

**PITT COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
GREENVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA
NOVEMBER 10, 2003 MINUTES**

The Pitt County Board of Commissioners met in a Joint Meeting with the Pitt County Board of Education on Monday, November 10, 2003, at 6:00 PM in the Agricultural Building Auditorium, Pitt County Office Park, 103 Old Creek Road, Greenville, North Carolina. A dinner was provided to both boards and staff.

Commissioners present:

Beth Ward, Chairman
Eugene James, Vice Chairman
Glenn Bowen, Commissioner
Tom Coulson, Commissioner
Jimmy Garris, Commissioner
David Hammond, Commissioner
John Minges, Commissioner
Mark Owens, Jr., Commissioner
Randy Royal, Commissioner

Staff present:

Scott Elliott, County Manager
JoAnne Burgdorff, County Attorney
Susan Banks, Clerk to the Board
Melonie Bryan, Deputy Manager/Financial Services
John Bulow, Deputy Manager/Human Services
Phil Dickerson, Deputy Manager/Public Services
Thomas Lynch, Public Information Officer
Jessica Davenport, Office of Public Information

Board of Education Members Present:

Jill Camnitz, Chairman
Michael Dixon
Mary Grace Bright
Barbara Owens
Mike Barnette
Walter Gaskins
Richard Tolmie
Betsy Leech
Delano Wilson

Board of Education Members Absent:

Sidney Scott
Ralph Love
Don Carson, III

Vice Chairman James opened the meeting with a welcome to everyone present. Michael Dixon provided the invocation.

Chairman Ward called the business meeting to order along with Jill Camnitz, Chairman of the Board of Education.

Chairman Ward spoke about the Education Compact and its successes. She said the compact has encouraged and opened community between both boards and additional communications between the chairmen and the Manager and Superintendent. She said it enforced that education and the children are the most important job they do as boards.

Commissioner Hammond stated that he has a business matter to attend to and would like to be excused from the meeting. He stated his support of the accomplishments from the Education Compact.

Motion:

Motion to excuse David Hammond from the meeting.

Motion made by Commissioner Owens.

Seconded by Commissioner Royal.

Motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Camnitz stated that the compact was an excellent investment for the children and the improved communications have helped create unity and value to this work. She called the Board of Education to order.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Michael Dixon.

Dr. Priddy said they have been planning for this meeting for two months because there was a lot to celebrate. He commended both elected boards and their commitment to allow the County to grow. He said Pitt County's teachers are among the best in the State and they have great leadership in the schools. He spoke about the community's support for these efforts. He said they have twenty-one ways to measure success. He reviewed some of the measures that were used and said these measures challenge the County schools to do better. They have incorporated the federal plan into the local program. He provided a two page summary that addresses themes and trends.

Reading and Math in grades two through eight went from 68% to 84% for working at grade level. They have a lowered retention rate which was reduced to 4% which was the best rate they have had in a long time. He said the one of the ways they used funds from the compact was to reduce class size for entry level English I class. Algebra 2 students have improved. There has been progress over the last four years with the drop-out rate. Also, teacher retention has improved. The rate in North Carolina is 12% but in Pitt County it is 8.5% which means that out of the 117 schools in the State, Pitt County retains teachers better than 97% of the schools.

For grades 3-8:

Subject	Target	Percentage
Math	87.5%	82.7%
Writing	No testing done by State	

High School

Algebra I (50% of 8 th graders are taking Algebra I)	86.5%	86.7%
Algebra II	82.0%	85.6%
Biology	70.0%	73.6%
Chemistry	74.0%	81.0%
English	79.0%	88.3%

9th grade

ELPS (¾ of students at grade level)	86.5%	75.4%
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Geometry	80.0%	81.5%
Physical Science (lower class sizes)	80.0%	73.3%
Physics	90.0%	90.8%
History	70.0%	55.0%
(Some teachers fees the concentration on other subjects has been to the detriment of science classes.)		
SAT	1005	993

Dr. Priddy stated that they have received a \$1.0 million grant to better prepare teachers to teach students in U.S. History. He said he hoped for improvements in this area next year. They will be doing block scheduling next year. English II was not tested by the State. He stated that the SAT scores are inching up. He said that the best students are in the top 10% of the SAT scores. He said they need to have more students taking AP courses and students need to start taking SAT's in the sixth, seventh and eighth grades. Pitt's best students are making 1196 on the SAT's and the State average score is 1249 for the top 10%.

	Target	Pitt Score
Drop-out Rate	6.10	6.64
Grade Level Retentions	5.4	4.0

Dr. Priddy stated they have a Scholars Program which requires a range of courses that will give the student a well rounded diploma. He stated that scoring on the grade level retentions has improved because of extra teachers, smaller classes, and retired teachers are coming in to help students that have fallen behind.

	Target	Pitt Score
Teacher turnover	7.85%	8.54%
Climate Survey	90.0%	82.6%

Dr. Priddy said the Teacher turnover rate has been improving because the compact allowed them to help salaries, lower class size, provide more materials, and Principals have been able to nurture new teachers. He said they have been stretched financially and academically but it will pay off.

Highlights of Education Compact Report

Since the implementation of the compact in 2000, we can celebrate some significant successes as a county and as a school district.

Reading and Math 3-8

- Steady success on End of Grade tests in grades 3-8
 - Resulting in the highest percentage ever of Pitt County Students being proficient in reading and math

Some of the reasons:

- One of the most stringent promotion policies in the state which has had the effect of focusing student, teacher and parent attention on the importance of mastering the skills and knowledge necessary for success at the next grade.
- Focus on early literacy: providing a foundation in K-2 to assure that the highest possible number of students are reading by grade 3

Lower Retention Rates in Grades 3-8

Early intervention and intensive remediation efforts have resulted in our lowest percentage of retained students ever... 4%. That already meets the target of grade level retentions being less than 5.4%.

High School Results

Pitt County high schools have met or exceeded the compact targets in 7 of the ten tested subjects (70%) on End of Course (EOC) Tests

English I

At the High School Level, we are particularly pleased with our percent proficient in English I that exceeds the 2005 target at 88.3% of students taking the course scoring at level III.

This is a course that serves all of our students... success in this area is important to us because it reflects our progress with all populations.

Higher Level Math and Science Courses

- Physics - exceeded target at 90.8%
- Chemistry - exceeded target at 81.0%
- Geometry - exceeded target at 81.5%
- Algebra II - exceeded target at 85.6%

EOCs in Algebra I and Biology both experienced a slight dip; however, the scores already exceed the 2005 target.

Lower Dropout Rate in High School

Pitt County's dropout rate continues to decrease from a high of 7.44 in 2000 to our 2003 rate of 6.64.

Quality Teachers, Administrators, and Staff

- Have steadily reduced teacher turnover rates from the baseline year (from a high of over 13% to 8.54% last year.) Pitt County's teacher turnover rate

of 8.54% is lower than 97 of the 117 systems and the state average (12.44%).

Chairman Ward stated how proud she and the Board of Commissioners are for the achievements the Board of Education has made.

Mr. Elliott presented the achievements of the Commissioners concerning the County's responsibilities with the Education Compact. He stated that because of the additional funding, Pitt County has exceeded the per pupil allocation to be in the top 33% in the State. He said the County started with the additional \$18.8 million funding in the first year and has risen to \$26.3 million in the fourth and current year. The County was ranked 57th when the Education Compact started. The first year the County was ranked 56th, the second year the 67th, the third year 38th, the fourth year 29th and anticipate being in the top 18-20 percentile counties for school funding in the fifth year. The Board of Commissioners has been lobbying the General Assembly for legislation on low wealth funding and working with the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners in these efforts. This legislative goal has been referred to a study committee of the Association. The NC Association of County Commissioners has previously adopted the need for low wealth funding as a statewide legislative goal. Mr. Elliott stated that the achievements have been tremendous and the funding has been astounding for the County.

Chairman Ward said this is truly a night to celebrate the successes. She asked if the Commissioners and School Board members would like to make comments or reflect upon the past four years of the compact.

Comments/Reflections by Board members:

Commissioner Owens said everyone knows that proper funding is needed for proper education. He said the compact was created with this in mind. He stated his support of the continuation of the compact and said that it has been beneficial to the students and the teachers. The County is getting a return for its money.

Mike Barnett, Board of Education member, said that the compact has been a very unique tool. He said that everyone should recognize that public education is important for economic development. He stated that sometimes we overlook quality of life and these go hand in hand with good education.

Commissioner Mingos recognized and thanked Suzanne Sartelle, Don Mills and Larry Seigler for the involvement of the Chamber and the business community. He spoke of the positive effects of the Oasis Program and stated his support of the next education compact.

Commissioner Bowen said he would have thought that the system climate would have been more positive with these improvements. He said he wondered why the satisfaction has not increased in the public. He asked if the same history is being taught today as was taught ten years ago. He said he was pleased with the success of the program and felt that the students were getting a better education.

Richard Tolmie, Board of Education member, spoke about the teachers and the system and how a lot has been accomplished with this compact because of the increase in funding. He said they need to hold and keep their goals at 80-85% and to keep improving.

Commissioner Coulson said this is a step in the right direction. He noted that Pitt County is competing with the entire world in recruiting for industries and the students need to be prepared for work. He said science is a must! He stated he was glad there is an emphasis put on college preparatory classes.

Mary Grace Bright, Board of Education member, stated that the compact has helped children be successful that were not previously successful. It has given them new opportunities.

Vice Chairman James said the School System still needs to look at North Pitt High School and asked what was being done to bring these students up to standard. He stated all students should have the same opportunity to succeed in school.

Dr. Priddy spoke about the funding allowing them to hire additional teachers and reduce class size. He said they are working on preparing students for taking the SATs. Vice Chairman James said they need to compare North Pitt High School students to J. H. Rose High School students and their statistics.

Michael Dixon, Board of Education member, spoke about history and 45% of the soldiers that freed the slaves were African American. He stated that working together, these two boards could achieve their goals.

Commissioner Royal stated that a good job had been done using the education compact. The funds may now need to go to other areas of concentration. He thanked Dr. Priddy, School staff and expressed his support of the School System as well as the agencies that have partnered with the schools.

Delano Wilson, Board of Education member, said he appreciated what the commissioners have done with the education compact and the funding. He stated that the money has helped special kids that need special attentions. He spoke about some of the children shying away from the AP classes.

Commissioner Garris said he was impressed and that the schools have done a good job. He said they should connect the SAT with these improvements so the test scores should be improving in relation to these other improvements. He stated his support in the future compact but expressed a concern about meeting the needs of students in conjunction with meeting the needs of the general citizenry.

Betsy Leech, Board of Education member, said she is pleased with the success of the compact and the relationship between the two boards. She said they still need additional funds for special programs for tutoring and mentoring. She was supportive of the new compact and that everyone needs to be involved and supportive of the new compact.

Barbara Owens, Board of Education member, said she was supportive of what has been done and that we need to continue to charge forward. She recognized the Education Compact Committee members and spoke about the County and Schools being the "Best in the East and the Leader in the State".

Mr. Walter Gaskins, Board of Education member, said he is not against the compact but the money is not going to the teachers and the children. He spoke about money going to raises for two administrative personnel in the amount of \$35,000. At the convocation, a lot of money was spent on books for the teachers. The Chamber was paid \$1500 in dues and \$4410 for the Education Summit and \$2900 was for teachers to attend. He said this was not putting the money in the right place. He spoke about the ABC's and asked who would get those funds. He stated that the housekeeping and custodial staff are not getting increases but Principals and Assistant Principals keep getting raises. He said he would be supportive if the funds were going in the right direction.

Chairman Ward stated that the next item was consideration of the organization of a committee to consider the second version of an education compact. There was a proposal for the makeup of this committee which once again will be a joint effort. She stated that research shows that when people focus on improving education in the community it attracts businesses and industry because they take that into consideration. Commissioner Bowen said he did not think the Boards were going to take any action at this meeting and that it was for informational purposes only. Chairman Ward stated that they would like to continue to move forward with this project.

Motion:

Motion to approve the proposed makeup of the second version of the Education Compact Committee:

Voting Members

Commissioners: Chair and Two Members

Board of Education: Chair and Two Members
County Manager: Scott Elliott
Superintendent: Michael Priddy
One Appointment from Community by Each Board

Non-Voting Members
Finance Officers
Appropriate Instructional Technical Staff

Motion made by Commissioner Garris.
Motion seconded by Commissioner Royal.

Discussion:
Commissioner Bowen said the membership needs to be clearer like chair and 2 members versus three members. Commissioner Royal stated he supports the recommendation of the chairman serving on the committee. Commissioner Garris stated his support also.

Substitute Motion:
Motion made by Commissioner Bowen.
Motion seconded by Vice Chairman James.

Substitute Motion Vote Record:

John Minges	No
Jimmy Garris	No
Mark Owens, Jr.	No
Beth Ward	No
Glenn Bowen	Yes
David Hammond	No
Eugene James	Yes
Randy Royal	No
Tom Coulson	Yes

Total Yes Votes: 2
Total No Votes: 7
Motion Failed.

Vote Record on Motion to approve proposed makeup of new Education Compact Committee:

John Minges	Yes
Jimmy Garris	Yes
Mark Owens, Jr.	Yes
Beth Ward	Yes
Glenn Bowen	No
David Hammond	Yes
Eugene James	Yes
Randy Royal	Yes
Tom Coulson	Yes

Total Yes Votes: 8
Total No Votes: 1
Motion Passed.

Adjourn

Motion:
Motion to adjourn at 8:35 pm.

**Motion made by Commissioner Mark Owens, Jr.
Motion seconded by Commissioner John Minges.**

Motion Passed Unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan J. Banks, CMC
Clerk to the Board