

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE  
COUNTY OF UPSHUR, STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA, HELD AT 7:00 P.M. ON  
FEBRUARY 9, 2021, AT BUCKHANNON-UPSHUR HIGH SCHOOL.

President Samples called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance. Dr. Greenbrier Almond read the mission statement, "The mission of the Upshur County Schools is to provide academic preparation, social responsibility, employability, and a desire of lifelong learning." The following board members were present: 1. Dr. Tammy Samples, President; 2. Mrs. Katie Loudin, Vice-President; 3. Dr. Greenbrier Almond; Attending virtually, 4. Mrs. Kristi Wilkerson; 5. Mr. Patrick Long.

Among other in attendance were: 1. Dr. Sara Lewis-Stankus, Superintendent; 2. Dr. Debra Harrison, Assistant Superintendent; 3. Mr. Jeffrey Perkins, Treasurer; 4. Mr. Tim Derico, Director of Facilities; 5. Ms. Melinda Stewart, Director of Secondary Curriculum; 6. Mrs. Jody Johnson, Director of Elementary Curriculum and Federal Programs; 7. Mrs. Jodi Akers, Director of Attendance and Transportation; 8. Mr. Doug Frashure, Director of Special Education; 9. Mrs. Kayla Yocum, Technology/Digital Media Communications Specialist; 10. Mr. Quinten Oldaker, Technology Support Specialist; 11. Mr. Eddie Vincent, Director of Wellness and Child Nutrition; 12. Mrs. Megan O'Neill, Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent.

Mrs. Katie Loudin requested for item XVI, Delegations and Public Comments, be moved to follow item VI, Acknowledgements.

Upon a motion duly make by Dr. Greenbrier Almond, seconded by Mr. Patrick Long and carried, the board approved the agenda. Agenda  
Approved

An Upshur Star was awarded to Jake Bohman by Mr. Jonathan Pollock and Mr. Mike Wilson for his role in the WV Students Success Leadership Council. He is also a finalist for the National Merit award. Mr. Bohman shared his presentation on the transition between high school and college which earned him recognition by the Council. Buckhannon Academy Elementary School student Serenity Farabee was presented an Upshur Star by Mrs. Susanne Britton for her calm, calculated, response in the face of a life threatening emergency. Miss Fairview saved her grandfather by administering CPR when he went into cardiac arrest. Upshur  
Stars

Upon a motion duly made by Dr. Greenbrier Almond, seconded by Mrs. Katie Loudin and carried, the financials were approved as presented. Financials

Director of Facilities, Mr. Tim Derico, shared HVAC issue at Hodgesville Elementary School and that contractors were scheduled for the following day. Portable heaters are on site until then. Bids for the Union Elementary School roofing project were presented. The box truck owned by the county is nearing the end of its use life and Mr. Derico has begun the research process for a replacement. The current truck has seen a significant increase in use this school year with pandemic food deliveries. The preliminary findings were presented and additional sources will be reviewed. Dr. Greenbrier Almond asked where the old truck would go and Mr. Derico replied that it would be auctioned off or traded for a new one. Old  
Business

Upon a motion duly made by Mrs. Katie Loudin, seconded by Mr. Patrick Long and carried, the Union Elementary School Roofing project was approved as presented.

Technology Support Specialist, Mr. Quinten Oldaker, shared the latest Technology Tips newsletter and Mrs. Kayla Yocum presented updates on technology support through the help desk. iMacs continue to be distributed to school secretaries and counselors. She thanked all those who contributed to World Read Aloud Day and invited all to participate in Read Across America Day in March. Technology

Director of Safety and Preparedness, Dr. Jeffery Harvey, shared that the second of three COPS grants had been awarded to upgrade door securities. He shared the trend data of positive cases in Upshur County since they returned to school in January, which is mirroring trends across the state. After the holiday travel season and vaccinations testing has waned but the percent Preparedness

positivity has remained the same. Since January 19, cases spiked as expected the third week back, staff cases are higher than students. Classes are being quarantined as cases arise but classmate quarantine has varied by age of students and level of physical contact between students with tracing by the health department being heavily utilized. The majority of cases in schools have come from the community into the school environment. Vaccine efforts continue with the 2<sup>nd</sup> round of 2<sup>nd</sup> doses will occur this week and the number of those desiring their first dose is shrinking. Measures that have been put in place are proven to be effective in protection against the virus. Daily temperature checks are in place at Buckhannon Academy Elementary School and other schools are screening as possible symptoms arise. He added that known violations of quarantine orders are difficult to discipline.

Director of Elementary Curriculum and Federal Programs, Mrs. Jody Johnson and Director of Secondary Curriculum, Ms. Mendy Stewart shared comparisons of first and second quarter data of full time remote vs. in-person students. Full Time Remote concerns varied by programmatic level and whether they were enrolled at the county level or through West Virginia Virtual School. Students in the K-12 pilot program have found it to be very labor intensive but a strong curriculum. Approximately 20 students have received an Incomplete grade in at least one course during the first semester but have been given extensions for the remainder of the year. There are 25 students who have shown little to no progress and have transitioned to either FTR, in-person or homeschool formats. Dr. Tammy Samples asked if students who are struggling this year, would they normally struggle in person full time? Mrs. Johnson replied that it depends on their individual supports. Parents are trying very hard but it's difficult for them to separate the parent-child relationship from the teacher-student relationship and when students are in the building, compensation can be made. Paper packets are not the same as virtual resources. Further information can be found in the included Overall Upshur County Data packet. Mrs. Katie Loudin commented that Lewis county has mandated for failing remote students to return to in-person school and asked how long we will allow students to fail at home. Mr. Jonathan Pollock responded that changes are in progress for teachers to change guidelines and in-House credit recovery is actively operating. Students with no school contact for five days then become an emergency for the administration. Social workers and Community In Schools Coordinators are being utilized to build relationships that will compel students to want to return in-person. Mr. Doug Frashure presented numbers related to Special Education students which can be referenced in the included packet.

Director of Facilities, Mr. Tim Derico, presented the first draft of the 2021-2022 school calendar. The first hearing will be at the February 23 regular board meeting. He added that 30 additional minutes have been added to the daily school schedule on the calendar to allow for snow days.

Director of Attendance and Transportation, Mrs. Jodi Akers, presented the Transportation GPS System proposal. The Zonar GPS system would provide turn-by-turn updates to parents and guardians with expected arrival times and immediate notification of technical difficulties on buses. Transportation Policies 9000, 9005, 9006 and 9007 were presented for first reading. Policy 9000 is an adoption of WVDE Policy 4336. Policy 9006 and 9007 are new in response to the requirements of WVDE Policy 4336.

Upon a motion duly made by Dr. Greenbrier Almond, seconded by Mrs. Katie Loudin and carried, the Personnel was approved as presented.

**A. Resignations**

- a. Kelly Poirier as Substitute Teacher, effective February 9, 2021.
- b. Teresa Weiford as Substitute Teacher, effective February 9, 2021.

**B. Employment (Pending Appropriate Certification(s) and Background Check)**

- a. Darryl Burgess as Assistant Boys Basketball Coach at Buckhannon-Upshur High School, retroactively effective February 5, 2021.
- b. Matthew Westfall as Substitute Custodian, retroactively effective February 5, 2021.
- c. Michael Phillips as Substitute Custodian, retroactively effective February 5, 2021.
- d. Michael Turek as Substitute Custodian, retroactively effective January 14, 2021.
- e. Elias Black as Substitute Custodian and Substitute Cook, retroactively effective January 14, 2021.

C. Leave Request:

- a. Christine Flanagan requesting FMLA retroactively effective February 1, 2021.  
Return date to be determined.

- D. Request Approval for West Virginia Wesleyan College student, Sarah Noll, to complete an internship with Shauna Jones at Buckhannon-Upshur High School, retroactively effective February 1, 2021.

Superintendent, Dr. Sara Lewis-Stankus presented her evaluation as Superintendent for the past three years. Dr. Stankus thanked the directors and school administrators for their hard work and support to the students of Upshur County. The 2019 levy renewal came at a time that the county was identified as a Distressed County, at risk for a State Board of Education takeover. A team of leaders has been built with a unified vision for Upshur County and exciting changes have taken place with more to come. She emphasized that top quality education is the goal through action and accountability because that is what our students deserve. The 2019 levy passed with a 2-1 rate, the highest in history of Upshur County. A county-wide system of support was put in place to reduce the high school dropout rate. Dr. Stankus entered her position with the county in a \$1.2 million deficit, which has been eradicated. Upshur County is one of two in the state to have increased enrollment with a rise in the graduation rate. Multiple grants have been written and awarded over the past three years including a \$2.2 million SBA grant for Hodgesville Elementary School. Recipients of the two top educational awards in the state are from Upshur County; Brian Allman, West Virginia Milken Educator Award, and Erin Anderson, 2021 West Virginia Teacher of the Year. When the 2020 pandemic hit many school districts struggled to supply their students with electronic devices for remote learning. Upshur County already had an Apple grant written which made one-to-one devices quicker to distribute. Upshur has seen the introduction of the PAX self-regulation program with a dramatic impact and astounding success. Other implementations include a Future Leaders program at B-UHS, innovations in science and technology, Empowerment Academy, an Esports lab, an expansion in career technology offerings, Taste of the Trades at Fred Eberle Technical Center for 8<sup>th</sup> grade students and Portrait of a Graduate.

Super.  
Eval.

Upon a motion duly made by Mr. Patrick Long, seconded by Mrs. Kristi Wilkerson and carried, the board members recessed into executive session at 9:13 p.m.

Upon a motion duly made by Dr. Greenbrier Almond, seconded by Mrs. Katie Loudin and carried, regular session resumed at 9:42 p.m.

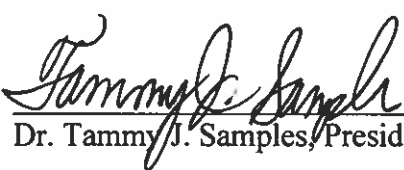
A special meeting of the Board of Education will be held Tuesday, February 16, 2021, at 6:30 p.m. at the Board of Education Office, 102 Smithfield Street, Buckhannon, WV 26201. The next regular meeting of the Board of Education will be held Tuesday, February 23, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. at Buckhannon-Upshur High School, 270 BU Drive, Buckhannon, WV 26201.

Next  
Meeting  
Date

Upon a motion duly made by Mrs. Katie Loudin, seconded by Dr. Greenbrier Almond and carried, the meeting was adjourned at 9:43 p.m.

Adjournment

  
Dr. Sara Lewis-Stankus, Secretary

  
Dr. Tammy J. Samples, President

