

BUNCOMBE COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING

4:00 p.m. – Call to Order – Executive Conference Room

(Work Session Updates / Closed Session)

Thursday, May 4, 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 May 4, 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; Tonya Robinson, Director of Secondary 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; Breanna Hensley and Hann Henson, Digital Communications Specialists; Tina Thorpe, Chief Finance Officer; Tina Jones, Asst. Finance Officer; Carol Edge, Operational Budget Manager; Lisa Sharpe, Accounting/Purchasing Manager; Lisa Payne, Director of School Nutrition; Amy Dupree, Director of Special Services; Jim Lewis, Student Services Special Populations Resources; Brian Propst, Assistant Director of Human Resources; Taylor Baldwin, Director of CTE; Chris Campbell, Attorney and Kim Matthews, Executive Administrative Assistant

MOTION TO CLOSED SESSION

Ms. Simpkins made a motion to enter into closed session at 4:00 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 4:20 p.m. and Ms. Buchanan seconded the motion – the motion was approved unanimously.

WORK SESSION UPDATES

The Board discussed the thoroughness of the budget work session. Ms. Franklin will convey this to the public during the regular meeting. When the motion to approve the proposed budget is brought forth, it will need to be made clear which option number is being requesting to be approved. Board members discussed information provided to them on teacher pay during the work session and on vacancy positions in administration and classroom teachers. Dr. Jackson gave the Board a revised Legislative Agenda for them to consider at the meeting. There were five additional points included based on Board member's input. If approved, he will present the agenda to the legislators on May 15 when they will be participating in "Bring Your Legislator to School Day."

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 amend and approve the agenda to include the addition to the Action Agenda of CA Erwin High School: Easements for Sewer Line Replacement and the removal of the Action Item CA Erwin High School Window Wall Replacement Project and Ms. Buchanan seconded the motion – the motion was approved unanimously.

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SUPERINTENDENT'S COMMENTS

- Dr. Jackson noted that during the month of May there is an opportunity to celebrate more of our BCS teammates with Teacher Appreciation Week, National School Nurses Day, and National Principal Appreciation Day. He said that we are blessed by the dedicated men and women who choose service to children and families as their life's work. As the school year begins to wind down, he asked all to take a moment to thank every single person, be they employee, parent, guardian, community supporters and volunteers, for their support of the children of Buncombe County.
- Next week, Dr. Reed and the Curriculum Team invite everyone to preview four different materials under consideration for our K-8 Math Curriculum. This is an open drop-in event on May 9, 2023 or May 10, 2023 from 4:00pm to 6:00pm.
- Dr. Jackson recognized Oakley Elementary School - their students, staff, and community. Oakley recently celebrated one hundred years of service to the community with a Centennial Celebration. He said that seeing former students, now grandparents and great-grandparents walking the hallways of their beloved school reminded him of just how important our schools are to the communities they serve.

GOOD NEWS

- NCHSAA 1A/2A Men's Indoor Track State Champion 500m –Davis Kendall, Owen High School
- NCHSAA 3A Women's Indoor Track State Champion 4x800 Relay Team – Eden Barnwell, Katie Johnson, Avery Mays, and Sophia Banks, North Buncombe High School
- NCSSA Dr. Sam Houston Jr. Leadership Award – Dr. Jennifer Reed, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction
- The Honor Roll of Peak Performers of the College of Education and Allied Professionals WCU – Dr. Rob Jackson

CURRICULUM FEATURE

- Superintendent's Listening & Learning Tour – Dr. Rob Jackson
Dr. Jackson began by sharing a video created by the Communications Department highlighting his school visits. He then recognized his special guests for the evening. They were: County Commissioners, Al Whitesides and Martin Moore; Jenny Zimmerman, BCS' Teacher of the Year; Jackie Parham, his former elementary school teacher; Ben Alexander, Principal of Reynolds High School and Dr. Jackson's former student; his wife, Renee Jackson; and the following student leaders representing BCS' high schools – Delila Cruz, Roberson; Asher Cunningham, Reynolds; Lorena Alamo, N. Buncombe; Sophia Banks, Nesbitt; Taylor McHone, Enka; Jamison Phelps, Erwin; Cole Christian, Owen; Gracie Nickelson, Virtual Academy; Jesse Raines, Community; India Houdham, Early College.

Dr. Jackson began his presentation by sharing the goals he had for his first one hundred days in office. He then reviewed the four phases of the Superintendent's Entry and Learning Plan that included school and facility visits, individual meetings with board members, internal and external stakeholders, community members, parents, students and staff members, principals, district leaders, municipality town councils, county leaders, agency partners and local higher education leadership. Based upon those meetings, Dr. Jackson stated that his goal was to analyze data from information gathered in order to identify strengths and opportunities for district improvement. He introduced Jeremy Stowe, Taylor Baldwin and Brian Propst, who took the information gathered at each of Dr. Jackson's meetings and analyzed and compiled it so that it could be used to inform future decisions for the system.

Mr. Stowe described the process for collecting the data from the three questions the Superintendent asked at each of his meetings with stakeholders. Mr. Baldwin reviewed the data collected to the responses to question one – "What do you love best about Buncombe County Schools?" Mr. Propst reviewed the same for question two – "What should never change about Buncombe County Schools?" Mr. Stowe reviewed the information for the last question – "What should the new superintendent be working on first?"

Dr. Jackson presented Phase 4 of his plan. He highlighted the strengths he discovered while visiting schools as: the Students; the Teachers; BCS' Literacy Instruction; and BCS' Arts Programming. Dr. Jackson then shared the areas where he saw opportunities to improve. These were: Mental Health Support; Teacher/Staff Retention; Multilingual Student Needs; School Support; and Enrollment. Dr. Jackson said that his next steps would be to lead efforts to launch a new strategic plan for BCS, establish teacher and staff advisory councils, grow BCS' student advisory council and advocate for BCS students, teachers, staff, administrators and families.

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PUBLIC COMMENT

The following list of people shared public comment regarding a request to increase both certified and non-certified pay by requesting an increase to the local supplement from the County Commissioners as part of the Board's 2023-2024 budget submission. They are as follows:

Kim Martin, BCS lead sign language interpreter
 Tate MacQueen, Erwin High School teacher
 Abby Hessling, Erwin High School teacher
 Caitlin Johnson, Erwin High School teacher
 Maureen Smathers, BCS Technology Department
 Shanna Peele, BCAE
 Kristina Horton, Haw Creek Elementary teacher
 Amy Lunsford, Woodfin Elementary Media Specialist
 Elliot Lunsford, Owen High School teacher
 Lissa Pedersen, Erwin District Art teacher
 Joan Hoffman, Reynolds High School teacher
 Lee Ann Smith, Glen Arden Elementary School Media Specialist
 Samantha Gallman, Owen High School Media Specialist
 Jan Blunt, Buncombe County resident and realtor
 Michelle Aldridge, Haw Creek Elementary parent
 Mark Sternal, Sand Hill-Venable Elementary parent
 Christina Mason, West Asheville resident and parent
 Phil Hardin, Buncombe County resident, retired educator

Maci Brown, an Owen High School teacher, advocated for ESSER positions to be funded in the budget.

David Honea, a Reynolds High School teacher asked the Board to increase coaching supplements as well as teachers' supplements.

Elizabeth Greene, a student at Owen High School, expressed her concern about losing computer classes at Owen High due to loss of teachers and increased class size.

ACTION AGENDA

- Approval of Funding Request for Current Expense and Capital Appropriation and Submission of the 2023-2024 Preliminary Budget to County Commissioners

Ms. Franklin stated that the Board had spent the afternoon in a work session examining BCS' capital needs and the operational budgetary needs as well. Mr. Elliot thanked the teachers who were in attendance and acknowledge the work that they do for students. He said that he feels this budget is a reflection of the Board's priorities by being student-focused, and addressing the needs of the school community, student achievement gaps, retention of certified and classified staff, mental health support for students and staff, and equity concerns. Mr. Elliot expressed his appreciation to Dr. Jackson for the budget requests put forth in his presentation. Ms. Simpkins also thanked the teachers, the Finance team and Dr. Jackson for their efforts to bring the Board three options for consideration. She also thanked County Commissioner Al Whitesides and Martin Moore for being in attendance and for the support that the County Commissioners provide to the schools. Ms. Plemmons also expressed her appreciation to the teachers and to the Commissioners for supporting public education. Ms. Franklin thanked the Commissioners as well for working together with the Board. Ms. Simpkins noted that the Board's earlier work session was streamed live and recorded for the public to view.

Ms. Simpkins made a motion to approve Option #3 for the funding request for current expense and capital appropriation and submit the 2023-2024 Preliminary Budget to the Buncombe County Commissioners and Ms. Lewis seconded the motion – the motion was approved unanimously.

- Buncombe County Schools Board of Education Legislative Agenda

Dr. Jackson presented the proposed BCS Legislative Agenda to the Board, with five additional points to be included upon the Board's approval. The BCS Legislative Agenda is as follows:

Buncombe County Schools Board of Education

2023-2024 Legislative Agenda

Buncombe County Schools serves approximately 23,000 students in Western North Carolina. Our priority is that All students will graduate as high-achieving and globally competitive learners. To assist in this work, the Buncombe County Schools Board of Education advocates for the following legislative actions:

Prioritize Student Safety and Well-Being

- Provide Mental Health Personnel at nationally recommended ratios
 - School Social Workers 1:250
 - School Psychologists 1:500
 - School Counselors 1:250
 - School Nurses 1:750 (1 per school)

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- Provide a School Resource Officer for every school
- Expand school safety grants
- Fully fund Leandro
- Oppose legislation that requires BCS, and all LEAs, additional requirements and mandates but does not provide new revenues to fund said programs
- Increased funding and assistance to local communities and refugee resettlement organizations to address the needs of new arrivals due to national immigration policy changes

Recruit, Retain, and Reward Talented Personnel

- Provide a substantial increase in state-funded base pay for teachers to reach the national average, helping attract and retain teachers and address teacher shortages
- Increase allotments to support fair and competitive wages for classified staff, including teacher assistants, custodians, treasurers, bus drivers, school nutrition staff, administrative staff, etc., helping attract and retain essential staff and address staff shortages
- Provide funding for recruitment and retention bonuses for teachers and staff, especially for hard-to-fill positions
- Reinstate advanced degree pay
- Restore longevity pay
- Restore full retirement benefits to all employees hired since January 1, 2021
- Fund full-time, permanent substitute teachers
- Fully fund the NC Teaching Fellows Program

Accelerate Learning

- Allow local school boards to align school calendars with the community college calendar
- Provide additional financial support for children with disabilities
- Provide additional financial support for academically-intellectually gifted students
- Provide no cost meals for all students
- Increase the number of Pre-K seats available
- Revise School Performance Grades, change to weight growth heavier

Mr. Elliot made a motion to approve the BCS Board of Education 2023-2024 Legislative Agenda with the five additional points and Ms. Plemmons seconded the motion – the motion was approved unanimously.

- CA Erwin High School: Easements for Sewer Line Replacement (added to agenda)

Ms. Plemmons made a motion to authorize the Board Chair and Superintendent to execute a temporary construction easement and permanent maintenance easement on the Erwin High School campus to MSD for replacement of sewer lines, contingent upon Board Attorney review and Ms. Lewis seconded the motion – the motion was approved unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA

- Budget Amendment #6
- Minutes: April 13, 2023 – Regular Meeting Open Session
- Personnel Report
- Mandatory Student Athletic Insurance for 2023-2024
- North Buncombe High School: Maintenance Easement for Public Water Line
- Approval of Board Member Training Credits
- **POLICIES FOR SECOND READING**
Policy 3226/4205 Internet Safety

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

INFORMATION AGENDA

- Finance Reports

ANNOUNCEMENTS / FUTURE MEETINGS

- The next Board of Education Regular Meeting will be held on June 1, 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.

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ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Lewis made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 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: June 1, 2023
klm