

POQUOSON CITY SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
January 18, 2022 – 6:00 P.M.
CITY OF POQUOSON COUNCIL CHAMBERS

MINUTES

Present: Michelle Sheeler, Chairman
Christina Helsel, Vice Chair
Jeremy Jordan
Craig Freeman
Jonathan Ingram
Cameron “CJ” Childress
Timothy Goodale
Madeline Hatok, Student Representative
Arty Tillett, Superintendent
Christine Hill, PhD, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction and Support Services
Dustie McCay, Clerk of the Board

- I. CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE TO THE FLAG:** Chairman Sheeler called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. Madeline Hatok, a junior at Poquoson High School led the Pledge to the Flag and read a quote in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
- II. STUDENT PRESENTATION:** Select students from each school recognized their principals for Virginia Principal Appreciation Week held January 8-14, 2022 and presented them with a certificate from the Board.
- III. ADDITIONS AND/OR MODIFICATIONS TO THE AGENDA:** None
- IV. RECOGNITIONS:**
 - A.** Chairman Sheeler recognized Mara Fehl as the PHS Senior of the Month.
- V. PRESENTATIONS AND REPORTS:**
 - A. Thomas Nelson Community College:** Dr. Towuanna Porter Brannon, President, shared Poquoson-specific data about success for Poquoson residents who attend TNCC. She explained there is a significant increase of student population rate for dual enrollment of Poquoson residents and incredible GPA increase. She shared Finish What You Started program to guide students to finish classes and mentioned TNCC was able to hand out 22 scholarships to Poquoson residents in the last five years. Mrs. Helsel commented her appreciation of Dr. Brannon coming in to share the outcome of the Dual Enrollment Program. Mr. Jordan commented appreciation for the TNCC “Two-for-Two” program relating to expense. He advised he is an advocate of TNCC opportunities.
 - B. Superintendent’s Update:** Mr. Arty Tillett, Superintendent, welcomed Dr. Brannon to the meeting and shared the passion for kids to grow the dual enrollment program. He gave an update on COVID-19 cases after the holiday surge. He explained that the definition of an outbreak changed from two cases to three cases. He mentioned the newest CDC guidance from December 27, 2021 detailing how quarantine will be handled in schools. He briefly

explained health expert predictions regarding the peak of Omicron variant. He explained current PCPS mitigation strategies and that PCPS participates in ViSSTA and will set up testing events. He went over the Senate Bill 1303 and Executive Order 79 and Order of Public Health – governing factor of the decisions made by the Board. He advised PCPS is aware of Executive Order Number Two which withdraws all other previous orders, and gives parents the right to have the option to send their children to school in a mask. He explained that he has proposed that the Board vote to approve PCPS to stop COVID-19 tracing. He advised PCPS will continue to recommend all CDC and VDH guidelines to keep students and staff safe at school. He stressed for people stay home if they are sick and that PCPS will require all COVID positive individuals to isolate in accordance with the CDC guidelines/wear masks.

- C. **Finance Update:** Mrs. Tara Woodruff, Executive Director of Finance, gave an update on the budget and the factors that have to be considered, such as rebenchmarking, composite index trend, average daily membership from FY12-FY23, compensation, and benefits. She explained the FY23 Governor's proposed budget and the next steps towards the Superintendent's proposed budget.
- D. **Instruction Update:** Dr. Christine Hill, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, reviewed the timeline and recommendation of Program of Studies by sharing additions and changes. She advised upon approval, guidance counselors will share information with parents in order to build a master schedule. She mentioned parents can attend meetings to gather information, in person or virtually. Craig Freeman asked if Juniors and Seniors can participate in Environmental Science. Dr. Hill advised guidance counselors are trying to guide students to take science courses that will align with their mathematics courses. Mr. Freeman asked if the Biology II edition- is it Oceanography and Aquatic? She advised it is not exactly the same and will give him additional information. Mr. Goodale asked if those type courses count toward science sequence courses. She advised it would.
- E. **Operations Update:** Dr. Brandon Ratliff, Assistant Superintendent for Operations, gave an update on food services and custodial services- both contracted services. He explained the challenges in staffing, food and supply chain shortages, and increased cleaning and new cleaning methods. He discussed the Federal Program Administrative Review- will audit school nutrition programs. He mentioned the solar power project expenses have increased and may change the process. He gave a construction update and showed new photos of progress. Mr. Jordan asked about the deadline and timeline for completion of construction. Dr. Ratliff advised PCPS is ahead of the timeline and should finish before the proposed timeline.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT:

- A. Theodore Imbasciani greeted the board and administrators. He gave a number of reported cases of the virus and agrees with the Governor's order to allow parents the option to decide if they want their child to wear a mask. He gave a background on where he is from and why he chose Poquoson. He wants the Board to stand up for Poquoson residents even if it differs from teacher wants.

- B. Alicia Darouse commended to school board and district for the program of studies options. She discussed the mask policy and new Executive Order. She does not want to fight the new Order as the Board did not fight the previous one.
- C. Laura Burbage advised she and others disagree with the mask option and advised the virus is spreading in school. She believes parents need to know if their child has been exposed to COVID via contact tracing in order to keep families safe. She agrees her child has also had a terrible time with the quarantines like other students.
- D. Tricia Rainone thanked the board, teachers, and all staff. She mentioned the Program of Studies and would like a practical math class offered in order serve all students. She is in favor of no masks.

VII. CONSENT AGENDA:

- A. **Approval of Financial Reports** *(Enclosed)*
- B. **Approval to Accept to Change Appropriation and to Accept and Expend Funds in Accordance with Attached Request** *(Enclosed)*
- C. **Approval of Personnel Action** *(Enclosed)*
- D. **Approval of Minutes of December's Regular Meeting, Work Session, and Closed Meeting** *(Enclosed)*

Mrs. Helsel read the Consent Agenda above. Mr. Jordan made a motion, seconded by Mr. Childress, that the Consent Agenda be approved as read. Vote was taken.

VOTE: 7:0

Mr. Ingram, Aye; Mr. Goodale, Aye; Mr. Freeman, Aye; Mr. Jordan, Aye; Mr. Childress, Aye; Vice Chair Helsel, Aye; Chairman Sheeler, Aye

VIII. OTHER MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION:

- A. **Consideration of Approval of Changes to Student Attendance Policy 7-2.3 and Student Handbook and Code of Student Conduct Attendance Guidelines Update** *(Reading File Enclosed)*

Mr. Freeman made a motion, seconded by Mr. Goodale, that the Consideration of Approval of Changes to Student Attendance Policy 7-2.3 and Student Handbook and Code of Student Conduct Attendance Guidelines be approved.

VOTE: 7:0

Mr. Ingram, Aye; Mr. Goodale, Aye; Mr. Freeman, Aye; Mr. Jordan, Aye; Mr. Childress, Aye; Vice Chair Helsel, Aye; Chairman Sheeler, Aye

- B. **Consideration of Approval of Implementation of New CDC/VDH Guidance for Isolation and Quarantine and Suspension of COVID-19 Contact Tracing and Quarantine Oversight by PCPS Employees** *(Reading File Enclosed)*

Mr. Ingram moved to strike the current motions of Consideration of Approval of Implementation of New CDC/VDH Guidance for Isolation and Quarantine and Suspension of COVID-19 Contact Tracing and Quarantine Oversight by PCPS Employees and Consideration of Approval of Proposed Plan Regarding Mask Optional Status in Schools to substitute the following: remove all elements of contact tracing within schools starting January 19 at 12:00 a.m., make masks optional without parents opting in or out on January 24, 2022 at 12:00 a.m., make masks optional for teachers, faculty, staff without opting in or out starting January 24 at 12:00 a.m., make masks optional for all guests who visit any PCPS school properties, ages two and up, starting January 24 at 12:00 a.m. and approval of implementation of new CDC/VDH guidelines for isolation and quarantine for COVID-19, seconded by Mr. Freeman in order to have a Board discussion. During the discussion, Mr. Ingram moved that they amend the motion for Consideration of Suspension of COVID-19 Contact Tracing and Quarantine Oversight by PCPS Employees to change the date from January 31 to January 19 at 12:00 a.m.

VOTE: 6:0, 1 Abstention

Mr. Ingram, Aye; Mr. Goodale, Aye; Mr. Freeman, Aye; Mr. Jordan, Abstain; Mr. Childress, Aye; Vice Chair Helsel, Aye; Chairman Sheeler, Aye

C. Consideration of Approval of Proposed Plan Regarding Mask Optional Status in Schools
(Reading File Enclosed)

Mr. Ingram moved to amend the motion for Consideration of Approval of Proposed Plan Regarding Mask Optional Status in Schools to make masks optional for students without parents opting in or out on January 24 at 12:00 a.m., make masks optional for teachers, faculty, staff without opting in or out starting January 24 at 12:00 a.m., make masks optional for all guests who visit any PCPS school properties, ages two and up, starting January 24 at 12:00 a.m., seconded by Mr. Freeman that the Consideration of Approval of Proposed Plan Regarding Mask Optional Status in Schools be approved.

VOTE: 4:1, 2 Abstentions

Mr. Ingram, Aye; Mr. Goodale, Abstain; Mr. Freeman, Aye; Mr. Jordan, Abstain; Mr. Childress, Aye; Vice Chair Helsel, Aye; Chairman Sheeler, Nay

D. Consideration of Approval of the Secondary Program of Studies for the 2022-2023 School Year
(Reading File Enclosed)

Mr. Jordan made a motion, seconded by Vice Chair Helsel, that the Consideration of Approval of the Secondary Program of Studies for the 2022-2023 School Year be approved.

VOTE: 7:0

Mr. Ingram, Aye; Mr. Goodale, Aye; Mr. Freeman, Aye; Mr. Jordan, Aye; Mr. Childress, Aye; Vice Chair Helsel, Aye; Chairman Sheeler, Aye


IX. COMMUNICATIONS AND/OR OTHER MATTERS BY SCHOOL BOARD AND/OR SUPERINTENDENT:

- **Mr. Tillett:** No additional comments.
- **Miss Hatok:** Gave an update on student activity in each school and thanked parents and staff throughout.
- **Mr. Ingram:** Congratulated Mara Fehl on Senior of the Month and all speakers. He was thankful for the emails he has received and stated he was not ignoring them but was allowing the Board Chair to be their spokesperson.
- **Mr. Goodale:** Thanked the speakers for attending and sharing their thoughts and views. He will take it all into consideration and everyone respected each other's opinions and decisions.
- **Mr. Freeman:** He thanked the speakers for coming and anyone who emailed them. He explained they do not always respond as that is the Board Chair's responsibility. He thanked all staff and teachers for hard work they do. He mentioned Braddigan Corbett, the great scout program here, and the world record they just set.
- **Mr. Jordan:** He echoed the sentiment that staff have worked over hours and that nice things were said by our students for principals. He hopes winter sports can get wrapped up. He appreciates mitigation procedures still in effect. He appreciates the measures everyone is taking.
- **Mr. Childress:** He thanked the students for coming up even if it is nerve wracking, and principals. He said children with symptoms need to stay home as with the flu. He said they have followed the law with masks and that it was clearly a hard decision, but in the end, it is still following the law. He advised to call the school nurse if there are any questions.
- **Vice Chair Helsel:** She advised she understands how serious the virus is as she lost her father last week to it, but will follow the law. She advised to keep children home if sick.
- **Chairman Sheeler:** She thanked principals, and enjoyed student presenters. She thanked Maddie for sharing a quote from Martin Luther King, Jr. She thanked the speakers for being courteous when disagreeing with other views and for their effort. She thanked those who emailed her to let her know their feelings.

X. MATERIAL FOR BOARD REVIEW: There were none.

XI. ADJOURNMENT: Chairman Sheeler announced a closed session would follow the Board Meeting for personnel matters and student discipline matters. Chairman Sheeler adjourned the meeting at 7:50 p.m.


Christina Helsel, Acting Chair


Dustie McCay, Clerk of the Board

2-15-22
Date