

**WIL LOU GRAY OPPORTUNITY SCHOOL
MINUTES OF MARCH 12, 1986
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

The Board of Trustees convened for a scheduled meeting on March 12, 1986, in the Archives Room of the William T. Lander Administration Building at 7:00 p.m. Trustees in attendance were: Mrs. Hannah Meadors, presiding, Dr. Marvin Efron, Mr. Walter Dahlgren, Mrs. Olive Wilson, Ms. Mickey Lindler, Ms. Linda Spivey, Ms. Elizabeth Thrailkill and Mr. DeVon Belcher. Dr. Robert C. Fulmer from the South Carolina Department of Education represented Dr. Charlie Williams. Staff members present were: Mr. Sam F. Drew, Jr., Superintendent; Mr. John Robinson, Principal; Dr. Jonnie Spaulding, Director of Educational Support Services; Mr. Pat G. Smith, Director of Administration; Mr. George Smith, Development Officer; Mr. John W. King, Jr., Fiscal Affairs Officer; Ms. Gloria Lloyd, Personnel Specialist; and Mrs. Brenda 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.

In reference to the agenda, Mrs. Meadors stated that she would like to add several items to the agenda. A copy of the revised agenda is attached as a permanent part of these Minutes. A motion was made by Dr. Efron that the agenda be accepted with the modifications that Mrs. Meadors recommended. The motion was seconded by Ms. Wilson. The motion was passed.

The next order of business was approval of the Minutes of the January 8, 1986, Board Meeting. Mrs. Meadors recommended one revision in the Minutes on page 11. The word "affect" should read "effect". Mrs. Lindler made a motion that the Minutes be accepted with this revision. The motion was seconded by Ms. Wilson. The motion was passed.

Mrs. Meadors called for the Superintendent's Report. Mr. Drew began by discussing budget requests. He stated that in the Legislature this year we were making slow headway with our request. He explained that part of the problem was due to a mid year budget cut and the effort expended to have that restored. Thus far, he said, the bill has been reported out of Ways and Means and is on the House floor where it will be debated another couple of weeks. He stated that thus far he has succeeded in having 1% of the 2% cut for next year restored. Mr. Drew said he will continue to work to have the full 2% restored. Otherwise, we would lose about \$25,000 from the base budget for next year. We have secured through this point the amount of money that we need from the Education Improvement Act. Therefore, unless something happens to this in the Senate, which he does not anticipate, we will have sufficient increases there to continue to keep our teachers on a level with surrounding school districts.

Mr. Drew further explained that he was continuing to work to secure additional money in one time funds to complete the utility renovation project. He asked the Board to recall that we were asking for an additional \$106,000 for this project which was needed to remove PCBs from the lines. In order to complete the project it is mandatory that the PCBs be removed.

The item requested and not granted by the Ways and Means Committee Mr. Drew explained, was an increase in personal service funds in the amount of \$31,000. This amount would cover the cost of a pay grade increase for the Youth Counselors anticipated to be made by State Personnel.

At this time Mr. Drew called on Mr. King to present updated information to the Board on expenditures. A copy of that summary is included as a permanent part of these Minutes.

Mr. King explained, that we are about half-way through the operating year and he felt that we were on schedule with respect to spending as we had budgeted.

Mr. King drew the Board's attention to the category, Institution (Earmarked) Funds, and said the most important thing to note about that is the fact that \$130,000 of the \$228,919 is EIA money. Therefore, this means that in actual Institutional Earnings we have earned over \$80,000. He explained that he and Mr. Drew reviewed our projections this afternoon and we feel strongly that we are going to draw approximately another \$80,000 in remaining months in the fiscal year.

In reviewing expenditures, Mr. King noted that we have expended approximately 61% of all funds at this time. In operating expenditures we have spent 54%. Again, we are approximately half way through the operating year and we are where we should be at this time.

Referring to the Internal Budgeting Process for FY 1986-87, Mr. King provided the Board with a schedule. The persons who are in charge of the various departments will formulate separate departmental budgets. He also provided the Board with a copy of a memo to the departments from him dated February 20, 1986, a copy which is attached hereto. We are now in the first phase of this schedule. Mr. Drew explained that this new process is designed to involve the Board in the budget process also. It will also give them a more detailed listing of the budget items.

Mr. Dahlgren, referring to the items on the Activity Report, asked if this would have a shortfall in any categories. Mr. Drew explained that we might with respect to the budgeted figure, however, the agency has the flexibility to move line items. He further explained that we are trying to more realistically assess expenditures over the past five years so in building these budgets we can be a little more accurate.

A final item Mr. King discussed, which was passed around for the Board to review, was a -0- status report from the computer. He explained that the purpose of this report was to give the Board an idea of the detail that the new system could report. He explained to the Board that they may not

want this much detail and this would be their decision.

At this time Mr. Drew called on Ms. Lloyd to present Personnel Actions. A copy of this report was provided to the Board and is attached as a part of these Minutes. She explained that there were two terminations, Mr. Harry Williams, Art Teacher, and Mr. Tyrone R. Robinson, Youth Counselor. There was one new hire, Mrs. Carroll A. Whichard, as art teacher. Also, Mr. Dee D. Vest will complete the school term as a replacement for Mrs. Bosworth. Dr. Efron asked if Mr. Vest was a permanent employee or if he was just hired for this school year. Ms. Lloyd explained that he was hired just for this year. Mr. Drew explained he had substituted some for us before.

Dr. Efron made a motion that the personnel actions recommended be approved. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Thrailkill and Ms. Wilson. The motion was passed.

Mr. Drew asked Mr. Robinson if he would inform the Board on the background of Mrs. Carroll Whichard. Mr. Robinson explained that he had worked with her in Richland County School District One's Avanti Program. Her experience with troubled youth is long and extensive. She has also worked with the S. C. Arts Commission. Mr. Robinson said he was pleased to get Mrs. Whichard.

At this time Mr. Drew called on Mr. Robinson and Dr. Spaulding to present a report on the Truancy Program. Dr. Spaulding referred the Board to the Truancy Program Update which was previously mailed to the Board. She explained that this report was prepared on March 4, 1986. Since this time we have added three other students. We also have other students who are 17 years of age who are taking advantage of the special counseling that we provide for the truant program. Dr. Spaulding explained, that a seventeen year old does not have to go to school, however, in a few instances we have included the seventeen year olds in the program because they could be helped by the same type counseling. She further explained that we are getting referrals from a variety of places.

Mr. Robinson explained that the truants have to be involved in a great deal of counseling on a day to day basis. These truants are monitored constantly by the staff. The program is evolving. We will make needed changes at the end of the year. Mr. Drew stated that many of the truants coming in have severe problems and we are working hard to develop programs that meet their needs.

Dr. Efron stated that he felt the truant problem statewide is a serious one that goes beyond just the services our school can offer and he felt the State Department of Education or the Governor's Office or even Mental Health should be made aware of. Mr. Drew explained there was a growing awareness of the problem. He said that a legislative committee headed by Crosby Lewis has come up with a draft suggestion for a statewide system for dealing with truancy. Mr. Hayes Mizell presented this plan for review and comments to a Department of Education committee Mr. Drew serves on. Mr. Drew further commented that the school is testing out programs and collecting data. Through planning sessions this summer the programs will be evaluated and refined.

Mr. Belcher asked if we have sufficient resources to handle the truant students. He explained that the Greenville County Delegation has asked him to keep them up-to-date on what we are doing in terms of truants and the truancy program. Mr. Belcher said he would like a report that he could present to them. Mr. Drew explained that we want to be realistic about what we are dealing with and the resources that we have. Mr. Belcher said this year the Childrens' Coordinating Council is addressing, possibly for the first time, the needs of the family as that relates to truancy and other problems children have. He further said if we could take a leadership role in this area he felt that we could obtain funding for the necessary special programs.

Mr. Drew pointed out that we were conservative last year in our estimate of funding needs for this program. Year end cuts by the legislature actually caused us to get less than was originally allocated, so we are operating this program on far less money that was projected. He further stated that in his reports to those legislators who were instrumental in helping us with the funding that he

has informed them of the above facts. In relation to this, Dr. Efron said that in planning for the utilization of some of the smaller buildings, we should think about scheduling an orientation time for these students in a more home-like area. Mr. Drew commented that he thought this was a good idea and is one that his staff had thought about.

Mrs. Meadors suggested that truancy data be presented to the legislative delegation. Mr. Drew said he was doing that on a one on one basis. Also, with respect to the discussion at the last meeting on the need for cooperation among the three special schools, Mr. Drew commented that this issue should certainly be an item on the agenda for a joint meeting.

Mr. Belcher asked Mr. Drew if we have had the opportunity to define the basic needs for the truant population. Mr. Drew explained that this is what we are working on now.

Mr. Drew said that we may see the need, as we get further into planning, for a special meeting of the Board to discuss in detail this particular issue. He said it requires a lot of planning and input as we proceed with this program. Mrs. Meadors said she agreed.

Mr. Drew called on Mr. Robinson for an update report on several items carried over from the last meeting, as well as some new items. Mr. Robinson informed the Board that the Opportunity School has been accepted into the Conference A Division 4 of the S. C. High School League for Basketball, Track, Tennis, and Baseball. Also, as requested by the Board relative to the Student of the Month, a plaque was made on which the students' names are added each month. Mr. Robinson showed the plaque to the Board. The student of the month will also receive a free lunch at the Red Lobster along with a guest of their choice. This award was made available through the generosity of Mr. White, who is the husband of a staff member Jackie White. Mr. White donated \$100.00 for this effort. Also, an article is submitted to the hometown newspaper of the student describing the

student's contributions here at WLGOS.

Dr. Efron commented that he felt it was in order that the Board send a letter of thanks for the contribution Mr. White made to the WLGOS. It was the general consensus of the Board to send this letter of appreciation. The plaque will be hung in the trophy case in the library.

Mr. Robinson also asked his staff to submit a report to him at mid-year on attendance, testing, and the vocational department goals. Mr. Robinson provided the Board with the Membership and Attendance Report. Mr. Robinson reviewed this report with the Board and a copy is attached hereto as a permanent part of these Minutes.

Mr. Robinson also provided the Board with a letter from him which was distributed to all high school Principals in South Carolina. The letter informed the Principals about the truancy program and other programs we have to offer here. A copy of this letter is attached hereto.

The next handout distributed to the Board, contained the results of the pre-term and mid-term standardized testing done with our students. Mr. Robinson reviewed this report with the Board. The results were quite good. 266 students were pre-tested. 178 were post tested. The average given for those tested on the high difficulty level was 6 months. On the medium difficulty level the gain was 7 months. Of the 2 students tested at the easy level there was no gain. At this time Mr. Robinson distributed to the Board for information the objectives that are being addressed by the vocational department.

Mr. Belcher asked Mr. Robinson about the extent of response we have received from the mailout to high school principals. Mr. Drew explained that we sent this information not only to High

School Principals, but also to Superintendents and all Family Court Judges. He also stated that we have had a special meeting with approximately thirteen counselors from the Department of Youth Services. He said that referrals have come from all of these sources and it is difficult to gauge the response from the one mailout to Principals. Mr. Robinson agreed but said he has received numerous calls inquiring about our program. Mr. Drew added that there is a growing statewide awareness of what we do.

Mr. Drew asked Mr. Pat Smith to update the Board on several capital improvement projects which we have underway or planned. Mr. Smith explained that we have two capital projects that are fully approved through the State Engineer's Office. One is our electric utility renovation for which we are attempting to get additional money for the PCB removal. We hope to have the system distribution renovation done at the same time we have PCB removal. This work is scheduled for this summer. He further explained that while we have been told for years that we are on a wholesale utility rate by virtue of our owning our own system, the engineer retained for this project has raised some questions in this regard. Mr. Smith explained that the engineer has said that the State Contract for the capital complex is the rate we probably are being charged. He explained that we are continuing to explore this. Mr. Drew commented that this information is quite different than that given by SCE&G when we met with them. Mr. Drew further said this information would be advantageous if true because we could have SCE&G take back the lines then relieving us of the responsibility for maintenance. He said that the architect who has worked a great deal in this area is saying that as far as he knows we are on the same structure as is all of State government and our rate would not change by giving the lines back. While we would still have to update the lines, the long range savings on maintenance would be significant. Mr. Drew said he is going to explore the least expensive way to complete the project.

Mr. Smith further explained that the wooded area as you enter the campus has been cleared and we

would like to do some landscaping in that area and create a park affect with some lighting.

Mr. Smith also discussed the possibility of fencing the perimeter of the campus beginning behind Vocational Rehabilitation and going through the woods. This would help secure the campus and help prevent strangers from entering the campus. He further explained that we are also looking at the possibility of building some nature trails and exercise stations.

Mr. Smith further explained that the last item officially designated as a permanent improvement project was the training center. He said we recently received the official notification that the Joint Bond Review Committee had approved the training center as a permanent improvement project for us.

This being the conclusion of the Superintendent's Report, Mrs. Meadors then called for the Committee Reports. Information from the standing committee reports, Program/Policy, Personnel, and Budget were discussed previously in this meeting. Therefore, Mrs. Meadors called on Dr. Efron to give an update on the Ad Hoc Committee on Policy Revisions. Dr. Efron referred the Board to their folder which contained the recommended draft policies. He explained that there were only a few exceptions from the existing policies. Policy AC was a carry-over from the last meeting. He asked the Board to recall that we were waiting for the Mission Committee to complete their work before drafting this policy. All of these policies provided to the Board were for first reading approval. He reminded the Board that they had two months to study these policies before giving final approval. In policy KG, which has to do with school facilities, Dr. Efron explained that Mr. Drew made changes that left the rate charged for facilities open so the Board could approve a yearly rate.

Dr. Efron further explained that there is one policy that he asked Mr. Drew to draw up alternative versions. The two versions are BCAB and BCBA. The policies have to do with the frequency of

Board meetings. Dr. Efron reminded the Board that the Board used to meet quarterly and later voted to meet every other month. He said he was in favor of moving back to regularly scheduled quarterly meetings thus allowing time for special called meetings as needed. Dr. Efron asked the Board to accept both versions on the first reading. Then at the May meeting the Board could choose the draft they wanted by giving one final approval and rejecting the other.

Dr. Efron further explained there was another issue which had to do with our legislation and he asked Mr. Drew for a report on this matter. Mr. Drew reminded the Board that last time we said that we needed a change in the wording of our legislation to allow the replacement of a Board member should a Board member leave for whatever reason before his/her term expired. Presently, there are no provisions for this. Approximately three years ago there was a letter from the Attorney General's office at the request of Dr. Efron which stated that there were no provisions in our legislation for a Board member to retire early or leave the Board for whatever reason. The Board member could not be replaced because of the way the legislation was worded. Mr. Drew explained that he drafted some wording and called Senator Joe Wilson and asked him if he would spearhead this change for us and coordinate the effort with the rest of the Lexington Delegation. Mr. Drew said this was a fairly routine matter. He did, however, leave the actual wording of the change open with the delegation.

Another matter which was raised at the last Board meeting, Mr. Drew explained, was the fact that the two positions on our Board elected by the Alumni Association were not approved by the legislature under the present legislation. He had a discussion with Emory Smith at the Attorney General's Office who told him that he felt that we were on "shaky grounds" without some wording to that effect. This is not an official ruling just an opinion. He said there had been some discussion about continuing to have members elected by the Alumni Association but that their resumes would be submitted to the legislature for eligibility screening. He said that this process would assure that alumni members had no conflicts of interest in serving on the Board. Mr. Drew said he has not formally proposed anything on this issue and has not discussed this issue with legislators. He said he felt that the Board needed to raise this issue again, have some discussion and determine what it

wanted to do about it. Mr. Belcher commented that he felt a change to have the alumni representation approved through the legislative screening process. He said he felt all alumni would agree. He added, however, that alumni felt strongly that they should continue to elect two representatives and would not be in favor of relinquishing that right. There was consensus of the Board that Mr. Drew should pursue this course of action.

After further discussion among the Board, Dr. Efron recommended that we pass the policies as stated for the first reading and study them between now and the next Board meeting, for final approval at that time. A motion was made that all of these policies be accepted for consideration for a first reading (not finalized). Mrs. Thrailkill seconded the motion. The motion was approved.

At this time Mrs. Meadors called on Mr. Dahlgren for a report on the Ad Hoc Committee on the Wil Lou Gray Foundation. Mr. Dahlgren explained that the status of the foundation is about the same as when the Board last met. He explained that before we submit the application for a final review we need to get additional input about the structure of the foundation Board. This should be finalized by the next meeting. Secondly, he reminded the Board of his request several meetings ago, to suggest names for members of the foundation Board. Mr. Dahlgren said a fund raising bazaar had been planned which he felt was a good idea. Mr. Drew commented that we need to think very carefully about who we want to be on the Foundation Board. Mr. Drew asked that the Board provide him with any suggestions within thirty days from this date.

Mrs. Meadors next called on Mrs. Lindler for a report on the School Board's legislative conference, which she attended. Mrs. Lindler mentioned several people that she had contact with. She said Mr. Earle Morris spoke and commented on the constitutional reserve funds used to reduce impact on mid year reductions. He was in favor of its use. He also was very supportive of School Boards in general. Mrs. Lindler attended two workshops at the conference which she reported on: 1) Establishing an Education Foundation (she has forwarded the material to Mr. Dahlgren), and 2)

Investing School District Funds.

At this time Mrs. Meadors called on Mrs. Wilson for a report of the status of the Wil Lou Gray Portrait. Mrs. Wilson said they had an enjoyable time reviewing work by several artists being considered. She said they choose Mr. Michael Del Priore and felt they had made the right decision. Mr. Del Priore is a noted artist of great talent. He will make three sketches for the committee to review. He guaranteed that he would meet the deadline in May. Mrs. Meadors explained that on February 12th she sent a letter requesting a joint session of the House and Senate for the dedication of the portrait. This request has to go to the Invitations and Resolutions Committee headed by Representative Barfield. Mrs. Meadors suggested that at the ceremony the portrait be presented and unveiled from an easel. She said General Services will be responsible for tables if we have a light reception in the rotunda area. She was asked if we would need a caterer. She explained that we probably could have our own cafeteria staff to do the catering. Mrs. Meadors further explained that we need to finalize all of this and as soon as a date is set for the joint session she will send the Board a notice. The tentative dates are May 14 and May 21.

Mrs. Meadors also said that the Board may want to think about co-sponsoring organizations for our reception such as the Commission on Women. Dr. Efron suggested Columbia College. She asked the Board to give any suggestions to Mr. Drew, Mrs. Thraillkill, Mrs. Wilson or herself.

Mrs. Meadors also showed the Board a copy of the litany that would be used in the religious services on March 17 which was written by Howard McClain. She was able to get Wil Lou Gray's name in as a part of the Bicentennial litany.

The next item discussed was travel in relation to per diem. Mr. Drew reminded the Board that each member of the Board was to have contacted him in the interim between the last meeting and this one to express their feelings on this issue. He did hear from most of the Board members. He took

the most frequent response, which was that Board members should be paid the \$35.00 per diem for officially approved meetings and put this into his revision of the respective Board policy.

Mrs. Meadors said she would like to appoint a committee to look at a wide array of conferences, training sessions, etc. from which this Board would gain information and would benefit by the attendance of one of its members. She said she would like to ask Mrs. Lindler and Ms. McBride to review and identify those events then project a budget figure, and present this information to the Board. The Board could then decide who would be best suited to attend these events and report back. Mrs. Meadors said she did receive some information in the mail recently from State Government which said the Board should have a policy on travel.

Under old business, Mrs. Meadors said she spoke with Mr. Doug Dent, Chairperson of the School for the Deaf and Blind, and he was in agreement that the Opportunity School and School for the Deaf and Blind need to do some cooperative things. She will talk with him again prior to his next Board meeting.

Mr. Drew said he met with Mr. John Shiflet and Mr. Barron Holmes and explained to them what we are proposing and both of them agreed that a joint meeting would be useful. He informed them that a letter would be coming to their Board chairpersons.

In relation to Mr. Drew's salary, Mrs. Meadors said we hoped to get Mr. Drew's salary up to the level that it should be. She met with Mr. Steve Elliott and Ms. Jennet Robinson and asked for the steps and procedures to pursue. Mr. Robinson suggested to the Board members that they should contact Steve Elliott or Senator Waddell and encourage them to give all consideration. Mr. Drew also asked that each Board member would stress with those persons they spoke with the importance of any salary proposal being funded. He said that under the present proposal for

agency head salary increases, the agency would have to generate the funds for a portion of the raise. Mrs. Meadors also said that Ms. Robinson strongly encouraged the Board to ask State Personnel to come out and give us a brief orientation to the process of evaluating the agency head. She said some aspects of the appraisal have changed and the Board needs to be aware of these.

A motion was made to approve this fund raising project. The motion was seconded. The motion was approved.

Mr. George Smith discussed the fund raiser planned for the Foundation. Mr. Smith then explained that a form letter will be sent out to art and craft dealers throughout South Carolina inviting them to participate in the Bazaar. The event will be scheduled for Saturday, April 26, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the Opportunity School. This event will be sponsored by the Alumni Association since we do not have a foundation set up at the present.

Dr. Efron said he was asked by Mr. Rhodes to discuss the matter of naming the gymnasium for a former Director of the WLGO, Mike Caskey. Mr. Caskey contributed a great deal to the school. He recently died and, in keeping with the idea of honoring some of our deceased people, Mr. Rhodes wanted to recommend that the gymnasium be named The Mike Caskey Gymnasium.

Mr. Belcher made a motion that the gymnasium be named The Mike Caskey Gymnasium. The motion was seconded by Ms. Wilson. The motion was approved.

After some discussion among the Board in reference to this motion, it was decided that we should have a dedication ceremony in connection with graduation. Mrs. Belcher said that if a speaker was needed he would volunteer to speak. Mr. Dahlgren commented that he agreed with the action to


name the gymnasium after Mr. Caskey. He added, however, that in the future the Board should consider granting such honors prior to a persons death. He felt that too often institutions wait until a person is deceased before bestowing honors.

Mr. Drew explained that he received a letter from the Board of the WLG Adult Reading Council. They give an award each year to a distinguished teacher. They are requesting that the plaque listing the names of these teachers be housed in the Archives Room. The Council would want to get the plaque from time to time and display it at their conferences. They would be responsible for bringing it back. He told the Council that he did not feel there would be a problem with this but he wanted to bring it before the Board. It was the consensus of the Board that the school would be an appropriate place for the plaque to be housed.

As a last order of business, Mr. Drew extended a word of thanks to Dr. Bob Fulmer for his close cooperation and assistance in the accrediting process this year. The school received an all clear. Mr. Drew added that Dr. Fulmer had always been a excellent representative on the Board, whose thoughts and insights were of great help during Board deliberations. The Board joined Mr. Drew in unanimous agreement of his thanks to Dr. Fulmer.

There being no further business Dr. Efron made a motion that the Board adjourn. The motion was seconded. The Board adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Linda Spivey
Secretary

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