

EXECUTIVE SESSION, WORK SESSION, COMMUNITY INPUT SESSION &  
BUSINESS MEETING  
OF THE  
DEKALB COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

January 8, 2024

The DeKalb County Board of Education held its Executive Session, Work Session, Community Input Session and Business Meeting on Monday, January 8, 2024, in the J. David Williamson Board Room, at the DeKalb County School District's Robert R. Freeman Administrative Instructional Complex, 1701 Mountain Industrial Boulevard, Stone Mountain, Georgia.

Mr. Dijon DaCosta, Sr. convened the meeting at 12:35 pm and noted the following were in attendance; Mr. Dijon DaCosta, Sr., Mrs. Deirdre P. Pierce, Mrs. Anna Hill, Ms. Whitney McGinniss, Mrs. Vickie B. Turner, Ms. Allyson Gevertz, and Superintendent, Dr. Devon Q. Horton.

Also in attendance were General Counsel Attorney, Ms. Melanie Slaton, Mr. Aaron Webb and Ms. Carolyn Lloyd, Executive Director to the Board.

**ADJOURN TO AN EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Mr. DaCosta, Sr. called for a motion to adjourn January 8, 2024, meeting to an executive session for the purpose of discussing permitted matters regarding litigation, land, legal, personnel, and student appeals.

On a motion by Ms. Gevertz, seconded by Mrs. Turner and with a vote of (6/0), the January 8, 2024, meeting adjourned to executive session at 12:35 pm. Dr. Morley joined the meeting during the executive session.

**ADJOURN THE EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Mr. DaCosta, Sr. called to adjourn the January 8, 2024, executive session to convene the work session and business meeting

Mr. DaCosta, Sr. noted there were no objections, the January 8, 2024, executive session adjourned to the work session.

**ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

Mr. DaCosta, Sr. amended the agenda by adding agenda item E.3.c. Approval of Dentons Contract for Professional Services (Not to exceed \$144,000 within the period from January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024 (Not to exceed \$12,000 per month). The agenda for the January 8, 2024 work session and business meeting agenda was adopted.

With no objections, the January 8, 2024, work session and amended business meeting agenda was approved.

**SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT and COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

- 1. Superintendent’s Report ~ “MIRACLES” Update  
Presented by: Dr. Devon Q. Horton, Superintendent**
  
- 2. Committee of the Whole Presentations**
  - a. Charter School Presentation: DeKalb Preparatory Academy (DPA)  
Presented by: Ms. Suzette Arnold, Governing Board Chair, DPA  
Dr. Lenise Bostic, Head of School, DPA**
  
  - b. Charter School Presentation: International Community School (ICS)  
Presented by: Dr. Chanika Perry, Governing Board Chair, ICS  
Ms. Fran Carroll, Executive Director, ICS**

**REVIEW OF AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE JANUARY 8, 2024, BUSINESS MEETING**

07.01.a.

Mr. DaCosta, Sr. requested that the Board of Education open the floor to accept nominations for the position of Chair and Vice Chair for 2024.

**Election of Chair for 2024 calendar year:**

1. Nominee: Mr. Dijon DaCosta, Sr. Nominated by: Mrs. Deirdre P. Pierce

Motion that nominations be closed by: Mrs. Vickie B. Turner

Vote: 6/1 – Dr. Joyce Morley - Abstained

Votes for Nominee #1 - 6

**Election of Vice Chair for the 2024 calendar year:**

1. Nominee: Mrs. Deirdre P. Pierce By: Mrs. Vickie B. Turner

Motion that nominations be closed by: Mr. DaCosta, Sr.

Vote: 6/1 – Dr. Morley - Abstained

Votes for Nominee #1 - 6

07.01.b.

Mr. DaCosta, Sr. requested that the members of the Board of Education re-affirm their commitment to comply with Board Policy BH (Board Member Code of Ethics) and Board

Policy BHA (Board Member Conflict of Interest). It is also requested that members of the Board of Education affirm to comply with Board Norms approved May 6, 2013.

07.01.c.

Mr. DaCosta, Sr. requested that the Board of Education approve travel related to educational conferences, meetings and workshops that address issues, strategies and process which will enable Board decisions to improve student achievement and successful management practices within the District for the calendar year 2024.

07.01.d.

Mr. DaCosta, Sr. requested that the Board of Education approve the 2024 Legislative Priorities. Dr. Morley objected to the legislative priorities as they were outlined. She made a motion to include to include mental health to the list. With no second, the motion died. Ms. McGinniss motioned to table to vote on the priorities, and for the board to vote on them at the board retreat at the end of the month. Motion seconded by Dr. Morley. Vote of 2/5 opposed; the motion failed. The item was placed on the consent agenda.

07.01.e.

Mr. DaCosta, Sr. requested that the Board of Education elect no more than two (2) other Board of Education members and no more than three (3) Community Advisors to the Audit Committee. Mrs. Pierce nominated Board Member, Ms. Hill to continue her service on the Audit Committee. With a vote of 6/1- Abstention by Dr. Morley, Ms. Hill would continue to serve on the Audit Committee.

Nominees, Ms. Gena Major, Mr. Dennis Allen and Ms. Erica Kuniansky were named to serve on the Community Advisory members. Dr. Morley objected. The item was pulled and would be voted on separately.

07.01.f.

Mr. DaCosta, Sr. requested that the Board of Education approve the ratification of the Superintendent's Goals and Artifacts. Dr. Morley objected to this agenda item. The item was pulled and would be voted on separately.

07.02.a.

Mr. DaCosta, Sr. requested that the Board of Education approve the minutes of the following meetings: December 11, 2023 strategic plan work session, and the December 11, 2023, board meeting which includes the executive session, work session, community input session and business meeting. Dr. Morley objected to this agenda item. The item was pulled and would be voted on separately.

07.03.a.i

Mr. Byron Schueneman, Chief Financial Officer, Division of Finance, requested that the Board of Education accept the November 2023 Monthly Financial Report.

07.03.b.

Mr. Byron Schueneman, Chief Financial Officer, Division of Finance, requested that the Board of Education approve a General Fund budget adjustment (rev/exp) in the amount of \$9,930,774. This is to record the additional revenue received through the QBE formula and subsequent outlay to provide employee bonuses.

07.03.c.

Mr. Byron Schueneman, Chief Financial Officer, Division of Finance, requested that the Board of Education approve the District to engage **Dentons for Professional Services** in an amount not to exceed **\$144,000.00** within the period from January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024 at a rate of **no more than \$12,000.00 per month** for strategic support and lobbying services.

07.03.d.

RISK ASSESSMENT – No Agenda Items This Month

07.04.a.

Dr. Tekshia Ward-Smith, Administrator, Division of Human Resources, requested that the Board of Education approve the 2023 Human Resources Report for January.

07.05.

LEADERSHIP & SCHOOLS - No Agenda Items This Month

07.06.a.

Ms. Stacy E. Stepney, Chief Academic Officer, Division of Curriculum & Instruction, requested that the Board of Education approve the award for RFP 24-187 for Speech Language, Occupational Therapy, and Physical Therapy Services to **Applied Pediatrics, Inc; The Stepping Stones Group; Comprehensive Therapy Consultants; Orange Tree Staffing; Soliant Health, LLC; SHC Services, Inc.; Invo Healthcare Associates, LLC ProCare Therapy; CRA Therapy; Sunbelt Staffing LLC; Tandym Group, LLC; Pediatric Developmental Services; AMN Allied Services, LLC; American Medical Staffing, Inc.; Maxim Healthcare Staffing Services, Inc.; Academic Staffing, Inc.; Epic Special Education Staffing; Kadiant LLC; Verbal Expressions, Inc.; GHR Education; Total Communication Therapy; Kidz Speak Therapeutic Services; E-Therapy LLC; Senseabilities, Inc.; Speech Teachers of North Georgia LLC; Advokids LLC; and CareerStaff Unlimited, LLC** as the most responsive and responsible bidders to provide speech language, occupational therapy, and/or physical therapy services for more than **\$100,000.00** per vendor but not to exceed **\$9,000,000.00**.

07.06.b.

Ms. Stacy E. Stepney, Chief Academic Officer, Division of Curriculum & Instruction, requested that the Board of Education approve the calendars for the next two school years. This item establishes the school calendars for the District during the period of July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2026.

07.07.

EQUITY & STUDENT EMPOWERMENT - No Agenda Item This Month

07.08.

OFFICE OF CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT (ACCOUNTABILITY - No Agenda Item This Month

07.09.a.

INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY – No Agenda Item This Month

07.10.a.i

Mr. Michael Harris, Manager of Partnerships, Division of Community Engagement and Innovative Partnerships requested that the Board of Education accept the donation from Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) which is aligned to the organization's core philanthropic pillar of ensuring all students can connect and engage with technology to meet their learning needs.

07.10.b.

Ms. Kina Champion, Director of School Innovation, Division of Community Engagement and Innovative Partnerships, requested that the Board of Education approve the charter renewal petition of DeKalb Preparatory Academy for a term of three (3) years. The school shall be placed on probationary status effective immediately through June 30, 2025, due to multiple incidents of noncompliance with FAPE (Free and Appropriate Public Education) as outlined in IDEA (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act); persistent instability in leadership, including during the current two-year contract extension; and academic performance. DeKalb Preparatory Academy shall provide a corrective action plan to the district for review and approval within 30 days.

07.10.c.

Ms. Kina Champion, Director of School Innovation, Division of Community Engagement and Innovative Partnerships, requested that the Board of Education approve the charter renewal petition of International Community School for five (5) years with an increase in maximum enrollment from 475 to 550.

07.11.a

ATHLETICS ~ No Agenda Item This Month

07.11.b.i.

Mr. Erick Hofstetter, Chief Operating Officer, Division of Operations, requested that the Board of Education approve the following ICA's that exceed \$50,000, with a total contract value not-to-exceed **\$185,000.00:**

- Clean A Blind of Atlanta, LLC (\$95,000)
- Premier Grease, Inc. (\$90,000)

Dr. Morley objected to this agenda item. The item was pulled and would be voted on separately.

07.11.b.ii.

Mr. Erick Hofstetter, Chief Operating Officer, Division of Operations, requested that the Board of Education approve the award of General Contractor Services for Playground Equipment Repairs, Replacements, and Outdoor Equipment Installation Services Contract Limit Increase district-wide to **PlayPower Inc** on an as-needed basis during 2024. Work to be performed as per Sourcewell Solicitation Number: RFP #010521 for playground equipment repairs, replacements, and outdoor equipment installation services district-wide, not to exceed the amount of **\$2,500,000**.

07.11.b.iii.

Mr. Erick Hofstetter, Chief Operating Officer, Division of Operations, requested that the Board of Education approve the renewal for ITB 20-752-036 for Electrical Contractor Services to **Capital City Electrical Services, Mr. Dee's Electric Service LLS and MWI Electrical Contractors, Inc.** for an additional year January 22, 2024– January 21, 2025; **Donald Camp, Inc.** for an additional year March 1, 2024 – February 29, 2025; and **D & R Construction and Contracting** for an additional year April 1, 2024 - March 31, 2025 in the amount not to exceed \$2,000,000.

07.11.b.iv.

Mr. Erick Hofstetter, Chief Operating Officer, Division of Operations, requested that the Board of Education approve a budget adjustment to cover additional costs for elevator services in the not to exceed amount of **\$2,000,000**, to the current term of the contract. This brings the total contract amount for the first service year to \$2,750,000.

07.11.c.i.

Mr. Erick Hofstetter, Chief Operating Officer, Division of Operations, requested that the Board of Education approve the Custodial Supplies Bid 22-497 as per the attached Bid Tabulation and its recommended awarded vendors.

07.11.d.

FLEET AND TRANSPORTATION SERVICES ~ No Agenda Item This Month

07.11.e.

SCHOOL NUTRITION SERVICES ~ No Agenda Item This Month

07.11.f.

E-SPLOST Projects ~ No Agenda Item This Month

07.12.

PERSONNEL RECOMMENDATIONS – No Agenda Item This Month

07.13.

OFFICE OF AUDITS & COMPLIANCE – No Agenda Item This Month

**F. AMENDMENT TO THE BYLAWS AND POLICIES** ~ No Agenda Items This Month

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The community input session began at 5:49 pm.

**COMMUNITY INPUT SESSION AND BUSINESS MEETING**

Mr. DaCosta, Sr. convened the Community Input Session and Mrs. Pierce read the Guidelines for Public Comments.

The following individuals addressed the Board:

1. **Eric Naindouba**
2. **Deborah Jones**
3. **Miriam Martin**
4. **Tara Gilmore**
5. **Joseph Austin**
6. **Michael St. Louis**

**CONVENE THE BUSINESS MEETING**

Mr. DaCosta, Sr. requested to convene the January 8, 2024, business meeting.  
With no objections, the business meeting convened.

**STUDENT BOARD REPRESENTATIVE** – Superintendent, Dr. Horton introduced two (2) Student Representatives. Miss Madison Roberts, Miller Grove High School, 12<sup>th</sup> Grade and Mr. Jonah Horwitz, Dunwoody High School, 12<sup>th</sup> Grade.

**RECOGNITION(S)** ~ No Recognitions This Month

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Mr. DaCosta, Sr. called for a motion to approve the January 8, 2024, consent agenda items.

On a motion by Mrs. Hill, seconded by Ms. Gevertz and with a vote of (7/0) the motion passed to approve the consent agenda.

**ACTION ITEM(S)**

**J.1. APPROVAL OF AN ITEM(S) FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION**

- a. Mr. DaCosta, Sr. called for a motion to accept the actions, as discussed, in Executive Session for item: Student Appeal #24-19.

On a motion by Mrs. Hill, seconded by Mrs. Pierce, and with a vote of 7-0.  
The motion passed.

- b. Mr. DaCosta, Sr. called for a motion to accept the actions, as discussed, in Executive Session for item: Student Appeal #24-20.

On a motion by Mrs. Pierce, seconded by Mrs. Turner, and with a vote of 7-0.  
The motion passed.

- c. Mr. DaCosta, Sr. called for a motion to accept the actions, as discussed, in Executive Session for item: Student Appeal #24-21.

On a motion by Mrs. Hill, seconded by Ms. McGinniss, and with a vote of 7-0.  
The motion passed.

- d. Mr. DaCosta, Sr. called for a motion to accept the actions, as discussed, in Executive Session for item: Student Appeal #24-22

On a motion by Mrs. Turner, seconded by Ms. Gevertz, and with a vote of 7-0.  
The motion passed.

## **J.2. APPROVAL OF AN AGENDA ITEM(S) PULLED FROM THE CONSENT AGENDA**

Mr. DaCosta, Sr. called for a motion to approve the following Action Items which were NOT placed on the consent agenda.

- a. Agenda Item: E.1.e. Election of Audit Committee and Advisory Members

Motion by Mrs. Pierce Second by Mrs. Turner  
All in favor - 6, Abstention by Dr. Morley. Motion passed 6 to 1.

- b. Agenda Item: E.1.f. Ratification of the Superintendent's Goals and Artifacts

Motion by Mrs. Hill Second by Mrs. Turner  
All in favor - 6, Abstention by Dr. Morley. Motion passed 6 to 1.

- c. Agenda Item: E.2.a. Approval of Minutes

Motion by Ms. Gevertz Second by Mrs. Pierce  
All in favor - 6, Abstention by Dr. Morley. Motion passed 6 to 1.

- d. Agenda Item: E.11.b.i. Approval of Independent Contractor Agreements (ICA) Clean A Blind of Atlanta, LLC, Premier Grease Inc., (For a collective total not to exceed \$185,000)

Motion by Mrs. Hill Second by Ms. Gevertz  
All in favor - 6, Abstention by Dr. Morley. Motion passed 6 to 1.

**ADJOURN**

Mr. DaCosta, Sr. asked if there were any objections to adjourn the January 8, 2024, work session and business meeting.

With no objections, the work session and business meeting adjourned at 8:08 pm.

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Secretary Ex-Officio

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Chair