MINUTES OF
THE WILSON COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
MAY 16, 2022

The Wilson County Board of Education held its regular meeting on Monday, May 16, 2022, at 6:30 p.m. at the Administrative Office, 113 N. Tarboro Street. Chairman Christine L. Fitch called the meeting to order at 6:30 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

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.

Others present were Associate Superintendent Dr. Cheryl Wilson, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources Dr. Norris Parker, 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 and *The Wilson Times* Reporter Olivia Neeley. There were 43 citizens in attendance.

I. After calling the meeting to order, Dr. Fitch asked for approval of the agenda. Ms. Boyette asked for an amendment to the agenda to remove the Approval of Inter-District Reassignment Requests under item X, Report from Closed Session, due to having no requests at this time. Ms. Boyette made the motion, seconded by Mr. Boykin, that the Board of Education amend the agenda and remove item X, letter B, from the agenda as we have no requests at this time. Ms. Powell made the motion, seconded by Mr. Mercer, that the Board of Education approve the amended agenda as presented. The motions passed unanimously, 7-0.

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

III. Dr. Fitch presented for approval the minutes of the April 25, 2022, Regular Board meeting; April 27, 2022, Special Board meeting; and May 9, 2022, Board Public Hearing. Dr. Fitch asked for approval of the minutes. Ms. Barnes made the motion, seconded by Mr. Mercer, that the Board approve the minutes of April 25, 2022, Regular Board meeting; April 27, 2022, Special Board meeting; and May 9, 2022, Public Hearing. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

IV. Under Chairman's Report, Dr. Fitch:

- Congratulated the students at Wilson Academy of Applied Technology (WAAT) and Wilson Early College Academy (WECA) on graduating from WCS on May 14. The early college students are now preparing to graduate from Wilson Community College. The early college students earn both a high school diploma and associate's degree.
- Congratulated the 10 students who will be attending North Carolina Governor's School during the summer.
- Congratulated all of the Teachers of the Year for each of our schools. She also congratulated the district Teacher and Principal of the Year finalists and nominees.
- Invited everyone to visit IMPACT!, a Wilson County Teacher/Student Group Exhibition, at the Wilson Arts Center Truist Event Gallery, 204 Nash Street South. The exhibition will be on display through May 26. The Wilson Arts Center is open Tuesday-Saturday from 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. She thanked the Wilson Arts Center for hosting and Silverthorne Properties, Inc. for sponsoring this event.
- Thanked those who provided input at the Public Hearing on May 9, regarding the possible permanent closure of Winstead Elementary and Toisnot Middle.

V. Under Superintendent's Report, Dr. Mills:

- Congratulated the seniors at the two early colleges who graduated on May 14. WAAT had 36 graduates and WECA had 71 graduates. He wished them all the best in their future and shared that WCS feels fortunate to have been a part of their educational journey.
- Shared that WCS celebrated Teacher Appreciation Week the week of May 2-6, and thanked everyone who made the teachers feel special. Our school staff, PTOs, families, business partners and churches went above and beyond to celebrate the teachers. Dr. Mills shared that he truly appreciates all that the teachers do for students each and every day; but especially this year since it has been so challenging.
- Shared that the district celebrated the nurses, administrative professionals and school nutrition staff in May. Dr. Mills added that he appreciates the important role these staff members play in the success of students.
- Advised the Board that the district did not receive approval for the Needs-Based Public School Capital Fund Grant application that was submitted in hopes of securing funding to build a new Frederick Douglass Elementary on its current site. The County Commissioners have indicated that they are supportive of building a new school, and they will consider resubmitting the application and exploring traditional financing options.
- The district has 10 finalists who are in the running to become the 2022-2023 WCS Teacher of the Year and five finalists for WCS Principal of the Year. The Board will be receiving information on the announcement of the winners.
- Lastly, Dr. Mills encouraged the students and staff to finish strong as the school year comes to a close. He shared that it's a busy time in the schools

with state testing, awards days, special events and concerts. The last day of school is June 3, and graduation for the comprehensive high schools is scheduled for June 11. Dr. Mills shared that he is proud of the students and staff for all of their hard work this year, and he appreciates the support of families and the community.

VI. Under Public Input, at 6:45 p.m., five people from the public began addressing the Board during this portion of the meeting. Public Input ended at 6:59 p.m. It was the Board's consensus to have the Administration respond to the speakers.

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

Information Items

A. Under Contracts Requiring Board Notification – Administrative 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:

- Mitchell's Septic - for grease trap cleaning and removal, in the amount of $37,800
- Hershey's Ice Cream - for supplemental sales of ice cream, in the amount of $57,723.80
- Trident Beverage - for supplemental sales of 100% juice slushy, in the amount of $69,000
- SFSPac - for manual food service sanitation, in the amount of $56,993.20
- Uniforms Galore - for uniforms, in the amount of $6,243.24
- Pepsi - for supplemental sales of zero calorie soft drinks (high school only), in the amount of $14,430

B. Under WCS COVID-19 Updates, the Administration presented to the Board an update on COVID-19 cases and protocols. Dr. Williams shared that at the time of the Board meeting, there were 15 active COVID-19 cases (nine staff members and six students) compared to zero active cases at the time of last month's meeting. Dr. Williams also shared that the Wilson County Health Department reported the following: a slight increase in cases; zero hospitalizations; low community transmission; and 11% of positive cases reported for the week ending May 6.

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 last Board meeting, the Board adopted a resolution in support of face masks being optional for students, staff and guests in schools and district buildings. Mr. Mercer made the motion, seconded by Mr. Breen, that the Board of Education approve the resolution as adopted on April 27, making note of the necessary change and that the Board adopt it again this month. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

B. Under 2021-2022 Budget Amendments, the Administration presented budget amendments that represent the 2021-2022 State Public School Fund, Federal Fund and School Nutrition Fund budgets ending June 30, 2022. General Statute (G.S.) 115C-434 authorizes the Board of Education to make appropriations for the budget year. Mr. Mercer made the motion, seconded by Mr. Breen and Ms. Powell, that the Board of Education approve Budget Amendments as presented by the Administration, Budget Amendments 104-State Public School Fund, 304-Federal Fund and 501-School Nutrition Fund. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

C. Under Resolution Redefining the Wilson County Board of Education Electoral District Boundaries, the law firm of Poyner Spruill, LLP, drafted a resolution reflecting the decision of the Wilson County Board of Education to redefine its electoral districts to align with the Wilson County Board of Commissioners. On November 1, 2021, the Wilson County Board of Commissioners adopted a resolution redefining the seven electoral districts for the election of County Commissioners based upon figures contained in the 2020 United States Census. At the April 25, 2022, Wilson County Board of Education meeting, the Board voted 6:1 to maintain the same electoral boundaries as the County Commissioners. The Board was asked to approve the resolution to allow members of the Board of Education to be elected from the same geographical boundaries as the County Commissioners. Mr. Mercer made the motion, seconded by Ms. Powell and Mr. Breen, that the Resolution Redefining the Wilson County Board of Education Electoral District Boundaries, in connection with the County Commissioners' lines, be approved. The motion passed 6-1, with Dr. Fitch casting the dissenting vote.

D. Under Possible Permanent Closure of Winstead Elementary School and Toisnot Middle School, based on the Operations Research and Education Laboratory (OREd) study, current and projected school usage and capacity figures, as well as maintenance needs, the Board has discussed closing Winstead Elementary and Toisnot Middle. The Board has also discussed Toisnot Middle serving as the interim location for Frederick Douglass Elementary during its construction and providing a temporary school for future school construction. A Public Hearing was held regarding the possible closing of these two schools on May 9, 2022, at Fike High. The Board will need to discuss next steps or take action. Ms. Powell shared that the decision is emotional for her and that she wished the Board would wait to make a decision to allow everyone time to adjust. Mr. Mercer shared that it breaks his heart that Toisnot Middle may not be a middle school anymore and waiting a year to make the decision would make it difficult to fill vacancies. Ms. Barnes shared that it hurts to hear the public refer to our students as "hood rats." She shared that the decision has to be based on facts, data and the ages of the schools; that the Board has remained transparent; and that the Board did not reach this decision overnight. Mr. Breen shared that the Board has been discussing the closures since October 2021, and it's not something that was decided overnight. He shared that if the Board closes the schools and consolidates them with other schools, this would allow the students to continue to be successful. He shared that he does not feel that the decision should continue

to be delayed and that the decision isn't taken lightly. Ms. Boyette shared that she is in agreement that it is a hard decision but she does not want to delay the decision. Mr. Boykin shared that he is also in agreement to move forward with a vote. Lastly, Dr. Fitch shared that there is a lot of emotion involved and this is not an easy decision. She added that the Board of Education has partnered with the County Commissioners, who provide funding for our capital projects. The district has underutilized buildings and some of the schools are old with costly repairs. She shared that the decision is heartbreaking any way that the Board votes.

Mr. Mercer made the motion, seconded by Mr. Breen, that the Board of Education move forward with the permanent closure of Winstead Elementary School and Toisnot Middle School. The motion passed 5-2, with Ms. Powell and Dr. Fitch casting the dissenting votes.

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

Information Items

A. Under Revised Policy 2121, *Board Member Conflict of Interest* – First Reading, the Wilson County Board of Education is in the process of reviewing all of its policies. The policy is being revised by Poyner and Spruill, LLP, to comply with state general statutes and North Carolina School Board Association (NCSBA) policies.

B. Under Revised Policy 2210, *Duties of Officer* – First Reading, this policy is being revised by Poyner and Spruill, LLP, to comply with state general statutes and NCSBA policies.

C. Under Revised Policy 2410, *Policy Development* – First Reading, this policy is being revised by Poyner and Spruill, LLP, to comply with state general statutes and NCSBA policies. Upon approval, the following policies will be repealed: Policy 2420, *Adoption of Policies*; Policy 2440, *Policy Review and Evaluation*; and Policy 2450, *Suspension of Board Policies*.

D. Under Revised Policy 2430, *Dissemination and Preservation of Policies* – First Reading, this policy is being revised by Poyner and Spruill, LLP, to comply with state general statutes and NCSBA policies.

E. Under Revised Policy 2600, *Consultants to the Board* – First Reading, this policy is being revised by Poyner and Spruill, LLP, to comply with state general statutes and NCSBA policies.

F. Under Revised Policy 4110, *Immunization and Health Requirements for School Admission* – First Reading, this policy is being revised by Poyner and Spruill, LLP, to comply with state general statutes and NCSBA policies.

G. Under Revised Policy 6402, *Participation by Historically Underutilized Businesses* – First Reading, this policy is being revised by Poyner and Spruill, LLP, to comply with state general statutes and NCSBA policies.

H. Under Revised Policy 7540, *Voluntary Shared Leave* – First Reading, this policy is being revised by Poyner and Spruill, LLP, to comply with state general statutes and NCSBA policies.

I. Under Revised Policy 7550, *Absence Due to Inclement Weather* – First Reading, this policy is being revised by Poyner and Spruill, LLP, to comply with state general statutes and NCSBA policies.

J. Under Draft Policy 9125, *Participation by Minority Businesses* – First Reading, this policy is being drafted by Poyner and Spruill, LLP, to comply with state general statutes and NCSBA policies. The Board was provided with a list of regional minority businesses.

Dr. Fitch turned the meeting over to Mr. Mercer to carry through the motions.

Action Items

A. Under Records Retention Schedule, the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources recently released updates to the records retention and disposition schedules that apply to Local Educational Agency (LEA) records; the 2021 General Schedule and 2021 Program Records Schedule: Local Public School Units (LPSU) Schedule. The Board must approve the 2021 General Schedule before records covered by the schedule can be lawfully destroyed. The updated LPSU schedule addresses retention and disposition requirements for education program-specific operational records in five discrete areas: academic program and curriculum; extracurricular program; individual schools' and central office administrative records; operational records; and student records. The Board must formally approve both retention schedules. Dr. Fitch made the motion, seconded by Ms. Barnes, that the Administration be directed in regards to record retention schedules to take the action to make sure we comply with the disposition and retention of LEA records as the statutes require. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

B. Under Revised Policy 4300, *Code of Student Conduct* – Second Reading, this policy is being revised by Poyner and Spruill, LLP, to comply with state general statutes and NCSBA policies. Upon adoption of this policy, Administrative Regulation 3400, *Student Behavior*, will be repealed. The Board requested minor changes to this policy. Dr. Fitch made the motion, seconded by Ms. Barnes, that the full Board approve Revised Policy 4300, *Code of Student Conduct*, as a second reading and if passed, repeal Administrative Regulation 4300, *Student Behavior*. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

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

VIII. Under Discussion/Action items, Wilson Community College Board of Trustees Appointment, the Board of Education has one appointment to make each year to the

Wilson Community College Board of Trustees. The current appointments and their four-year term expiration dates are as follows: Kenneth Jones (June 30, 2022); Dr. Carol White (June 30, 2023); William Thomas "Tom" Fyle (June 30, 2024); and Mark M. Johnson (June 30, 2025). The Board members received information about how to nominate someone for the appointment. Board members have until May 27, 2022, to notify the Superintendent's Office if there is someone they would like to nominate. Nominations will be presented at the June Board meeting for the Board's consideration and final approval. Mr. Jones has expressed his interest in continuing his term on the Wilson Community College Board of Trustees.

IX. At 7:40 p.m., Ms. Barnes made the motion, seconded by Mr. Boykin, 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; 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.

At 8:23 p.m., Ms. Barnes made the motion to reconvene to open session. The motion, seconded by Mr. Mercer, passed unanimously, 7-0.

X. Reporting from closed session, Mr. Breen made the motion, seconded by Ms. Boyette and Mr. Mercer, that the Board of Education approve the closed session minutes of the April 25, 2022, meeting, but do not release the minutes for public inspection because of confidential personnel matters. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

Ms. Barnes made the motion, seconded by Mr. Breen, that the Board of Education approve personnel recommendations, as presented by the Administration. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

Ms. Powell made the motion, seconded by Mr. Breen and Ms. Boyette, that the Board of Education approve the contract extension for Dr. Mills as our Superintendent through June 30, 2026. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

ACTION ITEMS

The Board approved the following classified positions and attached list of Administrator Contract Renewals.

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 – For Information

Luper, Denise (I)-Assistant Principal

Classified

Cotton, Theresa-Child Nutrition Substitute
Everett, Pheonix-Groundskeeper I
Garrett, Naisha-Teacher Assistant/Bus Driver
Jarmon, Larry-Bus Driver
Jones, Sarah-Teacher Assistant/Bus Driver
McIver, Jennifer-Occupational Therapist
Parris, Amy-Custodian
Ragle, Coy-Custodian
Upchurch, David-Electrician II

INFORMATION ITEMS

The Board received the following personnel list as information.

Certified

Ciampa, Deanna-Resignation
Credle, Jewel-Resignation
Daniels, Evangeline-Resignation
Davis, Morgan-Resignation
Ellis, Joseph-Resignation
Joyner, Bryson-Resignation
Matthews, Amanda-Resignation
Moore, Alexis-Resignation
Newman, Meredith-Resignation
Nichols, Marian-Retirement

Classified

Anderson, Jeremy-Resignation
Deans, Thomas-Resignation
Ray, Adeja-Resignation

Sherriod, Brittney-Resignation
Woodard, Robert-Retirement

E. There being no further business at 8:29 p.m., Mr. Breen made the motion, seconded by Mr. Mercer, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

Christine L. Fitch

Dr. Christine L. Fitch, Chairman

Lane B. Mills

Dr. Lane B. Mills, Secretary