

BOARD OF CONTROL MEETING

March 19, 2008
9:00 a.m.

Holcomb Room
North Georgia RESA
Ellijay, Georgia

BOARD MEMBERS

Frank Petruzielo, Chairman, Cherokee County Schools.....Present
Orval Porter, Superintendent, Dalton City Schools.....Present
Mark Henson, Superintendent, Fannin County Schools..... Absent
Raiford Cantrell, Superintendent, Gilmer County Schools.....Present
Vickie Reed, Superintendent, Murray County Schools.....Present
Mike Ballew, Superintendent, Pickens County Schools.....Present
Katie Brochu, Superintendent, Whitfield County Schools.....Present
Sanford Chandler, President, Appalachian Technical College..... Absent
John Schwenn, President, Dalton State College..... Absent
Joe B. Forsee, Northwest Georgia Regional Library System.....Present
Larry G. Harmon, Secretary, North Georgia RESA.....Present

Dr. Frank Petruzielo called the March board meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and welcomed all members attending.

Larry Harmon introduced Karen Walker of the Georgia Department of Education, Region I. He reported to the board that Ms. Walker has been a valuable asset to RESA and the RESA systems over the past several years in the area of school improvement.

Larry Harmon requested the March Agenda be amended to remove Item VI, Update on Mountainbrook Academy by Dr. Paul Baker. On a motion by Mike Ballew, seconded by Raiford Cantrell, the March Agenda was unanimously approved as amended. Mr. Harmon added that Dr. Baker was called to a GNET meeting and will attend the May board meeting to address the members.

On a motion by Orval Porter, seconded by Vickie Reed, the January Board of Control Meeting Minutes were unanimously approved as presented. As a quorum was not present, there were no meeting minutes for February.

Larry Harmon presented the RESA January and February Financial Reports and briefly discussed the contents of each. He noted that all accounts were in order and asked the board members to review these reports at their convenience and contact him with any questions. A brief discussion followed concerning anticipated reductions/changes for the FY09 budget. On a motion by Mike Ballew, seconded by Raiford Cantrell, the January and February financial reports were unanimously approved by the board.

The RESA FY07 Annual Report was presented and discussed. On a

motion by Mike Ballew, seconded by Joe Forsee, the board unanimously approved the North Georgia RESA FY07 Annual Report.

The RESA FY08 Annual Plan was presented and discussed. On a motion by Mike Ballew, seconded by Joe Forsee, the North Georgia RESA FY08 Annual Plan was unanimously approved by the board.

Dr. Petruzielo recommended, on behalf of the Personnel Committee, that the board grant Larry Harmon an outstanding rating on his annual performance evaluation. Dr. Petruzielo commented that the committee found Mr. Harmon's performance well above average in all areas and outstanding in several critical areas. The committee members had no substantive comments on areas in need of correction and would note that Mr. Harmon was well prepared to act in the position of executive director. On a motion by Joe Forsee, seconded by Vickie Reed, the board unanimously approved the committee's recommendation to grant Larry Harmon an outstanding rating on his annual evaluation. Mr. Harmon thanked the board for their continued support.

Mr. Harmon then made personnel recommendations on behalf of the Mountainbrook Academy. He requested the board: accept the resignation of Katherine Decker, Lead Teacher in the Canton Center, effective the end of the contract year; accept the resignation of Linda Romero, Lead Teacher at the Blue Ridge Center, to transfer to another system; approve the employment of Susan Brownlee in the vacated Lead Teacher position at the Canton Center, effective July 28, 2008; and approve the list of all Mountainbrook Academy personnel recommendations/staff pattern for FY09 (Attachment # 1). On a motion by Vickie Reed, seconded by Orval Porter, the board unanimously approved all Mountainbrook personnel recommendations.

Dr. Frank Petruzielo next presented his GSSA Business and Legislative Report. He commended Herb Garrett and the GSBA for the excellent job they have done keeping legislative information up to date and readily available to the members. He noted that the big issue this legislative session has been funding. Dr. Petruzielo discussed tax bills being considered including those on property taxes, the ad valorem tax on vehicles and the tax assessment cap. He reported that the proposed property tax assessment cap would have resulted in, approximately, a six million dollar loss in funding in FY08 for Cherokee County and the system is now taking these figures and applying them to the FY09 budget to determine the possible funding loss that might result in FY09. He also noted that Cherokee County is surveying parents to determine preferences in where these cuts, should they indeed occur, be made in the schools. Dr. Petruzielo next reported that the educational supplementary budget is not as promising as earlier hoped and that it is expected that teacher pay raises will be 2%.

Dr. Petruzielo also discussed the IE2 group, tuition tax credits, the BRIDGE Bill and how it conflicts with graduation requirements now in place, and the new Charter Schools Bill.

In closing, Dr. Petruzielo commended Tom Dickson on being the only republican in the state to vote against the property tax bill on the first round. The members concurred that Mr. Dickson was acting in favor of education when he voted as he did.

Mr. Harmon presented a report on the State Board of Education Liaison Committee teleconference he participated in last week, noting that discussion centered on legislative issues.

Mr. Harmon reminded the board that State Board of Education member and chairman of the budget committee, Larry Winter has asked to be present at the May Board of Control meeting, adding that this will be an excellent opportunity for the members to share issues/concerns with the SBOE.

Mr. Harmon next requested Joe Forsee elaborate on the Georgia Council of Public Libraries legislative agenda. Mr. Forsee addressed several discussion points on the agenda regarding the FY09 budget. He also reported information on an audit note (not a finding) that the libraries will be receiving because their documentation is lacking showing inadequate controls in system. In closing, Mr. Forsee expressed his appreciation to the board members for their support, both financially and through their membership on his board.

Larry Harmon then presented his RESA Director's Report.

Mr. Harmon updated the members on RESA's One-year Practicum Program. He asked the superintendents to be sure their principals are kept well informed on this valuable service as a way to fill those difficult positions in math, Science and special education with professionals interested in a career change.

Mr. Harmon reported that RESA has had an inquiry about possible chemical disposal for middle and high schools. This would involve bringing the chemicals to a central location for pick up by a certified disposal supplier. He asked the superintendents to let him know if there is indeed a need for this service.

Mr. Harmon distributed information on the results of work toward adjustments to the present North Georgia RESA local required funding formula. He discussed in more detail different avenues which can be used to calculate the systems' 20% share while still seeking the lowest possible expenditure of local system funds.

A discussion was held by the members regarding this fair and

equitable system along with various other areas that might be considered as part of the systems' 20% fair share.

In closing, Mr. Harmon discussed the Board of Control Chair meeting held by the Georgia RESA Directors organization and distributed a copy of a summary of directives and guidance prepared at that meeting.

The board thanked Mr. Harmon for the excellent manner in which he has kept them informed on RESA business.

With all business complete and all comments heard, on a motion by Mike Ballew, seconded by Raiford Cantrell, Dr. Petruzielo adjourned the March meeting at 10:30 a.m.

Frank Petruzielo, Chairman

Larry G. Harmon, Secretary