

ASHEVILLE CITY BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING

5:00 p.m. - Regular - Administrative Offices - Board Room

**Monday, August 9, 2021**

**BE IT REMEMBERED:** That the Asheville City Board of Education met in a regularly called session on August 9, 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

Jackie McHargue, Vice Chair

Martha Geitner, Member

Peyton O'Conner, Member

Shaunda Sandford, Member

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, Chief Finance Officer; Melissa Hedt, Deputy Superintendent Instruction, and Accountability; Laura Parks, Director of Secondary Education; Matt Whiteside, Director of Instructional Technology and Media; Nathan Haugaard, IT Help Desk Specialist; April Dockery, Executive Director of Crisis Management and Operations; Walter Dove, Safety Officer; Amanda Rigsby, Transportation Operations Coordinator; Carrie Buchanan, Principal HFE; Tima Williams, Principal APS, Mary Nichols, Principal, Claxton; Derek Edwards, Principal AHS, Cynthia Lopez, Attorney; Kimberly Jones, Administrative Assistant.

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 5:01 p.m. by the Board Chair, James C. Carter.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

James C. Carter made a motion to approve the agenda. Martha Geitner approved the motion. Peyton O'Conner seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

The following names were called to make a public comment:

Wendy Ikoku

Pepi Acebo

Shannon O'Conner

**CONSENT ITEMS**

- Work Session Minutes June 7, 2021
- Closed Session Minutes June 7, 2021
- Regular Meeting Minutes June 7, 2021

- Special Called Closed Session Minutes - Student Enrollment Appeal June 15, 2021
- Special Called Closed Session Minutes - Employee Appeal June 21, 2021
- Special Called Work/Closed Session Minutes June 21, 2021
- Special Called Work Session Minutes June 29, 2021
- Calendar Revisions for 2021-2022 School Year
- Student Releases to Buncombe County 2021-2022

Jackie McHargue made a motion to approve the Consent Items. Martha Geitner seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

### **ACTION ITEMS**

1. Personnel Report No. 1

Martha Geitner made a motion to approve Personnel Report No. 1. Jackie McHargue seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

### **INFORMATION AGENDA**

Public Comment Procedures

Ashely-Michelle Thublin,  
Executive Director of Communications

Good Evening Dr. Gene, Chairman Carter & members of the Board.

I come to you this evening to share exciting news about the public comments section of your Regularly Scheduled Monthly Board Meeting.

If you would like, moving forward, we can allow for public comments to occur both in person and virtually. I think this move to offer a virtual platform can support our families, not only as COVID cases continue to rise in our community, but after the pandemic is over...which I hope isn't too much longer...especially knowing that most of the people who wish to speak during public comment have school-aged students at home and are trying to juggle your meetings with making dinner, bath time and putting little ones to bed.

In order to allow for this virtual option, folks would need to complete a google form...which will be included both on the district's BOE webpage and in our social media meeting reminder posts. Moving forward, we have the ability to make social media posts on the Friday or Saturday prior to the meeting instead of just the day of.

In order to ensure each person that signs up for virtual public comment receives the correct login information, I would like to suggest that folks wishing to make virtual public comments sign up no later than noon on Board Meeting days.

Once our google form has closed, I will send an email to our public commenters, which will include a Zoom Meeting Link, a copy of the meeting's agenda as well as our Public Comment Guidelines.

Those wishing to make virtual public comments will do so after in-person attendees have made their public comments. At which time, we will bring in their Zoom Room and call those who have signed up to make virtual public comments in the order in which they signed up. Unless you decide otherwise, our virtual public commenters will follow the same Public Comment Guidelines as those making in-person comments, including having three minutes to speak.

Thanks to our AMAZING Technology Staff who have been the true brain trust behind this push for increased accessibility, we would be able to begin this during our September 20th Meeting...of course, if that is the meeting virtual public comments begin, we ask that our Cougar Family and community members extend grace our way. We've done quite a few test runs up to this point, but technology can sometimes be a bit fickle when adding a new element in real-time.

I'd be more than happy to answer any questions or clarify any points I may have inadvertently missed.

### **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

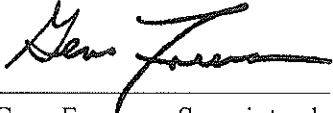
As you know, August 23rd is quickly approaching. And, although the delta variant means we're having to tighten up our safety measures, I did want to let you know of a few things we're doing to celebrate with our students and staff as we Return to School.

- August 16th is an Optional Work Day for teachers, and I'm looking forward to having all our staff back on Tuesday, August 17th. I hope our staff have had a chance to rest some this summer and are as excited as I am to start our new school year.
- Many of our schools are having socially distanced, outdoor meet the teacher events the week of August 16th. We're looking forward to welcoming families while keeping everyone safe.
- Prior to the first day of school, we'll have lunch delivered to each of our school campuses on Wednesday, August 18th. Our original hope is that we'd be able to have a district-wide gathering; however, with the rise in COVID cases, I think this is a good compromise.
- Also, on Wednesday, August 18th, we'll be hosting a career fair here in the Central Office Board Room. We invite interested applicants to visit our website for the latest postings as well as join us here between 3:00 - 6:00 PM to learn more.
- As in years past, on the first day of school, Central Office staff and Board Members will be outside each school building, ready to greet both our new & returning Cougar Family with a smile.
- This will be my first somewhat traditional first day of school as the Superintendent of Asheville City Schools. So, you can be sure I'm looking forward to waving at families & giving lots of air high fives & fist bumps.
- In fact, in order to support our staff and families, Central Office staff will be volunteering in a school for the whole first week. We're excited about this first week of school change and hope to continue it even after COVID-19 restrictions are lessened.

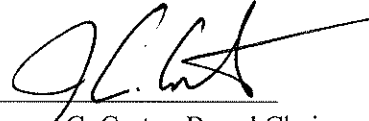
- The first week of school also brings our first home football game of the season. The Cougars will be playing Kings Mountain on the 27th at 7:30 PM. I'm looking forward to cheering on our players and seeing our cheerleaders, band, and dance team get our students and fans fired up.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Martha Geitner made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:28 p.m. Jackie McHargue seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.



Dr. Gene Freeman, Superintendent



James C. Carter, Board Chair