MINUTES OF
THE WILSON COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION
WORK SESSION
MARCH 9, 2023

The Wilson County Board of Education held a Work Session on Thursday, March 9, 2023, at 3:00 p.m. in the Administrative Office, 113 N. Tarboro Street. Chairman Dr. Christine Fitch called the meeting to order at 3:01 p.m. with the following members present:

Dr. Christine L. Fitch, Chairman
Henry E. Mercer, Vice-Chairman
Beverly Boyette
Blake Boykin
Debora Powell
Dr. Lane B. Mills, Secretary

The meeting was livestreamed through the Wilson County Schools (WCS) YouTube Channel. The public could also view the meeting through links on the WCS Facebook, Instagram and Twitter pages and the WCS website.

Others present were Associate Superintendent Dr. Cheryl Wilson, Assistant Superintendent of Instructional Services Robin May, Assistant Superintendent for Administrative Services Dr. Ben Williams, Executive Director of Maintenance Mark Letchworth, Director of Public Relations Amber Lynch, Assistant Director of Maintenance Greg Woodard, Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent and Board Clerk Linda Horrison, as well as Board Attorney Katie Cornetto, Skinner Farlow Kirwan (SFK) Architects, and *The Wilson Times* Reporter Olivia Neeley. Ms. Barnes and Mr. Breen did not attend the meeting. There were no citizens in attendance.

After calling the meeting to order, Dr. Fitch asked for approval of the agenda. Ms. Powell made the motion, seconded by Mr. Boykin and Mr. Mercer, that the Work Session agenda for March 9, 2023, be approved. The motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

Dr. Fitch led the Pledge of Allegiance, followed by a moment of silence.

Under Chairman's Comments, Dr. Fitch shared that the purpose of the Work Session was to continue the discussion of long-range planning for WCS.

Under Long-Range Facilities Planning for WCS, Dr. Mills provided updates on the following: assorted capital projects; field trip/bus tour projects; New Frederick Douglass Elementary School (FDES) construction; and scenarios for facility consolidation to support requests for new schools.

Dr. Mills shared the following information with the Board:

- Capital Projects
    - Fike High Tennis Courts
        - Cost: $481,780.00
        - Start Date: March 13, 2023
        - Contract: J.C. Lewis Company, Inc.
        - Funding Source: $1 Million Annual Capital Funding from 2021-2022

        - The initial contract was awarded to Court One at a cost of $302,161.00. The initial contract with Court One was terminated due to lack of response.
    - HVAC Upgrades
        - Upgrades include:
            - Barnes Elementary
                - $2,987,384.75
            - Beddingfield High
                - Emergency Chiller - $1,064,150.00
                - HVAC Upgrade - $5,215,000.00
            - Elm City Middle
                - $5,660,400.00
            - Forest Hills Middle
                - $2,934,700.00
            - Hunt High
                - $4,895,777.00
            - Lee Woodard Elementary
                - $2,022,737.50
        - Funding Source: Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Funds (ESSER) Part III - $24,780,149.25
- Additional Field Trip/Bus Tour Items
    - The Board set the following priorities in the order listed below:
        - High School Security Vestibules (Hunt Hunt and Fike High)
        - High School Science Labs (Beddingfield High, Hunt High and Fike High)
        - High School Auditorium Renovations (Beddingfield High, Hunt High and Fike High)
    - SFK Architecture provided a Cost Estimates Report
    - Funding Source: The Wilson County Board of Commissioners approved funding for an additional $2 million to begin work on these projects.
- New FDES
    - Apply for Needs-Based Public School Capital Funds (NBPSCF) for 2023-2024 Funding Cycle – deadline has been in August with notification in October
    - Design planning is underway
        - 60% Schematic Design Study of Projects completed by SFK Architects on January 19, 2023 – this design will accommodate 530 students
        - 80% Schematic Design Study of Projects completed by SFK Architects on December 21, 2022 – this design will accommodate 650 students
        - FDES currently has 350 students
        - Report from Barnhill Contracting Company regarding cost estimates was shared that included a projected cost ranging from $41.1 million to $50.5 million, depending on the options (60% or 80% capacity)
        - SFK is planning a community and student input event at FDES
        - Demolition of the current FDES will begin at the end of the 2022-2023 school year

- Toisnot is in the process of being retrofitted to allow for the relocation of FDES during the summer of 2023.
  - Rooms and other areas have been painted
  - New light bulbs have been installed
  - Bathrooms are being retrofitted for elementary-aged population
  - Signage inside and outside of the building is nearly complete
  - Boxes have been provided for FDES staff to begin packing items not needed at the present time
  - Facility Services will move unneeded boxes before the end of school year
  - The formal move from FDES to Toisnot will begin after the last day of proficiency summer school and workdays (June 14-16 are Optional Teacher Workdays)

- Facility Planning Issues
  - Student Assignment
    - With the closing of Winstead Elementary and Toisnot Middle, planning for the new FDES and a possible, second new elementary school, there is no need for the Board to address attendance boundaries for elementary or middle schools at this time.
    - High school attendance boundaries will be addressed during the 2023-2024 school year in preparation for implementation during the 2024-2025 school year.
      - Beddingfield High - 684 students
      - Fike High - 1062 students
      - Hunt High - 1069 students
  - Second New Elementary School
    - County Commissioners have acknowledged support for a second new elementary school (based on continued work on facility utilization at the elementary level)
    - One possibility is a new elementary school that could serve the attendance zones for Gardners Elementary and Stantonsburg Elementary and parts of eastern Wilson County. The location would need to be determined and land purchased.
    - The second new elementary school could be constructed while students continue to attend their current elementary schools
    - This project could start as the new FDES is underway
  - Addressing Elementary Utilization
    - Retrofit Speight Middle to a K-8 School
      - Capacity exists to allow for Stantonsburg Elementary to be combined with Speight Middle
      - Close Stantonsburg Elementary
      - Capacity
      - K-8 School Concept
      - Speight is a newer school and the facility was built to provide for greater enrollment
        - Stantonsburg Elementary – 186 students
        - Speight Middle – 304 students, with a capacity of 500
    - New Elementary School on Existing Wells Elementary Site

        - One possibility could involve the combining of Hearne Elementary and Wells Elementary into an expanded elementary school on the Wells site
        - Work could begin work while FDES is under construction
        - Need to examine the current school site at Wells Elementary
        - Would need to be a school with significant capacity given location and programs (e.g., Pre-K)
        - Summer of 2025 start date
            - Hearne Elementary – 392 students
            - Wells Elementary – 303 students, with a capacity of 550 students located on 16 acres of land
    - Expand Barnes Elementary to allow for Vick Elementary assignment area to attend
        - Combine Vick Elementary and Barnes Elementary students
        - Renovate Barnes Elementary for capacity
        - School site allows for expansion in logical fashion from existing wings
            - Barnes Elementary – 302 students, with a capacity of 560 students located on 32 acres of land
            - Vick Elementary – 329 students
- Additional Facility Needs
    - Complete renovations at Barnes Elementary and Lee Woodard Elementary
    - Daniels Learning Center needs attention for the future
    - Need to prioritize athletic facility needs
    - Still have a need for a painting schedule and furniture replacement funding
    - Need to schedule next meetings to continue work on facility planning

After discussion, it was the Board's consensus for Dr. Mills to share the following information with the County Manager:

- Prioritized list of capital projects that include the high school security vestibules, high school science labs and high school auditorium renovations
- Field trip/bus tour projects
- Design planning for FDES
- Retrofitting Speight Middle to a K-8 School

The Board agreed with the plan to combine Hearne and Wells Elementary Schools into an expanded elementary school on the Wells Elementary site. The Administration will share more information on this plan at a future meeting. The Board asked for additional information to include a GIS map to review on the expansion of Barnes Elementary to allow for Vick Elementary assignment areas to attend. The Board also discussed the possibility of allowing Stantonsburg Elementary to be combined with Gardners Elementary. This would require the purchase of land to build a new school. At the next regular Board meeting, Dr. Mills will provide an update on recent renovations.

At 5:00 p.m., Ms. Boyette made the motion, seconded by Ms. Powell, that the Wilson County Board of Education go into closed session to consider confidential personnel matters as provided in N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(1) and (6) and 115C-319 through 321; and consult

with the Board of Education attorney to preserve the attorney-client privilege as provided in N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(3). The motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

At 5:23 p.m., Ms. Boyette made the motion to reconvene to Open Session. The motion, seconded by Mr. Boykin and Ms. Powell, passed unanimously, 5-0.

There being no further business at 5:23 p.m., Mr. Boykin made the motion, seconded by Mr. Mercer, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

Dr. Christine L. Fitch, Chairman

Dr. Lane B. Mills, Secretary