STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA STOKES COUNTY
DANBURY, NORTH CAROLINA RETREAT APRIL 14, 2012

The Stokes County Board of Education held a retreat on Saturday, April 14, 2012, at 9:00 a.m., at the Northwest Forsyth Tech Center in King, North Carolina.

Board Members Present: Mr. Jamie Yontz, Chairman; Mr. Mike Rogers, Vice-Chairman; Mr. David L. Smith, member; Mrs. Sonya Cox, member; and Ms. Becky Boles, member.

Administration Present: Mr. Ronnie Mendenhall, Superintendent; Dr. Todd Martin, Assistant Superintendent; and Mrs. Ann Robertson, Administrative Assistant.

Others Present: Amy Nail, Central Office; Chad Beasley, Central Office; Michael Sands, Central Office; Cynthia Mabe, Central Office; Sarah Wood, Central Office; Ricky Goins, Maintenance/Central Office; David Burge, Operations/Central Office; Cindy Marion, Central Office; Brad Lankford, Transportation/Central Office; Melisa Jessup, Central Office; and Lanette Moore, Central Office.

Mr. Yontz welcomed everyone to the meeting. Ms. Boles gave the invocation and Mr. Rogers lead the pledge.

Mr. Mendenhall announced that Forsyth Tech had permitted us to use their conference room at no charge. He also thanked Unlimited Success for providing all refreshments and lunch for the Board of Education retreat.

Discussion Agenda

All Central Office directors gave a report from their departments to board members. The information shared were items that are normally not shared during regular board meetings.

The following topics were addressed:

Pursuit of Excellence in the 21st Century – Ronnie Mendenhall, Superintendent

Mr. Mendenhall shared the State Board's Mission: The guiding mission of the North Carolina State Board of Education is that every school student will graduate from high school, globally competitive for work and postsecondary education and be prepared for life in the 21st Century. Stokes County Schools' graduation rate for 2010-2011 was 81.2%.

Mr. Mendenhall stated our Central Office staff try to filter down and make sure everyone is working together. Three things are emphasized from our Central Office staff. Those three things are: 1) teamwork; 2) preparation; and 3) high expectations.

Mr. Mendenhall stated we have a lot of good things going on in our schools. He said during a regular meeting board members might recognize a couple of Good News items and that's all they hear about. He shared a list of the top five achievements for each of the schools which had been submitted by the principals.

Curriculum Changes for 2012-2013 – Dr. Todd Martin, Assistant Superintendent

Dr. Martin stated in the past North Carolina followed the Standard Course of Study. This approach did not tell teachers how to teach, but what to teach. A lot has changed since the 1980s when this started. ABCs were adopted in the 1990s and EOGs and EOCs came out of this. Now the state initiative is ACRE (Accountability and Curriculum Reform). ACRE redefines the Standard Course of Study for K-12 students and is known as Common Core and Essential Standards. ACRE also redefines the student assessment program (NC FALCON) and the student accountability program (EOG/EOC testing). North Carolina is the first state in the nation to address all three areas at once.

Common Core standards (K-12 Mathematics and K-12 English Language Arts) were developed by people from many different states. Their goal was to identify standards students need to know so they will be ready for college and the workforce. These people came not only from the United States, but all over the world. All states with the exception of five have adopted Common Core standards. What that means is a kindergartener in North Carolina will be learning the same thing as a kindergarten student in Georgia and California.

In addition North Carolina wants students prepared for all areas of the curriculum and Essential Standards is the effort to identify the most essential standards students should know in all areas of curriculum K-12, with the exception of reading and math.

Elementary Changes and Title I update, ESEA Authorization and State Flexibility – Amy Nail, K -8 Director

Pamphlets from the North Carolina PTA on Common Core State Standards for elementary and middle schools were shared with board members. The pamphlets were written in parent friendly language and this information will be shared with parents once the new curriculum has started.

The two things that will affect elementary and middle schools the most next year are Common Core and then in elementary specifically Title I. Much of our funding comes from Title I and it is used to pay for positions and programs. In the past, if we had Schools in Improvement, we had to take money right off the top and make sure funding went to those schools. Sometimes this was at the expense of other schools that also needed to accomplish things. North Carolina along with many other states has requested with the US Department of Education a waiver to give us flexibility as it relates to AYP and Title I funding. We do not know yet if our North Carolina waiver will be approved.

In order to have flexibility our North Carolina waiver had to include the following four principles: 1) College and Career-Ready Expectations for All Students; 2) State-Developed Differentiated Recognition, Accountability, and Support; 3) Supporting Effective Instruction and Leadership; and 4) Reducing Duplication and Unnecessary Burden. If a state demonstrates that their wavier request meets those four principles, than that can give us flexibility around provisions with No Child Left Behind.

Our state will have a new recognition system, if the waiver is approved. It used to be met AYP, didn't meet AYP, and School of Excellence. A new term that will be heard is AMO (Annual Measurable Objectives) rather than AYP. One of the good things about AMOs is the acknowledgement that subgroups are starting at a different place. No Child Left Behind

made us focus on subgroups and was a good thing. On the other hand, some schools were handicapped due to a larger population of subgroups. You may have a good school, but if you didn't meet the target for subgroups, the language made it look like your school was not doing well. Another big difference between AMOs versus AYPs is that now subgroups will be looked at over a six year term. If a student is far from being proficient, that is not going to change in one year. These new AMOs recognize that and would look at that over a six year period. On the other hand, we are expecting subgroups to improve at a faster rate than subgroups that are already proficient.

If we receive our waiver, we will recognize schools differently. New words that will be heard are Priority Schools, Focus Schools, and Reward Schools. If this is passed, we will not have any Focus or Reward Schools. We will have one Priority School and that is Meadowbrook. The good news is that Meadowbrook has already put into place last year and this year a lot of the things the state would expect them to put into place. Principal David Hicks has gotten way ahead of the curve on that without even knowing this was coming down.

Stokes County Schools will not have any Reward Schools and we think it is because you have to be at or above 50% with poverty. Some of our schools that have been high flyers are just below that rate. They meet all the other criteria.

<u>High School Changes, CTE, Future Ready/College Career Promise – Chad Beasley, High School Director</u>

Mr. Beasley stated our students are going to have to be 21st Century Learners coming out of high schools. If someone asks what is a 21st Century Learner the first thing we think about is technology, but today's high school students thought process is communication, team building, and collaboration. That's a 21st Century Learner and that's where we are headed in our high schools.

Mr. Beasley shared Governor Perdue's North Carolina Career and College Promise with board members. Governor Perdue states all students – no matter where they live – must graduate with the skills they need for a career, two or four year college or Technical training. Governor Perdue states that in today's global economy successful careers require a two or four year degree, a diploma, or a national recognized job credential. The CCP offers North Carolina high school age students a clear, focused, and affordable path to future success. This program is free to all students who maintain a B average and meet other eligibility requirements. College Transfer Pathway, Career Technical Education Pathway, and Cooperative Innovative High School Pathway information was shared.

Mr. Beasley also shared Future-Ready Core Course of Study information with board members. The only significant change for students entering the ninth grade in 2012-2013 is the addition of 1 unit of Social Studies so there is a total of 22 units of credit required.

<u>Testing and Accountability – Michael Sands, Director of Testing and Accountability</u>

Mr. Sands talked to board members about what the future assessments will look like. Starting next year we will have Common Core state standards and we will still have an English/Language Arts assessment. They will no longer be called EOGs and will simply be called English/Language Arts assessment. The change will be the same for math – grades 3-8.

Currently everything in elementary and middle school is paper and pencil. High schools have the option of taking online assessments versus paper/pencil. Next year assessments will be designed solely for online with rare exceptions for people who just cannot handle online.

Next year there will be no retest and there is discussion that there will not be retest in the future either.

Special Programs – Cynthia Mabe, Assistant Director of Special Programs

Mrs. Mabe described graduation options for EC students. Those include: 1) Future Ready Core Course of Study Diploma; 2) Occupational Course of Study Diploma (for EC students meeting certain disability criteria and as determined by the IEP team of the student); 3) Certificate of Completion (for students with moderate or significant intellectual disabilities and as determined by the IEP team of the student.)

Technology – Sarah Wood, Director of Media and Technology

Mrs. Wood shared that technology is a tool students use to develop 21st Century skills. The big deal is the information out there has grown so much students can't learn it all. They need to have the skills to know how to find information on things they don't learn. Technology will be used for instruction and also for testing.

One of the main objectives in the Technology Department is to buy resources for our students and teachers. A lot of our books will be electronic. We are moving towards every student having something in their hand.

Starting July 1 we will be upgrading our bandwidth so when the students take online tests it will work properly. We also have to add wireless access. We can't have a plug-in in the wall for every student. Our big project for the next two years is to get this infrastructure and the devices that we need. We will also have to look at having technical support and support in learning how to use the devices, because a classroom teacher with twenty-five kids can't look after all those devices.

Maintenance – Ricky Goins, Maintenance Director

Mr. Goins gave a refrigerant update and reported that CFCs and HCFCs are considered bad for the ozone and are being phased out in 2015. How that effects Stokes County Schools is cost. Example: on January 1, 2012 R-22 Freon cost $149 per 30 lb cylinder and on March 1, 2012 the cost increased to $340 per 30 lb cylinder. That is a 228% increase and the cost will continue to grow.

Currently, replacement equipment cannot be shipped with R-22 refrigerant and is being shipped filled with nitrogen. Legislation is expected to change that loop hole in the law. What that means for Stokes County Schools is we will no longer be able to get replacement condensers and evaporators for our existing equipment. Roughly 98% of Stokes County Schools' existing air conditioning equipment is R-22. Mr. Goins stated he felt it would get to the point that replacement parts cannot be purchased for our existing equipment and the entire HVAC systems will have to be replaced.

Operations – David Burge, Executive Director of Operations

Construction updates on Poplar Springs and Southeastern Stokes were shared. Poplar Springs is ahead of schedule and Southeastern is catching up rapidly. Information on furniture bids for both schools was shared with board members and will be on their agenda for approval on April 23rd.

Child Nutrition – Cindy Marion, Child Nutrition Director

Mrs. Marion shared that the total budget for the Child Nutrition Department is $4,059,987.00 and over 1,466,000 meals were served during the 2010-2011 school year. Stokes County Schools employs 95 Child Nutrition employees and approximately 25 substitutes. The average Health Inspection Score in our cafeterias is 101.

Mrs. Marion and board members discussed changes in federal regulations and challenges faced by the Child Nutrition Department at length.

Transportation – Brad Lankford, Transportation Director

Mr. Lankford reported that Transportation is a $397 million business in North Carolina and we're told to run it like a business. But we are a service to the school system and feel like we are a part of the school system. Our bus drivers are the first people our kids see in the morning and the last they see in the afternoon.

Mr. Lankford reported that Stokes County Schools has 88 buses which transport nearly 4,000 students over 8, 600 miles per day. Our buses make 5,000 passenger stops per day and the most unsafe time on a bus is during a passenger stop. Our activity buses travel over 123,000 miles per year.

Drivers' salary and fuel makes up the majority of the Transportation budget. Bus driver salaries total over $1 million annually. The current budget for Transportation is $2,675,000 with the majority of that coming from the state. Local money has to pay for the Bus Garage, activity buses, maintenance vehicles and school-owned vehicles. When the Bus Garage services a local vehicle there is a charge for all parts and $22/hour labor. This money is sent back to Raleigh, because employees are state paid to work on yellow buses.

State funding is based on a Budget Rating formula. The state looks at the number of buses we operate, the number of students we transport and the amount of money we spend. Every third week of September is Ridership Count Week. Every bus driver keeps up with how many students rode in the morning and afternoon. We are allowed the benefit of the higher number for that day and at the end of the week we tally up and that is how many kids will ride our school buses for the year. We encourage our principals and parents to have their children ride at least that week so our rate is up. This year our budget rating is 99.31%.

We will be getting 17 new school buses this year to replace 17 existing older buses. 32% of our school bus fleet will be less than 5 years old and still under warranty. 75% of our fleet (66 of 88) will have air conditioning.

Human Resources – Melisa Jessup, Executive Director of Human Resources

Ms. Jessup reported that effective this year all teachers are evaluated annually. This year they will be evaluated on a 6th standard that includes student performance and will be based on a three-year rolling average of growth. Student growth value this year will be a 70/30 weighted measure. 70% is based on student growth value for the individual students taught by the educator and 30% based on student growth value for the entire school. Teachers who are not proficient on any standard will be placed on an action plan.

Ms. Jessup shared that principals are evaluated annually and this year an 8th standard has been added that rates the principal on the academic success of students. This standard will be determined by a school-wide student growth value as calculated by the statewide growth model for educator effectiveness.

NC Wise – Ann Sliger, Director of Student Information/Student Reassignment

NCWise is a database that houses all student data and includes demographics, immunizations, attendance, test scores, discipline, grades, course schedules, report cards, grade point average, rank, and transcripts and teacher information. All schools are responsible for maintaining their data in NCWise which ensures accurate reporting to DPI.

Reports include a Principal's Monthly Report and Retention, Graduation, Promotion, Dropout, Academically and Intellectually Gifted (AIG) and School Activity Report (SAR) which are all yearly reports.

Finance/Budget Discussion – Lanette Moore, Executive Director of Finance

Board members received the first draft of the Superintendent's Budget Request and Ms. Moore covered information for board members to review before their Budget Planning Session. The following information was shared with board members on items approved for this current budget year.

- Stokes County Schools collected $15,900 as a result of the $45 Drivers Education fee as of March 30, 2012.

- Stokes County Schools collected $7, 240 as a result of the $5 athletic fee/parking fee as of March 30, 2012. This money will go for drug testing that we are doing at this time.

Other Agenda Items

Goal Setting for the Future – Tabled
Tour of Southeastern Stokes Middle School - Tabled

The retreat ended at 4:00 p.m. with a tour of Poplar Springs Elementary School.

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Secretary Chairman