

MINUTES  
BUSINESS MEETING OF THE SCHOOL BOARD  
CHARLOTTESVILLE CITY SCHOOLS  
Booker T. Reaves Media Center, Charlottesville High School  
Thursday, October 21, 2010 (6:00 PM)

1.1 Call to Order: Board Chair, Leah Puryear called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

2.1 Pledge of Allegiance: The Board began its meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

3.1 Roll Call:

The following Board	Mr. Edmund Michie	Mr. Juandiego Wade
Members were present:	Ms. Colette Blount	Dr. Alvin Edwards
	Ms. Llezelle Dugger	Ms. Kathleen Galvin
	Ms. Leah Puryear	

The following Board	
Members were absent:	None

The following Staff	Dr. Rosa Atkins	Mr. James Henderson
Members were present:	Mrs. Gertrude Ivory	Dr. Laurie McCullough
	Mr. Ed Gillaspie	Ms. Leslie Thacker
	Dr. Beth Baptist	Ms. Cass Cannon

The following Staff	
Members were absent:	Dr. Faye Giglio

4.1 Approval of Proposed Business Session Agenda: Mr. Michie made a motion, seconded by Dr. Edwards, to approve the proposed agenda. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the motion carried with Ms. Blount, Ms. Dugger, Mr. Michie, Dr. Edwards, Ms. Puryear, Mr. Wade and Ms. Galvin voting yes. 7 ayes, 0 nays.

5.1 Public Comment Grade Configuration/Facility Use: There were none.

6.1 Comments from Members of the Community: There were none.

7.1 Board Member Comments: Ms. Kathleen Galvin discussed her recent trip to Charleston, South Carolina with the Urban Design Studios representatives and their teacher Kim Thompson. There were two students that went from the Urban Design Studio Class for the purpose of attending a Conference on Making Cities Livable for Children. The Sunday tours were themed. The first was on urban design and the second was about architectural history.

Mr. Juandiego Wade commented about his recent visit to Jackson-Via to have lunch with the students. Mr. Wade also met with the CDBG Task Force and they discussed some innovative housing projects coming along. Mr. Wade also visited the Charlottesville Boys & Girls Club and the Smith Pool.

8.1-6 Approval of Consent Agenda: The Consent Agenda included Personnel Recommendations, September 2, 2010 Business/Work Session Minutes, September 15, 2010 Work Session Minutes, September 16, 2010 Business Session Minutes and Business, Financial, Routine Reports. Dr. Edwards made a motion, seconded by Mr. Michie, to approve the consent agenda. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the motion carried with Ms. Blount, Ms. Dugger, Mr. Michie, Ms. Puryear, Dr. Edwards, Mr. Wade and Ms. Galvin voting yes. 7 ayes, 0 nays.

## **Special Recognition:**

9.1 Recognition of Dr. Alvin Edwards: - Dr. Rosa Atkins, Superintendent presented a resolution that on October 21, 2010, the School Board of Charlottesville City Schools recognizes Dr. Alvin Edwards for his excellent service to the City of Charlottesville and Charlottesville City Schools.

Dr. Atkins also introduced our new Director of Technology, Dean Jadowski. Mr. Jadowski comes to us from Henrico County Schools where he worked for four years, serving as a technology project leader and an interim Director of Technology in the Division of Instruction. Mr. Jadowski is a Certified Project Management Professional and is a graduate of VCU with a BFA in Arts and Advertising.

9.2 Virginia School Boards Association Academy Awards: - The Virginia School Boards Association recognizes and honors school board members, superintendents, clerks, and deputy clerks who have improved their boardsmanship skills by participating in in-service education programs. Time, dedication, hard work and consistent efforts are required of each board member to stay well-informed on complex issues. The VSBA "Academy Awards" acknowledge these dedicated board members for their different levels of achievement." The Certificate of Recognition is presented to school board members who have completed 15 hours of Academy credit during a one-year period. The Award of Achievement includes a certificate and a bronze pin in recognition of 24 hours of Academy credit during the year. The Award of Excellence includes a certificate and a silver pin in recognition of 48 hours of Academy credit (2) years and was awarded to Board Members Ms. Colette Blount, Dr. Alvin Edwards, Ms. Kathleen Galvin and Ms. Leah Puryear. The Award of Honor includes a certificate and a gold pin in recognition of 66 hours of Academy credit (2) years and was awarded to Board Members Ms. Llezelle Dugger and Mr. Ned Michie. The Award of Distinction includes a certificate, a starfish pin, and a luncheon at the VSBA Annual Convention. The Award of Distinction is in recognition of 84 hours of Academy credit (2) years and was awarded to Superintendent, Dr. Rosa Atkins and Board Member Mr. Juan Wade.

## **Educational Highlights:**

10.1 Buford Middle School - Buford Live! and Buford Schoolyard Garden: - Dominique Bourgeois, Assistant Principal of Buford Middle School presented these items to the Board.

Ms. Bourgeois introduced Chau Dao and Gabriel Lipkowitz from Buford Live! a televised broadcast that was started this year. Buford Live! has a crew made up of eight students and two teachers, Mr. Frazier and Mr. Weiner who direct the broadcast. The broadcast is held once in the morning and once in the afternoon.

Chau Dao from Buford Live! introduced Jenna Ashby, Tianna Washington, and Jacob Wood from the Buford Garden. The Buford Schoolyard Garden is a unique learning environment where students explore connections between food, health, and the environment through hands-on activities, fully integrated into the curriculum.

Ms. Bourgeois also presented information about the Buford Character Education Program. The mission of the program is to model, teach and empower students to become responsible and productive citizens in a culturally diverse environment. Students are nominated by teachers weekly when they have displayed a character trait.

10.2 Walker Upper Elementary School - Instructional Practices from our Sixth Grade Read - "Seedfolks": Ms. Terri Perkins, Principal of Walker Upper Elementary School presented this item to the Board. Sixth grade students at Walker Upper Elementary School did a sixth grade read of "Seedfolks" by Paul Fleischman.

Ms. Perkins introduced Ms. Lavery and Ms. Hawkins who presented some of the instructional activities they did around the book. Students Gabby Sabo and Carrington Gallihugh presented information about the activities they did using Moodle. Students typed in projects and helped others improve their writing by commenting on their work.

School Board Chair, Leah Puryear asked that the Principals, Teachers, Students and Parents stand and the Board thanked them for their participation. Mr. Wade also recognized Ms. Linda Winecoff who is the Program Coordinator of the Buford Garden.

## **Action Items:**

11.1 Advisory Committees to the School Board: Dr. Beth Baptist, Director of Special Education and Student Services, presented membership lists for the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC), School Health Advisory Board (SHAB), Quest Advisory Committee, and Title 1 Advisory Committee. According to Policy BCF, certain advisory committees to the School Board must have the membership approved by the School Board. The Career and Technical Advisory Committee was approved as a part of the annual plan that was approved by the Board in the spring. The lists were provided for information at the October 7, 2010, meeting and are being brought to the Board for approval.

Dr. Edwards made a motion, seconded by Mr. Wade, to approve the Advisory Committees to the School Board Membership Lists. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the motion carried with Ms. Blount, Ms. Dugger, Mr. Michie, Ms. Puryear, Dr. Edwards, Mr. Wade and Ms. Galvin voting yes. 7 ayes, 0 nays.

11.2 Request for Professional Development/Teacher Mentor Facilitator: - Dr. Faye Giglio, Director of Human Resources, presented this item to the Board at the October 7, 2010 Work Session and is being presented for the Board's approval. Additional support is needed to mentor teachers who are new to Charlottesville City Schools and/or new to the teaching profession. Approximately 30% of our current teaching staff is composed of teachers with 5 years or less of teaching experience. This group of teachers statistically has a high turnover rate nationally and locally. Increasing support for new teachers is one of the strategies identified to help decrease the teacher turnover rate. Additionally, mentoring new teachers helps to improve teacher effectiveness which is directly related to student achievement. It is requested that we add a professional development/teacher mentor facilitator position which would be funded through the "Jobs Fund." This position would increase the amount of support available for new teachers. Salary for the position would be based on the teacher pay scale.

Dr. Edwards made a motion, seconded by Mr. Michie, to approve the request for Professional Development/Teacher Mentor Facilitator. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the motion carried with Ms. Blount, Ms. Dugger, Mr. Michie, Ms. Puryear, Dr. Edwards, Mr. Wade and Ms. Galvin voting yes. 7 ayes, 0 nays.

11.3 Approval of Lead Technology Support: - Dr. Faye Giglio presented this item to the Board. With the ongoing expanding use of technology to support instruction and the more recent laptop initiative, additional support is needed to ensure the continuous and dependable availability of technology for classroom use. It is recommended that we respond to these growing needs by restructuring the technology department and adding a position to manage and guarantee timely responses to support requirements. The position of Lead Technology Support Specialist is being requested to manage these needs. The Lead Technology Support Specialist position will be on Pay Table W.

Mr. Michie made a motion, seconded by Mr. Wade, to approve the Lead Technology Support position. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the motion carried with Ms. Blount, Ms. Dugger, Mr. Michie, Ms. Puryear, Dr. Edwards, Mr. Wade and Ms. Galvin voting yes. 7 ayes, 0 nays.

11.4 Appropriation of Condemnation Funds – CATEC: Ed Gillaspie, Director of Finance presented information regarding the appropriation of condemnation funds for CATEC property to the Board. Pursuant to an order under which funds representing the fair market value for land taken for highway purposes by the Commonwealth of Virginia are being distributed ½ each to Charlottesville City Schools and Albemarle County Schools, the School Board is asked to approve the forwarding of a request to City Council for appropriation to the School Board and to approve the use of these funds for bus loop and parking design work at CATEC.

Mr. Michie made a motion, seconded by Dr. Edwards, to approve the appropriation of condemnation funds with the assumption and condition that the funds end up back at CATEC along with funds from Albemarle County to fund the CIP plans. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the motion carried with Ms. Blount, Ms. Dugger, Mr. Michie, Dr. Edwards, Ms. Puryear, Mr. Wade and Ms. Galvin voting yes. 7 ayes, 0 nays.

11.5 School Board Salary Increase: - Dr. Beth Baptist, Director Special Education and Student Services presented this item to the Board. At the June 15, 2010, School Board Work Session the Board discussed the process for changing

School Board salaries and reviewed previous discussion on the topic. It was decided to review the topic again in the fall. For School Boards to raise salaries for the members, the vote must occur prior to December 31 of the year in which an election is to be held. A copy of information shared with the School Board in June was provided for their consideration.

Mr. Michie made a motion, seconded by Ms. Blount that the Board postpone the vote on this issue until December 16, 2010. Upon a roll call vote being taken the motion carried with Ms. Blount, Mr. Wade, Ms. Galvin, Ms. Dugger and Mr. Michie voting Aye. Ms. Puryear and Dr. Edwards voting nay. 5 ayes, 2 nays.

11.6 Facilities and Grade Configuration: Mr. James Henderson, Assistant Superintendent for Administration Services presented this item to the Board. Mr. Henderson provided a summary of the School Facilities and Grade Configuration discussions to date (attached).

Ms. Dugger made a motion, seconded by Dr. Edwards, that subject to funding availability the City School Division consolidate it's sixth through eighth grade students into one middle school building either at Walker or at Buford and that fifth grade students be returned to the elementary schools. Ms. Dugger further moved that the closed middle school building and other space that is made available through this reconfiguration be repurposed for Charlottesville City School uses including a pre-school center, a consolidated central office, and homes for our Adult Education and Henry Avenue Learning Center Programs as well as a an additional non-tradition high school program at Charlottesville High School. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the motion carried with Ms. Blount, Ms. Dugger, Mr. Michie, Dr. Edwards, Ms. Puryear, Mr. Wade and Ms. Galvin voting yes. 7 ayes, 0 nays.

Board Chair, Ms. Puryear stated that each Board Member will have three minutes to share with the public their concerns and their deliberations as they vote on this issue.

Mr. Wade's statement:

"Thank you Madam Chair. First I would like to thank staff for their diligence in all of the past year and a half to getting us all of the information that we requested on a timely basis. I would like to thank the public for all of their input throughout this last year or year and a half that has been very pivotal in us getting to this point. I would also like to thank the Board Members because you have put in a lot of extra hours, time away from your family and your work to devote to this very important subject. Throughout this process I believe that we all had in our minds what would be best for the students and although that was difficult at times with all of the information that we had I believe that is what we had in the forefront throughout this entire process. I will be supporting the option that I believe will reduce the number of transitions for our students which I think will have a positive impact on the students. I will support the option that will allow for us to potentially develop a pre-school center that will open up many exciting opportunities. I will support the option that will help alleviate the Central Office spacing issue. I will also support the option that will allow for us to serve some three and four year olds that we currently are not. Those are the primary reasons I will support the option."

Mr. Michie's statement:

"It really has been a long road we have been on and it is an extremely important decision and we appreciate everyone's participation and all of staff's work. We have an excellent school system and it's getting better all of the time. Nevertheless, we continue to struggle at middle grades like other communities across the nation and one of the questions that has been before us is what do we need to do to get to the next level with our middle grades and I think the whole board has been very interested in investing more money in our middle school facilities to upgrade them. They are forty-five years old and we need to move into a 21<sup>st</sup> century learning environment. While looking at the two options, making a significant investment in our current configuration or a significant investment that also consolidates middle schools and weighing those two choices I also support the motion before us to consolidate. This is a chance to totally reinvent the building and our middle school experience here in Charlottesville City Schools. It creates space for potentially a top flight pre-school center and I think that is something that has really gotten the Board excited about this option. When I think about it if we also have adult education there that also creates a possibility of some synergy with parents of at risk preschoolers taking adult education classes and that thought excites me. This option gives one more year of elementary school by putting the fifth grade back into the elementary school. One more year in the elementary schools and I think for most people that is the most comfortable as a standard grade configuration, it's been the grade configuration in the past in Charlottesville and does cut the number of transitions which seems to me as bound to be helpful. Research indicates it is helpful. The culture in the school is hard to build in a two year time frame and we are struggling in middle school aged kids and for them particularly to have to go through this many transitions is tough and so I think it is important to cut down the number of transitions at that age group. I think that this also creates more grouping options for teachers at the

consolidated middle school and at the elementary schools. There would be more kids there and more grouping opportunities. It also creates more teachers both at the consolidated middle school and at the elementary school level and having the teacher more in one location also creates opportunities for enhance professional development. I also believe it is a more cost efficient use of the buildings since consolidating saves us \$560,000.00 per year that we can use towards debt services towards these grade configurations and I think it's a more cost effective and better solution to the other problems we have identified of bringing adult education in house that we are currently paying \$80,000.00 a year for as well as Henry Avenue services that are costing us \$75,000.00 a year and it also allows us to consolidate the Central Offices into one place and free up space in the high school. I think that overall it is a better thing and I think that the cost difference between the two is not so great that it leads me to change my mind and I think that it is time that we invest in our school system. It has been forty-five years since we have had a major upgrade and if you look at the communities around us they all have buildings that have been built in the last fifteen years and so I'm excited about this possibility and hope that the community can find the funding for it.

Ms. Dugger's statement:

"While this started based on an efficiency study through MGT budget issues and efficiency issues are important. One of the key things that have been in my mind is that we cannot sacrifice the education of our children merely for efficiency and so that is the background in which I received all of the information (the emails, phone calls, the conversations at the bus stop and the grocery store). It was a difficult decision to make because our school district is doing well. We have our challenges and we have our issues but overall we are a good and strong school system. In my final analysis the idea of lengthening elementary school for our kids in a society where our kids grow up too fast was just too much for me to ignore. I have two young children in our elementary schools and the option of having fifth grade back in elementary school is very strong and it resonates with me and my husband and has resonated with some of the folks I have spoken with. With regards to our six, seven, and eight configuration less transition is always good in my opinion but even more important is the building blocks that happen in three years as opposed to two years in our schools and that played a factor in my decision. While efficiency is good and is something we have to look for in these economic times I feel very comfortable in supporting Option 4 as the best way to education our kids in the Charlottesville City School System.

Dr. Edward's statement:

"I'm going to support the motion because whatever is best for children and that enhances their learning and that strengthens the facilities to provide a better teaching atmosphere, especially getting ready for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. I believe we need to bite the bullet and do what needs to be done in order to help our children. On the other side of the coin I thought about how the number of issues our children have to deal with today that we did not have to deal with when we were coming along. It means that we need to find other creative ways to do it and I believe the best way to do it to reconfigure the schools, put Central Office in a certain place and rather than be repetitive I will agree with what most everyone else has said thus far."

Ms. Galvin's statement:

"I do support the motion and here are my reasons. I want to echo many of the things that have already been said. There are many areas of inefficiency in our system, that is not the main reason but it is a significant reason and it was something that the MGT Study focused on quite a bit. I think that we really do need to address the fact that we have double the Central Office we have rental space everywhere to deal with our alternative programs and leads to a fractured system. The recurring theme that has been brought to our attention by experts in the field as well as the general public was the idea that the number of transitions and the impact on the child as well as parent engagement in the middle school is the time when we really do need to engage both parent and teacher most of all and three years does give you that ground to work in. As many of you have already said the early childhood development center is something that I think given our proximity to UVA is a golden opportunity to really be a game changer in the early years of our children's' lives. I do appreciate what Mr. Michie brought up about the synergies between that and adult education that we do not have right now. I know that we do want to be concerned first and foremost about children as that is the reason why we all got into this business but we also would do well to think about investment. What are investing in? What is it going be like twenty years from now if we do nothing with the facilities? The price differential between the two options is not that great and we will get so much more by doing the thirty-six versus the twenty-four million. Now is the time when construction is cheap, the labor costs are low and interest rates are low. Then when we finally pay off everything in twenty years we will be achieving cost savings because of the fact that we don't have the duplication in staff. As an architect I'm also extremely excited by the possibilities that a brand new facility will provide golden opportunities to reconfigure the

schools. This would provide exciting opportunities for more experiential learning, project based learning and after the conference I've been to I am convinced that we must do something with the physical place that we have especially in those critical times of a child's life. That is very promising and exciting and I do not think it is going to hurt our arts program. I am an avid supporter of the music program in particular and I think it's going to allow us to expand what was started by the exploratory stings at Clark and Jackson-Via and would actually let us go deeper into the elementary program and so I see it only as a benefit."

Ms. Blount's statement:

"This has been a wonderful topic. One that has brought so many people together, parents, students, staff, business leaders, residents and it has been wonderful and I think that staff and the public for their input. I know that change can be difficult thing to undertake and it is interesting to note that prior to the MGT Efficiency Review this was not a topic of discussion for us and that little seed was planted and I know that when we had our earlier conversations around this we said that we might now even take what option they are recommending and may lead to something else. I never really saw this coming and I don't think any of us necessarily did but we kept that door open to the potential for other options. I know that children are very adaptable to a variety of environments and while this may be the situation we don't want to undertake change without the possibility of there being an overwhelmingly positive purpose. Neither of the two options puts our students in an unsafe nor an educationally unsound environment and student success is a primary goal of the city division. This can occur through either of the two options. Option 4 brings about this goal by investing renewed energies toward continuing and expanding upon the strong work that has been done by our preschool program. The creation of the preschool center affords our children the opportunity to benefit from a consolidated program in a state of the art facility through collaboration with UVA and other early childhood education specialists we have the chance to open the door to affecting early and long lasting positive work in the educational foundation of our children. As a teacher I have taught in a K-4 school, I taught at Clark. I have also taught in a K-5 school and currently teach in a 6th-8th school and I have taught 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders and the variance between 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> is not huge. Individually there might be milestones, I know some parents might not be very comfortable with their slow growing 4<sup>th</sup> grader heading off to 5<sup>th</sup> grade but then another parent of a 4<sup>th</sup> grader sees their 4<sup>th</sup> grader biting at the bit ready to head off to 5<sup>th</sup> grad and should have been there the year before. We're going to have those differences and will not please everybody because of those individual variations among the students. I am primarily supporting Option 4 because of the preschool center. That is where we can have a very different and long lasting impact. I am confident that the city staff will continue our wonderful fine-arts program in the structure that would be there with Option 4. I also support there being less transitions. Children these days, with so much going on with the media, are overwhelmed in many regards and so less transitions would help them to get a solid educational foundation in that regard."

Ms. Puryear's statement:

"I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone that has participated in the process be them staff, administrators, parents or students. I come to this from a very different perspective. Many years ago my husband had the opportunity to sit on the committee that made a very difficult decision in order to do a split and to have the 5-6, 7-8 program. My decision has not been easy because every time I thought about this I thought of him but he has always said to me that whatever decision you make you must make a sound one and it must be based on pedagogy when it comes to academics. As a University Professor he believed in strong academics but he also believed in access for all. The preschool center provides the City of Charlottesville with access for all. One of our children participated in the divided two middle school option and one participated in the upper elementary and middle school option. However, both of them had access to preschool and there are many children within our city that do not. Their ability to learn has been exponential and that is what I want for every child in the City of Charlottesville. Better than I had. Better than my children had and better than their parents' had. During our campaign Mr. Wade, Mr. Michie and I heard repeatedly that all parents in the City of Charlottesville want better for their children than they. Our preschool will afford our children ages three and four to have better than everyone in this room and all who are currently watching. With that we will call for the vote."

12.1 Comments from Members of the Community: There were none.

13.1 Board Member Comments: Dr. Edwards thanked the Board, Staff and the community for allowing him to serve the Charlottesville City Schools.

Ms. Blount commented on the IMPACT meeting she attended, representing the Charlottesville City Schools, and the impact the group had on the goals presented to the City Schools around preschool education.

14.1 Superintendent's Comments: Dr. Atkins thanked the community, stakeholders and the School Board for engaging in the conversation of the past eighteen months about how the Charlottesville City Schools uses our facilities and resources. Dr. Atkins thanked the Board for their careful deliberation and consideration of all the options that were presented and for considering the best interests of the students, preschool through 12<sup>th</sup> grade and how our facilities and resources can be best used to give our students the best possible education. Dr. Atkins added that there are many steps that will take place between now and the reconfiguration actually taking place and that it will not be a quick transition. It will involve discussion from our community, our staff members as well as input from various stakeholders to ensure that the transition is smooth and that we consider all of the stakeholders in making this transition.

15.1 Upcoming Meetings: Ms. Puryear read the list of upcoming meetings.

16.1 Adjourn: At 7:20 p.m. Mr. Michie made a motion, seconded by Dr. Edwards, to adjourn. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the motion carried with Ms. Blount, Ms. Dugger, Mr. Michie, Dr. Edwards, Ms. Puryear, Mr. Wade and Ms. Galvin voting yes. 7 ayes, 0 nays.

A complete podcast of this meeting can be accessed at:

<http://www.ccs.k12.va.us/podcast/media/CCSBoard21Oct2010.mp3>

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Leah Puryear, Board Chair

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Leslie Thacker, Clerk