school year. The year that it is fully implemented in the public schools we anticipate review committees will be established to review and revise the entire defined minimum program and the accreditations system for our special schools. Dr. Efron asked if the Board would need to review our Defined Minimum Standards before this new accrediting system goes into effect. Dr. Fulmer said no.

Dr. Fulmer also reviewed a Summary, distributed to the Board, which included the components that affect the Opportunity School. Mr. Drew said this summary gives a breakdown of exactly what caused the advised status. Dr. Fulmer said that about 75% of the districts in the State will have an advised status. However, Mr. Drew felt this was something that we still needed to remedy. He said that also due to our small number of instructional staff it is extremely important that all of our people are properly certified. Mr. Drew also commented that there would be a policy presented to the Board during this meeting that would address this issue. Mr. Drew thanked Dr. Fulmer for his report.

Mr. Drew called on Dr. Spaulding for the presentation of the Educational Support Services Report. She explained that in the admissions area, up to this time, we have enrolled 282 students. We have in attendance at this time 192 students. Of this number, 51% are white, 45% black, and 4% are other. In March, we have enrolled 21 additional students. March 29 is another registration date.

Dr. Spaulding further explained that in Psychological Social Services, we have completed the Chapter I audit that was done January 27. We have received the audit report. She explained that we were cited with a few errors in folders and those were due to recent changes in policy and procedures with special education placement. All of the cites were minor and can be corrected very easily. Most of the cites were instances when DSS workers had signed for placement of a student when a surrogate parent should have been assigned. All of the suggestions that we were given have been implemented.

Mr. Drew commented at this time that we were in the process of preparing our formal response to that audit report now and will share the full report with the Board when it is completed. He said he was pleased with the audit and Mrs. Murdaugh had done a tremendous job with this area this year. Mrs. Meadors also commented that she heard very positive reports from one of the teams that was here.

Dr. Spaulding also said the revision of the policy manual, including new procedural guidelines for special education, has been completed and approved.

She further explained that the Psychological Social Services Department is studying effectiveness of group intervention strategies in changing behavior of students. Three groups have been established that the staff will be studying. The first group will receive only social skills training. The second group will receive both social skills training and affective training. Group three will not receive any special group treatment. They will be evaluated at the beginning and end of nine week sessions and the three groups will be compared to determine effects each group strategy had on the special target behaviors as related to academic success and social functioning.

In this area, Dr. Spaulding explained, we have also started a new SCIP Program with treatment orientation whereas the regular SCIP focus is on prevention and intervention. She felt this was a needed area and it would be helpful to our students. Two members of that group attended a recent conference at Charter Rivers Treatment Center focusing on treatment of adolescents with drug and alcohol and associated problems.

As it relates to Student Affairs, Dr. Spaulding explained that we continue to experience turnover of Youth Counselors and to experience problems associated with not having very much flexibility in providing substitutes when evening staff are ill. Flu and viruses have caused us to be short staffed much of January and February. Even so, she explained, many activities have provided students with a busy and interesting schedule. A Valentine Talent Show was held in February. Also in February, 30 students and 2 counselors were volunteer workers at the Carolina Marathon. The Intramural Basketball Championship will be played next Wednesday and then intramural softball will start.

As an indication of the general workload of our infirmary, Mrs. Alley served 925 students in the infirmary in January and 387 students in February. In addressing the AIDS problem, an assembly program on AIDS was presented by Dr. Neill. We also anticipate in the near future that Dr. Neill will present another program on viral illnesses.

In relation to our program with the S. C. Arts Commission, we have almost completed this program. Our three artists in residence have completed their assignments very successfully. On March 2 the Theatre Mask Ensemble made an excellent mime and mask presentation. This program was very well received by the students. Mrs. Lindler attended this program as well as two representatives of the S. C. Arts Commission. The last performance will be on April 7 at 6:00 p.m. This will be the Chuck Davis/African American Dance Ensemble mini concert.

We have also submitted, Dr. Spaulding explained, the grant application for next years program with the S. C. Arts Commission and expect to hear from this soon.

At this time Mr. Drew called on Ms. Weeks to present her report on Case Management. Ms. Weeks provided the Board with a copy of the Student Data Report for the 1986-87 academic year and reviewed same. Mr. Drew commented that our goal is to place 50% of the students in the vocational programs in jobs. Mr. Dahlgren asked if there was any attention given to how long these students stay on the jobs.

Mr. Drew stated that we are establishing criteria for that now. Mr. Robinson explained that under vocational guidelines we receive credit if the student has been placed on a job from graduation in June until the following March. We must have 50% of the students placed in order to continue that vocational program. Dr. Efron asked if the Opportunity School still had an Office Occupations program. Mr. Robinson stated that it was replaced with Word Processing. Mr. Robinson explained that this was done after studying the impact on job placement for Office Occupations. He said our objective was to train our students for an entry level position in Office Occupations. However, that was not happening. He explained that students from this class primarily were being placed as cashiers. Mr. Drew explained that Word Processing is where the entry level jobs are. This was based on the State's statistics and the vocational report showing job availability.

Mr. Robinson explained that what we see happening is that we are providing educational skills and vocational skills for these young people, but we also need to address additional ways in which to prepare them for the work force. Mr. Drew said that some of these students will pass the GED or receive their diploma but they are not ready in terms of social skills for work so we are looking at ways to define a transition program here. He explained that there are many issues to address in establishing a Transition Program. One issue is enrollment. For example one question is should we let these students go who have completed GEDs in order to bring another student in or should we carry students on to gain other skills needed to help assure that they are successful. Dr. Efron suggested having a finishing school where the students could learn to be independent and manage their own affairs.

At this time Ms. Weeks also discussed with the Board the role of the Opportunity School in alternative programming for students in public school districts. Several discussions have been held between the Opportunity School administrators and other individuals/agency representatives concerning alternative education programming. In January, 1987, a meeting was held with Mrs. Shirley Motley, Executive Director of Project Keep-Up. Project Keep-Up is designed to provide counseling and academics to students who have been placed on long term suspension or expelled from public school. The ultimate goal of Project Keep Up is to keep the student actively involved in academics on a daily basis so that he/she can return to the public school setting. Presently, Project Keep Up provides counseling/seminars for students but is unable to provide credits for academic work completed.

Ms. Weeks further explained that on February 26, 1987, Mrs. Alice Hurley, Social Work supervisor for Richland School District #1, met with us and discussed the direction in which the District is headed in alternative programming. Mrs. Hurley stated that a proposal was being developed with recommendations for the following alternative settings:

1. Cities/Schools Program Implementation within Richland School District #1;
2. In-school Suspension Programs be developed by each school in the district with means to address behavioral as well as academic problems;
3. Evening School for students who need extra time for classwork due to excessive absences.
4. Pregnant Teens/Pregnant Mothers Program which provides a setting for child care;

The proposal also recommends that the district cooperate with agencies that have existing programs for high risk students.

She further explained that as a result of our discussions with Mrs. Motley, Mrs. Hurley and others, we have determined that there continues to be a great need for alternative education programming. Further, we are able to identify specific ways to provide services to agencies that work with high risk students. For example: We can use our programs (i.e., Opp Teams) as a model for other agencies to replicate. We would like to set up workshops and seminars out of our training center and out of that center we can disseminate information on alternative programs. We can provide training to individuals who work with high risk students. Also, Ms. Weeks explained, we could serve as a neutral location for school districts "statewide" who want information about what can be done for students in alternative educational settings.

Mr. Drew asked the Board to recall that three years ago in the first goal setting session that we had with the Board in Myrtle Beach, one of the areas discussed was that of out-reach programs. The idea was presented then that as a first step, we needed to move towards excellence in campus programming and maximize the utilization of this facility. A second step was to package and disseminate proven practices, developed here, to schools around the State. He explained that even with our best efforts here and with increased staff, 250 was the maximum number of students we could serve at one time. He felt that in order to maintain momentum as an agency we need to begin looking at other kinds of efforts that we could do in this area of alternative education. One of those efforts is to begin to package and disseminate programs that we have developed here. Through the Training Center we have been developing, we will now begin to disseminate that kind of material to school districts - by holding seminars and workshops with district personnel. The third step was to reach out beyond the campus and, working cooperatively with districts, begin to work on ways that we can help establish community alternative programs. These programs would be affiliated with the Opportunity School rather

than the school district, but would be sanctioned by the school district. Mr. Drew further explained that he had discussed this with Dr. Fulmer because we would want Dr. Fulmer involved in this process, as we move through it, from the prospective of accreditation. He said there would be many benefits to the school districts. For example, in the case of a student that a school district is suspending - the district could continue to provide educational services and draw money on the student which could then be channeled to the alternative program. Most of the students would be served locally rather than in a residential location and yet those that needed a residential environment could be referred here. Or, students could be referred from here back into the community program if that was called for. He said that as we had various kinds of events here on campus, students in the local program could be brought in to participate. Mr. Drew further commented that there is some interest from legislators in this area. He is exploring the idea of a tri-county project with Fairfield, Lexington and Richland Counties. He will be meeting with Dr. John Stevenson in Richland I in the near future. Ms. Hurley has already talked with Dr. Stevenson about what they discussed. The topic will then be scheduled as an agenda item on the next Midlands Superintendents' Meeting in April.

Mrs. Meadors thanked Mr. Drew and Ms. Weeks for their reports and called for Committee Reports. Mrs. Thrailkill presented the Personnel Report. A copy of the Personnel Actions was previously submitted to the Board. She reviewed this report with the Board and asked for their approval on the personnel actions that have taken place. Mrs. Thrailkill moved that the Board accept the Personnel Actions as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Rhodes. The motion passed.

At this time Mrs. Wilson presented the report on the Ad Hoc Committee on the Legislative Appreciation Dinner. The date has been set for May 13, 1987, which is the date of next scheduled Board meeting. The dinner is on the House Calendar and is tentatively scheduled on the Senate Calendar. It will be introduced to the Legislature in the near future and the invitation will be printed in the House and Senate Journals approximately ten days prior to May 13. She and Mr. Drew felt that separate invitations should be sent to each legislator. Constitutional officers should also be included. After a brief discussion among the Board, it was decided that the State Board of Education should be invited to a separate function at a later date. Dr. Efron suggested that maybe we should invite some of the key legislative staff personnel. Mr. Drew commented that we had also included in the invitation the spouse or guest of the legislators. After some further disussion, it was decided that the Board should convene for a brief meeting at 5:00 p.m. Mr. Drew is to provide to the Board members a list of legislators for them to contact personally.

Mrs. Meadors called for the ud pate report on the Ad Hoc Committee on Policy Revisions. Dr. Efron explained that the phase 1 revision of the policy manual has been completed. Dr. Efron reviewed with

the Board policies BBBC and BBBC-R. In relation to these policies, a motion was made by Dr. Efron for a second reading on these policies with an amendment to read "one representative will attend the National School Boards Conference" in lieu of two representatives attending. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Wilson.

Policies from Sections C, D, E, F, G, and I were also presented to the Board by Dr. Efron for a first reading. These sections included policies CGPA, DFB, DFK, DFK-E, DH, DJ, DJE, DJEJ, DN, EBBB, EBBB-R, FB, GBA-E, GBBA, GBBA-R, GBN/GBP, GBRA, GBRA-R, GBRA-E, IDDA, and IHF. In reference to policy GBBA-R, Professional Personnel Qualifications and Duties, Mr. Drew explained that the general statement of the policy is designed to show that the Board is committed to the professional standards set up by the State's teacher certification system in the Defined Minimum Program. He further explained that the policy contained four specific statements that the Board needed to carefully examine. The first statement is the Board will not hire a person who does not have in his/her possession a valid professional certificate or will have completed requirements for the certification by the time they assume the duties for which they are being hired. He explained that this is no different from any other school district in the State. Secondly, that all present instructional personnel and administrators update their teaching credentials to include a current professional certificate in the area of instruction to which they are assigned by June 30, 1988. Therefore, anyone who is not now certified in the area in which they are assigned are given until that time to do so after which they would not be employed here. Mr. Drew said he had made several contacts with the State Personnel office in reference to the above. State Personnel agreed that 1 1/2 years would be a sufficient amount of time to give someone to complete requirements. The third statement, Mr. Drew explained, is just a general statement by the Board stating that it considers the requirements stated as minimum requirements and because of the special nature of the work at this school the Board would encourage all teachers here to work toward multiple certifications. Teachers should also pay particular attention to Special Education course work and course work in Adolescent Counseling. The fourth statement is when instructional vacancies occur, hiring preference will be given to those applicants who possess certification in more than one of the instructional areas needed by the school.

A motion was made by Dr. Efron that the above policies be accepted on a first reading. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Wilson. The motion was passed.

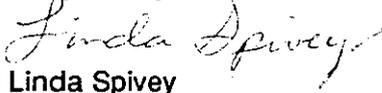
At this time Mr. Drew called on Mr. Smith for a report on the status of Capital Projects. Mr. Smith explained that we now have four projects that are listed as Capital Improvement Projects. They are the roofing project, the mechanical system project, the electrical distribution improvement project, and the

training center project. In reference to the electrical distribution improvement project, Mr. Smith explained we have completed the PCB removal for replacement of contaminated transformers. We should begin with this electrical project next week. All of the lines will be underground. As it relates to the roofing project, we are re-roofing the entire facility and this should be completed within the next four or five weeks. In the mechanical heating and air-conditioning system project update, he explained that we have engaged an A & E firm to undertake a study of our system and make recommendations. Mr. Drew stated that we will not have enough money to completely re-do the heating and air-conditioning system. We should receive a report on this next week also. The Training Center should be completed by the May Board meeting.

There being no further discussion, Dr. Efron made a motion that the Board move into Executive Session to discuss confidential matters of personnel. The motion was seconded by Mr. Rhodes and Mrs. Wilson. The motion was passed.

The Board reconvened after the Executive Session. No further action was taken. A motion to adjourn was made by Mrs. Wilson and seconded by Dr. Efron. The motion was passed and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,


Linda Spivey

LS/bgs