

Date	Kind of Meeting	Where Held
March 22, 2010	Regular	Honeysuckle Middle School - Auditorium, 1665 Honeysuckle Road
Presiding Officer	Members Present	Members Absent
Dr. Harry Wayne Parrish, Chairman	Dr. Harry Wayne Parrish, Chairman Mrs. Brenda Guilford, District 1 Mr. Franklin Jones, District 2 Mr. Charles Woodall, District 3 Mr. Jimmy Addison, District 4 Mr. Ben Armstrong, District 5 Mr. Chris Maddox, Vice-Chairman, District 6	

Dr. Harry Wayne Parrish called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m.

Mr. Franklin Jones led in prayer.

Dr. Harry Wayne Parrish led the Pledge of Allegiance.

School System News:

Mr. Charles Woodall gave the School System News as follows:

1. Mr. Matthew Humphrey, Principal at Dothan High School reports: Dothan High held its first Success Rally in preparation for the March Graduation Exams. Several community leaders were in attendance and Judge Rose Gordon & Mayor Mike Schmitz delivered excellent words of encouragement and motivation. DHS Varsity softball team won the Northview invitational tournament on Feb. 20th and the JV team came in 2nd. Varsity also won the Dothan tournament on Feb. 27th. DHS hosted "A Conversation with the Superintendent" in February. This was an opportunity for club presidents and officers to talk with Dr. Nichols and ask questions.
2. Mrs. Vicki Davis, Principal at Highlands Elementary School reports: 51 fourth and fifth grade students from Highlands Elementary qualified for the Duke TIP (talent identification program). 35 Highlands Elementary LinC students are going to Auburn University on March 27th to participate in the Elementary Science Olympiad Competition. Highlands Elementary received \$118.03 from Dothan Uniforms on March 2nd for participating in their coupon program for winter 2009. Highlands was awarded this money for having the most participation. Students at Highlands participated in "Jump Rope for Heart" and raised \$2,826.00 for the American Heart Association. "Read Across America" was once again a HUGE success at Highlands Elementary. Visitors read to children of all grade levels throughout the week of March 1st. The students also had an opportunity to participate in daily activities. One of the activities the students really enjoyed was dressing up as their favorite Dr. Seuss Character, and participating in a parade around the school. The Highlands Elementary Library is working together with Barnes & Noble to host a bookfair at the Barnes & Noble in Dothan. This is an effort to raise funds for new library books for the media center. The Highlands media center has over 200 books checked out daily, and has not received any money for books from the state. The bookfair will be March 12th through March 21st. Vouchers can be printed from the school website: <http://highlands.al.dce.schoolinsites.com>.
3. Mr. Woodall also stated fifteen 7th and 8th graders from BMS recently competed in the State Science Olympiad. The regional contest was held at Auburn where our students finished in 4th place which earned them a trip to the State competition at Huntington College in Montgomery. At State competition the BMS team medaled in 5 events earning these students around \$73,000 in scholarship money. Congratulations to the students and teachers at BMS.

Delegations:

Dr. Harry Wayne Parrish acknowledged the YES WE CAN Delegation.

Dr. Harry Wayne Parrish stated that Delegations would speak after Personnel Services.

Approval of Agenda and Proposed Agenda Modifications:

Dr. Harry Wayne Parrish stated there would be an amendment to the Agenda regarding the Executive Session to discuss matters likely to be litigated or imminently likely to be litigated if the Board pursues a proposed course.

Mrs. Brenda Guilford made a motion seconded by Mr. Jimmy Addison to approve the Agenda and proposed modifications as presented and as recommended by the Superintendent. The motion carried unanimously. Voting was as follows: "YEA" – Jones, Guilford, Woodall, Maddox, Parrish, Addison, Armstrong. "NAY" – None. "ABSTAIN" – None.

Action Items – Adoption of Consent Agenda:

Mr. Jimmy Addison made a motion seconded by Mrs. Brenda Guilford to approve the Consent Agenda as presented and as recommended by the Superintendent. The motion carried unanimously. Voting was as follows: “YEA” – Jones, Guilford, Woodall, Maddox, Parrish, Addison, Armstrong. “NAY” – None. “ABSTAIN” – None.

Minutes for the February 22, 2010 Regular Board Meeting – TA5, G21
Monthly Financial Reports and Accounts Payable/Payroll – TA4, G14 (See Attachment “A”)
Child Nutrition Program: Monthly Financial Report and Monthly Menu – TA4, G14
Bid(s): 15T Straight Cool Split Unit/Head Start Pre-School Center–TA4, G14
Project Updates
Donation(s)
Textbook Adoptions

Superintendent Recommendations:

Dr. Sam Nichols stated as I have received information from Montgomery I have tried to share it with the Board and the community. The legislature will have the Education Trust Fund Budget introduced Wednesday morning and from what I understand at this point there is a good possibility that it would be the best case scenario for us. We still have to cut \$5.5 million out of our budget and we were looking at possibly \$9 million. We are going to be absolutely transparent as we move forward. So that is why you are here tonight, we are soliciting your input and hope that later on those of you that have signed up to speak will share your thoughts with us. I am hopeful that we are going to have a good Educational Trust Fund Budget. Mrs. Morgan will share her thoughts about two high schools compared to one high school.

Mrs. Allyson Morgan shared good news stating that 7th and 8th graders from Carver Magnet School were also at the Science Olympiad competition and received \$40,000 worth of scholarship money. Also, Northview’s Academic Team was at the same competition at a different section and came in 3rd place. The 1st and 2nd place were private schools in the State of Alabama so we were the first public school with our academic team.

1. Mrs. Allyson Morgan stated Dr. Nichols asked me several weeks ago about consolidation of high schools and how we could save money because a few of the Board Members had asked him about it. So we began to look and see what actually would happen if we consolidated the high schools to save programs. At the present time we have 152 units that we split between Dothan, Northview, DTC and P.A.S.S. The State pays us for 141 units. We have 152 because we like to keep up with school systems that offer AP, Journalism, Mass Media, Yearbook, those kinds of courses within their school day. All those courses take teacher units to offer, they also take teacher units when you are duplicating services at both schools. Dothan has worked very hard in making sure that if AP was offered at Northview that AP would be offered at Dothan High. Also, ROTC, Drivers Ed and the list goes on and on. Electives that are not necessarily required but we offer our students. Most school systems that do not have a lot of local funding do not offer a lot of programs for their kids. Dothan has historically tried to do that. If there is an increase in the divisor, the formula for how they figure teacher units, we would have 123. With 138 we would staff two high schools with some electives not offered because we would not have the teachers to do that and with 123 units we would almost not be able to offer enough units for students to take. We would have large P.E. classes and we would maybe have study hall. We could not do 123 units adequately for two high schools that is where consolidation began to take shape. It is not about anything other than saving programs. The way we have to schedule students is first we have to look at what is required for graduation and every student in high school in the State of Alabama has to have 4 Math, 4 Science, 4 English and 4 Social Studies one a year their 9th through 12th grade year and they have a required computer applications course, a required fine arts course, and a required P.E. course. If they are college bound they need at least one year of a foreign language. Those are our first priorities. We have to make sure we have the adequate staffing for special education which also comes out of these units that are given. We have to look at every aspect of that before any electives are offered to students. If we are looking at an English course and your child wants to take an AP English that would be a core English that would be required. In the past Dothan City Schools has allowed 15 to be in an AP English class and make because we wanted to offer it we could not do that this year because we could not hire another English teacher to take this class. So what you would do is put say 45 students in an Honors English or General English to 15 in an AP class and we just do not have that luxury this year. We do not have that extra unit to add back in. We hear a lot about local units but that is where a big part of our local units has gone into play is making sure that we can offer these courses. If you have a child that wants to take beyond the required fine arts and wants to do the second year of art, sculpting or painting, we are going to have to make sure there is a class load in there; we cannot offer it to just 12 students anymore. Those are the kind of programs that we as a staff have talked about trying to save and talking with the Principals about saving. Do we save Drivers Ed? I think it is a really good program but do we continue offering it. It’s not required. When we look at requirements by the State for graduation that is the first way we schedule. I am going to make sure we have enough staff to accommodate the core classes. That is my biggest focus because I want students in English, Science, Math and Social Studies. I also want our students to have some extra electives. As it stands it stays the same for figuring how many units and we

would have 138 units. If the formula goes up we will have 123. If the Board chooses to consolidate, the high schools programs would be saved for students to be allowed to take. Either way it is going to be a hard year. We will have to reduce from 152 to either 138 or 123. That is never a good thing to reduce but at the same time it would not cut into what we could offer our students at two high schools versus one high school.

2. Mr. Mike Manuel gave a Budget Update reviewing the General Fund Balance Comparison FY2006-FY2010, Local Revenue Comparison FY2007-FY2010, General Fund Revenues FY2007-FY2010, Analysis of General Fund Expenditures FY2007-FY2010 and General Fund Recap. (See Attachment "B")

Personnel Services:

Dr. Dell Goodwin presented the Personnel Agenda and Addendum.

Mr. Jimmy Addison made a motion seconded by Mr. Charles Woodall to approve the Personnel Agenda and Addendum as presented and as recommended by the Superintendent. The motion carried unanimously. Voting was as follows: "YEA" – Jones, Guilford, Woodall, Maddox, Parrish, Addison, Armstrong. "NAY" – None. "ABSTAIN" – None. (See Attachment "C")

Board Comments:

Dr. Harry Wayne Parrish stated each Board Member will make a few comments.

Mr. Ben Armstrong stated I have received a lot of calls, emails and visits in the office. I have done my best to respond and look at alternatives to address the situation. I know there is one big issue that is looming out there that a lot of people are concerned about but what I have tried to tell most people is let's remain focused. The news Dr. Nichols gave earlier is certainly promising to know that we are hopefully not looking at \$9 million maybe it is less than that. Even the big issue out there is one issue of many that we are facing and let's consider everything and look at all the alternatives that we can and try to do what is best for the students.

Mr. Jimmy Addison state the biggest thing that I would like everybody to know from my standpoint is I am trying to save people's jobs. I feel like most of the people that know me know that I am going to try to do what I think is the right thing with the information that I have. There are a lot of rumors going on about all different kinds of things and there is no way that we as a Board will make any decisions regarding saving \$5.5 million is going to please everybody. There is no way to do it. I got a number of emails today saying I know you have a tough job and I am praying for you. That is all that we can do right now. It certainly is good news that we have to look at \$5.5 million as opposed to \$9 million. I cannot fathom \$5 million because I have never seen it. When I look at some of you people out here that I know personally and I know that it is your job that is at stake and you are a real person and we are going to try to take care of our employees as best as possible. We are charged and trying to do that as well as provide a quality education. I know that a lot of people have said I am just going to pull my child out and go somewhere else. Why because if you go to the County you are going to get a bare minimum education. It's like it was told to you just a few minutes ago, we are trying to provide extras for our students and we want them to have that. We do not want to cut any programs. We are going to do our best not to. Again we have a very difficult task ahead of us and please keep us in your prayers.

Mr. Franklin Jones stated I will only do what is right and what that is right now I do not know. I am glad to hear the news from our State Department. I do not want to be critical but our State needs to step up to the bat when it comes to our public education.

Mrs. Brenda Guilford stated I am thankful for the good news we received today from Dr. Nichols. The drop of \$4 million means a great deal and \$5 million is still a pretty tough thing to do but I am hoping that we will not have to do we have looked at possibly proposing. One thing as far as reduction that I am asking Dr. Nichols to do is to look at reducing non-teaching personnel before teaching personnel because that is so very important that we keep our teaching personnel in place. They are the ones that handle the bulk of everything. If you have a school and you have to reduce the teacher's slots then we have children without the proper teaching and supervision. That is one of the things that if I was totally in charge I would look at first because without the children we will not need as much help from other positions. That is one thing that I feel is very important. I am going to hear what you have to say tonight. I have gotten a lot of emails, some positive and giving us support. I knowing that we cannot please everybody. There is always going to be somebody that is going to come out not pleased. There is no way when you are dealing with a whole city of people that everybody is going to say hooray you did the right thing. For me I want to do the best for the children, the staff, everybody in the Dothan City School system and the best always does not please everybody so keep that in mind. We will hear what you have to say. I am looking at having a forum myself for anyone that has any concern in my district at Carver Magnet School on Wednesday at 5:00. If anybody has any information that might help me in making this decision as far as my one vote then you are welcome to come.

Mr. Charles Woodall stated I really appreciate each of you coming out here tonight. This is a very important subject and we do not take this lightly and I think everybody has mentioned that. We do have an understanding of what is at stake. The way I try to look at this is we all know the teaching happens between the teacher and the student so anything we can do to lessen the impact on that relationship is what we want to do. That being said Jimmy has said it

and others have alluded to it too, with the amount of money we may end up having to cut we are not going to be able to not affect that relationship. What we have to do is prepare for the worst and hope for the best. We appreciate you being here and your understanding with the situation we are in and just know like they said we are not going to be able to please everybody. We will try to do what we can to affect our kids as little as possible.

Mr. Chris Maddox thanked everyone for all their prayers and that he and his sister are both doing great. I appreciate you all being here as well. I wish that every one of our school board meetings had this kind of participation and this kind of attendance. What this shows me is the people of Dothan care about the city school system and that is important because we have 9,000 kids we are trying to educate in this system and we do it on what is basically a shoe string budget. There are serious problems that we have in the State when it comes to the way we fund our public education. I think you all are getting a hard lesson in how that works in terms of a sales tax being generated. It is great when times are good but when you have a recession in your economy and for the third year in a row we are going to be looking at proration. I see no reason to suspect that we will not be looking at another issue with some amount of proration for next school year as well. I hope I am wrong about that. I just want to say I appreciate all the emails and telephone calls I have gotten about your concerns. It seems that a lot of people are very concerned about the issue of the possible consolidation of the high schools. I understand that and that is an option that needs to be explored when it comes to possible ways to look at solving this financial problem that we have. That is not the only issue as Mr. Addison said a few minutes ago. To me this is more about saving jobs than it is about whether we consolidate high schools or not and whatever we can do to save teachers jobs and support staff that is what I am interested in doing. I have three children in the school system right now, I have a fourth not old enough but headed this way, I have a Mom employed by the school system and I have a wife that is employed by the school system. I assure you all that I am as vested in this decision as it can get and all I am interested in is doing what is best interest of the kids. For me it is not about one football team so anybody out there who thinks that this whole conversation is about one football, please understand that you are dead wrong as far as I am concerned. I do not care about one football team, I am interested in what can we do to make this system the best it can possibly be for all 9,000 kids. One of the things this Board is going to have to start doing and the community as well is start expecting excellence at all levels of our school system. Let's not be satisfied with mediocrity anywhere. Get involved and solve the problem. This is a great turn out and this is an opportunity, as bad as the money is, for the City to really step up through the community and the school system to start making strides to make the system better. I ask for your support and help. I am thrilled that you are all out here and look forward to working with all of you in an effort to do what is in the best interest of our school system.

Dr. Harry Wayne Parrish stated I do not know if you realize it or not but we have a tremendous Board of Education. I know everyone of them personally and I have gotten to know them even closer since I have been with them for just a few months here. The City of Dothan is really blessed because they all care about these kids. I am glad Chris said that about the football and I am the football coach. I have heard that so much. If you think that is the only reason I am sitting here that is crazy. People do not realize that I have been a school administrator but I am not here to defend myself, I am not worried about that. I am here for these kids. What concerns me the most and I will say it over and over again, I think the elementary kids are the part we need to look at the most to try to preserve. When I became an elementary principal in Georgia I saw what an impact those teachers had on all those kids and how important it was to get them off to a good start. I really believe it starts at the bottom and not the top. Nobody here has an Agenda; the Agenda is Dothan City Schools and our kids. We have tried to be open and I have tried to respond to every email and if they put a number I have called them. I think all the Board Members have done the same thing. We have done everything we can to do that. The last thing tonight is to let people talk before the Executive Session. We want to be open. Just call us and ask us. Dr. Nichols has told us everything. Some have said we are hurrying but I have been looking at numbers for 9 weeks and that is not hurrying. The whole Board has taken hours and hours looking at numbers trying to figure out what to do. So this has not been something we just thought up yesterday and came up with. It is a lot to look at to try to make the best decision. It is really hard, prayer is the best thing. Dr. Parrish continued stating the rules are you get three minutes. I will ask you quietly to sit down if you go over three so do not get mad at me. We want you to come down and talk about solutions, things you think we can do and things you think are important to you and solutions to these problems. Please be professional. The last thing, there will be no talking about anybody.

Delegations:

The following delegations addressed the Board regarding concerns over the budget, high school consolidation, saving programs, challenging the community, hidden agendas and spending: Bruce Peterson, Ann Parker, Twyla Williams, Margaret Reaves, Steven Tsukuda, Shuntae Goodman, Emmie Reynolds, Matt Parker, Tom Ziegenfelder, Sandy Kaston, Edward Vaughn, Jude Rodgers, Kim Price, Paige Talbert, and several other students. The following delegation showed support of the Superintendent: Wendy Strickland.

Dr. Parrish also recognized Dr. Nichols, Mike Manuel and Allyson Morgan for the hours and hours spent giving us information and working last week when everyone was off.

Mr. Charles Woodall stated he would hold a Public Forum for District 3 at Beverlye Magnet School at 6:30 tomorrow night.

Mr. Chris Maddox stated he and Mr. Ben Armstrong would hold a Public Forum for Districts 5 and 6 at Covenant United Methodist Church at 5:15 on Thursday.

Mrs. Brenda Guilford stated she would hold a Public Form for District 1 at Carver Magnet School at 5:00 on Wednesday.

Dr. Harry Wayne Parrish stated we need a lot of prayer, it is numbers, no matter how much emotion we have or how much we do I am not going to be the first Board Chairman that this school system goes bankrupt under. We will be fair across the board looking at everything. It is still numbers; they came down a little today.

Executive Session:

Mr. Jere Segrest stated I am required by the Open Meetings Act to certify that this is a matter to be discussed as likely to be litigated or imminently likely to be litigated if the Board pursues the proposed course relating to these discussions. The Board will be discussing this with me as the attorney and getting advice.

Mrs. Brenda Guilford made a motion seconded by Mr. Franklin Jones to adjourn into Executive Session as recommended by the Superintendent. The motion carried unanimously. Voting was as follows: "YEA" – Jones, Guilford, Woodall, Maddox, Parrish, Addison, Armstrong. "NAY" – None. "ABSTAIN" – None.

Mr. Jimmy Addison made a motion seconded by Mr. Ben Armstrong to reconvene into Regular Session as recommended by the Superintendent. The motion carried unanimously. Voting was as follows: "YEA" – Jones, Guilford, Woodall, Maddox, Parrish, Addison, Armstrong. "NAY" – None. "ABSTAIN" – None.

Dr. Harry Wayne Parrish stated there was no action taken in Executive Session.

New Business:

Dr. Harry Wayne Parrish announced the April 19th Board meeting.

Adjournment:

Mr. Jimmy Addison made a motion seconded by Mr. Ben Armstrong to adjourn. The motion carried unanimously. Voting was as follows: "YEA" – Jones, Guilford, Woodall, Maddox, Parrish, Addison, Armstrong. "NAY" – None. "ABSTAIN" – None.

The meeting adjourned at 7:33 p.m.

APPROVED: April 19, 2010

Dr. Harry Wayne Parrish, Chairman

Sam Nichols, Superintendent, Secretary