

Minutes of the Vance County Board of Education Meeting  
February 10, 2025

The Vance County Board of Education met in regular session on February 10, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. in the Administrative Service Center Boardroom. Board members present were Mrs. Dorothy W. Gooche, Chair, Mrs. Ayana F. Lewis, Vice-Chair, Mrs. Linda S. Cobb, Mrs. Gloria J. White, Mrs. Ruth M. Hartness, Dr. Omega T. Perry, Mr. Randy M. Oxendine and Mr. Jerry Stainback, School Board Attorney. Senior staff present were Dr. Cindy Bennett, Superintendent, Mrs. Aarika Sandlin, Chief Officer of Communication and Innovative Support, Ms. Chelsa Jennings, Chief Human Resources Officer, Mr. Kevin Perdue, Chief Operations, Mr. Rey Horner, Executive Director for Student Services, Jacqueline Batchelor-Crosson, Executive Director of Federal Programs & Elementary Education, and Dr. Destiney Ross-Putney, Chief Officer of Instruction and Innovation. Mr. John Suther, Chief Finance Officer, was absent.

Mrs. Gooche called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and welcomed everyone. A moment of silence was observed.

#### Approval of Minutes

Approval of the January 27, 2025 minutes was motioned by Mrs. Hartness and seconded by Mrs. White, with a unanimous (7-0) vote.

#### Approval of Meeting Agenda

Approval of the meeting agenda and the following additions were motioned by Mrs. White, and seconded by Mrs. Lewis, the Board unanimously (7-0) approved the agenda.

VIII. A. Personnel Addendum

X. B. Transfers Revised

#### Recognitions/Announcements

##### 2023-2024 Outstanding Student Academic Performance

Two Vance County School students earned a perfect score on their End-of-Grade tests during the 2023-2024 school year. The Board recognized Ny'La Powell from Aycock, and Jamehas Whitaker from Carver for their dedication to academic excellence. Each student was presented with their personal iPad by the Vance County School Board Chair.

##### School Counselors Appreciation

National School Counseling Week is observed from February 3-7, 2025 to recognize the priceless contribution of school counselors and to highlight the significant impact that school counselors have in aiding students during their schooling years, such as assisting with college, scholarship applications, and their careers. The district counselors are Andrea Reavis, Marvalene Mouzon, Connie Jones, Joyce Hunt, Marsha Harris, Karrene Turner, Deidra Taborn, Jasmine Rogers, Natonna Robinson, Nordia McLaughlin, Danielle Harris, Allison Dluzneski, Nicole Anderson and Monica Adams.

##### Bus Driver Appreciation Month

February is nationally recognized as Love the Bus month and February 10 – 14, 2025, is School Bus Driver Appreciation Week. Schools and communities nationwide are rolling out the yellow carpet for the legendary school bus and the amazing drivers who transport students to class each day! This month-long celebration is the perfect chance to shower some love and appreciation on the wheels that keep education rolling. Love the Bus month is here to remind us that these trusty buses are not just cool rides; they're the superheroes of safe and dependable school transportation, making sure every child gets their learning adventure safe and on time! Bus drivers, Albert Bullock, Lisa Hargrove, Loretta Howard, Dorothy Jones-Wortham, Fannie Kelly, Sheldon Purnell, Patricia Terry, and Sarah Williams were recognized for perfect attendance during the 2023-2024 school year. The district is grateful for their commitment and dedication. Below is the proclamation by the Governor of NC.

Whereas, every day in North Carolina, more than 10,000 school buses safely transport more than 620,000 students to and from school; and

Whereas, without school buses and school bus drivers, many public-school students would not have safe, reliable transportation to and from school; and

Whereas, it is estimated that the use of school buses saves over 65 million gallons of fuel statewide each year, compared to that required by individual family cars; and

Whereas, school bus drivers travel millions of miles each school year, navigating rural roads, neighborhood streets, and multi-lane highways to deliver students to their schools and homes safely; and

Whereas, weather and road conditions, student passengers, and other motorists can create special challenges to drivers as they carry out their duties; and

Whereas, many school districts are facing bus driver shortages that make it harder for the current drivers to do their jobs and that underscore the important role drivers have in student success; and

Whereas, the State of North Carolina salutes and appreciates school bus drivers and recognizes the invaluable contributions they make to public education and student safety and well-being; and

Whereas, the National Association for Pupil Transportation’s "Love the Bus" month is celebrated in North Carolina during the month of February; and

Whereas, our bus drivers are often the very first and last school employee to support students, providing a positive impact to students as they begin and end each day; and

Whereas, the State of North Carolina encourages residents to "Love the Bus" and to recognize the excellence of our state's school bus drivers and their strong record of safety;

Now therefore I, Josh Stein, Governor of the State of North Carolina, do hereby proclaim February 10 – 14, 2025, as “School Bus Driver Appreciation Week” in North Carolina, and commend its observance to all citizens.

**Public Comments – None**

**Superintendent’s Report**

The Fiscal Oversight Monthly Report was shared for information only.

**Vance County Restart Schools**

For Restart Schools, the school's authorization to use charter-like flexibility is intended to provide more opportunities for school reform. Flexibility may provide the ability to address specific needs and barriers to school improvement. The use of flexibility will result in strengthening the systems and structures of the school, and in turn, result in positive student outcomes. The goal is to improve school and district performance by 2027 by increasing the number of schools meeting or exceeding growth measure by subgroup. If schools are not renewed they lose calendar, staffing, and funding flexibility.

<b>Vance County High School</b> <i>(Early Start Calendar)</i>		<b>E.M. Rollins STEAM Academy</b> <i>(Modified Calendar Year)</i>
3	<b>COHORT</b>	1
2019-2020	<b>IMPLEMENTATION YEAR</b>	2017-2018
Calendar, Budget and Employment	<b>FLEXIBILITIES</b>	Calendar, Budget and Employment
2019 Data	<b>BASELINE</b>	2024 Data
Up for Renewal 2025-2026	<b>CONTINUED AUTHORIZATION</b>	Renewed 2024-2025

**3-Year Graduation Options**

NC House Bill 259 3-Year graduation options are:

<p><b>Student Eligibility</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must be at least 16 year of age</li> <li>• Must earn the required 22 credits</li> <li>• Must attend high school for 3 years</li> </ul>	<p><b>Early Graduate Scholarship</b></p> <p>Students who graduate early are eligible for a two-semester scholarship at an eligible post-secondary institution to be used in the two years immediately following their high school graduation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must qualify as a resident</li> <li>• Must be admitted and enrolled at an eligible institution</li> </ul>
---	--

	• Must submit a FAFSA
--	-----------------------

The district will encourage students to complete all four years of high school to best prepare for post-graduation plans. If students wish to graduate early in three years, they will not be allowed to attend Vance County Early College nor be able to participate in senior activities.

**New Business** – None

**Board of Education Standing Committees**

**Personnel**

Mr. Oxendine shared information from the February 4, 2025 meeting.

**I. EMPLOYMENT RECOMMENDATION(S)**

LOCATION	EMPLOYEE NAME	RACE/SEX	POSITION	EFFECTIVE DATE
VCMS	Whitney Davis	B/F	Teacher	01/30/25
ASC	Melissa Richardson	AI/F	Assistant Finance Officer	02/25/25
VCMS	Jewel Black	B/F	Teacher	02/17/25
VCMS	Lakesha Dean	B/F	Custodian	02/10/25
Zeb Vance	Lakiya Davis	B/F	EC Teacher Assistant	06/06/25

**II. RESIGNATION(S)**

LOCATION	EMPLOYEE NAME	RACE/SEX	POSITION	REASON	EFFECTIVE DATE
Advance Academy Vance Virtual Village Academy	Marvalene Mouzon	B/F	Guidance Counselor	To work in another NC school system	02/23/25
Transportation	Jakita Floyd	B/F	Bus Driver	Family Responsibility	01/21/25

**III. LEAVE(S) – For Information Only**

LOCATION	EMPLOYEE NAME	RACE/SEX	LEAVE TYPE	POSITION	EFFECTIVE DATE
Clarke	Olga King	W/F	FMLA	Child Nutrition	01/15/25-06/30/25
Dabney	Jennie Adams	W/F	FMLA	Teacher	01/06/25-02/10/25
EM Rollins	Juliet Black-Jasnosz	B/F	FMLA	Assistant Principal	02/03/25-04/09/25
EM Rollins	Tamera Glover	B/F	FMLA	Teacher Assistant	01/14/25-06-30/25
VCMS	Tassandra Cockburn	B/F	FMLA	Teacher	01/22/25-06/30/25

**IV. TRANSFER/PROMOTION(S) – For Information Only**

NEW LOCATION	EMPLOYEE NAME	NEW POSITION	OLD POSITION/LOCATION	EFFECTIVE DATE
Clarke	Kayla Perry	Teacher	Teacher Assistant Clarke	01/30/25
VCMS	Jacqueline Bates	EC Teacher Assistant	AVID Teacher Assistant VCMS	01/03/25

The district has 28 projected vacancies and the ESS substitute fill rate is 92%.

Upon motion by Mr. Oxendine and seconded by Mrs. Hartness, the Board unanimously (7-0) approved the personnel summary and addendum.

**Finance**

Mrs. White shared information from the January 23, 2025 meeting. The board received a Clean Audit Opinion with zero findings for fiscal year 2023-2024. Majority of funds are dedicated to instructional services and the Local Fund Balance decreased from the prior year. W-2s are available to employees through Timekeeper and employees who do not have access were mailed their W-2s. 1099s were mailed to vendors.

Upon motion by Mrs. White and seconded by Mr. Oxendine, the Board unanimously (7-0) accepted the audit report for fiscal year 2023-2024.

### Building and Grounds

Mrs. Hartness shared information from the January 23, 2025 meeting. The current Capital Funds available are \$7,104,825.49 in Capital Reserve School Fund and \$4,014,090.13 in Lottery Funds. The current CIP list is at 9 million roofing around 6 million, parking lot resurfacing around 2.5 million and 1 million for additional safety security improvements. The department continues to recruit and three drivers have completed behind the wheel training. The concrete pad has been poured at the VCHS Greenhouse. The department completed 1,423 work orders.

### Policy

Mr. Horner shared information from the January 23, 2025 meeting. The NCSBA Fall 2024 Custom policy updates were recommended and the annual policy review of the 5000 Series.

1310/4002	Parental Involvement
2302	Remote Participation in Board Meeting
3225/4312/7320	Technology Responsible Use
3227/7322	Web Page Development
3420	Student Promotion and Accountability
5030	Community Use of Facilities

Upon motion by Mrs. Cobb and seconded by Mr. Oxendine, the Board unanimously (7-0) approved policies 1310/4002 - Parental Involvement, 2302 - Remote Participation in Board Meeting, 3225/4312/7320 - Technology Responsible Use 3227/7322 - Web Page Development, 3420 - Student Promotion and Accountability and 5030 - Community Use of Facilities.

### Curriculum

Mrs. Lewis shared information from the January 23, 2025 meeting. In November, a total of 373 staff members earned CEUs, for a total of 857.5 contact hours and in December 35 staff earned 197.5 contact hours. The State requires all public schools to offer at least one eligible computer science course, starting with students entering 9<sup>th</sup> grade in the 2024-2025 school year, which reduces the number of elective credits by one. A computer science course must be provided to high school students by 2026-2027 school year. Insights on the 2024-2025 advance coursework enrollment across the district was shared noting two key data points. The number of Honors courses and Career & College Promise courses offered, along with student enrollment in these advanced courses. The district improvement plans were submitted to the State in December with the overarching goal of 100% for VCS to meet or exceed growth or demonstrate at least a 10% increase in their achievement scores. Individual School Improvement Plans are available for review on the district website using the login credentials provided. The district will apply for the Golden LEAF grant. The 2025-2026 calendar for Traditional, Early Start, and Modified Year-Round schools were presented for approval with additional optional work days in February and May of 2026.

Upon motion by Mrs. Lewis and seconded by Mrs. White, the Board unanimously (7-0) approved the 2025-2026 school calendars for traditional, early start, and modified year-round schools.

### Community & Business Relations

Mrs. Sandlin shared information from the January 23, 2025 meeting. The district held innovative school sessions on January 22, 28, and 30 for families to ask questions, tour the school and meet with principals. The applications were due on February 7 with decisions to families on March 7. The NC Symphony will be held on March 13 at McGregor Hall and on January 29, Pinkston, Aycock and Clarke recognized their student spotlight. On January 22, Vance County Schools was on TownTalk sharing about Innovative schools, PreK and Kindergarten registration. Additional upcoming student spotlights and events are below.

- February 25: Carver, VCMS, EOY
- March 2: LBY, Zeb Vance
- April 3: Experience Raleigh
- May 12: Red Carpet Soiree and Board recognition
- April 26: Arts Alive (3:00 Art Gallery & 5:00 Talent Showcase) Free to the Public
- April 30: Leadership Vance Education Day

**New Business** - None

**Field Trip Request**

Vance County High School request to travel to Greensboro, NC on February 20-22, 2025 for the State Wrestling Tournament and to Washington, DC on March 7, 2025 to explore the National Museum of African American History.

Upon motion by Mrs. White and seconded by Mrs. Hartness, the Board unanimously (7-0) approved the two VCHS field trips requests.

**Transfer Requests**

Dr. Bennett presented six student requests to transfer into the district.

Upon motion by Mrs. White and seconded by Mrs. Hartness, the Board unanimously (7-0) approved the six transfer requests.

**Executive Session**

Upon motion by Mrs. Gooche and seconded by Mrs. White, the Board voted unanimously (7-0) to go into closed session pursuant to the provisions of North Carolina General Statutes 143-318.11 for the purpose of approving executive session minutes and discussing legal, personnel, and property issues pursuant to subsection (a) of the said statute at 6:43 pm.

The Board returned to the open session at 7:20 p.m.

Being no further business, upon motion by Mr. Oxendine and seconded by Mrs. Hartness, the Board voted unanimously (7-0) to adjourn the meeting at 7:20 p.m.

---

BOARD CHAIR, DOROTHY W. GOOCHE

---

SECRETARY, CINDY W. BENNETT