

BOARD BRIEFS



A Monthly Review of the Actions and Highlights of the Newton County Board of Education Meetings February 2008



District 1
Mr. Johnny Smith



District 2
Mr. Rickie Corley



District 1
Mrs. Cathy Dobbs



District 4
Mr. Almond Turner



District 5
Dr. C.C. Bates

February 12, 2008 Monthly Work Session

Board Names New Schools: The school board officially named the system's two new schools. Newton County's thirteenth elementary school, South Salem Elementary School, will open in August 2008. The county's fifth middle school, Liberty Middle School, will open the following school year.

Executive Session: The school board approved the recommendation of Mr. Dennis Carpenter for the position of Associate Superintendent for Personnel, pending release of his contract from Appling County School System.

February 26, 2008 Monthly Work Session

Public Participation: Mr. Marcus Hill, a representative of the Newton High School Band Booster Program, came before the board once again to submit several possible bids for new band uniforms. Mr. Hill had previously asked the board for assistance with the purchase of new band uniforms as the current uniforms are in need of replacement.

Mr. Robert Tymkew asked the school board to consider making the disciplinary policy on sexual harassment stronger, such as suspension on the first offense, to force parents to get immediately involved in the issue if their child has committed such an offense. The board members indicated they would have Newton County School Superintendent Dr. Steve Whatley review the policy and contact Mr. Tymkew for follow-up.

The School Board Recognized the following for their achievements:

Spelling Bee Winner: The school board recognized Stephanie Lightsey, an eighth-grade student at Clements Middle School, as the winner of the 2008 Newton County School System Spelling Bee. When Stephanie won the 2008 Spelling Bee it marked the fourth time in five years that she was our county champion. She won the county spelling bee as a fourth-grader, fifth-grader, sixth-grader, and now as an eighth-grader. No one has ever accomplished that feat in our school system.



BOARD BRIEFS



National Board Certification: The school board recognized Ms. Karen Crowder, principal of Middle Ridge Elementary School for earning national certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. National Board Certification is a voluntary assessment program designed to recognize and reward great teachers—and make them better. While state licensing systems set basic requirements to teach in each state, NBCTs have successfully demonstrated advanced teaching knowledge, skills and practices. Certification is achieved through a rigorous, performance-based assessment that typically takes one to three years to complete. As part of the process, teachers build a portfolio that includes student work samples, assignments, videotapes and a thorough analysis of their classroom teaching. Additionally, teachers are assessed on their knowledge of the subjects they teach.

GLISI Participants: The school board recognized members of Newton County School System's District Change Team, who have been participating in the Georgia Leadership Institute for School Improvement, also known as GLISI. This school year, the District Change Team has participated in two school improvement conferences held at the Evergreen Conference Center in Stone Mountain, Georgia. The focus of the school improvement learning conferences was to provide information to assist schools in increasing the graduation rate, reduce the dropout rate and to improve student progress from pre-school through high school; through post-secondary education and to the work force. Participants included: Mrs. Holly Dubois, Fairview Elementary School; Mrs. Shari Thomas, Fairview Elementary School; Ms. ReNae Malcom, Fairview Elementary School; Mr. Scott Sauls, Cousins Middle School; Dr. Renee Mallard, Cousins Middle School; Mrs. Brook Khodabakhsh, Cousins Middle School; Mr. Dave Easterday, Alcovy High School; Mrs. Debbie Stephens, Alcovy High School; Mrs. Allison Jordan, Alcovy High School; Dr. Shelia Thomas, Director of Testing and GPS; Dr. Linda Hayden, Associate Superintendent for C&I; and Dr. Steve Whatley, Superintendent.



BOARD BRIEFS



Special Presentation: Dr. Adria Griffin, Director of Middle School Curriculum presented information on the Newton County School System's Middle and High School Graduation Coaches, including the current list of coaches, their training, and duties to assist students and prepare them for graduation.

Summer School Programs: The school board approved the schedule and locations for Elementary Summer School, Middle Summer School, and Georgia High School Graduation Test (GHSGT) Remediation Summer School. Elementary Summer School will be held from June 2-26, 2008 on Monday through Thursday at Middle Ridge Elementary School for grades three-through five. Middle School Summer School will be offered June 2-26, 2008 at Clements Middle School on Mondays through Thursdays. GHSGT Remediation Summer School will be held on June 30-July 11, 2008 at Newton High School. No classes will take place on July 4.

Revised Policies: The school board approved slight changes to Newton County School Board Policy GBRIB-Illness and Policy GBRID-Military Leave. The policies were revised to be in compliance with Georgia law. All Newton County School System policies may be viewed online at <http://www.newtoncountyschools.org>.

Proposed Revisions to Policies: The school board has placed on the table for thirty days, seven policies for revision and public review. These policies are: Policy DIB-Financial Report; Policy GAD-Professional Development Opportunities; Policy IDD-Special Program-Special Instructional Assistance; Policy IDDD-Program for Gifted Students; Policy IEB-Organization for Instruction; Policy IED-Scheduling for Instruction; and Policy II-Testing Programs-Student Assessment. The board will vote on these proposed revisions at the March 2008 monthly meeting.

Executive Session: The school board approved the items discussed in Executive Session, including the transfer of Ms. Holly Dubois, principal of Fairview Elementary School to principal of South Salem Elementary School effective July 1, 2008. In addition, the board approved the promotion of Ms. Takila Curry, current assistant principal of Palmer-Stone Elementary School to replace Ms. Dubois as principal of Fairview Elementary School next school year. Dr. Lori Thomas, current assistant principal at Ficquett Elementary School was promoted to principal of Palmer-Stone Elementary School for the 2008-2009 school year. She will replace Mr. Carl Wilkins, who is retiring as principal of Palmer-Stone at the end of the current school year. Finally, the board approved the promotion of Ms. Samantha Fuhrey, principal of Indian Creek Middle School to Newton County School System Director of Professional Learning.

For a complete listing of presentations and actions of the Newton County Board of Education, check the Board of Education meeting minutes, which are posted online at <http://www.newtoncountyschools.org/boe-minutes.html> or contact the Newton County School System Public Relations Department at 770-784-2908.