

VOICE Meeting January 12, 2010

20 members present representing 15 schools at May Memorial Library

Visitors present: Dr. Randy Bridges, Superintendent, ABSS

Jackie Cole and Steve Van Pelt, Alamance-Burlington Board of Education

Co-Chair Linda Dale called the meeting to order and welcomed visitors. She congratulated Jackie Cole as new Board Chairman and Steve Van Pelt as Vice Chairman for the Board of Education.

Superintendent's Comments

Dr. Bridges thanked members for their attendance. He announced that the school board heard a presentation at yesterday's board work session for South Graham Elementary to go to a year round schedule for 2010-2011. Board members must vote to approve the request from the school staff and families. Sylvan made a presentation about a community health center they would like to open at the school in partnership with other agencies if grant funding is available.

North Carolina is applying for federal Race to the Top Grant funds, and if selected, it would mean \$600,000 to \$625,000 per year for 4 years for ABSS. There are strings attached, but the requirements match the district mission statement and ongoing goals.

The state budget picture is not looking good for next year. School systems are being asked to prepare for cuts of 3, 5, and 7% cuts for the 2010-2011 school year. The Race to the Top funds would help offset some of the cuts if N.C. is awarded the grant funds, and Dr. Bridges believes that the state is well-prepared to compete. California and Texas are not competing for the funds.

As far as the local budget, he believes that county commissioners will be hard-pressed to increase funding to the system for next school year.

Dr. Bridges provided information about a traffic study currently underway for the proposed Career and Technical Education Center for the city of Burlington. More information about the center will be coming and he thinks VOICE reps will like what they see about the facility and programs to be offered for students.

Both Jackie Cole and Steve Van Pelt urged reps to help judge graduation projects as a great way to find out what students are learning and interested in. It is especially helpful for elementary and middle school parents to judge as a way to find out what their own children will be expected to do when they begin their own projects in high school.

Terri Stevens Director of Programs for Alamance Citizens for Education mentioned the annual Stage Struck event will be held on April 24. The Classroom Closet has over 200 teachers signed up and needs donations for new items: things like pencils, notebook paper, crayons, markers, card stock.

ACE has 2010 calendars featuring student artwork for sale at \$10 each.

Suzan Bell, Director of Volunteerism, has 75 student requests for tutor/mentor volunteers.

ACE will hold the second annual purse sale on Saturday, May 8. ACE is requesting gently used purses as donations. This year they will also feature mens' wallets, belts, and briefcases.

Linda encouraged VOICE reps to share fundraising tips, opportunities and success stories on the VOICE website during these challenging economic times.

Jackie Cole encouraged reps to attend board work sessions and monthly board meetings. She also mentioned that the 2010-2011 school calendars are posted online for public comment, and urged members to respond with their comments.

Linda Dale reminded VOICE reps that the new VOICE website is up and running; www.voiceofabss.org

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 9, 2010.

Jenny Faulkner, Secretary