

BUNCOMBE COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING

4:00 p.m. – Call to Order – Executive Conference Room
(Work Session Updates / Closed Session)

Thursday, January 12, 2023

5:30 p.m. – Minitorium

Broadcast live on BCS Communications YouTube Account

MINUTES

BE IT REMEMBERED: That the Buncombe County Board of Education met in a regular session on January 12, 2023 at 5:30 p.m. in the Minitorium located at 175 Bingham Road, Asheville, North Carolina and streamed live on YouTube, when the following business was transacted.

The following Board members were present:

Ann Franklin, Madam Chair
Peggy Buchanan, Member
Rob Elliot, Member
Judy Lewis, Member

Kim Plemmons, Member
Amanda Simpkins, Member
Amy Churchill, Vice-Chair

Staff present: Dr. Rob Jackson, Superintendent; Jennifer Reed, Assistant Superintendent Curriculum & Instruction; Joseph Hough, Assistant Superintendent Auxiliary Services; Tonya Robinson, Director of Secondary Education; Dr. Paula Pinkerton, Director of Elementary & Intermediate Education; Dr. Shane Cassida, Director of Student Services; Robert Frisby, Director of Technology; Dr. Stacia Harris, Director of Communications; Clark Wyatt, Director of Maintenance; Tim Fierle, Director of Facilities; Steve Earwood, Director of Testing; Jeremy Stowe, Director of Transportation; Ginny Barrett, Director Title I; Tina Thorpe, Chief Finance Officer; Taylor Baldwin, Director of CTE; Christy Cheek, Director of BCS Foundation; Shanon Martin, Assistant Director of Student Services; Jennifer Hand, Scott Emory and Joshua Ponder, Technology Support Specialists; Tim Reaves, Assistant Director of Communications; Hann Henson and Breanna Hensley, Digital Communications Specialists; Dean Shatley, Attorney and Kim Matthews, Executive Administrative

MOTION TO CLOSED SESSION

Mr. Elliot made a motion to enter into closed session at 4:20 p.m. and Ms. Simpkins seconded the motion – the motion was approved unanimously.

The Madam Chair entertained a motion for the Board of Education to enter into closed session pursuant to G.S. 143-318.11 for the following purposes:

- Under subsection (a)(1) to prevent the disclosure of privileged and confidential personnel information pursuant to G.S. 115C-319-321;
- Under subsection (a)(1) to prevent the disclosure of privileged and confidential student information pursuant to 20 U.S.C. 1232g (FERPA);
- Under subsection (a)(3) to discuss matters protected by the attorney-client privilege.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Simpkins made a motion to adjourn closed session at 5:25 p.m. and Ms. Buchanan seconded the motion – the motion was approved unanimously.

CALL TO ORDER

PRESENTATION OF COLORS / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE / REYNOLDS HIGH SCHOOL Instructed by Lieutenant Colonel Davide Wise, United States Army (retired) & Sergeant First Class Jamie M. Brown, United States Army (retired)

MOMENT OF SILENCE

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Elliot made a motion to approve the agenda and Ms. Plemmons seconded the motion – the motion was approved unanimously.

SUPERINTENDENT'S COMMENTS

- Dr. Jackson began by noting that this month is School Board Appreciation Month. He thanked each of the School Board Members for their hard work and advocacy on behalf of our students, staff, families, and community.
- During the Curriculum Feature this evening, Dr. Jackson said that we will hear about the amazing opportunities our students experience in our CTE, or Career and Technical Education, program. CTE is an important part of curricular and extracurricular offerings in the school system. BCS' goal is that each and every student in our school system graduate on-time prepared for success on the pathway they choose beyond high school. He is very proud of BCS' CTE program.

1595

Open Session Minutes – January 12, 2023

- Dr. Jackson expressed his thanks to Mr. Clark Wyatt and the Maintenance Department team, Mrs. Lisa Payne and the School Nutrition Department team, our school custodians, and school leaders who were amazing in their collective response to the water crisis earlier this month. The School Nutrition Department offered lunch at convenient sites on the day BCS was out of school and when we returned were able to serve lunches in all schools, following all required protocols until full water service was reinstated. Once we returned to school, the twelve schools still under a Boil Water Advisory received a combined 16,000 bottles of water a day and over 1,000 bottles of hand sanitizer. Additionally, all schools that either lost water at some point or who were under a Boil Water Advisory were completely flushed - from hot water heaters to ice machines, to water fountains, and more. He commended the team for their leadership in a unique set of circumstances.
- Earlier this week, National Law Enforcement Day was recognized. Dr. Jackson shared his appreciation for our School Resource Officers, for Sheriff Miller and the Sheriff's Department, and for all of BCS' law enforcement partners.
- Dr. Jackson stated that his Superintendent's Listening and Learning Adventure is continuing as he spends his first 100 days as superintendent in discovery and exploration. He has now soared with Hawks, Blackhawks, Ivy Hawks, Cardinals, and Eagles. He has run with Warcolts, Warponies, and Road Runners. He has blasted off with Jets and Rockets and has crested the high plateaus with Rams and Wildcats. In visiting all forty-five schools and spending a full school day in fourteen schools, he has been incredibly impressed and proud of what he has experienced in the classrooms across this great school system.
- The "town hall-style" meetings in each district are underway. Dr. Jackson stated that last week he conducted a Town Hall meeting in the Owen district at Community High School and this week was in the Reynolds district at Charles C. Bell Elementary. He has enjoyed the opportunity to meet parents and community members.
- This month, Dr. Jackson said he has also had the opportunity to visit BCS' Family Resource Center and speak with members of our Student Support team. The team works hard to support the mental health of our students and staff. They are also working with community partners to connect families with needed resources.

GOOD NEWS

- Principal of the Year: Dr. Jamie Johnson, North Buncombe Middle School
Christy Cheek, Director of Buncombe County Schools Foundation and Carla Trull, Vice President of First Citizen's Business & Commercial Banking, presented the Principal of the Year Award funds to Dr. Jamie Johnson. Ben Alexander, Principal of Reynolds High School spoke about Dr. Johnson and the qualities that have earned her this deserved recognition.
- Owen High School 2A State Champions: Men's Cross Country, Coach Bob Saddlemire & Men's Soccer Team, Coach William Morrison
David Ball, District Athletic Specialist spoke about the many accomplishments of athletes in Buncombe County Schools and recognized the two Owen High teams for their State championship wins. Dr. Sam Sircey, Principal of Owen High School, introduced the two teams and expressed pride over the accomplishments of the athletes and coaches.
- Special Recognition: Lt. Kelly Ball, Lead SRO Sheriff's Department
Mr. Hough, BCS Assistant Superintendent and Sheriff Quentin Miller recognized Lt. Kelly Ball for her dedication and hard work in the SRO program for Buncombe County Schools. Lt. Ball expressed her love for the students and staff of BCS and appreciation for her time spent in the SRO program.

CURRICULUM FEATURE

- Career Technical Education: "CTE Accelerate Your Career"
Taylor Baldwin, CTE Director, highlighted the Career and Technical Education curriculum offered in Buncombe County Schools. He noted the district goals, enrollment, courses offered at the high school level, options for middle school students, credentials that students can earn and the number of student participants in the program. Mr. Baldwin also recognized Amy White for her national award as the 2022 New and Related Services Division Support Staff Member of the Year.

REPORTS

- External Audits Reports: Anderson, Smith & Wike PLLC – Shannon Dennison
Ms. Dennison shared results of the audit performed by their firm. She stated that this was an unmodified opinion - the highest you can receive. She congratulated BCS on that designation. Ms. Dennison then highlighted several areas of the audit for the Board. She also stated that their firm looks at internal controls of the Finance Department, verifies compliance for federal and state fund spending, and found no instances of non-compliance in any area. Ms. Dennison stated that the audit was a very clean report and had no issues with the Finance Team or management during the audit.
- Finance Department Award: Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting
Ms. Thorpe recognized the entire Finance Department for the two awards they received and thanked them for their hard work.

Open Session Minutes – January 12, 2023

PUBLIC COMMENT

-Wally Lee, a resident of Fletcher and member of the American Legion Post 70, spoke in support of youth programs involving citizenship, leadership, sportsmanship opportunities and volunteer opportunities that the American Legion supports.

-Brian McKeown, a teacher at Erwin High School and treasurer of BCAE, expressed concerns over teacher shortage and non-classified staffing. He supports a request to the County for an increase in the local supplement.

-Lissa Pedersen, an Erwin district art teacher and member of BCAE, shared concerns about recruitment and retention of teachers, and low teacher pay.

-Joan Hoffman, a CTE teacher from Reynolds High School and member of BCAE, also spoke in support of asking for an increase in the local supplement from County leaders.

ACTION AGENDA

- Budget Amendment #2

Board members thanked Ms. Thorpe and her Finance Department team for the good audit report and congratulated them on their awards. Ms. Thorpe answered questions from Board members concerning the Classroom Teachers line item change of almost one million dollars, stating that this reflects the end of ESSER funds. Finance and Human Resources are working together to address potential staff loss due to enrollment through attrition and better alignment with allotment formulas. The goal is to align the positions with allotments by June 2024 with reductions coming from attrition. Questions regarding local and state funding based on enrollment were also addressed.

Mr. Elliot made a motion to approve Budget Amendment #2 as presented and Ms. Churchill seconded the motion – the motion was approved unanimously.

- RESOLUTION SUPPORTING LOCAL CONTROL OF SCHOOL CALENDARS

Ms. Plemmons made a motion to approve the Resolution Supporting Local Control of School Calendars be adopted and Ms. Buchanan seconded the motion.

Mr. Elliot spoke in favor of approving the resolution that would ask state legislatures to allow local school boards to set their school calendars. He shared that being able to set calendars to allow high school exams in the first semester to be completed before the holiday break is what would be in the best interest of our students. With current state school calendar laws, systems are restricted to start and end dates that don't allow for that to happen. Mr. Elliot also said that the resolution is an important advocacy for our students. He stated that if approved, the Board will ask for the resolution to be sent to local and state leaders so that we can develop more flexibility in our school calendar. Ms. Simpkins also expressed her support and encouraged the public to reach out to our elected officials to push this issue to the forefront.

Madam Chair then called for the vote – the motion was approved unanimously.

Mr. Shatley then read the resolution aloud for the record.

- Approval of BCS Academic Calendar for 2023-2024

Ms. Churchill thanked Ms. Reed for providing pros and cons to eliminating June 10, 2024 as the last day on the proposed calendar. Ms. Lewis also thanked Ms. Reed and the calendar committee in developing the calendar but stated that it would be best for students if BCS had the flexibility to start earlier to end first semester at the holiday break. Mr. Elliot also stated that the calendar committee has to operate within the law and that there are many opinions to how that should look. He encouraged stakeholders to express interest in serving on the calendar committee if they would like to share input. Ms. Reed said it is important to have input from stakeholders and that the process starts in our summer months. Dr. Jackson encouraged people interested in serving on the committee to contact their principal, Ms. Reed or himself.

Ms. Lewis made a motion to approve the BCS Academic Calendar for the 2023-2024 school year as presented and Mr. Elliot seconded the motion – the motion was approved unanimously.

- Approval of BCS Early/Middle College Academic Calendar for 2023-2024

Dr. Lanahan, principal of the Early/Middle College, presented the 2023-2024 Academic Calendar for the school. She stated that this calendar will better align with the AB Tech Community College calendar which is better for students who are dual enrolled. Since the Early/Middle College is a Cooperative Innovative School, flexibility is allowed for start and end dates. Dr. Lanahan did state that the interior of the calendar has been kept to align with the BCS academic calendar. Dr. Lanahan also answered questions concerning transportation arrangements and costs.

Ms. Simpkins made a motion to approve the BCS Early/Middle Academic Calendar for the 2023-2024 school year as presented and Mr. Elliot seconded the motion – the motion was approved unanimously.

1597

Open Session Minutes – January 12, 2023

CONSENT AGENDA

- Minutes: December 6, 2022 – Regular Meeting Open Session
- Personnel Report
- **POLICIES FOR SECOND READING**
 - Policy 2121 Board Member Conflict of Interest
 - Policy 2210 Duty of Officers
 - Policy 4050 Children of Military Families
 - Policy 4152 Unsafe School Choice Transfer
 - Policy 7262 Communicable Diseases – Employees
 - Policy 7800/1610 Professional and Staff Development

Ms. Simpkins made a motion to approve the items on the Consent Agenda and Ms. Lewis seconded the motion – the motion was approved unanimously.

INFORMATION AGENDA

- Finance Reports
- **POLICIES FOR FIRST READING**
 - Policy 3430 School Improvement Plan

Dr. Jackson addressed several questions from board members concerning Policy 3430. He clarified the difference in the strategic plan for the system and the individual school's plans. Board members also expressed their desire to encourage stakeholder involvement in the school plans.

ANNOUNCEMENTS / FUTURE MEETINGS

- The next Board of Education Regular Meeting will be held on February 2, 2023. There will be a Work Session beginning at 2:00 p.m. in the Beaucatcher Room, a Closed Session beginning at 4:30 p.m. in the Executive Conference Room, and the Open Session beginning at 5:30 p.m. in the Minitorium at 175 Bingham Road, Asheville, NC 28806.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Plemmons made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:30 p.m. and Ms. Buchanan seconded the motion – the motion was approved unanimously.

Rob Jackson, Superintendent &
Ex Officio Secretary

Ann B. Franklin, Madam Chair

Minutes for Approval: February 2, 2023
klm