MINUTES OF
THE WILSON COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
OCTOBER 18, 2021

The Wilson County Board of Education held its regular meeting on Monday, October 18, 2021, at 6:30 p.m. at the Administrative Office, 113 N. Tarboro Street. Chairman Christine L. Fitch called the meeting to order at 6:34 p.m. with the following members present:

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

Ms. Powell joined the meeting remotely via the Zoom video conferencing platform. The other Board members participated in the meeting at the Administrative Office.

The meeting was televised on Spectrum and Greenlight Channel 22; and 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.

Chairman Fitch announced that face coverings are required to be worn during the Board meeting. Face masks were available for those who did not have one.

Others present were Associate Superintendent Dr. Cheryl Wilson, Assistant Superintendent for Administrative Services Dr. Ben Williams, Director of Public Relations Amber Lynch and Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent and Board Clerk Linda Horrison, as well as Board Attorney Katie Cornetto. Also present was *The Wilson Times* Reporter Olivia Neeley. There were 12 citizens in attendance.

I. After calling the meeting to order, Dr. Fitch asked for approval of the agenda. Ms. Powell made the motion, seconded by Mr. Mercer, that the Board approve the agenda for the October 18, 2021 meeting. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

II. At Dr. Fitch's request, Ms. Barnes led the Pledge of Allegiance which was followed by a moment of silence.

III. Dr. Fitch presented for approval the minutes of the September 20, 2021, Regular Board meeting and October 6, 2021, Special Board meeting. Dr. Fitch asked for approval of the minutes. Ms. Barnes made the motion, seconded by Mr. Boykin, that the Board approve the minutes of the September 20, 2021 and October 6, 2021 meetings. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

IV. Under Chairman's Report, Dr. Fitch shared the following:

- Thanked the Dollar General Literacy Foundation for providing a $4,000 grant to WCS. The foundation awarded more than $105,000 in youth literacy grants to North Carolina teachers, libraries and nonprofit groups.
- Congratulated staff and students for the completion of the first quarter of the year.
- Thanked teachers, staff and administrators for their hard work keeping students safe during the pandemic. She also thanked families for entrusting their students to WCS.
- Reminded Board members of the official Groundbreaking Ceremony for the new Wilson Academy of Applied Technology (WAAT) building on October 19 at 11 a.m. The new building will be located at Wilson Community College's Lee Technology Center site.
- Reminded the Board members that School Improvement Plans are now available for their review. The plans will be approved at the November Board meeting.

V. Under Superintendent's Report, Dr. Mills shared the following:

- Informed the Board members that the Wilson County Sheriff's Office has planned several days of training exercises at Stantonsburg Elementary. The officers were at Stantonsburg the entire day on October 18 because it was a teacher workday. On October 19 and 20, they will be there after school hours beginning at 4 p.m. until late in the evening. During the training exercises, there will be numerous law enforcement vehicles and personnel at the school. Dr. Mills wanted everyone to be aware in case they heard about it and were concerned. He shared, "I appreciate all that the Sheriff's Office does to keep our staff, students and community safe, and we are happy to partner with them on enhancing their training protocols."
- Reminded Board members of the WAAT Groundbreaking Ceremony being held October 19. He also thanked everyone involved in the planning of the event and stated, "We are looking forward to being out there tomorrow with all of the partners and key players who made this building possible and getting a chance to turn some dirt over."
- Recognized Jones Elementary First-Grade Teacher Cynthia Ramirez for being selected as the WCS nominee for the NC Center for the Advancement of Teaching (NCCAT) Beginning Teacher of the Year Award. This award recognizes teachers who have successfully completed their first year of teaching and show promise as excellent teachers and education leaders. NCCAT will announce the regional finalists in December. In February, the finalists will participate in interview rounds, and the winner will be announced. Dr. Mills shared that Ms. Ramirez worked at Central Office for many years, but her dream was to be a teacher. She is beginning her second year of teaching. He added that it was great to visit her classroom recently to surprise her with this news and to see her living her dream.
- Recognized the 26 principals during National Principals Month. Dr. Mills shared that it makes a huge difference having strong and caring principals in a school district, and he is proud of them. "They do a lot of behind the scenes work and have really stepped up during these challenging times,"

shared Dr. Mills. "I love them, and they should know that they are appreciated. If you see them, please tell them thank you."

- Informed the Board members that the Wilson County Health Department is in the process of planning another mass vaccination clinic for students and staff. However, they want to wait until the vaccine is open to students under the age of 12, which is anticipated to be sometime in November. Time slots would be available by school. Dr. Mills shared that he is thankful for the strong partnership with the health department.
- Lastly, Dr. Mills reminded Board members that a Special Board Meeting is scheduled for October 28 at 1 p.m. with OREd to work on the redistricting process and explore school assignments.

VI. Under Public Input, the following members from the public addressed the Board during this portion of the meeting:

- Jerry Rivenbark (Optional face coverings)
- Sue Glisson (Book concerns)
- Susan Guzman (Student Club and Hispanic Heritage Month Spirit Week)
- Emely Lazo (Hispanic Heritage Month Spirit Week)
- Flor Herrera-Picasso (City Proclamation for Hispanic/Latinx Heritage Month)
- Elizabeth Herrera (Casa Azul de Wilson Partnership)

It was the Board's consensus to have the Administration respond to the speakers.

VII. Under Committee Reports/Administrative Services – Committee Chair Mr. Mercer shared that the committee met today to discuss one information and four action items.

Information Item

A. Under WCS COVID-19 Updates, the Administration presented to the Board an update on COVID-19 cases and protocols, which included information about the WCS COVID-19 Information webpage; The Wilson Area School-Based Health (WASH) Centers Diagnostic Testing Information; WCS COVID-19 Dashboard Data; Wilson County COVID-19 Data; updates to the StrongSchoolsNC Public Health Toolkit (K-12); face coverings; the handling of cases; classroom closures; and athletic quarantines.

- The WCS COVID-19 Information webpage can be found on the WCS website - wilsonschoolsnc.net - under COVID-19 Information. The website includes the WCS COVID-19 Dashboard and information on face covering requirements; vaccinations; the WASH Clinics; monitoring symptoms; cleaning and safety protocols; COVID-19 protocols and quarantines; and additional resources.
- The WASH Clinics are open to all WCS staff and students and provide accessible and affordable physical and preventive health services by appointment. Diagnostic testing is available by appointment only for those who have COVID-19 symptoms. The WASH Clinics are located at Forest Hills Middle, Beddingfield High and Hunt High.

- The WCS COVID-19 Dashboard can be found on the WCS website under COVID-19 Information. The dashboard is updated each morning. At the time of the Board meeting, there were 19 active COVID-19 cases (3 staff members and 16 students) compared to 135 active COVID-19 cases (12 staff members and 123 students) at the September 20, 2021, Board meeting. Regarding active contacts, there were 43 active contacts (all students) at the time of the Board meeting compared to 391 active contacts (11 staff members and 380 students) last month.
- Recent data from the Wilson County Health Department indicated that the percentage of positive COVID-19 tests in the county was 5.1% compared to 11.4% last month. The average cases per day for the last seven days was 13 compared to 33 last month. Out of the total population of Wilson County, 50% are partially vaccinated compared to 47% last month and 46% are fully vaccinated compared to 43% last month. Based on the data, there also appears to be a downward trend of the Delta variant surge. The FDA is expected to meet and approve the Pfizer vaccine for children ages 5-11 on October 26, 2021. The CDC will meet the first week in November to give their approval and clinical guidance. If the vaccine is approved, the Wilson County Health Department will schedule a large vaccination event for children ages 5-11.
- At the recommendation of the Wilson County Health Department, WCS follows the guidance in the StrongSchoolsNC Public Health Toolkit (K-12). The last update of the Toolkit was October 5, 2021. The biggest change was this portion of the Toolkit that now states: Students and staff who are not fully vaccinated after a close contact in a classroom or school setting if masks are worn appropriately and consistently by both the person with COVID-19 and the potentially exposed person do not have to quarantine. This is a change from the previous version because staff are now included.
- All students, staff and guests are required to wear face coverings consistently while inside schools, other WCS buildings and on school transportation. Exemptions to face coverings can be found in the Toolkit.
- To handle possible, suspected, presumptive or confirmed cases of COVID-19, WCS asks staff to perform self-monitoring of symptoms and families to conduct symptom screenings at the home of students. If someone becomes symptomatic while at school, they are immediately isolated in a designated area of the school and sent home. WCS coordinates with the Wilson County Health Department on quarantines and COVID-19 guidance. The protocol for the quarantine of close contacts is as follows:
    - Individuals who are fully vaccinated and non-symptomatic do not have to quarantine.
    - Individuals who have tested positive for COVID-19 in the last three months and have fully recovered do not have to quarantine.
    - Students and staff who are not fully vaccinated after a close contact in a classroom or school setting if masks were worn appropriately and consistently by both the person with COVID-19 and the potentially exposed person do not have to quarantine.
- WCS does not currently have any entire K-12 classes, athletic teams or grade levels that are in remote learning because of cases or contacts. Staff and children in the Hunt High Daycare Class are quarantined because of a

positive case, and they can return to school on October 25. The teacher is providing remote learning activities.

Action Items

A. Under Face Coverings, a state law went into effect August 30, 2021, requiring school boards to vote monthly on their masking policies. At the September 20, 2021, Board meeting, the Board adopted a resolution in support of staff and students continuing to wear face coverings in schools, other WCS buildings and on school transportation. The Board discussed having the Administration present for consideration at an upcoming Board meeting a list of parameters to determine when face coverings might become optional, which would be based on circumstances and not a specific date. Mr. Mercer made the motion, seconded by Mr. Boykin, that the Board reaffirm the resolution regarding mandating face coverings and direct the Administration to present for consideration at the next meeting parameters for which the Board might consider moving to an optional face mask scenario. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

B. Under Proposed Capital Projects for 2021-2022, the Administration presented a list of proposed projects, which included the replacement of tennis courts at Fike High, repaving of parking lots at Elm City Middle, the purchase of three small activity buses, replacement of the fire alarm system at Lee Woodard Elementary, the purchase of two maintenance vehicles, the purchase of one technology vehicle, painting at Wells Elementary and the purchase of one county car from state surplus. The total cost of the projects is $1 million. Mr. Mercer made the motion, seconded by Ms. Barnes and Ms. Powell, that the Board approve the capital projects for 2021-2022 as presented by the Administration. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

C. Under Lease Agreement between WCBOE and Qualderm Partners of NC, LLC, the Administration presented a lease agreement for the parking lot on the southeast corner of Ward Boulevard and Brentwood Drive North used by a local dermatologist office. The lease agreement is the same amount as it was previously - $400 a month. The Administration shared that the map did not represent the true boundaries as stated in the lease agreement. Mr. Mercer made the motion, seconded by Ms. Barnes, Ms. Powell and Mr. Breen, that the Board approve the lease agreement between the Wilson County Board of Education and Qualderm Partners of NC, as presented by the Administration, with the provision to make sure that the exhibit of the map is appropriate and adequate. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

D. Under Contract Requiring Board Approval – Administrative Services, Board Policy 6420, *Contracts with the Board*, states that any contract for materials, equipment or services involving expenditures in excess of $90,000 must be reviewed by the Board attorney and approved in advance by the Board unless provided otherwise in Board policy. The following contract exceeds $90,000 and requires Board approval: a contract with De Lage Landen Financial Services, Inc., for a lease agreement for printers located in WCS Print Shop, in the amount of $124,200. Mr. Mercer made the motion, seconded by Ms. Barnes, that the Board approve the contract for De Lage Landen Financial Services, for lease

agreement for printers with the school system's Print Shop. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

Under Committee Reports/Instructional Services Committee – Committee Chair Dr. Fitch shared that the committee met today to discuss information and action items.

Information Items

A. Under Contracts Requiring Board Notification – Instructional Services, Board Policy 6420, *Contracts with the Board*, states that the Superintendent is authorized to enter into contracts involving amounts up to $90,000 and the Superintendent shall report such contracts exceeding $30,000 to the Board at its next regularly scheduled meeting. The following contracts, which are less than $90,000, have been approved by Dr. Mills:

   - A contract with Tarboro Pediatric Psychology, PLLC for psychological, psycho-educational and early childhood development evaluation, in an amount not to exceed $80,000.
   - A contract with Renaissance for Star Math data integration, platform and professional services, in the amount of $64,903.50.
   - A contract with Flyleaf Publishing for decodable books for grades K-2 in Title I schools, in the amount of $80,617.22.

B. Under Overnight School Trips, in the guidelines provided in WCS Policy 3320, *School Trips*, the Board is not required to approve overnight school trips. The Board was informed that the Administration would be setting parameters on how to proceed with overnight trips while implementing COVID-19 protocols.

   Dr. Fitch turned the meeting over to Vice Chair Mr. Mercer for the purpose of receiving the report and carrying through the motions.

Action Items

B. Under Contracts Requiring Board Approval – Instructional Services, Board Policy 6420, *Contracts with the Board*, states that any contract for materials, equipment, or services involving expenditures in excess of $90,000 must be reviewed by the Board attorney and approved in advance by the Board unless provided otherwise in Board policy. The following contracts exceed $90,000 and require Board approval pending the release of Emergency Connectivity funding through the Federal Communications Commission:

   - A contract with USAT for 50 routers for WCS school buses, in the amount of $176,689.45.
   - A contract with Trafera for 2,250 Touchscreen Lenovo Chromebooks, in the amount of $900,000.
   - A contract with Trafera for 5,000 Chromebooks (non-touch), in the amount of $1,545,000.
   - A contract with Trafera for 1,500 Lenovo Laptops, in the amount of $1,458,945.
   - A contract with Kajeet/Verizon for 150 Hotspots (including service), in the amount of $150,000.

Dr. Fitch explained that many of the devices that are issued to students are reaching the end of their life and need to be replaced. Dr. Fitch made the motion, seconded by Mr. Breen, that the Board approve the contracts for USAT, Trafera for three contracts and Kajeet/Verizon, with the understanding of when the funds are available. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

Mr. Mercer turned the meeting back over to Dr. Fitch.

VIII. At 7:32 p.m., Ms. Barnes made the motion, seconded by Mr. Breen, 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; to consider confidential student matters as provided in N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(1) and N.C.G.S. 115C-402 and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. 1232g; to establish or give instructions concerning the Board of Education's negotiating position concerning a potential acquisition and/or lease of real property, as provided in N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(5); and to consult with the Board of Education attorney and preserve the attorney-client privilege as provided in N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(3). The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

Mr. Breen left the meeting at 7:36 p.m.

At 8:25 p.m., Ms. Barnes made the motion to reconvene to open session. The motion, seconded by Ms. Boyette, passed unanimously, 6-0.

IX. Reporting from closed session, Ms. Boyette made the motion, seconded by Mr. Mercer and Mr. Boykin, that the Board accept the Inter-District Reassignment Requests as presented by the Administration. The motion passed unanimously, 6-0.

Ms. Barnes made the motion, seconded by Ms. Boyette, that the Board approve the closed session minutes of the September 20, 2021, and October 6, 2021 meetings, but do not release the minutes for public inspection because of confidential personnel matters. The motion passed unanimously, 6-0.

Ms. Barnes made the motion, seconded by Mr. Mercer, that the Board approve personnel recommendations, as presented by the Administration. The motion passed unanimously, 6-0.

ACTION ITEMS

The Board approved the following certified and classified positions, Substitute Teachers and Coaches.

E = Emergency License – One-year non-renewable license. Not an option for those who have already completed a college education program. Has 18 hours of related coursework. Experience and graduate pay.

I = Interim – Temporary or provisional (certified) hire.

P = Permit to Teach – Replaces emergency license. One-year non-renewable license. Has less than 18 hours of related coursework. Paid on A-00 scale.

R = Residency License – Replaces lateral entry. One year with the option to renew twice. Three-year max. Enrolled in a college education program. Has 24 semester hours of related coursework. Experience and graduate pay.

V = Volunteer – Offers to undertake a position without monetary compensation.

Administrative

Narron, Jamie-Director of Child Nutrition

Administrative (For Information) - Transfers

Luper, Denise (I)-Assistant Principal

Certified

Allen, Kristi-Digital Teaching and Learning Specialist
Artis, Melissa-EC Resource Teacher
Baines, Alisha (P)-7th Grade ELA Teacher
Berry, Cynthia-STEM Lab Facilitator
Griffin, Joshua-Digital Teaching and Learning Specialist
Jones, Matesha-English Teacher
Maddox, Amanda-Digital Literacy Coach
Murphy, Cindy-Digital Literacy Coach, Part-Time

Classified

Armwood, Marva-Teacher Assistant/Bus Driver
Bullock, Sonya-Interim EC Teacher Assistant
Foreman, LaTonya-EC Pre-K Teacher Assistant
Fullwood, Annie-Office Manager
Gardner, Joy-EC Pre-K Teacher Assistant
Haynesworth, Latoya-EC Bus Driver
Hendricks, Michelle-School SecretaryBookkeeper
King, Kelly-TIMS Data Manager
Mercer, Cornell-Teacher Assistant/Bus Driver
Sword, Tammy-Teacher Assistant/Bus Driver
Williams, Latoya-Interim EC Part-Time Teacher Assistant

Substitute Teachers

Barnes, Felicity-Non-Certified
Campbell, Danisha-Non-Certified

Coaches

Bancroft III, George (V)-Wrestling
Noonan, Alayna-Head Soccer
Stevens, Darius (V)-Cheerleading
Taylor, Marques-Assistant Boys Varsity Basketball

INFORMATION ITEMS

The Board received the following personnel list as information.

Certified

Baird, Jacob-Resignation
Boykin, Jeffrey-Resignation
Brown, Nicole-Resignation
Brown-Leach, Felicia-Retirement
Cox, William-Resignation
Dye, Tamara-Resignation
Eatmon, Kimberly-Retirement
Hansley, Cynthia-Retirement
Kornegay, Tammi-Resignation
Little, Sheri-Resignation
Martin, Teresa-Resignation
Mooring, Kathleen-Resignation
Richardson, Lea-Resignation
Sessoms, Brittany-Resignation
Stevens, Sophia-Retirement
Thomas, Glenda-Resignation

Classified

Baker, Jimmy-Resignation
Chapman, Iesheia-Resignation
Hardy, Brenda-Resignation
Langley, Wendy-Retirement
Mercer, Zachary-Resignation
Pollock, Lucinda-Resignation
Solomon, Patricia-Resignation
Taylor, Stephen-Resignation
Thompson, Edna-Retirement

Tripp, Charlene-Resignation
Whitley, Sandra-Retirement
Williams, Sherise-Resignation
Worthy, Brenda-Retirement

X. There being no further business at 8:27 p.m., Ms. Boyette made the motion, seconded by Ms. Barnes, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously, 6-0.

Christine L. Fitch

Dr. Christine L. Fitch, Chairman

Dr. Lane B. Mills, Secretary