

MINUTES  
THE ASHEVILLE CITY BOARD OF EDUCATION  
REGULAR MEETING DECEMBER 5, 2016

The Asheville City Board of Education ("Board") held a regular meeting starting at 4:00 p.m., on Monday, December 5, 2016, in the Theatre at Isaac Dickson Elementary School, 125 Hill Street, North Carolina.

Members present were:

Peggy Dalman, Chairperson, presiding  
Matt Buys, Vice Chairperson  
Martha Geitner  
Leah Ferguson  
Shaunda Sandford

Comprising a quorum of the Board; also

Dr. Pamela Baldwin, Secretary/Superintendent  
Board Attorney, Dean Shatley

Media present:

Julie Ball, Asheville Citizen-Times

CALL TO ORDER

Board Chair Dalman called the work session meeting to order at 4:05 p.m.

WORK SESSION

**School Improvement Plan Updates**

The Board received one-year School Improvement Plan updates from the district's nine schools. Principals presented a five-minute summary of their action steps on the three focus areas of the strategic plan as they relate to their schools: Early Childhood, Academic Achievement, and the Whole Child. The Board approved the schools' detailed plans on December 7, 2015.

Dr. Baldwin and the Board acknowledged Mr. Weinkle for doing an outstanding job at the high school while serving as the interim principal. His last day will be December 31, 2016.

**Public Comment**

The following parents addressed the Board regarding their support of the Balanced Calendar. Ms. Howell requested that the Board need to listen to the community before making a decision to not have the balanced calendar at Hall Fletcher, and Ms. Mars inquired

about the leadership providing equitable solutions to address the proficiency performance with African-American students at Hall Fletcher:

- Angela Howell
- Janet Mars
  
- Derek Edwards addressed the Board on some good news that has been happening at Claxton Elementary School with students from every zip code within the school's district limit.

### **Asheville City Schools Data Talk**

Melissa Hedt, Coordinator for K12, presented highlights of data growth for K12 for years 2014, 2015 and 2016, but first shared the importance of data. Accessing data details have improved with EVAAS and Digital Assessment, which allows districts to pinpoint where growth has taken place and address target areas. Ms. Hedt attributes how the district now views data to Dr. Baldwin and further stated that the district did not look at racial disparities when addressing the issues surrounding the achievement gap, but attributed it to socioeconomic status. Other areas of the data talk presentation were differentiating between proficiency versus growth, areas for continued growth, and the plans to address those areas.

The Board had no questions for Ms. Hedt.

### **Hall Fletcher Balanced Calendar Update**

Carrie Allen presented an overview on where the Growth Committee stands with the Balanced Calendar three-year pilot program at Hall Fletcher Elementary School, and their recommendation to the Board regarding the direction of the school for the 2017-18 school year.

Ms. Allen thanked the committee members and the Hall Fletcher committee and said the process had many turns, and the direction in which they started, was not how they ended due to the data collected. Both committees wanted to do what is right for students, families and the school.

A recap of when the committees held their meetings and next steps were shared with the Board and Leadership, including the findings from the surveys that were conducted.

- Majority of the community and Hall Fletcher staff supports the balanced calendar
- The school's report card went from D to a C
- K2 class data has improved with the support from Foundations and title I support and the committee were in agreement that the data will continue to soar.

### **Challenges the surveys showed:**

- Conducting Staff Professional Development has been difficult for two schools in such a small district
- Bus drivers have no time off
- Flexibility and equity of student placement has been a concern

- Space and capacity with classroom sizes across the district
- District has to racially balance every school across the district
- Absenteeism with staff and students has not improved. Sick and personal leave being the highest in the district.
- Funding for Out of School Time and Bonus Learning Time is not equitable across the district. A similar presentation was shared with the school's staff.

### **Recommendation from the Growth Committee**

The committee on November 21, 2016 conducted an anonymous vote, and nine were in favor of Hall Fletcher Elementary School returning to the traditional calendar for the 2017-18 school year, and six voted to remain on the balanced calendar. Therefore, it is the recommendation of the Elementary Growth Committee to the Board of Education that Hall Fletcher Elementary School is transitioned back to the traditional calendar for the 2017-2018 school year.

Ms. Allen requested to have the support of the Board to continue to look at those successful areas of the balanced calendar and implement them across the district.

Ms. Allen concluded by saying doing what was best for all children across the district was what the committee did.

Board Chair Dalman thanked Ms. Allen for her leadership. The Board members had no questions for Ms. Allen.

### **Merit Pay Plan Proposal**

Joyce Graves, Executive Director for Human Resource and Charlotte Sullivan, Executive Director for Finance presented the Local Merit Pay Plan Proposal for classified employees provided in the State Approved Budget. The ladies reviewed the plan.

- The Board will be asked to approve a plan as to how to award the bonuses
- Non educators eligible-excludes teachers and certified instructional support personnel
- The bonus is not subject to retirement, and it is a one-time payment only

#### Criteria:

- Classified employee must be a permanent full-time employee who works 10 month 11 month, or 12 month schedule.
- Must have been employed with Asheville City Schools as of July 1, 2015.
- Must not have a break in service from Asheville City Schools since July 1, 2015.
- Must remain employed at the time the merit pay is issued in January 2017.
- Must not have been on an Action Plan since July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2016.

#### Employee Categories:

- Child Nutrition Staff
- Custodial Staff
- Instructional Assistants (to include Media and ISS assistants)

- State Allotment \$43,792.00
- Awarded amount is \$700.00 for each eligible employee.

Board Chair Dalman requested to have the 6:30 pm regular meeting agenda amended to add item D Merit Pay Plan Proposal to the action items for their consideration and approval.

### **First Reading Board Policy 8307-Title I Program-Comparability of Services**

Dean Shatley presented Policy Code 8307, Title I Program-Comparability of Services, a new policy from the North Carolina School Boards Association. Every school district is required to adopt this policy as it pertains to the amendments to Title I, Every Student Success Act (ESSA). The policy is on the 6:30 pm regular meeting agenda for approval for first reading. The Board had no questions for Mr. Shatley.

The 6:30 pm agenda will be amended to Board Chair Dalman reviewed the 6:30 regular meeting agenda. The audience was reminded that public comment is also on the agenda. There were questions.

Matt Buys made a motion to go into closed session at

#### CLOSED SESSION

At 6:07 p.m., Matt Buys made a motion to go into closed session, pursuant to Section 143-318.11 (a)(1) and (3) of the General Statutes of North Carolina to prevent the disclosure of privileged or confidential student information; personnel information pursuant to G.S. §115C-319; and to discuss matters protected by the attorney-client privilege. The motion was seconded by Shaunda Sandford and carried.

At 6:19 p.m., the Board returned to open session.

#### CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Dalman called the Board meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

#### AMENDED AGENDA

Matt Buys made a motion to amend the regular Board meeting agenda and add item D Merit Pay Plan Proposal. The motion was seconded by Martha Geitner and carried.

#### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The pledge of allegiance was led by two Isaac Dickson students.

#### CONSENT ITEM

Matt Buys made a motion to approve the consent items listed below. The motion was seconded by Leah Ferguson and carried.

A. Minutes

1. Closed Session – November 7, 2016
2. November 10, 2016

### SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

Dr. Baldwin provided the following updates:

#### **Preschool**

##### Haywood Campus

- 6 PreK rooms with 103 children enrolled with 5 slots in process of enrollment (for full capacity)
- 1 Toddler (2 year olds) room with 11 children enrolled
- 1st quarter data shows strong growth across domains
- Focus for 2nd quarter is on gross motor, math and social-emotional development
- Current curriculum investigation is “Trees”
- 11 staff members have nearly completed a 10 session training course regarding effective teacher-child interactions (CLASS Making the Most of Interactions)
- All staff members (including off-sites and K/1) have been trained in the Community Resiliency Model
- Verner began serving infants and toddlers at this location on 11/30/16

#### **Jones, Dickson & Hall Fletcher**

- All classrooms are fully enrolled with a near balance of subsidized and private pay slots
- 1st quarter data shows VERY strong growth in all developmental domains for all classrooms
- All Assistant Principals attended an Introduction to Preschool training in early November
- All Lead Teachers have attended a Playground Safety Training and will attend an Emergency Response Plan training as required for stand-alone programs

#### **Kindergarten and First Grade**

- 17 Kindergarteners
- 8 First Graders
- Both classes began FEAST classes with the HFE FEAST Teacher
- Teachers are involved in planning regarding next year at this campus, including a potential magnet theme
- Teachers are in the early phases of a Literacy Stations book study lead by Carrie Allen

#### **Day Treatment**

- 6 students enrolled and 2 in process
- Exceptional Children’s support provided via contract teacher
- Tima provides curriculum support weekly
- New transportation plan begins December 5th

## CURRICULUM FEATURE

The curriculum feature highlighted Teacher of the Year, Leslie Blaich, at Isaac Dickson Elementary School, interacting with her kindergarten classroom.

## GOOD NEWS

Erin Hill presented the following good news items:

1. Jacqueline Brown and her students assembled another Cougar Paws Thanksgiving Feast. The Cougar Kitchen prepared 108 meals. They cooked for four days, and were featured on WLOS Never Stop Learning. 18 meals went to McKinney-Vento students, and 20 meals went to our maintenance staff. 20 teachers purchased meals at \$10, one for him or herself and one for a disadvantaged person. Congratulations to all involved for blending our amazing Foods, I and II curriculum with community need.
2. The following AHS and SILSA students competed with over 350 others at the District 8 HOSA Fall Leadership Conference at Southwestern Community College. All our students did an excellent job and racked up these honors:
  - Jaszmin Dean, 2nd place, Healthy Lifestyle
  - Maya Hunter, 2nd place, Health Career Photography
  - Haylie Felhl, 3rd place, Extemporaneous Writing
  - Candida Alas-Ortega, 3rd place, Job Seeking Skills
  - Melody Shaffer and Catherine Shulby, 3rd place, Health Career Display
  - Itzel Garcia-Ruiz, 5th place, Extemporaneous Poster
  - Stella Fields and Ryan Rosenfelt, Top 10, Health Career Display
  - Paige Kemper, placed First in Healthy Lifestyle

Congratulations to our HOSA students and special thanks to our HOSA Advisors, Kim Hill and Robyn Luliano!

4. Asheville City Schools Foundation teacher scholarship awardees for 2016-17:

Class of '49 Scholarship:

- Natalie Davis- Asheville High School, Odyssey Ceramics Summer Workshop

ACSF Scholarships:

- Kidada Wynn- District- Mental Health Liaison, Administration Certification
- Savannah Forsythe- Asheville Middle, University of Georgia (online) - Education Specialist in Creative & Gifted Ed (and Ed Psych)
- Nicole Warren- Jones Elementary, National Art Education Association's 2017 Convention
- Yetta Williams- Hall Fletcher Elementary, STEAM Professional development

Buncombe County Retired Teachers Scholarships:

- Chuck Larrick- Asheville Middle, National Board Certification
- Robbie Lipe- Vance Elementary, NCAEA 2016 Professional Development Conference

Thank you to Miranda Musiker, Grant and Scholarship Programs Manager for the Asheville City Schools Foundation.

5. Vance teachers Blair Johnston and Brian Ballenger presented at the NSTA (National Science Teachers Association) Portland Regional Conference. STEAM Ahead for Climate Change was the session title and here is how Blair and Brian described it: “We’ve transformed our school’s science culture! Passion is all you need to initiate the same revolution in your school. We’ll show you everything else.”
6. Michael Holton has long been a gem in Asheville City Schools. Visits to his classrooms over the years at Hall Fletcher and Asheville Middle School reveal an outstanding teacher who knows how to inspire and education his students. Michael now serves as the Dean of Students at Asheville Middle School, which keeps him super busy but he still has time to do one of the things I believe he enjoys most ---- coaching our young student-athletes.

### PUBLIC COMMENTS

Board Chair Dalman reviewed the public comment guidelines before the following individuals addressed the Board:

1. John Brigham addressed the Board regarding calculators in the classroom. They serve no educational purpose for seventh graders.
2. Jess Daniellan addressed the Board on behalf of the PTO Mulch Committee regarding the Rubber Mulch on the playground at Isaac Dickson at its risk factors.
3. Donna Toole of the Mulch Task Force addressed the Board regarding the concern of Rubber Mulch on Isaac Dickson Playground and holding a discussion about alternative playground opportunities for all children.
4. Chris Flanders addressed the Board regarding the Rubber Mulch on its life-threatening effects.
5. Matt Menne addressed the Board about the Mulch at Isaac Dickson Elementary School and to establish a plan to correct the issue.
6. David Nash addressed the Board regarding Hall Fletcher Balanced Calendar. His kids had a good experience while at Hall Fletcher. Mr. Nash shared with the Board if the balance calendar is not working, it should be given some more time.
7. Elizabeth Onkka-Holstein addressed the Board and expressed her support for the balanced calendar. She shared that the students need assistance year round, and the voices of the parents and staff are not being heard.
8. Rebecca Howell addressed the Board regarding the Balanced Calendar and mentioned extending the time. The data that was presented on the calendar was not meaningful and there were no apples to apple’s comparison, and the presentation that was shared was not transparent.
9. Kate Russell addressed the Board regarding the Mulch at Dickson and the need for urgent action.
10. Brook Flanders addressed the Board regarding the Mulch at Isaac Dickson and the safety concerns.

Board Chair Dalman told the audience that public education is a partnership, and thanked the parents for their comments.

## PRESENTATION

Kendra Ferguson, Manager with Dixon Hughes Goodman, L.L.P. presented for review, the Compliance Report and at the end her presentation, requested to know if the Board had any questions. Ms. Ferguson thanked Executive Director of Finance, Charlotte Sullivan and her department for a no-error audit.

## ACTION ITEMS

### A. ***Balanced Calendar***

Matt Buys made a motion to approve the recommendation of the Growth Committee to transition Hall Fletcher Elementary School back to the traditional calendar for the 2017-2018 school year. The motion was seconded by Martha Geitner and Carried.

#### ***Response from Leah Ferguson to the motion made by the Board***

- As a board, we are tasked with looking at the policy decisions to ensure that they do not intentionally or unintentionally discriminate against any of our protected classes. We have a duty not just to children and families, but to our staff and to tax-paying citizens to ensure that our schools are doing their very best to use resources efficiently and to meet the needs of all learners. We strive to meet the challenge of excellence with equity.
- What is being presented to us is a policy decision regarding calendars. The decision that I am weighing is this: **does the balance calendar, for all of its merits, intentionally or unintentionally contributes to the ongoing racial and socioeconomic imbalance at Hall Fletcher and is it intentionally or unintentionally contributing to hardships on our other elementary schools?** The position of district leadership is that yes; the balanced calendar contributes to the ongoing imbalance of race and class, and it is contributing to class size increases that are a hardship for our other elementary schools.
- Now, **I must weigh whether or not I believe that the information presented to me by our staff is accurate and provided completely with the intent to address serious challenges and if their recommendation is founded on adequate information.**
- At this point, I have neither seen nor experienced any lack of thoughtfulness, discrimination (intentional or unintentional), bias, or incompetence on the part of district leadership in the examination of the core challenges outlined as part of this investigation. I see no cause not to support leadership's recommendation. That being said, I do strongly encourage leadership to work diligently to identify hardships for HFE staff and families unique to their school community and to put an extra focus and additional resources towards addressing them. I also ask that district leadership examines whether or not they can add a fall break into the existing traditional calendar for 17-18 and provide high-quality summer programming to the students at HFE this summer.

#### ***Comment from Matt Buys***

- Mr. Buys shared his initial support of the balanced calendar at Hall Fletcher Elementary School until the Growth Committee presented the data; some of which was good. Other considerations presented, included the cost of the balanced calendar to the district and more critical, the new legislation handed down from Raleigh that will not only impact Asheville City Schools, but schools in North Carolina. No longer will there be flexibility in kindergarten classroom size. The new mandate allows sixteen students to a classroom. Hall Fletcher currently has a classroom of thirteen students, and Vance has twenty-four. Mr. Buys mentioned his concerns about equity and the school system not being in compliance.

The motion to transition Hall Fletcher Elementary School back to the traditional calendar for the 2017-2018 school year, was passed unanimously (5-0).

**B. First Reading of Board Policy 8307, Title 1 Program-Comparability of Services**

Martha Geitner made a motion to approve the first reading of Policy Code 8307, Title 1 Program-Comparability of Services as presented by Dean Shatley. The motion was seconded by Shaunda Sandford and carried.

**C. Employment of Personnel with an Addendum attached**

Martha Geitner made a motion to approve the following personnel recommendations and the addendum as presented by Executive Director of Human Resources, Joyce Graves during closed session. The motion was seconded by Matt Buys and carried.

December 5, 2016

For Approval by the Board of Education

Recommendations for 1 Year Teacher Contracts:

<u>Asheville City Preschool</u>		
LeeAnn Wright	11/21/16	Birth-Kindergarten Teacher
<u>Vance Elementary School</u>		
Jennifer Perry	11/18/16	Grade 4 Teacher

Recommendations for Classified:

<u>Asheville Middle School</u>		
Lisa Foster	11/9/16	Child Nutrition Assistant
<u>Claxton Elementary School</u>		
Sarah Vallejo	12/1/16	Child Nutrition Assistant

Substitutes:

Giuliana Aguilar-Brown  
 Brian Bilich  
 Jade Henke  
 Jasia Martin  
 Bradley Ward

Addendum 12/5/2016

Administrative

Dr. Bobbie Short	1/3/17	Acting, Assistant Superintendent of teaching and Learning Asheville City Schools Systemwide
Shannan Baggett	1/3/17	Assistant Principal, Montford School

***D. Merit Pay Plan***

Leah Ferguson made a motion to approve the Merit Pay Plan as presented by Executive Director for Personnel, Joyce Graves and Executive Director of Finance, Charlotte Sullivan during the work session. The motion was seconded by Shaunda Sandford and carried.

ANNOUNCEMENT/FUTURE BOARD MEETINGS

- Winter Break: Wednesday, December 21 – January 2, 2017
- Board of Education (Mid-year Retreat) Administrative Offices-Board Room, January 19, 2017 8:15-5:00 pm
- BOE Work Session – Claxton Elementary School, Monday, January 30, 2017 at 4:00 pm
- Regular Board Meeting, Administrative Offices-Board Room, Monday, February 6, 2017 at 6:30 pm

ADJOURNMENT

The Board meeting adjourned at 7:39 p.m.

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Peggy Dalman, Chairperson

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Dr. Pamela Baldwin, Superintendent /Secretary

Approved by the Board on January 19, 2017