

## Minutes

January 23, 2014

The Greene County Board of Education met in regular session Thursday, January 23, 2014, at 4:30 p.m., at the Greene Technology Center.

Board members present were: Chairman Nathan Brown, Vice-Chairman Kathy Crawford, Tom Cobble, Rex Hopson, Deborah Johnson and Rick Tipton. Kathy Austin was absent.

Chairman Brown called the meeting to order, welcomed everyone present and noted that a quorum was present. Student Board member Adam Foshie from North Greene High School led the pledge to the flag, Mr. Bill Ripley led the invocation and student Board member, Logan Long from West Greene High School ran the A/V equipment for the meeting.

**III. PRESENTATIONS & CELEBRATIONS**

- CDHS-TSSAA District I Female Coach of the Year -Beth Frye – Certificate presented by Mr. Rex Hopson and Mr. Tom Cobble
- JRROTC Unit Merit Award – T.H. McNeese Educational Center – Major David Wims and Master Sergeant Kent Lyon – Receiving an overall assessment score of “Exceeds Standards” on Unit Evaluation – Certificate presented by Mr. Rick Tipton.
- Niswonger Scholars – McKenzie Reynolds (NGHS) and Alora Ricker (SGHS)
- Trash to Art Contest Winners Sponsored by Keep Greene Beautiful – DeBusk Winners – 1<sup>st</sup> Place – Bryson Casteel; 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Abigale Isley; 3<sup>rd</sup> Place Harmoni Metcalf; - Doak Winners – 1<sup>st</sup> Place Camryn Beals and Tanna Bookhamer; 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Brayden Kennedy; 3<sup>rd</sup> Place Mylee Doty.

Chairman Brown thanked the schools for the many gifts and invitations given to the Board for Board Appreciation Week.

**IV. APPROVAL OF AGENDA INCLUDING CONSENT AGENDA AND ADDENDUM**

Ms. Deborah Johnson stated that she would like to make a request to move up the appearance before the board of the two parents that had made the requests. Mr. Brown stated that there would have to be a motion and a second and the Board would have to vote to do so. Ms. Johnson made the motion to move the last item on the agenda to the first item on the agenda. Mr. Brown asked for second. No second was given, therefore the motion did not pass.

Approve the Agenda, Consent Agenda and Addendum

On motion by Mr. Rick Tipton, seconded by Rex Hopson

**Vote:** 6 – 0 Passed

**V. REPORTS, HEARINGS AND COMMUNICATIONS**

GCEA – Representative Stephanie Johnson gave a brief report of their recent event discussing new teacher licensure and a website called Donors Choose.

Budget Monitoring Sheets – Ms. Mary Lou Woolsey gave a brief update on the budget stating that property tax was up 4.2 % and also sales tax was up 2.5 %. She noted that expenditures were up in line item 71100 due to Bonuses in November and that the Retirement Insurance was also up due to the fact that we have made 5 payments this year compared to 4 payments last year. She stated there has been a \$100,000 decrease in electricity from last year and that diesel is 7% less than last year. She added that the revenues and expenditures were all in line. She gave the undesignated fund balance as \$2.9 million and noted that money would be moved out in January leaving \$2.1 million. Ms. Johnson stated that with a 55 million dollar budget it is very difficult to look through every item and wanted to know if it would be possible that if a line item changed that it be numbered and then at the bottom give a description of why it changed? Ms. Woolsey indicated that she did not feel there would be sufficient time for this request. Dr. Kirk asked if Ms. Johnson could clarify what exactly she is wanting because the line items change every month. Ms. Johnson stated it was mainly the line item changes that were unusually other than just the normal bills paid monthly. She said that she would sit down with Ms. Woolsey to discuss. Ms. Woolsey stated that if it is a big change or something unusual that she does already make a notation.

Data Report – Dr. Julia Lamons stated that they had just completed their last set of mid-year school visits with their Central Team to talk about data at the schools and that they saw a lot of positive things happening at the schools. She noted that there was a special group at the Board meeting to share what was going on at their school. Teachers from Doak gave presentations on how they use data in their classrooms and how it is helping instruction. Dr. Lamons praised Doak for achieving a level 5 at their school in achievement and growth. Doak teachers attending and presenting were Brooke Loggins, Mindy Kennedy, Holly Marshall, Angela McInturff, and principal, Jennifer Teague. The teachers were excited about the involvement of the students with their own data and also including them in parent-teacher conference. Ms. Teague stated that the use of data in their classrooms has transformed their school and that it was evident in their report card. Mr. Rick Tipton asked who came up with the idea of the student lead conferences. They noted that the idea came from the book series “Leader in Me”. He also asked if this was something that had been shared with the other schools. Ms. Teague stated that Dr. Kirk had handed her the book last year and Ms. Teague said it was the most amazing book she had ever read. She added that a few of them went to visit a school in North Carolina where it had actually begun. She said that they then started to encourage those leadership traits in their students. Mr. Tipton agreed that this was a great idea and that it gave the kids ownership and would make them feel like they were part of their own learning process and would get them motivated. Dr. Lamons added that this is the kinds of things they are doing and not just looking at numbers. She stated that this lets the students identify their strengths and weaknesses and to set goals which helps them grow and take ownership of their learning.

Personnel Report – Mr. Bill Ripley handed out a copy of the January 2014 Personnel Report. He stated that he had been asked by the Board to provide information on the retired teachers that we have in our district that come back and do various jobs on a part-time basis and he noted that the list is at the bottom of the Personnel Report.

Bus Advertisement Update – Mr. David McLain stated that 25 ads have been sold on the buses at \$50 per ad per month for 10 months. He stated that the money would be split four ways and

help out on athletic expenses for the four high schools. He also showed a brief presentation of pictures of the ads on several of the buses. Some of the ads included Walters State Community College, Subway and various other local businesses.

Mr. Rick Tipton stated that he wanted to brag on Mr. David McLain and Mr. David Myers after the Long Range Planning Committee along with some of the County Commissioners went on some school visits to the West side and that it was very eye-opening to the tremendous job that is going on out at the schools and maintaining them.

ESP Report – Dr. Krisiti Wallin stated that she wanted to address some policy questions about the program. She gave a power point presentation with an overview of the program noting that there were four sites in Greene County - Chuckey, DeBusk, Doak and Mosheim. All sites, with the exception of Chuckey have both morning and afternoon ESP and summer ESP for students. She noted that surveys were sent at Glenwood this year; however there were not enough responses to start the program. She added that the program had begun in 1990 at Doak with some Grant funding. Sites are open from 6:00 am until 6:00 pm to provide quality childcare for parents. Initially the program was run by central office personnel and then after several years it became self-sustaining and a full-time employee was hired to oversee the program. In 2011 the program was again taken over by central office personnel and site directors were established at each location. The site director is responsible for overseeing the day to day operations of the site including billing with the parent, parent communication, and planning. Dr. Walling stated that there are many more students signed up than actually attend and that there was no way of knowing who was coming on any given day. She gave the averages at each site with Chuckey's average at 20 per day; DeBusk – 30 during the school year and 45 during the summer; Doak – 50 during the school year and only 40 during the summer; Mosheim – 40 during the school year and about 30 during the summer. She stated that the current rates were raised during 2012 with Board approval and are as follows:

-\$.75 if picked up before 3:45/day or \$8.75 weekly (prorated for 2 children-\$3.00) If the child qualifies for free or reduced lunch they have programs that can help subsidize their rates.

-Full Day Rate for snow days or summer are \$13.00/day or \$65.00 weekly. (Prorated for 2 children-\$20.00) Students are only charged for the days they actually attend.

Dr. Wallin reported that all employees are part-time and start at \$7.25/hour and site directors are paid \$10.00/hour because of their added responsibilities. The average time worked is 5 – 25 hours and most are college students or classified employees working up to 5 hours. The adult/child ratio that is set by the state is maintained at all times and usually more. Ms. Johnson asked if there had been criteria developed for hiring the staff in the ESP program. Dr. Wallin responded that there is a staff handbook and staff responsibilities that they have to read the job requirements and they ensure that they are able to perform those job duties before they are hired. Ms. Johnson also wanted to know if they receive benefits or any paid holidays and Dr. Wallin answered that they did not.

Solar Panel/Energy Report-Mr. Steve Tipton gave a brief report and update on the Energy Program that had been brought up at the last couple of Board meetings. He stated that after Christmas Break we have had some the coldest weather we have had in decades and they were concerned about making sure the pipes would not burst and that the buildings could

recover their temperatures and they were not sure because he had not had that kind of weather. He said that they had adjusted the night set back from 55 to 62 degrees. There had been some concerns about the room temperatures during occupied times so those set points were changed from 69 to 70 degrees and the maximum adjustable temperature was moved up to 72 so that the teachers could set those up in their classrooms if necessary. He noted that when the temperature changes are made that you can bank on about 3% per degree that you change. Mr. Tipton also expressed his approach in handling concerns and that he tries to develop good relationships and collect data about what needs to be done. He stated that it is important to let him know of any concerns they may have. He discussed the many things he is doing to get everyone involved and that at Christmas Break they had a contest to see who followed the shut down procedures and West Pines had a 100% participation. Mr. Rick Tipton thanked Steve for checking on the problems that he had asked him about. Mr. Brown thanked him for his hard work over the last month with all of these changes.

Director of Schools, Dr. Vicki Kirk, addressed the following items in her report:

## [Director's Report – Greene County BOE Meeting ~ January 23, 2014](#)

### **School News**

There is little to report as school has been out for much of the time between when we last met and now. Students and teachers are back and going strong! We are just hoping to get some consistent weather to prevent further interruptions.

I have completed the first round of principal observations with follow-up visits for each.

### **Communications Meetings (Students, Parents, Teachers)**

**Student Board Members** – I have met a second time with student board members. The meeting was both enjoyable and informational for me. We discussed students' desire to connect their learning to career goals and their desires to have some kind of career or work experience while in high school. These students expressed an interest in more challenging work and stated that they would welcome challenges, especially when they were meaningful ones. We discussed the district's plans to develop a career goal with each student during their middle school years with a focus on that career as they entered high school. One student commented, "Like a major in college." And I responded that it would be much like that. The students were very enthusiastic about this idea.

Our students have dreams and goals, but I am not sure we are connecting all the dots for them when it comes to school. They need to see that school has meaning as they work toward those dreams and goals. I heard in the conversation a need for purpose and meaning in the work – the same thing adults desire. I was impressed by their thoughtful conversation and am convinced that we would be well served to incorporate student voice into the development of our plans and goals. I am committed to doing this over the next three years.

### **Pal's Business Excellence Institute**

Pal's was very gracious to invite directors of schools to attend their Business Excellence Institute free of charge. In 2001 Pal's won the prestigious Malcolm Baldrige Award. Each year hundreds of leaders and managers from all types of businesses come to Kingsport from all over the country and Canada. They learn from BEI how to improve their organizations based on Pal's Baldrige-

based, world class performance excellence practices and see one of the best managed companies in the country.

I have as a goal for 2014 to learn more about effective business practices and strategies, so the opportunity to attend the Institute was very timely for me. The learning was engaging, practical and at times fascinating. The Pal's organization is truly remarkable. Here's just one indicator: Across their 26 stores, the average health rating is almost 98%.

I have several "take aways" that I intend to follow up on. Among these are the concept of identifying the key drivers that help an organization achieve its mission – and then focusing on those; developing a more robust and consistent orientation plan; and studying our top performers to analyze what practices could be easily replicated.

### **NETCO**

I want to be sure to recognize the contribution that the Niswonger Foundation is making to education in East Tennessee, and to express my particular gratitude for their assistance in Greene County. Through the i3 grant they are providing a means for students to take more advanced courses and to enroll in dual credit. They are now beginning to develop some focus around CTE. All of these efforts are aligned with what we are trying to accomplish in Greene County. They are currently working with us to develop a proposal to outfit a science lab to be used by all four high schools. Details of this plan are still in development, but the possibilities are very exciting. We have a great need for advanced science classes, particularly chemistry and physics. The Foundation's help in this regard is invaluable to us.

Some of the services that were announced at the NETCO Advisory Council Meeting included the following:

- Two-week summer institutes for upper level math
- Two-day workshops for STEM teachers
- Summer Day Camp for students to learn to code
- More online offerings – particularly in language and advanced placement
- Conference attendance for high school principals, for counselors and for directors of schools

We are very grateful for the hard work that the Niswonger Foundation does – and their focus on excellence and opportunity for our students.

### **Upcoming Schedule**

January 29	PARCC Training for Superintendents by TOSS (Greeneville)
January 30	Travel with representatives from Greeneville to Kentucky to visit an aeronautics program
January 31 – February 1	Core Leadership Council (Nashville)
February 10 – 11	Tennessee Council for CTE – Legislative Meeting (Nashville)

I am foregoing the TOSS Legislative Conference and AASA this year. Both are in Nashville, but both are also in February.

It is my honor to serve this school system. I work with some of the finest, most dedicated and hard working individuals one could find. We are working together to accomplish great things for the community. As I have said often, this work is the most important work going on in Greene County.

I want to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to the Board of Education. This is Board Appreciation Week, and there have been events at the schools to honor board members – although some may have been interrupted by the weather this week. Nevertheless we want you to know that we appreciate your dedication and hard work. Board members take their work very seriously and spend many hours of service to the community to insure that our students are receiving a quality education that will equip them for a productive, fulfilling life. There is nothing that is more important than that. Thanks to each of you for your devotion to our system and to our children.

**Meetings and Workshops**

Date	Event	Notes
12.17.13	Leadership Team Follow-up with a principal	
12.18.13	Insurance Committee Policy Committee	
12.19.13	Follow-up with 2 principals Topping Out Ceremony - WSCC	
12.20.13	Personnel Meeting with teacher & principal Central Team	
01.06.14	Central Team	
01.08.14	Director's Evaluation Committee Bid Opening	
01.09.14 – 01.10.14	Pal's Business Excellence Institute	
01.13.14	Attempted Central Team Meeting (too many interruptions to meet)  Many phone calls on Mosheim situation  Visited Mosheim  Interviewed by WJHL	

---

Met with TNDOE representative on  
personalized learning

**01.14.14** NETCO Advisory Board

Met with a teacher

Foundation Meeting

**01.15.14** Insurance Committee

Policy Committee

**01.16.14** Breakfast with student board members

Interviewed by the Greeneville Sun

Called Board Meeting

Met with B. Ripley & C. Wagoner

**01.17.14** Leadership Team

Met with Roger Woolsey

**01.18.14** Basketball Game

Evening Event

**01.21.14** Juvenile Court

County Commission

**01.22.14** Met with Nathan Brown – Review agenda

**01.23.14** Met with representative from Battelle for Kids

Met with insurance broker

---

## **VI-OLD BUSINESS**

Approve Policies on 2<sup>nd</sup> Reading-

1.205-Board Director Relations

3.208-Facilities Planning-New Policy

4.606-Graduation Activities

1.8012-Extended School Day/Year Programs and School Age Childcare

(Ms. Johnson requested to pull for further discussion)

2.702-Inventories

2.802-Payroll Procedures

Existing Energy Guidelines with Recommended Revisions

On motion made by Rick Tipton, seconded by Tom Cobble

**Vote:** 6 – 0 Passed (All with the exception of 1.8012)

1.8012-Extended School Day/Year Programs and School Age Childcare

On motion by Kathy Crawford, second by Rex Hopson

**Vote:** 5 – 1 Passed

NO: Deborah Johnson

Ms. Johnson stated that pay increases for our Extended School Program staff should be tied to their evaluations rather than across the board increases that this policy mandates. The state of Tennessee requires that our teacher pay increases be merit based and she feels that starting with the ESP staff would be a move in the right direction. She also stated that under the current policy that is being proposed, the ESP staff that the parents are upset with, will get the same raise as every other classified staff in the system. She ended with a question to think about, what message would this send and what behaviors do we want to encourage?

## VII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Approve Skyward, Inc. as the Student Information System-

On motion made by Rex Hopson, seconded by Tom Cobble

**Vote:** 6 – 0 Passed

Dr. Kirk asked to give some clarification and stated that this was a very complex contract and that most of the paperwork given was a contract that the state had executed with Skyward who is one of four vendors that the State of Tennessee vetted and put out for school systems to select as Student Data Management. She stated that the Board has already approved Skyward as our vendor and that we must have a vendor to report attendance to the state and that is how we are funded. She added that in the past the cost had been totally covered by the state and now none of the vendors will be completely covered by the state so there will be a cost to us that was shared at the Board Workshop. Mr. Chuck Cagle has looked over the contract and he says there is no problem it but had a little trouble with it being a 3 year contract. Because of that, Dr. Kirk asked Jason Patrick to contact the vendor to see if they would execute an annual contract with us, which they have done and we will have the opportunity to renew at the end of each year.

B. Approve WebHosting Service for 2014-2015 School year-

On motion made by Tom Cobble, seconded by Rex Hopson

**Vote:** 6 – 0 Passed

C. Approve West Pines Volunteer Assistant Softball Coach-

On motion made by Deborah Johnson, seconded by Tom Cobble

**Vote:** 6 – 0 Passed

D. Approve Baileyton Pre-Season softball Tournament-

On motion made by Kathy Crawford, seconded by Tom Cobble

**Vote:** 6 – 0 Passed

Mr. Hopson asked if the tournament would be local or for East Tennessee. Mr. Brown responded that last year they did it for local schools. Mr. McLain added that it was being expanded to outside teams.

E. Approve Bids for Buses and Mini-Buses-

On motion by Tom Cobble, seconded by Rex Hopson

**Vote:** 6 – 0 Passed

F. Approve IDEA Part B 13:21 Carryover budget and additional allocation-

On motion by Kathy Crawford, seconded by Tom Cobble

**Vote:** 6 – 0 Passed

G. Approve Out-of-State Field Trip Requests-

On motion by Tom Cobble, seconded by Deborah Johnson

**Vote:** 6 – 0 Passed

H. Approve Nolachuckey Girls Basketball Team to attend TNT State Tournament-

On motion by Deborah Johnson, seconded by Rex Hopson

**Vote:** 6 – 0 Passed

I. Approve Policy Manual Revisions/Recommendations – First Reading-

On motion by Rick Tipton, seconded by Rex Hopson

**Vote:** 6 – 0 Passed (All except 3.201 Safety)

-4.605 – Graduation Requirements

-3.201 – Safety (*Ms. Johnson asked to Pull this Policy*)

-3.402 – Special Use of School Vehicles

-3.601 – Student Insurance Program

-3.2001 – Energy Conservation

-3.206 – Community use of School Facilities

-3.300 – Equipment and Supplies Management

-3.302 – Data Management

-3.401 – Scheduling and Routing

-3.404 – Private Vehicles

-3.500 – Food Service Management

3.201 – Safety (*Pulled by Ms. Johnson*)

On motion by Kathy Crawford, seconded by Rex Hopson

**Vote:** 5 - 1 Passed

NO: Deborah Johnson

Ms. Johnson stated that we should do all that we can to keep our schools safe and that she did not understand how calling ahead kept students any safer than the procedure currently in place for visitors to our schools. Calling ahead gives the perception of safety but it is not a reality. She felt that it only discouraged parents and school board members from visiting the schools instead of building a relationship of trust with the parents; we choose to limit parent involvement. Mr. Rick Tipton responded that he felt

this came from all of the incidences that are happening around us with all the violence and people coming into the schools and he also felt it was an opportunity to make sure that the principal was there so you could have an audience with them or the teacher. He said he understood that they may be tied up or gone and as a school board member he liked to call to be sure that the principal or the one he was visiting was there when he drove out to the school. He stated that in his profession he sees the violence and that he would like to see as much security as possible and that we should look at it in a positive light that this is a way to 1) make sure that whomever you want to talk to is there and 2) let the teachers and administrators know who is in the building. He agreed that it may not fully secure the building but he felt they should all look at it with a positive attitude. Mr. Brown agreed with Mr. Tipton. Ms. Johnson added that she felt that when the school board members stopped by the schools they should be welcomed into the schools and that calling ahead just would keep her from being able to stop by on her way to work or on the way home. She said that she did not feel that stopping by, signing in and taking the visitor sticker and putting on her county badge should be something that isn't welcomed. She also said that calling ahead made her feel that she was not welcomed to be able to walk through the schools and just visit to see what is going on. She said many teachers tell her to stop by and see what we do and come and talk to me. She stated that she is an elected official and she should have the ability to walk into the school and sign in and go into the schools. She stated that as for the parents, that if you have a child in that school and they need to come into that school and speak to the teacher, they should be allowed to come in and be welcomed. She felt that they should have to sign in and show they have a student there. She also stated that she is all for safety but she felt this was a way to tell parents that we are shutting down the schools and they are not welcome. Mr. Brown stated that he did not feel this was at all what it was intended for. He said that when they visited the schools they did not ask them to put on another badge over their current badge. Ms. Johnson said that she felt that some were treated differently than others. Mr. Brown said that they had made it very clear in the Policy Committee that they did not want that happening and he said if it does she should bring it to the attention of the director of schools and let her handle it. Mr. Brown stated that once the parent drops off their kids at schools that they expect us to take care of them and if something happens we will be held responsible for it and he stated that we have to take responsibility for the children. Mr. Tipton stated that he too had been told by principals and teachers to just stop by but for him he liked calling and that in his job at the courthouse he liked for people to call him first if they came to see him because he may not be there. He and Mr. Brown agreed that it was not the purpose of the policy to deter parents from coming to the schools. Student board member, Adam Foshie added that it is just common courtesy to call first.

J. Approve Policy Procedures Manual Revisions/Recommendations

-3.203 - Crisis Team - Exhibit A

-3.403 - Traffic and Parking Controls - Exhibit A

On motion made by Tom Cobble, seconded by Rex Hopson

**Vote:** 6 - 0            Passed

K. Approve West Pines Baseball Coach and Volunteer Coach

On motion by Kathy Crawford, seconded by Rex Hopson

**Vote:** 6 - 0            Passed

L. Approve 2014-2015 School Calendar

On motion by Tom Cobble, seconded by Rex Hopson

**Vote:** 6 - 0            Passed

Ms. Johnson asked Mr. Bill Ripley to clarify that the student would have to go to school on Saturday, May 23rd. He stated that would be the report card day. He said that the Calendar Committee's reasoning behind that was because the 25th was Memorial Day and it would push the report card day out to the 26th and if it was done on Saturday, the buses do not run any way, it would free up families for summer vacation and that day was considered an Abbreviated day from 8:00-10:00 am with no classes being held.

M. Approve Academic Coach Job Description

On motion by Tom Cobble, seconded by Rex Hopson

**Vote:** 6 - 0            Passed

Ms. Johnson wanted to know if the Curriculum Coaches had their own classes where they teach a grade level class or a subject. Dr. Kirk replied that Academic Coaches do not. Mr. Ripley added that she was asking about Curriculum Coaches and they do. Dr. Kirk stated that for this job description being approved, they do not. Ms. Johnson stated that it seemed to her that we are expanding our non-classroom personnel than we are growing the number of teachers. Dr. Kirk clarified that we have an existing Academic Coach job description and we have existing Academic Coaches so there are no positions be created with this job description and that we were just refining the job description to be more specific to math and language arts and to detail some of the duties. She also stated that since they have been doing this now for about 3 years they wanted to look at what they would like for them to do and what is important for them to do so the job description has been refined just to clarify their duties. Ms. Johnson asked how many coaches we currently have. Dr. Kirk responded that we currently have 4. Ms. Johnson wanted to know if there were different levels of coaches because she had read that there were 16. Dr. Kirk responded that there were Learning Leaders who are classroom teachers who serve as lead teachers for the district and they receive a stipend and are paid out of Race to the Top and they also get extra training and are out ahead for Common Core and those types of things. Mr. Tipton asked if this was the type of program where principals may contact one of the Academic Coaches to help in certain areas of their school and Dr. Kirk responded that yes it was. Mr. Ripley added that they names are sometimes confused and that each of the high schools have 4 Curriculum Coaches which are Learning Leaders at the high schools and they are paid for out of the general budget and they have been around for several years. He stated that the Learning Leaders were developed a couple of years ago. Ms. Johnson asked if the Learning Leaders had their own classroom and Mr. Ripley responded that they did. He said that they are paid I stipend to do additional work with other teachers and professional development. Ms. Johnson asked how many Learning Leaders we have and Mr. Ripley answered that we currently have 48 - 50 and that we hope to continue with at least that many and if you include the Curriculum Coaches at the high school level it adds 16 more. He also stated that we hoped to have 50-60 doing the additional work coaching and helping other teachers. Ms. Johnson stated that this seemed like an abundance of Learning Leaders. Dr. Kirk responded that we have over 500 teachers. Mr. Ripley added that the 500 teachers are required to do professional development every year and we want to try deliver

professional development in a job embedded way and use the expertise that we have and that actually they are stretched pretty thin when you consider that they are classroom teachers and also trying the mentor and coach and lead these activities for other teachers. Ms. Johnson asked if we hire substitute teachers when the Learning Leaders are mentoring or doing an in-service. Mr. Ripley answered that on occasion we do but we try to do that work during their planning period or before and after school. He stated that money out of Title II could be used for professional development to cover and pay for subs and that we were not gaining a lot if we have good teachers out of their classroom so we do not do that very much.

N. Approve Learning Leader Job Description

On motion by Tom Cobble, seconded by Rex Hopson

**Vote:** 6 - 0          Passed

O. Approve Moving the Director's Evaluation date from March to June annually

On motion by Tom Cobble, seconded by Deborah Johnson

**Vote:** 6 - 0          Passed

Mr. Hopson asked if it would make a difference either way on the date and Dr. Kirk answered that we had talked about moving it later than that but the committee said they felt like they could get it done in June and that we are going to have to look at data. She also stated that whether the evaluation was done in March or June this year it would be done on last years' data because we will not have the current years' data back.

Chairman Brown apologized to those who had requested to appear before the board and stated that the Board was going to have to recess and go to the Joint Board Meeting that was scheduled to begin at 6:00 pm. He informed them that there was another room set up down the hall to reconvene when the Joint meeting was finished.

Meeting recessed at 6:00 pm.

Chairman Brown called the Board meeting back into order.

## **VIII-OTHER**

### Request to Appear Before the Board

-Christan Serrienne – of Osmet Lane, read a statement regarding her child being bullied by a teacher at Doak Elementary school while attending the ESP Program nearly four months ago. She lists the chain of command followed to resolve the issue and states that she did not receive any notification of actions taken, nor did she receive any phones calls to update or check on her child. She read from Policy 6.304 for Bullying that someone is to contact her within 5 days of the complaint and states that did not happen. She added that her child has come home twice since the complaint crying because of the same ESP teacher. She lists another incident that happened on January 3<sup>rd</sup> stating that an ESP staff member also bullied her child with witnesses in the area and that as of the following Tuesday of the event no one had contacted her. She reads Policy 6.304-Student Discrimination/Harassment and Bullying/Intimidation and Cyberbullying. She states that this policy has not been followed and that there is a zero tolerance policy for students on bullying and if they have to abide by these rules shouldn't there

be a zero tolerance for teachers or staff members bullying students. She also stated that she went to the central office the week of January 6th and the doors were locked and no one answered the phones. She spoke with the director on January 11th who told her that she was unaware of the complaints. Ms. Serrienne said that she feels there is a lack of communication between the teachers, staff members and parents and she felt like there needed to be more respect for parents and their concerns.

Deborah Johnson said that she would like to ask in all of her dealings with the schools and the central office did anyone direct you to the forms or the policy. Ms. Serrienne answered that she had to get them online. Ms. Johnson also asked how this had impacted her child. Ms. Serrienne said that her child used to absolutely love going to school and now she dreads it every day and does not want to go back. Ms. Johnson asked what is the outcome that you hope will come of this. Ms. Serrienne stated that she felt the teacher and staff member needed to be removed from the school and no child should be treated the way her child was treated.

Nathan Brown said that he would also like to ask a question and that his wife had brought this to his attention from Facebook and it stated that she had notified the school system and the Board and he wanted to know who the Board member was that she contacted. She stated that she thought that Kristi Wallin was the Board member. Mr. Brown said that is why he was confused because he said he knew he had not been made aware of the situation and that they take situations like this very seriously in the school system and no child is going to be bullied in our school system and it be brought to our attention. He assured the parents that they were going to try to get these situations taken care of and he reminded the parents that they do have school board members in their districts and he encouraged them to contact them with things like this because the Board did not know anything about this. Mr. Rick Tipton stated that he too would invite them to call any of the school board members since they were here for the whole county and that she would have been going through the chain of command and if she wasn't able to reach anyone at central office she could have called any board member. She stated that she had contacted the District Attorney and they were supposed to contact the school board. Mr. Tipton also agreed that maybe it was a lack of communication and that he wishes that it would not have happened. Ms. Serrienne states that central office did know about the complaint and that she was not contacted within the 5 days shown on Policy 6.304. Dr. Kirk asked to give a timeline of events that she had been made aware of. She states that in August of 2013 there was an incident between a staff member at ESP and Ms. Serrienne's daughter. Also in August of 2013 Jennifer Teague, the principal of Doak Elementary, addressed the incident with the ESP employee and reprimanded her for her actions and coached her about proper interactions with the students. November of 2013, Ms. Serrienne contacted the central office and spoke with Dr. Wallin about the incident that had occurred in August. Dr. Wallin took notes and documented the occurrence and apologized that the child had been mistreated and assured her that she would address the situation and try to ensure that it never happened again. January 3, 2014, was the incident between another ESP employee and Ms. Serrienne's daughter at Doak ESP. On Saturday, January 4, 2014, Dr. Walling contacted Ms. Serrienne and began to investigate the incident because she had become aware of the incident from Facebook. Sunday and Monday following, Dr. Wallin continued her investigation and spoke to the employee in question. On Tuesday, January 7, 2014, the decision was made to dismiss this employee due to her actions as ESP. She was called into the office and notified with a dismissal letter and separation notice. Ms. Serrienne interrupted and asked why she was not informed of this. Dr. Kirk continued and stated that she had been informed that the situation had been taken care of.

## Request to appear before the Board

-Melissa Bryant - of Arrowhead Loop, Midway, read a statement regarding an incident that happened on December 4, 2013, at Moshiem. She states that when she picked her son up at school he informed her that he had had an issue with the Assistant Principal, Ms. Jennifer Whitson and that she had kicked him in the back. He told her that he was sitting Indian style and leaning back on his hands and she asked him to move his hands and as he was moving she walked by and pushed him up with her foot. She states that she looked at her son's back and there was still a mark on his back so she immediately left and went into the principal's office and told Ms. Carpenter what had happened. Ms. Carpenter said that she was in the activity center and did not see any of this happen. Ms. Bryant states that she requested to have Ms. Whitson come to the office to discuss this and Ms. Carpenter replied that she could not do that. Ms. Bryant also states that she asked for a form to document the incident or a complaint form and says Ms. Carpenter told her she did not have the forms. Ms. Bryant said that since no documentation was made that she went to the sheriff's office to file a complaint card. She states that on the same day she called the central office and left a message for Dr. Kirk and did not receive a call back. She states that on December 5th she called central office again and spoke to the Assistant Director, Mr. Ripley and says that he stated that he would contact Jennifer Whitson and assured her that a meeting would be arranged and that he would have her to call back that day to arrange the meeting. She states that she did not receive a call from Ms. Whitson. She also states that when she went to pick up her son and Ms. Whitson walked him out to the car and said that she wanted to tell her that she did not kick her son, that she nudged him and then she walked back to the school. She states that she called the central office again the next day to speak with Dr. Kirk or Mr. Ripley and left messages and did not receive a call from anyone. She said that on January 8th she went to central office to pick up the form to appear before the board. Ms. Bryant states that her biggest issue is why everything is being ignored when she has followed the chain of command and it has been over a month. On January 10th there was a meeting held with Ms. Carpenter and Ms. Whitson and states that Ms. Carpenter stated that at the time Ms. Whitson did not think anything of using her foot and that Jennifer admitted to her that using her foot was a way of getting her son's attention. She says that Jennifer also admitted to kicking the door to demonstrate what a kick was. Ms. Bryant states that she made it very clear that she was not happy with any of this and that at the least, Ms. Whitson should be suspended without pay and take classes on bullying and harassment. She also said that the students are expected to follow the policy on bullying and the administration should set an example for the kids. She states that she went online to find the policy forms for bullying and harassment (6.305) and also found a grievance (6.304) form which should have been given to her.

Deborah Johnson asked Ms. Bryant in all of her contact with the administration and the schools, did anyone guide or direct her to these policies or forms. She answered that they did not. Ms. Johnson also asked if at any time she had indicated that she was happy and that this incident was now resolved? Ms. Bryant stated that she made it very clear that no one had spoken to her and it had been over a month. Ms. Johnson then asked how this has affected her child and do you have any proof of the allegations? Ms. Bryant answered that it had affected her child because he is now afraid to go to school. She states that she does have proof of them, in their own words admitting to what she did in the form of a cd. Ms. Johnson asked Ms. Bryant what did she feel would be the appropriate outcome? Ms. Bryant answered that at the least she felt Ms. Whitson needed to be suspended without pay and attend classes on how to act around children. She asked if the Board needed a copy of the cd and Dr. Kirk responded that we did have a copy.

Mr. Brown said that because there has been so many public comments about this situation that he has asked Dr. Kirk to prepare a timeline of how these events.

Dr. Kirk asked that everyone be patient that the list was rather long.

## Remarks to Board

January 23, 2014

***These remarks are regarding the situation with Mosheim Elementary School.***

*I am distressed by the fact that we must bring this situation before the board in a public meeting. It is always my desire to handle such issues with dignity and respect. This was, however, brought to public attention through the media, and I believe it is only appropriate that all the facts be now presented to the board tonight.*

*I have reason to believe that the administration's efforts to resolve this issue were intentionally interfered with, and I believe that the timeline of events will reveal that fact. I think the board should also know that this is not the first time that the administration has been placed under suspicion. The board will recall that I sent out a memo dated March 11, 2013 on the topic of board members investigating issues on their own and how board members should conduct themselves when visiting schools. This was sent as a result of an incident where Mrs. Johnson had visited West Greene High School to ask about an incident that had happened on a bus. She asked to view videotape of the incident and spoke to individuals at the school about the incident. My memo was sent to help Mrs. Johnson and all board members understand the difference between administrative and board duties. The memo reads as follows:*

***I am sorry to do this communication by memo rather than by phone with each of you, but I feel there are two good reasons for communicating in this way. First, this gives us a tangible record of the communication, and second, a memo of this type insures that everyone receives the same message.***

***I need to clarify the duties of the Board when it comes to two situations. The first is investigation of complaints and access to student records and data, and the second is visiting the schools. I have consulted with TSBA and Mr. Chuck Cagle on both issues.***

***When a complaint is made to a Board Member, it is the responsibility of the Board Member to convey this concern to the Director of Schools. Policy 1.202 states, "The duties of an individual board member shall be as follows: ...8. To refer complaints to the director of schools and to abstain from individual counsel and action in regard to staff members." Furthermore, it is inappropriate for Board Members to review student records and data including, but not limited to, official records, video evidence or any other confidential material unless and until this evidence is presented to the Board as a body during an appeal process. To be clear, Board Members do not investigate complaints or conflicts. This is a duty of the administration. The Board may be called upon to render an opinion upon appeal, and it impedes the appeal process if Board Members have been involved in the investigative process.***

***I have full faith in our administration, including both principals and supervisors, to investigate and resolve issues. If there are questions regarding a principal's procedures, those should be forwarded to me, and I will follow up. Our principals are diligent in their efforts to handle daily***

problems with fairness and justice. They often must employ the patience of Job and the wisdom of Solomon. Although I sometimes check in with them on issues, it is rare that my intervention is necessary.

I encourage you to visit schools, but I ask that you honor the authority of the principal in each school. No one is allowed to visit our schools unaccompanied. When I visit classrooms, I am always escorted by the principal. Furthermore, if your visit is unannounced, you may not have the opportunity to see the principal as each is very engaged in observing classrooms and meeting with teachers on instructional issues. It is prudent to call ahead to avoid such a situation.

As always, thank you for your dedication to our students, and please let me know if you have any questions.

I share this information as it is pertinent to the issues of the past weeks. I have recorded a timeline of events which I will now share.

#### **TIMELINE OF EVENTS - MOSHEIM COMPLAINT Dec/Jan 2013-14**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Explanation of Events</b>
12.04.13	Melissa Bryant reported to Wendy Carpenter that her son had been kicked in the back by Jennifer Whitson. Mrs. Carpenter's notes indicate that she examined the child's back but did not see anything. Ms. Bryant named two witnesses. Ms. Bryant wanted immediate action but Mrs. Carpenter indicated a need to investigate further. Mrs. Carpenter states that Ms. Bryant asked for a form, but she thought Ms. Bryant wanted an accident report. She wasn't sure what form Ms. Bryant was referring to.
12.05.13	Mrs. Carpenter talked with Jennifer and two witnesses, one of which was named by Ms. Bryant. Mrs. Carpenter asked Mrs. Whitson to document what had happened the day before and email it to her. She explained that she had called the boys down twice for tripping people in the lunch line. They were sitting in the activity center on the floor. The third time she nudged him with her foot, but never a kick. Mrs. Carpenter talked with the other little boy involved who was sitting next to Ms. Bryant's son. She asked him what had happened yesterday. He said they got in trouble because they were leaning back. Mrs. Carpenter asked him if anything happened that she needed to know about. She made an effort not to lead him and to approach with care since he is a first grade student. He responded, "Ms. Whitson didn't kick us." No witness indicated that Mrs. Whitson had kicked the boys.

12.05.13 Ms. Bryant called Central Office and asked to speak with Dr. Kirk. Dr. Kirk was not in and because Mrs. Berney assessed the situation to be serious (the mother was stating that an employee had kicked her son) she sent the call to Mr. Ripley. Mrs. Bryant relayed to Mr. Ripley that she had spoken with Mrs. Carpenter the day before but was not satisfied that Mrs. Carpenter was going to handle the issue. Ms. Bryant agreed that there was probably no actual kick but she wanted to speak with Mrs. Whitson about it. Mr. Ripley told her that he would speak with Mrs. Whitson and that Mrs. Whitson would call her.

12.05.13 Mr. Ripley spoke with Mrs. Whitson and asked her to speak with Ms. Bryant.

12.05.13 Mrs. Whitson met the student to take him out to his car so she could speak with Ms. Bryant. During that time she demonstrated a kick and a tap on a doorframe and asked the student which she had done. He indicated a tap, and she asked him why he had told his mother she had kicked him. *[No one in admin was made aware of Ms. Bryant's issue with what Ms. Whitson had done in questioning her child.]* Mrs. Whitson spoke with Ms. Bryant in the car line. Ms. Bryant was last in line, so there was no hurry in the discussion. She states that she said, "I want to assure you that I did not kick your child. I did nudge him so that he would move his hands [out of the aisle]." They then discussed details of what had happened that day. Mrs. Whitson also explained that she had already left for the day when Ms. Bryant brought her complaint to Mrs. Carpenter. They discussed the fact that Mr. Ripley had asked Mrs. Whitson to speak with Ms. Bryant. Ms. Bryant indicated that she would call him to report that they had talked. Mrs. Whitson said that she would be seeing him later and that she would tell him.

12.05.13 Mrs. Whitson stopped by Mr. Ripley's office to tell him that the meeting with Ms. Bryant had occurred and it seemed to be OK.

12.06.13	<p><i>Mrs. Carpenter received a call from the second boy's mother. She wanted to warn Mrs. Carpenter that Ms. Bryant came to her house on December 4th to ask about the kicking incident. This mother explained to Mrs. Carpenter that she had talked to her son, and he told her they had gotten into trouble because they were leaning back on their hands and trying to trip people. This boy told his mother that Ms. Whitson did not kick Ms. Bryant's son. He told her that Ms. Whitson tapped them on the back and said to sit up. Then she moved them to the next level down in the activity center so even if they leaned back, it would not trip anyone. This mother stated that Ms. Bryant was going to the police and if the police were involved she did not want her son questioned or involved in any manner because she believed this was blown completely out of proportion.</i></p>	
12.06.13	<p><i>Ms. Bryant came inside to pick up her son and told his teacher that Mrs. Whitson was not to have any contact with her son as she had filed charges.</i></p>	
12.06.13	<p><i>Teacher reported the conversation with Ms. Bryant to Mrs. Carpenter.</i></p>	
12.19.13	<p><i>App. 11:30 a.m.</i></p>	<p><i>Mrs. Carpenter reported to Dr. Kirk that she had been contacted by the sheriff's department because a complaint had been filed. She stated that no charges were filed. During her conversation with the deputy she was informed that the Johnson's had called the sheriff's department about this incident.</i></p>
12.19.13	<p><i>Immediately following</i></p>	<p><i>Dr. Kirk called Mr. Woolsey to notify him of the situation.</i></p>
12.19.13		<p><i>Mrs. Johnson left a message at Central Office for Dr. Kirk to call.</i></p>

12.19.13 (Last full day before Christmas Break)

5:30 p.m.

Dr. Kirk returned Mrs. Johnson's call. When Mrs. Johnson came to the phone she asked, "Has something happened at Mosheim?" When I asked her to be more specific, she said, "Have charges been filed against someone at Mosheim?" I relayed to her that the sheriff's department had notified Mrs. Carpenter of a complaint that had been filed on an incident that had happened about two weeks ago, and that we weren't sure why they were making contact with us at this point about it. Mrs. Johnson said she thought the sheriff's department had not followed up on the complaint in a timely way. During the course of our conversation Mrs. Johnson asked me if Mrs. Whitson had kicked a door and told the child that if she had kicked him that this is what it would look like. I told her that I had no such information and that I could not believe that would have happened. She further stated that teachers wanted to report things but they were afraid to do so. I also told her that I had seen no indication of intimidation by the administration with the faculty and staff at Mosheim and that when I visited they seemed to be in high spirits. I told her that I thought that Mrs. Carpenter, Mrs. Whitson and Mrs. Brooks were doing a good job and that there seemed to be good comradery at the school.

12.20.13  
(Abbreviated Day prior to Christmas Break)

Email sent to Board to apprise them of the situation.

12.20.13

Mr. Woolsey advised that I ask Mrs. Carpenter to complete an investigation and provide details of that investigation to Ms. Bryant.

12.20.13

Dr. Kirk emailed Mrs. Carpenter to ask that she complete an investigation and provide details to Ms. Bryant.

12.29.13 (During Christmas Break)

Mrs. Johnson responded to the email sent 12/20/13 to the Board, replying to all recipients. In this email Mrs. Johnson states that our system of reporting these incidents isn't working, doesn't exist, or is being subverted, and that we need to look at the process. She states in the email that she had spoken to the mother prior to my email to the board on 12/20 and also since that time.

12.30.14 (During Christmas Break)

Mrs. Austin called. One of her concerns was the situation at Mosheim. She asked about a report that Mrs. Whitson had threatened the student after the report of her kicking him had been made. I told her I had heard the story that she had kicked a door and that Mr. Ripley was looking into that. I also reported that we were following up with the administration at Mosheim to review the entire situation.

01.07.14 (Out for Snow)

Dr. Kirk and Mr. Ripley met with Mrs. Carpenter to reflect and review. Areas for improvement were identified and a proper process for student interview was discussed. Improvement in parent communications was also discussed. All agreed on the standards for professional behavior. Mrs. Carpenter was asked to work with her staff on these items; to meet with Mrs. Whitson, and to set up a meeting with Ms. Bryant.

01.08.14 (Out for Snow)

Ms. Bryant came to pick up a form to request to speak to the Board. Because the Board Secretary was out, Mr. Ripley assisted Ms. Bryant with this. He requested the form from me and I stepped out my door to hand it to him. I saw Ms. Bryant in his office, but as we had never met, I did not know who she was. She did not introduce herself to me nor I to her. She stayed in Mr. Ripley's office to talk. He shared with her that we had met with Mosheim administration to discuss the issue, and he asked her to please meet with Mrs. Carpenter when she called, that we were working to try to resolve her issues. Mr. Ripley asked her to call the school by 10:00 in the morning if she had not heard from them by then. At no time did she request to speak with Dr. Kirk.

01.09.14 (First day back from Christmas Break, 1 hour delay)

Mrs. Carpenter tried to phone Ms. Bryant, but the number she had was not working. She contacted Mr. Ripley at 9:45; he sent her a working number, and she set up a meeting with Ms. Bryant.

01.09.14

11:15

Ms. Bryant called Central Office to report that no one from Mosheim had called her. Mr. Ripley returned this call and spoke with Ms. Bryant. He informed her that Mrs. Carpenter had attempted to call. Ms. Bryant talked with Mr. Ripley for some time about her issues with Mrs. Whitson and with her objections to restrictions on parental access to the building at Mosheim. During the course of this conversation, Ms. Bryant told Mr. Ripley that she had been in touch with WJHL but that she had told them that she was meeting with Mr. Ripley and the Mosheim administration and that she had nothing to say to the reporter at this time.

01.09.14 Mrs. Carpenter installed Complaint/Suggestion Boxes in both offices at Mosheim. She began investigating training opportunities regarding bullying and appropriate discipline.

01.09.14 WJHL contacts Dr. Kirk to request interview.

01.10.14 Dr. Kirk schedules interview with WJHL at 1:30 on Monday, January 13. Dr. Kirk emails board to make them aware of the situation and to let them know about the interview with WJHL. At that time, Dr. Kirk advised the board that she would not be speaking about specifics with the press, and she gave an update on the Mosheim situation including the fact that Mrs. Carpenter would be meeting with Ms. Bryant.

01.10.14 Mrs. Carpenter, Mrs. Whitson, Mrs. Brooks and Ms. Bryant met. Ms. Bryant had opportunity to express her concerns. Her main concern was the confrontation between Mrs. Whitson and her son. Mrs. Whitson explained her side of the story and apologized to Ms. Bryant and her son. Ms. Bryant expressed her desire to have Mrs. Whitson reprimanded, suspended and required to take classes about bullying. Mrs. Carpenter expressed that she felt that the appropriate measures had been taken except the classes and that she was researching professional development opportunities, and that she felt the whole staff could benefit from them. Ms. Bryant further expressed that she felt communication was lacking in this matter and that she would like to speak with Dr. Kirk about this. The meeting concluded with Mrs. Whitson apologizing to the student and they shook hands.

01.10.14 Mrs. Carpenter calls Mr. Ripley to report that the meeting went well and to request that Dr. Kirk meet with Ms. Bryant. She also reported to Mr. Ripley that they had learned of Dr. Kirk's interview with WJHL from Ms. Bryant. Mr. Ripley speaks with Ms. Bryant re: meeting with Dr. Kirk. Mr. Ripley calls Dr. Kirk to set up and then returns call to Ms. Bryant to confirm. Ms. Bryant states she wants to meet with Dr. Kirk before she talks to WJHL. Meeting is set for 8:00 Monday morning (01.13.14). Ms. Bryant also reported to Mr. Ripley that the meeting had gone well.

01.11.14 Dr. Kirk (I) phoned Christan Serriane due to her request to speak to the Board. I asked if there was some way I could assist with the issues. A meeting was agreed to and scheduled for 12:30 on Monday afternoon (01.13.14). Toward the end of the phone conversation, Ms. Serriane told me that she had befriended Ms. Bryant and that they had it "through the grapevine that you said that Melissa was lying about her son being kicked." I stated that this was the problem with the grapevine at which point she interrupted me and said, "Oh, no no, you don't understand. We have someone who knows who keeps us informed." At that point I told her I thought I understood what was going on. She abruptly ended the call at that point.

01.12.14 A group text goes out asking parents to meet at the park at Mosheim to speak with WJHL.

01.13.14 8:00 Ms. Bryant calls and tells Trena Berney that she is not going to meet with Dr. Kirk (me) unless I talk with her first by phone. I immediately went to the phone and called the number she left in her message. I got her voicemail and left a message stating that I was prepared to meet with her and wanted to learn what I could about how we might improve. I left her my cell phone and asked her to call so we could reschedule. She never returned my call.

01.13.14 8:28 Dr. Kirk (I) sent an email to the Board to let them know that the meeting between the administration at Mosheim and Ms. Bryant had gone well and to report that Ms. Bryant had cancelled her meeting with me, and that I was trying to get in touch with her to reschedule.

01.13.14 9:04 Mrs. Austin calls to discuss the Mosheim issue. She expressed her concern that we had not handled the situation properly and that we had not sufficiently disciplined personnel. I disagreed and told her that I was beginning to believe that my efforts to resolve the issue were being interfered with. She asked me if I had refused to meet with Ms. Bryant. I told her that I had scheduled a meeting with Ms. Bryant, but that Ms. Bryant had cancelled the meeting. She said that she had been told that when Ms. Bryant was in the office the week before that she had introduced herself to me and that I had refused to speak to her. I told her that this was not true and that Mr. Ripley could verify that. He stated that she had not asked to speak with me, and she certainly did not introduce herself to me. Mrs. Austin also expressed the concern that teachers had been afraid to report to the administration and that was why they often went to board members instead.

01.13.14	9:50	Our office began receiving reports that WJHL was set up at the park in Mosheim interviewing parents and that Mrs. Johnson was present with them.
01.13.14	10:00	Dr. Kirk spoke with Chuck Cagle and Roger Woolsey regarding events of the morning to gain advice on speaking with the press under these circumstances.
01.13.14	11:30	Dr. Kirk visits Mosheim to speak with administration regarding the reports of the news activity at the park.
01.13.14	app. 12:20	Christan Serriane stops at the office to tell the receptionist that she will not be meeting with Dr. Kirk at 12:30.
01.13.14	1:25	Dr. Kirk is interviewed by WJHL. The interview lasts until approximately 1:40.
01.13.14	1:43	Dr. Kirk emails the Board to notify them regarding the press activity at both Mosheim and Doak and to inform them that Ms. Serriane has also cancelled her meeting.
01.16.14		Dr. Kirk interviewed by the Greeneville Sun on the situation. Article published in the Sun and WJHL spot airs.

***In conclusion***

*We have more than 7000 students in Greene County, and we employ about 1000 people. There are many, many demands on my time as the Director of Schools, and I try to give each one appropriate attention. For 13 days, I believed everything to be resolved in this instance. Mrs. Carpenter had investigated the situation, and Mrs. WHITSON had spoken with the parent and reported resolution. We did hear that charges were filed, but no one ever contacted us officially on that. So sometime between December 6th and December 19th, Mrs. Johnson became aware that the situation was not resolved but did not notify me, she did in fact call the sheriff's department and now she is on record stating that our system of reporting these incidents isn't working, doesn't exist or is being subverted, and the process needs to be reviewed. We are reviewing the process. We are reviewing our policies, I think there are some misunderstandings of these policies but that would indicate a communication issue that we need to resolve.*

Mr. Brown asked that our attorney, Mr. Roger Woolsey come up and give the comments that he had regarding the situation. Mr. Woolsey states these are unfortunate incidence and the he would encourage the Board to review the Board Policies that have been adopted because there is a reason for those policies. He stated that the Board acts as a unit. You receive information and you want to get information from students and parents and others who are interested in the community but if you look at the Board Policy, the Board's responsibility is to set policy and be the

eyes and the ears for the Director of Schools in the community and you need to refer any complaints, as the Board Policy states, to the Director of Schools in every instance. He said that they need to give the system an opportunity to work. He stated the Board does have an overwhelming responsibility because they are supervision a huge budget and a great deal of responsibility goes to the Board to set policy so that you can education these 7,000 students and stressed that there does have to be open lines of communication in every instance. You have to follow Board policy and that you may not always do everything right but you have to learn from your mistakes and move forward. Mr. Woolsey stated that at the end of the day the Board makes the final decision and that that was the problem with the Board getting too involved on the front end because they are the ones to hear the case at the end if it is not resolved by the school or the principal or the central office and director of schools. The Board makes the final decision. He also stated that if he were a teacher or principal or parent that he would want to the Board to have an open mind when they made the final decision in every instance and that everyone hear the same information at the same time just as with a jury. He stated the he would caution each of them as Board members from doing any investigation because there is a reason that your Board Policy models the policy that TSBA recommended and that for the central office and administration to do their job they need to learn about these complaints. He said to the parents that maybe there were several people who dropped the ball but at the end of the day they would be looking to this Board to make a final decision to resolve the issues you have and that as a parent you would certainly want the Board to be fully aware of the facts and in the proper way. He said that people from the TV stations and maybe the newspaper there at the meeting, and sometimes they get the facts correctly and sometimes they do not get all the facts. He said sometimes news like this is sensational and the we all like to point a finger but if we truly want to make the school system better then we want to try to work together instead of trying to work separately. He said that Greene County is responsible for defending any action the Board takes or any member of the staff or any teacher. He advised that what we need to do is try to correct the problem instead of trying to make it sensational. Ms. Johnson said that she would like to ask a question of Ms. Bryant and that it had been insinuated that Ms. Johnson was the one that has encouraged, investigated and spurred on this whole thing and she wanted Ms. Bryant to tell how much contact she had had with her and how she was involved in her case. Ms. Bryant answered that she had gotten her number from the website and called her to ask about the policies and procedures she found online. Ms. Johnson told her on the phone that she could print those policies for her and got them to her and that was it. Ms. Johnson states that she then contacted Dr. Kirk like she was supposed to. Dr. Kirk answers that she contacted her on the 19<sup>th</sup> after she (Ms. Johnson) had called the sheriff's department. Ms. Johnson states that she thinks it is sad that this is being blamed on a Board member. Mr. Woolsey addressed Ms. Johnson directly and said that it is distressing to him that as the attorney who will be defending her if she is sued, or the rest of this Board, or any teacher, when he hears from a police officer that a Board member has contacted him as opposed to contacting the Director of Schools and that that does concern him. He states that when he reads the Board policy he does not see

where it gives Board members the responsibility to investigate but that a Board member is required to refer any complaint to the Director of Schools and he would expect that if any Board member has a complaint to refer it to the Director of Schools and if you do not get a response, then refer it to the full Board. Ms. Johnson asks Mr. Woolsey if he was saying that an officer actually said that she called the sheriff's department. Mr. Woolsey states that the officer said that "The Johnsons" had called and the officer was Mike Finchum and he asked Ms. Johnson if she had called Officer Finchum. Ms. Johnson answered that she did not. Mr. Woolsey then asked if her husband had called. Ms. Johnson said that he was not there and that she would ask him. Mr. Woolsey asked if she had not asked him or talked to him about this and she responded that she had not and that she was not involved in this case. Mr. Nathan Brown added that Ms. Johnson's phone number is on the complaint at the sheriff's department. Mr. Woolsey said that he had asked Officer Finchum what they were doing about it and he said that generally they want the school system to investigate, especially a matter like this, and they are hoping for schools to resolve issues for these parents. Mr. Brown added that that is what we want, to resolve the issues. Ms. Bryant and others from the audience began to speak and bring up the issues again and Mr. Brown did have to call the meeting to order and stated that the discussion segment was finished. He stated that he had a question to ask of Ms. Johnson and wanted to know that since she was on the news media, how did she become involved and if WJHL had just contacted her and that is all that she did was to talk to them on the 13<sup>th</sup>. He stated that he had gotten the reports that she was down there talking to them and being interviewed and asked her to clarify that that was her only involvement. Mr. Brown asked if she would tell him what happened that day. Ms. Johnson asked why that was important to this Board. Mr. Brown stated that it was important to him and she was the spokesperson for this Board and he wanted to know. Ms. Johnson responded that she was not the spokesperson for the Board but she was the spokesperson for herself and how she feels. She said her involvement was that she was contacted by Ms. Bryant and she found these policies for her then found out why she needed them and then states that she contacted Dr. Kirk. Ms. Johnson states that Ms. Bryant called her again and said that she could not get the policies printed and she offered to print them for her. Ms. Johnson also stated that other than that she did not know Ms. Bryant and that channel 11 had contacted her and she felt she had the right to speak on her own behalf which she did and states that she did follow the proper channels. She read a statement saying that she would like to thank the parents for speaking and commend them for their courage to stand up for their children and all of the children of Greene County. She read that she has concerns and reports that our policy for reporting these incidents is not being following and we need to, at a minimum, determine why and then make the needed changes. She went on to read that they were told as late as January 13<sup>th</sup> that there was no problem and that the parents were happy with the outcome. She read that administration is either misreading parent satisfaction or not reporting the facts. She said that the director reported that the system works 99% of time and that she would like to see the system work all the time for every student and that every incident needed to be reported, documented and investigated. She read that parents should be partners

with the teachers and administrators and our children should not fear going to school and the parent's should not have to worry about their safety or well-being. Ms. Johnson said that she would like to challenge the parents and the tax-payers of this county to be aware of the issues and remind them that there is an election in August and if there is any one on this Board that is not part of the solution, they are part of the problem. Spontaneous comments were heard throughout the audience and Mr. Brown used the gavel to maintain order. He stated to Ms. Johnson that he wanted to go back to his original question about the 13<sup>th</sup> when she was talking to the news media and wanted her to clarify that all she did was give an interview. More spontaneous comments came from the audience and Mr. Brown again had to use the gavel to maintain order and stated that we are finished with the discussions from the audience. Ms. Johnson said that he was making it too much about her and not the children and said "I leave". Ms. Johnson then gathered her things and left the Board meeting. Spontaneous applause came from the audience and Mr. Brown called them to order. Mr. Brown stated that the reason that the attention is put on Ms. Johnson is because he feels, and that he thinks the majority of the Board feels, that this whole situation was undermined. Ms. Johnson states that all she did was talk on the news media; however he has a letter from a parent in the Mosheim community that reads, *"there was a lady that approached my vehicle and she introduced herself as Deborah Johnson and said that she was with the Greene County School Board, she asked my name, I told her. She asked if I had any children at Mosheim. I said yes, 3.... Her next question being, have you or your children had any problems with anyone at Mosheim. I answered thankfully, no, we have always been on good terms. She asked me if I was there in support....."* The letter explained how the parent had stopped to ask someone on the grounds what the media was doing there and so she had told Ms. Johnson she knew Ms. Whitson and did not believe she was capable of violence. Mr. Brown then reads from the letter, from the parent that says *"Ms. Johnson responded that well, I think it was not an act of violence, it all happened so fast, that she acted with force and was overly aggressive in her actions. We just can't have that in our schools, especially with small kids. This problem needs to be addressed and no child should be mistreated."* Mr. Brown stated that he agreed with that last statement but felt that this letter goes to set the tone in looking at the situation that has happened, that Ms. Johnson had more of a part of this than we know as a Board. He also stated that things had already been contradicted at this meeting. He said that he has been on the School Board for four year and he has had complaints brought to him about different issues and he has always taken them to the director and he has never had one complaint that he has brought to Dr. Kirk that has not been handled and no parent has ever come back saying their issue had not been resolved. He states that Ms. Johnson could have had a really active role as a School Board member and helped the parents to get a meeting with Dr. Kirk and maybe have gotten some issues resolved. Mr. Brown adds that the Board was not given the opportunity to take care of this situation. He said that he had looked at how the media had reported this with comments like *"the media reports the problem as being wide-spread due to Board policies"*, *"it is just the tip of the iceberg of what happens to be a wide-spread issue in the Greene County Schools, deterring from its*

*own policies*", *"media reports that the Greene County Schools fails to protect the students"*. Mr. Brown states that we have around 7,000 students and since the news media reported the story he has not received one phone call from this incident or any other bullying incidents that may have taken place or even from Facebook. He adds that he regrets that these incidents have happened and that we are going to try and do some things to make it better and move forward and that the facts have been presented at this meeting.

Ms. Kathy Crawford commented that as a Board member they are all one voice and not acting as a single anymore.

Mr. Cobble stated that he has had children and grandchildren go through the county schools and he is proud of every teacher and every administrator he knows and has never had any problems. He said that he feels blessed to have Dr. Kirk as the director of our school system and that they do need to speak as one body. He adds that there isn't a teacher that he knows that would let this happen to a child and just set back and watch. He said that the teachers, administrators and board members work really hard and that it is hard to sit back and take this criticism. He added that he has all the respect in the world for these teachers as he sits and watches them in their classrooms as a guest and sees the children learn. He said that he is proud to be part of this system and that he will not back up one bit. Spontaneous applause comes from the audience and Mr. Brown gavel the meeting back to order.

Mr. Rick Tipton states that he has been on the Board only a couple of months and that he tries to sit back and watch and learn and that what bothers him the most is that we all make mistakes but to get up there and tell them that they did not take care of things when he was not called and told about the situation and that he was in the Mosheim district as well. He added that we have ways to get things done and has respect for everyone involved. He stated that he did not like getting called out personally about going ahead and voting against him in August. He stated that he had nothing to do with this and that Ms. Johnson called out every Board member when he and others did not know anything about the situation. He said that he did not think it was fair to come up and criticize the Board when they did not know about it and that it wasn't fair to be criticizing every teacher in Greene County. He said the media had reported that we had a *"wide-spread problem in Greene County"*. He states that he has never been called by any parent complaining about kids being bullied and if he did he would bring it to Dr. Kirk and that if she did not handle it the way they think she should then he would bring it before the whole Board. He stated that he had respect for all of the teachers and that he was a parent as well and he expected his child to be treated with respect and that he also expected his child to show respect to the teachers and that it goes both ways. Ms. Serrienne made a comment from the floor that the Board should look up the suicide rate of children from bullying. Mr. Tipton states that he became a part of this Board to try and stop this trend that we are having of settling our issues in the paper. He said that he feels there are ways of settling our issues and not in the newspapers or on television. He added that they are saying that the whole Greene County School

System is flawed and we have two incidents and we have not heard from anybody else. He said that it was quoted in the paper that Ms. Johnson had said "*Greene County has a problem*". He said that he is asking the parents, that if they ever have an issue, to please go through your administrator first and if something doesn't happen, to feel free to call him. Mr. Brown added that that goes for him as well. Ms. Kathy Crawford added that everyone in this room and the whole Board loves kids. She said she loves them and that she will fight for them.

On Motion by Rick Tipton, Second by Rex Hopson, the Board adjourned at 8:14 p.m.