MINUTES OF
THE WILSON COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING
JANUARY 27, 2025

The Wilson County Board of Education held its regular meeting on Monday, January 27, 2025, at 6:30 p.m. at the Administrative Office, 113 N. Tarboro Street. Chairman Blake Boykin called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. with the following members present:

Blake Boykin, Board Chair
Rhyan Breen, Board Vice-Chair
David Batts
Beverly Boyette
Dr. Christine L. Fitch
John Kyle
Debora Powell
Dr. Lane B. Mills, Secretary

The meeting was televised on Spectrum and Greenlight Channel 22; and livestreamed through the Wilson County Schools (WCS) YouTube Channel. The public could also view the meeting by downloading the WCSTV22 app and through links on the WCS Facebook, Instagram and Twitter pages and the WCS website.

Others present were Associate Superintendent Dr. Cheryl Wilson, Assistant Superintendent for Administrative Services Dr. Ben Williams, Director of Public Relations Amber Lynch and Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent and Board Clerk Linda Horrison, as well as Board Attorney Katie Cornetto and *The Wilson Times* Reporter Olivia Neeley. There were 45 citizens in attendance.

I. After calling the meeting to order, Mr. Boykin asked for approval of the agenda. Ms. Powell asked for the following amendments to the agenda under Committee Reports:
   - Administrative Services Committee
     - Remove item B. Dewberry FCA Pilot Report (Action Item)
   - Instructional Services Committee
     - Remove item K. Revised Policy 6402/9125, *Participation by Minority Businesses* – First Reading (Information Item)
     - Add Remote Instruction (Information Item)
     - Add Revised 2024-2025 Traditional Calendar (Action Item)
     - Add Revised 2024-2025 Restart Calendar (Action Item)
     - Add Revised 2024-2025 Early College Calendar (Action Item)

   Ms. Powell made the motion, seconded by Mr. Breen, that the Board amend the agenda for tonight's meeting. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

II. At Mr. Boykin's request, Mr. Kyle led the Pledge of Allegiance which was followed by a moment of silence.

III. Mr. Boykin presented for approval the minutes of the December 9, 2024, Regular Board meeting. Mr. Boykin asked for approval of the minutes. Dr. Fitch made the

motion, seconded by Ms. Powell, that the Board approve the minutes. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

IV. Under Special Presentation to the Board, WCS Principal of the Year Jenny Hayes recognized the Board members for Board of Education Appreciation Month. She shared that each of the Board members bring countless strengths to the Board, and remain the biggest champions and advocates for students, staff and families. Few people realize the huge responsibility it takes to be a Board member and all of the many decisions that must be made. The Board members have 10,000 students under their watch. In every decision that is made, the Board members come together to ensure that students remain at the forefront. Ms. Hayes also recognized that the Board now has several new members and shared a few accomplishments from the past Board since last January:

- A total of 694 seniors graduated in 2024 and accepted $4.4 million in scholarships.
- The district celebrated incredible accountability results. There was an increase in overall proficiency compared to the previous year, and the district achieved its highest state ranking ever. WCS is now 37th in the state out of 115 school districts. Not too long ago, the ranking was 89th. The district also had 19 schools meet or exceed growth, including every high school.
- Ribbon cuttings for the new Wilson Area School-Based Health (WASH) Center at Darden Middle and the relocated WASH Center at Beddingfield High were held.
- Rock Ridge Elementary was named a 2024 National Blue Ribbon School - one of only 356 schools in the nation, and one of five public schools in the state. This prestigious recognition is the highest honor awarded to schools by the US Department of Education.
- The Board voted to name the Fike High athletic complex the Jimmy Tillman Athletic Complex, further preserving and celebrating his incredible legacy.
- All students are currently receiving breakfast and lunch at no cost through Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) or Universal Meals.
- The Board submitted a nomination to the North Carolina School Boards Association (NCSBA) for Hubert Vester Auto Group to be recognized with the Champion of Education Award, and the Vester Auto Group won the award.
- Lastly, the Board and district leaders navigated the school system through the unthinkable - a tornado that demolished portions of one of our schools. Quick actions and insight kept the damage at Springfield Middle to a minimum and the students and staff were able to remain there for the school year.

Ms. Hayes also applauded several exciting projects at Beddingfield High, which included:

- The replacement of the HVAC system.
- The WASH Center was moved from a modular unit outside to the wing that used to house Wilson Academy of Applied Technology (WAAT).

- A game art design classroom has also been added and a new state-of-the art culinary classroom will be moved to that wing as well.

In closing, Ms. Hayes thanked the Board members again for their service, presented goodies from the Beddingfield High Culinary Arts program, as well as thank you cards from students created for the Board.

V. Under Good News Presentation, Dr. Mills, with the assistance of Mr. Kyle, recognized the following:

- 2024 WCS Christmas Card Design Contest Winners - Four elementary students were recognized for winning the WCS Christmas Card Design Contest. Dr. Mills shared that for the past several years, he has held a contest for elementary students to design the Christmas cards that he sends to colleagues in Wilson and across the state. Selecting the winners is always a challenge because the students have such great designs. This year, Dr. Mills selected four winners out of the 39 submissions. The winners were:
  - Elise Blalock from Rock Ridge Elementary
  - Ashley Aguilar Villanueva from Gardners Elementary
  - Love Barnes from Stantonsburg Elementary
  - Ja'Nylah Davis from Barnes Elementary.

  Dr. Mills thanked the students for participating in the contest and told them how proud he was of their creativity and attention to detail. The students received a framed copy of their Christmas card and a $25 Walmart gift card. Dr. Mills also thanked the students' art teachers for working with the students on the cards. The art teachers are LaNicha Richardson from Rock Ridge Elementary, Elizabeth Neal from both Gardners and Barnes Elementary and Frank Johnson from Stantonsburg Elementary.
- 2024 Congressional App Challenge Winners - Lydia and Bethany Denton, sisters who attend Wilson Early College Academy (WECA), were recognized for winning the 2024 Congressional App Challenge for our congressional district through the office of Congressman Don Davis. Lydia is a junior and Bethany is a freshman. They created an app called BITES Bento that helps people with diabetes better manage their blood sugar levels. The app connects to a special Bento box with three compartments. Food in each compartment can be weighed before and after eating, and the app calculates the nutritional information of the food that was consumed. This enables the user to more accurately dose insulin to account for the carbohydrates in the meal. The app was inspired by one of their friends who has diabetes and was struggling to maintain his blood sugar levels. The Congressional App Challenge is an official initiative of the US House of Representatives, where members of Congress host contests in their districts for middle and high school students, encouraging them to learn to code and inspiring them to pursue careers in computer science. This year's challenge set new records, with 382 members of the House of Representatives hosting competitions. In total, 12,682 students from across the country participated. These talented students submitted original applications, showcasing their creativity, passion for technology, and the limitless potential of the next generation of innovators. Congressman Davis visited Bethany and Lydia at WECA on

January 17 and presented them with Certificates of Special Congressional Recognition for their achievement. He also mentioned them on the House floor during Computer Science in Education Week. During the Board meeting, Bryashia Buggs from Congressman Davis' office presented Bethany and Lydia with a framed copy of the Congressional Records. We are incredibly proud that Lydia and Bethany were chosen as the winners for our district.

VI. Under Chairman's Report, Mr. Boykin:

- Shared that he hoped everyone had a safe and happy holiday season and enjoyed the snow days.
- Shared that January is Braille Literacy Month to raise awareness about the importance of braille for individuals who are visually impaired or blind. January 4 is the birthday of Louis Braille, the inventor of the code.
- Shared that Martin Luther King Jr. Day was January 20.
- Congratulated Jones Elementary Teacher Sylvia Williams for being recognized as a WRAL Teacher of the Week.
- Lastly, he shared that Wilson Education Partnership's (WEP) Adult Trivia & Spelling Bee is scheduled on March 13 at 6 p.m. in the Hunt High gym. The theme this year is Circus Extravaganza. Mr. Boykin asked for a team of four to represent the Board of Education at this event. Dr. Fitch, Mr. Boykin, Mr. Kyle and Ms. Boyette volunteered as team members.

VII. Under Superintendent's Report, Dr. Mills:

- Shared that he hoped everyone had a relaxing Winter Break and enjoyed time with family and friends during the holidays. He added that we also had a few snow days last week but luckily it cleared out quickly so we could resume the spring semester.
- Echoed Principal of the Year Jenny Hayes and thanked the Board members for their service to our students, staff and community. He acknowledged what a huge responsibility it is to serve on the Board and that he was honored to work alongside the members. He thanked them for all of the work that they do for the district that is both seen and unseen.
- Reminded families about completing the 2024-25 Parent Survey to share input about our schools. The survey is online and can be found on the district website and social media sites. The deadline to complete the survey is Jan. 31.

VIII. Under Public Input, at 6:58 p.m., one person from the public began addressing the Board during this portion of the meeting. Public Input ended at 7:01 p.m. It was the Board's consensus to have the Administration respond to the speaker.

IX. Under Committee Reports/Administrative Services – Committee Chair Rhyan Breen shared that the committee met today to discuss information and action items.

<u>Information Item</u>

A. Under Wilson County Schools Disposal of Surplus Property Report, in accordance with WCS Board Policy 6560, *Disposal of Surplus Property*, the Administration presented the WCS disposal of surplus property report. The

report included 11 vehicles (1989-2003) that were sold due to the age of the vehicle, high mileage or mechanical issues. The total for the sale of this property was $10,905.

Action Item

A. Under Contracts Requiring Board Approval – Administrative Services, Board Policy 6520, *Contracts with the Board*, states that any contract for materials, equipment, or service involving expenditures in excess of $90,000 must be reviewed by the Board attorney and approved in advance by the Board unless provided otherwise in Board Policy. The following contracts exceed $90,000 and require Board approval, pending attorney review:
   - Berry Building Group, to provide design and preconstruction services, for the Beddingfield High Culinary Arts classroom, in the amount of $99,000. Mr. Breen made the motion, seconded by Dr. Fitch, that the Board approve a contract by Berry Building Group, for design and preconstruction services, for the Beddingfield High Culinary Arts classroom for $99,000. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.
   - Barnhill Contracting, to design and reconstruct the Springfield Middle damaged wings, pending approval from the NC Department of Insurance, in the amount of $5,947,628. Mr. Breen made the motion, seconded by Mr. Batts, that the Board approve a contract with Barnhill Contracting, to design and reconstruct the Springfield Middle damaged wings, pending the NC Department of Insurance approval for $5,947,628. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

B. Under Dewberry FCA Pilot Report, this item was removed from the agenda.

Under Committee Reports/Instructional Services – Committee Chair Beverly Boyette shared that the committee met today to discuss information and action items.

Information Items

A. Under Summer Program 2025: Racing to Success, the Administration presented an overview of the program that included the following:
   - Read to Achieve/Summer Scholars K-3 – Students in grade 3 who do not meet the requirements as stated in the General Statute 115C-83.1-10 (NC RtA Law) are required to attend summer reading camp. Grade 3 students will have opportunities to demonstrate reading proficiency near the end of camp. Students in grades K-2 who do not meet end of year reading goals are invited to attend. The program is scheduled July 7-24 at Vinson-Bynum Elementary, Wells Elementary and Vick Elementary. The program is being funded by PRC 016, Title I and Title IV.
   - Summer Scholars – Elementary – Students in grades 4-5 will be invited by their base school according to district-wide criteria. 4-5 students will receive instruction in reading and math. The program is scheduled July 7-24 at Vinson-Bynum Elementary, Wells Elementary and Vick Elementary. The program is being funded by Title I and Title IV.
   - Summer Scholars – Middle – Students in grades 6-8 will be invited by their base school according to district-wide criteria. Students in grades 6-8 will be

engaged in Project Based Learning that focuses on priority standards for math and integrates high interest reading. The program is scheduled July 7-24 at Forest Hills Middle. The program is being funded by Title IV.

- Accelerator – Students who are entering grades 6-8 are invited to apply for mini-courses based on the student's interests. All students that attend Accelerator will have the opportunity to meet local industry leaders and attend field trips to local businesses. The program is scheduled July 7-10 (Session 1) and July 21-24 (Session 2) at Hunt High. The program is being funded by Title IV.
- Summer Scholars – High – High school students will be able to recover one credit towards promotion and graduation standards. Students earning credits may be eligible for summer graduation. The program is scheduled July 7-17 at Hunt High. The program is being funded by state and local.
- Supplemental Programming – Students identified as Migrant (MEP) will be offered a one-week camp that culminates with a field trip. The program is scheduled July 7-10 at Vinson-Bynum Elementary.
- District C – District C offers students an opportunity to assist a local business with solving an industry issue. Student groups, facilitated by a District C trained instructor, will collaborate with a local industry to learn more about the issue and then will collaboratively design a solution that will be shared with the industry at the end of the session. The program is scheduled July 7-17 at locations to be determined. The program is being funded by Title IV (PRC 108).

B. Under Contracts Requiring Board Notification – Instructional Services, Board Policy 6420, *Contracts with the Board*, states that the Superintendent is authorized to enter into contracts involving amounts up to $90,000 and the Superintendent shall report such contracts exceeding $30,000 to the Board at its next regularly scheduled meeting. The following contracts, which are less than $90,000, have been approved by the Superintendent:
   - Amergis Healthcare Staffing, Inc., for one-on-one staff for students with disabilities, in an amount not to exceed $80,000;
   - AMN Healthcare, Inc., for one-one-one staff for students with disabilities, in an amount not to exceed $80,000;
   - Focal Point Medical Staffing, for one-on-one nursing for students with disabilities, in an amount not to exceed $80,000.

C. Under Revised Policy 3226/4205, *Internet Safety* – First Reading, this policy is being revised by the law firm of Poyner Spruill, LLP, to comply with general statutes and align with the NCSBA policies.

D. Under Revised Policy 3440, *Recognizing Excellence* – First Reading, this policy is being revised by the law firm of Poyner Spruill, LLP, to comply with general statutes and align with the NCSBA policies.

E. Under Revised Policy 4320, *Tobacco Products – Students* – First Reading, this policy is being revised by the law firm of Poyner Spruill, LLP, to comply with general statutes and align with the NCSBA policies.

F. Under Revised Policy 5022, *Registered Sex Offenders* – First Reading, this policy is being revised by the law firm of Poyner Spruill, LLP, to comply with general statutes and align with the NCSBA policies.

G. Under Revised Policy 5026/7250, *Smoking and Tobacco Products* – First Reading, this policy is being revised by the law firm of Poyner Spruill, LLP, to comply with general statutes and align with the NCSBA policies.

H. Under Draft Policy 5150, *Reporting to External Agencies* – First Reading, this policy is being drafted by the law firm of Poyner Spruill, LLP, to comply with general statutes and align with the NCSBA policies.

I. Under Revised Policy 6120, *Student Health Services* – First Reading, this policy is being revised by the law firm of Poyner Spruill, LLP, to comply with general statutes and align with the NCSBA policies.

J. Under Revised Policy 6140, *Student Wellness* – First Reading, this policy is being revised by the law firm of Poyner Spruill, LLP, to comply with general statutes and align with the NCSBA policies.

K. Under Revised Policy 6402/9125, *Participation by Minority Businesses* – First Reading, this item was removed from the agenda.

L. Under Revised Policy 8305, *Federal Grant Administration* – First Reading, this policy is being revised by the law firm of Poyner Spruill, LLP, to comply with general statutes and align with the NCSBA policies.

M. Under Remote Instruction, Ms. Boyette provided an update on utilizing remote instruction during inclement weather, as a result of many surrounding counties opting for this option during recent inclement weather days where school was closed. She shared that face-to-face instruction is better than any other type of instruction. The district has a remote learning plan on file with the state if needed. The district had three days of "banked" time, which is extra time built into the calendar, that can be used during inclement weather to make up for missed time. Since the beginning of the school year, the district has used two of those days. As a last result and after all the "banked" days are exhausted, the district can consider adding hours and/or minutes to a school day; adding days to the end of the school year; converting teacher workdays into student days; utilizing remote instruction; or sending packets home.

<u>Action Items</u>

B. Under Proficiency Summer School 2025, the Administration presented a plan that included the following:
   - Proficiency Summer School is a Board of Education approved opportunity for students who have not demonstrated proficiency on state End-of-Grade (EOG) or End-of-Course (EOC) tests. Additional, targeted instruction is offered to students.

- Students who do not score proficient on the following tests are invited to attend a 4-day summer program for remediation and testing:
    - EOG and NCEXTEND1 Grades 3-8 Math
    - EOG and NCEXTEND1 Grades 3-8 Reading*
    - EOC English 2, NC Math 1 and NC Math 3
    - EXTEND1 Grade 10 English 2 and NC Math 1

  *Grade 3 Reading EOG students will follow the Read to Achieve guidelines and attend Summer Reading Camp in July if applicable. No EOG Grade 3 Reading summer testing is available.

  Standard setting for EOG Science Grades 5+8 and EOC Biology will occur in July so no science scores will be available until August 2025. There will not be any summer testing for Science.
- Summer Program Schedule:
    - June 5 – remediation
    - June 6 – remediation (some testing to occur based on student need)
    - June 9 and June 10 – summer test days at every school.
- Summer Program hours:
    - 7:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. (High School)
    - 8:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. (Elementary School)
    - 8:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. (Middle School)

Ms. Boyette made the motion, seconded by Mr. Breen, that the Board approve the Proficiency Summer School 2025 program. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

C. Under Contract Requiring Board Approval – Instructional Services, Board Policy 6520, *Contracts with the Board*, states that any contract for materials, equipment, or service involving expenditures in excess of $90,000 must be reviewed by the Board attorney and approved in advance by the Board unless provided otherwise in Board Policy. The following contract exceeds $90,000 and requires Board approval: Sunbelt, for contract EC teaching positions, not to exceed $150,000. Ms. Boyette made the motion, seconded by Ms. Powell, that the Board approve the contract with Sunbelt, for contract EC positions, not to exceed $150,000. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

D. Under Proposed 2025-2026 Early College Calendar, the proposed 2025-2026 Early College Calendar was created in collaboration with Wilson Community College and the Early College principals. The Administration recommended adoption of this proposed calendar. A copy of the proposed calendar was provided for the Board's discussion and consideration. Ms. Boyette made the motion, seconded by Mr. Breen, that the Board adopt the proposed 2025-2026 Early College Calendar. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

E. Under Revised 2024-2025 Traditional Calendar, the 2024-2025 Traditional Calendar was revised. Due to inclement weather, Tuesday and Wednesday, January 22-23, 2025, have been changed from Instructional days to Non-days; and Thursday and Friday, June 12-13, 2025, will become Optional Teacher

Workdays. The Administration recommended adoption of this revised calendar. A copy of the previously approved calendar and the proposed calendar was provided for the Board's discussion and approval. Ms. Boyette made the motion, seconded by Mr. Breen and Ms. Powell, that the Board adopt the Revised 2024-2025 Traditional Calendar. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

F. Under Revised 2024-2025 Restart Calendar, the 2024-2025 Restart Calendar was revised. Due to inclement weather, Tuesday and Wednesday, January 22-23, 2025, have been changed from Instructional days to Non-days; and Thursday and Friday, June 12-13, 2025, will become Optional Teacher Workdays. The Administration recommended adoption of this revised calendar. A copy of the previously approved calendar and the proposed calendar was provided for the Board's discussion and approval. Ms. Boyette made the motion, seconded by Mr. Breen, that the Board adopt the Revised 2024-2025 Restart Calendar. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

G. Under Revised 2024-2025 Early College Calendar, the 2024-2025 Early College Calendar was revised. Due to inclement weather, Tuesday and Wednesday, January 22-23, 2025, have been changed from Instructional days to Non-days; and Tuesday and Wednesday, May 27-28, 2025, will become Optional Teacher Workdays. The Administration recommended adoption of this revised calendar. A copy of the previously approved calendar and the proposed calendar was provided for the Board's discussion and approval. Ms. Boyette made the motion, seconded by Mr. Breen, that the Board adopt the Revised 2024-2025 Early College Calendar. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

H. Under Revised Policy 1310/4002, *Parental Involvement* – Second Reading, this policy is being revised by the law firm of Poyner Spruill, LLC, to comply with general statutes and align with the NCSBA policies.

I. Under Revised Policy 2302, *Remote Participation in Board Meetings* – Second Reading, this policy is being revised by the law firm of Poyner Spruill, LLP, to comply with general statutes and align with the NCSBA policies.

J. Under Revised Policy 3225/4312/7320, *Technology Responsible Use* – Second Reading, this policy is being revised by the law firm of Poyner Spruill, LLP, to comply with general statutes and align with the NCSBA policies.

K. Under Revised Policy 3227/7322, *Web Page Development* – Second Reading, this policy is being revised by the law firm of Poyner Spruill, LLP, to comply with general statutes and align with the NCSBA policies.

L. Under Revised Policy 3410, *Testing and Assessment Program* – Second Reading, this policy is being revised by the law firm of Poyner Spruill, LLP, to comply with general statutes and align with the NCSBA policies.

M. Under Revised Policy 3420, *Student Promotion and Accountability* – Second Reading, this policy is being revised by the law firm of Poyner Spruill, LLP, to comply with general statutes and align with the NCSBA policies.

Ms. Boyette made the motion, seconded by Mr. Breen and Ms. Powell, that the Board approve Revised Policy 1310/4002, *Parental Involvement*; Revised Policy 3225/4312/7320, *Technology Responsible Use*; Revised Policy 3227/7322, *Web Page Development*; Revised Policy 3410, *Testing and Assessment Program*; and Revised Policy 3420, *Student Promotion and Accountability*. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

Ms. Boyette made the motion, seconded by Mr. Breen, that the Board approve Revised Policy 2302, *Remote Participation in Board Meetings*, with corrections, pending legal review. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

N. Under Repealed Policy 2671, *Appointment of Wilson Technical Community College Trustees*, the Board is being asked to repeal this policy as requested by the law firm of Poyner Spruill, LLP, as the Board of Trustees of Wilson Community College is no longer appointed by the Board of Education. Ms. Boyette made the motion, seconded by Ms. Powell, that the Board repeal Policy 2671, *Appointment of Wilson Technical Community College Trustees*. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

X. At 7:27 p.m., Ms. Powell made the motion, seconded by Ms. Boyette, that the Wilson County Board of Education go into closed session to consider confidential personnel matters as provided in N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(1) and (6) and 115C-319 through 321; to consider confidential student matters as provided in N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(1) and N.C.G.S. 115C-402 and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, 20 U.S.C. 1232g; and to consult with the Board of Education attorney and preserve the attorney-client privilege as provided in N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(3). The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

At 8:29 p.m., Dr. Fitch made the motion to reconvene to Open Session. The motion, seconded by Mr. Breen, passed unanimously, 7-0.

XI. Reporting from Closed Session, Ms. Boyette made the motion, seconded by Mr. Breen, that the Board approve the Inter-District Reassignment Requests, but do not release for public inspection due to confidential student records. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

Ms. Powell made the motion, seconded by Mr. Breen, that the Board approve the Closed Session minutes of the December 9, 2024, meeting, but do not release the minutes for public inspection because of confidential personnel matters. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

Ms. Powell made the motion, seconded by Mr. Breen and Ms. Boyette, that the Board approve personnel recommendations as presented by the Administration. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0. The list of personnel recommendations is attached.

XII. There being no further business at 8:31 p.m., Mr. Breen made the motion, seconded by Ms. Powell, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously, 7-0.

William B. Boykin, Chairman

Dr. Lane B. Mills, Secretary