

Hamlet, North Carolina
February 10, 2026

The Richmond County Board of Education met in regular session on February 10, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. The meeting was held at the Central Office in Hamlet, North Carolina.

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

The administrators present were Dr. Joe Ferrell, Superintendent; Dr. Julian Carter, Associate Superintendent of Operations and Athletics; Dr. Kate Smith, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction; Dr. Tesha Isler, Executive Director of Human Resources; Melvin Ingram, Assistant Superintendent of School Safety and Support Services; 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, Chairman Satterfield, called the meeting to order at 5:06 p.m. Daryl Mason requested a Moment of Silence and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes

On a motion by Jerry Ethridge, seconded by Daryl Mason, the open session minutes of January 13, 2026, were unanimously approved.

Recognition of Inspiring Excellence Awards

Cameron Whitley introduced Melanie Carnes, Principal of West Rockingham Elementary School, who presented plaques to two of her staff members: Kelli Parsons and Krista Herold. Next, Cameron Whitley introduced Jennifer Collard, Principal of Fairview Heights Elementary School, who presented plaques to two of her staff members: Mary Kate Duncan and Erin Jernigan. These recipients were honored for their outstanding contributions and dedication to students and the school community.

Athletic Recognitions

Cameron Whitley recognized Rockingham Middle School's football and volleyball teams for winning their fall conference championships.

2026-2027 School Calendar

Dr. Kate Smith presented the proposed 2026-2027 school year calendars for a 30-day review period. She shared feedback gathered from the Teacher Advisory Committee and district administrators.

Dr. Smith reported that a survey was conducted at the traditional high school regarding the timing of the semester change, specifically whether it should occur in December or January. The results indicated that 80% of respondents preferred the semester to end in December. Given that the semester change has the greatest impact at the high school level, district staff conducted follow-up conversations with the high school principals, who met with teacher to gather more specific feedback.

Based on the strong majority preference for a December semester change, one calendar option was developed that incorporated the requests. Board members were provided with a copy of the comments shared during the committee meeting. Dr. Smith stated that an additional calendar option was not developed due to the clear preference for the December semester change.

Chairman Satterfield asked when the Board could review first semester test scores to see whether ending the semester in December, as implemented this school year, had an impact compared to the previous year when the semester ended in January. Dr. Smith replied that the test score data is

currently available. The Board requested that, if possible, the data be presented at the upcoming work session.

RSHS Roof Project

Steven King informed the Board that last Wednesday there was a bid opening for the Richmond Senior High School partial roof replacement project facilitated by REI Engineering. Five bids were received. Weatherguard was identified as the lowest responsible bidder with a base bid of \$446,300.00.

The base bid covers the D-Pod section of the roof. An alternate bid in the amount of \$111,600.00 was also included. The alternate covers the section from D-Pod to the new gym, which is the CIC hallway. REI Engineering submitted a recommendation letter supporting the award of the contract to Weatherguard for the total project cost of \$557,900.00, which includes the alternate. Steven explained that the project was structured with a base bid and alternate in the event the total cost exceeded the available budget. He also noted that the alternate price represents the most cost-effective opportunity to complete that portion of the work.

Steven further stated that REI Engineering submitted the drawings and specifications to the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) for review and approval. Upon execution of the contract, the district will submit an application to the state to draw down available ADM funds. The district is eligible to receive 75% of the project cost, \$418,425.00, from the state. The remaining \$139,475.00 will be paid from the Capital Outlay Fund.

Steven noted that the district has previously worked with Weatherguard and described the company as reputable and reliable.

On a motion by Bobbie Sue Ormsby, seconded by Ronald Tillman, the Board voted unanimously to approve the partial roofing project at Richmond Senior High School and award the contract to Weatherguard in the total amount of \$557,900.00.

RMS Auditorium Seats Replacement

Steven King informed the Board about the Rockingham Middle School auditorium remodel project. He reported that the district received \$100,000 from the Cole Foundation to support the project. Seats replacement was put out for bid, and three companies submitted proposals: Davis Furniture Company, Learning Environments Inc., and Universal Equipment Company.

Steven stated that Davis Furniture Company, based in Wisconsin, was disqualified because the company did not have a licensed general contractor, which is required for the project. Physical seat samples were provided by all three companies; however, after the disqualification of Davis Furniture Company, two vendors remained under consideration.

Steven noted that he, Dr. Ferrell, Dr. Carter, and Windy Taylor reviewed the remaining seat samples, evaluating the quality of materials, seating comfort, durability, appearance, aesthetics, and overall features.

Based on performance, appearance, aesthetics, and overall features, the recommendation is to award the contract to Learning Environments Inc. in the amount of \$207,860.00.

In addition to replacing the seats, the district plans to complete several related improvements. Once the original seats and mounting studs are removed, the floor will be patched and the concrete ground to ensure a level surface. A concrete sealer will then be applied before installation of the new seats. The ceiling and walls will be painted, and carpet in the aisles will be replaced.

Discussion and Q & A:

Bobbie Sue Ormsby asked Steven whether the district had contacted Amazon to explore the possibility of a grant for the project.

Steven responded that Amazon previously donated \$10,000 for playground improvements at the Ninth Grade Academy.

Chairman Satterfield asked whether the additional funds needed for the improvements is included in the budget.

Steven responded that he, Dr. Ferrell, Dr. Carter, and Dawn Jordan have been meeting to review these projects and available ADM funds and confirmed that the funds are budgeted.

On a motion by Scotty Baldwin, seconded by Bobbie Sue Ormsby, the Board voted unanimously to approve the contract with Learning Environments Inc. as presented.

Construction Updates

Steven King presented the following construction updates to the Board:

RNGA to an Elementary School	Painting and general construction - WIP New playgrounds – Vendor selected, color selection - WIP RFP's for fencing, sidewalks, rubber wall base - WIP
RSHS Running Track Reno	The rubber running material was delivered 11-21-25 Waiting on opportunity to complete work in favorable weather conditions
RSHS Baseball Field Reno	Punch list items complete Monitoring irrigation, sod growth, and drainage
Various Projects	RSHS soccer netting replacement - WIP RSHS football stadium restroom (home and visitors) remodel - Planning RSHS partial roof replacement – Bids received 2-4-26 RMS auditorium remodel: Painting & flooring – Planning Seating - Bids received 2-4-26 RMS baseball backstop netting replacement - WIP (painting poles complete) New LJB Responses to Architect RFQ received 2-4-26 CM at Risk – RCS will work with Architect to select CM at Risk Moving logistic - WIP

*WIP = Work in Progress

Discussion and Q & A:

Scotty asked if temporary signage would be installed at the former Ninth Grade Academy while LJ Bell Elementary School is housed there during construction of the new school.

Steven responded that temporary signage will be used.

Chairman Satterfield stated that several individuals have asked when the current LJ Bell Elementary School building will be demolished and whether that would likely occur this summer or fall. Steven responded that demolition could take place sometime this summer. He added that once a Construction Manager (CM) is secured, he anticipates the building could be torn down prior to the finalization of the new construction plans.

Steven reported that he has spoken with Meredith Norwood and that he, Dr. Ferrell, and Dr. Carter have been working to develop a logistics plan for moving LJ Bell Elementary School items to the former Ninth Grade Academy. The plan includes delivering boxes, packing tape, and labels to the school before the end of the school year. Staff can use a portion of the 10 workdays at the end of the school year, to pack materials.

Steven stated that Dr. Carter obtained one quote from an out-of-town moving company in the amount of \$40,000. He noted that only one quote has been received, so it is unclear whether that amount is reasonable. There has been some discussion about offering the moving project to local companies, with staff and equipment to assist. If local vendors are not interested, the district will pursue another option.

Chairman Satterfield asked whether any district employees might be interested in assisting with the move.

Steven responded that it is possible, noting that during a previous move many staff members were very helpful. However, he expressed concern about the physical demands of moving desks and furniture all day, as well as the fact that many employees may not have access to trucks, trailers, or vans.

Scotty added liability is a concern for him, as an employee injury during the move could result in responsibility for the district.

Steven concluded by stating that administration will continue working to ensure the best and safest option for executing the move.

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:

- Policy: 1600 Governing Principle - Professional Development
- Policy: 1750-7220 Grievance Procedure for Employees
- Policy: 2127 Board Member Technology Use
- Policy: 2302 Remote Participation in Board Meetings.
- Policy: 7425 School Administrator Contracts
- Policy: 7910 Retirement

On a motion by Jerry Ethridge, seconded by Bobbie Sue Ormsby, the Board voted unanimously to adopt policy amendments 1600, 1750-7220, 2127, 2302, 7425 and 7910.

Policies for Review

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

Policy Numbers:

- 1740-4010 Student and Parent Grievance Procedure
- 2125-7315 Confidential Information
- 4240-7312 Child Abuse and Related Threats to Child Safety
- 4270-6145 Concussion and Head Injury
- 5150 Reporting to External Agencies
- 6310 Organization of Student Transportation Services

NCSBA Legislative Committee Nomination

NCSBA encouraged the Board to nominate one of its members to serve as an at-large member on the NCSBA Legislative Committee. The committee is responsible for developing the statewide legislative survey and drafting the 2027–28 NCSBA Legislative Agenda for consideration by the Delegate Assembly at the Annual Conference. At-large members represent the eight education districts and are selected by the NCSBA President, providing an opportunity for broader member involvement in the legislative process.

On a motion by Ronald Tillman, seconded by Bess Shuler, the Board unanimously approved the nomination of Jerry Ethridge to serve on the NCSBA Legislative Committee.

Board Members' Comments

Chairman Satterfield

- Kathy Ormsby, a Richmond Senior High Hall of Fame member, recently passed away, and her funeral was held last Saturday in Wilmington; she was very talented, keep her family in your prayers

Jerry Ethridge

- Acknowledged that it is Black History Month and emphasized the importance of recognizing it
 - Reflected on high school friends who played musical instruments and are still involved in band today
 - Recalled the time when segregation ended in Richmond County (around 1966–1968).
 - Shared when students from Monroe Avenue joined their school during integration, and many became close friends
 - Shared that at his 50th high school reunion, four of those former Monroe Avenue students attended and had never previously been invited to a Hamlet High School reunion
- Have been walking at Ninth Grade Academy and observing renovations and consistent improvements at the school
- Highlighted the importance of the welcome and first impression received when visiting Richmond County schools
 - Taking photos of front office staff and posting them on Facebook to highlight the welcoming atmosphere at each school
- Shared condolences for recent losses
- Encouraged keeping grieving families in our prayers

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Ferrell

- Attended the Amazon Fund celebration and publicly thanked Amazon for their contributions to the school district, noting their strong partnership in a short time
 - Many school staff were present to accept awards and grants
- Mentioned an upcoming meeting with North Carolina superintendents and community college presidents to discuss collaboration between the school district and the community college system, which he will attend alongside Brent Barbie
- Noted Monroe Avenue Elementary School's involvement in selecting playground equipment for the former 9th Grade Academy building
- Highlighted that spring semester dates were provided by Cameron Whitley, offering many opportunities for Board members to be visible and engaged in district activities

Chairman Satterfield citing NCGS 143-318.11(a)(1) and (6) requested a motion to go into closed session.

On a motion by Jerry Ethridge, seconded by Ronald Tillman, the Board voted unanimously to go into closed session at 6:00 p.m.

On a motion by Jerry Ethridge, seconded by Scotty Baldwin, the Board voted unanimously to reconvene into open session at 6:14 p.m.

Personnel Report

Dr. Tesha Isler presented the personnel report and addendum.

On a motion by Scotty Baldwin, seconded by Daryl Mason, the Board voted unanimously to approve the personnel report and addendum.

Adjourn

There being no further business, on a motion by Scotty Baldwin, seconded by Bobbie Sue Ormsby, Chairman Satterfield adjourned the meeting at 6:15 p.m.