

# Board Bullets

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Highlights of the Cherokee County Board of Education Meeting held on Thursday, January 13, 2011, 6:00 p.m., at the Tri-County Early College.

Thank you to those Principals and Administrators attending: Alissa Cheek, Bill Gaither, Tom Graham, Virginia Haynes, Delaine MacDonald, Barry McClure, Mike Penninger, Phil Pressley, Andy Pyle, Paul Wilson, Jodi Alverson, Mike Campbell, Kenny Garland, Jeana Hardin, Karen Kephart, Bryan Kilpatrick, Libby Thigpen, and Gary Wright

- Mr. Randy Barnett called the meeting to order.
- Ms. Alissa Cheek, Principal of Tri-County Early College, welcomed all in attendance and said the invocation.
- Mr. Paul Brown led the Pledge of Allegiance and Dr. David Ackerman read the Mission Statement.
- The Agenda and Minutes were approved as presented.
- There was no public input.
- Ms. Cheek briefed the Board on Tri-County Early College's primary goals and introduced the students and teacher who gave the following presentations:
  - Ms. Safiyya Adam gave a student presentation outlining TCEC's utilization of 7 survivor skills as their school wide theme.
  - Ms. Breanna Cheek gave a presentation on TCEC E-Portfolios, their goals, and use.
  - Mr. Hagen Carringer provided a presentation on global citizenship and gave an overview of TCEC's hosting Danish exchange students.
  - Ms. Anne Breazeale provided a detailed brief on Tri-County Early College's testing statistics in comparison to state averages. This brief also included attendance and graduation ratings.
  - Mr. Ben Owens, Math and Science Teacher, presented each Board member a copy of The Global Achievement Gap by Tony Wagner. He provided detailed information of its significance to using the 7 survival skills and ensuring students were well prepared upon finishing school to enter into the competitive 21<sup>st</sup> century work place.
  - Ms. Cheek summarized the student presentations by reemphasizing their utilization of technology and how technological advancements will ultimately save money. She then requested that the Board sponsor their appropriation of new technology with a grant of \$500. The Board approved the request.
- Mr. Bill Gaither appeared before the Board and provided an overview of Mountain Youth School's student presentation. He informed the Board that the greenhouse had been repaired and of their plan to seed the area where trailers had been removed. The Board approved granting Mountain Youth School \$500 to fund their school improvement projects.
- Mr. Kenny Garland appeared before the Board and delivered an SAT update. Dr. Lane added that there has been significant emphasis put on SAT training and that he was confident the testing results for December/January will continue to show gains just as those reported for November/December. In addition, he informed the Board that the goal was to be above the regional and state average and ultimately to be above the National average.
- Mr. Gary Wright presented the Board with a facilities update. He emphasized removal of trailers, improvement of playgrounds, and announced that at 2:00 p.m., Wednesday, January 19, the contractor's bids would be opened for the Andrews Building B project.
- Dr. Mike Campbell presented the Board with an energy update and spoke of the three major shutdowns that occur during the school year in an effort to save energy. In addition, he complimented Mr. Paul Wilson and his school for having the most efficient "Christmas Break" shutdown.

- Dr. Lane presented a budget amendment for approval. The amendment was approved. In addition, Dr. Lane updated the Board on the School Foundation, and announced that the Foundation Board would meet on January 24, 2011 at noon.
- The Board approved one policy for second reading: 1510/4200/7270 – School Safety. There were no policies for first reading.
- Dr. Lane provided the following Superintendent’s Report: I would like to commend Tri-County Early College students and staff for their presentations this evening. I think the information you heard from Ms. Cheek on their use of I-Pads and the savings realized is an excellent use of monies. As you know, purchasing of text books is one area that the State has suspended funds. Also, in our Race to the Top grant, we’ve approved 25 sets of the I-Pads for our high schools. Jodi Alverson has made sure that the special needs teachers have I-Pads and of course our administrators have them. I think this is a tremendous initiative on Tri-County Early College’s part and I think that you can see from this that TCEC continues to implement exciting and creative programs. They have a 100% graduation rate and have the highest EOC scores in the county. Peachtree School has some great news: Wal-Mart donated \$100 to each of the classroom teachers for classroom supplies. Peachtree also received a \$2,000 donation from Snap-On Tools. Ms. Linda Garland, 4<sup>th</sup> grade math teacher of Ranger school received an \$800 grant from Target for field trip use. Mr. Steve Simonds had been previously recognized with the Yale Education award. An article appeared in both papers about his accomplishments and we appreciate the recognition. What we didn’t know at the time was that he was the only person in North Carolina to receive that award and only 1 of 18 counselors in the entire world to receive this from Yale University. We are having to revise our calendar due to the weather. We have a lot of issues and the biggest of course is how we’ve had to close school. We analyze road conditions each day, and work closely with DOT. I must commend Mr. Wendell Chastain of DOT because he has done a good job keeping the main roads open and anytime that we have made a request of him he has done his best to accommodate us. Mr. Wright and Mr. Bryan Kilpatrick worked to get the school parking lots scraped and we’ve asked our principals to come out and take care of salting the main entrances and other areas so that in the event we do have school those areas will be cleared. Tomorrow we will assess the possibility of having school on Saturday. As far as making up missed days, our calendar called for two optional days, which we took on Monday and Tuesday of this week and now June 9 and 10 will become school days. We’ve got a snow day designation for Good Friday which will become a school day for Wednesday, January 12. So that leaves Thursday and Friday that we have to make up. We have a January work day so we will go on Saturday of that week without getting into employee overtime that will replace Thursday, January 13. Not wanting to affect the Memorial Day holiday, we’ll use June 4<sup>th</sup> which is a Saturday and that would take care of Friday, January, 14<sup>th</sup>. If we miss anymore days, we’ve already announced that the following Saturday of that week will be our makeup day. Although we can use Saturdays for days missed within a week, what we really would like is to extend our day as designated Mountain Counties with waivers can do. By extending their school day, they are able to get their hours of instruction despite not having their 180 days. We will explore this option. This is our third year with qualifying bad weather days, and it takes four years under the current calendar law to qualify for a Mountain County Waiver. Last year the legislature did act to allow 1000 hours or 180 days but unfortunately, they didn’t enact it until late May. By then we already had our days designated and made up. We’re meeting with our representatives next week to discuss this option and we’ve heard that the new leadership in the General Assembly is in favor of giving control of the calendar to local Boards of Education. This is one of the requests we’re making of them. If they do this in February, for instance, that will give us flexibility to manage our calendar issues like those counties that qualify for the waiver. Hence, if the legislature acts in February, we will not have to have 180 days, only 1000 hours. This will be a much better way to solve the issue. The representative from Henderson County is now in charge of the rules committee and will decide what legislation is heard and in what order. I’ll be sending him a letter, with the concurrence of the Board, to request that calendar issues be considered early. I think this winter weather has impacted all 100 counties in some way. It’s been a state-wide event and I think when we have that kind of wide spread need, there will be a lot of support. We’re hoping this is the year they make the changes because it is something they have already indicated they would like to do. One of the changes for the calendar is to move the work day on January 24<sup>th</sup> to January 31<sup>st</sup>. This workday was set primarily for high schools because it’s the end of a semester and is like starting a whole new school year all over again. By moving the workday from January 24<sup>th</sup> to January 31<sup>st</sup> that will allow us to use Saturday, February 5<sup>th</sup> as a

makeup day for January 14<sup>th</sup>. We'll take one weather event at a time and monitor all weather events and try to make the best decision that we can in the best interest of the students. One of the problems that we're facing for Monday, January 17 is that snow has been pushed off the main roads blocking turn around locations for our busses. So between now and Monday, even though the weather is supposed to be warmer, those big mounds of snow will still be there. I've asked the principals in the meeting held prior to the Board meeting to take a look at all of those possible turn around locations, and let Bryan Kilpatrick, our Transportation Supervisor, know of alternate sites we can use. Depending on what we learn from this, we may only be able to offer limited bus services on Monday. But, we'll have time to communicate that to all the parents and let them know how busses will operate. We'll also let parents know that if there is an absence because of a missed school bus, it will be counted as an excused absence. Hopefully, with prior notification, principals and parents will be able to make some alternative arrangements for the portion of students affected. Principals and bus drivers will be working on that between now and the weekend to make the notifications. I think we're being as conscientious to safety as we can while still trying to have school. We want to be able to start Monday even if it's with a delay, if possible. Dr. David Ackerman added that Georgia has missed a lot of school, especially in North-Georgia. Consequently, UGA has altered the deadline for some of the applications and materials that counselors have to provide and this may affect North Carolina students. He requested that support be offered to assist any student affected. Dr. Lane said that we will contact North Carolina Universities and find out if that will be an issue, and communicate that information to principals and counselors.

- At this time, the Board adjourned to closed session.
- After returning to open session, the board took the following actions:
- The Board approved the Leaves of Absence for: Heather Lovingood, MES and Amanda Barton-Patterson, AES.
- The Board approved hiring Harry Holliday for the second semester as an AP History teacher at MHS.
- The Board approved the following substitutes: Amanda Aldridge, Melissa Brown, Michael Herrington, Avis Hicks, Johathan Spradling, Debbi Timson, Jason Johnson, James Postell
- The next meeting of the Cherokee County Board of Education will be held at Murphy High School, on February 10, 2011 at 6:00 p.m.
- There being no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 8:46 p.m.