

Roswell Cluster, LSAC
Jan. 16, 2007 – 12 noon
Teaching Museum - North

Members Present:; Cathy Decker, Chair; Debbie Dobson, Sweet Apple LSAC; Debra Martino, Sweet Apple LSAC; Vivian Bankston, Elkins Pointe Principal; Jennifer Altmeyer, Elkins Pointe LSAC; Cheryl Williams, Mimosa Principal; Gladys McBurrows, Hembree Springs LSAC, Edward Spurka, Roswell High Principal; Diana Jones, Roswell High LSAC; Cathi Barlow, Mountain Park Principal; Kimothy Jarrett, Crabapple Principal; Lenny Forte, Sweet Apple Principal; Elyne Halverson, Roswell North Asst. Principal; Denise Dumont, Roswell North LSAC, Agneta Mimms, Crabapple LSAC; Maggie DeCan, Roswell North LSAC; Lisa Smith, Mimosa LSAC – Community Partner; Sharon Stranberg, Sweet Apple LSAC; Robert Lynch, Area Superintendent

Guests: Linda Schultz, Fulton County School Board, James Wilson, Superintendent

Call to Order

Chair, Cathy Decker, called the meeting to order at 12:15 pm.

Introductions

All in attendance introduced themselves.

Topic: SPLOST III

Cathy Decker, Chair, indicated that each school had been asked to forward details of their school SPLOST coordinator which in turn were forwarded to the County's PTA SPLOST committee, led by Sue Derene and Sally Hildebrant. The committee in turn will communicate directly with these reps.

Diana Jones, Roswell High LSAC and SPLOST rep, asked about interest in a collaborative public meeting on SPLOST amongst our Cluster schools. Several schools indicated an interest and Cathy Decker agreed to forward Diana all the contact info for the SPLOST reps in our Cluster.

Superintendent Wilson then spoke on this subject. Highlights of his remarks included the following:

- Both a PTA committee and a business/chamber of commerce committee have been formed and are proactively getting the positive message out about SPLOST III. Businesses are identifying "hot spots" to target and the PTA is seeking to educate its parents and those in neighborhoods surrounding the schools.

- Printed pieces explaining and promoting SPLOST III are being printed and will be delivered to the schools by the end of the week.
- Why SPLOST III as the vehicle to raise money? The alternatives are a bond or increase in property taxes which would be hugely more expensive for the bond and much more unpopular for the property tax increase. SPLOST III is also attractive because this revenue is generated not only by Fulton County residents, but by others who live outside Fulton County but travel in to buy goods (tourists, commuters, etc.). Thus, others help raise monies for our schools!
- Why do we need SPLOST III? We expect growth of 20,000 more students in our school district in the next 5 years. We need to have funds to reduce the # of portable trailers (currently 600), build 14 new schools and construct 11 additions to schools in order to accommodate this growth.
- We cannot rely strictly on our operation budget as 88 % goes to salaries; the remaining 12% is used for other expenses – there is no left-over money to accommodate the growth mentioned above.
- Why the vote on March 20? Only 5 dates available for special elections and this vote had to come 5 years after the SPLOST II vote (March 2002).
- Historically, SPLOST votes have a high pass rate. Gwinnett and Cherokee Counties passed their most recent SPLOST in late 2006.
- What happens if Milton County is created? The County will ask the legislature to vote on keeping the SPLOST III monies in the county where it was created. This probably will not be an issue due to timing of a future possible Milton County.
- Do we expect any backlash with the Cobb SPLOST issue? No, Cobb went away from their advertised plan and we will not deviate from our plan of 14 schools, 11 additions and reducing the number of portables.

Topic: BUDGET

Superintendent Wilson spoke on the budget. He shared ways the County is working to make hiring new teachers more attractive. Highlights included:

- Cost center budgets will be to the schools and principals before the 1st hiring fair in February (next month). Now, principals will be able to offer contracts at this time; this is a change from the past when these budgets were not provided this early in the year. This will also allow principals to hire general teachers at this time, not just those in the science, special education and foreign language fields. Principal Spurka, Roswell High, noted that this positive change will allow our schools to be more competitive in hiring the best teachers.

- The County is researching a salary raise for all school employees, as well as eliminating the 3 year salary freeze with new hires with no experience and granting full credit for experience in other school systems.

Mr. Lynch also spoke on the budget. He indicated that he needed projected enrollments from all the schools. He also shared the student teacher ratios by grade: K: 19 to 1; 1 -3 grade: 20 to 1; 4th and 5th grade and middle school: 27 to 1; high school: 27 to 1 (Ms. Schultz shared that the high school ratio had just changed to 28 to 1).

He also mentioned graduation coaches being extended to middle schools.

Next Meeting

Our next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 13, 2007 at 12 noon at the Teaching Museum- North. Mimosa Elementary School will be providing lunch. Agenda topics to include budget and staffing.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 1:15 p.m.