

BARTLETT CITY BOARD OF EDUCATION
SPECIAL CALLED MEETING MINUTES
Thursday, March 19, 2015
Bartlett City Hall - Council Chambers
6400 Stage Road, Bartlett
8:00 PM

INVOCATION

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Invocation and Pledge of Allegiance were waived.

CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL

*****Official Business of the Day*****

Chairman Norris called the meeting to order at 8:00 p.m. The following Board Members were present:

Ms. Erin Berry
Mr. David Cook
Mrs. Shirley Jackson
Mr. Jeff Norris
Mr. Bryan Woodruff

ANNOUNCEMENT OF MEETING PURPOSE

Chairman Norris stated that the purpose of the meeting was to approve a Voucher Resolution.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- *Blount Smith - 457 Waring Rd.*
Re: TEA/Legislation

BOARD ACTION ITEMS

Bartlett City Board of Education Voucher Resolution

Chairman Norris requested that the Voucher Resolution be read into the record by the Board Secretary, Bethany McConville.

RESOLUTION 2-3

WHEREAS, each year the Tennessee General Assembly convenes the state's legislative session to adopt and amend laws affecting a wide range of legislative issues; and

WHEREAS, this year, Tennessee lawmakers convened the 109th General Assembly on Tuesday, January 13, 2015; and

WHEREAS, pending before this legislative body are bills that would create a voucher program allowing students to use public education funds to pay for private school tuition; and

WHEREAS, the Bartlett City Board of Education is responsible for providing a system of free and appropriate public education for all school-aged children in Bartlett, Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, the Constitution of the State of Tennessee requires that the Tennessee General Assembly "provide for the maintenance, support, and eligibility standards of a system of free public schools", with no mention of the maintenance or support of private schools; and

WHEREAS, the State of Tennessee, through work of the Tennessee General Assembly, the Tennessee Department of Education, the State Board of Education, and local school boards, has established nationally recognized standards and measures for accountability in public education; and

WHEREAS, standards and measures for accountability are intended to improve student achievement, close achievement gaps between high performing and low performing students, and provide meaningful opportunities to engage in the educational experience; and

WHEREAS, vouchers eliminate this public accountability by channeling public education funds into private schools that do not face state-approved academic standards, do not make budgets public, do not adhere to open meetings and records laws, do not publicly report on student achievement, and do not face the public accountability requirements contained in major federal laws, including special education; and

WHEREAS, vouchers have not been effective at improving student achievement or closing the achievement gap, with the most credible research finding little or no difference in voucher and public school students' performance; and

WHEREAS, vouchers give choice to private schools but do not provide meaningful choice to students and parents, because private schools decide if they want to accept vouchers, how many and which students should be admitted, and the potentially arbitrary reasons for which they might later dismiss a student; and

WHEREAS, many voucher proponents argue these programs increase school choice, but currently numerous public school options exist within Shelby County. Seven public school districts and a litany of charter schools currently support open enrollment policies that allow opportunity for public school choice. Through federal, state, and local laws and policies, students have the option to attend traditional, charter, and magnet schools within the County; and

WHEREAS, voucher programs divert critical dollars and commitment from public schools to pay private school tuition for a few students; and

WHEREAS, Tennessee's public education funding formula, the Basic Education Program ("BEP"), has experienced significant changes "designed to restore fairness, sustainability, and accountability to the funding process" resulting in BEP 2.0; and

WHEREAS, BEP 2.0 has never been fully funded since its inception in 2007; and

WHEREAS, vouchers compel taxpayers to support two school systems, one public and one private, while public education remains partially unfunded, and while the private system offers no accountability to the taxpayers supporting it.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BARTLETT CITY BOARD OF EDUCATION, that the Board opposes and hereby urges the General Assembly to oppose any legislation or other similar effort to create a voucher program in Tennessee that would divert money intended for public education to private schools, especially in light of the lack of funding for BEP 2.0.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be transmitted forthwith to the Shelby County delegation to the General Assembly, which is hereby requested to oppose all legislation or other similar effort in the next legislative session that would divert money intended for public education to private schools.

On this _____ day of _____, 2015.

Jeff Norris, Chairman
Bartlett City Board of Education

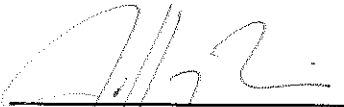
March 19, 2015
Page 2 of 3

Motion Passed: Bartlett City Board of Education Voucher Resolution passed with a motion by Mr. Bryan Woodruff and a second by Ms. Erin Berry.

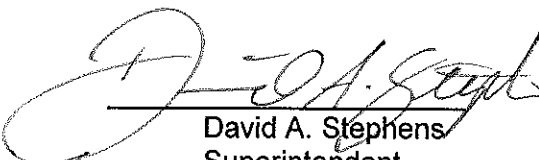
| | |
|----------------------|-----|
| Ms. Erin Berry | Yes |
| Mr. David Cook | Yes |
| Mrs. Shirley Jackson | Yes |
| Mr. Jeff Norris | Yes |
| Mr. Bryan Woodruff | Yes |

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 8:07 p.m.



Jeff Norris
Chairman



David A. Stephens
Superintendent