

Minutes of the Vance County Board of Education Meeting
May 11, 2026

The Vance County Board of Education met in regular session on May 11, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. in the Administrative Service Center Boardroom. Board members present were Mrs. Ayana F. Lewis, Chair, Mrs. Linda S. Cobb, Vice-Chair, Mrs. Gloria J. White, Dr. Omega T. Perry, Mr. Randy M. Oxendine, Mrs. Ruth M. Hartness, Mrs. Dorothy W. Gooche, 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, Dr. Destiney Ross-Putney, Chief Officer of Instruction and Innovation, Mr. Kevin Perdue, Chief Operations, and Dr. Stephanie Ayscue, Executive Director of Secondary Education, Mrs. Marsha Abbott, Chief Technology Officer and Mrs. Jacqueline Batchelor-Crosson, Executive Director of Federal Programs & Elementary Education.

Mrs. Lewis 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 April 13, 2026 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. Hartness, the Board unanimously (7-0) approved the agenda with additions.

- Personnel Addendum

Recognitions/Announcements

Mental Health Awareness Month and School Nurse Appreciation Week

National Mental Health Awareness Month is observed to raise awareness, reduce stigma, and promote mental wellness. Mental Health Awareness Month provides a chance to stand with your community and show that no one struggles alone. School Nurse Appreciation Week is May 6-12, to honor the specialized practice of school nursing and recognizes the contributions these professionals make daily to improve the safety, health, and academic success of students.

School Lunch Hero Day

School Lunch Hero Day is May 1, 2026, to honor school nutrition professionals who fuel students and support learning. This day recognizes the hardworking cafeteria staff who serve meals, accommodate allergies, and offer welcoming smiles every day.

PE and Sport Week

National PE & Sport Week is an annual celebration of the importance of physical education and health education. Engaging in physical education helps students develop essential motor skills, personal and social skills, and core character values such as resilience, fairness, and respect. During May 1-7, 2026, educators use this time to advocate by educating parents and the community about the importance of health and physical education.

Teacher Appreciation Week

May 4-9, 2026 is Teacher Appreciation Week. Teacher Appreciation Week is our moment to say thank you, and to make sure educators have what they need to keep doing this essential work. All district staff were provided an umbrella as a symbol of the way they cover our students.

School Communicators Day

May 8 is recognized for the vital contributions of school communicators and school public relations professionals for their dedication and impact. The Board recognized Mrs. Aarika Sandlin, Mrs. Grace Herndon and each schools' communicator for shaping, sharing and organizing how the district communicates with families.

Walk Down Memory Lane

Mr. Oxendine shared that Carver's and New Hope Elementary Schools Walk Down Memory Lane were a great idea for the community and there were well attended. He also thanked Dr. Bennett for her vision and dedication to the district.

Comments from the Public

Superintendent's Report

The Fiscal Oversight Monthly Report was shared for information only. The Finance department is ensuring all funding is spent correctly and the last check for 1-month employees will be May 22. Local and State Supplements will be paid in June.

Federal Consolidated Audit Update

Programs monitored by NCDPI on April 16, 2026, were Title I-IV that consisted of examination of program files from Clarke, EM Rollins, Pinkston and Vance County Middle School prior to the visit. Interviews were from parents, teachers, principals and district leaders. The results were **No Findings**. NCDPI had three recommendations below:

- Parent Consultation – increase opportunities for parents beyond the context of Advisory Committee Meetings and School Improvement Team meetings to give suggestions or feedback on how federal funds are spent at both the school and district level.
- Parent Family Engagement Policy – thoroughly document opportunities for more ongoing and timely revision and joint development of the Parent and Family Engagement policies and the School-Parent Compact.
- Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) and Targeted Support and Improvement (TSI) – continue to build and refine the required documentation for CSI and TSI by June 30, 2026.

Board of Education Standing Committees

Personnel

Mr. Oxendine shared information from the May 5, 2026 meeting.

I. SEPARATION(S)

LOCATION	EMPLOYEE NAME	RACE/SEX	POSITION	EFFECTIVE DATE
Clarke	Naisha Wynn	B/F	Teacher Assistant	04/07/26
Maintenance	Chadwick Denton	W/M	Grounds Crew	03/30/26
VCHS	Loretta Terry	B/F	Teacher	04/07/26

II. RESIGNATION(S)

LOCATION	EMPLOYEE NAME	RACE/SEX	POSITION	EFFECTIVE DATE
New Hope	Linda Faines-Rhem	B/F	Custodian	05/15/26
VCEC	Matthew Harris	W/M	Teacher	05/29/26
VCHS	Darlene Orapa	P/F	Teacher	05/29/26
Aycock	Elizabeth Whitby	W/F	Teacher	06/12/26
Dabney	Terri Elam	B/F	Receptionist	04/22/26
VCHS	Brian Green	B/M	Custodian	04/24/26
VCHS	Brandon Simmons	B/M	Teacher	06/30/26
VCHS	Kaylom Crawley	B/M	Teacher	06/11/26
VCMS	Nijah Wynn	B/F	Custodian	04/17/26
Zeb Vance	Erma Ragland	B/F	Bus Driver	04/21/26

III. LEAVE(S) – For Information Only

LOCATION	EMPLOYEE NAME	RACE/SEX	LEAVE TYPE	POSITION	EFFECTIVE DATE
Aycock	Sherrika Fogg	B/F	FMLA	Teacher	05/07/26-06/11/26
Dabney	Tamara Nelson	B/F	FMLA	Bookkeeper	04/24/26-07/17/26
EO Young	Orlinda Terry	B/F	FMLA	Teacher	04/17/26-06/12/26
VCMS	Sade Small	B/F	FMLA	Teacher	04/14/26-06/12/26

VCMS	Sheneika Campbell	B/F	FMLA	Assistant Principal Intern	04/06/26-04/20/26
VCMS	Tracy Allen	B/F	FMLA	Teacher Assistant	03/25/26-06/12/26

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

IV. SUBSTITUTE(S)

LOCATION	EMPLOYEE NAME	RACE/SEX	POSITION	EFFECTIVE DATE
All Schools	Derek Parker	B/M	Substitute Teacher	05/07/26
All Schools	Sanjea Whitton	B/F	Substitute Teacher	05/11/26
All Schools	Natassia Hamilton	B/F	Substitute Teacher	04/2026

V. RETIREMENT(S)

LOCATION	EMPLOYEE NAME	POSITION	EFFECTIVE DATE
Dabney	Barbara Newsome	Teacher Assistant	07/31/26
Aycock/EO Young	Karen Smiley	Social Worker	07/01/26
Clarke	Tempie Robinson	Custodian	06/30/26
Pinkston	Barbara Davis	Teacher Assistant/Bus Driver	06/11/26

VI. TRANSFER/PROMOTION(S)

NEW LOCATION	EMPLOYEE NAME	NEW POSITION	OLD POSITION/LOCATION		EFFECTIVE DATE
Pinkston	Juliet Black-Jasnoz	Social Worker	Assistant Principal/Social Worker	VCEC	04/25/26
VCHS	Shanice White	ELA Teacher	ELA Teacher	VCEC	04/27/26

The district has 64 current vacancies. The employee absence report for March-April showed a total of 617 absences across the district with 428 absences filled. VCEC, VCMS, Advance Academy, New Hope, LB Yancey and Carver schools recorded fewer than ten staff absences during the period and were commended for high attendance: Pathways to Practice cohort data was discussed and it was noted that employees signed agreements requiring reimbursement to the district in the event of non-completion.

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 April 23, 2026 meeting.

FORVIS MAZARS, LLP Audit Contract

This contract is for the required independent audit for fiscal year ending June 30, 2026 with the proposed fee of \$72,000 of local funds. The contract increased by \$3,000 from last year and the work will begin in May of this year with the compliance audit portion and the financial portion to continue this fall.

Upon motion by Mrs. White and seconded by Mr. Oxendine, the Board unanimously (7-0) approved the FORVIS MAZARS, LLP Audit contract.

Kirkman Floors

This summer the maintenance department will complete projects at our schools to prepare for the beginning of school in August. Kirkman Floors will top scrub and recoat the floors and pressure wash the bathrooms for a cost of \$33,626.25 of Restart Funds.

Upon motion by Mrs. Cobb and seconded by Dr. Perry, the Board unanimously (5-0) approved the Kirkman Floors contract.

IntelliChoice Home Care Request for Proposal (RFP)

The RFP for Special Education Related Service Providers in four categories (Psychological, Nursing, Occupational Therapy and Speech-Language) was posted on the district website on April 10, 2026 at 12:00. Twenty different vendor bids were received and the winning bidder was IntelliChoice Home Care. Below are the costs associated with the contract.

Speech Language: \$70/hr. (currently paying \$75)
 Nurses: \$55/hr. (currently paying \$78)
 Psychological: \$75/hr. (currently paying \$1,000 per assessment)
 Occupational Therapy: \$70/hr. (currently paying \$85)

Upon motion by Mrs. White and seconded by Mrs. Cobb, the Board unanimously (7-0) approved the IntelliChoice Home Care contract.

A.B. Hair Carpet

The ASC server room has a specialized tile panel access floor and are made of high-pressure laminate and are two-foot square with a load capacity of 1250-1500 pounds. The tiles are original to the building and have become warped over years and has become a trip hazard and because of the specialized nature of this product there are few options in vendors. Maintenance department will install the tiles and the purchase amount for 180 panel tiles is \$28,750.00 of KTCOG rental proceeds.

Upon motion by Mrs. Cobb and seconded by Mrs. Hartness, the Board unanimously (7-0) approved the A.B. Hair Carpet purchase.

Fiscal Year 2026-2027 County Appropriation Request

This request is presented as information only, to initiate the discussion process, and for public comment. The Board is requesting a 5% increase in local funds for utility and operational costs and a 3% increase in salary costs along with matching benefits for FICA, hospitalization insurance and retirement contribution. Other key points noted:

- The district pays 27 charter schools with 2,320 students
- There are 235 scholarship recipients in Vance County
- Local certified teacher/staff supplement request a \$1,500 increase
- Local supplement non-certified staff request an 8% increase
- Requesting \$700,000 for Capital Outlay (Routine Maintenance) and \$275,000 for Technology
- Consolidating two elementary schools (Carver & New Hope) – also will help with funding constraints

Continuation Budget Request	
Operating	\$7,501,283.00 <i>current appropriation & increase</i>
Continuation	\$40,130.00 <i>student decline/state salary & benefits increase</i>
Local Supplement	\$3,181,651.00 <i>current appropriation & increase</i>
Expansion Budget Request	
Certified Teacher/Staff Supplement + Benefits + Charter School Portion	\$933,286.00 <i>expansion appropriation to increase supplement to \$5,000</i>
Non-Certified Staff + Benefits + Charter School Portion	\$2,205,149.00 <i>expansion appropriation to increase supplement to 10%</i>
Subtotal County Appropriation	\$13,861,498.00
Capital Outlay	
Maintenance & Instructional Technology	\$975,000.00 <i>continuation & expansion</i>
Total Appropriation Request for Fiscal year 2026-2027	\$14,836,498.00

Upon motion by Mrs. White and seconded by Mrs. Hartness, the Board unanimously (7-0) approved the Fiscal Year 2026-2027 County Appropriation Request and a signed letter stating that the Board of Education reserves the right to request additional funding should unforeseen needs, enrolment changes, or state mandates place further demands on the school system.

NVHS and SVHS Athletic Uniforms Surplus Declaration

There are a combined 78 boxes of athletic uniforms from Northern Vance HS, Southern Vance HS, and Eaton-Johnson MS that are no longer needed. Uniforms are replaced between 3-5 years, depending on the sport, and then retired to storage. It is recommended that the uniforms be surplus and then sold so funds can be redirected to support students.

Upon motion by Mr. Oxendine and seconded by Mrs. White, the Board unanimously (7-0) approved to surplus athletic uniforms from Northern Vance High, Southern Vance High and Eaton Johnson Middle Schools.

Other items discussed were on the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) Statement No. 103 that states The purpose of the updates is to provide an overview and its impact on the district's financial reporting beginning in fiscal year 2026-2027. It only affects how financial information is presented. New telephone software RFP bid opened on April 17 and two have been received. Currently the district is paying \$20,000 and the new contract will be a big savings. This purchase recommendation will be presented in June.

Building & Grounds

Mr. Perdue shared information from the April 23, 2026 meeting. The engineer is currently working on VCMS roof replacement designs and plans will go out for bid soon. Transportation continues to recruit new drivers and each school is asked to find candidates in their building to be trained as drivers in case of emergency needs. With the closure of Carver and New Hope schools, there is a need to update the elementary school district map for 2026-2027. This item was tabled to discuss further at the next committee meeting. During the summer months, the Center for Innovation will only be available for rentals for June-July to allow for facilities to be cleaned.

Upon motion by Mrs. Hartness and seconded by Mr. Oxendine, the Board unanimously (7-0) approved the Summer Facility Rentals.

Policy

Mr. Horner shared information from the April 23, 2026 meeting. The 9000 Policy Series: Facilities, didn't have any changes. The NC School Board Association spring custom policy substantive update are listed below for approval.

Policy Code: 1310-4002 Parental Involvement

Policy Code: 2340 Parliamentary Procedures

Policy Code: 3225-4312-7320 Technology Responsible Use

Policy Code: 4318 Use of Wireless Communication Devices

Policy Code: 4342 Student Searches

Policy Code: 5071-7351 Electronically Stored Information Retention

Policy Code: 6220 Operation of School Nutrition Services

Policy Code: 7130 Licensure

*Tabled for May Committee Meeting

Policy Code: 2330 Board Meeting Agenda

Policy Code: 7263 COVID-19 Employee Pandemic Safety Mitigation

Policy Code: 7325 Video and Audio Recordings by Employees

Upon motion by Mr. Oxendine and seconded by Mrs. White, the Board unanimously (7-0) approved the Spring Custom Policy Substantive Updates except codes 2330 and 7325.

Curriculum

Dr. Ross-Putney shared information from the April 23, 2026 meeting. A total of 441 contact hours were logged with 158 staff members earning CEU credits for the month of March. Staff will still be able to attend professional developments, even with the current budget constraints because departments utilize its own allocated funds to support conference attendance. The district completed the 2025-2026 mock assessments for grades 3-8 Math, ELA and Science. The data presented was initially based on two years of SchoolNet-reported proficiencies for comparison

purposes and this year's data indicated significant increases in elementary ELA and moderate increases in elementary Math; significant decreases in 5th grade Science. Middle schools indicated moderate decreases in ELA, slight increases in Math, and significant increases in 8th grade Science. Contributing factors for the decline is teacher absenteeism, developmental factors in grades K-2 and potential gaps in conceptual math instruction. The Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) was discussed for MTSS team referrals to EC services, including both teacher-initiated referrals and parent-written requests. The December EC headcount was also reviewed showing the district currently serves 715 students with IEPs but received funding for only 683. The district receives \$1,700 per student and an additional \$4,700 in state funding to support contracted and related services. The department plans to consolidate EC classes to reduce transportation times and improve service deliver. As part of this plan, EC Pre-K will relocate from Pinkston to Clarke, while NC Pre-K will remain at both schools. Future EC placements are projected to be centralized at designated schools, pending approval. The EC Program Restructuring Plan was tabled until the next committee meeting. The IT Department has completed 1,241 work orders and computers/Chromebooks are replaced on a three-year cycle, but is now considering a five-year cycle. Preliminary data related to the post-suspension re-entry meetings were also discussed, including its usage and overall effectiveness. Accurately documenting the number of re-entry meetings are important and counselors and social workers are responsible for entering the data with a recommendation that assistant principals also support this process. The EC Discipline Infractions for the 2025-2026 data was shared.

Community & Business Relations

Mrs. Sandlin shared information from the April 23, 2026 meeting. The recent happenings in the district was shared and the upcoming events are below. The district's website analytics shows that the menu, calendars and VCHS website are the top three sites visited over the last month. The Rodeo Round Up/Transition Experiences held at CFI includes one grade level from Carver with EO Young and New Hope with Dabney, to ensure that students are able to meet and building connections with students from the other school. The summer rental recommendation for facility rentals was shared in the Building and Grounds Committee for approval. An Accessibility Steering Committee is being formed to begin developing processes to meet the federal compliance guidelines. The Board could have the local option to create a policy that the district will adhere to the federal policy and this will be shared with the Policy committee.

May 12 VCEC Senior Awards Day at 9 AM
May 14 End of Year Mentor Celebration at CFI at 3:45 PM
May 14 ESL Family Engagement Meeting at CFI at 5:30 PM
May 16 Brick Ed State Competition in Salisbury, NC
May 22 VCHS Graduation at 9 AM at VCHS
May 22 VCEC Graduation at 5 PM at VGCC

New Business - None

Field Trip Request

Vance County High Class of 2026 will travel on May 16, 2026 and STEM eighth grade class will travel on June 4, 2026 to Kings Dominion in Doswell VA.

Upon motion by Mr. Oxendine and seconded by Mrs. Cobb, the Board unanimously (7-0) approved the Vance County School and STEM Early High School trips to Kings Dominion.

Transfer Requests

Dr. Bennett presented 22 requests to transfer into the district and 2 to be released from the district.

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

Executive Session

Upon motion by Mrs. Lewis and seconded by Mr. Oxendine, 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 7:15 pm.

The Board returned to the open session at 7:44 p.m.

Upon motion by Mr. Oxendine and seconded by Mrs. White, the Board unanimously (7-0) approved to pay the superintendent's twenty-seven annual leave days.

Being no further business, upon motion by Mr. Oxendine and seconded by Mrs. White, the Board voted unanimously (7-0) to adjourn the meeting at 7:44 p.m.

BOARD CHAIR, AYANA F. LEWIS

SECRETARY, CINDY W. BENNETT