

BUNCOMBE COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING  
 4:00 p.m. – Call to Order – Executive Conference Room  
 (Work Session Updates / Closed Session)  
**Thursday, April 13, 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 April 13, 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; Dr. Jennifer Reed, Assistant Superintendent Curriculum & Instruction; Joseph Hough, Assistant Superintendent Auxiliary Services; Dr. Shane Cassida, Director of Student Services; Robert Frisby, Director of Technology; Clark Wyatt, Director of Maintenance; Steve Earwood, Director of Testing; Tonya Robinson, Director of Secondary Education; Paula Pinkerton, Director of Intermediate & Elementary Education; Jeremy Stowe, Director of Transportation; Shanon Martin, Assistant Director of Student Services; Jennifer Hand, Scott Emory and Joshua Ponder, Technology Support Specialists; Dr. Stacia Harris, Director of Communications; Tim Reaves, Assistant Director of Communications; and Breanna Hensley, Digital Communications Specialists; Tina Thorpe, Chief Finance Officer; Tina Jones, Asst. Finance Officer; Carol Edge, Operational Budget Manager; Lisa Sharpe, Accounting/Purchasing Manager; Dean Shatley, Attorney and Kim Matthews, Executive Administrative Assistant

**MOTION TO CLOSED SESSION**

Ms. Plemmons made a motion to enter into closed session at 4:30 p.m. and Ms. Buchanan 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 5:15 p.m. and Ms. Lewis seconded the motion – the motion was approved unanimously.

**WORK SESSION UPDATES**

The Board discussed the Resolution to Oppose House Bill 219. Ms. Churchill stated that in speaking with NCSBA about HB 219, she understands that the bill is in the rules committee and doesn't appear to be moving soon and feels that it could be better to wait and see if the bill makes it out of committee before moving forward on the resolution. Mr. Shatley said that if the Board would like to remove the item from the agenda, they could do so by consensus. Dr. Jackson and Mr. Shatley answered questions concerning the lease extension for the Reynolds Middle School property with the Reynolds Fire Department. This lease extension will not impair BCS' ability for future projects on Rocket Drive, such as the future guard shack placement. Mr. Elliot stated that he would be asking to table the item concerning the sports participation fee increase as he would like further information before a decision is made.

**CALL TO ORDER**

**PRESENTATION OF COLORS / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE / NORTH BUNCOMBE HIGH SCHOOL**  
 Instructed by Captain Thomas Swanberg, United States Coast Guard (retired)

**MOMENT OF SILENCE**

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA removing the Resolution**

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

# 1608

Open Session Minutes – April 13, 2023

## **SUPERINTENDENT'S COMMENTS**

- Dr. Jackson expressed his excitement about the opportunity to recognize amazing teachers from each of our schools during the Teacher of the Year presentation later in the meeting. He stated that these teachers are exemplars of the incredible teachers and faculty members throughout our school system.
- National Assistant Principals Week was officially last week as we were away from school for spring break, said Dr. Jackson. He would also like to celebrate and honor the dedicated men and women who serve in these vital roles. A sometimes thankless job filled with bus schedules, building operations, and pitching in wherever needed, our schools depend on their service in more ways than we could ever name. He thanked each of our Assistant Principals for their tireless dedication to students, teachers, staff, parents, and the community.
- Dr. Jackson offered congratulations to BCS' high schools for earning re-accreditation during the month of April. He said that the process of accreditation is rigorous as schools are examined for their continuous progress procedures and for their student success results. Dr. Jackson thanked all the school teams involved in this process.
- In closing, Dr. Jackson stated that his Superintendents Listening and Learning Adventure is winding to a close. To date, he has completed forty-three of forty-five full day school visits. The visits were each wonderful. He said that he left amazed at the work of teachers and staff and appreciated the hard work of our students. The atmosphere of each of our schools felt warm and caring. Dr. Jackson expressed his extreme gratitude to the principals, teachers, students, and staff members who warmly welcomed him and have endeavored to help him understand and experience the strengths and challenges of each individual school. At next month's school board meeting, Dr. Jackson said that he will present what he has learned about our school system and our schools, our points-of-pride and our opportunities for growth. He looks forward to sharing with our Board, our team, and our community what he has learned.

## **GOOD NEWS**

- Teacher of the Year Recognition

Dr. Jennifer Reed, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction and Ms. Jenny Zimmerman, current Teacher of the Year congratulated and thanked the Teacher of the Year recipients from each school. They also announced the seven district Teacher of the Year names. These are the district Teacher of the Year recipients: Enka District – Misty Brooks, Candler Elementary; Erwin District – Canaan Frisby, Johnston Elementary; North Buncombe District – Mike Rowe, North Buncombe High; Owen District – Ashley Styles, Black Mountain Primary; At-Large District – Nicole Washburn, Nesbitt Discovery Academy; Reynolds District – Maura Brouwer, Reynolds High; Roberson District – Susan Rana, Glen Arden Elementary.

## **REPORTS**

- Classified Personnel Salary Update: Tina Thorpe, Chief Finance Officer

Ms. Thorpe presented information to the Board concerning the implementation status of the Classified Personnel Salary study. Ms. Thorpe shared information on BCS' profile consisting of forty-five schools, 22,000 students and almost four thousand employees, making BCS the fourteenth largest public school district in the state. She also displayed the budget totals by category for the Board. Ms. Thorpe reviewed the financial challenges that school systems in North Carolina face. Next, Ms. Thorpe reviewed the findings and recommendations of the HIL Consultants Classified Salary Study presented to the Board in May 2022. She also covered the budget request presented to the Commissioners in May of 2022 and the subsequent approval for a three-year phased-in salary increase. Ms. Thorpe stated that in the May 2023 request to the Commissioners, they will request to fully implement the classified salary study recommendations. Ms. Thorpe offered a comparison of teacher local supplements from other LEAs in the state, showing that BCS provides the sixth highest local supplement. Ms. Thorpe also answered questions from the Board concerning the salary request.

The Board took a short recess before proceeding.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

-Phil Hardin, a Buncombe County resident and retired community college educator, expressed his support for a teacher supplemental pay increase.

-Lissa Pedersen, a teacher in Erwin District, advocated for better working conditions by asking for an increase in salaries and increase in supplemental pay for teachers equivalent with other systems in the state.

-Joan Hoffman, a teacher at Reynolds High asked the Board to support a living wage for all BCS staff, certified and non-certified, and to ask the County Commissioners for funding for the increase.

-Abigail Hessling, a teacher at Erwin High, requested that the Board ask for additional funding from the Commissioners to increase teacher salaries.

-Natalie Romanello, a teacher at Reynolds High, also advocated for an increase in the teacher salary supplement.

## Open Session Minutes – April 13, 2023

- David Honea, a teacher at Reynolds High, also requested that the Board ask the Commissioners to increase funding for salary and coaching supplements.
- Laura Cleaveland, a county-wide school social worker, requested the Board to continue the ESSER funded positions beyond the end date of this year.
- Greg Parks, a parent in the Erwin District, expressed concern for some books that are in schools.
- Eric Smythers, Living Wage Coordinator for Just Economics Living Wage, advocated for a living wage rate for all employees and demonstrated how that rate is determined.

**ACTION AGENDA**

- PRC 071 Teacher Supplement Approval

Mr. Elliot made a motion to approve the Resolution to adopt the plan for distribution of the Supplemental Funding for Teacher Compensation described in PRC 071 and Ms. Simpkins seconded the motion – the motion was approved unanimously.

- RESOLUTION OPPOSING HOUSE BILL 219, “CHARTER SCHOOL OMNIBUS”

This item was removed from the agenda without objection.

- Childcare Tuition Request

Several Board members commented on this request. They expressed concerns over a tuition increase and how that would affect the parents who use the childcare, many of which are BCS teachers. Ms. Thorpe answered questions concerning grant funding and the enterprise work designation of the childcare operations. Ms. Plemmons feels that we should address this issue with the County Commissioners and seek funding there. Ms. Simpkins also feels that funding should be found elsewhere instead of increasing tuition. Ms. Churchill inquired about the feasibility of increasing childcare operating hours.

After discussion, Madam Chair called for a motion. Hearing no motion from the Board, no vote was taken on the request.

- Authorization of Lottery Application: Paving at Valley Springs Middle School, Pisgah Elementary School, Oakley Elementary School, Community High School and Enka High School

Mr. Elliot made a motion to authorize execution of an application for use of lottery funds in the amount of \$1,225,000.00 for paving at Valley Springs Middle School, Pisgah Elementary School, Oakley Elementary School, Community High School and Enka High School and Ms. Simpkins seconded the motion – the motion was approved unanimously.

- Authorization of Lottery Application: North Buncombe High School Softball Field Stadium Lights

Ms. Franklin made a motion to authorize execution of an application for use of lottery funds in the amount of \$725,000.00 for the North Buncombe High School Softball Stadium Lights and Ms. Plemmons seconded the motion – the motion was approved unanimously.

- Athletic Participation Fee Proposed Change

Mr. Elliot made a motion to table this item and Ms. Plemmons seconded the motion – the motion was approved unanimously. The item was tabled for a future meeting.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

- Budget Amendment #5
- Elementary Class Size Waiver Request
- AC Reynolds Middle School: Lease Extension for County Fire Department
- Avery’s Creek Elementary School: New Roadway Construction and Easement Agreement
- Minutes: March 2, 2023 – Regular Meeting Open Session
- Minutes: March 2, 2023 – Special Called Meeting
- Personnel Report
- Approval of Board Member Training Credits
- **POLICIES FOR SECOND READING**
- Policy 2120 Code of Ethics for School Board Members
- Policy 2123 Board Member Opportunities for Development
- Policy 2330 Board Meeting Agenda
- Policy 2410 Policy Development
- **POLICIES TO BE RESCINDED**
- Policy 2420 Adoption of Policies
- Policy 2440 Policy Review and Evaluation
- Policy 2450 Suspension of Board Policies

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

**INFORMATION AGENDA**

- Finance Reports
- **POLICIES FOR FIRST READING**
- Policy 3226/4205 Internet Safety

# 1610

Open Session Minutes – April 13, 2023

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS / FUTURE MEETINGS**

- The Board of Education will meet in a Special Called Work Session on May 4, 2023 at 12:00 p.m. in the Minitorium.
- The next Board of Education Regular Meeting will be held on May 4, 2023. Work session updates and Closed Session beginning at 4:00 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**

Mr. Elliot made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:07 p.m. and Ms. Simpkins seconded the motion – the motion was approved unanimously.

---

Rob Jackson, Superintendent &  
Ex Officio Secretary

---

Ann B. Franklin, Madam Chair

Minutes for Approval: May 4, 2023  
klm