Hamlet, North Carolina

October 3, 2023

The Richmond County Board of Education met in regular session, on October 3, 2023, at 5:00 p.m. The meeting was held at the Central Office in Hamlet, North Carolina.

The members present: Wiley Mabe, chairman, Bobbie Sue Ormsby, vice-chair, Scotty Baldwin, Jerry Ethridge, Daryl Mason, Ronald Tillman, and Cory Satterfield.

The administrators present: Dr. Joe Ferrell, superintendent, Dr. Julian Carter, associate superintendent of Human Resources, Dr. Kate Smith, assistant superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, Melvin Ingram, assistant superintendent of School Safety and Operations, Dr. Tesha Isler, executive director for School Administration and Policy, Dr. Wendy Jordan, director of Student Services, Jennifer Taylor, director of Testing and Accountability, Dawn Jordan, executive director of Finance, Steven King, directory of Maintenance, Mike Williams, director of Technology Systems and Student Information, Katherine Bendell, director of Instructional Technology, Kylie DeWitt, executive director of Communications, and George Crump, III, board Attorney.

After noting that a quorum was present, Wiley Mabe called the meeting to order at 5:06 p.m.

Wiley Mabe requested a Moment of Silence and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

On a motion by Jerry Ethridge, seconded by Scotty Baldwin, the minutes of September 5, 2023, open and closed meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

The agenda, as presented, was approved by unanimous consent.

Kylie DeWitt introduced the Inspiring Excellence Awards winners from L. J. Bell and Richmond County Early College. Jennifer Beck, principal recognized Hanna Smith (certified) and Melissa Brayboy (classified) from L. J. Bell. Joy Smart, principal recognized Shannon Brayboy (certified) and Lindsey Craven (classified) from REaCH.

Dr. Tesha Isler introduced the beginning teachers of the year from each school. Loni Wilkerson, teacher from Monroe Avenue School was recognized as The Beginning Teacher of the Year.

Dr. Wendy Jordan presented the COVID-19 Guideline updates. Based on the CDC guidance, prevention, vaccines, and staying home when sick are encouraged. If exposed, but there are no symptoms, staying at home is not required. Test for COVID, if you have symptoms. For positive results, notification to the school nurse and 5 days isolation is required. Total cases to date – 14 staff and 81 students.

Jennifer Taylor presented the District Testing and Accountability 2022-2023 School Performance Report.

Summary points:

* Test data for grades 3-8 EOG is trending in right direction with increases in proficiency over last year.
* High school EOC data shows gains in achievement.
* Cohort graduation rate remains relatively consistent with previous years.

Improvement targets:

* Learning-focused strategies, and professional development.
* Multi-tiered System of Support Specialist (MTSS) and strategic planning.
* Analyzing formative data.
* Focus on student attendance, and track student movement in, out, and between schools.
* Implementation of 5th block and evening academy at the high school.

Steven King presented an update on the construction projects at Mineral Springs School, Fairview Heights School, and Richmond Senior High School.

* Richmond Senior High School – found 16 electrical conduits in ground, three major power sources to re-route, engineers and electrical contractor working on solution, found some asbestos in adhesive in basement, will have to abate and capsulate asbestos, and demolition of elevated walkway
* Mineral Springs School – making good progress – working on storm water pipes, building pad and footings.
* Fairview Heights School – building pad is ready and footings completed by end of month.

Steven King presented three change orders from Muter Construction:

* PCO #001 – at Richmond Senior High School – demolition delay of 10 business days – no additional cost
* PCO #002 – at Mineral Springs School – replacement of unlevel slab in corridor 501C – at a cost of $4744.97
* PCO #003 – at Mineral Springs School – added color band in classroom and electrical for 10 additional cameras – at a cost of $9,571.45

On a motion by Jerry Ethridge, seconded by Daryl Mason, the board voted unanimously to approve the change orders as presented.

Steven King presented a project to level the courtyard area at Richmond Senior High School. The work on this project will remove a circular brick area, light pole, eliminate two steps which will open the courtyard area for easy access and make a more friendly usable area. The estimate for this project is $78,000.00. Steven King stated that the maintenance department would make these renovations and expense taken from capital outlay maintenance budget.

On a motion by Bobbie Sue Ormsby, seconded by Ronald Tillman, the board voted unanimously to approve the renovation project at Richmond Senior High School.

Dr. Tesha Isler presented the Policy – 4150 School Assignment for review. Changes and/or additions to the current policy were highlighted in red. The Regulation Code: 4150 R-1 Reassignment Regulations was combined in the Policy 4150. Meetings with stakeholders are to be scheduled for feedback.

Dr. Tesha Isler presented the NCSBA Policy Services update. The legal team from the North Carolina School Board Association (NCSBA) will evaluate the Richmond County Board Policy Manual for a fee of $2,700.00 to make sure it is up-to-date and following state legal guidelines.

If further analysis is needed, a sample of 35 and no more than 50 policies would be reviewed at an additional cost. This cost could be from $2,000.00 to $29,000.00 (paid over three years); however, the update evaluation cost of $2,700.00 would be deducted from this expense.

On a motion by Ronald Tillman, seconded by Bobbie Sue Ormsby, the board voted to approve the contract agreement with NCSBA as presented.

Dr. Tesha Isler presented the policies for board approval:

* 6402 – Participation by Historically Underutilized Businesses
* 6410 – Organization of the Purchasing Function
* 6430 – Purchasing Requirements for Equipment, Materials and Supplies

On a motion by Corey Satterfield, seconded by Daryl Mason, the board voted unanimously to approve the policies as presented.

Dr. Tesha Isler presented the following policies for 30-day review:

* 1310/4002 – Parental Involvement
* 3210 – Parental Inspection of and Objection to Instructional Materials
* 3540 – Comprehensive Health Education Program
* 4335 – Criminal Behavior
* 4720 – Surveys of Students
* 6120 – Student Health Services
* 7300 – Staff Responsibilities

Melvin Ingram presented the Field Trip Requests:

* Monroe Avenue School – 1st grade – McArthur Farms in Bennettsville, SC – October 13, 2023 – 60 students

On a motion by Jerry Ethridge, seconded by Scotty Baldwin, the board voted unanimously to approve the field trip as presented.

Dr. Joe Ferrell presented the calendar adjustment due to hurricane. On August 31, 2023, school was canceled due to possible weather conditions. December 15, 2023, will need to be changed from a 12:30 dismissal day to a full day to make up the day missed in August.

On a motion by Scotty Baldwin, seconded by Ronald Tillman, the board voted unanimously to approve the weather make-up day to December 15, 2023.

Since the monthly November board meeting is scheduled the same time as the municipal elections, the date of the meeting was agreed to be changed to Thursday, November 9, 2023, at 5:00 p.m.

The December Community Breakfast will be held at Washington Street School on December 7, 2023, beginning at 8:30 a.m. The December board meeting will begin at 10:00 a.m.

The board members were asked to volunteer to be a delegate at the NCSBA Annual Conference in Asheville on November 13. Wiley Mabe, Jerry Ethridge, Ronald Tillman, and Cory Satterfield were selected to serve.

Comments from board members: school visits, attended Fayetteville Street School reunion (87 attended), Career Day was a great success, and the board will not have the authority to nominate trustees for Richmond Community College due to recent state legislation.

Dr. Joe Ferrell presented the Superintendent’s Report:

* From the public debate about the single event at RSHS, the core issues are:
  + Attendance
  + Graduation rate
  + Homebound process
* Implementation of strategies already in place:
  + Improvement goals for testing achievement
  + Drop -out prevention coordinator based in schools to better connect with students.
  + Laser focused on student attendance
  + Student support advocate at RSHS to help reduce suspensions and absences
  + Plans to implement fifth block and/or evening academy
* Great things are happening in the schools, with focus on positivity and learning.
* Meetings with classified and certified staff at each school with the Listening and Learning follow-up results.
* The Beginning Teacher of the Year Prize Patrol recognized the beginning teacher in each school with a plaque and a check.
* Curriculum instruction surprise walk-throughs at each school are very good.
* Just had the third morale booster event of the year with Central Office employees.
* Things are great. Watching the team come together to work and solve problems.
* School Scoop is a great tool to highlight the great activities in the schools.
* Will reach out to reporter at the Daily Journal to do an article to focus on the positive strategies implemented for this school year.

Wiley Mabe citing NCGS 143-318.11(a)(3),(6) requested a motion to go into closed session.

On a motion by Daryl Mason, seconded by Scotty Baldwin, the board voted unanimously to go into closed session at 7:08 p.m.

The board returned from closed session at 8:07 p.m.

Dr. Julian Carter presented the personnel report, and the addendum.

On a motion by Jerry Ethridge, seconded by Cory Satterfield, the board voted unanimously to approve the personnel and addendum reports.

There being no further business, on a motion by Scotty Baldwin, seconded by Daryl Mason, the board voted unanimously to adjourn at 8:08 p.m.