

MINUTES
ASHE COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION
December 2, 2019

The December meeting was held at the Board of Education annex as scheduled with all members present. Superintendent Yates called the meeting to order, welcomed those in attendance and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Policy 2200, *Election of Officers/Organization of Board*, requires that the Board of Education hold an organizational meeting at the first meeting in December of each year at which time a chairman and vice chairman are elected. Following opening remarks by the Superintendent, the floor was opened for nominations for chairman. A motion by Lee Beckworth and a second by Keith McClure gave unanimous approval to appointing C. B. Jones as Chairman. Superintendent Yates relinquished the meeting to Chairman Jones who opened the floor for nominations for vice chairman. A motion by Polly Jones and a second by Keith McClure gave unanimous approval to appointing Lee Beckworth as Vice Chairman. The Board will continue to hold its meetings on the first Monday night of each month (unless altered by a holiday). In response to requests to change the meeting time, the Board agreed to changing the time from 7:00 pm to 6:00 pm for January, February and March before making a final decision. Meetings will still be held in the annex unless otherwise announced.

Following a motion by the Vice Chairman and a motion by Mrs. Jones to add an addendum to personnel, the agenda for the meeting was unanimously approved.

The Board is always proud to recognize the achievements and accomplishments of its students and employees. Each of the following were presented with a certificate on behalf of the Board of Education. The presenters made comments on the importance and significance of each award.

- Recognition of Kylie B., Sabrina C. and Camila M., billboard winners for the Anti-Vape Campaign—Youth Development Coordinator Alice A. and Health Promotion Program Manager for AppHealth Care Emily Harwood informed the audience that youth vaping is now of epidemic proportions, increasing by 894 percent from 2011 to 2017. AppHealth is paying for anti-vape billboards for two months.
- Recognition of Brian Hampton as the Mountain Valley Athletic Conference Coach of the Year in Football—Athletic Director David Koontz announced that this is the second year in a row that Mr. Hampton has received this award.
- Recognition of Shane Greene as the Mountain Valley Athletic Conference Coach of the Year in Cross County Men and Women—This is the third year in a row that Mr. Greene has received this award. Mr. Koontz stated that both men are excellent coaches due to dedication to their sport and their ability to build relationships with students.

A motion by Mrs. Jones and a second by Mrs. Eldreth gave unanimous approval to the minutes for the regular meeting of the Board on November 4, 2019.

A motion by Mrs. Eldreth and a second by the Vice Chairman gave unanimous approval to the request from Sarah C. for early graduation.

A motion by Mr. McClure and a second by Mrs. Jones gave unanimous approval to each of the schools' Strategic Plans as presented by principals and school staff members. Just like the District Plan, the

school plans are also created in NCSTAR, a web-based tool that guides and manages the continuous improvement process.

Student Services Director Jamie Little gave an overview of the five-year Rural School Mental Health Training and Service Provision Grant received from the Office of Elementary and Secondary Education in the amount of \$2.5M. The grant partners are Ashe County Schools, Appalachian State University and RTI International. The goals of the grant are to train graduate students in the subject of school mental health, provide school mental health services to high-need LEA (local education agency) students and build capacity for high-need LEAs to provide the workforce. Ashe County Schools will provide the assessment, support and counseling component. The University will provide the training component, and RTI will provide the training, technical assistance and evaluation component. Improvement metrics include increasing the number of students screened for mental health problems, increasing the number of students receiving mental health treatment in the Assessment, Support and Counseling Center, increasing MTSS training and increasing Tier 2 interventions. Mrs. Little and Ashe County Schools will serve as the program lead.

Technology Director Amy Walker gave an update on adopting Policy 2302 *Remote Participation in Board Meetings*. As requested by the Board at a prior meeting, Mrs. Walker had obtained pricing quotes for the equipment and the cost for each of the services required for conference calls. Vice Chairman Beckworth stated that this policy is a Board-requested item, not a school system request, and asked how the money would be recouped. Following much discussion, the Board decided to table the adoption of said policy.

A motion by Mrs. Eldreth and a second by Mr. McClure gave unanimous approval to the following *Resolution Urging the State of North Carolina to Take Action on Remitting Civil Penalties Unconstitutionally Withheld from North Carolina's Public Schools* as presented by the Superintendent.

Whereas, the North Carolina Supreme Court ruled that under Article IX, Section 7 of the NC Constitution that the public schools are entitled to the clear proceeds of specific civil penalties collected by various state agencies, including the Department of Revenue (DOR), Department of Transportation (DOT), the campuses of the University of North Carolina (UNC), the Department of Commerce (DOC), the Employment Security Commission (ESC), state owned psychiatric institutions in the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR, now DEQ); and

Whereas, in 1997, the General Assembly created the Civil Penalty and Forfeiture Fund in G.S. 115C-457.1 and provided that the clear proceeds of all civil penalties collected by state agencies should be paid into the fund; and

Whereas, in 2008, the NC Superior Court upon remand from the NC Supreme Court ruled that state agencies were in clear violation of the State Constitution by improperly withholding \$747,883,074 that should have been paid to the Civil Penalty and Forfeiture Fund from January 1996 through June 2005; and

Whereas, the 2008 court order lists the amount to be paid by each state agency to public schools: DOR \$583,340,162; DOT \$104,071,323; UNC \$42,368,982; ESC \$18,017,467; DHHS

\$53,955; DOC \$10,404; DENR/DEQ \$20,781; and

Whereas, the Legislature declared that such funds should be used exclusively for school technology and appropriated to the individual public-school units on a per pupil basis; and

Whereas, public school units are in dire need of additional technology funding; and

Whereas, according to the Department of Public Instruction (DPI), only 38% of North Carolina's 115 local school districts in 2018/19 reported having achieved the State's four-year replacement goal for student devices (Chromebook, iPad, laptop, etc.); and

Whereas, more than 30% of school districts in 2018/19 reported having no resources budgeted for replacement devices; and

Whereas, investing in current technology is necessary to achieve a 21st Century education that utilizes innovative, collaborative, and learner centered experiences; and

Whereas, since 2008, the public schools have received only \$18.1 million, approximately 2.5% of the total amount owed; and

Whereas, the defendants have not fulfilled their constitutional obligation to make up for the remaining \$729,699,823 that was diverted from public schools; and

Whereas, on March 6, 2019, a consent order was entered to extend the enforceability of the existing unpaid 2008 judgement to prevent it from expiring; and

Whereas, the plaintiffs have tried to work with state leaders for almost fifteen years to find an amicable resolution to this matter; and

Whereas, the plaintiffs continue to seek a win/win outcome and remain willing and ready to work on a mutually beneficial resolution.

Therefore, Be It Resolved that the Ashe County Board of Education respectfully requests the General Assembly to approve during its January 2020 session a multiyear plan to pay the remaining \$729.7 million judgment for civil penalties that should have gone to public school units for school technology but were diverted to other purposes in violation of the North Carolina Constitution.

A motion by Mr. McClure and a second by Mrs. Jones gave unanimous approval to the following personnel recommendations as presented by Human Resources Director Roy Putman.

CERTIFIED

Teachers

- Promotion of Jessica Miller from NC Virtual Public School/APEX teacher assistant at Ashe High to interim teacher for exceptional children at Westwood beginning on November 18, 2019

Substitute teachers

- Addition of Sandra Allen, Stephanie Barr and Lesia Goodman to the approved substitute list (prior approval)

Employee Leaves

- Request from Courtney Hash, 4th grade teacher at Blue Ridge, for a parental leave of absence beginning on March 30, 2020 and ending on June 8, 2020
- Request from Holly Roten, literacy teacher at Mountain View, to extend her parental leave through the end of the 2019/20 school year

Prior approval to employ the following vacant positions

- Health Sciences teacher at Ashe High
- Chorus teacher, part-time, at Ashe High
- Substitute teachers

CLASSIFIED

Bus Drivers

- Resignation of Linda Tucker, bus driver at Ashe High, effective end-of-day December 20, 2019

Cafeteria

- Resignation of Kristina Graybeal, cafeteria manager trainee at Ashe High, effective end-of-day November 20, 2019

Office Support

- Resignation/retirement of Sandy Rhodes, payroll specialist at Ashe County Schools Central Support Services, effective March 1, 2019

Prior approval to employ the following vacant positions

- EL tutor, part-time, at Ashe High
- Office support position at Central Support Services
- Teacher assistant for exceptional children at Ashe High
- Cafeteria manager at Ashe High
- Cafeteria assistant manager at Westwood
- Part-time cafeteria assistants at Ashe High and Ashe Middle
- Regular route bus drivers
- Substitute bus drivers
- Substitute cafeteria assistants

The Superintendent shared the following comments with the Board.

- Veterans Day Programs at the schools—Superintendent read the appreciation note from the High-Country Detachment Marine Corps League.

- *State of the Schools* on Thursday, November 14, considered a huge success—hopefully, this will become an annual event.
- FFA Luncheon—Saturday, November 16—Annual NC Land Judging Career Development Event
- American Education Week—November 18-22—*Flipping Flapjacks for the Fabulous* . . . Central Support Services staff prepared flapjacks for all employees at each school. Everyone enjoyed!
- *Find Your Voice, Inspire Others* Leadership Day at Blue Ridge, Friday, November 22—student growth was very evident.
- Two Husky Vanguard students participated in this year's Macy's Great American Band in the Macy's Parade in New York on Thanksgiving Day—Jordan Carlton on the alto sax and Joey Vela on the trombone.
- *The Reality of Money*—Tuesday, December 3, 8th grade—State Employees Credit Union
- 2020/21 School Calendar Committee—Keith McClure was selected represent the Board.

The following informational items were shared with the Board.

- EOC testing—last five days in the semester
- December 23-January 1—Christmas break—*student early release on December 20*
- Thursday and Friday, January 2-3—optional teacher workdays
- Monday, January 6—students return
- *Would it be possible to schedule the next regular meeting of the Board for Monday, January 13, 2020, 7:00 pm, at the Central Support annex? Request to move date was approved—time will be 6:00 pm rather than 7:00 pm.*
- Monday, January 20—Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday
- Thursday, January 23—Spelling Bee, 6:30 pm, Ashe High auditorium—snow date is Thursday, February 6, 2020

There being no other business, a motion by the Vice Chairman and a second by Mrs. Jones adjourned the meeting at 8:30 pm.