

Hamlet, North Carolina  
August 13, 2024

The Richmond County Board of Education met in regular session on August 13, 2024, at 5:00 p.m. The meeting was held at the Central Office in Hamlet, North Carolina.

The members present: Cory Satterfield, Chairman, Bobbie Sue Ormsby, Vice-Chairman, Jerry Ethridge, Ronald Tillman, Scotty Baldwin, Bess Shuler and Daryl Mason.

The administrators present: Dr. Joe Ferrell, Superintendent, Dr. Julian Carter, Associate Superintendent of Auxiliary Services of Operations and Athletics, Dr. Kate Smith, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction, Melvin Ingram, Assistant Superintendent of School Safety and Support Services, Dr. Tesha Isler, Executive Director of Human Resources, Dawn Jordan, Executive Director of Finance, Cameron Whitley, Executive Director of Communications and Eva Dubuisson, Board Attorney.

### **Meeting Commencement**

After noting that a quorum was present, Cory Satterfield, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. Daryl Mason, requested a Moment of Silence and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **Approval of Minutes**

On a motion by Daryl Mason, seconded by Jerry Ethridge, the minutes of July 11, 2024 (open and closed) meetings were unanimously approved.

### **School of Math & Science**

Cameron Whitley recognized Emma Humann, a rising Junior from Richmond Senior High School who was accepted into the NC School of Math and Science. Emma was involved in numerous sports and activities at the high school. Her teachers shared they are thrilled for Emma to have this opportunity.

### **Education Foundation**

Jody Williamson, Chairman of the Richmond County Education Foundation, addressed the board, introducing the foundation's board members and highlighting their collaboration with Richmond County Schools. Williamson outlined the foundation's focus on providing essential funding support to Richmond County students. After being very active prior to 2020, the foundation has resumed its efforts in 2024. Since beginning meetings earlier this year, the foundation has hosted a successful "Clays for Education" fundraiser, raising over \$10,000. Next year's "Clays for Education" fundraiser is scheduled for April 4, 2025. Additionally, the foundation awarded two "Grow Your Own" scholarships to students planning to major in education and return to Richmond County to teach. They also provided funding through the Partnership Pathways program for two individuals to attend the Electric Line Worker program at Richmond Community College. Williamson emphasized the foundation's ongoing efforts to recruit more members to better represent the community and increase engagement to support educational growth. He also expressed gratitude to the volunteers, particularly highlighting the contributions of Dawn Jordan and Cameron Whitley who contributed to the foundation's success.

## **Cognia Recognition**

Dr. Kate Smith shared that Richmond County Schools has successfully concluded the accreditation process and engagement review by Cognia. She was pleased to announce that Richmond County Schools is officially accredited for the next four years. Dr. Smith explained that this year's process differed from the typical one, which usually focuses on high schools. Instead, the district opted for a systems review, ensuring that all schools will receive a certificate of accreditation that can be proudly showcased in their front offices for the community. Dr. Smith emphasized that this process ensures the institution meets specific criteria for performance and quality. Throughout the year, the district's Cognia Evaluation Team members, along with some school board members, met multiple times to analyze various survey data and performance data from each school to develop next steps. These efforts were related to the standards of culture, growth, leadership, and engagement. She also highlighted that Richmond County Schools showed exceptional data analysis. Dr. Smith reported that the district's Index of Education Quality (IEQ) score is a strong 338, noting that anything above 300 is considered excellent. She praised the Cognia Evaluation Team for their exceptional data analysis and their ability to find evidence to meet the standard of quality. Dr. Smith also shared feedback comments received from Cognia:

- **Culture of Learning:** Richmond County School fosters a culture of learning where leaders and professional staff align with core values and prioritize the diverse needs of learners to ensure inclusive support.
- **Leadership for Learning:** The district is grounded in a desire to inspire excellence, demonstrate a multifaceted approach to curriculum development and instructional quality, and fosters a culture of collaboration and alignment with its mission and vision.
- **Engagement of Learning:** The institution has cultivated a curricular and instructional atmosphere that embraces diverse cultures, backgrounds, and abilities, prioritizing student-centered learning environments through the systemic adoption of research-based practices.
- **Growth in Learning:** Leaders and professional staff leverage diverse data sources to inform decisions on curriculum, instruction, and interventions for growth, while fostering supportive, collaborative environments to enhance student learning outcomes.

## **2024 - 2025 Federal Programs District Plan**

Dr. Toni Witherow presented a review of the district's plan for Federal Funding. Federal Programs funding includes:

- Title I: Improving Basic Programs
- Title II: Supporting Effective Instruction
- Title III: English Language Acquisition
- Title IV: Student Support and Academic Enrichment

The district is currently in the summer planning and application phase for these funds. The process is guided by comprehensive needs assessments conducted at both the school and district levels to identify key areas requiring additional resources. In the coming weeks, schools will be transitioning into their annual schoolwide program. This process involves ongoing collaboration and consultation with stakeholders to work to implement the Title I budget in ways that provide the greatest benefit to our learners. Dr. Witherow shared details

about the comprehensive needs assessment and plan for the federal grant applications that will be submitted by August 31, 2024. In this year's comprehensive needs review, there were some very positive outcomes.

- ☆ Parents and staff felt valued and supported
- ☆ Strong emphasis on social-emotional learning
- ☆ Noted urgency around student graduation success
- ☆ Professional development was aligned and purposeful
- ☆ Evening Academy and Credit Recovery programs were well-received by the community

The needs assessment also highlights areas for improvement

- ☆ Need for additional support for multilingual learners
- ☆ Request for more Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS)
- ☆ Need for enhanced mental health resources
- ☆ Concerns regarding attendance

Dr. Witherow explained how Federal Programs funding is allocated.

Title I Expenditures District (Title I Schools Only)

- Professional Development
- Parent Liaison
- PreK
  - 2 teachers
  - 2 teacher assistants
  - Academic Coach/Field Trips/Transportation/PreK Specialist/PD/Registration stipends
- Homeless Liaison (K-12)
- Foster Student Transportation
- Academic Software/Curriculum Resources
- MTSS Interventionist (Title 1 schools)

Title I Expenditures (Title I Schools – Rank Order)

- Parent/Family Engagement
- Professional Development
- Teachers
- Instructional Coaches
- Teacher Assistants
- Tutors
- Devices
- Behavior and Attendance
- Software
- Student Transitions

Title II Expenditures

- Teachers (4) (Class size reduction)
- Contracted Services
  - New Teacher Evaluation Training
  - Aspiring Leaders Academy
  - Principals/Assistant Principals Evaluation Training
  - New Teacher Support
- Mentors (contracted and teacher mentors)

- Education: Tuition / Test Reimbursements (34 last year)
- Professional Development (subs/workshop)
- Recruitment Software

Title III Expenditures

- Multilingual Learners (ML) Tutor
- Multilingual Learners PD/supplies/travel
- Parent and Family Engagement
- Software

Title IV Expenditures

Well Rounded Education STEM Education	Student Support Dropout Prevention/SEL
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordinator</li> <li>• Supplies/Materials</li> <li>• Field Trips</li> <li>• Workshop</li> <li>• Resources</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student Support Specialist</li> <li>• Social Worker</li> <li>• Workshops</li> </ul>

Dr. Toni Witherow requested board approval to authorize Dr. Joe Ferrell to act as a representative to file federal program applications.

On a motion by Jerry Ethridge, seconded by Bobbie Sue Ormsby the board voted unanimously to approve Dr. Joe Ferrell to act as a representative to file federal program applications.

**EC Contracts**

Dana Mintmier reported that the Exceptional Children’s (EC) Department is currently operating with a budget deficit. She also provided information on the number of EC referrals, EC Pre-K students, and related services, along with key steps being taken to address the deficit. The department has implemented staff reductions, specifically by not filling three vacant teacher positions. Reassignment efforts ensured that no jobs were lost, but the goal was to reduce staff to manage the budget better, as staffing costs are significant and are not fully covered by state or federal funding. Dana proposed a plan to transition from using contractual services to employing Richmond County Schools staff for related services, which could save approximately \$1 million. This approach might include offering retention bonuses to attract and retain employees, reducing the need for costly contracts. Ronald Tillman the proposal could be a topic for a future work session, focusing on the budget and strategic planning to manage EC resources more effectively.

Ronald Tillman suggested that the topic shared by Dana Mintmier would be well-suited for discussion in a future work session, with a focus on budgeting and strategic planning to better manage EC resources.

Dawn Jordan presented the following EC contracts for board approval:

<b><u>Contract Title</u></b>	<b><u>23-24 Cost</u></b>	<b><u>24-25 Cost</u></b>	<b><u>Increase</u></b>	<b><u>Decrease</u></b>
The Stepping Stones Group LLC	\$170,000.00	\$73,000.00		\$97,000.00
Sprouting with S.P.O.T.S	\$61,000.00	\$90,000.00	\$29,000.00	
Amanda Y. Hill, M.ED., CCC-SLP	\$103,500.00	\$105,000.00	\$1,500.00	

Dysphagia & Voice Therapeutics PLLC	\$361,950.00	\$323,900.00		\$38,050
Invision Services, Inc.	\$70,000.00	\$45,000.00	\$25,000.00	
Margaret A. Zastrow	\$150,000.00	\$160,000.00	\$10,000.00	
John E. Sexton & Associates	\$37,000.00	\$36,000.00		\$10,000.00
Speech Therapy of the Sandhills	\$327,000.00	\$270,500.00		\$56,500
Sandhills Children's Center	\$440,297.66	\$393,700.00		\$46,597.66
Shelter Island Psychological Services	\$29,655.00	\$23,000.00		\$6,655.00

On a motion by Scotty Baldwin, seconded by Ronald Tillman the board voted unanimously to approve all ten EC contracts as presented.

### Digital Equity Grant

Katherine Bendell announced that Richmond County Schools has been awarded funding through the Digital Equity Champion grant program. The grant application, primarily written by Jill Buck with assistance from Tara Pierce, both tech facilitators and Katherine Bendell, has secured \$400,000 for the district. This funding will provide Richmond Senior High School students with 1:1 internet-enabled devices that they can take home, as well as access to digital literacy and skills training. Katherine noted that the devices will be ordered soon, and after they are programmed by the technology department, they aim to have them distributed to students by January.

Components of the grant are:

Digital Safety for students and teachers	Wi-Fi on buses	Available Hotspots
New Devices for students	Devices will be 1:1	

### Construction Updates

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

- Mineral Springs Elementary School
  - Roof, brick, windows and doors installed
  - Most of the sidewalks are complete
  - First coat of paint applied
  - Cabinets and marker boards are getting installed in classrooms
  - Electric work is getting installed
  - Interior painting is 80% complete
  - Ceramic tile and lights are installed in bathrooms
  - Working to install a two-hour fire separation to fireproof the old building where it meets the new building
- Fairview Heights Elementary School
  - Exterior brick work around the bottom of the metal building is complete
  - Windows and doors have been installed - except two fiberglass doors on the backside of the building (they have been special ordered and will be installed the first week in September)
  - Roof is complete
  - Canopy installation at the front of the building is in progress
  - Concrete slab below the canopy is being poured
  - Vestibule accent wall is being painted school colors

- Electrical work is going on
- Ceramic tile countertop in bathrooms is being installed and sinks will be cut soon
- Interior painting is 80% complete
- 6 automatic adjustable height basketball goals and sports flooring will be installed soon
- Richmond Senior High School
  - Structural steel and decking installed
  - Interior work ongoing
  - Big bar joists will be going in soon
  - Bricking the outside of the building will begin September 1, 2024
  - Basement level girl's restroom in the gym has been installed and plumbing installed.
  - Proposed completion date is November 12, 2024 but expected completion in December 2024.

### **Policies for Adoption**

Melvin Ingram presented the conclusion of the 30-day review period, asking the board to adopt amendments for the following policies.

Policy Numbers:

- 3620 Extracurricular Activities and Student Organizations
- 4140 Foreign Exchange Students
- 8510 School Finance Officer

On a motion by Jerry Ethridge, seconded by Bobbie Sue Ormsby, the board voted 6 to 1 to adopt policy amendments 3620, 4140, and 8510, with Scotty Baldwin casting the sole opposing vote.

### **Policies for Review**

Melvin Ingram presented the following policies for a 30-day review.

Policy Numbers:

- 1310-4002 Parental Involvement
- 3460 Graduation Requirements
- 4240-7312 Child Abuse and Related Threats to Child Safety
- 4270-6145 Concussion and Head Injury
- 5071-7351 Electronically Stored Information Retention
- 8340 Insurance

### **Field Trip Proposal**

Melvin Ingram presented the following field trips for board approval.

- Ellerbe Middle School – Volleyball in Cheraw, SC – August 20, 2024
- Cordova Middle School – Football in Cheraw, SC – September 4, 2024
- Richmond Senior High School – Football in Dillon, SC – August 16, 2024

On a motion by Scotty Baldwin, seconded by Bess Shuler, the board voted unanimously to approve the field trips as presented.

### **2024 - 2025 Coaching Supplements**

Dr. Julian Carter requested board approval to absorb all of Richmond Ninth Grade Academy’s coaching positions. Additionally, he proposed changes to Richmond Senior High School’s football coaching supplement levels based on a submission by Brad Denson, Head Football Coach. The proposal outlined the following allotments for the football coaching staff at Richmond Senior High School based on skill level.

<b>Level</b>	<b>2023 – 2024 # of positions</b>	<b>2024 – 2025 # of positions</b>
<b>I</b>	2	3
<b>II</b>	3	5
<b>III</b>	5	5 (same)
<b>IV</b>	1	3
<b>V</b>	7	1

On a motion by Jerry Ethridge, seconded by Ronald Tillman, the board voted unanimously to approve the absorption of all Richmond Ninth Grade Academy coaching positions and the changes to Richmond Senior High School’s football coaching supplement levels as presented.

Dr. Julian Carter requested board approval for an increase in the supplement for middle school athletic directors, citing the increased number of games and additional responsibilities they have undertaken. He proposed an additional \$200 to their current supplement. Carter also requested an increase of \$180 in the supplement for Richmond Ninth Grade Academy’s Athletic Director, which also serves as Richmond Senior High School’s Assistant Athletic Director.

On a motion by Scotty Baldwin, seconded by Ronald Tillman, the board voted unanimously to approve the supplement increases as presented.

**NCSBA Board of Directors Nominations**

Dr. Joe Ferrell informed the board that the North Carolina School Board Association is accepting nominations for vacancies on their board of directors from our region. The term of service is two years, with the option to serve two consecutive terms. The board meets in November, March, June, and September, with additional meetings scheduled as needed. Each board member typically serves on two committees that meet once or twice a year. Dr. Ferrell emphasized the importance of selecting individuals who can regularly attend these meetings. He invited board members to consider nominating someone, including self-nominations. Nominations require a one-page essay detailing the nominee’s potential contributions, which must be submitted by October 2.

**Surplus Items**

Dr. Joe Ferrell requested board approval to list the following as surplus items on Govdeals.

- Activity Buses
  - FA #29324 1988 60 Pass Ford
  - FA #29325 1990 60 Pass International
  - FA #29328 1991 23 Pass Chevrolet

- FA #Na 1988 Chevrolet 350ci - No Title
- Drivers Ed Car
  - FA #29387 2005 Ford Taurus - No AC
- Miscellaneous Items
  - Bed from 2023 Chevy 2500 ¾ ton 6.6L truck (removed for toolbox)

On a motion by Scotty Baldwin, seconded by Bess Shuler, the board voted unanimously to approve listing the surplus items on Govdeals.

### **Board Member Compensation**

Dr. Joe Ferrell continued a discussion from the previous month's board meeting about increasing board member compensation, which has remained unchanged for 23 years. The proposal suggested a \$100 monthly increase this year, with another \$100 increase next year. However, some board members expressed concerns, preferring to prioritize staff compensation or consider using the additional funds to give bonuses to the lowest-paid employees instead.

A motion was made by Scotty Baldwin, and Bess Shuler seconded, to approve a \$100 monthly increase in board member compensation, with an additional \$100 increase next year. The motion passed by a 4:3 vote, with Ronald Tillman, Daryl Mason, and Jerry Ethridge opposing.

### **Board Members Comments**

Jerry Ethridge reported that LJ Bell Elementary School was in good condition. He mentioned that he toured the new gym at Fairview Heights Elementary School with Dr. Theresa Gardner and visited the new additions at Mineral Springs Elementary School with Angel Mabe. Additionally, he visited STEM camps at Hamlet Middle School and East Rockingham Elementary School, noting that they were doing a wonderful job. He also informed the board that the Prayer Breakfast and Walk is scheduled for August 24, 2024, at 9:00 a.m., and encouraged board members to attend if possible. Cory Satterfield reminded board members that Open House is August 24, 2024.

### **Superintendent's Report**

Dr. Joe Ferrell shared that Richmond Early College High School had a great first day of school today, August 13, 2024. The superintendent reminded the board the following upcoming event dates:

- August 14, 2024, 4:00 p.m. – New Teacher Mixer at Cole Auditorium
- August 21, 2024, 8:15 a.m. – Teacher of the Year Breakfast at Richmond Senior High School in the media center followed by Convocation in the gym
- August 26, 2024 – First day of Traditional School for students

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

On a motion by Ronald Tillman, seconded by Bess Shuler, the board voted unanimously to go into closed session at 6:35 p.m.

The board returned from closed session at 7:28 p.m.



Dr. Tesha Isler presented the personnel report.

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

There being no further business, on a motion by Scotty Baldwin, seconded by Daryl Mason, Chairman Satterfield adjourned the meeting at 7:31 p.m.