

SPECIAL MEETING

Ashe County Board of Education

May 12, 2011

A special dinner meeting beginning at 5:30 pm was held in the annex with all members present. The purpose of the meeting was twofold—to review a proposed change in the 2011/12 transportation routing system and a closed session to discuss personnel action that involved an officer or employee of this Board [N.C. General Statute §143-318.11(a)(6)].

Transportation Director Shea Coldiron stated that the purpose of changing the transportation routing system is to reduce student ride times. Ashe County currently has the longest ride time of any school system in North Carolina—an average of 56 minutes. Some students ride the bus two hours or more one way. Mr. Coldiron introduced Kevin Hart from the Urban Institute at UNC Charlotte. The Department of Public Instruction contracts with the Institute to collaborate with school systems in implementing the Transportation Information Management System (TIMS) software. The software is provided by the State and fulfills the legislative mandate for efficient utilization of the school bus fleet for all students and schools in the district. He also introduced Amanda Pennington from Caldwell County who is assisting with the input of TIMS data.

Mr. Hart gave an overview of the TIMS system, highlighting how student address information is downloaded from the student information data system (NCWISE) and how TIMS then uses Geocode (computerized map of school district's street and road network) to design bus routes based on this ridership data. He stressed the importance of accurate TIMS data. Once a map is calibrated correctly, TIMS will find the quickest path between each stop.

Mr. Hart then reviewed the proposed solutions to reduce student morning and evening ride time. The plan will require change in local procedures for staggered bell times, stop locations, multi-school busing, transfer stops, multi-tier busing from the same school and student supervision before and after the bell to allow buses more flexibility. The current system of door to door stops will continue.

The principals and bus supervisors were present for the meeting as well. Following questions, Mr. Coldiron was directed to compile answers and solutions, particularly about early dismissal during inclement weather and the availability of space to park 14 buses at each elementary site. The Superintendent will later contact the Board for direction on proceeding with the proposed changes.

Information just received on the status of the State budget was shared with the Board.

On a motion by Vice Chairman Jones and a second by Dr. Beckworth unanimous approval was given to going into closed session at 7:55 pm to discuss personnel action that involve an officer or employee of this Board [N.C. General Statute §143-318.11(a)(6)].

Upon return to regular session at 8:35 pm, a motion by Vice Chairman Jones and a second by Mr. Williams gave a 3-0 vote to the non-renewal of the ILT1, ILT2 and ILT3 teachers (Kim Turnmire, Kayla Rash, Andrea Huovinen, Audrea Little, Jessica Greer, and Dianna Miller) due to budget. Mrs. Jones and Dr. Beckworth abstained from voting.

There being no further business, the Chairman immediately declared the meeting adjourned at 8:55 pm.