

Board Highlights
Special Called Board Meeting
May 29, 2015

The Gates County Board of Education met to discuss personnel as outlined in N.C. General Statute 143-318.11 (a)(6).

The Gates County Board of Education met in a special called meeting on Friday, May 29, 2015 at the Gates County Board of Education Building. Madam Chair Glendale Boone called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m., and welcomed visitors and staff.

Public Comments

Dr. Williams began by reading the following Resolution dated May 12, 2015:

Whereas, the Board is authorized by law to implement a reduction in force when necessary in certain situations;

Whereas, the Board has adopted policy number 7920 governing Professional Personnel Reduction in Force, which allows a reduction in force as part of a system reorganization, to address declining enrollment or in the event of financial exigency;

Whereas, financial exigency means (a) any significant decline in the Board's financial resources that compels a reduction in the schools system's current operational budget; (b) any significant decrease or elimination in funding for a particular program; or (c) any insufficiency in funding that would render the Board unable to continue existing programs at current levels;

Whereas, the Superintendent has submitted a memorandum regarding a potential reduction in force pursuant to Board policy;

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Whereas, the Superintendent learned on May 11, 2015 that the funding provided by Gates County will be \$896,000.00 less than what was requested by the Board to balance our budget;

Whereas, the board projects that it will have approximately \$525,006.01 in fund balance at the close of the June 20, 2015 fiscal year;

Whereas, the board has previously by resolution decided that it will maintain a minimum of \$200,000 in fund balance;

Whereas, the board expects to have approximately \$325,000 available for use from fund balance without having to go below a minimum of \$200,000 in fund balance;

Whereas, the board anticipates it will need to find approximately \$571,247.99 in savings or reductions than the school district's operation budget for 2015-2016 school year;

Whereas, the superintendent has presented information showing that the amount of \$571,247.99 will need to be saved out of personal related expenses;

Whereas, it appears that there will be a significant decline in the Board's financial resources that will compel a reduction in the school system's current operational budget; there is likely to be a significant decrease or elimination of funding in a certain program and there is likely to be insufficiency in funding that would render the Board unable to continue existing programs at current levels;

Whereas, the Superintendent has made a recommendation that certain positions be considered for reduction in force as an effective means of addressing the Board's financial exigency with the least disruption or impact on the Board's ability to provide a sound, basic education for all students;

Whereas, the Board has considered and discussed a variety of ways to avoid a reduction in force but has determined that a reduction in force of licensed employees is necessary;

Whereas, the Board has also considered ways of avoiding a reduction in force on non-certified staff, and has determined that elimination of some positions held by certified staff as well as some positions held by non-certified staff will be necessary as part of a reduction in force.

WHEREFORE, It is hereby resolved as follows:

1. The Board declares a financial exigency that necessitates considering ways of reducing Board expenditures in order to have a balanced budget.
2. The Board hereby determines that a reduction in force of licensed employees and non-certified staff is necessary.
3. The Superintendent is hereby directed to recommend to the Board which individuals are to be dismissed, demoted or reduced to part-time employment, based on criteria set forth in Board policy 7920.
4. The Board will consider the Superintendent's recommendations and may, in the future, enter further resolutions, orders for dismissal or demotion of individuals to address this financial exigency.

Dr. Williams expressed his desire to keep everyone informed and he understands the anxiety that everyone feels.

Others who requested to speak were: Barbara Toti, Jo Chatman, Wendy Harrell, John Williams, George Owens, Lauren Hargett and Katie Speight.

Mrs. Toti, Drama Teacher at Gates County High School, spoke about the importance of keeping the arts program in the school. It is an essential program where students, and the community alike, have been enriched.

Mrs. Chatman, Director of New Beginnings Daycare spoke about the importance of having the daycare available to our community. It has provided a strong foundation for K-12 throughout the years. She and her staff have worked hard to increase their rating status, and they are continuing to make improvements. She read a letter from a parent of a daycare child, and the parent expressed positive comments about their experience with New Beginnings.

Wendy Harrell, John Williams, George Owens, Lauren Hargett and Katie Speight, all spoke as parents of children at New Beginnings. They each expressed their gratitude for the daycare system, and felt closing it would be a monumental loss to the community, especially since there are such few child care choices in the county.

The board members all thanked the speakers, and assured them they are doing their very best to resolve this situation. They encouraged them to go to the commissioners meeting on June 3, 2015 and express their concern, as they had done today.