

WEEKLY SESSIONS SET

Harmony Prevails as EOA, Atlanta School Board Meet

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Put the Atlanta Board of Education and an education subcommittee of Economic Opportunity Atlanta (EOA) together and what would you get?

Sweetness and light.

Members of the subcommittee left the Monday night meeting which they expected to be a fracas still a little unsure of what had actually happened.

Not only did they get a sympathetic hearing, but at the recommendation of Atlanta Supt. of Schools Dr. John Letson, the subcommittee will hold weekly meetings with the board "as long as is necessary" to discuss and iron out their complaints.

"DO YOU REALIZE what this means?" Mrs. Marilyn Graybill asked following the meeting. "It means we are actually going to get in on school decisions at the policy level."

"This is the best board meeting I've ever attended," said Robert Tuve, chairman of another citizens group, Better Schools Atlanta. "I'd say this was a very positive response."

"I'd say we made a start," said Mrs. Maggie Moody chairman of the subcommittee of the EOA Citizens Advisory Council.

The meeting began on a sour note when board chairman Bill Wainwright grilled Mrs. Moody about differences between her correspondences praising the board for working with the subcommittee and published reports that the subcommittee had criticized the board for failure to communicate and cooperate.

However, the tone of the meeting began to change after one of the subcommittee members came to Mrs. Moody's defense.

"You're awful stiff," Mrs. Susie LaBord told Wainwright.

"You're like you've got Mrs. Moody on trial. We're here to talk about our children's problems, not to jerk up Mrs. Moody. We don't want anymore of that kind of talk," she said.

AFTER A BRIEF exchange between Wainwright and another subcommittee member, Mrs. Dorothy Bolden, over whether the board should respond to the complaints of the group in writing or, as Wainwright said, by having Dr. Letson "throw the answers out on the table," Dr. Letson took over the meeting.

High School and request that the board build a new high school on Field Road to serve the expanding northwest Atlanta population.

Mrs. Hill maintained Archer is housing 1,700 students but

has a capacity for only 1,200.

Dr. Letson told the parents the school board included additions for Archer, Harper and West Fulton High Schools in this bond issue to take care of population growth in that area.

"Mr. Wainwright may I suggest that we take each one of these broad areas the subcommittee is questioning us about and set up a specific meeting to discuss it with them in depth," Dr. Letson said.

"Let me illustrate," Letson went on. The Atlanta school lunch program is the largest food service operation in Atlanta. If you want a thorough understanding of our school lunch program it's absolutely essential that you spend the time to learn about it.

"We'll set up these meetings, one on each topic or more if necessary, and have all the staff people, area superintendents and principals here to answer your questions. Then you can help us evaluate the program and if there's a better way to do it, we'll be glad to take your recommendations."

THE FIRST meeting, set for 7 p.m. Wednesday, will deal with the operation of the school lunch program and the board's new policy on free and partial pay lunches.

Mrs. Odessa Hill, Mrs. Mary Sanford and Mrs. Olivia Pullen representing the Perry Homes area, appeared before the board earlier in the evening to discuss overcrowding in Archer