

WIL LOU GRAY OPPORTUNITY SCHOOL

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

MINUTES OF MEETING ON MARCH 10, 1982

The Board of Trustees convened for its regular bi-monthly meeting on Wednesday, March 10, 1982 at 12:55 p.m. in the Archives Room of the William T. Lander Administration Building. Trustees in attendance were: Dr. Marvin Efron, presiding; Mrs. Anne T. Boyce; Ms. Patricia Jacques; Ms. Mary Alice Mack; Mr. James McClary; Mrs. Hannah C. Meadors; Mr. Clarence S. Rowland; Mrs. Elizabeth Thrailkill; and Mrs. Jack Wilson. Faculty in attendance were: Mrs. Thelma Bailey; Mrs. Denise Hoce; and Mrs. Judy Dick. Also present were: Dr. Jack Mullins, Director of State Personnel; Mr. Roy K. Harrill, Assistant to the Director of Classification and Compensation at State Personnel; and Mr. Steve Osborne, Senior Employee Relations Analyst at State Personnel. Mrs. Mary Grant, Cafeteria Supervisor; Mrs. Mary E. Taylor, Cook; Mr. O'Neal Miller, Horticulture Instructor and Grounds Supervisor, were also present. Also present were: Mr. Douglas Woody, Distributive Education teacher; and two Distributive Education students, Miss Gladys Riddle and Miss Devie Whitton. Mr. Salvatore A. Fede, Superintendent; Mr. John King, Director of Fiscal Affairs; Ms. Gloria Lloyd, Personnel Specialist; Dr. Jonnie Spaulding; Director of Student Development; Mr. Pat Smith, Director of Facilities and Supportive Services; and Mrs. Patricia Robbins, Secretary to the Superintendent; were also present.

Mrs. Wilson led the invocation.

Dr. Efron welcomed the guests.

Mrs. Wilson moved that the agenda be amended to include presentation of Distributive Education awards and then be adopted as printed. Mrs. Boyce seconded the motion. Approved.

Dr. Efron moved that both the Minutes of the General Session and the Executive Session of January 16, 1982 be adopted as presented to the Board. Approved by common consent.

The ten year service pins were awarded to Mrs. Mary E. Taylor, Mr. O'Neal Miller, and Mrs. Margie Lancaster. Mr. Fede accepted for Mrs. Lancaster, as she was not present at the meeting.

Mr. Woody, Distributive Education teacher, presented two of his students, Miss Gladys Riddle and Miss Devie Whitton, who had won awards in outside competition.

Mr. Harrill, State Personnel, discussed a report written after the last Board meeting with the Board and staff when it had been decided that there would not be a reduction in force. State Personnel studied the deficit and the number of employees who would be put on "Reduction in Force" and concluded that most positions were critical to the operation of the school and that the school would suffer if these positions were eliminated. Mr. Harrill went on to summarize the study conducted by State Personnel. (This study is attached as Appendix A.)

Dr. Mullins, Director of State Personnel, stated that the Budget and Control Board has been very strict about total 2.19 Budget shortfall rescissions. The 2.19% has been rescinded for the time being although the Budget and Control Board did not vote to rescind the entire amount. It was recommended that advantage be taken of a bill that was approved yesterday by the Senate Finance Committee. The bill is entitled "S815" and was introduced jointly by Senators Dennis and Waddell as a joint resolution. If approved by the Legislature for Fiscal Years 1982 and 1983 it would mean that state employees could be mandated by agency heads with prior Budget and Control Board approval to take leave without pay for a specified number of days. This leave without pay could be mandated only in these shortfall situations caused by State mandated budget reductions. It is desired that the school will make maximum use of this legislation and it is hoped the Budget and Control Board will then provide partial relief from the remaining 2.19% shortfall. If Bill S815 does not pass assistance with the full amount of shortfall will have to be requested of the Budget and Control Board.

Dr. Mullins further stated that the Budget and Control Board might be able to help us through the Civil Contingency Fund which for the entire fiscal year, is \$250,000 in comparison to a State Budget of two billion. The Contingency Fund is very low at the present time. Dr. Mullins further stated that there is very strong legislative support for the "S815 bill," and that it will probably pass.

Mrs. Wilson asked if there were any state agencies at the present time, that had used leave without pay? Dr. Mullins replied that the School for the Deaf and Blind in Spartanburg has used this plan already. Mr. McClary stated that we would not be able to use mandatory leave without pay unless the "S815 bill," passed; otherwise it would be illegal.

Mr. Harrill, State Personnel, stated that if the school were closed down for a day it would save the agency \$5,301, two days \$10,602. The ideal time to do this would be during the spring break when the students would not be present. Dr. Mullins stated that the bill called for equity among the employees in the administration of "leave without pay." It was further discussed that all employees take at least one day during the spring break and that twelve-month employees take another three days later. Discussion followed concerning scaling down twelve month positions to eleven and one half months and perhaps others to ten months. This would not take place during this fiscal year, but could take place next fiscal year.

Mr. Fede stated that we must show good faith in our negotiations with the Budget and Control Board. We should come up with at least 40% of the funds needed by the agency, and then the Budget and Control Board could be asked to come up with the remaining funds.

Mrs. Thrailkill asked if the "snow day" could be counted as one of these days without pay. The reply was that the non-make up of the "snow day" would not provide financial relief.

Ms. Mack asked would it not be illegal, if the "S815 bill" were not passed, to take mandatory leave without pay. The reply was that it would be illegal to mandate leave without pay without prior passage of "S815 bill". Ms. Mack also suggested that the Board should take some action soon since they will not be meeting again until May.

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Dr. Efron requested that with the assistance of the administration we look to the needs of twelve month employees.

Mrs. Thraikill stated that she thought it would be demoralizing for employees to take leave without pay when the House of Representatives, the Senate, and other Constitutional agencies have voted to give themselves a raise. Mrs. Thraikill further stated that, if the School for the Deaf and Blind had it to do over, they would not. Also, Mrs. Thraikill asked if we can expect to go through this again next year. General discussion followed with no conclusion reached.

Dr. Mullins told the Board that the Auditor's office had pointed out that the Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School budget had grown at a much slower rate than the budgets of other state agencies. Dr. Mullins stated that we all know the economic news is not good now. There has been a slowing of revenue collections in the state, far below what was expected. This year a 40 million dollar deficit in the state budget has been forecasted. Next year we may face further reductions. This means that the Opportunity School must look ahead and plan a very sound budget. If it becomes necessary for a "Reduction in Force" it should be early in the year.

Dr. Efron asked for Mr. Fede's recommendation as to which course of action (Appendix B) should be adopted. Mr. Fede stated that in view of nine-month employees having borne the cuts of last year, he preferred course of Action One. Dr. Efron suggested that the Board discuss this information, which it did. After some discussion Mr. McClary recommended that the first course of action be accepted. Mrs. Wilson seconded the motion. Approved.

Mrs. Meadors asked how this would affect the morale of the staff. General discussion followed. Mr. Fede asked that the Board act on course of Action Two should the Budget and Control Board not accept our first course of action number one. Mrs. Wilson made the motion that the Second course of Action also be accepted. Mrs. Thraikill seconded the motion. Approved.

Mr. Harrill and Mr. Osborne said that they will continue their interviews with individual Board members and various administrators of the School to get their views on improving administration/Board relationships. Dr. Mullins stated Dr. Jessie Coles, assistant State Auditor, had agreed to assist the school in this action.

Dr. Efron said that the change in the date of the next Board meeting should be decided. It was suggested that May 12, Friday, would be a good date.

Discussion followed concerning Dr. Coles and his various skills and expertise. Dr. Coles was an Assistant Superintendent of Education during Dr. Busbee's term. It was suggested that following a four hour seminar with Dr. Coles we could then go into the Board meeting. It was decided that May 7 would be a good date to hold the next Board meeting and the workshop.

The School Advisory Council report was presented by Mr. Fede in the absence of Mrs. Lisa Peeples. Mr. Fede remarked that the School Advisory Council Annual School Report was received in timely fashion and that the administration would draft responses for Board approval at a subsequent Board meeting.

Standing Committee Reports:

Mr. James McClary, Chairperson of Student Services, stated that the Education and Student Services Committees met together. The Student Services Committee heard from the Dean of Women and the Dean of Men concerning the students abuse of drugs and alcohol and the various activities that are being conducted to assist students in this regard. The Education Committee's report was made by Mrs. Wilson, Chairperson for the Education Committee, and she stated that thirteen persons had passed the GED. Seven are waiting for the results and there are 224 students enrolled as of March 3, 1982 in the Opportunity School. The student enrollment has been down as low as 190 during the school year.

Mrs. Wilson reported that the School Advisory Council was requesting permission from the Board of Trustees to award quarter credits to students since they were here for such a short time. This action will be coordinated with the State Department of Education. It was stated that Mr. Steve Hooper is helping Mrs. Bailey from five to six hours a week and that she would not have this assistance next school year since Mr. Hooper will be teaching full-time.

The question was raised as to whether the State can afford to pay the teachers to go back to school. Dr. Spaulding stated that at the present time, we are authorized to pay for up to seven teachers to become certified in an area of Special Education, but only four are taking courses under the program this semester. The school has been re-imbursing these teachers for the money spent for such courses. It was asked if the agency can afford to continue this expense, the budget being as it is. At this point Dr. Mullins, Director of State Personnel, stated that he did not think it was legal to do this. Mrs. Wilson stated that the school has been paying for these courses because it was required to have these particular teachers certified to teach Title I courses. We receive monies from Title I for teaching the courses that these teachers who are taking courses must be certified to teach.

Mrs. Wilson stated that Colonel Irick has indicated that he will retire at the end of this school year. Mrs. Bailey stated at the present time Mrs. Bonnie Foster, teacher, has a certificate that is going to expire but is taking the necessary steps to correct this to be certified. Mr. O'Neal Miller's certificate will also expire at the end of this school year.

Mr. McClary stated that the staff is holding individual and group sessions for counseling students who abuse alcohol and drugs. The staff insists on the abusers participating in group sessions.

Mr. Rowland, Chairperson of the Public Relations Committee, stated that although Mr. George Smith was not present, Dr. Spaulding had discussed with him plans being made to develop additional recruiting methods making use of contacts to which various staff and faculty have access. Mr. Rowland suggested that it would be helpful for Mr. Smith to report on the reception he gets and the follow-up needed after a visit to either prospective clients or contacts. Mr. Rowland distributed copies of the recruiting meeting reports, the revised recruitment packet and a cover letter to be sent to service agencies/organizations.

Dr. Efron suggested that he thought it would be a good idea if Mr. Fede had a letter drafted thanking Dr. Mullins and his staff for their help. This would be a letter from the Board of Trustees. (Mailed March 17, 1982) (Letter of appreciation was also mailed to Mr. Vaughn, State Auditor, and his staff.)

Mrs. Meadors, acting chairperson of the Fiscal, Facilities and Supportive Services, and Personnel Committee made the motion that we approve the letter of intent which is to be signed by teachers showing intent for next school year. Mrs. Wilson seconded the motion. Approved.

Mrs. Bailey stated that she was recommending that all teachers be re-hired for next school year. Mrs. Bailey further stated that on the evaluations she had done on her teachers she had awarded 18 teachers a superior, four had been awarded an outstanding, and three awarded a satisfactory.

Mrs. Boyce made the motion that all teachers be re-elected for next school year. Mrs. Wilson seconded the motion. Approved.

Mrs. Meadors next discussed the Disciplinary Action Guidelines. She mentioned that a staff member has been accused of a felony and was suspended without pay. Mr. Osborne, State Personnel, stated that the right thing was done in suspending the person charged with a crime. If the person is reinstated because he is found guilty, he will receive all of his back pay.

Mrs. Meadors motioned that the Board approve the Disciplinary Action Guidelines. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Wilson. Approved.

It was brought to the attention of the Board that the Bechtler house is being recommended by the administration to be divided up into offices. Mrs. Meadors stated that she thought we should first get some estimates and be very careful about spending to remodel this apartment into offices as money is very tight now and we are trying to save salaries. The Board asked the administration to re-evaluate this action.

Mr. King discussed last years planning calendar for budgetary activities and indicated the dates this year for budgetary activities would be pretty much the same. He then presented a schedule of proposed increases to the FY 82-83 budget for formulation of the FY 83-84 budget. Dr. Efron asked all members to return their suggestions before the end of March.

Dr. Efron, Chairman, stated that at the next Board meeting they would take a look at the suggested Information Agenda for School Year 1982-1983 and the suggested Action Agenda for School Year 1982-1983.

Mr. King told the Board that the contract with the South Carolina Migrant and Seasonal Farm Workers Organization was not acceptable because of the wording and the time period covered. Also, because the federal format has changed, a new contract is needed. Dr. Efron suggested that he be allowed to sign the new contract when it comes to the school as the Board will not be meeting again until May.

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Mr. McClary moved that the Board give Dr. Efron the authority to sign the new contract. Mr. Rowland seconded the motion. Approved.

Dr. Efron informed the Board that there is a parcel of land which the Vocational Rehabilitation facility would like to use if we will permit them to use it. This piece of land would be deeded to them. It is approximately 200' by 600' in size. Ms. Mack asked if we will be paid for the land. The reply is no. The cost of the deeding of the land to Vocational Rehabilitation will be their responsibility.

Mrs. Wilson made the motion that we deed the land to Vocational Rehabilitation. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Meadors. Approved.

Dr. Efron stated that the school had asked Governor Riley early last year to speak at our June commencement exercises. The Governor said he could not commit himself that early. The school then asked him later but at that time he had already committed himself. Mrs. Thrailkill suggested that we ask Lt. Governor Nancy Stevenson.

Dr. Efron stated that Dr. Scott had asked that the Facilities and Supportive Services function be moved from her committee to another committee. Dr. Efron stated that Mr. McClary had indicated he would accept the additional function. Mrs. Wilson motioned to place Facilities and Supportive Services in Student Services. Seconded by Mrs. Meadors. Approved.

Mrs. Wilson made the motion that the school not make up the snow day missed. Ms. Mack seconded the motion. Approved.

Ms. Jacques stated the Alumni Association had suggested that Mrs. Bechtler be presented with a plaque in appreciation of her services to the school. Mr. McClary made the motion. Mrs. Wilson seconded the motion. Approved.

Ms. Mack suggested that a procedure be implemented for those persons who wish to make a presentation to the Board. It was recommended that an action be drafted for the Executive Committee to consider at the next Board meeting.

Mrs. Meadors then distributed copies of the campus housing study by Dr. Thomas Surratt and Dr. William W. Savage of U.S.C. Dr. Efron requested the Facilities and Supportive Services and the Student Services Committees review this study and make recommendations for implementation. Mr. McClary asked the superintendent and his staff to assist the committee in this action.

Mrs. Boyce asked that we implement a fund for school improvements. Dr. Efron stated he would deposit the money at Bankers Trust while Mr. King explored a way for the school to monitor the fund.

Unfinished Business:

Mr. Fede stated that he had talked with Mrs. Sherri Turner, wife of Glenn Turner, and she had advised him that the funds from the close-out and liquidation of the Emiley Jones Home for the mentally retarded were still targeted for the

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Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School.

Mr. Fede reported that Dr. Marguerite Tolbert had moved out of Dr. Gray's home and into the Methodist Nursing Home in Orangeburg, S.C.

New Business:

None

The motion was made to go into Executive Session by Mr. McClary. Mrs. Wilson seconded the motion. Approved. All personnel except Board members and Mr. Osborne and Mr. Harrill were excused.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:40 p.m.

ATTACHMENTS: Appendix A (State Personnel Study)
Appendix B (Course of Actions)

James McClary
Secretary, Board of Trustees