

MINUTES  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING  
OPPORTUNITY SCHOOL  
MARCH 7, 1961

This was a called meeting of the Board which met in the Conference Room at the Opportunity School at 3:30 o'clock. The following were in attendance: Vice-Chairman, Dr. M. B. Webb, who presided; Secretary, Mrs. Harriet F. Johnson; R. H. Smith; Hal Kohn, Jr.; Sam H. Jones; Dr. Oliver Thomas; Miss Wil Lou Gray, Director Emeritus; J. S. Agnew, Director; and Miss Marguerite Tolbert, Assistant Director, on request.

The meeting was called to order by the Vice-Chairman. Mr. Smith gave the invocation. The secretary gave a resume of the minutes of the September meeting which had just been sent from Dr. Holler's office.

Dr. Webb stated that the purpose of this meeting was, first, to consider Mr. Agnew's resignation, and then consider any other business which members may wish to discuss. He then asked Mr. Agnew if he would like to make a statement regarding his expressed desire to retire.

Director Agnew assured the group that this was really his wish, inasmuch as he would reach retirement age in June, that he had taken this position as a short-time one and did not wish to continue. He further stated that nothing unpleasant had occurred to prompt him to retire at this particular time.

This brought further discussion as follows:

Dr. Webb stated that because of Mr. Agnew's certainty, we should respect his decision. Those present expressed surprise and regret at Mr. Agnew's recent announcement of retirement.

Mr. Kohn suggested that we keep in mind the dates of June 15 or August 15 for his retirement to take effect.

In consideration of a director replacement, Miss Gray suggested Dr. George C. Mann, former head of Adult Education in California and now with the United States Office of Education in Washington, who might serve for one year. He was a recent visitor at the Opportunity School. She stated that the 11,000 students in college and the 600,000 in lower schools with expenditures so much more favorable in proportion to the former group that increased funds for the latter is one great need. She referred to the forth-coming survey of the Opportunity School as a basis in order for this school to do its share to help the 600,000.

She stated that psychiatrists were of the opinion that illiteracy was a cause of many ailments and frustrations.

The question of Dr. Mann's contribution to the Opportunity School as director of the survey as being more advantageous was asked by Mr. Kohn.

Dr. Webb stated that if Dr. Mann were asked to assist with the survey he should be invited by the official survey committee. He also stated that Mr. Lever, chairman of the survey committee, would ask for more funds for the committee. (They were given only \$1,000.)

He next suggested that Mr. Agnew might stay on through the summer school.

Mr. Kohn moved that Mr. Agnew's resignation be accepted to take effect August 15, 1961. Mr. Jones seconded the motion, which carried.

Mr. Jones suggested that Miss Gray look further into the possibility and advisability of Dr. Mann's service for one year. Others agreed.

Dr. Webb then suggested that Mr. Kohn, Mr. Smith, and Mr. Holler serve as a committee with Miss Gray as chairman to make this investigation. Mr. Jones made a motion to this effect, which carried.

Mr. Agnew expressed his hope that Miss Tolbert may be his successor. Hearty agreement was expressed, but Miss Tolbert gave no encouragement to the suggestion. She stated that she would be glad to serve as Assistant Director to Dr. Mann. Several members were of the opinion that the Board should fill the vacancy of Director as soon as possible, that since this is an \$8,000 job, that many undersirables will make application.

Dr. Webb appointed a committee to plan proper recognition of Mr. Agnew on his retirement. Those named are Mr. Jones, Chairman, Dr. Thomas, and Miss Tolbert.

A question arose as to whether any teachers were to be retired. Mr. Agnew stated not to his knowledge, that he had recommended them all.

A motion was made by Mr. Jones that all teachers be re-elected. Dr. Thomas seconded the motion, and it carried.

Miss Tolbert advised of the necessity to look ahead for future trained leadership for the school; that she too wished to retire in a few years.

Mr. Agnew added that due to very expensive maintenance, immediate building plans should be evolved, that a crew of workers was continually patching and repairing the buildings.

Mr. Smith reminded the group that information based on the survey would help develop adequate plans for the future.

The chairman announced the next meeting to be held at 11 a.m., Wednesday, May 17, at the Opportunity School.

With this announcement the meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m., after which the board members attended the dinner at the school in honor of members of the General Assembly.

Respectfully submitted,

*Harriet F. Johnson*

Mrs. Harriet F. Johnson