

*Georgia Board of School Directors
February 3, 2009 at 6pm
Georgia School Library
Regular Meeting*

Agenda

- I. *Call to Order*
- II. *Public Comment*
- III. *Consent Agenda*
 - *Minutes: 1/6/09 (Regular Mtg), 1/26/09 (Special Mtg)*
 - *Reports: Financial*
 - *Correspondence*
- IV. *Old Business*
 - *Community Forum - update*
 - *School Budget Presentation - continued discussion*
- V. *New Business*
 - *Approve Transportation Bids - **Action***
 - *Approve 2009-2010 School Calendar - **Action***
- VI. *Policy Review*
 - *Full-Day Kindergarten Policy - **Action***
 - *Equipment Policy - *Review**
- VII. *Other*
- VIII. *Executive Session (if needed)*
- IX. *Upcoming Meetings*
 - A. **Budget Presentation (Special Meeting):** March 2nd at 6pm at Georgia School Library
 - B. **Annual School Meeting:** March 3rd at 10am at Georgia School Gymnasium
 - C. **Regular Meeting:** March 3rd at 6pm at Georgia School Library
 - D. **Community Forum (Special Meeting):** March 12th at 6pm at Georgia School Library
- X. *Adjourn*

Georgia Elementary/Middle School Goals

- *To create a committee structure that actively supports the priorities and objectives of the School Board.*
- *To continue to a budgeting process that provides for educational programs and supports the School Action Plan.*
- *To encourage and facilitate communication with Georgia Town Committees and Town Offices.*

Georgia Board of School Directors
January 6, 2009 at Georgia School Library
Budget Meeting at 6:00 PM
MINUTES

Board Present: Jennifer Petrie, Carl Laroe, Irene Bonin, Casey Hager, Doug Bergstrom
Administrators: Armando Vilaseca, Frank Calano, Flora Hurteau
Others: Chris Sumner, Bruce Chattman (Interim Superintendent)

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:08PM

II. Public Comment – A community member read the following letter regarding the single bus run with multiple questions and concerns:

Can you please tell us the reasons for pushing a single bus run when there will be so many adverse affects on the kids and community. To name a few:

- *kids having to choose between band or sports, if band were to be offered after school
- *elementary students that now stay after school for academics will no longer have a ride home
- *preschoolers will have to ride with 8th graders, a combination that will not work well

It also seems to me that a single bus run would cost more money.

There has been no input from the community about a single bus run. Why is this only your decision as a board when it affects the entire community? Will the public be made aware of your decision for a single bus run, or will it simply be snuck into the budget without their knowledge?

Also, have you considered that teachers will need to be compensated for the extra time in the day. Even 15 minutes more each day adds up to almost 45 hours a year, about 6 extra days. This means new contract negotiations.

Lastly, why change what works and works well. Georgia is a unique community that stands out for it's quality of academics. WE are not like every other school, and I think that is what draws people here. Just because other schools have a single bus run, doesn't mean that a single run is the right decision for the kids of Georgia.

Matthew Crepeau

There was a question regarding the length of the school day. Georgia has 6.5 hours of school time each day. This is below most schools in the State. This is due largely to the bus runs. Georgia goes to school 177 days per school year. There were questions regarding drop off and pick up for a single bus run such as cluster stops, after-school programs, etc. There was a question regarding the episode of the child being left on the bus. There have been changes put in place such as all buses being parked at the school, the bus driver posts a sign on the rear door and calls in to indicate that the bus has been checked at the end of the run.

III. Consent Agenda

- **Minutes: 12/2/08 (Regular Meeting), 12/16/08 (Special Meeting); 11/18/08 & 10/7/08**

***ACTION:** Motion by Irene Bonin to approve the Consent Agenda, seconded by Casey Hager, approved unanimously.*

IV. New Business

- **Community Forum** – No update
- **Approve FY08 Audited Financial Statements** – There were some suggestions in a letter from the Auditors.

***ACTION:** Motion by Irene Bonin to approve the FY08 Audited Financial Statements, seconded by Carl Laroe, approved unanimously.*

- **Paraprofessional Master Agreement** – If a single bus run is decided on, there will need to be changes made to the next paraprofessional master agreement.
- **Schedule Meeting with BFA St. Albans School Board** – Armando sent a letter to the BFA St. Albans School Board and they will get back to Armando with a couple of dates to chose from.
- **Single Bus Run** – Chris distributed the three bids for the school buses. These bids are for 9 runs, which is the single bus run.

***ACTION:** Motion by Casey Hager to go into Executive Session, seconded by Irene Bonin, approved unanimously.*

***ACTION:** Motion by Casey Hager to exit Executive Session, seconded by Carl Laroe, approved unanimously.*

***ACTION:** Motion by Jennifer Petrie to approve two personnel requests, and granted 1 day of unpaid leave to MJ Mitiguy during January 21-23, 2009 and 2 days of unpaid leave to Mary Chiappinelli to be used during the remainder of the school year, seconded by Casey Hager, approved unanimously.*

Armando discussed different issues and suggestions regarding the single bus run. Armando suggests increasing the school day by 15 minutes the first year and an additional 15 minutes the second year. This will allow for 2.5 more hours face time between the students and teachers once it is implemented to its full extent.

- **Annual School Meeting Presentation** – Last year's presentation was distributed to the Board. Armando is looking for suggestions for any changes to the presentation.
- **Approve FY10 Budget & Legal Warning** – Chris distributed the most current version of the Budget and explained the changes since the last version. The budget is currently at 3.82% or \$12,024,519.00. Chris distributed the estimated revenue.

***ACTION:** Motion by Casey Hager to approve the FY10 Budget at 3.82%, seconded by Irene Bonin. Motion passed with one opposed.*

Doug read the proposed Legal Warning to the Board.

ACTION: Motion by Irene Bonin to approve the Legal Warning, seconded by Jennifer Petrie, approved unanimously.

V. Policy Review

● **Board Meetings & Agenda Preparation/Distribution Policy**

ACTION: Motion by Irene Bonin to approve Board Meetings & Agenda Preparation/Distribution Policy, seconded by Jennifer Petrie, approved unanimously.

● **Idling of Vehicles Policy**

ACTION: Motion by Jennifer Petrie to approve the Idling of Vehicles Policy, seconded by Carl Laroe, approved unanimously.

● **Hazing Policy**

ACTION: Motion by Jennifer Petrie to approve the Hazing Policy, seconded by Casey Hager, approved unanimously.

● **Full-Day Kindergarten Policy – 1st Reading**

● **Equipment Policy – Review –** Flora expressed her concerns regarding equipment. Equipment is not loaned to the general public.

VI. Other – Casey brought up the option to go first at Town Meeting Day. Doug will contact them towards the end of the month. Doug also talked with the Town regarding the costs of printing the town report. The format for the report will be looked at more closely next year. The School Budget will not be credited for the two weeks of lost interest from the tax payment. There are systems in place now so that this will not happen again.

ACTION: Motion by Jennifer Petrie to approve the tuition rate at \$9,550.00, seconded by Carl Laroe, approved unanimously.

ACTION: Motion by Jennifer Petrie to approve early retirement incentive requests made by Patricia Couture, Collette Hebert, and Beverly Mahoney, seconded by Casey Hager, approved unanimously.

VIII. Upcoming Meetings

- **Regular Meeting:** February 3rd at 6PM at Georgia School Library

Georgia Board of School Directors
Special Meeting (Budget)
January 26, 2009 ~ 2:00pm
Georgia School Room # 222

Meeting called to order at 2:11

Board Members Present: Doug Bergstrom, Chair; Jen Petrie, Clerk; Carl Laroe, Casey Hager, Irene Bonin

Administrators Present: Bruce Chattman, Interim Superintendent; Flora Hurteau, Elementary Principal; Frank Calano, Middle School Principal

Transcriptionist: Candy Granger

Others: Chris Messineo, Judi St.Hilaire, Stephanie Munson, Laura Datillio, Gail Hardy, Christine Orellana, Nancy Volatile-Wood, Ellen Hsieh, Karen Garrett, Allison MacKenzie, Heather Grimm, Deb Raboin, James Raboin, Marilyn Sink, Julie Stevenson, Sue Crepeau, MJ Mitiguy, Sara Heth, & Steve Emery

Doug announced that the meeting today is to discuss the Governor's recent proposal that local school board's level fund their budgets - i.e. a 0% budget increase over last year.

There are three ways (or more) to interpret level funding:

1. To reduce the FY10 expenditures to equal the FY09 expenditures
2. To reduce the FY10 state support grant total \$ amount to the FY09 state support grant level
3. To reduce the FY10 state support grant to the education spending per pupil FY09 calculation at the FY10 equalized pupil count.

Doug explained you can go forward with the budget adopted by the Board. Or it can be modified. A budget is just a planning document so reality may not match because some things we cannot control, such as where students attend high school.

Bruce thoroughly reviewed possible changes for the FY10 budget. See attached Georgia School District FY Budget Changes 1/22/2009.

Bruce shared that the FY10 changes in Option A are now known information that was a best guess when the FY10 budget was originally approved. He urged the board to look at the proposal in order, whereas A has less of an impact on students than D. He recommended looking at each lettered section as a whole.

Bruce explained how education is funded and exactly what the proposal by the Governor entails.

Christine Orellana asked what the goals of today's meeting are and how likely is it that we are going to have to act as the Governor has proposed.

Doug Bergstrom responded that this meeting is a last minute chance to do something and have a process to determine our direction. We cannot predict what the Governor will do. Doug explained that the CLA changed and that alone increases your tax rate.

Irene asked what would happen if we keep our proposed budget and the community approves it - then the Governor decreases the expected revenues. Then what do we do? Bruce responded that the burden is shifted to the local share and changes the tax bill for community homeowners. The board then has the right to put forward another budget to be voted on or not make any changes at all.

A community member noted that eliminating the single bus run would reduce costs.

There was a community member who stated that there is support for a full day kindergarten so it should have priority. Why can't we cut just the single bus run - why can't we cut just that line?

A community member asked if the proposed changes could be put on the website. Once the board votes on changes the final proposed budget will be posted on the website.

Nancy Volatile-Wood & others felt that they aren't expecting to see a zero percent increase. Nancy Volatile-Wood commended the board for their hard work & felt they put forth a responsible budget.

Christine Orellana offered to have additional coffee talks at her home & to help get the word out to the community.

Doug Bergstrom said that the board felt they needed to be diligent by reviewing the budget again.

ACTION: Irene Bonin made a motion approve the budget with the reductions of options A, B, & C. Casey Hager seconded. Motion failed; no one voted.

Doug stated that he felt that the board should revise the budget by only cutting A.

ACTION: Irene Bonin made a motion to approve the budget with the reductions of options A & B. Casey Hager seconded. Motion defeated; 2 to 3 with Doug Bergstrom, Jen Petrie, and Carl Laroe opposed.

ACTION: Irene Bonin made a motion to approve the budget with the reductions of option A. Jen Petrie seconded. Motion passed; 3 to 1 with Casey Hager opposed.

ACTION: Jen Petrie made a motion to approve the FY2010 School District Warning with a proposed budget of \$11,947,568. Casey Hager seconded. Motion passed, unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:30 pm.

Georgia School District
FY10 Budget Changes
1/22/2009

12,024,519 Budget Approved 1/6/09
11,581,638 FY09 Budget
442,881 Original Budget Increase
\$ 1.113 Original Tax Estimate

A. Changes to the Budget to reflect most recent information

11,139 Decrease Health Insurance from 2% to actual zero increase
46,848 Decrease in Special Ed Costs
12,432 Decrease to proposed Franklin West Budget
6,532 Decrease High School Tuition based on Essex actual vocational rate
76,951 Subtotal
365,930 New Budget Increase
3.16% New % Budget Increase
\$ 1.108 New Tax Rate Estimate

**B. Elimination Planned Program Expansions
and Institute a Hiring Freeze**

53,000 Eliminate Single Bus Run
19,771 Eliminate Extra Time for Paras
16,411 Eliminate Kindergarten Para
10,345 Reduce Technology Teacher to .86FTE
99,527 Subtotal
176,478 A & B Total Reductions
266,403 New Budget Increase
2.30% New Budget % Increase
\$ 1.098 New Tax Rate Estimate

C. Reductions in Non-Instructional Programs & Staff

2,590 Decrease part-time Office Support
5,250 Decrease vacation office coverage
7,967 Reduce Raises for Administration and Support Staff to 2.5%
15,807 Subtotal
192,285 A,B & C Total Reductions
250,596 New Budget Increase
2.16% New Budget % Increase
\$ 1.097 New Tax Rate Estimate

D. Reductions in Existing Instructional Support

14,780 Para in Alternative Ed Program

13,500 Technology Equipment
4,000 Cocurricular Budget Reduction
10,000 Enrichment Budget Reduction
42,280 Subtotal
234,565 A,B,C & D Total Reductions
208,316 New Budget Increase
1.80% New Budget % Increase
\$ 1.093 New Tax Rate Estimate