

ASHEVILLE CITY BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING/ PUBLIC HEARING
5:00 p.m. - Regular - Administrative Offices - Board Room
Monday, December 13, 2021

BE IT REMEMBERED: The Asheville City Board of Education met in a regularly called session on December 13, 2021, at 5:00 p.m. at the Administrative Office - Board Room at 85 Mountain Street, Asheville, North Carolina, where and when the following business was transacted.

The following Board members were present:

James C. Carter, Board Chair
Martha Geitner, Vice Chair
George Sieburg, Member
Peyton O'Conner, Member
Shaunda Sandford, Member - attended virtually

Staff Members Present:

Dr. Gene Freeman, Superintendent; Dr. Mark Dickerson, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources; Ashley-Michelle Thublin, Executive Director of Communications; Dillon Huffman, Communication Specialist; Georgia Harvey, Executive Director of Finance; Melissa Hedt, Deputy Superintendent Instruction and Accountability; Tanya Presha, Academic and Program Support Coordinator; Sarah Cain, Director of Elementary Education and Federal Programs; Laura Parks, Director of Secondary Education; Nathan Haugaard, IT Help Desk Specialist; Marta Alcala-Williams, Executive Director of Equity and Family Engagement; Kidada Wynn, Executive Director of Student Services; Dr. Kim Dechant, Director of Recruitment and Induction; Dr. Paula Dowd, Executive Director of Exceptional Children; Ian Nelson, Director of Testing and Accountability; April Dockery, Executive Director of Crisis Management and Operations; Kristy Coats, Facilities Liaison; Shannon Baggett, Principal MNSA; Miranda Wheeler, AP MNSA; Tima Williams, Principal Asheville Primary; Brad Johnson, Principal Isaac Dickson; Susanna Smith, Director of Preschool; Ruletta Hughes, Principal Lucy S. Herring; Sonna Jamerson, AP Lucy S. Herring; Ruafika Cobb; Principal Ira B. Jones; Jo Landreth, AP Ira B. Jones; Mary Nichols, Principal Claxton; Paul Garrity, AP Claxton; Derek Edwards, Principal AHS; Ashley Free, AP AHS; Tiger Norman, AP AHS; Holly Sutter, AP AHS; Sybil Jefferson, AP AHS; Nicole Cush, Principal SILSA; Rheta West, AP SILSA; Carrie Buchanan, Principal Hall Fletcher; Harrison Newkirk, AP HFE; April Collins, Principal Asheville Middle School; Brian Powchak; AP AMS; Cynthia Lopez, Attorney; Kimberly Jones, Administrative Assistant.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting and public hearing will be reconvened from last week. The meeting was called to order at 5:06 p.m. by the Board Chair, James C. Carter.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

James C. Carter made a motion to reconvene the meeting from last week. Peyton O'Conner approved the motion. Martha Geitner seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

James C. Carter, Board Chair -Yes
Martha Geitner, Vice Chair - Yes
George Sieburg, Member - Yes
Peyton O'Conner, Member - Yes
Shaunda Sandford, Member attended virtually - Yes

PUBLIC HEARING CONTINUED

OPENING REMARKS

James C. Carter, Board Chair shared details on how the hearing will be conducted. As was stated last week the Board of Education is holding the public hearing today specifically on three different items. 1.) Possible relocation of Asheville Primary School; 2.) Keeping Asheville Primary School where it is; 3.) Closing Asheville Primary School for the 2022-2023 school year and enrolling those students in other schools. The Board Chair is handed a list of people that have signed up. Last week it was stated that if you signed up and spoke in person you would only be able to speak if you brought new information. Since it is subjective on what new information is the Board Chair is going to start with the individuals who have not been identified as having spoken before. Once that list is complete, individuals who have signed up for the virtual public comment will speak. If there is time and the Board of Education sees fit they will let those who spoke before speak again. You will be asked to inform the Board of Education what the new information is. There will be another board meeting this evening. The [meeting notice](#) and guidelines were shared with the speakers.

THE FOLLOWING AUDIENCE MEMBERS GAVE INPUT IN PERSON AT THE PUBLIC HEARING

1. Andres Braeth
2. Sean Dunn
3. Ben Schweizbch
4. Erutig Utben
5. Veronica Sostolongo
6. Damian Wells
7. Ian Gibbs-Hall
8. Iya
9. Hollis
10. Taylor
11. Jenson Gelford
12. Laura Dangelo
13. Maria Buchanan
14. Julian
15. Aeden
16. Jordan Ahlers
17. Marcus Coward
18. Carrick Hopkins

19. Halsey Hopkins
20. Aaron Brumo
21. Anne Lanzi
22. Hannah Schweitzer
23. Stephen Edge
24. Jose Ruiz
25. Jackie McHargue
26. Sally Grau
27. Lucine Gueksian
28. Fiorella Cotrina
29. Erin Dunn
30. Elaina Ori-Honeycutt
31. Sybriea Lundy
32. Mary Aldridge
33. Aquinnah deBettencourt
34. Chase Hager
35. Jessan Hager
36. Rachael Hammer
37. Alma Romero
38. Sade Mustakeur
39. Susan Senzon

Virtual Public Comments

1. Kelly Richards
2. Jerick Wilson
3. Brooke Heaton
4. Olive Wilbur
5. Samatha Demick
6. Amanda Wilde

THE SCHOOL BOARD INVITED ADDITIONAL PUBLIC COMMENTS BY EMAIL. THE FOLLOWING PUBLIC COMMENTS WERE SUBMITTED BY EMAIL. THE BOARD ALSO ACCEPTED WRITTEN COMMENTS DURING THE MEETING. THE EMAILS SUBMITTED IN A TIMELY MANNER WILL BE A PART OF THE RECORD OF THE PUBLIC HEARING.

Asheville Primary School Open Hearing Email Public Comments:

[Emails - 1](#)

[Emails - 2](#)

ADJOURNMENT

James C. Carter made a motion to adjourn the public hearing. The meeting adjourned at 7:13 p.m. George Sieburg approved the motion. Peyton O’Conner seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

James C. Carter, Board Chair -Yes
Martha Geitner, Vice Chair - Yes
George Sieburg, Member - Yes
Peyton O’Conner, Member - Yes
Shaunda Sandford, Member attended virtually - Yes

Regular Meeting

CALL TO ORDER

James C. Carter, Board Chair, called the session to order at 7:27 PM.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Ms. Nikki’s, Kindergarten class from Isaac Dickson Elementary School

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

James C. Carter made a motion to approve the agenda. George Sieburg approved the motion. Peyton O’Conner seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

James C. Carter, Board Chair -Yes
Martha Geitner, Vice Chair - Yes
George Sieburg, Member - Yes
Peyton O’Conner, Member - Yes
Shaunda Sandford, Member attended virtually - Yes

Good News: Ashley-Michelle Thublin, Executive Director of Communications shared the following:

- Asheville High School Dance Showcase
- Local author Omileye Achikeobi-Lewis Visits Lucy S. Herring
- Gracie Bolick Signed with UNC-Chapel Hill
- Band Concerts

PUBLIC COMMENTS

The following names were called to make a public comment, including additional comments related to Asheville Primary School:

In-Person

Derek Edwards
Nicole Cush
Tanya Presha

Copland Rudolph
Kate Shen
Molly McGroven
Micah Honeycutt
Rob Lamb
Henry Blackford
Marta Alcala-Williams
Pepi Acebo
Lara Lustig
Liza Kelly
Rachael
Stephanie Motley
Lindsey Furst
Beth Mayberry

Virtual

No virtual

CONSENT ITEMS

- Work Session Minutes November 1, 2021
- Closed Session Minutes November 1, 2021
- Regular Meeting Minutes November 8, 2021
- Special Called Meeting Minutes November 15, 2021
- [Face Coverings](#)
- Student Releases to Buncombe County 2021-2022
- Budget Amendments
- Contracts: [Budd Group](#), [Manpower Group USA](#)
- Policies Second/Final Read: Enrollment
- [4115 Behavior Standards for Out of District & Transfer Students](#)
- [4130 Discretionary Admission of Out-of-Students](#)
- [4130-P Discretionary Admission of Out-of-District Students](#)
- [4150 School Assignment](#)

Peyton O'Conner made a motion to approve the Consent Items. Martha Geitner seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

James C. Carter, Board Chair -Yes
Martha Geitner, Vice Chair - Yes
George Sieburg, Member - Yes
Peyton O'Conner, Member - Yes
Shaunda Sandford, Member attended virtually - Yes

Recommendation from Administration in regards to Asheville Primary School:

Comment from Dr. Freeman. ACS has a financial issue. There has been an independent audit and a state audit of the finances. The surplus will run out in the spring of 2023 if it doesn't run out before. That is based on the historical spending pre-Covid. That is the fact.

Dr. Freeman recommended that the Board close the school and move Pre K to other buildings. Mr. Carter asked: What will happen to the building if the Board of Education approves the recommendation from Administration? Dr. Freeman responded that if the Board of Education chooses, the building can be used for the Maintenance Department and Child Nutrition. If the County Commissioners want to use the building for a Pre K hub they will need to support it financially.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Adoption of final APS Study & Amendment (G.S. 115C-72) George Sieburg made a motion to approve the adoption of the final APS Study & Amendment (G.S. 115C-72). Martha Geitner seconded the motion.

James C. Carter, Board Chair - Yes
Martha Geitner, Vice Chair - Yes
George Sieburg, Member - Yes
Peyton O'Conner, Member - No
Shaunda Sandford, Member attended virtually - Yes

2. Action on possible relocation or closure of Asheville Primary School
Peyton O'Conner made a motion to postpone the issue of what to do with Asheville Primary School until the Board of Education adopts a strategic plan and has additional public engagement around the issue of the strategic plan. Not seconded.

George Sieburg makes a motion to close Asheville Primary School effective with the 2022-2023 school year and enroll the students impacted into existing ACS schools using existing enrollment policies. Shaunda Sandford seconded the motion.

James C. Carter, Board Chair - No
Martha Geitner, Vice Chair - Yes
George Sieburg, Member - Yes
Peyton O'Conner, Member - No
Shaunda Sandford, Member attended virtually - Yes

3. Personnel Report No. 5
Martha Geitner made a motion to approve Personnel Report No.5. George Sieburg seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

James C. Carter, Board Chair - Yes
Martha Geitner, Vice Chair - Yes

- The November monitoring visit went well
- Round two of funding approved for FY 2022!! \$220,000!!!
- Family events Herring and APS next week
- CTE
 - The CTE leadership team is planning career activities for all ACS fifth grade students starting the week of January 24th.
- Preschool
 - Susanna Smith is engaging with Buncombe County's Early Childhood Education team to prepare for this year's grant application.
- Summer Plans
 - C&I has drafted a plan for summer programming 2022 Draft Plan
- 1st Semester testing plans are being solidified for AHS/SILSA
 - Jan. 10-14 @ AHS/SILSA

EC Department

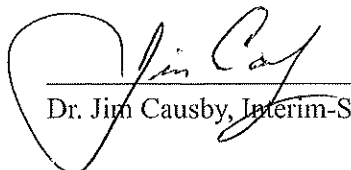
- We have received donations from outside agencies to include 2 wheelchairs for students at Claxton Elementary School and the PreK Development Disability classroom at Asheville Primary School. The wheelchairs were donated from the Children's Assistive Technology Service (CATS).
- Also, we received an adaptive trike donated by the WNC Friends of Amblucs. This will also be used with our PK students with disabilities at Asheville Primary School.

Student Services

- Social Workers are working to get all of their Holiday Hearts students taken care of for Christmas. We are supporting well over 600 students this year! Thank you to everyone who contributed! We are grateful and our students will have joy this holiday season because of people like you!
- The school counselors are teaming up with the administrators to look at the data received from our SEL assessments. We are excited to start providing SEL resources to our students, staff, and families. Our mental health team will be facilitating RESET rooms throughout the district. We will have 5 operating once we come back from break. These rooms will focus on restorative practices, SEL, Trauma-informed care, and resiliency. This will support our students in having and maintaining healthy school relationships in order to be successful academically.
- Our very own Cort Radford was announced coach of the year, and several athletes were named all-conference players of the year! Overall, many ACS athletic teams stood in high rankings. ACS finished the fall sports season with some renewed Cougar Pride!

ADJOURNMENT

Martha Geitner made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:34 p.m. Peyton O'Conner seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.


 Dr. Jim Causby, Interim-Superintendent


 James C. Carter, Board Chair

