



OPEN SPECIAL MEETING

By unanimous agreement the Somerset County Board of Education met at the J.M. Tawes Career and Technology Center on Tuesday, January 24, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. to hold the Special Open. Present were Chairman Sumpter, Vice Chairman Green-Gale, Mr. Miles, Dr. Whittington, Mr. Wells, Superintendent Dr. Marjorie E. Miles and Melissa Tilghman, recording secretary.

AGENDA

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Sumpter at 7:00 p.m.

2. Roll Call

The roll was called by Ms. Tilghman indicating that all five Board members were present.

3. Declaration of Quorum

Chairman Sumpter declared a quorum was present.

4. Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Sumpter led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

5. Public Participation

Several parents, students, and community members addressed the Board with their questions and concerns regarding the school realignment proposal. Some of those questions and concerns were:

- students student travel time to school and the impact of student learning
- can SIS parking house student and teacher vehicles
- the danger of route 413 for those students that drive to school
- increased students population impact on student achievement, sports and fine arts
- Afterschool programs would be affected for the CAHS students
- Identity crisis for CHS students
- Lack of parent involvement and community input
- Increase in rivalry and fighting

- Lack of accountability for SCPS staff
- SIS student capacity
- Present a list of pros and cons for the derivative schools
- Loss of student morale
- Implementation of tools to increase AYP
- Availability of courses offered at both schools
- Do what is best for students

6. Presentation

The Superintendent explained the steps that will be needed to improve AYP. Two restructuring plans were presented for the community's review. She stated that positive research had been done on school consolidation. Chairman Sumpter added that various parts of the presented plans could be combined to make a whole.

Beth Whitelock explained that school restructuring would require CHS staff to reapply for the positions. Observations will be done on staff and their certification will be reviewed. Dr. Miles explained that all new staff must be in place by August 2, 2012. Summer institutes are being held where teachers will be taught and inserviced on teamwork. She stated that administrators should be located throughout the school building.

Lisa Hopkins, Director of Curriculum and Development, explained the course of Derivative and Restructuring schools. She expressed that there would be significant savings if the schools combined. There were several questioned regarding the letter sent to the commissioners regarding the consolidation proposal. Chairman Sumpter explained that the letter was written requesting the commissioners support to research and gather information on school consolidation.

Ms. Smoker explained the laptop expansion initiative and the continued use of promethean boards. It was suggested from the audience that students be taught with chalkboards instead of using promethean boards.

Ms. McLaughlin, Elementary Student Services Supervisor, addressed the community explaining that increased parent involvement was needed.

Dr. Miles stated that a teacher/principal evaluation process is being implemented. She also indicated that a State of the Arts Vocational Program would be developed and paid for by MSDE grants.

6. Superintendent and Board Comments

Chairman Sumpter announced that a meeting will be held February 02, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. at the J.M. Tawes Career and Technology Center.

The Board members thanked the students, parents, and community for their attendance and input. The Board understands that a change is needed within the schools system and will gather the information from the community's input to make a decision that proves to be what is best for the students of Somerset County.

Dr. Miles announced that there will be a Special Education Advocacy group on February 01, 2012 at 12:30 p.m.

6. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 p.m.

Dr. Marjorie Miles, Superintendent

Melissa Tilghman, Board Secretary