

JOINT MEETING MINUTES
DURHAM PUBLIC SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION
and
DURHAM COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
February 24, 2003

Durham County Board of Commissioners hosted a joint meeting with the Durham Public Schools Board of Education on Monday, February 24, 2003 at 4:00 p.m. at the County Commissioners Chambers, 200 E. Main Street, Durham, North Carolina.

School Board Members in attendance:

Kathryn Meyers, Chair
Regina George-Bowden, Vice-Chair
Gail Heath
Steve Martin
Phillis Scott
Jackie Wagstaff
Ann T. Denlinger, Superintendent

County Commission Members in attendance:

Ellen Reckhow, Chair
Joe Bowser, Vice-Chair
Philip Cousin, Jr.
Becky Heron
Mary Jacobs
Mike Ruffin, County Manager

Board of County Commission Chairman Ellen Reckhow called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone on behalf of the Board of County Commissioners. Kathryn Meyers thanked the County Manager and Commissioners for the opportunity to meet together to discuss the public schools' facilities plans and projects. Superintendent Ann Denlinger introduced Durham Public Schools' staff members in attendance. The agenda was reviewed. The two Boards agreed to hold at least four joint meetings yearly. Proposed dates for meetings were: April 28, 2003, August 25, 2003, October 27, 2003 and February 23, 2004. Protocol for joint planning will be discussed at the next joint meeting.

Superintendent Denlinger said the Board of Education will hold two Public Hearings on the Long Range Facilities Plan on February 27, 2003 and March 27, 2003. The hearings will give the Board of Education members and staff an opportunity to hear from citizens. The Priority One Projects for the 2003 Bond Referendum will be approved at the April 24, 2003 Board of Education Meeting. The Board of County Commissioners will receive the approved Priority One Projects on April 25, 2003. Dr. Denlinger stated that Assistant Superintendent Hugh Osteen will provide a breakdown of the \$210,198,905 capital plans. All schools are addressed in the Plan.

System-wide improvements include mobile classrooms, school security, technology, activity buses and playground upgrades. Two drafts were presented: (1) the revised Long Range Facilities Plan and (2) the 2003 Bond Referendum Recommendations. Superintendent Denlinger thanked County Manager Mike Ruffin and the Board of County Commissioners for considering the bond referendum that will provide \$100M designated for schools. Dr. Denlinger said the money would enable the schools to address improvements to current buildings, as well as provide for anticipated growth.

Assistant Superintendent Hugh Osteen gave a thorough overview of Durham Public Schools Long Range Facilities Plan and Priority One Projects for the 2003 Bond Referendum. The Plan presented is an eight or nine year Plan to extend through 2011 or 2012. Individual facility summaries were discussed for elementary schools, middle schools, secondary schools, high schools, central facilities and system wide improvements.

Ellen Reckhow said the overall Plan appeared to be solid. School Board Members and County Commissioners debated over what to do with the Lowe's Grove Elementary School site. The school board resolved to sell the land in 2001, only to reconsider building a new school on the site when the commissioners did not agree to turn the land over for private use. There are no plans, however, in the bond proposal for the 16-acre site. Included in a draft of the long-range facilities plan is a recommendation for a small elementary school to be built on the site, as well as a public library and a park. Commissioner Joe Bowser said he did not think there was enough land to split it up three ways. The land, near Research Triangle Park, is worth more than \$2 million. Mr. Osteen stated that if commissioners allowed the school system to sell the property, the proceeds could pay for two separate school sites in other parts of the county. Mr. Ruffin and County Commissioners will ask their planning department to look at the Lowe's Grove site.

There was also discussion about the future of W.G. Pearson Elementary School and whether to renovate the old school or build a new school. One scenario would be to build a new elementary school that would accommodate up to 600 students on the Hillside High School property. The school could become the new W.G. Pearson Elementary School

County Commissioners asked if Durham Public Schools had a technology plan in place. Superintendent Denlinger stated it does and that a copy of Durham Public Schools Technology Plan would be forwarded to the County Manager's Office.

Questions from the public were entertained. There were six individuals who spoke on varying issues from mobile classrooms, playgrounds at schools, building new elementary schools, bond issues, environmental issues at Lakewood School, input from school board members at meetings, and construction of an elementary school on the Hillside High School site.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

Approved by Durham Public Schools Board of Education

Kathryn Meyers, Chairman / Date

Approved by the Durham County Board of Commissioners

Ellen Reckhow, Chairman / Date