

Minutes of the Vance County Board of Education Meeting
December 15, 2025

The Vance County Board of Education met in regular session on December 15, 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, Dr. Omega T. Perry, Mr. Randy M. Oxendine, Mrs. Ruth M. Hartness 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. Rey Horner, Executive Director for Student Services, Mr. John Suther, Chief Finance Officer, Mrs. Jacqueline Batchelor-Crosson, Executive Director of Federal Programs & Elementary Education, Dr. Destiney Ross-Putney, Chief Officer of Instruction and Innovation and Dr. Stephanie Ayscue, Executive Director of Secondary Education. Mr. Kevin Perdue, Chief Operations 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 November 10 and 18, 2025 minutes was motioned by Mrs. White and seconded by Mrs. Hartness, with a unanimous (7-0) vote.

Reorganization of Board

Mrs. Gooche turned the meeting over to Dr. Bennett who assumed the chair temporarily, to elect a board chairperson. Dr. Bennett called for nominations for chairperson. Mrs. White nominated Mrs. Lewis, seconded by Mrs. Hartness.

With no further nominations, Dr. Bennett called for a motion to close the nominations. The motion passed unanimously (7-0) to approve Mrs. Ayana F. Lewis as chair. Mrs. Lewis was elected Chairperson. Dr. Bennett thanked Mrs. Gooche for her leadership and congratulated Mrs. Lewis.

Mrs. Lewis called for nominations for vice-chair. Dr. Perry made a motion to nominate Mrs. Cobb, which was seconded by Mrs. Hartness.

With no further nominations, Mrs. Lewis made a motion to close the nominations. The motion passed unanimously (7-0) to approve Mrs. Linda S. Cobb as Vice-chair. Mrs. Cobb was elected Vice-Chair. Mrs. Lewis congratulated Mrs. Cobb.

Approval of Meeting Agenda

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

- Personnel Addendum
- Transfers/Releases Revised

Recognitions/Announcements

District Christmas Card

This year's holiday card competition received entries from students in grades K-12. The student's artwork for the front cover of the district holiday card is Xya'Kiyah Bryant, STEM Early High, 8th grader and the back cover is Gielah Caballe, EM Rollins STEAM Academy, 3rd grader. Xya'Kiyah and Gielah's artwork will be shared across the state.

NCSBA Awards

Superintendent & Board Assistants of NC Public Schools are awarded by NCSBA for their professional development earned for the 2024-2025 school year. The program's mission is to support the work of superintendents and boards of education through collaboration among local education agencies and to continue to learn and develop in a positive, professional manner through appropriate staff development. Members are offered professional certification through their association.

Training Hours Earned:

Certificate of Advanced Achievement: Deanna Steed (100)

Gold Award: Mrs. Gloria J. White (801-900)

Award of Excellence: Mrs. Linda S Cobb and Dr. Omega T. Perry (301-400)

Certificate of Merit: Mrs. Ayana F. Lewis (31-100)

HBCU Festival

Dr. Tim Hall, K-12 Social Studies Instructional Coordinator, shared that high school students from Vance County Schools participated in the Alfred Street Baptist Church 23rd Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Festival on Saturday, November 15 at the St. James Sports Complex in Springfield VA. This event was sponsored by the Henderson Institute Association in partnership with Vance County Schools. Seventy-two colleges and universities participated this year with \$8.1 million awarded through scholarships.

Special Education Day

Special Education Day was on December 2, 2025, that is an annual observance for students with disabilities focusing on inclusion. In support of the Individual Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), organizations pledge to provide good education to students with special needs.

Comments from the Public - None

Superintendent’s Report

The Fiscal Oversight Monthly Report was shared for information only. Local supplements were paid on December 12 and regular monthly payroll is December 18. The Finance department is changing all employees to the new State Health Plan tiered premiums mandated by the State. The new premium deductions will be on the December pay stub that covers January health insurance and W-2s and 1099s will be issued in January.

2026 Board of Education Meeting Schedule

Presented for approval are the 2026 Board of Education monthly meeting dates that are held in the Board Room at the Administrative Services Center. January 12, February 9, March 9, April 13, May 11, June 8, July 13, August 10, September 14, October 12, November 2 and December 14, 2026.

Upon motion by Mrs. White and seconded by Mrs. Cobb, the Board unanimously (7-0) approved the 2026 Board of Education Meeting Schedule.

Board of Education Standing Committees

Personnel

Mr. Oxendine shared information from the December 2, 2025 meeting.

I. EMPLOYMENT RECOMMENDATION(S)

LOCATION	EMPLOYEE NAME	RACE/SEX	POSITION	EFFECTIVE DATE
EM Rollins	Carla Fogg	B/F	Tutor	11/18/25
VCMS	Ayesha Rogers	B/F	Receptionist	12/01/25

II. RESIGNATION(S)

LOCATION	EMPLOYEE NAME	RACE/SEX	POSITION	EFFECTIVE DATE
Advance Academy	Lisa Chandler	B/F	EC Teacher	12/19/25
Maintenance	Joshua Finch	W/M	Electrician I	11/21/25
Dabney	Raquelle Dunston	B/F	Teacher	12/31/25
E.O. Young	Karen Christmas	B/F	Bus Monitor	12/12/25
Pinkston	LaRhesa Whittley	B/F	EC Teacher	12/31/25
Pinkston	Linda Hargrove	B/F	Social Worker	12/31/25

III. LEAVE(S) – For Information Only

LOCATION	EMPLOYEE NAME	RACE/SEX	LEAVE TYPE	POSITION	EFFECTIVE DATE
EO Young	Kristen Boyd	W/F	FMLA	Principal	11/10/25-12/23/25
Pinkston	Tiara Williams	B/F	FMLA	Teacher	11/13/25-02/02/26
VCHS	Gloria Holden	B/F	FMLA	Teacher	11/07/25-02/09/26
VCMS	Michael Rice	B/M	FMLA	Teacher	10/22/25-11/19/25
Clarke	Tykeria Bullock	B/F	FMLA	Teacher Assistant	12/03-25-03/11/26
L.B. Yancey	Wendy Oakley	W/F	FMLA	Teacher	11/17/25-02/09/26
STEM	Alice Clement	B/F	FMLA	Cafeteria Assistant	11/08/25-12/14/25

***Note:** Extended Medical Leave does not qualify as FMLA.

IV. TRANSFER/PROMOTIONS(S) – For Information Only

NEW LOCATION	EMPLOYEE NAME	NEW POSITION	OLD POSITION	/LOCATION	EFFECTIVE DATE
Dabney	De-Kisha Elam	Teacher	Teacher Assistant	Dabney	11/12/25
Dabney	Eric Watkins	EC TA-Behavior Support	VCEC	EC TA-Behavior Support	01/01/26
Vance Virtual Village	Shanice White	Teacher	VCEC	Teacher	12/05/25
Dabney	Letitia Fields	Principal	New Hope	Principal	01/05/26
Advance Academy	Debbie Hite	Instructional Engagement Specialist	VCEC	Principal	12/08/25
VCEC	Dr. Tim Hall	Interim Principal	Social Studies Specialist K-12	ASC	11/21/25
New Hope	Marylaura Christopher-Rubin	Interim Principal	Director of School Behavior Health	ASC	01/05/26

V. SUBSTITUTE TEACHER(S)

LOCATION	EMPLOYEE NAME	RACE/SEX	POSITION	EFFECTIVE DATE
All Schools	Marguerite Alston	B/F	Substitute Teacher	12/15/25
All Schools	Sylvia Lowery	B/F	Substitute Teacher	12/10/25

The district has 26.5 projected vacancies and the greatest need is in the area of Exceptional Children and Elementary education.

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

Finance

Mr. Suther shared information from the November 20, 2025 meeting on E.M. Rollins STEAM Academy Elementary School – HVAC Electrical Panel. An unexpected fire occurred during the school day on October 28 on the outside wall where the electrical panel was located. The fire damaged the main electrical panel, the sub panels and connecting electrical wiring. School was closed a week and repairs have been completed and \$156,738.00 of public-school building capital fund lottery money will be used to pay Breedlove Electrical, Inc. Mrs. White asked were other vendors contacted to complete this work and inquired if the insurance will refund the district for some of the repairs.

Upon motion by Mrs. White and seconded by Dr. Perry, the Board unanimously (7-0) approved Breedlove Electrical, Inc. to repair EM Rollins’ HVAC electrical panel for \$156,738.

Building and Grounds

Mrs. Hartness shared information from the November 20, 2025 meeting. EM Rollins’ roof is 75% complete and should be finished by mid-December. VCMS roof replacement is next. Breedlove Electrical completed the work on EM Rollins’ electrical panel. The district was not selected to receive the NBPSCF funds this year. The Tiny House Ribbon Cutting ceremony was postpone and the Kerr-Tar Council of Governments lease has been signed for an increase of \$2 per square foot beginning July 2026. The department completed 1,306 work orders for the month of November.

Policy

Mr. Horner shared information from the November 20, 2025 meeting. The 5000 Policy Series: Schools and the Community, didn't have any changes. The NC School Board Association fall custom policies listed below were presented.

Policy Code: 1740/4010 Student and Parent Grievance Procedure

Policy Code: 1750/7220 Grievance Procedures for Employees

Policy Code: 2125/7315 Confidential Information

Policy Code: 3101 Dual Enrollment

Policy Code: 3220 Technology in the Educational Program

Policy Code: 3225/4312/7320 Technology Responsible Use

Policy Code: 3226/4205 Internet Safety

Policy Code: 3400 Evaluation of Student Progress

Policy Code: 3460 Graduation Requirements

Policy Code: 4318.OPTA Use of Wireless Communication Devices

Non-instructional time was included in the policy. The Procedure and Consequences document was shared and it was recommended to include an unwillingness to put away or turn over wireless devices becomes insubordination.

Upon motion by Mrs. Cobb and seconded by Mr. Oxendine, the Board unanimously (7-0) voted to accept the changes to the 3000 policies and policy 4318.

Curriculum

Dr. Ross-Putney shared information from the November, 2025 meeting. The month of October 467 staff logged 962.7 contact hours. Students in grades 3-5 receive direct instruction and in-class practice in cursive writing and grades 3-4 receive structured instruction on multiplication tables. Sample cursive writing and multiplication work was provided to the committee. More data will be shared at the next meeting showing progress across three points for RtA like last year's EOY assessment, summer RtA Camp and this year's performance assessments. The Student Services team will meet with principals in January to review disciplinary actions and strategies for improvement. Secondary students meet with their counselor as part of their re-entry process. The Technology department completed 570 work orders for the month. EMR continues to qualify for Restart while VCHS does not and the district will need to develop and reapply in January.

Upon motion by Mrs. Cobb and seconded by Mrs. White, the Board unanimously (7-0) voted to develop a new VCHS Restart Continuation plan.

Community & Business Relations

Mrs. Sandlin shared information from the November 30, 2025 meeting. The monthly Student Spotlights were held on November 19 at VCMS, Carver and EO Young and the series will continue in to the spring. Schools held their Thanksgiving meals on November 20 and Sounds of the Season will be held at the Administrative Service Center and dates will be shared with the Board. Below are future events.

December 16: EOY Holiday Concert at 1:15

December 17: EM Rollins Holiday Concert at 6:00

New Business - None

Field Trip Request – None

Transfer Requests

Dr. Bennett presented ten requests to transfer into the district and four to be released from the district.

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

Executive Session

Upon motion by Mrs. Lewis 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 6:41 pm.

The Board returned to the open session at 7:03 p.m.

The Kerr-Tar Council of Government’s lease agreement has not been received as of December 15 and the current lease ends December 31. The Board recommends that Mrs. Lewis signs the lease once it is received by the superintendent.

Upon motion by Mr. Oxendine and seconded by Mrs. Lewis, the Board voted unanimously (7-0) to authorize Mrs. Lewis to execute the Kerr-Tar Council of Government lease.

Being no further business, upon motion by Mrs. Hartness and seconded by Mr. Oxendine, the Board voted unanimously (7-0) to adjourn the meeting at 7:03 p.m.

BOARD CHAIR, AYANA F. LEWIS

SECRETARY, CINDY W. BENNETT