



Charlotte, North Carolina
December 14, 1999

REGULAR MEETING OF THE CHARLOTTE-MECKLENBURG BOARD OF EDUCATION

The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education held a Regular Board Meeting on December 14, 1999 at 6:00 p.m. in the Board Room of the Education Center. The meeting was televised by CMS TV - Channel 21.

PRESENT: Arthur Griffin, Jr., Chairperson;
John W. Lassiter, Vice Chairperson;
Wilhelmenia I. Rembert, Member at Large
James H. Puckett (District 1); Vilma D. Leake (District 2);
George Dunlap (District 3); Louise Woods (District 4)
Molly Griffin (District 5); and Lindalyn Kakadelis (District 6)

ABSENT: None

Also present at the request of the Board were Eric J. Smith, Superintendent; James L. Pughsley, Deputy Superintendent; Greg Clemmer, Associate Superintendent for Operations; other members of the Senior Staff; Leslie Winner, General Counsel to the Board; and Carol K. Gerber, Clerk.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Griffin, presiding, called the meeting to order and led the Board members in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The very first order of business for the Board of Election is the election of the Board Chairperson and Board Vice-Chairperson and I would like to ask the Board Parliamentarim because all nine of us are possible candidates, Leslie Winner to approach the chair. If you would please conduct that portion of the agenda that relates to election of Board Chairman and Board Vice-Chairman.

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MINUTES APPROVED 10/10/2000

Leslie Winner, thank you. The first item on the agenda is the election of the Chairman of the Board. Floor is open for nominations. Dr. Leake: Thank you General Counsel, I would like to put into nomination a young man who has served his community, has been diligent in his job as former Chairman of this Board, one who was reared in this community, and has been a part of this community all of his life. As the Chairman of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School Board, and I'm honored to do this because of history. I asked to do this and I'm indeed grateful that you recognized my hand before the other eight people tried to do it. So, I want to put into nomination that person of Mr. Arthur Griffin, Jr. to serve as Chairman of the School Board and to eliminate the problem of time to add to that Mr. John W. Lassiter, as Vice-Chairman, if we can do it that way.

Mrs. Winner: Let's do it one at a time. I think that will be better.

Mrs. Leake: Well, I was instructed to add that name.

Mrs. Winner: Arthur Griffin has been nominated for Chairman and John Lassiter has been nominated for Vice-Chairman, are there any further nominations? Hearing none, I declare the nominations closed. Mr. Puckett: I was going to make a second to that. Actually, seconds are welcome, but not required. Mr. Puckett: In the spirit of pupil assignment, I say we Grandfather our Chairman and Vice-Chairman and as a conservative I will note that we do not have to change any letterhead if we do that, so that's part of my debate.

Madam Chair, Questions having been property called, all those in favor of electing Arthur Griffin, Jr. as Chairman and John Lassiter as Vice-Chairman, raise your hands. Vote is unanimous. Congratulations.

Chairperson Griffin: Thank you Dr. Leake and Members of the Board of Education for your vote of confidence for the both John and myself and certainly we will try our very best not to let you down, nor the public, nor the children that we serve.

ACTION ITEMS

With respect to the Agenda, Item I. © Presentation by the Community Relations Committee, I would like to call on my friend, Dr. Steger. He's not here; they told me Dr. Steger would be here. Good Evening. My name is Steve Hayes, I am Vice-Chair of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Community Relations Committee and standing in for Don, unfortunately he is delayed and not here. We, like most of the community are very concerned about our school system and we would like to make this statement to you. I am here this evening to say thank you to the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Board of Education for all of your time, energy and patience that you have shown the community this year. Your efforts have truly been extraordinary and we are grateful.

We hope that as we approach the millennium, your leadership and willingness to listen will bear the fruits of success for all children; and appreciation for all cultures represented in our community. The Community Relations Committee is ready to assist in any way that will promote harmony and justice so that every child can learn. And, I would like to

add one other statement and that is will enhance the quality of education that every child receives in this school system. We are very concerned about the quality of the education. Thank you.

Chairperson Griffin: Thank you very much Mr. Hayes.

Next, is Item I.(d) which is Presentation of the June 30, 1999 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report. I will call on Dr. Smith.

Dr. Smith: Yes, Janet Stoner is prepared to introduce this presentation, Janet.

Janet Stoner: Good afternoon. I would like to present Mr. Woody Nail, Partner, Deloitte & Touche who will present the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report. Afterwards, we will be glad to answer any questions. I have Gail Murchison who is Assistant Director of Accounting and myself here.

Mr. Nail: Good evening and thank you for letting me be up front. My name is Woody Nail and I am the Partner in charge of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School Board this year and I have good news. We have completed our audit for the annual financial statements for the year ending June 30, 1999. We have issued an unqualified opinion, a clean opinion, which is the best opinion that can be issued by a CPA firm and our opinion is on page 3 of the annual report. I would also like to add that the School Board was awarded two certificates; Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting by the Government Finance Officers Association, and also the Association of School Business Officials International. These awards are not just given to any entity; it is given to entities that meet certain high quality reporting standards in their annual financial reporting. The School Board has received these rewards for the past 21 years and 17 years respectively. In Addition, the Local Government Commission, which is a part of the State of North Carolina Treasury, has reviewed the financial statements also and they have concluded that the School Board is in compliance with State Laws and Government and County Standards. I also would like to confirm just personally, the top, first quality report that the Finance Department prepared. **"It's one of the best, and I've said this more than once in previous years, It's one of the best in the Carolinas"** and I've spent a lot of time with both North and South Carolina.

Your report that you have you see here is prepared by the Finance Department. This is from Janet Stoner and her Group. The only thing that Deloitte and Touche actually prepared is that one page "auditor's opinion", so this is a compliment to what your Finance Department does. In addition to the audited financial statement we also issued separate reports on programs having to do with money coming from local, state and federal agencies. We determined that the School Board has complied with these program requirements. During our review and testing of internal accounting control, we found no material weakness or reportable conditions in internal accounting control. There were no significant changes in the accounting policies from the prior year. There were no significant audit adjustments proposed by Deloitte Touche. We had no disagreements

with management regarding any accounting issues or presentation of the financial statement.

In summarizing, I would like to say first the credibility of the financial statement are good and more importantly we found that the credibility of management is very good also, which I think is the most important thing. That concludes my report and I am open for any questions anyone might have.

Chairperson Griffin: Thank you Woody for that report. Let me see if any of my colleagues on the Board of Education have any questions for you. Seeing no hands rise, we certainly appreciate your relationship with the Board of Education and we appreciate the fine work you have done for us over the years and I think the public should recognize the various awards, governmental awards, that this Board of Education has received particularly under the leadership of Janet Stoner since she has been our Chief Financial Officer and we really appreciate the hard work Janet has done in regard to "*that clean bill of health*" coming from our accountant. We thank you very much and I want to make sure that our folk across the street hear that we have been audited and everything is in order. Thank you very much.

I have two follow-up announcements. The first, as always, we would like to recognize the Boy Scouts attending our Board of Education meetings. Tonight we are blessed to have Troup #55 from the Myers Park Presbyterian Church. The ScoutMaster is Henry Harkey. Mr. Harkey is not here, but we do have Bob Stokes and Carter Whitley. Will you Boy Scouts in the back stand so that the cameras can pick you up for the television at home? Thank you for being with us this evening, and we appreciate your commitment to excellence and your commitment to citizenship. Thank you very much.

The next announcement that we have is that it is certainly an exciting time in Charlotte, North Carolina. On January 25, 2000, the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Education Foundation would like to invite every citizen (I mean every citizen in Mecklenburg County) to its Annual Meeting and Summit that will be held at the Charlotte Convention Center. This Summit is for every citizen concerned about the quality of education in Mecklenburg County. For additional information and registration, the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Education Foundation is located Two First Union Center, Suite 1725 and the phone number is 335-0100. Tom, you can send me my fee. This is a really important time when we want to put the public back into public education and we certainly want to have as many people participating in the Annual Meeting and Summit of the Education Foundation. You will hear a little more about that as the weeks near.

The next item on our agenda is Item II. (a) and that is Recommend Approval of Administrative Personnel, and I call on Dr. Smith for that item.

Dr. Smith: Thank you very much. I do have one introduction. An individual that the Board has already taken action on if the Board will permit. Dr. Susan Agruso is with us. Stand up if you would like. Susan officially started on duty Monday of this week. She has taken the reins of our Accountability Program and has arrived from South Carolina

where she was in charge of the State Accountability Program in South Carolina, prior to that New York State where she had some state responsibilities and early in her career Science Advanced Placement Teacher (if I'm not mistaken) at the high school level in New York State. Again, we welcome Susan to the CMS Family.

Dr. Smith: It's customary for personnel at that level to meet the Board of Education. I would like for her to come down please. Applause.

Chairperson Griffin: The next agenda item is item II. (b), and that is Approval Waiver for Midwood, I call on Dr. Smith for that particular item.

Dr. Smith: This is a waiver that we have brought to Board in years past. I think it started in 1992 for Waiver for Midwood High School. This is an alternative learning environment where we test students on a mastery basis and it's a waiver to allow the testing to be done on an off-cycle basis. Again, we recommend this particular item to the Board.

Chairperson Griffin: Could you just for the Board, talk a little bit to the standards? Are standards the same?

Dr. Smith: Exactly, this carries the same requirements as other programs in Charlotte and across North Carolina, but allows us to work on an off-cycle testing process for students as they progress on individual learning plans that are based on mastery learning.

Chairperson Griffin: Is there a Motion with respect to Item II (b). Mrs. Woods? Mrs. Woods, I move that we accept the recommendation of the Superintendent. Is there a second to that Motion? Second by Lindalyn Kakadelis. It is has been properly moved and second, any additional discussion with respect to Item II (b)?

Mrs. Woods, Dr. Smith I know in the past we have had a waiting list for this, do you know what the situation is there this year?

Dr. Smith: Waiting List for Midwood, Jim can you address?

Dr. Pughsley: In the past we have had waiting lists. We have tried to make some accommodations by adding additional staff. I don't know specifically what it is now, but we have tried to make accommodations.

Mrs. Woods: So you don't know how many?

Dr. Pughsley: No, I don't. I can certainly research that and provide it to you.

Mrs. Woods: I think it would be good as we pass this issue that we learn this.

Chairperson Griffin: Any other questions with respect to this item II (b). Hearing none, all of those in favor indicate by a show of hands. Motion carried unanimous. Thank you.

Item II.© Approval of Software Vendor the Finance/Human Resources System. Call on Dr. Smith with respect to this particular item. Dr. Smith:

Dr. Smith: This is a very important item that is being brought to the Board. While tonight we recognize the outstanding job that Janet Stoner and the Finance Department and Business Services does for Mecklenburg-County, I will share with you that as a Superintendent that has been to a number of other school systems across America, they do their work with significant handicap and not having available to them state-of-the-art technology that allows Human Resource/Finance/Budget/Purchasing, etc. to be connected and related in tying those functions to school operations.

Janet, if you want to come forward, I believe Barbara Jenkins is going to kick this off, but it's going to be a combination of Barbara and Janet Stoner. They are going to make the recommendation along with Rick Rozzelle regarding a recommended purchase of technology for the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School System. Dr. Jenkins.

Dr. Jenkins: Good Evening Mr. Chairman, Members of the Board. It gives us great pleasure to present to you our recommendation for Business Technology for Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. As the Superintendent mentioned, Janet Stoner, Rick Rozzelle and myself have been involved as Project Sponsors for this particular charter and Dr. Susan Purser has been our Executive Sponsor. I might also mention that Glenn McCorkle is our Project Manager. This is not a project to be entered into lightly nor single handily, so I would also like to state that we are extremely proud and appreciative of the effort done by the individuals who work in Human Resources, Finance and Technology Services. I have a brief agenda to share with you this evening regarding the Business Technology recommendation.

I will talk briefly about the background and technology direction. Rick Rozzelle will talk about the selection process, and Janet Stoner will end our presentation with the findings and conclusions and a recommendation for our next steps.

You will recall that sometime ago the Superintendent did set in place for Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools a 4th Goal for the Central Office, which was called specifically *Efficient and Effective Support Operations*. That is to say, we will deliver support services on time, on budget with 100% accuracy and with quality at or above the expectation of the school-based customer. It is a goal that we have pursued with great intensity, but it also a goal that we realize could not be reached without adequate tools; more specifically business technology, which will serve as a catalyst to improve our business processes. Let me stress that our ultimate goal is to provide service to schools to our 101,000 students. Let's revisit briefly the background that was shared with you previously regarding our current business technology. First of all, we mentioned previously that our applications and general ledger area are twenty-five years old.

Current financial systems cannot support state data requirements. We do not have appropriate vendor support because our current system is our own unique system modified over time. There is no inter-face between H/R, Payroll, Budget, Purchasing or Accounts Payable. That's an important point because due to the lack of inter-face, there are double and triple entry of data. For instance, in the employment area, information is entered which is then processed through the Budget Area and entered again, which is then processed through Payroll and input once again. Requisitions for example, are input at the school level and then in Budget and then in General Ledger. As you might imagine, there is a long requisition cycle time, as well, sometimes as much as four to eight weeks from the time a school orders supplies or materials and the delivery. That means delays in getting needed materials, like computers, to classrooms for our students. As you can imagine also, computers that are ordered at the school level with great anticipation certainly bring some disappoint with such a lengthy wait period. There are hours that must be spent often tracking requisitions causing further delay for schools and other departments.

I would also like to mention that our employment process in general is just very paper intensive. That means, personal action forms are input in one department, downloaded and carried to another department for further processing. Applicant tracking is very limited in our non-instructional area. The employment cycle-time, we are afraid, loses good teacher candidates. In the past, when we have recruited in different environments only later to approach some of those candidates and hear they were interested in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, *but we just took too long*. Those kinds of indications are certainly of concern. We don't want a single candidate to leave us because of a lengthy, paper intensity employment process. Smaller districts have fewer applications to process and certainly don't have the load that we carry here and can process them more quickly.

And then, I would also like to mention that employee morale is impacted by outdated tools in all of those areas; in particular, there are extremely long working hours for exempt employees during the most intensity periods for purchasing, for employment, for financial functions. Then there are 83 school offices that still use 1980's technology. And, finally historical data has to be extracted from file cabinets rather than computer screens. That's where we are coming from and several improvements certainly have been realized in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools without the latest tools, but we can go so much further, so much faster if we talk about where we are headed with the new Business Technology.

Technology directions include Year 2000 efforts. The work has been done since July of 1997 to make our systems Y2K compliant. That allows us to approach replacement of our Business Technology without being under a deadline for January 2000. That is something that we experienced in some of our site visits. Other districts had to be under a tremendous time constraint because they were trying to beat the Y2K bug. Connection of all of our schools to a wide area network, deployment of the new Business Technology requires that we have a way in and that is already in progress. All schools are connected to our CMS wide area network. Even though all schools have the wide-area network, not all schools are connected yet. To connect these offices data cabling work and new

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computers are required. Data cabling for the school offices should be complete in the first quarter of next year. New computers and software for school offices will be delivered to the schools over the coming months. Training in the use of Windows, Internet e-mail and Microsoft Office will be provided starting first quarter next year for the Administrative Offices and Intranet Services once all of our offices are connected, Administrators will have access to the internet through our own technology opportunities.

I might also mention that our Business Technology will make use of this same Intranet to give Principals availability to view teacher applications on an almost immediate basis, to give employees the opportunity to transact their benefit changes almost immediately. The speed of our processes will also be enhanced by the CMS Intranet. It's an exciting future for all of CMS for students, for employees not only in the Central Office, but also at the school site. Rick Rozzelle is going to talk with you now about our selection process for this Business Technology.

Rick Rozzelle: If you remember a few months of ago, we had some members of the Information Technology Advisory Board, which is a sub committee of the Charlotte Chamber speak to you on behalf of Information Technology. Cecil Smith of Duke Energy and Bill Donner of Sealand. They have worked with us throughout this project. They shared with you a little bit of wisdom that evening about some of the dos and don'ts of this specific project. One of the things that they told you was such a project is not just a technology project, it's a business project and don't enter into it without the support and comfort of the people. The fact that Barbara, Janet and myself are altogether tonight presenting this to you as a team as a unified decision is a good indication that we are all on the right foot, working together, and we're all in agreement with the selection process and the decision that we reached. We went through a very rigorous selection process in making this decision. No decisions were made lightly. This is one where you are selecting a partner that you hope will last for many years and a choosing a set of tools you will use in the district to improve your business processes and help you meet your 4th goal. We used Price Waterhouse Coopers and they developed a very thorough RFP that captured all the requirements of our business. We issued that RFP to over 20 software vendors. We also issued it to Mecklenburg County. Three vendors responded; they were Lawson, Oracle and SAP. All three were very qualified vendors with very qualified products. We evaluated the responses to the RFP on four general criteria;

1) Functionality – how well the product met the business requirements spelled out in the RFP, and that functionality weighed the most, (that was the most important of the criteria of the four). We also looked at how technical architecture, whether it would run within the technical architecture that we had at Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools.

2) We looked at vendor viability;
How long has the vendor been in business?
How successful has the vendor been?
How likely will it be that the vendor will be with us for the long haul?

3) We also looked at cost of ownership. We didn't just look at cost of The initial acquisition, we looked at the cost of the decision for the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools in its totality over a long period of time.

A team of twenty people participated in the process and that was to make sure that we had appropriate knowledge and representation in all areas that were affected including H/R, Payroll, Purchasing, Finance, Budget and Technology. Each vendor was given two days to do a structured demo. We gave them script, they went through the demo and showed us their product. We then did site visits to make sure everything they told us we could see in practice. We went to several different schools, driving to Atlanta. We placed conference calls to Chapel Hill Hospital; we placed one to New Orleans Public Schools, Orange County Schools, Montgomery County Schools, Denver Public Schools and Wake County Public Schools. Then we weighted each one of over 900 individual requirements that were spelled out in the RFP. We assigned a weight, each one as a vendor to see how well each met the requirement. We summarized the weighted ratings and then and only then once we had looked at that, we studied and compared the cost carefully. We request clarification on some costs and the last thing that we did was request their best and final offer from each vendor to make sure we got the most competitive price.

Janet Stoner will now tell you the conclusions that we reached and our recommendation for the system.

Janet Stoner: Lawson and SAP were evaluated to be roughly the same in functionality, technology architecture and vendor viability. Oracle was evaluated lower than Lawson and SAP largely to the fact that they did not meet 8 of the 37 major areas of functionality. Lawson and SAP basically did not meet one of the areas of responsibility.

The cost of software, software maintenance and training showed Lawson lower than SAP for both the initial cost and the 5-year cost. Our assessment of the total cost of ownership estimates provided by the vendor, as well as, industry reports pointed to Lawson to having the lower total cost of ownership.

On the next slide you will see the public sectors that Lawson installed. We really wanted to go to Kamei Mai Schools in Hawaii as a site visit, but we didn't think we could afford that. We are recommending that we go with Lawson Software. We would establish a contract and long term partnership with them. Afterwards, we will start contract negotiations with Lawson. We will issue an RFP for the systems integrator and then we will issue an RFP for the financing. We will have to obtain loan approval from the Board of Education and the County Commissioners also. We will secure office space with Program Department Chairs and we'll order the hardware and begin the project.

That's the end of our presentation, be glad to answer any questions.

Dr. Smith: If I could just direct a few comments back to the Board. That was a great deal of information tonight and we have talked previously with the Board about our interest in moving ahead with new Business Technology and Platform. That was certainly a lot to digest and we've been limited in our ability to bring you information prior to tonight. The first point I would make, if it is acceptable with the Board, this an information item tonight and then perhaps at Thursday night's meeting and ask for direction from the Board. We can answer questions between now and then if there are some. There are several points along the path where the Board is going to be asked to continue and move forward. The first though is simply to enter into some negotiations with the firm, that would then have to come back for Board approval and then we would have to get into the process as Mrs. Stoner indicated. Financing aspect of this, which would again require additional votes not only by this Board, but also by the County Commission. There are numerous times when the Board is going to be asked to give us direction and guidance on moving forward on this project.

Chairperson Griffin: Thank you very much Dr. Smith. He will bring this back to the Board with additional backup information on this particular item before we make a final vote.

Mr. Dunlap: Question for Janet Stoner. The proposal that we heard a short time ago as it relates to the new budget process, is this software going to be compatible with that; and that reason that I asked that question is that appears we are moving in that direction even though we haven't really.

Janet Stoner: Yes sir, it will be. We've already started part of the implementation of the new budget process without it, as far as the process itself, but we most definitely need this to complete it.

Mr. Lassiter: Great question though. These are two related issues and I guess we on one hand could continue without any new business technology and push forward on this 4th goal issue the new budgeting process. As a financial and operational manager, we would be significantly handicapped in the process. If we're going to do both, gone to have efficient delivery of business services and efficient operations. That's what we really are striving for.

Mrs. Woods: I was going to say that this is something so long overdue and not having inner connections, it's just unbelievable what our staff has had to do and how it has impacted our ability to keep teachers and substitutes as efficient as we should. And, in particular, to be able to hire new teachers. Frankly, I don't know what we are waiting for; I would like to act on it tonight. Particularly, with what we have facing us. Every teacher that we lose to another is a tremendous loss. We can't move fast enough without this technology. As I saw, I'm ready to vote now.

Chairperson Griffin: Thank you Mrs. Woods. Mr. Lassiter.

Mr. Lassiter: Just a couple of logistic questions and I look forward to seeing the details on functionality comparison just so I can tell kinda what we've got and what does and doesn't do things. Timetable in terms of doing things, from approved financing, when do we believe that we will have some partial implementation of the staged in various departments? When do we perceive things would be staged in, what time?

Rick Rozzelle: At this point, the earliest that we would start bringing a team on board would be April timeframe, and that's if everything clicks. We would begin serious implementation in April and this project would be staged in several different departments; Financing/Budget/Purchasing, then we would move into HR and lastly into Payroll. We are staggering it that way to minimize the impact on the organization. These types of projects run anywhere from 12-23 months or longer, the average is 24 months. Our first module should come well within a year of implementation.

Mr. Lassiter: The second question may be related to the functionality question, compatibility with other current systems that are not part of the process, what remaining issues are there and what is our compatibility with state programming? And lastly, how does it relate to our accountability system, to what extent does our accountability system tie into finance?

Mr. Rozzelle: That was part of the technical architectural discussion that we had earlier, fits into our future direction. It allows us to produce data Superintendent wants for financial and performance boundaries. We and Wake have information requirements that are unique. A smaller company would probably not use or need this scale. We will have good credibility interfacing with Raleigh.

Mr. Lassiter: I assume Wake County chose another vendor and they are in some phase of their implementation. How is their implementation going with their chosen vendor?

Mr. Rozzelle: Wake County chose Oracle and we did look at what Wake County is doing. Their implementation should have been done in October 1999; their current completion date is April 2000.

Chairperson Griffin: Thank you. Any other questions? Mrs. Kakadelis.

Mrs. Kakadelis: If you would reiterate again, and I may have just missed it when Mr. Lassiter was asking the questions about the program evaluation and the budget components and how those mesh together, we are looking at that?

Mr. Rozelle: There are tools that we do want to look out that will allow us to

Chairperson Griffin: Any other questions. Thank you very much. Dr. Smith

Dr. Smith: There are things that Administration has the responsibility and opportunity to work on that will touch the future in ways we probably won't perceive under our watch, it's going to extend out over a period of time five to ten years. Again, we have devoted a

fair amount of time over the last couple of years working on Building Services Operations, Facilities, Maintenance, Custodial and I really do think we have one of the best Business Operations on the facility side of the house that you are going to find in America, that we have extremely high reputation among other school systems in the country surpassing their performance levels and we have the same kind of leadership in our Business and Human Resource Operations. What is holding us back is that we don't have the technological platform to report on. This element when we finally get to go ahead with this particular piece is going to revolutionize the way we do business, the speed decisions can be made, the flow of decisions, be they purchase orders or hiring staff or paying people on time, our turnaround time will be cut dramatically, so yes, this is an issue the Board will be very proud of.

Chairperson Griffin: Dr. Smith, I think you misspoke awhile ago. I talked with my colleagues and they have all committed to being here through the next decade.

Dr. Smith: That's good, all right!

Item II. (d) Approval of Bonus Payment in lieu of ABC Payments to Pre-K Sites.

Dr. Smith: This item is a result of our bonus process not including the Pre-Kindergarten teachers in the original action of the Board and brought this to attention of the Board so we can now go ahead and make bonus payments to our Pre-Kindergarten teachers; a group of individuals that did meet the criteria we set out for them in advance in terms of performance requirements or economic achievement in the Pre-K program. Tony Bucci is here to respond to any questions you may have.

Chairperson Griffin: Is there a motion? So moved Mr. Chairman. Motion made by Dr. Leake, second by Molly Griffin. Properly moved and second, is there any discussion on this particular item Dr. Leake?

Dr. Leake: I am appalled that we did not have funds available for our Pre-K certified staff, along with our teacher assistants. I was under the impression that we did. Dr. Smith, these are key people, along with our teachers and custodians.

Dr. Smith: This is a unique situation, as the state doesn't allocate funds for Pre-K sites, that is causing some problems. Tony Bucci is here to speak to that.

Tony Bucci: That's right. Good evening. It has not been a part of the state ABC Programs. We have had rulings in the past both from VPI and from the Attorney General's office and this is an attempt to correct what has been rightly identified as an issue of equity. We bring it before the Board this evening in order to address that issue of equity and these future bonuses for Pre-K Teachers and Centers at these centers will be in future Title I budgets, as well, so that money for bonuses will be available on an on-going basis.

Dr. Leake: Are you saying Dr. Smith those funds will come specifically out of the Title I?

Dr. Smith: They will budget those in the future from Title I. This one occurred as a separate item.

Dr. Leake: So it will be ongoing and that's a plus for this district. I hope our Pre-K Teachers and our Assistants understand this is something special and they will appreciate it. I noticed they are talking about morale and all of those things that have had a negative impact. So, now that it is Christmas time, when we they get this bonus?

Dr. Smith: A big plus for this district.

Tony Bucci: The intention is to pay teachers within 15 – 30 days.

Dr. Leake: Is that work days or does that include Saturday and Sunday?

Tony Bucci: Workdays (no that includes just workdays).

Chairperson Griffin: Mrs. Woods

Mrs. Woods: Since this is not in the ABC Accountability Program, what are the criteria that the sites need in order to receive the bonus?

Tony Bucci: The local accountability standards for expected exemplary growth will be used as the standard for awarding the bonuses.

Mrs. Woods: The bonuses, Dr. Smith, there's some question about how bonuses are given in terms of where they are connected to their regular payment or separate and how taxes relate to that. Have we worked on that to deliver the bonuses in such a way so that they don't lose half of it to taxes? I don't understand all of the issues about bonuses and taxes.

Dr. Smith: Janet Stoner is not here right now, but we've reviewed the bonus process and pay in accordance with IRS regulations and state tax regulations. So, we're in compliance and consistent with that process.

Mrs. Woods: I would encourage us to certainly be in compliance and legal, but at the same time anything that we can do to pay bonuses in such a way that there is a tax break, that we look at that.

Chairperson Griffin: Mrs. Kakadelis.

Mrs. Kakadelis: I just want to make sure I understand this. We're going to do this to the Pre-K Standalone Sites that feed into the elementary schools that have met their requirements.

Mr. Bucci: These are for teachers and assistants in the Pre-Centers at Plaza Road, Double Oaks and Tryon Hills. Teachers in the Pre-K Classrooms in elementary schools are eligible for bonuses because those classes are in elementary schools and those centers feed into the elementary school. So it is a quirk in the interpretation of the State law regarding using ABC State money for Pre-Kindergarten. Hence, we cover it under permissible use of federal funds for the teachers in these pre-Kindergarten Centers.

Mrs. Kakadelis: My understanding is that if you are a schoolhouse, you are eligible for it if the school meets certain criteria, but the Pre-K stand-alone sites?

Mr. Boucci: They can meet criteria local, or otherwise and still not be eligible for the bonus, hence we have this item before you to approve bonuses for these teachers using federal funds to pay bonuses.

Mrs. Kakadelis: Ok, using what criteria?

Mr. Boucci: Again, the local accountability for expected and exemplary growth.

Mrs. Kakadelis: I wasn't sure we do that because we do that with our assessment tools.

Chairperson Griffin: Let me go to a quick alibi. Dr. Leake.

Dr. Leake: As it relates to bonuses, I think we all have some concerns, but yet a bonus is a bonus and not a part of salary, so we cannot include that in salary because it is what it says it is "a bonus that one opts to make sure he or she is making the criteria to receive those bonuses", so we cannot change that by putting it into salary. That's a problem I had with the state agency. We want them to put it into salary because that's ongoing, but as long as it's a bonus you can take it whenever you get ready to stop it. So we don't want to confuse it.

Chairperson Griffin: Thank you. Any other comments before we call the question. All those in favor of Item II.(D), so indicate by show of hands. **Madam Clerk, that is unanimous.**

CONSENT ITEMS APPROVED IN ONE MOTION

On motion by Dr. Rembert, seconded by Dr. Leake, the Board voted unanimously to approve in one motion the following items on the Consent Agenda:

ITEMS III. A-D

With respect to those items, is there a discussion about any particular item? Mrs. Griffin.

Mrs. Griffin: I have a question about III.(D).

Chairperson Griffin: Any other items. Ok, Mrs. Griffin.

Mrs. Griffin: I just raised that only because it reminded me about a request that we develop some kind of proposal for individual board members to have travel allowance. I'm hopeful that we are working on that allowance.

Chairperson Griffin: That sort of slipped through the Chair's hand. Looking at a revised travel policy for the Board. I may try to give that requirement over to Mrs. Woods in the Policy Area so that you can carry that ball Mrs. Woods, if you would be so kind to investigate and explore the various policies, as it relates to travel. I will work with you, but let the Policy Committee look at that particular item with regard to a recommendation. Therefore, Mrs. Griffin, I won't have to try to bounce too many balls.

Mrs. Griffin: That's fine.

Chairperson Griffin: All right any other questions with respect to Items III. (A-D). No questions, all those in favor please indicate by a show of hands. Madam Clerk, that is unanimous.

APPROVED MINUTES

The Board approved the following minutes:

September 30, 1999 Closed Session (Attorney/Client Privilege)

October 12, 1999 Closed Session (Attorney/Client Privilege)

October 26, 1999 Closed Session (Attorney/Client Privilege)

Chairperson Griffin: Item IV. ©. I would like to call on Dr. Smith with respect to this item.

Dr. Smith: I believe Barb Pellin is going to initiate this presentation. As they are coming forward to share with you, I am very pleased with the work that has been led by Barbara Pellin and her Staff and directed by Jim Pughsley. Some pretty aggressive plans, I think, in helping us to attack the issue of Dropout Prevention in Charlotte-Mecklenburg. Barb.

Barbara Pellin: Thank you. Good evening. We really appreciate the opportunity to share with you tonight our Dropout Prevention Plan, and though there will be just three of us presenting, and I would like to introduce them at this point, Jerri Ross, who is our Director of High School Accountability Team, and Connie Clark who is our Dropout Prevention Case Manager at Northeast Middle School. I want to say that just the three of us will present, but there was an energetic committed team who worked on this together and we really appreciate the input that was given to us by students, by parents, by practitioners in the field, by neighborhood leaders, by corporate leaders and also recognize two people from my staff, Janet Huber and Mary Beth Rigsby, who were very much a part of it and also Cynthia Marshall, who has been a long supporter of this school system of our Communities In School Program.

When Dr. Pughsley first met with us as a team, he gave us some very clear directions and if you familiar with the kind of directions he gives, they are always very clear. He said, "I want the outcome of the work that you do to be very focused on outcomes that will benefit children and also benefit our plan for Dropout Prevention. So, we thought we need a theme, so we thought about the Nike Theme *JUST DO IT*, and he said I have a suggestion. I want you to think about *NO FEAR, NO EXCUSES*. Do not be afraid to step outside of the box in what you create and there will be no excuses so that you will succeed and so our students will succeed. So, we had our marching orders. We began by looking at a definition of dropout and decided to utilize the definition that the state uses and it is very clear and very focused. A dropout is any student who leaves school for any reason before graduation or completion of a program of study without transferring another school. Based on that definition, we looked at our goals and that goal was to be focused on the fact that Dropout Prevention Plan would be to reduce the number of students who drop out of school by providing the supports and programs needed to keep these students engaged in education. As we began to look at important components, and Jerri was a tremendous help to us in studying and evaluating our Dropout data. We saw that there were six components that we really needed to pay attention to. Those were plans for transition grades, a plan for transitioning our students back into school (once they have been in a treatment plan or within an incarcerated situation) any kind of situation that has taken them out of the school setting and transitioned them back into the school setting. Also, to look at a very specific role if we are going to be held accountable, the role of a Dropout Case Manager has to be very clear, very defined and we have to hold our case managers accountable for certain outcomes. Also, that we needed to identify our students who are at risk of dropping out, as well as, looking at specific evaluation components, that again we could hold our system accountable for making happen for our students. And, then how we would coordinate and work with community agencies. As we began to look at those six components, we found when we looked at the data again that there were transition points where we very clearly lose our students, those being from 5th to 6th grade, from 8th to 9th grade and again when our students are in a treatment program, or in a situation that takes them out of school, whether that be an alternative setting of transitioning them back.

Our first plan looked at that transition piece from 5th to 6th graders. In the past we have had the students come from the elementary school to visit their middle school, and that's a good thing, but what we wanted to be very clear on was that we identified those students as 5th graders who would be at risk for dropout and that we would pay attention to them when they came to the middle school, and that we would also pay attention to those students during the summer because it is at that time that they really have fears about coming to the middle school. There are issues of attendance, issues of isolation and we want it to be very clear that we met those needs, so we will begin looking with them as they begin to transition into the middle school. Also, we found students who were new to CMS, whether it be at the middle school or high school level are at very much of a risk for dropout, so we are going to pay attention to that in our plan, looking at and evaluating the needs of our students who are new to CMS.

Then, also we wanted to look at the 8th to 9th grade transitions, so we went through some of those very same processes, looking at and identifying those students early, meeting with

them and their families, developing plans for that transition into the high school setting, making sure that schedules were scheduled, that questions were responded to, and courses that they might take or not take, giving them the kind of support that was needed. Then the transition to or from either the Management School setting, or again a treatment center, or whatever has taken them out of the school setting to make sure that we hold our people accountable for understanding what they need when they come back into that setting. What we found again in looking at the data, was that we often lose those kids who are assigned to a Management School, we don't really sometimes know if they have actually enrolled; the home school thinks they have, the Management School's communication may not have been as strong as it needed be, so we will pay very close attention to the communication that will take place between the time a student is placed in a Management School situation or again in a treatment center, or whatever.

We are very excited! We have met with almost all of the providers now who provide substance abuse or any kind of mental health treatment and we will be developing actual agreements with them so that we will have specific protocol that we will each follow when those students come back into the school setting, as well as, one of the missing links that we often found was that we were not familiar perhaps with the treatment plan that the treatment people put in place and how did they really support the student's academic needs. So, we have been very excited at the response we have had from working with those agencies and providers.

Then we also wanted to step outside of the box and Dr. Pughsley suggested that we think about some new strategies, and one of the ones that we would like to think about in pilot is once called "*A Student Locator*", which is an incentive based strategy. As we met with neighborhood folks in that, we had people tell us "**oh, we know who has dropped out and we know where they are at;**" but, we didn't know that we had no idea. So what we would tentatively offer is some sort of a bonus to our neighborhood or anybody who will locate for us a dropout, making sure that we will pay them an initial fee (we had tossed around like \$100 thinking about that), and yet we wanted to make sure that when that was paid that when that student comes back, they will be in attendance on a consistent basis for at least three months. Then, we will follow that student to graduation and then we will think about paying the \$200 once that student graduates. So, it's kinda of a new stepping outside of the box, but something we would like to try.

Also, we talked about one of the needs that was very clear when we talked with some of our students who had dropped out that there was really not an easy way to come back into our system. That sounds like a simple statement, but when you begin to talk with students and hear some of their stories about difficult it was to get back into our system, we really felt it would be helpful to pilot a re-centralized relocation site where our students will come, we will meet with them, we will meet with their families, we will look at a contract piece we will do with them as a contract they will help us design. We will look at the courses, we'll look at the kind of study environment they need to be in and put in place that kind of support that will really help them in coming back into our system and Jerri's going to talk about how we are going to identify our students.

Jerri Ross: The task we had was to identify students at risk of dropping out and to determine the degree of risk that varying students carry. So, we identified some risk factors that other people have identified throughout the years relating to dropping out and then identified existing CMS data that could be applied to predict students dropping out. These are the predictors that we found;

- They previously been identified as dropping out, and we had data on them,
- One is years overage for grade and when you try to figure out how does that happen, they are detained multiple times and they are considerably overage for grade and creates social problems, etc. Other factors for identification are:
 - Socio-economic Status
 - Minority Status
 - Below average achievement level (if the achievement level is lower than average, it seems to be an important factor).
 - Poor Attendance is an important factor (number of days absence during the previous year was a significant predictor.
 - The number of days students were assigned OSS
 - Whether a student had a physical disability and was identified through the EC Program, although this was not a highly significant predictor, nevertheless, it was a significant predictor.
 - The students gender, we get more males dropping out.
 - The best predictor was whether the student had been prior dropout.

The factors that had attributed to the highest number of dropouts are Prior Dropout, Achievement Level, Minority Status and whether they were overage for grade.

Now in order to find out how we can predict dropping out or staying in school, we look at students who were 9th grade four years ago, fall of '95 and then we look at where they were last summer and they should have graduated, and many of them did, most of them did but some did not. So we looked at those who graduated, those who dropped out using the statistical technique with progression, we learned that we could predict with more than 90% reliability those students who would not drop out, not as good at predicting those students who will drop out, which is good news, because it says there are many factors that relate to dropping out that wouldn't account for all of those. Students persist in school even if they have a lot of these factors that relate to dropping out. We then applied it to this year's 9th and 10th grader students, so we now have a rank order list of all of our 9th and 10th graders indicating if they have the data at what level of risk they are for dropping out, so that support services can be provided for those students.

I want to skip a little bit and talk about how we would evaluate this program before we go on to look at more details of the program. To evaluate it, first of all we have a couple of important needs; we need to develop consistent identification of the interventions and services student receives. There's going to be a wide variety of services provided. And, then we need to report whether students are making progress or whether we have succeeded, or if we have failed, which interventions were the most important. We would provide a quarterly and then at graduation time, a report of the progress of these students. We'll compare

outcomes of various kinds of services that the students have had, particularly related to the initial risk these students had. So, through our evaluation we hope to identify those most effective services and interventions for students with various risk factors.

At this time, I would like Connie Clark to tell you more about the Case Manager.

Ms. Clark read the list of assessment of students assessing the needs of each individual student, development and implementation of individual support plan and monitoring progress and support.

Barbara Pellin: We mentioned that the Community Collaboration piece would be very important and we really feel that very strongly and know that dropout prevention is not just a challenge for the school system, but for the community. In that avenue, we really want to talk and share about six specific partnerships that we are going to be working with:

- With the *Department of Social Services*, we have eight Community Social Workers that are working within this Community and though we have connected some with them, I don't think we have really utilized the strengths that their roles ring within the Community, so we will be directly connecting with them. They will be making home visits with our Case Managers and we will be looking at specific areas within neighborhoods that we really need to target more directly and they will be an integral part of that implementation plan.

We also have a Staff Member now who is working with our foster children and families and we're really going to utilize that role to impact the needs of our foster children, that is a group of our children who have many needs that often go unidentified and by working with them directly and having this one staff person serve as a liaison within that role we really feel that we can strengthen meeting the needs of the population.

- We also are going to work very closely with the *Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department*. The TNT plan that we use to have in place was a fairly successful plan and what we are going to try and look at is re-instituting that plan, as well as, using off and on-duty officers. One of our Community based teams that is in place now that works within Boulevard Homes, the Police have been a tremendous support for us in making home visits, meeting neighbors, working within the neighborhood framework.

- Also with the *Housing Authority*, I think that's one of the partnerships that we are very excited about. We will have Human Service Specialists assigned from the Housing Authority who will work directly with a property manager in each of our housing development areas. We will have constant contact with them in making referrals and follow-up.

- The *Juvenile Justice System* will be working closely with Ralph Taylor and his Department to look at connections between our system and the Juvenile Justice System.

- And then also with the *Health Department*. As we review the data one of the things that we found was the tremendous lack of health care of these students. And often it's just a misunderstanding of how to enter into a Health Care home whether it be through an HMO or whether it be through any sort of NC Choice Plan, and that's one of the pieces that we will be working clearly on so that the health needs of our students can be met.
- *Right Moves for Youth* has been a very strong partner. We are going to be identifying specific membership within the Right Moves for Youth Clubs for each of our dropout students that will be on the intensive caseloads.
- And then *CIS*, I'm not going to go completely through that role as it goes back to long-standing relationship. Our original plan of how we utilize CIS Staff to look at putting in place the supports that need to be there. They will work very closely with our dropout case management.

The School Implementation Plan will begin 2nd Semester with a pilot program. Our data will be reviewed again so that we will choose probably seven high schools that we will initiate this plan in.

As far as recommendations go, we really would like to look at several ideas about School within a School Model and Mastery Learning Pieces and we will be going over those more in depth with you.

Thank you. We would be happy to entertain any questions.

Chairperson Griffin: I saw Mr. Dunlap's hand, all right.

Mr. Dunlap, thank you Mr. Chair. I guess the first question I had is how are we going to pay for this? And, the first thought that came to my mind was that the business community will be the benefactors of having a better educated employee and with that in mind, it appears to me that maybe we need to be talking with the Chamber and other citizens of the Community to see if we can get some support for this kind of program.

In the presentation, you mentioned a caseload of 35-40 and then you mentioned all the things that a case manager was going to have to do. My personal experience with this is when you have a tremendously high caseload, you render the case manager ineffective. In other words, they are not going to be able to do anything. So, if this is something that we are going to undertake, I would ask you to look at the caseload. That, in my opinion, just wouldn't work. You are actually spinning your wheels.

And, the other thing I wanted to comment about, TNT. Because that program primarily deals with kids under the age of 16, beyond paying the fee to get the kids back over the age of 16, what program do you have in place? TNT can deal with those kids under the age of 16 who are mandated to go to school, you can take them back, doesn't mean they are going to stay, but you can take them back. Beyond the age of 16 what program do you have in place?

Ms. Ross: I think this is one of the pieces we will be looking at Mr. Dunlap and that was a discussion we had on **How do you reach those students**, and at this point what we are **really** going to be counting on is like the Midwood setting, looking at the needs of students, our EC population, we really need to look at that also because many of those students are beyond 17 years of age and so I think in the pilot phase those are some of the issues we are going to working with and looking out and that's a good question. I appreciate it.

Chairperson Griffin: Ms. Kakadelis.

Mrs. Kakadelis: Every year we get the dropout statistics and every year I hear "well, we really don't know if this is true dropout because if we just didn't get the records transferred to another school, that's considered dropout and they may have gone and gotten their GED, but we don't know that". Are we doing a better job and how are we doing that to really know if a student has dropped out?

Barbara Pellin: Part of this plan is going to be focused at looking at a better way to actually validate our dropouts because what has often happened is that a school may be credited with a dropout and that student may have re-entered another school without any knowledge. We are working very closely with our attendance people and part of the Guidance Secretary's role is going to be looking at and validating. Our Dropout Case Manager will also do that and that's a great point and one that we have considered and it is true and that's a piece we need to work out.

Mrs. Kakadelis: I'm glad we're having this. I know we have dropouts, I'm just concerned about the inflation of that number. Mr. Dunlap made the point that under the age of 16 a child is mandated by the state law to attend school or either be in home school or something. What are we doing to take care of that situation? You're talking about 5th and 6th graders, under the age of 16.

Barbara Pellin: We have specific protocols in place and I can share those with you and Connie (we just appreciate her being here because she was in court almost all day and came here about 6:15 PM), but we do prosecute if there is indeed documentation, etc. We are pursuing that.

Mrs. Kakadelis:

And then as far as over the age of 16, how would you describe or what would be the criteria that we would use for a community based individual for giving the \$100.

Barbara Pellin: The Student Locator.

Mrs. Kakadelis: Right

Barbara Pellin: Basically at this point what we have talked about is a student who has dropped out within the last 12 months and then also who is more than 17 years of age. Are you talking about the person?

Mrs. Kakadelis: I'm talking about the person that would tell you that the student has dropped out, the community based individual, would that be a mother, father or another student?

Barbara Pellin: It could be a number of people and I think again this is an idea that we have that we would like to explore and it might be the community mom, or the person in the neighborhood who really understands and knows all of the children in that neighborhood.

Mrs. Kakadelis: I would suggest we be very careful about that. I would love to see someone who is involved in a community based tutoring program or something that is coming back to the community to get the money for that. Possibilities of abuse, and how many times would you pay it? Student drops out, you could do it every three months. We could do it every three months. You would only do it one time. What I am seeing with the dropouts I have worked with is a common denominator is a lack of reading skills; they're just non-readers. Other than just doing tutoring, are we looking at a teenage or adult literacy program that we could put these students in and accelerate those kids?

Barbara Pellin: Absolutely, one of the most important pieces of this is the academic piece and I think that's the part that really looks at the individuals success or academic plan and I think you are right that is a common thread that we find and that's one we will be working very closely with. When the kids are discouraged in the classroom, I think it really leads to dropout, so we need to look closely at that.

Ms. Kakadelis: I just want to say that I'm excited about this. I think it's long overdue. It's very specific and Dr. Pughsley, I really like the part that says NO EXCUSES, for so long we have blamed one thing or another, all of the things we list for indicators, well this or that or the other. It's time now that there are no excuses and I appreciate the fact that we are prosecuting the people who are responsible for getting children under the age of 16 to school. Adults need to take responsibility of getting students to school. I appreciate you doing that. Thank you for being in court Ms. Clark.

Chairperson Griffin: Thank you. Mrs. Griffin.

Mrs. Griffin: I do am very excited about the possibilities here and we have great people working on it. Just a couple of questions. I hopeful that we will not eliminate some of our dropout efforts in the elementary/middle school when we go to this pilot for clearly they have had some real success and that's an important foundation.

Barbara Pellin: Absolutely and we talked about that a great deal and that's the best prevention that you can use and we would still focus on the role of the SSS. We also have a partnership that we are going to do with JCSU that has students who will be coming in to work with our elementary schools who have defined high absenteeism. We're very excited about that partnership.

Mrs. Griffin: Great and then we have some great mentor programs around and I would hate to see those dropped by the wayside as we focus on the high schools. Any thoughts, about when we're through identifying kids, how many at risk kids we might have.

Barbara Pellin: We don't know that yet. Even in looking at preliminary data, it may vary the intensive caseload from 30-75-80 students. Mr. Dunlap's point about how you would handle all of those is a critical one. We will pay close attention to that and I think we will learn a lot from the pilot stage.

Mrs. Griffin: Right, and of course if we have that many we will need to find more money for these managers because there is no point in setting up this wonderful program and not giving it a chance to succeed. Two transitions that concern me and I am delighted to see them addressed. The first are when we leave the Alternative Programs, I'm afraid with all of that structure with many children, to go back to a more unstructured program has been difficult for many kids. I am delighted that you are going to focus on that. Clearly I think the real problem is going to be finding an alternative program, you said you would come back and tell us more about that. That's something as a school system we have not done well enough. What we've done, we've done well; we just haven't done enough of it well. Many of these kids won't succeed if we put them right back. In other words, I'm delighted that you are going to be focusing on difficult transitions. I hope this Board will be behind you all the way in finding the funding to do it, because with adequate funding I am confident that your department and all of these community groups together can find a way to solve this problem.

Chairperson Griffin: Thank you. Dr. Rembert.

Dr. Rembert: Thank you. I would also like to thank you for the preparation of this report and the plan as well, I have some questions about how the staff that will be working to implement this program will include or will be relating to other staff in other areas; such as Exceptional Children's Area. I can't help but think about a large number of students who have been classified as behaviorally and emotionally disabled, many of whom I believe are misclassified and I will be very up front about that. What kind of collaboration do you anticipate going on between the staff responsible for implementing this plan and the staff instrumental involved with those children who have been classified and are being served by the EC Program, is there much overlap?

Barbara Pellin: There is a great deal of overlap, and that's a great question and great thought. What we found when we began and we've worked closely already with the EC Staff, but again I think it doesn't belong to just one department and it's going to be critical that we cross over, even the goal that we have the system goal, our EC graduation goal. When we begin to look at patterns of attendance within our EC children and identification of EC children we begin to see a lot of needs that we should have been doing a better job with prevention and that's one of the pieces we hope to get to with this program.

Dr. Rembert: Is the same true for those enrolled in the TAPS Program?

Barbara Pellin: Absolutely.

Dr. Rembert: My next question has to do with the factors for identification of "at risk" students. All of these are largely related to the students. Have you identified any institutional factors that are associated with dropout?

Barbara Pellin: We have and this is a discussion we have had on how we are going to work this piece in. It was really interesting meeting with the students and listening to the students and I assume an institution you refer to is the school setting itself and that is very clearly something that we need to address in training pieces. The students stories were, I really can't describe them, it was not only poignant, it was very clear that at some points we have not done a good job understanding the needs of our students. Nor have we paid respect to the cultural pieces of their lives and I think that is a piece we need to pay a great deal of attention to as a part of our training and our work in this program will be with that area.

Dr. Rembert: I feel very strongly that we should make that as much a part of a plan and highlight the institutional factors as we do the individual and parental factors which I certainly understand a lot of these are very important factors related to dropout. We tend to over-emphasize these factors and hardly ever emphasize those that we have a lot more control over and those are the institutional factors. We can't change a parents education; we can't change a persons gender; we can't change a persons race and ethnicity; but there are some institutional things I think we can change and we have some control over that might influence whether a child ultimately drops out of school or not and if we place a lot of our emphasis on those things we might find we see changes more rapidly than not. I wondered also about whether there is a partnership with an organization called "100 Black Men of Greater Charlotte" for example, has a mentoring program and there are probably others that haven't been notified. I just happen to know that that organization has a mentoring program and as part of the mentoring program there is emphasis on post-secondary education. There are structured opportunities for the participants in that program at their junior and senior year to visit a college campus and stay on that college campus for a couple of days. And while they are on the college campus, they get to sit in college classes that are taught by regular faculty with college students and get to experience what that's like. It opens up opportunities for the students to have perhaps higher or different aspirations than what they might otherwise have. That seems to have a very positive orientation to me and a solution orientation as opposed to a problem orientation.

I think the extent to which we can link ourselves with organizations that emphasize where students go or where they can go if they stay in school will be helpful especially for those who tend to focus on the problem of dropping out of school and you need to stay in school and then what happens if you stay in school. What are realistic goals and possibilities for children that might help motivate children to stay in school. Now Mr. Davidson is in this audience and I have heard him say on several occasions that the best treatment, if you will, or intervention for discipline, which is often one of the reasons children drop out of school is effective teaching and learning. For those students who are effectively engaged in the classroom very early aren't turned off very early are children who can be successful and success breeds success, and so the extent to which we can structure success opportunities for

students early on and sustain that I think we will impact the dropout rate. Those are my observations and comments.

Chairperson Griffin: Dr. Leake

Dr. Leake: Thank you Mr. Chairman. I want to thank you Barbara and your staff for coming up with a recommendation and plan for dropouts. I have been talking about this for two years and I certainly do appreciate all that you have done and your staff has done. Did we look at any other programs across the state or outside of the state that has been successful that we might look out?

Ms. Pellin: We did and I would be happy to share some of that information with you. We tried to take component pieces that they utilize and we would be happy to share that.

Dr. Leake: The other concern that I have about the total program is the part that talks about prevention and it talks about piloting seven high schools. Why would you not include elementary schools to catch those young people before it happens so that we would not be repeating and having to catch them in high school. We could look at supporting young people in elementary school, rather than in high school. I'm not saying not to use the high schools, but to use some elementary schools. We know that by 3rd grade, we educators, that children are potential dropouts based upon some of the factors that we have listed and talked about, so why would we not look as early as 3rd grade? Could we look at that see if we could reactivate that process as we talk about *nothing has changed* as we look at issues that come to children who dropout. The other part to this is TANF. There are funds in TANF and a lot of these young people are part of that program. Are we going to use this plan as a part of working with our TANF children, because these are some of the children who have the basic problems we are talking about upfront and I don't see anything in here that addresses the issue of helping parents to help their children wanting to stay in school, and that's a part of that TANF process, so are we going to utilize the TANF Program to assist us with this Dropout Program?

Barbara Pellin: Yes, we will probably will Dr. Leake and on the parent piece, you are exactly right and that is just as important as the student piece and they will be a part of any of the development of the plan for that individual student. We will look at how the funds are used for TANF and those are some of the things again in the implementation initial phase that we will look at.

Dr. Leake: I attended a meeting on Saturday and that meeting was with "Fighting Back" and it was with working with some young men who had dropped out of school. The concern was what do we do to get back in school? Where do we go? Where is there identified support for me if I go back to school? The next concern is the curriculum. Those courses again academics and success, we need to make sure that is included in this process and we do not drop the ball, because in school we find as Mr. Dunlap stated we are going to use case managers and they have seventy-five or eighty children, how then can they be successful? How can the classroom teacher, the principal take on the responsibility of overseeing a program of this nature, so how are we going to make sure that this is successful because we

know we have a dropout problem. It's not just a Charlotte-Mecklenburg problem; it's a national problem. What worries me is that these young people drop out of school and the first place we send them, if they get in trouble, is to jail and that's not what we want to do. They are not building more schools; they're building more jails. So we want to make sure that we provide so our children will not have to go to jail. I have that concern. I want them to be successful so they can pay some Social Security, so we can not suffer. I hope that we look at this carefully and those concerns that all of us have lifted up that are not negative, but hopefully we are trying to put something in place to help our children. At long last a Dropout Program that we can be proud of, Dr. Smith and thank you for that.

Chairperson Griffin: Mrs. Woods

Mrs. Woods: Fellow Board Members and I appreciate your presentation and are excited about it. I was really taken with Dr. Rembert's questions about institutional impact and I, too believe that is something we really need to take ownership for. I was just thinking as you were talking Dr. Rembert, one fairly similar thing that might happen if we have advocates for these children very early, including our SSS in elementary schools or Dropout Prevention people is to be sure they are engaging. We hope all of our teachers are engaging, but there are some teachers in schools that are tremendously engaging; they are the ones the active parents are they're trying to get their children in their classes. It seems to me if we have potential dropouts that maybe there needs to be an advocate or the principals need to pay particular attention so that some of the most outstanding teachers in the school are the ones that touch these children and I would hope we would be looking at that because that can make a difference in these children's lives.

I was also thinking in terms of what are a couple of things we can do early on that could impact these factors that make a difference. One is parent education issue, and one day I hope somebody will stand up and tell me that from Kindergarten that every parent who does not have a diploma, that we are intentionally making a contact with that parent and offering them a connection to the closest parent/education center, encouraging them to finish their GED. I think if we do that, all parents wouldn't follow through, but if we offer support in that arena, then their children will so much more likely be successful. One day when that happens, stand up and tell me. It shouldn't be that difficult.

Parent Contracts – somebody said we weren't going to do the Parent Involvement anymore because everybody should be doing it. That's true, but why don't we have the Parent Contracts, Dr. Smith, starting next year for every parent in the school system and why don't we print it in red at the bottom of that parent contract "attendance is the critical factor in your child succeeding in school, and essentially we can't be responsible for indicating your child if your child is not there". Maybe we could say it in a nicer terms, but I really think as Ms. Kakadelis said we need to lay that on parents and to emphasize that without getting your child to school it doesn't matter what kind of engaging teacher we have there. I would really like to see us do some things differently next year and just get out there on the front edge of that and I know that every parent who signs a contract doesn't necessarily follow through, but I believe if we take it seriously and lay out the things that are necessary for their child to succeed, I believe most parents would carry through on that.

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Did you look at the potential impact on dropout rate on the State Accountability Standards and what we are going to do following through on students that are impacted by that?

Barbara Pellin: At this point of course we don't exactly numerically what the effect would be, but clearly since being overage for grade is a severe risk factor, it seems essential that we work on early intervention and prevention. Yes, the Student Accountability System does have to be very closely related to this Dropout Prevention Program.

Mrs. Woods: I would think that any student who is caught in that thread should be tagged immediately Dr. Smith, and I would hope that we would have some type of transition program where somebody is retained at third grade, we could have a smaller classroom setting where they could still do 3rd and 4th grade together and still make it past that. I would like to see us look at that because "an ounce of prevention is worth".

Another issue that concerns me is the Bonus issue in terms of our teachers at the ABC's and frankly I still believe that there is a motivation for educators to sort of allow dropouts now at test taking time, if the children aren't doing very well. I would like to see us look at what we can do to perhaps have some kind of bonus and/or recognition for those schools that are successful with the students most likely to dropout or who take this children who already have dropped out and bring them back into school and are successful with them. I really think we need to look at positive benefits for schools who are successful with children.

Do you have any sense of what percent of potential dropouts we will be able to serve with these case managers?

Barbara Pellin: I think once we complete the data analysis we will be able to answer that and we can certainly share that with you.

Mrs. Woods: One other thing, some of the issues I don't see on this like alcohol, drugs, pregnancy are often the things I hear again that lead to that as well. I'm sure you are interacting with pregnancy and alcohol and drug prevention organizations. Thank you.

Chairperson Griffin: One closing comment Dr. Smith. How do you work with kids? How do we do back-up? When we had United Way drive and all of our Staff, all of our School And those that went over the top had little signs up. I think it is extremely important in respect to all these strategies, institutions, etc. to come back and say ok, here's a group of students at several locations and this is the percent of dropouts. The things we talk about have been out there for twenty years. What do we do about it? How do we specifically reduce from 1% to ½% in the next year and the next year go from ½% to ¼% and just keep dropping. We can identify thousands of new strategies, but I think it would help us to just simply say this is the percent of dropouts for 1998-1999, this is the percent of dropouts for 1999-2000, is there any way to know if those strategies are working, and if they're not working, why. I hope that Barbara Pellin stands in front of us she will tell us we had X% and we have X- whatever it is in terms of success of the various collaborations. And certainly to my colleagues about reading, the jails are full of folk who have reading problems. We know

these things; we just have to be about the business something about those things. Thank you for a great presentation and I look forward to the next presentation being "our percent was such and such and this year it's that much lower".

Chairperson Griffin: Item IV. (D)

Dr. Smith: If we can go ahead and proceed with IV. (d) We have a number of individuals here that deal with the planning process, Ike Heard, Consultant, as well. Thank you for your patience tonight. I would just share with you at this point there has been discussion regarding the planning process. There is a document that is presented to you tonight that County Planners have developed regarding moving forward in a bit of changed direction in the planning process. As I have communicated with most of the Board Members, this is something that is critically important to each and every one of you. I realize that our pre-occupation has been a little bit on student assignment lately and that this is something that will require some attention in the very near future. Again, there is a copy of the document that is a draft document. The reason this has some urgency right now is that next Tuesday there is a scheduled meeting of the School Board, City Council and County Commission at which this document will probably be a certain extent the topic of discussion. In your paperwork tonight, you also have some recommendations for you to at least begin some discussion dialogue around how the proposed planning process can be modified. Again, if you have any questions on this or direction for Staff, we would welcome those at this point.

Chairperson Griffin: Any questions? I would certainly be able to suggest to the Board Members that this is a very important action item that is in front of us and I really want you to pay particular attention not only to the appointment of Citizens Advisory Committee Members, but also the recommendations coming from Staff. We were presented with this particular document recommendation on December 3rd at a Planning Liaison Meeting and I said to the folk at that time, John Tatum, who chaired the Planning Commission, it was my first time seeing it and I was trying to get it on the agenda for December 14th to have Board Members to have some capacity to try to talk about it a little bit and to respond to the Superintendent's recommendation in several areas and we will try to bring it back in January to actually take action on this particular item. There are some issues of concerns I saw when I first got this document relating to contract services, best practices. We do a lot of work already that perhaps the other body of government don't know with respect to best practices. I don't want to give the firm's name, but there are several firms here that are just solely in school practice in terms of architectural design. And when we go to NSDA Meetings, you see all of these firms that just simply specialize in schools and we contract with those folk and we also have architects on staff. So we probably just need to do a much better job in respect to articulating the level of expertise that's already on this side of the aisle and also be willing, absolutely willing to partner with the city or the county as it relates to things we can benefit from as it relates to our capital programs. Those things are critically important; I would raise your attention to all of those. I also asked our two members that we appoint to the Planning Commission to be here this evening so that you would be able to recognize those two individuals who will be carrying our water for us as members of the Planning Commission and for Dr. Smith for also to identify the Staff liaison to those two individuals as it relates fully to the purchase of property, any zoning issues or zoning matters, and to

really be advocates for us on the Planning Commission. I see Michael Bruno who is present. Michael, would you stand please? And the other representative is Bernard Johnson, if you would stand also? These two gentlemen will be working on behalf of 102,000 children on the Planning Commission and we certainly want to establish a very strong relationship staff wise with these two individuals. A lot of things are going to be happening in the next 12 months that directly relate to your role not only in zoning, but also in planning. We appreciate the role that you play. I would like to ask on behalf of the Board of Education if you would be willing perhaps on a quarterly basis to make some type of report back to the Board of Education as it relates to your role on that Planning Commission and the activities associated with representing us as it relates to capital meets planning. I understand Ike Heard is going to make a presentation, but before Ike makes that presentation, I wanted this Board of Education to see our two Representatives and understand that they will have a much stronger role than they have in the past. Dr. Rembert.

Dr. Rembert: My question is will our representatives to the Planning Commission receive regular information about capital facilities, committee meetings for example, might they get notices of your committee meetings and have an opportunity to at least sit in and hear some of those discussions

Chairperson Griffin: I would suggest that we just simply send them a calendar of meetings, as well as, minutes with respect to Mr. Lassiter's Committee minutes, as well as the Board of Education minutes, so you would be able to follow the discussion of what's happening both in the capital area, building area, as well as the Board of Education to keep them in constant communication with the Board.

Mr. Dunlap: This is about the Schools Master Facility Plan, right?

Chairperson Griffin: Revised Schools Master Facility Plan, we passed one early in the year, but based on the Court's ruling, based on the movement to build a lot of new schools in the center city, it will be revised.

Mr. Dunlap: Had a couple of concerns. Page 2, Item 3. The Committee of nine persons, three from each of the elected body. Although I realize these are advisory roles, I guess my concern is that we have more people not connected and related to the Board of Education telling us what to do. Maybe we need to look at those numbers. That's not to say they don't have the best interest at heart, but you know one of the things I found out is when you get a Plan out there, it depends on who the planners are and then we are put in a position or in the box where we have to act on the plan because there was a recommendation by some particular group. I would ask that we look at the makeup of those committees.

The other thing that concerned me was they have specific design guidelines for inner-city school sites (pg. 3). I don't know why specifically inner-city school sites, if it's a concern, it ought to be any school site. My question as it relates to that is how do you define an inner-city school? Are we looking at a city within a city map, or what are the parameters of an inner-city school? Is Eastover a city school?

Chairperson Griffin: Those are the kinds of comments that we would need to share with the Staff. I wanted you to have an opportunity to read this, I did not expect you to be able to give the Staff all of your comments this evening but to provide those comments between now and the time we place it back on the agenda in January so that collectively we can communicate with the Planning Commission in respect to our response to this draft document. This is in fact a draft document and they are asking us to respond to this particular document. I think it is important to work with them and you do raise interesting concerns Mr. Dunlap about the design as it relates to all of our schools. I haven't had a public hearing yet where people came up to the microphone fussing because we built a brand new school in their area, but they may happen one day.

Mrs. Woods: I think in terms of the sites in the city. I think more of the concern was the sites where you have limited sites because many of our city sites will be on limited land and that perhaps might need to be more community sensitive because there is not a lot of space between the school and community. I suspect they are thinking more in terms of sites along small amounts of land than necessarily where the schools are located.

Mrs. Kakadelis: I agree with you I have concerns about Citizen's Advisory Committee not having at least of half of the people from the Board of Education. I know we did it the other way before, but I just feel like it is such a political football especially when you start talking about what happens with schools and frankly when the former plan was made, there was greater needs in the suburbs than there are now that children are coming back home. Now, we're talking about taking some of the schools that could serve the suburbs and maybe making Magnets out of them, certainly we shouldn't be building new schools when we're making Magnets out of the schools that are there. I think we've got to be sensitive, but we also may need to realize that we may need to make some pretty drastic changes and they may not be politically popular, so I think we have to be very careful to who is appointed to the body and what the motivations are. I also think it is important that we retain control. It does say that we are in charge of this, however, I was distributed at the Planning Liaison Meeting, that it didn't seem that our Staff and our Chair had not even seen this document and it didn't seem that our Staff had a tremendous of input into it. I think we just need to be very careful that we are the engine that runs this thing and at the same time I think it's extremely important to cooperate with the city and the county so we can use a coordinated plan to utilize our resources to benefit other community agencies and that type of thing so that when we finish with the plan, we can seek a bond issue that will make best use of the money. It takes a lot of time, but sometime our Staff really doesn't have as much say, so we have to coordinate effectively and efficiently as well.

Chairperson Griffin: Let's take a short comment from Mr. Heard and then we will go to Dr. Leake. Our goal tonight is just to take the information tonight, ask your follow up questions during the month and we'll put this back on the agenda for action next month.

Ike Heard: Good evening. Thank you for a very short time. That's all I'm going to take. You have the material before you and you have the understanding that the basic issues are the need to plan for and construct the new schools in a timely manner given the new assignment plan, according to our land acquisition, as well as, the need to give some comfort to the

various levels of government concerned with this issue of impact of Neighborhoods on Schools and Schools on Neighborhoods. You have before you the original long-range planning process that went through the Committees of 33, 25 and 16. They led us to a Plan which was approved and completed in 1998, approved by this body in February of 1999, you may recall the procedures that went through that the map and circles identifying general areas where schools might be placed and the principals that grew out of that discussion process. Basically now because of the New Student Assignment Plan that has been mandated by the recent Court ruling, we have to go back and now and re-visit this process and put in place a revised version of the original plan and procedure. There was a document that was prepared that you have here which has nine basic items in it dealing with the responsibility and the oversight capability of a Planning Liaison Committee and the reconstitution of that Citizens Advisory Committee, you see all of those through there, the role of the various groups that have been appointing those members, the cost and funding of that, the contractual services who support that, the need to put together a timeframe that would support this, as well as, the support staff resource to support these various committees. There are some specific outcomes which are noted in here dealing with the short-range program, which looks at those '97 bonds, as well as, a Tenured Needs Assessment program, revisiting what you already had before, as well as, a Three-Year CIP for new facilities, as well as a Three-Year CIP for new facilities, as well as, the new items which deal with Design-Guidelines, especially for inner-city Schools and some general guidelines for Community Planning and Joint Use.

Our purpose today is to go back and look at some ways we might want to go back and revise that proposal. It was as the Superintendent noted presented as an information item at the December 3, 1999 to the Planning Liaison Committee. It is likely to be up as an item on the December 21st Joint Luncheon Agenda, if I remember correctly. We have had a number of things here which we thought you might want to consider after the Superintendent's Staff has looked at them and we thought we might want to request some changes in these things; specifically the makeup of the Citizens Advisory Committee. Looking at having at nine members (at least 3, 3, and 3) from each of the bodies with a 10th member being the Chair appointed by the School Board. There may be many different variations on that theme, but again the idea of changing that some.

Looking at the idea of the cost and funding sources to continue this. As the Superintendent has noted, you have many, many resources already on board and you have access that simply needs to be brought to the floor and the other governing bodies made aware of them and shown how they worked with process rather than duplicating that effort. To that end, you have to be aware of the fact that the Contract Services and the extent of them may be broader than is necessary, since this is a very comprehensive approach. It touches on everything and you may find that we have some of these things already handled in-house. We need to communicate this better and be sure we coordinate them very well. The issue that probably raised the most immediate issue in conversation was the concept of the site-design guidelines. The issue again is in small sites in inner-city locations where how close you are to things may have an impact on those things around you, as well as, how things around you impact your school. This is an issue which has been of growing concern and growing use in other aspects of land use control and the issue was brought forth here, the issue is simply

whether that's simply appropriate all given the other layers of design and guidelines that are in place.

The real issue from my perspective having had a chance to discuss this with your Staff over and over is having a time-sensitive and cost-sensitive process because we are working on a very short timeline to get these schools in place and opened on time. And so every time we take additional time and add additional cost because of these extra steps, it makes it more difficult to meet the guidelines with which we are faced. So, we are looking for ways which we can streamline this whole process having as few fingerprints on it as possible, but only those fingerprints which make the most difference so we add value to the process and not just time and cost, as well as talking about changes to the design of the school, which may make it more in some people's opinion, compatible with the neighborhood but which has little value to the educational qualities offered inside the building.

Then there's the whole issue of thinking we don't do anything that gets in the way of giving us maximum flexibility with regard to land banking because we will need to develop in short order; be able to identify sites, get to them, get them purchased and on the launching pad quickly and we don't have to wait through this entire process if we find something that is critical to do there.

So the issue is whether or not the issues which have been raised, and I believe you have material in great detail that you can discuss with your Staff. Your Staff has had some specific recommendations in regard to whether or not we need to go back and request changes in the original proposal for a planning process to get that additional flexibility and I will said a short report, I will stop there. I'll answer questions, if necessary.

Chairperson Griffin: Dr. Leake has a burning question. I wanted to read this and check back with you and the Staff to be prepared to take action in January.

Dr. Leake: My question is who put this together?

Ike Heard: We had two staff members from the Planning Commission, as well as, a Staff Member from CMS and myself who worked together as a team to get a comprehensive list of the things necessary to be done. That represents the comprehensive list of all the things necessary to be done in order to accomplish the task.

Dr. Leake: And these are recommendations.

Ike Heard: That was our original proposal for a way of doing everything we were told we needed to have done.

Dr. Leake: I have that, but I'm concerned about this. I want to know who prepared it?

Dr. Smith: A Consultant, didn't a Consultant write this?

Ike Heard: A Consultant with the Planning Commission Staff, as well as, Planning Commission Staffers, as well as CMS Staffers and myself.

Dr. Leake: How much did it cost?

Chairperson Griffin: Didn't cost us anything.

Dr. Leake: So then we don't have to adhere to any of this?

Chairperson Griffin: What I'm going to do is ask Board Members to look at this document, get with the Superintendent, get with the Superintendent's Staff and make sure there is clarification input so that when January gets here we will be able to take action based on whatever those recommendations are.

Dr. Leake: My question still is "We do not have to implement any of this"?

Chairperson Griffin: We haven't taken action on it at all. This is simply a proposal that is in front of us for our recommendation and input and we are going to do that in January with the appropriate deliberation and consideration Dr. Leake.

Dr. Leake: Thank you. One short one before we get to the public.

Dr. Leake: Mr. Davis has to leave and I don't want to hold him up. I have a concern that everybody can tell educators how to educate. We don't go to the medical doctor and tell him how to prescribe medicines and tell him how to diagnose our cases; so I have a concern about every time we turn around somebody is trying to tell us what we need to do, and not at you Sir, but this is a problem. The classroom teacher is told how to teach by non-trained persons who come into the building and want to assess the classroom teacher and tell them how to teach and here we have persons who come up with a recommendation of what this Board needs to do without any input from us. I have a serious problem with this. Lawyers do not allow us to tell them how to run a case. I really have a serious problem with this.

Chairperson Griffin: Thank you Dr. Leake.

Ms. Kakadelis: Point of understanding this document doesn't talk about curriculum or methods or anything like those just locations of buildings and sites.

Dr. Leake: I understand the document, I just have a problem with it.

Chairperson Griffin: Dr. Leake, we are going to move forward to the next item. Thank you very much Mr. Heard and Dr. Smith. I'm going to go to the public right now and we are a little late, what I would like to do is hear from the Public. Carol, if you would get the electronic timer cranked up. We're not going to rehash the Public Hearings about Public Assignment. I see some wonderful people from Greenway Park here. We certainly have heard from you and will continue to hear from you, by fax, e-mail and the regular process, but this is not a Public Hearing on Public Assignment and I will just remind you that Board

Members are extremely susceptible to comments from folk when you follow the rules, and I listen to these folk all the time, so simply as a favor to you make those comments that this is not a Public Hearing.

REQUESTS FROM THE PUBLIC

First of all we have Mr. Albert Hilton and Rev. Wendell Sloan. Following Mr. Hilton if you will come up front and have a seat, Fred Church, following Fred Church will be Bob Davis. Next are Maria Macon, Wilbert Watson, Fred Marsh and Annelle Houk.

First at bat will be Albert Hilton and Rev. Wendell Sloan,

Good Evening. Good Evening Sir, my name is Wendell Sloan. I live in Huntersville and I'm a graduate of 12 years of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School System. First, let me express appreciation for all of the time that you give for the good of our citizens through your work as School Board Members. The purpose of my speaking to you is that you request that you place on a near future agenda the matter of giving a name to the school now designated as Hawthorne Middle School. With all due respect, that designation is only a location and has nothing to do with education peruse. I represent a large group of former students who were educated in those buildings when it was called Charlotte Technical High School, or as we called it, TECH HI. One of our teachers invested her 26-year career in Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools as our history teacher. We did not appreciate her enough when we were students, but as adults and more educated citizens now, we want to do what we can to perpetuate her memory. We have raised over \$100,000 for a scholarship in her memory because she died this year. Her name was Lula Faye Clegg.

Naming a school after a former educator is not a precedent. Several of our local schools are already named after educators. Education is what life is all about. To survive and succeed, we need more education. You leaders of our society and the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School System make your decisions, we trust, on the basis of education that you have acquired. I was taught by Ms. Lula Faye Clegg and I hope that your decision will be based in education and appreciation for an educator who invested her career educating Charlotte-Mecklenburg Students.

Chairperson Griffin: Thank you very much Rev. Wendell Sloan. Speaking for Albert Hilton is Doug Dellinger.

My name is Doug Dellinger. I am replacing Albert, evidently he has had an emergency. We planned to petition the School Board for naming the school in memory of Ms. Lula Faye Clegg.

I have a letter I would like to read to you Mr. Chairman from Parks Helms.

Mr. Helms has provided you with a copy of the letter I will read and a copy made a part of the minutes.

Chairperson Griffin: Thank you very much Mr. Dellinger. Whenever the petitions come with Mr. Hilton, get them to the Clerk and she will get them distributed to the Board of Education. Next we hear from Mr. Fred Church. Good Evening Mr. Church.

Fred Church: My name is Fred Church, my wife was Denise and my son Sean Church is a junior at West Mecklenburg High School. As a former high school teacher and instructor at four different universities and a corporate training manager, I'm here to ask the rhetorical question WHY? And the why is about an incident that occurred November 5th. My son was basically suspended. The incident involved being told by an administrator to come to the office, he and several other students. One of the students asked why and the administrator said "You are suspended", more why's from my son met with 3 days, 5 days, 10 days suspension. At that point, one of the students started cursing the Administrator. He was removed. The two boys, including my son, ended up in the Administrator's Office. Again, my son asked why. The Administrator responded "you were talking about me". My son denied that. He immediately went ahead and wrote out the suspension slips, gave them to the boys and said you are being suspended for "that" and insubordination. Again, my son asked WHY. The Principal was in the office at that time. The Principal got in his face, literally 12 inches away, and in an excited and loud voice said "listen to me, listen to me, he does not have to tell you why". On November 23rd and November 29th, Bev. Moore, the Regional Assistant Superintendent held interviews regarding that incident and basically she upheld the Principal's decision. Here are my WHY's:

- 1) Why do we not uphold due process as guaranteed in the Supreme Court of Doss vs. Lopez in 1975. A student has a right to a fair and impartial hearing Before suspension.
- 2) Why did the Administrator the three boys to go to the office in the first place? Presumably it was to punish them; so they were danged if they do and danged if they didn't.
- 3) Why did the Administrator escalate three-five-ten days out on the field making a public spectacle?
- 4) Why was the student who cursed the Administrator only suspended for one day and those who did not suspended for five days. Initially it started out as ten days reduced to five.
- 5) Why is insubordinate to ask WHY? My definition of insubordination is to refuse to do something, so he obviously did not refuse to go to the office.

Regarding Bev. Moore and her inquiries, she said and I quote "Administratively their actions have been discussed and recommendations made". That is referring to the Principal and the Administrator, now come on Ms. Moore, what does that mean? Did they make a mistake or not. Let's be a little plainer here please!

- 1) Bev. Moore met along with my son on November 29th in a closed room.
Do we really consider that proper interview technique?
- 2) In both the forms that Bev. Moore sent they ended this way, even if the Principal's decision is reversed the record of suspension will remain. Now, come on Ladies and Gentlemen that is not justice. If a person is imprisoned wrongly and they get out, we do not maintain their criminal record.
- 3) And finally, North Carolina Statues 115C-391 says a Principal may suspend someone if they willfully disobey. Asking WHY is not in my opinion equal willful disobedience.

Chairperson Griffin: Mr. Church, your time is up and we appreciate your comments. Let me just remind the audience that those coming before this Board of Education subsequently Mr. Church, please advise by the Roberts Rules of Order and just use position of the individuals as you make your presentations. We encourage people to come and that is the reason this period is made available, so that we can hear from citizens. We simply ask that you comply by the rules established by this body as you come before us.

Next we hear from Mr. Bob Davis. Good Evening Mr. Davis.

Bob Davis, I am Robert L. Davis, Jr. Chair, Advocacy and Racial Inclusion Committee. Good Evening. Mr. Chairman, Mr. Superintendent, Distinguished Board Members, Fellow Concerned Citizens of this community, thank you for this opportunity to speak tonight on behalf of the Urban League of Central Carolinas and it's advocates for inner-city children and disadvantaged children throughout the Charlotte-Mecklenburg System.

Mr. Davis' speech is made a part of the minutes and included.

Chairperson Griffin: Thank you very much.

Dr. Leake: He's representing a group so he has five minutes.

Chairperson Griffin: Mr. Davis, if you could give us a copy of that presentation. Thank you very much. Maria Macon. Good Evening Ms. Macon.

Maria Macon: Good Evening. How many minutes do I have? My name is Maria Macon and I am before you representing The Bethel Human Services Alternative Education Program located on Tuckaseegee Road at Temple Baptist Church. Bethel Human Services is an Alternative Education Program for youth that have been suspended from school for 3-10 days. The Alternative Education Program was developed in 1996 to assist Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools with the dropout rate by serving as a liaison between the school and the parent of out of school suspended youth. One of the challenges, however, for the program is overcoming Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools hands off policy for students who are suspended, which includes not allowing assignments or homework to be picked up and returned to school by anyone other than the parents.

Bethel Human Services hands-off policy acknowledgement has brought to our attention the fact that students who are not allowed to continue their education process because they are suspended from school will more than likely drop out of school. We are here to help prevent that dropout situation, however, Charlotte-Mecklenburg hands-off policy means that the student is not privy to the continuation of his education. We are here asking the School Board to look at its policy and review that policy to the extent that it allows Bethel Human Services and other Alternative Education Programs to pick up the homework and/or the assignments of students so that homework assignment can be continued even though that child is suspended from school. This connection that Charlotte-Mecklenburg Policy Committee provides because of a student being suspended is now causing students when they reach age 16 to determine that dropout is their only alternative.

Bethel Human Services is asking you not only to review the policy, but give them permission to pick up the homework and allow their Alternative Education Program teacher to continue that educational process. As I mentioned, there are studies that show that when students fall behind more than likely they are teased by students in school and that teasing or peer pressure, we call it, will then cause them to consider dropout as their alternative.

There are two schools that Bethel Human Services would like to target as a pilot project and they are Coulwood, with a combined in school/out of school suspension rate of 857 students as of June 1999, 740 were out of school suspensions. Also Wilson Middle School with a combined out of school suspension rate of 1,588, 556 of those were out of school. We have prepared a package that we will be providing for you, we knew you didn't have time to read it today. Thank you very much for this opportunity.

Chairperson Griffin: Thank you very much Ms. Macon. Wilbert Watson.

Wilbert Watson: Mr. Chairman and Board Members, thank you very much for listening to us. I'm here representing 24-28 African American Organizations. I was hoping that I could get five minutes, I didn't want to put all 28 down. I want to say to you that we are not here to talk about student assignment, we are here to talk about the environment for student achievement. In our presentation last Tuesday we talked about equal access to a quality education; talked about opportunities for education by choice; a plan devised based on sustainable equity. We support all those things. We also support not turning in a plan until we have input into the plan. Tonight, I want to talk briefly about a statement that the African American Coalition came up with. In any case, the AAC asked me to come and read this statement to the Board. Would you allow me to read this to the Board?

What we have done is met over the last five or six months and of course you have also attended our meetings, as well as, some of the other folks on the staff. A Copy of the African American Coalition Education Statement made a part of the minutes. (#5)

Chairperson Griffin: Mr. Watson, your time is up. Thank you very much. Fred Marsh.

Fred Marsh: Everything I am about to say comes from one of two articles in the Charlotte Observer; Year-end Test Results dated (June 8, 1999) and Equity by the Numbers (February 8, 1999).

I have absolutely nothing against Highland Elementary School. As far as I can tell, it's a fine school, with fine administration and fine faculty that produces good results under very difficult circumstances. However, it appears that Highland has now become the model for which we plan to educate as many as 40 TARGET schools primarily I guess based on its 3rd grade test results. Last Year's 3rd grade at Highland at 46 students in it. We would normally 54% of those to test at grade level for 25. In fact 29 were at or above grade level. Whether the universe is 101,000 students or 50,000+ elementary students, or 25,000 elementary students who undergo year-end testing, a variation of 4 students from the mean in a sub-sample of 46 has absolutely zero statistical significance. But, if you disagree with that and you think it really is statistically significant, then you really need to explain why the 4th grade students are as far below expectations as the 3rd grade students are above, particularly in view of the fact that the 4th grade students showed no improvement over their 3rd grade test results and the 3rd graders who tested for the first time.

In case you intend to go to the County Commission using Highland as a justification for an increased budget, I thought I would tell you before the bean counters at the County Budget Office do that the results at Highland that you think are so wonderful were accomplished with a teaching staff (of 85 elementary schools was 79th in terms of years of experience, 83rd in the number who had advanced degrees, and 78th in terms of supplies), which means that if this is the way to educate students what we should be doing logically is not asking for more money but firing teachers with lots of experience, and particularly those with advanced degrees and shorting everybody \$50 more per student for supplies.

There have been a whole lot of illogical and unsupportable arguments that I have been hearing lately. This one really takes the prize and I really think that the School Board needs to put an end to this kind of thing before you all lose all credibility, not only the County Commission and the public at large. Thank you very much Mr. Marsh.

Chairperson Griffin: Next is Annelle Houk. Good Evening.

Annelle Houk, good evening. I wish I knew enough to tell you what to do about pupil assignment, but I don't. Ms. Houk's speech is a part of the minutes VII. (6).

Chairperson Griffin: Thank you very Ms. Houk. Next you will have Arameita Johnson.

Good evening Ms. Johnson.

Good evening. I would like to urge this Board once again to exercise leadership, the leadership for which you were elected. Up to this point, you have not provided the Superintendent with guidelines that can create for the long-term and equitable and just school system in Mecklenburg-County. If you fail to do so, you will fail to do what the voters of this county elected you to do. The Swann Fellowship recognizes the pressure this School Board and its full staff is under to do anything, just do something! We find it difficult to

believe, however, that public service as intelligent, as experienced, as this group will make the mistake of doing wrong simply in order to do something. Before you vote on Thursday, on a pupil assignment plan that does not insure that all children will receive the educational opportunities they deserve, please stop and think. On Thursday night, vote for a process that will give this community and its children the time required to get it right for all children.

As Ms. Houk just pointed out "separate was never equal" before and it will not be now. Thank you very much.

Chairperson Griffin: Thank you very much. That is the last presenter's name that I have. Let me say this to you. I forgot to make an announcement during the last presentation in regard to Planning Commission. On the 14th of January, I would like to have as many of us present at possible to discuss the smart growth initiative, it's on your calendar, but I wanted to bring it up.

Break resume at 8:55 PM.

Let us reconvene, we are going to Item IV. (E) Ladies and Gentlemen and that is in respect to Presentation of *Possible Revisions to the 2000-2001 Student Assignment Plan* and I want to call on Dr. Smith.

Dr. Smith: Thank you very much and we have again had the opportunity to continue to work on the Student Assignment Recommendations for the Board. At this point, there some issues that are immerging that we feel will be part of the final recommendation for Thursday night and would like to present those publicly to you at this point. I would call on Eric Becoats to list those items that at this point we are preparing to include in our final recommendation on Thursday evening. Again, if there is differing direction after tonight's meeting by the Board, it would be advisable to meet again to try to bring this thing to closure. Mr. Becoats, if you would like to go ahead and go down the list (I believe the list is in your supplemental packet for tonight). Eric.

Eric Becoats: Good Evening. I will be highlighting before you boundary changes, as well as, a change in the Revised Proposal for Choice Zones and followed by that Dr. Purser will highlight for you the Magnet changes that we are recommending at this point. There is one item that had text omitted from your handout; however, Dr. Purser will reference that in her presentation as it relates to Magnet Programs.

Our recommendations are attached Article IV (E). Included as a part of the minutes.

We would like to share with you the recommended change for Choice Zones. We would recommend that the following high school feeder areas be comprised to make up the Choice Zone:

- (1) The New North High School, North Mecklenburg and West Charlotte
- (2) West Mecklenburg, Olympic and the New Southwest
- (3) Myers Park and South Mecklenburg
- (4) East Mecklenburg, Providence and Butler
- (5) Garinger, Vance and Independence

So, in summary the change for the Choice Zone is that we moved East Mecklenburg from the Choice Zone with Myers Park and South Mecklenburg and we moved East Mecklenburg to Providence High and Butler. All other Choice Zones remain the same. Dr. Purser will now share with you some Magnets.

Dr. Purser: To review the revisions we are proposing in the Magnet Feeder, I would suggest you look at the 2001 Proposed Magnet Feeder Chart revised 12/14/00. I will simply highlight the changes, first introducing the program at Eastway Middle and Kennedy Middle for the Center for Leadership and International Studies it will feed into the programs at the high schools; Eastway will feed into Garinger and Kennedy will feed into the program proposed at Olympic.

In the Communication Arts Area, we recommend a change from Lincoln Heights to Hornets Nest. In the International Baccalaureate Program at the elementary level, we are recommending that IB be located at Beverly Woods as a partial magnet, no longer at Selwyn. At the middle school level, we are recommending that the students who would attend the IB Program at Statesville Road be allowed to go to Davidson Middle IB or Ranson Middle IB based on their location. In the Language Immersion Program at the elementary level, we are recommending a change that the program be located at Huntingtowne Farms Elementary School. For the Learning Immersion & Talent Development Program at the elementary level, we are recommending that Lincoln Heights continue with the program as it is today and that it would feed into either Davidson Middle IB or to the IB Program at Ranson. Another change in Learning Immersion & Talent Development we are recommending reinstating the program also at Barringer and that program would feed to Ranson. The program we had previously recommended at Tuckaseegee, we would recommend to feed to Ranson. The program we had previously recommended at Villa Heights we would recommend feeding the program at Ranson, and the program at Idlewild, we would recommend that it feed to Randolph Middle IB.

In the Medical Sciences Area, we have verbally made comments about the program continuing at Garinger High School; however, it would be phased out with the introduction of the Technical High School.

In the Montessori Program, we have recommended a program be introduced at Greenway Park and no longer be located at Amay James. For the Paideia Program, we have recommended at the middle level the program is to be reinstated at Randolph, and the program be offered at Eastway that would serve the Choice Zone.

In the Traditional Program, previously we had recommended Winding Springs; we are now recommending Derita and we also recommend that Wilson have the Traditional Program as opposed to Coulwood. The Myers Park Traditional Program would feed the Traditional Program at Wilson or Sedgefield based on residence. The program at Derita Elementary traditional would feed the program at Wilson.

We are recommending a change in our proposal for the Visual and Performing Arts Program to now be located at Dilworth rather Huntingtowne Farms.

Now let's look at the High School International Baccalaureate (IB) Groupings. We recommend that the program at North Meck be phased out and be phased into West Charlotte High, so next year we are recommending that to begin in Grade 9, the program in grades 10, 11 and 12 will continue at North Mecklenburg. The feeds to the IB Program would be for New North, North Mecklenburg, Vance and adding West Charlotte. We are recommending that East Mecklenburg IB Program be combined with the program at Independence and have it housed at East Mecklenburg; therefore, Independence would now be part of that IB Program at East Meck. That would mean eliminating the program at Independence High School. The Myers Park IB program would be supported by the home schools of Garinger, Myers Park and South Mecklenburg.

Now for the recommendations dealing with relocations of current programs. I will highlight the changes. We would recommend that the Devonshire and David Cox programs would be relocated to Hornets Nest.

In the IB Program, we would recommend the program that is at Reid Park today would be moved to Beverly Woods. Looking at the middle school level, we are recommending that the program at J. T. Williams today be relocated to Ranson. The program that is at Sedgefield today would be relocated to Randolph. In the high school area, the program at Independence, as I stated, would be combined with the program at East Mecklenburg.

With the languages, Collinswood remains as it is. Our proposal is now to have the Bruns, Reid Park and Sedgefield programs now at Huntingtowne Farms.

We are recommending that the Learning Immersion & Talent Development Programs stay at Barringer, Lincoln Heights and Villa Heights as they are today.

We are recommending that the Amay James Montessori Program move to Park Road and that Billingsville move to Greenway Park.

Druid Hills Traditional would move to Derita in our recommendations. The Traditional Program at J. T. Williams would relocate to Wilson.

Chantilly Visual and Performing Arts Program would move to Dilworth.

The Workplace Magnet Program, just to insure that we are clarified, we recommend that the program they have developed be allowed to continue at the Village, so it is available to

people within that Choice Zone. We are not recommending that as a magnet that would serve the entire county. So with Morehead and Nathaniel Alexander, the program would be at Nathaniel Alexander and available to the Choice Zone, for Martin and also for Vance Choice Zone.

Those are the recommendations regarding the revisions in our proposal regarding the magnets.

We have totally confused everybody now; again, this is a compilation of input that we have received since the final public hearing on our proposal. Eric Becoats presented boundary changes that involved J.T. Williams locating at Ranson and the traditional being located at Wilson. All the rest are included on the first two pages of your handout. Page three is simply a clarification about recommended changes in the International Baccalaureate Program which, in essence, is a move to phase out at North Mecklenburg and move to West Charlotte and a change moving it from Independence to East Mecklenburg High School. The next number of pages deal with magnet school program relocations and then the magnet school feeder page which shows the pattern of feeds that are being recommended.

We will entertain any questions at this time.

Mr. Dunlap: I have some questions and then some items for general instructions. Let me start with close to the back page with the Workplace Magnet at Nathaniel Alexander. I think we said in having this discussion, that we would eliminate Workplace Magnets. There were a number of schools throughout the district that had Workplace Magnets, and then all of a sudden I see a particular Workplace Magnet in this proposal. It's the same way I feel about this as I feel about a lot of these other things in this proposal; what you can't do for one, you can't single out a certain group and do it for others. It appears, and there might be some justification for having done so, but it appears to me that we are putting a Workplace Magnet at what was previously IBM Village, First Union, but we are eliminating Workplace Magnet at Dilworth and other places. Now the concern was when there were Workplace Magnets at other locations, they were put there because they were central to where people worked. This area is not the only area that is central to where people work, so if we're going to phase out Workplace Magnets and let them be Choice options, then we need to phase out all Workplace Magnets. I would not vote for only one Workplace Magnet, having eliminated all the rest of them.

Dr. Purser: Perhaps a point of clarification. We have recommended that workplace be an option within any of the Choice Zones, so this is not treating this area differently. It is a point of confusion that we created when we said we discontinued it as a magnet and people thought they could no longer choose that school. The concept of workplace transfers at Dilworth, Eastover and some other sites, we have said that should be one of the choice options anywhere in the district within the Choice Zones.

Mr. Dunlap: I appreciate that, but if that is the case then why is this one singled out and specifically put there if there are no workplace transfers, or magnets, then there are simply none.

Dr. Smith: I don't want to belabor the point and we can talk about it later. The Village has developed a lot of components to their program and I think what Dr. Purser was saying is that there was a sense that they had been abandoned when, in fact, those components might even be shared with other school operations elsewhere around the county, such as parent contracts, etc. There is a choice in the village and we'll work on the explanation of this.

Mr. Dunlap: Another concern I have is why would we phase in IB at West Charlotte, but it is not being phased in anywhere else. We are simply moving IB's from one location to another and starting a full IB, but at West Charlotte we are phasing it in starting at 9th grade.

Dr. Smith: The reason for recommending Independence moving to East Mecklenburg is East Mecklenburg is a certified program. We don't have to have certified programs at the middle school level, but we do have to for junior and senior years, so we can move Independence to East Mecklenburg, we might have some technical problems with the way Independence and East Mecklenburg arrange their junior and senior level courses and we would have to work through that instructionally, but when we phase out at Independence and West Charlotte is going to have to go through the certification process, we are going to have to grow it at West Charlotte. We will have to grandfather out those kids at North Meck until they complete their assignments and support them until they graduate.

Mr. Dunlap: I had some calls relative to some programs that were instituting without any information as to what the program would entail; one in particular, #11, Pg. 2. What is a welcome center for ESL Students? The feeling is any program that pulls children away from their group of peers, and especially this group of kids who have a problem with English as it is, for them to be separated and then at some point be put back is a problem for people in the community. Peer continuity is just as important to these children as it is to any other children. First, of all I want to know what the welcome center is and what is the community academy?

Dr. Smith: We can get the information to you. The community academy is a specific method of school operation that we are proposing for the coming school year. Mr. Becoats has worked a little with it and it includes things such as strict behavior requirements, parental participation and involvement, homework required, uniforms, pretty strict operation.

Mr. Dunlap: Before we got this sheet we talked about possibilities and recommendations and now those recommendations have been firmed up as though by way of discussing it, I want to hear some discussion with what is happening with Greenway Park and Lansdowne.

Dr. Smith: The recommendation is as follows: Greenway Park, in essence, might have some small modification to boundaries. Basically the Greenway Park home school area would be absorbed by the Lansdowne area. Greenway Park would be made available then for the Billingsville Montessori Program. Billingsville was previously recommended to be assigned to Park Road. This allows us to move Amay James to Park Road and allows us to make space by moving a portion of the Barringer zone to Amay James; we can make space at Barringer to return the existing current Talent Development Program there without having a

tremendous increase of home school children assigned to Irwin Avenue. These combinations of configurations allow us to keep enrollment down at Irwin Avenue outside of the magnet school piece, allows us to return the program to Barringer Elementary without overcrowding Barringer, allows us to provide a more decentralized Montessori Program at Park Road and Greenway Park, and allows us to accommodate the students basically in Greenway Park and Lansdowne area in one school

Mr. Dunlap: Can I just get that in writing?

Dr. Rembert: What is the impact on the Billingsville community by sending the Montessori out?

Chairperson: Let Dr. Smith get these questions so staff can respond.

Dr. Smith: We'll get that in writing.

Mr. Dunlap: The last issue. We resolved the issue with Derita. We had two schools that were closing – Derita and Highland. As it relates to Highland, there is currently a proposal on the table to grandfather children at particular schools, at particular grade levels and what have you. You can't grandfather children at a school that no longer exists. In addition, those children will be moved because the school is closing to another school and then when Craighead is built, they will be moved again. The question is can we not allow Highland to stay open for the year that it will take to build Craighead?

Dr. Smith: I don't know if we are prepared to answer that question right now in terms of capacity. We can run those numbers on the new Highland boundary to see if those children could stay put for a year until we get the new Craighead. We can get some numbers for you. There are too many students to put into Highland, but if the rest of them stay where they are, we'll check on that. I understand the question.

Mr. Puckett: Page 1, #7, Oakdale Elementary to Coulwood to West Mecklenburg. Contingent on all the other pieces happening.

Mrs. Kakadelis: I still have some grave concerns about these Choice Schools simply because if you live in the Independence area and, if Clear Creek is in the Butler attendance zone, you're going to be driving from one end of the county and your only choices are Garinger and Vance which are a long distance from there, you really are not giving some people any choice because of the distance they have to travel. Same thing with some of the South Meck area and Southwest schools, if you live at almost the Pineville area county line, West Meck and Olympic are not real options for distance. I have grave concerns about it. I've heard also that Independence and Butler together would help that Clear Creek area. I don't see any movement on the Choice Zones. It's still very concerning about Pineville and the accidents that happen at I-77 and I-485, and there are no choices except to go that way. You have people two miles from a high school. Independence now will not have any of the programs they started with and Independence had the original IB Program. They did that on their own initiative. I'm concerned that in my district the more expensive your house is, the more

choices you may have that are closer; you get on the outer range and for the lower income houses, there are not as many choices. Crown Point's numbers have declined in such a way. I appreciate all of these recommendations Dr. Smith, but I am truly disappointed that many of these changes are occurring.

Dr. Smith: We are trying to come to some consensus on some of these issues and if there is further direction by the Board, we'd be happy to take on issues like Crown Point and others. Again, the process we are in right now is to try to facilitate us moving toward Thursday for a decision point.

Mrs. Kakadelis: I assume that there are not enough people on the Board that would like to work with the Crown Point situation.

Chairperson Griffin: Let me just give you some feedback for all of us. If we can come up with a motion, we will have to see when we get ready to vote. I think if we continue to say to the Superintendent, here's variation #15 and #20, when we get ready to vote, we are going to vote and if there are five members who support that particular initiative, we'll get that. I don't know how else to get to the various options that are available to the Board of Education. If you can talk to the staff and find out what your particular recommendation/variation is and if you are going to make a motion, make sure you are able to articulate the impact on the area is and you can get that from the staff.

Mrs. Griffin: It's sort of hard to know where to jump into this and I probably would like to sit down with staff and go over some of the specifics more closely regarding facility numbers and capacity numbers that result from these changes to be able to analyze them fairly.

Chairperson Griffin: Are you asking for a new statistic section based on these recommendations? There is a chorus who supports that.

Mrs. Griffin: I would like to know what that means for a school as far as capacity. Two general areas and then maybe meet individually. To the audience, I would just like to say our computers are really old, and if you would just fax or call me, I can respond better to your requests.

Chairperson Griffin: There are some folk scanning info and petitions and sending to Board Members and this is taking up a lot of space and locking up the system and then we can't get any e-mail. This is the reason we are slow to respond.

Mrs. Griffin: When you raised questions about the workplace magnet, the Village really wasn't a workplace magnet and I don't know why we persisted in calling it a workplace magnet. The sign out front says Parent/Involvement Magnet and they had this hybrid where if you had chosen that school you had to volunteer one hour per week for your child or the equivalent over the year. It is a very successful way to get parents into the school, and I think it is a system we ought to take all over the county. It really had nothing to do with workplace. As I understand the history of it, at some point the Village was going to be a workplace, but that was abandoned and it became a countywide Parent/Involvement Magnet.

I think we just have to take that countywide and I would love to see us make a little room at Vance to let it keep that choice. I'm very much in favor of putting all of Nathaniel Alexander back at Vance because I hate for kids to start the Village and then leave the Village. I am concerned that we then didn't take anybody out. And in the second revision we took out Nathaniel Alexander and put in the new Craighead. I wonder if we couldn't make that switch back and leave some room for some choice in that wonderful Parent/Involvement Magnet Program.

I really need a thorough analysis of what has happened with the Barringer move. All of those children assigned to Barringer under the first and second revision, where are they now headed out, where will their feeder be? I don't know if there is any chance of going through that Barringer scenario and sending some of these children to Amay James, it really gets into the Montessori picture and I don't know if there is any chance of making Greenway Park a partial Montessori Magnet, but I'd like to walk through those numbers.

The final thing I will talk about this time is the plan to move the IB from Selwyn to Beverly Woods; I think that is a good one. I have some concern about the decision to split the Sharon feeder at middle school, although that is what has currently happened because what we did was take children out of Alexander Graham and put them in Carmel; Carmel needed them, but we didn't put any back in Alexander Graham to take up that slack and as you know, Dr. Smith, I have been in favor of having the Cotswold children who come to Myers Park High School being allowed to come into AG. That would balance out if that got accomplished. That gets involved with the magnet situation at Randolph, but I will come back with that.

Dr. Rembert: First, Mr. Chairman, I think I am struggling with all of the specifics because I still have an original question and my original question had to do with guiding principals and the premise upon which the plan was developed in the first place. I have shared this concern with the Superintendent and with the individual members of the Board. I understand that we need to move forward with developing a plan, but I need to communicate my concerns still regarding that bear "premises," which puts us in my mind the very predicament we find ourselves in. We started out with the premise of guaranteeing seats close to home, and I believe that was very misleading to our community. One because we can't do it for everybody, second, because it automatically creates high poverty schools, no way around it. By virtue of the housing patterns in our community when we guarantee seats "close to home," we will have high poverty schools. I asked the question when the plan came out. I asked eleven questions and at least one reporter referred to my questions as rhetorical. I'm disappointed that you probably regarded them as rhetorical, also, because they really weren't. I really expected and hoped for responses. That's why I have had difficulty coming in asking questions about details and specifics.

The second item I have a question about is what treatment, if any, has been given to the concept of grandfathering and how is that reflected in any of the proposed revisions. If we allow parents and children the opportunities for grandfathering, that probably does give more people choice than currently feel they have a choice. And lastly, I have a concern that the plan, even in it's revised form, still leaves us with a district that looks more segregated than our current system looks. That troubles me greatly and I really don't know how to reconcile

that with any plan based on the premises that we used. So, I am suggesting, Mr. Chair, that the Board do now what we should have done at the very beginning and that is adopt a set of policies to guide the plan as opposed to the plan dictating our policy. Those are my comments.

Chairperson Griffin: Dr. Rembert's comments are written down regarding guiding principles and we're going to circulate it around the Board if the Board so chooses to look at that.

Mrs. Woods: I agree very strongly with Dr. Rembert. I also said from the very beginning that we're the ones that set policy -- that's our job and Mr. Superintendent, I think we haven't been fair to you, in that you gave us the initial guiding principles, we didn't adopt them, we didn't not adopt them, nor did we give you other guidelines. It's really our fault and we need to correct that. I've been trying and I'm sure other Board Members have also, to work on three different levels which has made it very difficult to work on any one level. We have the level of policy (we need, Mr. Chairman, to take some time tonight to talk specifically about policy) and we've got these recommendations to talk about, but before we go home we need to talk about policy as a Board. The Board needs to be discussing it; it shouldn't be all on your shoulders. The second level that I have been trying to work on is the level of recommendation regarding choice seats and magnet seats. I put in front of you tonight some of the things I suggest, they may or may not be right, but I don't think what we've got is what we need. I think we need to go far beyond that and I also think we need to have some time to think about it. If we're going to adopt the plan and then come back and talk about that in relation to the plan after Christmas, then maybe we need to clarify that. I'm not comfortable that the Choice Policy and Magnet Policy are as extensive as what we need. So, either we need to take time to talk about that some now and if, we can't resolve it, Dr. Smith, we need to find out if it is something that can be resolved now or can be resolved by mid-January. I think it is critical to the equity issues relating to this plan.

Then the 3rd level of this plan is the one we're working on now. We are so worried about these boundary and choices. Since we are talking about grandfathering, Dr. Smith, there are two particular groups that I have concern about that we have not talked about yet. There are actually more than two, but these are the two that rise to the top of the occasion. One is the group of children who are in schools presently who will move to new schools. I'm worried about the ones that move to Craighead or Greenville. I really believe that they need a top priority in terms of grandfathering because I don't think that it is fair to move them next year and then move them again year after next. If we have to use trailers, or whatever we have to do, I think we need to be able to leave them where they are if they want to stay there, not saying they've got to. I just don't approve of moving them twice should we not get the Stay and I'm still hopeful.

The 2nd group of children that I worry about, and Mrs. Kakadelis, I feel like you share -- I feel like everybody shares the concerns -- are that group that are going to be going to new schools, like Olympic for one year, or go to the 9th grade at Alexander one year, that just seems to me to be one change and then another change; I almost feel it would be better to go to 9th grade at their formerly assigned schools so that at least they have that comfort and then

move in 10th grade. I just don't feel good about moving them twice. That's another issue that I have a lot of concern about.

Dr. Smith: In response to that particular recommendation, I haven't seen any numbers on the possibility of grandfathering those that would normally be assigned to Greenville or Craighead, an indication of the North with the new North High School. We have explored some numbers, but I don't know if I would have them for you tonight or not, but there is the possibility of those students moving into Vance and North Meck and then being moved as a group to the New North High School. At the south end, I don't believe there is space to delay without moving those students first to Olympic, as opposed to the rising 9th graders go to Olympic and then go on to Southwest. We don't have space at the other high schools to accommodate those students at their currently assigned high schools.

Mrs. Woods: The other thing would be to grandfather all of our high school students. If we did that, would that not it be easier? I agree with that especially if they have brothers or sisters. I don't know if there are enough members of the Board to agree. Is there a possibility of grandfathering all of the children? Except, if you are going to a new school, at the time that you go, you would certainly have to take the freshmen, sophomores and rising juniors, like we have done before, but students who are otherwise in the high schools, if they could be grandfathered, I think that would just make it so much better for students because once they get into high school, it's awfully hard and, in a case where they are going to a new school, they have something to look forward to at a new school, but if they are going from one older school to another, I just think we should look at that and I would support it if there is anyway we could do it.

Regarding Greenway Park, it just really bothers me that we would come at this late date and displace another whole school without opportunity for public comment or anything else. I do understand how things get put together, but I also think there are things that don't get put together. I don't think it fits together to put a 500-seat student body into a 800 seat school and I don't think we have the teachers or the money to expand Montessori programs, so it just doesn't fit together. I don't understand why, if we're going to displace somebody, we don't look at a school that is near Lansdowne that has 500 seats. We're putting magnets all over the place to save schools that are near Lansdowne that aren't 800 seat schools, so it just really bothers me. I think it is bad policy to fill up a school that is so near the outer edges; for example, if we were willing to go to 51, we could populate Greenway Park and relieve Matthews. Somehow we seem to have boundaries that are dictated by political purposes. I don't want someone coming to me asking for money to build a new school in that same general area in a couple of years if we are not willing to populate the schools we've got. I just have trouble with that. I do understand how it fits together and it certainly helps Billingsville to have the location.

Workplace, again I'm like Mr. Dunlap. What does it mean? I think Mrs. Griffin said it's something "different", and it is, I understand that, but we're still calling it Workplace and does it relate to a workplace address and, if it doesn't, why isn't it just Choice like it is Choice for everybody else. I'm really for grandfathering the children who are there now, but I don't understand why if everybody else has to be Choice why not there. I wanted

Workplace to be near a number of places like hospitals, etc., so I think it's surprising that shows up.

When I look at the Choice Zones, I also see that there are Choice Zones that don't have any schools that are high poverty. There are Choice Zones that don't have any schools that are with low poverty and that's one of the reasons for one of my recommendations is that I believe where that is true we need to look at the possibility of linking schools with high poverty and low poverty even if they may be slightly outside the Choice Zone.

Dr. Leake: I guess I will say what I said previously that the Judge never said for us to provide neighborhood schools. The only thing the Judge asked us to do was to make sure that we did not use race as a means of assigning children. When I look at the process, I see the have's and the have not's. I see the inner city still with poor schools without resources and there is no guarantee that the county is going to provide the funds for resources for those schools. We talk about equity and I'm really concerned about it, Dr. Smith, and I have a letter here that a parent sent to me that says Judge Potter and Superintendent Smith support the concept of neighborhood schools. That's fine, but the Judge never said that Dr. Smith, you said that. The second letter to me, stop busing. We're going to have buses regardless of what we do because we have to transport children and I'm tired of parents saying to us that they don't want any more busing. That means that everybody would walk to a school or everybody would get in their car and drive their children to school. The second part to this letter says something that they have always been the first to be bused, and that is not true. The inner city has carried the weight of busing all the time, still is and will probably continue to because those parents want the best education for their children. Every person, just about, and all of the students, said to us leave us where we are. I have talked about and asked the questions about grandfathering the district but nobody has given me an answer yet. I'm still waiting. The Mayor talked about crisis. I don't think we are in a crisis. I don't know why he perceives us to be in a crisis. I see us trying to make decisions in assigning children to schools. When I look at Barringer, Lincoln Heights and Oaklawn, I'm still concerned that we do the right thing. Parents talk to me about J. T. Williams, maintaining that as a Magnet School, I look here tonight and I see the parents talking about Greenway, keeping Greenway and let's take away Billingsville. I've had many, many calls from the people of that community to maintain the Montessori in that school. I don't see why we cannot, maybe the numbers are not right, but I'm concerned. I worry about West Charlotte, I worry about all of those schools that happen to be in the inner city, so I say to us, we've got to be fair. Now, I know the southern end is happy, the northern end is happy, but those of us in the middle we are still pregnant, we're upset. We're about to burn the baby here that is not able to walk. I have a concern that we do the right thing. I think about a Marie G. Davis that's going to be 90% free/reduced lunch. I'm not saying those children cannot be successful. But, how are we going to staff the school without resources or support. I don't know any teachers or administrators who would want to go there. You are going to have to give them more than \$250 or \$5,000 and you understand that. It's a situation that we have found ourselves in that we are trying to satisfy politically a given group of people. We must do the right thing about all of these children. I look at the high schools, the feeder areas, the zoning and we're just not fair. I'm still concerned about the schools on the west side. The west Ssde has always been the "dumping ground" before you were even were born, Dr. Smith, before you ever

came to the district. It has been the least supported and I cannot sit here as a Representative of District 2 and say that I'm happy with this plan. I'm not happy because my people are not happy, and when my people are not happy they say that to me. So I say to you and the staff, we appreciate what you've done. You've done a wonderful job of satisfying some people, and not satisfying others. I know everybody will not be happy. All of us will never be happy, but I just have a concern about the inner city and I have read, repeatedly, editorials in The Charlotte Observer about how are we going to educate these children. And, I would ask the same question – how are we going to do it and do it fairly? There is no guarantee that this city and county will even pass a Bond referendum unless the county and this community see the need to continually try to educate children. I just have that concern that we're not doing the right thing to help the inner city.

Chairperson Griffin: Let me make a short comment. Nine of us are in charge of the responsibility of leading the education policy; whatever we come up with we need to do it and move on, support it, not support it, come up with a plan. It certainly won't be perfect, but we have to stay the course with regard to trying to make sure that all children, Dr. Leake, get the very best learning opportunity we can afford as a community. We will make our presentations, and we're very passionate about the positions that we take, but we're also going to have to be very passionate about our responsibility which is ultimately coming up with a plan and ultimately answering some of those questions because the nine of us or five of us will have to raise our hands on a plan and move forward and we're going to that because school will have to open. I've lived in this community all of my life for some of you newcomers when they were segregated and desegregated. The buses ran to pick children up, kids went to school because people made decisions and we're going to do the same thing to support our community by making decisions and it's tough, it's complex, but we have no choice because we have to exercise our elected responsibility. Three of us took the oath the other evening where we said we would uphold the Constitution of the State of North Carolina and somewhere in those general statutes the Board of Education has the requirement of assigning students to schools. So, we have to get on about the business of discharging our responsibility and what I would suggest to my colleagues, is that very, very quickly we need to make sure we can come up with a plan, working with administration, and vote on a plan. Our options are quite sure, you can vote on the plan, the modified plan, the new plan, but you are going to have to vote on a plan in order to run schools in August 2000. I am confident that we'll do that. You're going to have to come up to the plate and let folk know what your druthers are. Dr. Rembert and Mrs. Woods have presented us with two items to look at, we're going to do that. We know what the issues are, they are very clear and we know what we have to do with regard to what we have to do, we have to make those choices. I would encourage my colleagues to let's get on about the business of getting a Pupil Assignment Plan together so that we will be able to open school and not break the long tradition since 1892 of having schools in Charlotte-Mecklenburg open on time, serving the children of Mecklenburg County. I have two questions. Very short ones. First, do we have any indication, Madam Counsel, with regard to our stay that is at the 4th Circuit? The second question deals with grandfathering. I know that we are in litigation and I don't want to go into Executive Session to ask for specifics, but could you give me some response as to the expectation as to when we may hear something from the 4th Circuit on our Appeal, Stay Order and also some feedback with regard to implications of grandfathering students.

Leslie Winner: I can do that in a public way. As of last Friday, we know that our motions for Stay and all the briefs and everything were before a panel of the 4th Circuit. So, the judges have it as of last Friday. They don't have any timelines when they have to rule, but they obviously understand this is a matter of some eminence, so I would think they would not dally. I am sorry I can't give you a more precise answer than that. The second question about grandfathering – as you know Judge Potter did not give us any precise answer about who we could or couldn't grandfather, but he did give us some guidelines which were:

- 1) Any grandfathering had to be a voluntary option which means that for every student that you are offering to grandfather they have to have the option for going to the school based on a student assigned plan that is not race-based.
- 2) The other thing is that the grandfathering of one student can't deny another student the ability to have a student assignment that is not race-based.

So, I interpreted that last to mean you have to have a Student Assignment Plan and that the grandfathering has to be into any excess capacity; you can't move students out in order to make capacity for grandfathered kids. I think that is about all we have now.

Chairperson Griffin: One other comment because I am going to squeeze us a little in terms of time, I know it gets emotional at times, these are very complex issues, but I would ask that we be as civil as possible as we discharge our duties because some folk will agree with us, some folk won't agree with us, but we're going to have to move forward in an agreeable fashion and make sure we stay focused on our students and our responsibilities.

Mr. Lassiter: I have a general question. In following up on your question, Mr. Chairman, the legal issues I think are critical and clearly everything that we are doing here is in a large part driven by legal activities that have taken place in the past and, it is still continuing, and it would seem appropriate to me that in advance of our decision or attempt to make a decision on Thursday, having some assessment of legal issues, as we make these votes, by our Counsel would be appropriate. There are a number of questions which relate to what you can and can't grandfather, what you can and can't prioritize, I would certainly like to get some clarity, in your opinion Leslie, and what perhaps our outside Counsel can give us some direct information. Any extent to which we could do that would be to have some opportunity prior to the meeting or some vehicle to do that in advance would be helpful I think.

Ms. Winner: I would be happy to meet either privately or in executive session, or publicly try to give my opinions about any part of this plan that anyone has questions on. Obviously, I cannot give an opinion on every line, street or part of it. It would be helpful if people would let me know what their particular questions are. I know there are questions about all the grandfathering options and all of the choice priorities, I assume that. I haven't heard any other legal questions, so if you have other legal questions, get them to me so that I can have a chance to think about them before Thursday. Of course, any of you are free to call me anytime tomorrow. I'll talk with you on the phone or you can come see me.

Mr. Lassiter: Perhaps we could have a short Executive Session in advance of Thursday and get some update on where we are litigation-wise and where we are appeal-wise and explore some of the loose ends. The second thing, and we really haven't every talked about it in my recollection other than intermittent conversations with Board members and we haven't had a lot of input on it, and that deals with Priority Zones. There is only one page that I know of in this book that talks about that. It only deals with magnet schools and programs in the lottery. Is there another piece of that? We really haven't had much talk about what the implications of choice really are and what options are potentially there and you've got proposals that Mrs. Woods made this evening that has some tie into some of these pieces that talks about the same grade level and percentage of classes in other Choice Zones. It doesn't dovetail at all with issues of transportation. At the high school level, I think that is, perhaps, an opportunity that we really haven't fully examined. Maybe there is a way we can look at some even broader choice opportunities at the high school level where transportation is less critical, or ability to take advantage of public transportation or working with the City in providing public transportation which may, in fact, allow us to create more stability for students who wish to stay in particular school houses. We've blocked them out because of Choice Zones and in some cases are really extremely narrow and don't allow much mobility. We've never updated this. The related piece is the whole issue of student priorities. We've talked about manpower as one way of doing this. If a student has been attending a particular school today, and now assigned to a different school, and it may or may not be within my Choice Zone, to what extent can I put an additional priority within this range of priorities. I'm not sure where it fits in the order that says that child now gets a higher priority than somebody else. How far would you carry that? To what extent does that create a legal issue? It's kind of a grandfather-like priority that doesn't have maybe the blanket, but certainly gives a lot more direct choice to the individual student/family who says they really want their student to stay at the school one or two more years because we've finally gotten accustomed to it, it fits my work schedule or it I've got family over there, or daycare that works for me, or a variety of reasons I may have. Is there any immediate legal red flag that we get from something like that?

Ms. Winner: With the caveat that nothing is risk free, as long as that were done a really race neutral blanket way, and it was done in a way that didn't stop somebody who had that as their home school, but can't go there, I don't see why that would be wrong. The Board's priority is to try to create stability by allowing students to stay where they are if they want to and it doesn't deny somebody else their non-race based choice, I don't see why that would be illegal.

Mr. Lassiter: This is a question for you, Mr. Chairman, and it relates to the issue of process for Thursday. Do you have some thought at this point about the process you want us to operate under as we either support the Superintendent's proposal, or as we want to add particular pieces or want some variation how we want to manage ourselves so we can think through our thought process?

Chairperson Griffin: What I've said before and I said again tonight. This is not just simply the pupil assignment from School A to School B. When you make your motions, in essence, you are establishing a Pupil Assignment Policy for the school district. I would want you to

work with Leslie, the General Counsel, in getting your motions typed up so that you can pass them around to folk to read it. I am hoping that we can get some plan, and if there are amendments, you can give those to Leslie, but I prefer not having amendments that clearly don't have the support in terms of what the implications are; if you just simply say I want to do this at Chantilly, but there is no information to suggest what the implications are, I would not be likely to support such an amendment and each of us would have to look in terms of our own selves with respect to supporting that, but it makes the process clean in terms of understanding what we are trying to do successfully for the Board to adopt. I would hope that we are able to minimize the number of amendments because of what the domino effect is. It just simply gridlock's the debate process and I would hope that there are perhaps no more than three or four. If it gets so crazy you can't support the plan, then ultimately you have to vote against the plan. But we are going to take some action, a decision will be made, open up schools and it's unfair to children that we don't have a clear response for them.

Mr. Lassiter: Reflecting on the 1997 actions, I thought it was one of the most effective methods we had ever done because you were able to find coalitions that like particular pieces and matched them up, otherwise, I think you have to break it down and the risk to that is that you get inconsistent with what might be voted but don't tie together. I don't think there is any way perfect. Getting them all typed up is almost theoretically impossible from Leslie's schedule and our schedules. Sometimes you get here and try to find last minute ways to hopefully resolve issues and then second saying you only get three, which I don't think Roberts' Rules says that anyway. Trying to be sensible about it I think is fair, but the extent to which you are going to have to have multiple ways to manage that and the vehicle (I forgot what it is technically called in Roberts' Rules) allows you to vote those pieces out and then add various amendments to pieces, if you can keep track of the players as you go through, works relatively well with something in cases of this kind.

Chairperson Griffin: We'll do that and I would also encourage us to talk with each other which makes it a lot simpler when we do that.

Ms. Winner: Can I make a suggestion? For the changes that are moving a street for a neighborhood from one place to another, it probably doesn't make sense to bring those to me. The changes that are changes in the grandfathering are, of course, priorities and changes to the agnet rules, are words that somebody needs to get written carefully. I probably could help get those written in a way to be typed.

Dr. Smith: Preparation for Thursday night is critical. Staff will be available, they have double duty, I have a pretty good list here of questions that you came up with tonight, but I will be available to field questions and try to get information for you. I would share with you that some of the questions that came up here tonight are we're trying to make a square peg fit into a round hole. We weren't built that way in the schools for the last thirty years; we have incredible emotion around that, but we also have incredible logistic issues, the likelihood of our students average bus ride being longer than they are this year with one of the most efficient transportation systems in the state of North Carolina and the likelihood of having an incredibly high number of mobile units moved and relocated next year and in some cases, the mobiles cannot fit. The more we can see and give you feedback before a final decision is

made we stand ready to do that. I would share with the Board again that Thursday night is a critical night for the administration. For us to prepare, even with an extended summer, I have not said that we are going to open up after Labor Day, I said there was a possibility of that and part of that depends on what happens Thursday night and our ability to get the school system ready to do what the Board finally authorizes. Again, the ability to move trailers and the transportation system are the major issues. So, wherever we can advise members if they have suggestions, we would be happy to try to put them in the mix.

Mr. Puckett: A couple of comments and questions. One for the record is pretty obvious, some of this is similar to what Ms. Kakadelis said. This newest plan basically leaves only one Magnet Program in north Mecklenburg County, that being Davidson IB Program from North Meck to West Charlotte and I have questions and concerns about the number of magnets moving back towards the inner city and why we are doing that when we have some great capacity needs according to this proposal at three different magnet schools in West Charlotte and none at North Meck or the New North Meck. Capacity wise that may be okay, there may be some upsides to that, but I'm back to the philosophical piece of this to the debate of why we are doing some of the things we're doing and I agree with some of the other Board members who say I would like to know some of the rules of the game of the things we are doing. I mention that as a note. I also have some rather great concerns about some of the Choice Zones. There have been a couple of different options that made those lines a little less definite as far as either offering middle schools that are on the border line so that you can get a wider range. I have problems, for example, with my particular district with students that live in the very northern end of the West Meck Zone and their options then are Olympic and the New South and they are really not a choice, very similar to what Ms. Kakadelis said. The same problem, if you happen to live in the Lake Wylie area, your choices are rather limited also. I am more concerned about those parents who have currently been going to a high school, but now we draw the line and they may be three or four miles from that line and the next choice is twenty miles away. I would like to see a little bit of work also on how we can expand that choice piece at the high school level. Again, I think our transportation piece comes a little bit easier at that. Also, Mrs. Griffin spoke of the Workplace Magnet that was originally a Workplace Magnet. Over half of the elementary school kids that we reassigned in 1998 are in Blythe Elementary. We have about 660 elementary students that we reassigned in 1998 and there is a discussion of grandfathering all of those '98 students. About 375 of that 660 actually are in one elementary school. One of my concerns there is capacity, I'm afraid we are going to fill up one elementary and deplete another elementary school in the process. The only other issue is that I worry this Board has sort of a fatalist outlook toward our inner city schools when we go to a program that looks anything like this and I really do see this plan, and what Charlotte has in front of it, as a real golden opportunity for this school system. I hear over and over again that no major urban school district has gone back to proximity based pupil assignments and it worked, but I also know very few large urban integrated school systems that did not go back to proximity that worked. There are very few large urban school systems that are working period, regardless of their student assignment. I happen to think Charlotte-Mecklenburg may have the last chance to do it right. I want to make sure that we don't become fatalistic in that though. One of the things that concerns me about my magnet programs is opening more and more magnet programs as it appears in some of my target schools. One of my great concerns with the way

we currently assign children is I end up with schools that have very empowered parents and the students that go there, and end up with the same schools that have students that don't have parents there either for lack of motivation, geography, or whatever the case may be. I think that speaks a lot for what happens in those schools and the empowered parents. Parents that are there every day being tutors and lunch buddies tend to get the best teachers. Kids who aren't empowered and who in the past have been satellite kids tend to get the lesser or weaker teachers. One of the strengths I happen to think of proximity based as we get to the inner city, and we do have great challenges there, this Superintendent and this staff are going to be in a position to do the things we need to do, but if I continue to add magnet programs, and I continue to add empowered people, do I run the risk of my best teachers becoming the magnet teachers, in partial magnet schools and I think we start that cycle all over again. I think if I have a school that is a target school that I put a partial magnet in it, I can see it becomes a dual school within that school, that I then have my brightest and best magnet teachers headed to that magnet program and the regular kids getting the less effective teachers. I have the same thing as far as parents go. I have empowered parents when they come there and the biggest plus we have in the past, a very wise guy once said if the only tool you have is a hammer, all your problems begin to look like nails. If our problem is how do we provide resources for at-risk children and the only way we have ever been able to come up with it is to put empowered parents in the school, then that means we're not doing a very good job because we need to be able to be the spokesperson advocate for those children that don't have empowered parents. I think the influx of magnets may make that a little more difficult for us.

The other one is a process piece and how do I pay. If I have a target school that has a partial magnet, do my magnet teachers get the differentiated pay when they may not even be sitting in front of targeted students. That's one thing that I haven't thought through the process is if I put a magnet in targeted schools, is the magnet piece of it also a target school, as far as the pay for my teachers go. And that's it. I happen to think we are on the road to doing some great things and it won't be easy, but I think we will be able to show in the next year or two a lot of great growth in a lot of places that we haven't seen it before. I'm looking forward to it to be honest with you. Thank you.

Mr. Dunlap: First question is a legal question. You don't have to answer tonight, but it has to be answered before Thursday. Will our voting or adopting a plan render our appeal moot?

Ms. Winner: No

Mr. Dunlap: Let me tell you why I ask that question. If we adopt a plan, why then would the 4th Circuit want to render a decision when we have already gone forward?

Ms. Winner: The three issues that we are appealing: one is whether we are unitarian; if we are not unitary, then even though we have adopted a plan, we're going to have to go back and readdress how to bring equity and unitarians into the plan, it doesn't moot that question.

The second issue was whether the magnet lottery was unconstitutional before which has to do more with liability questions than anything that we are doing in the future does.

The third question was whether we should have this injunction and have perpetuity and that certainly is not moot to the fact that we have adopted a plan that complies with the injunction and it doesn't moot the question of whether you should have your hands tied behind your back forever.

Mr. Dunlap: The bottom line is if you adopt a plan and then the Judge says we don't need to make a decision as it relates to the state, you have already moved forward, so what need would there be to render a decision on it?

Ms. Winner: One of the arguments, and possibly the strongest argument we made to the 4th Circuit, was not that there wasn't enough time to adopt a plan, but there wasn't enough time to implement it properly. We just didn't have enough time to move all those mobiles; to order mobiles, do the bus routes, and get the teachers where they need to be and that was really the primary focus of why we told them we needed the Stay. So, I don't think adopting a plan would affect whether you got the Stay.

Mr. Dunlap: I want to know what the implications are if we adopt a plan and get the Stay, but the other thing that I would like to have happen and we haven't done this, would be to have some evaluation done as to the implication of grandfathering those people by choice currently where they are. How would we do that, I don't know, but I would like to have an evaluation of what the implication would be? If everybody who wanted to stay where they are, by choice. It would be ideal for a Pineville parent, but I would like to have some evaluation.

Dr. Smith: One of the key questions on grandfathering, as I understand the legal implications of this, is you can't bump the child out that would have normally gone there if he chose to on a non-race based process. So one of the guiding issues of the Board is how much over capacity do you want us to make a school to accommodate grandfathering? We talked about 110% limit, do you want us to go there, or how much can we afford? How much space can a high school or elementary school campus handle with relocated classrooms? How many can we purchase and get delivered in time? Those are the questions or the other half of the questions. I can say we can grandfather, but physically we can't do it.

Mr. Dunlap: I would say that if it were possible and that's what people wanted to do, then we should, we've been beyond 110% before. We've been 148%, so my point is as long as we are not pushing anybody out, that might mean that we adopt a plan so that everybody has a proximity school, or whatever name you want to put to it, overlay that with everybody who wants to stay where they are and see what shakes out. If it means we move trailers, you know they have been good in the past. I would like to have some evaluation as to what the implication would be for grandfathering everybody as long as they meet the legal channels.

Mrs. Griffin: I just wanted to add my voice for preferential choice. Several people have raised points here I thought were very good and very valid. Mrs. Woods, I am interested in pursuing your ideas, but at the very least I wanted to take what Dr. Smith had put in the proposal with some preference and flush that out. If we do have, and apparently there is no

way to avoid having some high poverty schools, that there be real preferential choice out for children who want it or need it. There may be some who prefer to stay in a target school with the resources that small class sizes offer and that would be their choice given a preference on the assumption that there would not be as many people choosing into their school. There would be more one-way choice, whether it be as Mr. Lassiter spoke based on some continuity, or Mrs. Woods spoke based on linking it with the school, I am not sure, but that to me is the best resolution we have of the problem before us and that is finding a way to adopt a plan that makes sense for most of our children and at the same time offers some real protection from the parachute we are always speaking of. I don't think we're far from offering that and I'm not sure but what this plan could be crafted in a way that would still allow us that significant choice to protect those children.

Dr. Rembert: Just quickly about the concept of grandfathering. It does seem like one way we might be able to increase the choice options for parents of children in the inner city because I am assuming there are some people who want to bring their children in close proximity to home and there might be others who would like their children to remain where they are. They believe they are getting a good education and they are comfortable with that. That would at least give them a sense that they had a choice.

My question, Mr. Superintendent, is one that I asked just before Thanksgiving and that is about the feasibility of surveying parents, at least a sample, to find out whether they wish to remain where they are, whether they want to be grandfathered or not, so that we can base it on data that we receive from parents and not have to speculate about it.

Dr. Smith: We didn't have great success with local firms and out of town firms being able to conduct in rapid order a statistically significant survey of parent choices. We did craft a survey on our own within the last couple of days, asking two basic questions:

- 1) Given the option, would you prefer that your child stay in his or her current school? Yes or No. Response was 114 Yes, 21 No. That was done random-wise across schools, with some random structure to it.
- 2) Given the option, would you prefer that your child stay in his/her magnet program? Response 56 Yes, 4 No. So, a significant population that would like to stay where they are.

Dr. Rembert: The only other thing is that I'm trying to be a consensus building group. I've laid out what my concerns are and they remain my concerns. I will wait until Thursday to see what the possibilities are with regard to a motion and it may be the plan with some particular conditions might be palatable.

Dr. Leake: Thank you. That was my question, also, about the survey. We need to set policy for capacity and I don't think we have any. I've also have a concern for those children whose parents don't have the political know-how to speak up for themselves and I'm not saying they are less important, but they are more important to some degree because they have not utilized the procedures to speak for themselves. We must protect those children. That's

our responsibility as a Board and not just support the have's and not the have not's across the district.

Mrs. Woods: One thing is you want to get information in writing to us and we have to get answers to the questions we've asked such as I asked questions for example about the area there in Wilmore, split at West Boulevard and several other questions and I haven't gotten answers and I can't propose anything if I don't know what I'm doing there. I think the questions Mrs. Griffin asked are just critical to help us figure out what we want to recommend or not recommend. I want to ask the Board as we're talking about things what priorities we might want to give. It seems to me that in the schools where the children are displaced from magnets that we need to do something that you all did before under Dr. Murhpy's plan, whereas the first three years we need to give priority to those magnets to the children who in fact are displaced and I recognize that some magnets such as language that didn't give them a whole, unless it is maybe a kindergarten. I just think that that is only the courteous thing to do if you're taking away a school from a population of students and I would like to hear some response on that and I just think that's what we should do. That would also, for example, in a situation like Wilmore and Dilworth where some of the other communities have come together, it would give them a chance to start that ball rolling.

The second thing was one of the things I asked was to be sure that we looked at the zone so that if we give the Dilworth Magnet the Performing Arts, that we would also have a zone that, at least would include Wilmore, even if we had to split the West Meck Zone and that we also looked at aligning the zones more closely with where they were before. I gave you some recommendations and again I haven't heard on that, but it's real critical. It's not in the recommendations so I want to know whether it will be recommended and I am encouraging that it will be recommended. I just need to hear back. In response to Mr. Puckett's question, I think one of the issues regarding policy that I see in here that I really don't like are some of the things from Independence and some of the other places where they were developed, but I think the policy we are looking at, at least what I see in this that makes sense to me, is that the schools in the inner city that don't have growth areas that then a chance to have an attractive magnet that might still draw people there and the outlying areas where there is growth area, this gives them a chance for stability, such as Independence, they have almost 2,000 children without the magnet, which is really unfair to the people who live near Independence who might want to go there, because the magnets in North Meck are a great growth area. I think where things like that happen or are proposed we need to explain why and again to me that is a part of the policy. It makes good sense if it is in relation to policy, but it doesn't make good sense if it just looks like we're shuffling things around. But, I certainly think it is good policy to be sure that our trackers in the area where we need students, both from the point of view of stability of people in the growth areas and otherwise. I would like the Superintendent's recommendation about grandfathering for the first three years for the students who are displaced from schools prior to the magnet.

The other thing I think as we look at these Choice options, both Choice and magnet, the priorities that we had. I think we need to look at it in terms of whether we really do have true choice in the different zones like I was talking about. That's the reason for some of my recommendations that might go outside of the zones only in cases where you don't have the

cases of low poverty and high poverty schools. And, also I think we need to look back at our magnet policy, because one of them, for example, would say that if you had children who are in schools that were less than 50% on grade-level and you have a choice, which I think is a wonderful policy, but I think it needs to be the schools that have at least 10% above the system-wide average above grade level. What we don't want to do is have people choosing from a school that is below grade level to another school that is below grade level, or a school of poverty to another school of poverty. We want to offer a real choice to them. Originally, when this was done, our magnets were primarily in the white areas where we felt the magnets would be a privilege and some of them still are, but there are other magnets that will have very high free/reduced lunch population and maybe struggling themselves to achieve, so we need to be sure that choice is into those magnets where, in fact, we don't already have choice.

Chairperson Griffin: Mrs. Woods, we're going to need to move on and I suggest you grab us individually, by two's or by three's, state your case.

Chairperson Griffin: I want to thank you all for electing me Chair, but as Chairman, we have to move forward. We're starting to repeat ourselves like public hearings. We hear you loud and clear but we need to move on. I think we have a fun item coming up next.

Dr. Smith: I'll be brief, but I won't be too brief. I apologize for that, I know that it's late, but we have a couple of opportunities today to recognize some an individual who has given a tremendous amount of service to the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School System for the last 3-1/2 years and that's Dr. Susan Purser. Some of you were able to get over to the reception this afternoon. I would share with you that I have been honored to work with Dr. Purser throughout my time in Newport News and throughout my time here in Charlotte-Mecklenburg. She is one of the keenest educators I have ever come across. Her intellect and knowledge is outstanding. Her ability to get projects done in an incredible timeframe is something I'd never seen before and that is why you generally see her car here between the early hours to the late hours and on the weekends. She has helped this school system to not only begin getting its arms around the whole issue of curriculum and instruction and accountability, but also to get its arms around the issue of public information, get its arms around legislative efforts, and get its arms around a host of issues such as litigation last spring, CMS Vision document, the Advantage Carolina document right through the student assignment press that we have been under the last couple of weeks and those are just the tip of the iceberg. She has done an incredible job in Charlotte and it is much better for her presence here. Also, we're excited about her future in taking her leadership to the Great State of Mississippi and to tell you the truth sometimes I am quite envious, to tell you the truth, going to a school system with four schools. I think we could figure out the student assignment pattern down there, even if we had to open a new one.

Again, Dr. Purser from me personally, you are going to be missed, not only your service to me, but also your service to this school system and the children of Mecklenburg County. We would like to present you at this point a plaque in recognition of your service here.

Dr. Purser: I was able to come to Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools because of a recommendation of Dr. Smith, but that recommendation was approved by the School Board, so you, in fact, have given me this opportunity to serve in Charlotte-Mecklenburg. I came here because I truly believed, and I continue to believe, that Charlotte does offer the answer for public education in our country. I will definitely be keeping my eyes on Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools because it is going to continue to do great things. I'm just going to borrow a few and take them to Mississippi. But, thank you very much for this opportunity and thanks for the plaque.

REPORTS FROM BOARD MEMBERS:

Dr. Leake: I visited Cochrane Middle School on Monday. You hear parents say they don't want their children in a given school because of the community or neighborhood. That school is doing an excellent job educating children. It is clean. The principal is A-1. As far as the students go, I did not see one young man with his pants dropped down. I saw the staff, who was dressed appropriately and professionally and I just applaud Mrs. Lee for the job she is doing at that school. I want this community to understand that we do have good schools in this district and I wish we would not go by hearsay, but go visit these schools. Their grounds were immaculate. The second place I visited was West Charlotte. They had their Christmas Program today at the Museum of the New South and I thought it was a wonderful occasion of teachers enjoying themselves and I guess I will stop there. The principal there is doing an excellent job.

Dr. Rembert: I would certainly forgo this opportunity any other time but I promised a student who had their first press conference for the first edition of their Cougar Kids Connection at Cornelius Elementary that I would recognize their recent achievement and share with you a copy of their newspaper. I would like to recognize Ben Fisher, Chanel Gregory, Adriana Rawlins, Rebecca Oliver and Jason Penninger and their teachers who helped them with their new newspaper, Mrs. Hall and Mrs. Fisher. I went to that press conference because I got a letter from Chanel Gregory and I said if I could make it, I would try to do so. They did a very fine job and I just wanted to congratulate them and follow up on my commitment that I would recognize them at this Board meeting and pass out a copy of their newsletter.

Mrs. Griffin: I had one of the most delightful experiences of the Holiday Season when I visited Dilworth Elementary. They had a wonderful program, probably 650 parents and supportive people from the community, extremely diverse group of citizens. If we keep the magnet here, we have got to find a way that those three groups of people still have at least a shot at making it into that magnet. The place was packed, it absolutely has to be one of the best music instructors in the system, they are all good so I can't say that, but he was just wonderful, the children were wonderful; and it was just an extraordinary time and I think as we look at whether it's Dilworth or other schools, and how children and communities have come together to create a very special place in our school system that we need to remember those visions and continue to make those visions happen for our children.

One other thing I just have to say as we go into the holiday seasons, many of us are Christians and I hope as we think about this pupil assignment plan, and as we think about

decisions and choices we make for our children, the question that I'm beginning to ask is in how many of our schools would Jesus be welcome!

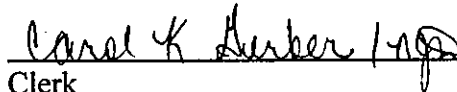
Chairperson Griffin: Before I ask for a motion for adjournment, let me say thank you to our Charlotte-Mecklenburg School Family for the great job you have done this first half of the year and we wish our entire School Family and the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Community Happy Holidays and Happy New Year.

ADJOURNMENT

On motion by Ms. Woods, seconded by Mr. Dunlap, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn the Regular Board meeting at 11:15 p.m.



Chairperson



Clerk