

DeKalb County Board of Education

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Matt Sharp, Vice-Chairman
Mark Richards, Member

Harold Bobo, Member
Jeff Williams, Member

Evaluation of Superintendent

In December 2012, the DeKalb County Board of Education voted to begin the new Superintendent's salary at \$119,371.06 (same as the previous Superintendent). The Board also agreed to adopt an evaluation instrument to be used to evaluate the Superintendent. The motion stated that based on the most current evaluation of the Superintendent's four-year term the Board will have the authority to keep the salary the same or increase the Superintendent's salary up to 5%. Any future raises during the term of the Superintendent would be based on the next evaluation. The first evaluation will occur 18 months after the new Superintendent takes Office (June 2014) and every 12 months thereafter. The Board also authorized that the Superintendent shall not be subject to State raises.

Salaries/Student Enrollment for Superintendents in the contiguous Counties:

System	Salary	Students
Cherokee County	\$108,107	3,983
DeKalb County	\$119,371	8,736
Etowah County	\$122,400	8,964
Jackson County	\$114,240	5,648
Marshall County	\$116,469	5,550
Albertville City (Marshall Co)	\$140,360	4,598
Arab City (Marshall Co)	\$129,160	2,592
Attalla City (Etowah Co)	\$106,080	1,823
Boaz City (Marshall Co)	\$122,400	2,099
Fort Payne City (DeKalb Co)	\$162,643	3,003
Gadsden City (Etowah Co)	\$143,247	5,422
Guntersville City (Marshall Co)	\$133,906	1,986
Scottsboro City (Jackson Co)	\$122,716	2,655
Chattooga County (GA)	\$ 92,500	2,839
Dade County (GA)	\$106,904	2,231
Walker County (GA)	\$136,059	9,130
Trion City (GA)	\$120,071	1,391

The first evaluation of the superintendent being due in June 2014 has now been completed. The evaluation was modified from several school systems and is very similar to the instrument used by the Fort Payne City Board of Education.

The evaluation includes the following areas:

- (1) Relationship with Board
- (2) Community Relationship
- (3) Staff/Personnel Relationship
- (4) Educational Leadership
- (5) Business/Finance
- (6) Personal Qualities

All Board Members responded to the evaluation with the exception of Mr. Wootten who did not participate. Board Members do not speak as individual members. They only have authority when speaking as a Board; therefore, the evaluation is based on an average compilation of the responses from all participating Board Members.

According to the Alabama Association of School Boards it is the responsibility of the local Board of Education to evaluate the Superintendent of Education. The Superintendent has vast power and authority and regardless of whether the Superintendent is elected or appointed, it is in the Board's right and responsibility to evaluate the chief educator in the System. The current instrument used to evaluate the Superintendent is very basic and does not include goals of the system.

The Board realizes that there is a distinct difference between a School System like the City of Fort Payne which has only one community and the DeKalb County School System which has eleven different communities with varying school size. Also, the Fort Payne City System has an appointed Board that then appoints the Superintendent; whereas, the DeKalb County System has an elected Board from five different districts and an elected Superintendent. Those differences are dramatic and certainly cause some degree of division and difficulty in managing the County System.

Nevertheless, it is incumbent upon the Board Members to evaluate the educational leader of any system and maybe more so in a system as diverse and challenging as the DeKalb County School System. Prior to a few years ago, the State Department of Education did an evaluation of all the Superintendents; however, the State has shifted that responsibility to the local Boards of Education.

Areas where Mr. Taylor needs to improve are as follows:

- *Public Relations is an area that rates in the below average to poor range. It is vitally important for any organization (especially one with nearly 9,000 students and 1,000 employees) to have a good public image. The Superintendent should develop at least a cursory relationship with local media outlets.*
- *Morale among employees (including principals, teachers and other staff) is low. More should be done to make our employees feel appreciated in their jobs.*
- *The Board of Education needs to be informed on issues, needs and operations of the School System on a periodic basis. Important issues that effect schools and students should be thoroughly explained to Board Members before action is taken.*
- *The Superintendent should have a harmonious working relationship with the Board. As noted above, communication with the Board is vitally important.*
- *The Superintendent should accept the responsibility of maintaining a liaison between the Board and personnel, working toward a high degree of understanding between staff and the Board. Central Office Supervisors should periodically address the Board regarding their duties and why they are important to the School System.*
- *The Superintendent should recruit and assign the best available personnel in regards to their competencies. There are no supervisors with high school administrative experience working in the central office.*
- *A good leader should seek and accept constructive criticism of his work and look for ways to improve. The Superintendent needs to take wise counsel from Members of the Board of Education; members of the Community; as well as those with more education experience.*

The results of the evaluation show that the Superintendent was in the satisfactory range for Personal Qualities and Business/Finance.

It also shows that he needs to improve on Educational Leadership; Staff/Personnel Relationships; Relationship with the Board; and Community Relationships.

The Evaluation shows an overall need for improvement by the Superintendent,

The evaluation shows that Mr. Taylor was above average in the following areas:

- *Defending his principles and convictions in the face of pressure and outside influence.*
- *Maintains a high standard of ethics, honesty and integrity in his personal and professional matters.*
- *Speaks well in front of large and small groups and expresses his ideas in a logical forthright manner and is suitably attired and well-groomed.*
- *Writes clearly and concisely.*

Mr. Taylor was satisfactory in the following areas:

- *He evaluates financial needs and makes recommendations for appropriate budgeting of funds.*
- *Includes groups in policy planning.*
- *Accepts responsibility for his personnel recommendations.*
- *Maintains professional development.*