

## **VOICE Meeting September 8, 2009**

47 members present representing 27 schools

Visitors present: Terri Stevens and Suzan Bell, ACE

Dr. Randy Bridges, Superintendent, Alamance-Burlington School System

Jackie Cole, Alamance-Burlington Board of Education

Co-Chair Linda Dale called the meeting to order and welcomed visitors.

### **Superintendent Comments**

Dr. Randy Bridges handed out a budget sheet for ABSS highlighting reductions in funding for the district. ABSS had to revert \$3.4 million back to the state with virtually 5% taken from every line item in the budget with the exception of 30% from central office and less than 5% for EC and At-Risk student categories to protect students with high needs. Budget reductions will need to be even larger for the 2010-2011 school year. Schools are off to a good start, ABSS is close to the projected DPI student enrollment. On the 9<sup>th</sup> day of school, district was 30 students shy of the projected 22,384 enrollment.

Dr. Bridges stated that schools are experiencing students and staff with flu-like symptoms and it is expected to be an on-going situation during the year. Unless the school work force gets drastically under-staffed, schools most likely won't close. ABSS and the Alamance County Health Department are monitoring student absences on a daily basis.

He commented on redistricting, in response to a question, that the district has achieved unitary status, according to the federal government and is no longer under restrictions that determined attendance to assigned schools, based on race. This will be an on-going topic of discussion for the school board.

ABSS has applied for federal stimulus funds that must be approved by county commissioners, and would be used for construction of a career and technical center and possible 4 classroom addition at Western Middle. \$2.7 million has already been approved from DPI, and the district is seeking another \$1.7 million for the classroom addition at WAMS. There is a joint county commissioner-school board meeting on September 17 to discuss the purchase of these tax-free bonds.

Dr. Bridges answered questions from VOICE members on a variety of topics including: field trips, new transfer policy, the possibility of Graham High School going to a year-round schedule, and if the EC Dept. would be joining the Child and Family Team concept currently in practice.

Co-Chairs Linda Dale and Kim Steele encouraged VOICE members to send their questions or concerns in advance of each meeting and also to spread the information learned at each VOICE meeting back to their parent communities.

Terri Stevens, Director of Programs for Alamance Citizens for Education, and Suzan Bell, Director of Volunteerism were present to update VOICE reps on initiatives by their organization including: dictionary project for all 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students in the county, Shadow a Principal program set for October 28, the Classroom Closet for teachers, tutoring and mentoring, and the annual Education Summit for October 16. They gave the website address for members interested in more information about their programs: [www.alamanceforeducation.org](http://www.alamanceforeducation.org) and asked for more volunteers. In addition, they asked VOICE members to help urge teachers to join the Classroom Closet for an annual \$20 fee. A suggestion was made that a purchased membership would make a great teacher gift idea. Suzan Bell encouraged reps to ask their principals if the video explaining the Classroom Closet has been shown to their faculty members. The Classroom Closet is located at the Burlington Outlet Village (formerly BMOC) in the strip center where the Hanes store is. It is open for classroom teachers and specialty teachers with membership. 87 first year teachers will have the chance to shop for free next week, September 14, 15, and 16.

Linda announced the new VOICE website was up and would have more information added to it after the meeting. Two addresses can be used to get to the website: [www.voiceofabss.org](http://www.voiceofabss.org) or [www.voiceofabss.com](http://www.voiceofabss.com)

Zone leaders were announced as follows:

Cummings	Davina Woods
Graham	Stephanie Isoma and Kim Williams
Eastern	Lynita Montgomery
Southern	Lynette Friddle
Western	Angela Kalo and Michelle Zaiser
Williams	Barbra Bond (?)

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Jenny Faulkner  
VOICE Secretary