

Fulton County Board of Education
Teleconference Board Meeting Minutes

February 18, 2005

The Fulton County School Board met via teleconference call on February 18, 2005, at 9:00 a.m. Board members indicating their presence verbally were Gail Dean, Katie Reeves, Julia Bernath, Linda Bryant, Zenda Bowie, Liz Hausmann, and Linda Schultz. Board Attorney Kyle Pearson was also teleconferenced. Others present were James Wilson, Harold Grindle, Katie Lovett, Bob Leon, Wilma Gibbs-Matthews, Carolyn Mattingly and Mitzi Edge.

The meeting was declared an emergency due to the need to consider the award of a data communications services contract. The contract must be awarded by February 18 in order to qualify for e-rate funding.

Operations

Interim Superintendent James Wilson introduced the topic for discussion as a \$529,000 contract for signature. The contract will allow the school system to apply for e-rate funds. The contract has been reviewed by legal counsel and has been signed by BellSouth. Mr. Wilson apologized that the information was not sent sooner and requested permission to move forward. He further explained that rules and laws might change regarding e-rate but this contract would allow the school system to be eligible to apply for \$529,000 of e-rate funds.

Liz Hausmann: Are there any members of the press or public present?

Mr. Wilson: No.

Julia Bernath: Is this amount different from amounts in prior years?

Katie Lovett: Our annual rate is \$694,000. This request would increase us to \$929,000 per year.

Gail Dean: Could someone explain what our rate means?

Katie Lovett: We currently purchase T1 lines from AT&T. We want to use these funds to increase our bandwidth.

Katie Reeves: Are T1 lines state-of-the art?

Mr. Wilson: Not at all. We will discuss some of the other issues in open meeting. What we are doing today will make us eligible to apply for reimbursement.

Katie Reeves: Is there a different plan for the money? Can we change from T1 lines to something more current after getting approval?

James Wilson: We are obligated to spend the funds on telecommunications.

Katie Lovett: We will not keep T1 lines. We are moving to fiber optic.

Katie Reeves: We can qualify for the funds but not specify that we will spend the funds on T1 lines?

Kate Lovett: We currently use T1 lines. We are moving to fiber for better internet access.

Kyle Pearson: All that we want to do today is approve the BellSouth contract. E-rate funds come as a result of completing the contract. BellSouth has already signed the contract.

Mr. Wilson: What we are asking is that you allow us to sign the contract to be eligible to apply for e-rate funding.

Gail Dean: Is that your motion?

Mr. Wilson: Yes.

Gail Dean: Will someone make that motion? Katie Reeves makes the motion. Julia Bernath seconds the motion.

Board members were polled and voted verbally. The motion passed unanimously.

Zenda Bowie: Will this be on the Purchasing Report in March or is this the vote?

Mr. Wilson: This was the vote. When I mentioned it previously, we thought the item may need a vote on the March agenda but it will appear as information.

Liz Hausmann: Could department heads review other contracts so that we don't have this occur again?

Mr. Wilson: Yes.

Kyle Pearson: The reason for the emergency meeting must appear in the minutes.

Linda Schultz: Could we receive a recap – a paragraph – about what we did today?

Mr. Wilson: Yes. We will send that out before the end of the day.

The teleconference ended at 9:15 a.m.

Gail Dean, Board President

James Wilson, Board Secretary

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