

**MINUTES  
BOARD OF EDUCATION  
ELIZABETH CITY-PASQUOTANK PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
December 14, 2020 – Regular Meeting**

The Elizabeth City-Pasquotank Board of Education met in regular session, via livestream, on Monday, December 14, 2020, at 4:00 pm to include closed session, resuming open session at 5:30 pm. The following Board members were present and constituted a quorum:

Sharon Warden, Chair  
Mr. George Archuleta  
Mrs. Virginia Houston  
Mr. Rodney Walton

Ms. Pam Pureza  
Mr. Daniel Spence  
Dr. Shelia Williams

The following staff members were present:

Dr. Catherine Edmonds, Superintendent  
Rachael Haines, Chief Finance Officer  
Rhonda James-Davis, Chief Human Resources Officer  
Dr. Amy Spencer, Chief Academic Officer  
Tammy W. Sawyer, Director of Community Schools/PIO  
Executive Asst to Superintendent and Board

**1.Meeting Called to Order by Chair**

Chair Warden called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m.

**2.Pledge of Allegiance and Moment of Silence**

The Pledge of Allegiance was led, virtually, by Nyzeria Cofield, 4th grade student at J.C. Sawyer Elementary School. Chair Warden requested a moment of silence.

**3.Roll Call**

Tammy Sawyer called the roll and recorded members in attendance for the meeting.

**4.Ethics Awareness and Identification of Conflicts or Potential Conflicts of Interest**

Virginia Houston read the ethics statement and allowed members the opportunity to identify any conflicts or potential conflicts. The record reflects that no conflicts exist.

**5.Approval of Agenda (Action)**

A motion was made by Dr. Shelia Williams, seconded by Pam Pureza, to approve the agenda.

**6.Closed Session**

A motion was made by Dr. Shelia Williams for the Board to enter into closed session for the purpose of considering personnel actions that involve employees of this Board as allowed by N.C. General Statute 143-318.11(a)(6).

Closed session began at 4:06 p.m. The following Board Members were present: Sharon Warden, Chair; Pam Pureza, Vice-Chair; George Archuleta; Virginia Houston; Daniel Spence; Rodney Walton; and Dr. Shelia Williams. The following staff members were present: Dr.

Catherine Edmonds, Superintendent and Rhonda James-Davis, Chief Human Resources Officer. The Board and staff discussed personnel matters during the closed session.

A motion to come out of closed session was made by Dr. Shelia Williams, seconded by Virginia Houston, and unanimously carried. Full and accurate minutes of the closed session will be kept on file in the superintendent's office, but are to be withheld from public disclosure, so as to not frustrate the legitimate purposes of this closed session. Closed session ended at 5:30 p.m.

### **7.Meeting Called to Back to Order by Chair - Open Session**

Chair Robinson called the meeting to order at 5:43 p.m. Tammy Sawyer called the roll and recorded members in attendance meeting.

The following Board members were present and constituted a quorum:

Sharon Warden, Chair  
Mr. George Archuleta  
Mrs. Virginia Houston  
Mr. Rodney Walton

Ms. Pam Pureza  
Mr. Daniel Spence  
Dr. Shelia Williams

The following staff members were present:

Dr. Catherine Edmonds, Superintendent  
Rachael Haines, Chief Finance Officer  
Rhonda James-Davis, Chief Human Resources Officer  
Dr. Amy Spencer, Chief Academic Officer  
Tammy W. Sawyer, Director of Community Schools/PIO/Executive to the Superintendent and Board of Education

A motion was made by Dr. Shelia Williams, seconded by Virginia Houston, and unanimously carried, as confirmed by roll call, to approve the Excellent Educator items presented to the Board.

### **8.Superintendent's Report**

Superintendent Edmonds presented a plaque of recognition to Principal Delishia Moore in honor of her being named ECPPS Principal of the Year for 2021. She introduced Principal Sammy Fudge, virtually, to the Board of Education. He joined the Central Elementary School family on December 1, 2020.

Superintendent Edmonds shared the 2020 ECPPS Holiday Card with the Board. The holiday card will be shared with others following the meeting.

The Return to Campus Update was shared as part of Superintendent Edmonds' report. She shared the ECPPS COVID Dashboard and explained how cases within the district are posted. Dr. Edmonds further shared an update on the number of students who are face-to-face currently. Overall, we still have approximately 50% of students who have returned for in-person instruction; however, the high schools are realizing a slight decrease in numbers.

## **9. Approval of Minutes (Action)**

A motion was made by Dr. Shelia Williams, seconded by George Archuleta and unanimously carried, as confirmed by roll call vote, to approve the minutes for the November 23, 2020; November 30, 2020; and December 2, 2020.

## **10. Public Forum (Citizen Comments to the Board)**

Mr. Harold Alcorn shared comments with the Board regarding testing for students scheduled for remote learning.

## **11. Agenda Items**

### **Financial, Business, and Technology Systems Committee Chair, Sharon Warden**

The Board reviewed the latest Maintenance Report.

Rachael Haines, Chief Finance Officer, presented the budget calendar (FBT-02); budget amendments #103, #201, #303, #402, and #803 (FBT-03) for approval. A motion was made by Rodney Walton, seconded by Virginia Houston, and unanimously carried, as confirmed by roll call vote, to approve FBT-02 and FBT-03.

Chief Haines also presented a proposal for cameras (FBT-04). A motion was made by Sharon Warden, seconded by Rodney Walton, and unanimously carried, as confirmed by roll call vote, to approve FBT-04.

Lastly, Chief Haines presented a proposal for access control systems (FBT-05) for approval. A motion was made by Sharon Warden, seconded by George Archuleta, and unanimously carried, as confirmed by roll call vote, to approve FBT-05.

Chair Warden shared that the board committee assignments were already in place so no need for further discussion.

### **Personalized Education**

#### **Committee Chair, Pam Pureza**

Testing Assessment Update: Superintendent Edmonds introduced Chief James-Davis to share information regarding the latest updates for state testing. Chief James-Davis provided an update from the testing discussion held during the NC State Board of Education Meeting on December 9, 2020. The state is extending the testing window to allow districts to test students safely. The state department is also planning to submit a waiver and is researching the information that needs to be included in the waiver. If the waiver is approved, the plan is to ease the 95% participation rate as well as consider changing the 20% of the students final grade.

Nina Griffin, AIG/Testing & Accountability Coordinator, shared information regarding the 2020 fall testing information. ECPPS, along with other districts, have received approval to expand the testing window giving students a larger window of time to test rather than require them to participate at this time. Early graduates would be able to test in December, prior to graduation. Students who are currently face-to-face would be able to take their EOC/CTE exams in December if their parents choose for them to do so. Students who do not test at this time will have an IP which means "in progress" on their report card until testing has been

completed. For students who do not have an EOC or CTE exam may take a teacher created exam which can be uploaded in Canvas and taken remotely.

The NC State Board of Education Policy TEST-003, states that public schools shall use the results of all operational EOC assessments a minimum of 20% of the students final grade. ECPPS Policy Code 3410 Testing and Assessment Program states that the results of EOC and NC CTE assessments will count as 25% of a student's final grade in each high school course. Ms. Griffin requested approval to amend Policy Code 3410 to align our final exam percentage with state requirements and reduce the 25% to 20% for EOC and NC CTE exams for the 2020-2021 school year.

A motion was made by Pam Pureza, seconded by Daniel Spence, and unanimously carried, to approve amending Policy Code 3410 to align our final exam percentage with state requirements and reduce the 25% to 20% for EOC and NC CTE exams for the 2020-2021 school year.

ECPPS Return to Campus/Remote Instruction Plan (2nd Semester): Superintendent shared an update regarding return to campus/remote instruction for second semester. She introduced Dr. Mike Smith from the ABC Science Collaborative to provide the latest information with regard to COVID-19 and schools as well as answer any questions from the board. Dr. Smith shared the purpose of the ABC Collaborative in supporting schools with decisions regarding either returning to school or implementation of safety protocols for those who have already returned to school. He further shared information on the COVID vaccine.

## **Policy Committee**

### **Committee Chair, Virginia Houston**

Tammy Sawyer, Director of Community Schools/PIO/Executive Assistant to the Superintendent and Board, presented the Board the following policy updates, considering approval at the January meeting: PC-01 Fall Policy Updates and PC-02 3227/7322 - Web Page Development. The policies were shared as an initial read last month. Mrs. Sawyer further requested the board consider approval of the following policies as presented: PC-03 7900 - Resignation and PC-04 5030 - Community Use of Facilities. Policy updates for PC-05 3410-B were approved during the testing assessment presentation earlier in the meeting. The additional updates as provided by the NC School Boards Association were also presented for approval.

A motion was made by Virginia Houston, seconded by Pam Pureza, and unanimously carried, as confirmed by roll call vote, to approve PC-03 7900 - Resignation, PC-04 5030 - Community Use of Facilities, PC-05 3410-B - Testing Assessment Program. There was discussion about the community use of facilities and whether policy would be considered with regard to fields and such. Superintendent Edmonds shared that we had consulted with the NC School Boards Association (NCSBA) regarding adjustment of this policy and based on feedback, we submitted the policy as suggested originally by the NCSBA.

## **Excellent Educators**

### **Committee Chair, Dr. Shelia Williams**

Kelly Cowell, Beginning Teacher Coordinator, presented the Beginning Teacher Plan to the Board for approval. A motion was made by Dr. Shelia Williams, seconded by Virginia Houston, and unanimously approved to accept the Beginning Teacher Plan as presented.

## **Global Citizens and Healthy Students**

### **Committee Chair, George Archuleta**

Superintendent Edmonds shared an update with the board regarding athletics. Dr. Jared Miller, D.O., with Sentara Orthopedic and Sports Medicine, was also in attendance virtually for the discussion for athletics to answer questions as needed. Dr. Edmonds requested guidance from the board with regard to approval for our high schools to play spring sports. Discussion was held regarding wearing masks for athletes while practicing and competing. Dr. Miller shared that he supports the decision for wearing masks during practice and competition based on medical data and research available. Further discussion was held regarding any possible long-term impacts for athletes who may contract the virus and return to play. Dr. Miller shared that the return to play protocol is designed to bring athletes back slowly.

Members asked for any updates with regard to middle school athletics. Superintendent Edmonds shared that since the update in November, she did not have any further updates. It was requested that we look at middle school to see if we can consider having students participate in athletics. Superintendent Edmonds shared that we are following the recommendations from NCDHHS since middle school does not fall under the guidelines of the NCHSAA. She further shared that NCHSAA is not providing guidance for middle schools and that local boards will have to make decisions with regard to athletes at that level participating. Members requested that we follow up with other districts around us to see what is taking place with regard to middle school athletics.

A motion was made by Pam Pureza, seconded by George Archuleta, and unanimously carried to proceed with the original plan to participate in spring sports following the schedule of the North Carolina High School Athletic Association.

### **12.Board Member Reports**

Members shared appreciation for the work taking place for children at this time. Appreciation was shared for retirees as well as for Ms. Whitehurst, serving as lead at Central prior to a principal being named. New board members were welcomed. Members wished everyone a happy holiday and encouraged rest during the break.

### **13.Other**

No other business was discussed.

### **14.Adjournment**

A motion to adjourn was made by Dr. Shelia Williams, seconded by Pam Pureza, and unanimously carried by show of hands. The meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

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Chair

Secretary