

**MINUTES  
BOARD OF EDUCATION  
ELIZABETH CITY-PASQUOTANK PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
January 4, 2021 - Meeting**

The Elizabeth City-Pasquotank Board of Education met virtually and via livestream, on Monday, January 4, 2021, at 12:00 p.m. The following Board members were present and constituted a quorum:

Ms. 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  
Delishia Moore, ECMS Principal  
Adrian Fonville, RRMS Principal  
Mitchell Manuel, ECMS Athletic Director  
Delton Stallings, RRMS Athletic Director  
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 ???? p.m.

**3.Roll Call**

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

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

The Board moved directly into the agenda items.

**6.Agenda Items**

**Staff Bonuses**

Chair Warden opened the floor for questions regarding the bonuses. Chair Warden recommended that the Board consider the two additional supplemental payments of either \$250 or \$150 to give staff a bonus after the holiday without putting our district at a financial risk. A member asked about a higher amount and Chair Warden shared that there was a \$350 amount proposed; however, the higher amount would involve going beyond the available funding for this purpose. She cautioned that with the opportunity for weather and other needs that may arise throughout this fiscal year, they should consider having funding available as needed. This bonus is a way to show our support and appreciation for the excellent work that our staff and our teachers have done during this most difficult time and at all times to ensure students are progressing. Chair Warden shared that the Board could revisit consideration of an additional bonus later in the fiscal year if funds are available. A member suggested to go with the \$250 amount at this time.

Chief Haines shared that the source of the funds for the recommended bonuses would be contingency funds as well as funds available from positions not filled earlier in the year. She also responded to a question regarding considering the \$350 amount for bonuses, indicating that amount would require the Board to agree to use fund balance.

A motion was made by Virginia Houston, seconded by Daniel Spence, and unanimously carried, as confirmed by roll call vote, to give to all staff members a bonus at this time of \$250.

### **DPI Facility Needs Survey**

Marlene Wilkins, Director of Maintenance, presented the 2020-2021 Facility Needs Survey which is required by the state every five years. Members asked if the information submitted could be amended if needed and Mrs. Wilkins indicated that the information could be updated. The report is due on Friday to the state and a copy will be shared with the County Commissioners. A question was asked about input from the schools and others about the needs listed on the survey. Superintendent Edmonds shared the process for the survey and that the team working on the document visited each site and received input from the principals. Additional information was requested for the projects at Weeksville Elementary and River Road Middle due the cost calculated. Mrs. Wilkins indicated that Weeksville will need a heat and air replacement and River Road will need a portion of the roof replaced.

A motion was made by Dr. Shelia Williams, seconded by Virginia Houston, and unanimously carried, as confirmed by roll call, to approve the DPI Facility Needs Survey for 2020-2021.

### **Middle School Athletics**

Superintendent Edmonds presented information to the Board from the CDC and NCDHHS in reference to middle school sports. The guidance takes into consideration the level of intensity of the activity the length of time that players are close to each other or to staff, setting of the sporting event or activity, the amount of necessary touching of shared equipment and gear, the ability to engage in physical distancing while not active actively engaged in play, the age of the players, size of the team, non-essential visitors/spectators/volunteers, travel outside of the local community, and the behavior of the athletes on the field. Age is a consideration in determining if middle school students will be able to remain socially distanced and follow the safety protocols that would be required to ensure as much as possible that we mitigate the spread of covid-19.

Edmonds also shared that NCDHHS has made some recommendations about sports by grouping them into safety categories as related to COVID. They recommend only playing sports in which participants can maintain social distancing. Superintendent Edmonds shared three groups of sports as defined by NCDHHS as those where social distancing is maintained or close contact is limited or brief (green level), those where close contact may occur but not prolonged (yellow), and those that NCHHS does not recommend due to participants not being able to maintain social distancing and contact is frequent or prolonged (red).

Principals Delishia Moore and Adrian Fonville shared information regarding the middle school conference. They shared the sports proposed for spring sports which includes cheer, football, soccer and volleyball. They also shared the potential cost to the district to participate in sports due to limited ability to have spectators to raise funds. The need for athletic trainers for middle school was also included in the cost. The principals recommended that if middle school sports are played that NCDHHS and CDC guidelines are followed, schools not

participate in wrestling, plans be approved by administration and the health department and no concessions served. Their concerns include training, coaching staff availability, monitoring players, transportation.

There was discussion about funding assistance for middle schools from the district level. Also, to see if there were creative considerations with regard to serving concessions to generate funds for those spectators who may attend. There was a question regarding the middle schools working with the high schools to design plans for athletics. Superintendent Edmonds shared the process for plans and that for the high school, we followed NCHSAA as well as other safety protocols. She explained also that the plans at the high schools include athletic trainers and that is not a resource we have at the middle schools. A member shared that if we consider spring sports it would give time to train staff, secure needed coaches and have plans approved. In discussion about networking with other schools who may be participating, a member asked if any of the other schools already participating in athletics for middle school had expressed concerns. Mr. Manuel, ECMS Athletic Director, shared some of the concerns include COVID itself, masks during contests, especially during softball and baseball. Mr. Stallings, RRMS Athletic Director, shared his concerns with transportation due to students leaving school at 1:30 pm and having to return for practice at 3:30 pm. He also expressed concern with the number of athletes and parents inside the facility at one time. He will reach out to see how others are handling these situations. He agreed that spring sports would be easier to organize due to having more time and with more events held outside. Superintendent Edmonds shared that the high school has already addressed spectators with regard to volleyball and that it is working well.

Further discussion was held to determine if a decision was needed today and if that decision needs to be for spring versus winter which has already started. Feedback from athletic directors indicated that spring would be better to allow preparation and to have everything in place. Additional clarification was provided for board members surrounding what protocols other districts are using compared to ECPPS. Superintendent Edmonds shared that the guidelines are the same across the state. Mr. Manuel indicated that other districts are following the NCHSAA. He shared that ECMS would consider Pasquotank County High School's plan when designing a plan for the middle school.

Chair Warden thanked everyone for participating in the meeting. She recommended that we consider athletics for the spring due to the winter season start date. There was discussion regarding the need to approve now versus later for planning purposes. Chair Warden recommended not taking action today, but requesting the middle schools move forward to plan and get numbers for further discussion during committee meetings on January 19, 2021. Additional concerns were shared that waiting to make a decision on January 19, 2021, could place undue stress on the coaches and athletic directors in moving forward. A clarification was requested regarding supplements paid for athletic directors and coaches. The reason for the clarification was to see if funds were available from supplements unpaid to help fund some of the athletic activities. Chief Haines shared that supplements have been paid for coaches who have had sports this year as well as high school athletic directors. She further shared that the Board can approve to use the funds from supplements not paid this year to assist with middle school athletics.

Chair Warden is in agreement with having coaches and athletic directors to move forward with planning for spring sports prior to the committee meetings on January 19, 2021. This will provide the additional details needed to make an informed decision at that time. It was

requested that the principals and athletic directors know what information to have for committee meetings on January 19, 2021. In preparation for the January 19, 2021 meeting, principals and athletic directors should have plans prepared and numbers of interested athletes and any additional costs associated with moving forward. Superintendent Edmonds also said information on athletic trainers for middle school would be important.

A motion was made by Rodney Walton, seconded Daniel Spence, and unanimously carried, as confirmed by roll call vote, to give approval to the athletic directors and coaches on the middle school level as well as principals to move forward with a plan to initiate the spring sports season for Elizabeth City-Pasquotank County Schools at the middle school level.

#### **7.Other**

There were no additional items for Board consideration during the January 4, 2021, meeting.

#### **14.Adjournment**

A motion to adjourn was made by Sharon Warden, seconded by Dr. Shelia Williams, and unanimously carried. The meeting adjourned at 1:40 p.m.

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Chair

Secretary