

Hamlet, North Carolina  
June 4, 2024

The Richmond County Board of Education met in regular session on June 4, 2024, at 5:08 p.m. The meeting was held at the Central Office in Hamlet, North Carolina.

### **Board Members Present**

Wiley Mabe, Chairman, Bobbie Sue Ormsby, Vice-Chairman, Scotty Baldwin, Jerry Ethridge, Cory Satterfield, Ronald Tillman, and Daryl Mason.

### **Administrators Present**

Dr. Joe Ferrell, Superintendent, Dr. Julian Carter, Associate Superintendent of Human Resources, Dr. Kate Smith, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, Melvin Ingram, Assistant Superintendent of School Safety and Operations, Dr. Tesha Isler, Executive Director of School Administration and Policy, Jennifer Taylor, Director of Testing and Accountability, Dawn Jordan, Executive Director of Finance, Steven King, Director of Maintenance, Mike Williams, Director of Technology Systems and Student Information, Katherine Bendell, Director of Instructional Technology, and Cameron Whitley, Executive Director of Communications, Dr. Wendy Jordan, Director of Student Services, Greg Norton, Director of CTE, Rena Priest, Director of Child Nutrition and George Crump, III, Board Attorney.

### **Meeting Commencement**

After noting that a quorum was present, Chairman Wiley Mabe called the meeting to order at 5:06 p.m. Bobbie Sue Ormsby, Vice-Chairman requested a Moment of Silence and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **Approval of Minutes**

On a motion by Scotty Baldwin, seconded by Cory Satterfield, the minutes of June 4, 2024 (open and closed) meetings were unanimously approved.

### **RCS Special Recognition**

Bobbie Sue Ormsby, Vice-Chairman presented Chairman Wiley Mabe a plaque for his 16 years of service as a board member for Richmond County Schools.

### **Recognition of Inspiring Excellence Awards**

Cameron Whitley introduced Angel Mabe, Principal of Mineral Springs Elementary School, who presented plaques to two of her staff members: Dana Treece and Amy Tadlock. These recipients were honored for their outstanding contributions and dedication to students and the school community.

### **Teacher Cadet Recognition**

Cameron Whitley introduced Suzanne Hudson, teacher at Richmond Senior High School, recognized Jonathan Glaze as becoming a future educator. Ms. Hudson shared that Jonathan attended a future cadet conference when he was in the ninth grade and two other conferences since then. Jonathan has also taken the teacher cadet class. He has worked at Fairview Heights Elementary School in Ms. Michelle Austin's classroom two different semesters for seven weeks each time. In March, Jonathan decided to run for state office for the North Carolina Teacher Cadet (FTA) program and won. He will now collaborate with his state officer team, members of the teacher cadet cadre and Marca Jones, Director of the North Carolina foundation for Public School Children to plan the 2025 conference.

### **Purple Star Schools Recognition**

Cameron Whitley recognized Dr. Tesha Isler for taking the initiative to attend training to find out the process for Richmond County Schools to become a “Purple Star” district and for the schools to become “Purple Star” schools. She led Dr. Theresa Gardner, Principal at Fairview Heights Elementary School, Ismael Gomez, Assistant Principal at Hamlet Middle School, and Major Darryl Kelly, JROTC teacher at Richmond Senior High School through the entire process of achieving the first purple star schools in the district.

- ★ Dr. Tesha Isler presented Fairview Heights Elementary School’s Purple Star School banner to Dr. Theresa Gardner and Kristen Pruitt.
- ★ Dr. Tesha Isler presented Hamlet Middle School’s Purple Star School banner to Courtney Pearson and Ismael Gomez.
- ★ Dr. Tesha Isler presented Richmond Senior High School’s Purple Star School banner to Major Darryl Kelly.

### **Career & Technical Education Local Application**

Greg Norton presented the Career & Technical Education Local Application Plan, highlighting the requirement for LEAs to submit a strategic action plan every two years, which includes accountability goals and legal applications necessary for securing funding. A copyright lien assessment was conducted to guide the identification of needs and issues to address moving forward. The annual budget for PRCs is submitted to both state and federal levels, with the local application serving as a tool to deliver quality, high-performing CTE programs. Funding sources include PRC 13, projected to cover 349 months of employment; PRC 14, with \$115,952 in state funds; PRC 17, providing \$201,881 in federal purchase funding; and PRC 83, allocating \$58,236 for credential offerings to benefit student opportunities.

Employment projections detailed that 29 teachers will be employed for 10 months each, one teacher for 12 months in compliance with state law, two CDCs for 20 months, and a Curriculum/Instructional Management Coordinator for 11 months, totaling 333 months with an additional 16 months available for a potential health science position. Budget utilization has included investments in equipment, tools, and simulators, such as a 100-brake lathe, a 911 simulator, and a childcare experience program. Professional development efforts saw six new teachers attending the New Teacher Institute, with licenses and PD opportunities funded, alongside active CTSOs like SkillsUSA, HOSA, and FBLA.

Enrollment trends indicate a decrease in 9th-grade academy numbers, aligning with broader trends, while middle school offerings include business, finance, marketing, computer science, health science, and family consumer science courses. High school pathways encompass 26 areas, particularly emphasizing trade and technology, including a welding pathway through RCC. Articulated credit courses in electrical trades and drafting also transfer to RCC credits. Performance indicators from the Perkins legislation focus on recognized post-secondary credentials and state testing. In 2023, concentrators achieved a 100% graduation rate, with credential earning at 55.6% and projected to reach close to 70%.

Assessments include traditional exams and performance-based measures, while the Major Clarity platform is utilized for academic planning, aligning students with career pathways based on learning styles and personality profiles. Efforts in work-based learning resulted in internships, pre-apprenticeships, registered apprenticeships, and job shadowing opportunities, with recent success in securing job shadowing at Windy Hill.

On a motion by Jerry Ethridge, seconded by Daryl Mason the board voted unanimously to approve

the Career & Technical Education Local Application Plan.

### **Alternative Schools Modified Accountability System Model**

Jennifer Taylor discussed the alternative schools modified accountability system model, emphasizing that the state requires school districts to have an alternative learning setting for at-risk students. Annually, the district administrators collaborate with Ashley Chapel's school administrator to evaluate the modified accountability system so the recommendation can be presented to the board. At the May 7 board meeting, the district's recommendations for the 2024-25 school year's modified accountability model were shared, and tonight's review aims to address any questions.

Ashley Chapel Principal Monica Robinson met with district leadership to discuss the accountability model for the 2024-25 school year, recommending Model Option B, which incorporates three years of data. Option A, suitable for standard learning settings, measures academic achievement and growth but doesn't cater to the specific needs of at-risk students in alternative settings. These students require a model that addresses their diverse needs beyond academic performance, such as attendance and dropout rates.

The district highly recommends Model Option B for the alternative school, as it not only measures achievement and growth but also includes a persistence metric evaluating student retention and graduation rates. This is crucial for at-risk students characterized by poor attendance and high dropout rates. Model Option B aligns better with the alternative school's responsibilities, ensuring accountability for keeping students in school and graduating them.

Participation in Model Option C, where schools can modify the existing performance model, is not recommended. Instead, Option B is preferred for its alignment with the school's needs without further modifications. This model is supported by 81% of the 95 alternative schools across the state, reflecting its suitability for holding schools accountable for a broader range of issues, including behavior, attendance, and graduation rates. Only 18% of schools use Model Option C, and one school uses Model Option A, the standard accountability model.

### **Triennial Assessment**

Dr. Wendy Jordan presented the Triennial Assessment as part of the student wellness policy, emphasizing the requirement to conduct this assessment every three years. The student wellness policy mandates public notification, including the identification of the local wellness official, which is detailed on the student services page and in policy revision 6140, presented last month. The School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) must be updated on the policy and its implementation, and the triennial assessment must be posted on the website, ensuring it is easily accessible and understandable.

The assessment measures compliance with the law and policy, compares the district's policy to a model policy, and evaluates progress towards the goals set in policy 6120. Dr. Jordan noted that the district meets all federally required items except for the section on standards for USDA child nutrition programs and school meals, specifically regarding the privacy of students qualifying for free or reduced-price meals. However, since Richmond County Schools participates in the Community Eligibility Program (CEP) funded by the USDA, which ensures all students receive nutritional meals without applications, there is no need for privacy safeguards.

To compare the policy, the district used the WellSAT 3.0 tool, which provided a comprehensive score of 86, indicating how well the topics are covered, and a strength score of 55, reflecting the

robustness of the policy language. These scores are detailed for each section in the assessment document.

Progress towards policy goals is facilitated by the active SHAC, which collaborates across agencies to meet the needs of children and families in the community. The council fosters a positive and encouraging environment, allowing for effective and frequent communication. The district continues to work towards meeting and exceeding the goals outlined in the policy, with particular attention to strengthening the language used in the policy.

Policy 6140 was reviewed, and areas for improvement were identified to increase the strength score in future assessments. This review process involved Dr. Jordan, Rena Priest, Director of Child Nutrition and Talia Swiney, Director of K-12 Math & Science, who examined their respective areas within the policy. The revisions were brought forward by Dr. Isler in April and May for board review and voting. The team feels confident in the submitted revisions, which aim to make the language more explicit and improve scores in the next triennial assessment.

### **Construction Updates**

Steven King presented an update on projects at Mineral Springs Elementary School, Fairview Heights Elementary School, and Richmond Senior High School.

- Mineral Springs Elementary School
  - Mechanical, electrical, and plumbing rough ins inside the building are underway.
  - Roof panel installation to follow.
  - Exterior brickwork will start soon, followed by window and door installations next year.
  - HVAC systems will be placed in the mezzanine; ductwork is currently being run.
  - HVAC systems will be hooked up and installed, allowing interior finishing work to commence in the air-conditioned building.
  - Interior finishes include painting and casework in classrooms.
  - Scheduling discussions ongoing to have the building ready for the new school year.
- Fairview Heights Elementary School
  - Interior building work is underway.
  - Next week: interior walls inside the gym will be framed with metal studs.
  - High-impact drywall installation will follow, then painting.
  - The building is scheduled to be completed by late October but is expected to be completed before the new school year starts.
- Richmond Senior High School
  - Block walls installation ongoing.
  - Two of the four exterior walls now at full height of 38 ft.
  - Duke Energy installed the electrical transformer pad for the new building last week.
  - Painting and lighting work underway in the basement of the existing gym.

All three new structures are coming along well and will likely be completed ahead of the scheduled completion date.

### **Child Nutrition Bid Proposals**

Rena Priest presented the 2024-2025 grocery and supply bids for approval.

- Grocery Bid
  - Bids sent to: Cisco in Raleigh, Gordon Food, and US Foods Service.
  - Recommendation: Cisco, as they were the lowest bidder and the only complete bid received.

- Fresh Produce Bid
  - Bids sent to: RH, Honeycutt's, Ward's and Foster Cabinets.
  - Recommendation: RH Produce as the lowest bidder.
  - Note: Honeycutt's bid disqualified due to incomplete documentation.
- Beverage Bid
  - Bids sent to: Cisco, Pepsi, US Food, and Coca Cola.
  - Recommendation: Cisco for line items 65140 through 65152 (lowest bid for those items), and Pepsi for all other beverages.
- Meal Bid:
  - Bids sent to: Pet Dairy and Mayola.
  - Recommendation: Pet Dairy as the lowest bidder.
- Bread Bid:
  - Bids sent to: Flowers and Bimbo Bakeries.
  - Recommendation: Flowers as the only and lowest bid.
- Pest Control Bid:
  - Bids sent to: Carolina Pest and Brown Pest Control.
  - Recommendation: Carolina Pest as the only bid received.
- Chemical Bid:
  - Bids sent to: Safail Correction, Imaging, and Sunbelt.
  - Recommendation: Safail Correction as the lowest and only complete bid received.
- Ice Cream Bid:
  - Bids sent to: Cisco and Hershey.
  - Recommendation: Hershey as the lowest bid, offering a larger variety and better pricing than Cisco.

On a motion by Scotty Baldwin, seconded by Bobbie Sue Ormsby the board voted unanimously to approve the 2024-2025 Child Nutrition grocery and supply bid proposals as presented.

### **Budget Amendments**

Dawn Jordan presented budget amendment requests for budget numbers 17, 18 and 19.

- Budget #17 State funds received an increase in the amount of \$5,400.00.
- Budget #18 Federal funds received an increase in the amount of \$9,500.00.
- Budget #19 Other Local funds received an increase in the amount of \$60,366.74.

On a motion by Scotty Baldwin, seconded by Jerry Ethridge the board voted unanimously to approve budget amendments numbers 17, 18 and 19.

### **Customized Policy Update Service Agreement**

Dr. Tesha Isler presented the Customized Policy Update Service Agreement from the North Carolina School Board Association. She highlighted the positive results of a recent policy update evaluation, which showed good performance with minor corrections. Dr. Isler expressed gratitude for the policy evaluation and introduced the new contract and invoice for the next school year, covering online web hosting and custom policy updates.

- Proposed costs: \$10,550
  - Custom updates: \$6,900
  - Web hosting: \$3,650
- Current costs: \$6,150
  - PLS update service: \$2,500
  - Web hosting: \$3,650

Dr. Isler requested board approval to continue with the current services at \$6,150 and to avoid the unnecessary increase of \$4,400 for custom updates citing the efficiency of the central office staff in handling policy updates as per the existing protocol.

On a motion by Ronald Tillman, seconded by Scotty Baldwin the board voted unanimously to approve the Customized Policy Update Service Agreement as recommended and to avoid the unnecessary increase.

### **Policies for Adoption**

Dr. Tesha Isler presented the conclusion of the 30-day review period, asking the board to adopt amendments for the following policies.

Policy Numbers:

- 2127 Board Member Technology Use
- 2310 E-A Request to Speak During Public Comment Time
- 3220 Technology in the Educational Program
- 3225/4312/7320 Technology Responsible Use
- 3420 Student Promotion and Accountability
- 3460 Graduation Requirements
- 6125 Administering Medicines to Students
- 6140 Student Wellness

On a motion by Ronald Tillman, seconded by Bobbie Sue Ormsby, the board voted unanimously to adopt policy amendments: 2127, 2310 E-A, 3220, 3225/4312/7320, 3420, 3460, 6125, and 6140.

### **Policies for Review**

Dr. Tesha Isler presented the following policies for a 30-day review.

Policy Numbers:

- 1760/7280 Prohibition Against Retaliation
- 3220 E-A Field Trips
- 4040/7310 Staff-Student Relationships
- 4235/6129 First Aid/Emergency Health Care
- 4235/6129 R-1 Emergency Health Plan
- 5023/6128/7268 Emergency Administration of Naloxone
- 7130 Licensure

Wiley Mabe commented to the board, “that’s our insomnia reading.”

### **Field Trip Proposal**

Melvin Ingram presented a senior trip to Orlanda, Florida for board consideration. Melvin Ingram is requesting the trip for the following school:

- Richmond Senior High School – Senior trip – March 28-April 1, 2025.

On a motion by Jerry Ethridge, seconded by Scotty Baldwin, the board voted unanimously to approve the senior trip as presented.

### **Board Attorney Selection**

Dr. Joe Ferrell presented the school board attorney vacancy due to George Crump’s retirement on June 24, 2024. During last month’s board meeting the superintendent presented the board with bids from Tharrington Smith and VanCamp and Van O’linda. The superintendent requested a decision from the board as to who they would like for legal representation.

On a motion by Cory Satterfield, seconded by Ronald Tillman, the board voted unanimously to approve Tharrington Smith as Richmond County Schools Board of Education attorney.

### **Board Members Comments**

Cory Satterfield commented that it makes him happy seeing so many wonderful things going on this time of year in the district. Satterfield commended Richmond County Schools for all they do for the kids.

Scotty Baldwin thanked Wiley Mabe for his years of service, telling Wiley he has learned a lot from him. Baldwin also commented Senator Dave Craven was able to secure some funding for Backpack Pals in the amount of \$50,000.00.

Jerry Ethridge comment on Chad Osborne, Band Director at Hamlet Middle School, has had some health issues causing him to be out of work some. He added Chad was still able to put on a great chorus concert for Hamlet Middle School. Ethridge mentioned he attended Washington Street Elementary School, West Rockingham Elementary School's chorus concerts, Richmond Senior High Schools's chorus and band concert as well as Richmond Early College High School graduation ceremony and everything was great. Jerry Ethridge also gave thanks to all the volunteers.

Chairman Wiley Mabe commented that Richmond Senior High School's band and chorus concert was the best he has ever been to. Chairman Mabe noted it is worth anyone's time to go see it.

### **Superintendent's Report**

Dr. Joe Ferrell commented that everything he was going to share the board members already shared.

Wiley Mabe citing NCGS 143-318.11(a)(3),(6) requested a motion to go into closed session.

On a motion by Cory Satterfield, seconded by Bobbie Sue Ormsby, the board voted unanimously to go into closed session at 6:45 p.m.

The board returned from closed session at 7:04 p.m.

Dr. Julian Carter presented the personnel report, and the addendum.

On a motion by Jerry Ethridge, seconded by Bobby Sue Ormsby, the board voted unanimously to approve the personnel report and addendum as presented.

There being no further business, on a motion by Ronald Tillman, seconded by Scotty Baldwin, Wiley Mabe adjourned the meeting at 7:05 p.m.