Hamlet, North Carolina
August 11, 2026

The Richmond County Board of Education met in regular session on August 11, 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; Scotty Baldwin, Vice-Chairman; Bobbie Sue Ormsby; Jerry Ethridge; Ronald Tillman; Daryl Mason; and Bess Shuler.

The administrators present were Dr. Joe Ferrell, Superintendent; Dr. Kate Smith, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction; Danielle Meeks, Executive Director of Human Resources; Melvin Ingram, Assistant Superintendent of Safety and Operations; Dawn Jordan, Executive Director of Finance; Cameron Whitley, Executive Director of Communications and Policy; and Eva DuBuisson, Board Attorney.

Meeting Commencement
After noting that a quorum was present, Cory Satterfield, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 5:07 p.m. Scotty Baldwin requested a Moment of Silence and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes
On a motion by Jerry Ethridge, seconded by Ronald Tillman, the open session minutes of June 30, 2026, and July 29, 2026, were unanimously approved.

Meet the New Directors, Coordinator, and Assistant Principal
Dr. Ferrell, Superintendent, introduced the district's newly hired leaders: Matthew Thompson, Director of Safety & Security; Brian Cameron, Kendra Cummings, Custodian Services Coordinator; Kendra Cummings, Director of Child Nutrition; Andi Nordberg, Assistant Principal at Fairview Heights Elementary School; and Kevin Wallace, Assistant Principal at Richmond Senior High School. Dr. Ferrell stated that he wanted Board members to have the opportunity to put faces with names and welcomed the new administrators to Richmond County Schools.

New LJ Bell Updates
Ashley Dennis and Blair Bordeaux presented an update on the new LJ Bell Elementary School project. Ashley Dennis explained that the schematic design had been submitted and the project was moving into the design development phase, where the floor plan, functionality, and design details would continue to be refined with input from staff and stakeholders.

Ashley Dennis reviewed the site plan and explained that the existing gymnasium would remain and be incorporated into the new campus. The new school will be a two-story building; however, due to the site's topography, it will appear as a one-story building from the main entrance. The design is intended to maintain familiarity with the original LJ Bell Elementary School. The site will include separate areas for parent drop-off, bus access, staff parking, and fire access, as well as a paved walking pathway and playground areas.

Ashley Dennis reviewed the floor plans, noting that the school will include administrative and guidance suites, a secure entrance vestibule, art and STEM spaces, classroom wings, pre-k classrooms with outdoor play areas, and a two-story media center. The lower level will also include the cafeteria, Exceptional Children classrooms and support spaces, and a multi-purpose room with a stage. The learning stairs will provide both a gathering space and a connection between the two levels. The service drive will connect to the bus loop to allow deliveries to access the cafeteria without using the parent drop-off area.

Ashley Dennis also shared preliminary interior design concepts. She explained that the design remains in the early stages and will continue to develop throughout the design development phase. The concepts focus on creating a warm and welcoming environment that incorporates LJ Bell's bumblebee mascot, blue and yellow school colors, natural textures, and industrial elements that reflect the school's history and character.

Bobbie Sue Ormsby asked about parking and building access for parents and community members attending events in the multi-purpose room.

Ashley Dennis explained that parking would be available in multiple areas, including the bus loop, along the side of the school, and in another parking lot. She also explained that a separate, clearly identified entrance would provide direct access to the multi-purpose room, allowing visitors to enter without traveling through the school.

Blair Bordeaux provided an update on the construction schedule for the new LJ Bell Elementary School. As construction manager, his primary responsibilities during the design phase are to monitor the project’s schedule and costs while the design team develops the project.

After reviewing the schematic design drawings and taking a closer look at the project’s critical path, the team determined that the original goal of opening the school for the fall 2028 school year would require significant compression of both the design and construction schedules. The team explored several ways to accelerate the project, including an early site package that would allow some site work to begin before the full design and regulatory approval process was complete. However, this approach would add complexity and approximately $500,000 in additional costs for items such as erosion control, early grading, demolition of existing slabs, and related site work.

Even with the early site package and other acceleration efforts, the project would still be approximately six to eight weeks behind the schedule needed for an August 2028 opening. The team also determined that achieving the August 2028 target would require significantly reducing the time available for quality control, community input, design review, and cost review. Blair Bordeaux emphasized that the team does not believe compressing these processes would provide the level of quality and service expected for the project.

As a result, the team is considering alternative opening schedules, including a mid-year move-in between November 2028 and January 2029, or a fall 2029 move-in. Blair Bordeaux noted that the project is funded through a needs-based grant, and unused funds return to the State, creating an incentive to maximize the amount of grant funding used. However, pushing aggressively for an August 2028 opening could result in construction continuing after students and staff have already moved into the building. The project team does not believe that having construction work continue while the school is occupied would be in the district’s best interest.

Blair Bordeaux also provided an update on a planned project video documenting the history of LJ Bell Elementary School and the community’s involvement with the school. The video will connect the history and community involvement with the architectural design and vision for the new school.

Finally, Blair Bordeaux reported that demolition is currently targeted to begin in November and wrap up in January. Before demolition can begin, an asbestos survey must be completed and an abatement plan established. Regardless of whether the district ultimately selects a mid-year or fall 2029 move-in, the intent is to complete the asbestos abatement and demolition as an early project package.

Bess Shuler questioned how we are so far behind schedule now.

Bobbie Sue Ormsby expressed concern that the Board had previously been told that removing the existing auditorium from the project site would allow the new school to remain on schedule for an August 2028 opening.

Blair Bordeaux explained that the original schedule was a conceptual schedule and that the project team had since spent significant time examining individual activities and determining how those activities affected the project's critical path. He explained that the site plan approval would involve the Department of Environmental Quality and would occur during a period that includes Thanksgiving and Christmas. Because of the timing of that approval process, there was significant risk that the approval could not occur within the narrow timeframe assumed in the original schedule.

Bobbie Sue Ormsby asked whether the project team had been aware of those potential timing issues when the Board voted to proceed with the project.

Blair Bordeaux explained that over the previous two months the team had been studying the individual activities, asking questions of the design team, identifying the critical path, and determining where time could potentially be recovered. This more detailed review provided a clearer picture of the risks associated with the original schedule.

Bobbie Sue Ormsby questioned whether an August 2028 move-in date is feasible.

Blair Bordeaux stated that achieving an August 2028 opening would require compressing the project into approximately a 12-month schedule. Such compression would increase cost and project difficulty, reduce the number of subcontractors willing or able to participate, and potentially require reductions in the amount of building square footage or number of classrooms.

Scotty Baldwin stated that he was pleased the issue was being identified and addressed early rather than waiting until later in the project. He emphasized that the Board wants quality work and asked whether a mid-year move-in was considered feasible without sacrificing quality.

Blair Bordeaux explained that a mid-year move-in would target a move between Thanksgiving and Christmas, but that option would still involve an early site package and additional complexity. The early site package would require a separate bid package and could result in multiple site contractors working on the project. It would also require certain work to occur out of sequence while design work was still being completed, increasing the overall project risk and potentially increasing costs.

Bess Shuler emphasized that the Board's priority is to construct the best possible school while expressing concern about the impact of the revised LJ Bell Elementary Schol timeline on Monroe Avenue Elementary School.

Chairman Satterfield asked whether the district had experience with a mid-year move into a new school.

Blair Bordeaux noted that Northampton High School is currently using a similar approach, with a move planned between Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Chairman Satterfield noted that the district has time to make necessary calendar adjustments if the Board chose a mid-year move-in for LJ Bell Elementary School.

Blair Bordeaux emphasized that the project team wanted to provide the Board with accurate information regarding the schedule, risks, and unknowns rather than present an overly optimistic timeline that could result in unexpected delays later. He stressed the importance of completing the

design process properly and allowing adequate input from the Board, staff, and community to ensure the new school is designed and constructed to serve the district for many years.

Chairman Satterfield reiterated that the Board wants the highest-quality school possible and does not want to sacrifice quality to meet an overly aggressive opening date.

Blair Bordeaux clarified that the Board did not need to make a final decision on the move-in date at this meeting because the current critical path remains focused on design development. He explained that the move-in date will become more significant as the project progresses.

The Board thanked Ashley Dennis and Blair Bordeaux for the update.

Construction Updates
Steven King presented the following construction updates to the Board:

LJ Bell Elementary School (County Home Rd)	• State Pre-K inspection 8-4-26 • Ready for school to start
Rockingham Middle School Auditorium Remodel	• Painting, concrete floor resurfacing, new seating – Complete • Carpet replacement – To begin week of 8-3-26
East Rockingham Elementary School	• New pre-K classroom
Mineral Springs Elementary School	• Moved 2 pre-K classrooms from mobile units to inside the building
LJ Bell Elementary School (Hawthorne Ave)	• Surplus boiler, chiller, auditorium seats • Play set at Pod relocated to MSES – Complete • 3 of 4 mobile units sold, waiting to be picked up – WIP
Richmond Senior High School	• Roof replacements 10 athletic buildings – Complete • Softball infield grading – PO issued • Baseball additional fencing – Planning • Baseball sound system – Planning • Football/stadium sound system – Planning • Graduation stage – Planning
LJ Bell Elementary School (New School Project)	• Soil borings – Complete • Virtual meeting with staff to review floor plans – 8-4-26 • RCS, Bordeaux, Mosley – working together on schedule and design

Miscellaneous	• Summer floor care and cleaning – Complete • Custodial training – 8-12-26 • Playground mulch and inspections – WIP • Sprinkler & backflow tests – Complete • Stage drape cleaning and fire treatment – WIP • Ice machines cleaning – Complete • Kitchen hood cleaning – Complete • Grounds maintenance – Ongoing • Flushing water lines/fixtures – WIP • Surplus pickup – WIP

*WIP = Work in Progress

Bess Shuler asked about the high school gym sound system, noting that it had malfunctioned during a recent cheer event.

Dr. Ferrell explained that Daktronics has been contacted and will return to inspect the system because the same issue has occurred multiple times.

Dr. Ferrell stated that James Johnson and Joyce McRae were coordinating with Daktronics to determine the cause and appropriate solution.

Daryl Mason questioned the timing and purpose of the recent school inspections, noting that they were conducted while schools were operating with reduced custodial staffing. He explained that 12-month custodians were primarily focused on summer floor work, while 10-month custodians had not yet returned, and questioned whether it was fair to evaluate school cleanliness under those conditions.

Steven King explained that a third-party company conducted spring inspections at each school, assigning scores and providing recommendations for improvement. The purpose of the recent inspection was to assess the current condition of each school and identify any issues that could be addressed before students returned.

He emphasized that summer cleaning is intended to be a thorough, top-to-bottom process. Inspection results and recommendations were shared with principals for follow-up and correction before the start of the school year. The district also plans to conduct inspections throughout the year to monitor cleanliness and ensure that standards are consistently maintained.

Daryl Mason emphasized that his concerns were about having a fair evaluation considering being short staffed during the summer.

Steven King noted that some gym floor work was completed by outside contractors or maintenance staff, reducing the custodial workload in those areas.

Dr. Ferrell explained that the district is in the process of having a custodial staffing audit to evaluate school size, activity levels, and the number of custodial staff assigned to each location. The purpose of the audit would be to establish a baseline for the appropriate custodial staffing level at each school and determine whether staffing is aligned with the size and needs of each facility.

Chairman Satterfield stated that the Board had directed administration to improve school cleanliness and emphasized that inspections were intended to identify areas for improvement rather than blame

individual custodians. He noted that spring inspection ratings had not been satisfactory and that improvements were needed.
Daryl Mason emphasized his support for clean schools while asking that custodians be evaluated fairly based on staffing and workload.

Chairman Satterfield suggested that Board members visit schools together to observe conditions firsthand.

Chairman Satterfield asked about plans to increase the protective barrier following a student being injured by a baseball.

Steven King explained that the existing four-foot fence would be replaced with a 10-foot fence. He explained that the taller fencing would extend approximately 90 feet.

Property Inquiry
Dr. Ferrell presented information regarding district-owned property located behind West Rockingham Elementary School. He explained that an individual had inquired about property. Because of the legal requirements associated with selling district property, Dr. Ferrell asked Eva DuBuisson to provide information regarding the property and the process the Board would need to follow if it chose to pursue a sale.

Eva DuBuisson reviewed the property records and explained that the property consists of three parcels. The parcel containing the school is approximately 22 acres, while the two additional parcels total approximately three acres, including a 2.49-acre parcel and a smaller parcel of approximately 0.6 acres. She stated that the district has owned the school property since 1969 and acquired additional parcels in 2007. Based on the records, the district appears to have purchased the property. Eva stated that she was not certain why the additional property was acquired, although it may have been intended as a buffer around the school. She also noted that there are currently no buildings on the additional parcels.

The Board questioned the possibility of using a sealed-bid process, public auction, or upset bid process.

Eva DuBuisson explained that the upset bid process is commonly used and would allow an initial offer to be advertised for at least 10 days, with additional higher bids being accepted and advertised until no further bids are received. She noted that other methods may also be available and could be researched if the Board decides to pursue a sale.

Bess Shuler questioned the logic of sell the property while the district is considering a potential school closure study for West Rockingham Elementary School.

Dr. Ferrell shared that he brought it to the Board because an individual inquired about it and the Board has to make the decision whether to sell it or not.

Ronald Tillman agreed with Bess Shuler that the Board needs to hold off on selling the land at this time.

The Board also discussed the property’s previous use, access, potential residential development, zoning, and the possibility of placing covenants and restrictions on the property if it were sold.

Eva explained that the Board would need to declare the property surplus before moving forward with a sale. If the Board did not take that action, the interested party could simply be informed that the district is not prepared to pursue a sale at this time.

Following the discussion, the Board reached a consensus to hold off on any action regarding the sale of the property.

Beginning Teacher Support Plan
Tina McNeill, Director of Beginning Teacher Support, presented the Richmond County Schools Beginning Teacher Support Plan for the 2026–2027 school year and requested approval from the Board. She explained that the plan was developed in accordance with North Carolina State Board of Education requirements, provides a three-year induction and support program for beginning teachers. The program includes new teacher orientation, assignment of trained mentors, professional development, coaching, classroom support, and assistance aligned with the North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards and Educator Evaluation System.

Tina McNeill reviewed the support provided to beginning teachers, including regular mentor meetings, classroom observations, collaborative planning, professional reflection, and professional development opportunities. First-year beginning teachers will participate in a minimum of seven required support sessions, while second and third year beginning teachers will participate in a minimum of three. The plan also establishes working condition expectations for beginning teachers, including timely mentor assignments, and limited non-instructional duties.

The program will be monitored by the Beginning Teacher Director and Human Resources Department through evaluations, mentor documentation, beginning teacher feedback, and annual program reviews to ensure beginning teachers receive the support needed to develop their skills and successfully complete the three-year induction process.

On a motion by Jerry Ethridge, seconded by Bess Shuler, the board voted unanimously to approve the beginning teacher support plan as presented.

Advanced Teaching Roles
Danielle Meeks presented the conclusion of the Board's review period regarding the proposed implementation of the Instructional Teacher Leader (ITL) model for the 2026–2027 school year. She explained that the district had invested significant time and effort into the grant application, which is now titled LEAD - Leading Educators' Achievement and Development.

Danielle Meeks stated that the grant would create advanced leadership opportunities for highly effective teachers, provide job embedded support for educators, and expand students' access to excellent teaching. She requested the Board's approval of the district's Advanced Teaching Roles grant application and authorization to proceed with submission.

On a motion by Ronald Tillman, seconded by Bobbie Sue Ormsby, the Board voted unanimously to approve the district's Advanced Teaching Roles grant application and authorize the district to proceed with submission.

Student Services Update & Mental Health Plan
Angela Gallagher, Director of Student Services, provided the Board with an update on Student Services and presented the 2026–2027 Mental Health Plan. She highlighted the district's continued focus on student mental health, attendance, behavior, and access to support services.

Angela Gallagher discussed the development of a Truancy Mediation Council in collaboration with Dr. Kate Smith, Judge Wallace, and Lavonda Jones with the Department of Juvenile Justice. The council will bring families, schools, and community agencies together to identify attendance barriers, connect families with resources, and develop action steps. Participation will be voluntary. Approximately 14% of students in grades K–10 have at least 15 unexcused and unlawful absences, which will be used as a threshold for prioritizing students for mediation. Angela Gallagher noted that the highest numbers of truancy concerns are currently at the elementary level.

The district will continue and expand existing initiatives, including Zones of Regulation, Behavior Problem-Solving Teams, and Friday 411 meetings. Zones of Regulation will expand from Pre-K–1 to grades 2–5 and middle schools. Caitlyn Martin will provide professional development at schools as needed, including training in tiered behavior support, Zones of Regulation, autism spectrum disorders, trauma, anxiety, and depressive disorders. The district will also expand trauma-informed instruction through additional staff training.

Angela Gallagher reported an expansion of school-based mental health services. Five schools will have a full-time mental health worker, while other schools will receive weekly services through Sandhills Best Care.

Bobbie Sue Ormsby asked whether Caitlyn Martin would be responsible for taking the Let's Go Learn professional development topics to schools, including foundations of tiered behavior support and Zones of Regulation.She also asked whether the Let's Go Learn resources were part of a purchased program.

Angela Gallagher explained that Caitlyn Martin will provide training at schools as needed. The district has developed turnkey presentations and resources based on training previously received, and principals may request either schoolwide training or targeted training for specific groups of teachers based on individual school needs. Angela Gallagher further explained that the district works with Amy Adams, a Let's Go Learn consultant, who provides on-demand support to principals and staff, including assistance with problem-solving, data collection tools, strategies, and professional development. She noted that the district has adapted the Let's Go Learn training materials to meet Richmond County Schools' specific needs and has developed a menu of professional development options available to schools.

Ronald Tillman asked whether particular schools or grade levels had higher truancy rates.

Angela Gallagher stated that elementary schools currently have the highest numbers and explained that students will be prioritized based on early intervention needs and historical attendance concerns. She emphasized that the goal is to identify barriers, connect families to resources, and provide coordinated support to improve attendance.

Angela Gallagher also provided legislative updates regarding diabetes education information for parents, implementation of required NC Student Lifeline Information throughout the district, and continued compliance with the Cardiac Emergency Response Plan and AED requirements.

On a motion by Scotty Baldwin, seconded by Jerry Ethridge, the Board unanimously approved the 2026–2027 Mental Health Plan as presented.

Micropurchase Threshold Increase Self Certification

Angel Mabe, Director of Federal Programs, presented the Micro-Purchase Threshold Increase Self-Certification for Board approval. She explained that the district has completed this self-certification in previous years and is requesting approval to continue using a higher micro-purchase threshold for

goods and services purchased with federal funds, provided the prices are determined to be reasonable.

Angel Mabe noted that the threshold remains at $50,000. Board approval would authorize the district to make qualifying purchases up to the threshold without bringing each individual purchase to the Board for approval.

Scotty Baldwin asked how the district determines whether a price is considered “reasonable.”

Angel Mabe explained that the district evaluates purchases based on the circumstances and comparison to fair market prices.

On a motion by Scotty Baldwin, seconded by Ronald Tillman, the board voted unanimously to approve the increased Micro-Purchase Threshold for the 2026-2027 school year.

Federal Programs Plan
Angel Mabe presented the 2026-2027 Federal Programs Plan, including a review of the Comprehensive Needs Assessment process and funding priorities under Titles I, II, III, and IV.

Angel Mabe outlined the annual federal programs timeline, which includes comprehensive needs assessments conducted by the district and schools in the spring, communication and engagement with parents and community partners in the fall, and budget and application approvals during the summer. Data sources for the Comprehensive Needs Assessment included community and parent surveys and feedback, accountability data such as graduation rates, EOG/EOC results, attendance, and discipline data, school-level surveys, school and district software reviews, and the Teacher Working Conditions Survey. Key findings indicated that parents and teachers recognize high expectations for student success; parents value social-emotional learning (SEL) and believe students have access to resources such as STEM opportunities, software, and tutors; teachers and staff feel supported with instructional and behavior needs; software purchases are aligned and purposeful; additional targeted professional development is needed for multilingual learners, exceptional children, and students at risk; attendance remains an ongoing concern; and systems need to be strengthened to address academic and behavior needs.

Title I district-level expenditures include professional development, Instructional Teacher Leaders, middle school instructional coaches, Pre-K teachers and teacher assistants, Pre-K instructional support and related expenses, a homeless liaison, a parent and family liaison, foster student transportation, and academic software and curriculum resources. Angel noted that the majority of Title I funds are allocated directly to schools. Title I school-level expenditures include teachers, instructional coaches, teacher assistants, professional development, computer devices and software, parent and family engagement, tutors, and behavior and attendance support.

Title II expenditures support four class-size reduction teachers, contracted services including SEL training, contracted and teacher mentors, tuition and test reimbursements, professional development such as substitutes and workshops, and 50% of the salary for a behavior interventionist.
Title III expenditures include multilingual learner tutoring, professional development and supplies for multilingual learners, parent and family engagement, and software.
Title IV expenditures support well-rounded education and student support, including STEM facilitators, supplies and materials, field trips, workshops, resources, dropout prevention and SEL initiatives, a student support specialist, a social worker, and 50% of the salary for a behavior interventionist.

On a motion by Bobbie Sue Ormsby, seconded by Daryl Mason, the Board voted unanimously to authorize Dr. Ferrell to act as the district's representative to file the Consolidated Application for these funds.

EC Contracts
Dawn Jordan presented the following Exceptional Children's contracts for board approval:

Contract Title	25-26 Cost	26-27 Cost	Increase	Decrease
Amanda Y. Hill, M.ED., CCC-SLP	$102,000.00	$104,000.00	$2,000.00	
AMN Healthcare, INC.	$173,000.00	$178,000.00	$5,000.00	
Comphealth Medical Staffing	NA	$97,000.00		
Dysphagia & Voice Therapeutics PLLC	$424,000.00	$570,725.00	$146,725.00	
Invision Services, Inc.	$70,000.00	$82,000.00	$12,000.00	
Refine Communication Solutions, LLC.	NA	$108,000.00		
Speech Therapy of the Sandhills	$270,500.00	$317,000.00	$46,500.00	
The Stepping Stones Group LLC	$199,000.00	$225,000.00	$26,000.00	
Margaret A. Zastrow	$160,000.00	$190,000.00	$30,000.00	

Eva DuBuisson shared that she had reviewed the EC contracts the previous week and had informed Dana Mintmier that she would like to add additional language regarding background checks and insurance requirements. Eva DuBuisson requested that the Board approve the contracts subject to final language being added by the Board Attorney.

On a motion by Ronald Tillman, seconded by Jerry Ethridge, the Board voted unanimously to approve the EC contracts, subject to the final language from the Board Attorney.

Policies for Review
Cameron Whitley presented the following policies and a regulation code for a 30-day review.

Policy Numbers/Regulation Code:
- Policy: 2200 Election of Officers Organization of Board
- Policy: 3510 Religious-Based Exemptions from School Programs
- Policy: 5150-7313 Reporting to External Agencies
- Policy: 6220 Operation of School Nutrition Services
- Policy: 6402 Participation by Historically Underutilized Businesses
- Policy: 6420 Contracts with the Board
- Policy: 6442 Vendor List
- Policy: 9115 Prequalification of Bidders for Construction Projects
- Policy: 9120 Bidding For Construction Work
- Policy: 9125 Participation by Minority Business
- Policy: 9300 Naming Facilities

Surplus
Dr. Ferrell requested board approval for the following items to be listed for sale on GovDeals:

TRANSPORTATION: • 1990 Activity Bus (Bus # 8110)	MAINTENANCE: • Auditorium seats (old LJ Bell) • Chiller (old LJ Bell) • Boiler (old LJ Bell)

On a motion by Scotty Baldwin, seconded by Jerry Ethridge, the board voted unanimously to approve listing the surplus items for sale on GovDeals.

Board Members' Comments
Chairman Satterfield
- Agreed with Ronald Tillman that the Board needs to come up with a timeline as to when LJ Bell will open. The Board needs to be able to give everyone information to keep them informed as to what is happening.
- Remember Convocation and TOY on August 19th.

Jerry Ethridge
- August 22, East Rockingham Church of God on Flowers Street will have a small breakfast and then they will divide up and visit all of the schools and the central office for prayer.
- Shared an update regarding the NCSBA Legislative Agenda, explaining that the Board of Directors spent approximately six hours reviewing and discussing the items that will be presented at the Delegate Assembly. The legislative agenda is developed based on input from school board members across the state. Board members will receive a survey containing approximately 20 statements and will be asked to indicate their preferences regarding the proposed legislative priorities.

Scotty Baldwin
- Welcome Back to School REaCH
- Happy 14th Birthday to my son, Memphis!
- Happy 7th Birthday to my daughter, Bristol!
- Remember Convocation on August 19th

Ronald Tillman
- Visited LJ Bell at the former Ninth Grade Academy, it looks good on the outside and playground area.
- Attended several Back-to-School drives
- Transparency on the new LJ Bell school schedule needs to be provided to the community.

Superintendent's Comments
- Visited REaCH today for their first day of school
- August 24th - Opening day of school
- August 12th - New Teacher Mixer at RSHS in the auxiliary gym
- August 19th - TOY/SSOY/POY/APOY breakfast at 8:15 a.m. - Convocation at 10:00 a.m.

Cory 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 Bess Shuler, the board voted unanimously to go into closed session at 7:05 p.m.

On a motion by Jerry Ethridge, seconded by Bobbie Sue Ormsby, the board voted unanimously to reconvene into open session at 7:36 p.m.

Personal
Danielle Meeks presented the personnel report for Board approval.

On a motion by Scotty Baldwin, seconded by Bobbie Sue Ormsby, the board voted unanimously to approve the personnel report.

Daryl Mason discussed the need for a strategy to recruit more minority teachers to Richmond County Schools. He suggested using graduates of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) as recruiters. He explained that recent graduates are familiar with the campus, its culture, and key personnel, which could make them more effective in connecting with prospective candidates and encouraging them to consider Richmond County Schools.

Ronald Tillman recalled that the district had previously participated in job fairs, including the CIAA job fair, where Board members and staff worked with the Human Resources Department to recruit candidates. He agreed that the district should revisit this approach and develop strategies to increase minority teacher recruitment.

Chairman Satterfield noted that the district has Title II funds that could potentially support recruitment efforts.

Daryl Mason emphasized that HBCU recruitment should be an ongoing effort rather than a one-time initiative and encouraged the district to specifically seek out graduates from those institutions to assist with recruitment. He expressed the belief that developing relationships with HBCU graduates could help strengthen the district's efforts to attract more minority teachers to Richmond County Schools.

Ronald Tillman reported receiving several calls from parents concerned about the new restriction preventing parents from going onto athletic fields after games to meet their children. He acknowledged the district's security concerns but encouraged the district to find a designated location that would allow parents to meet their children after games.

It was also recognized that the current practice occurs across multiple sports and grade levels, including high school and middle school events, and therefore any new procedure should be consistent across all schools and sports.

Daryl Mason emphasized that meeting children after games has been a long-standing tradition in Richmond County. He noted that there has never been an incident.

Several possible solutions were discussed, including creating a designated meeting area away from the field and adjusting spectators exit so parents can still see their children before they are transported to the locker room. It was noted that Richmond County's facilities and layouts differ from other schools, so the district may need to develop a solution specific to its facilities.

Cameron Whitley stated that she would reach out to Brad Denson and James Johnson to discuss possible solutions. The group also discussed the need to consider how the policy would apply to all middle school and high school sports, rather than focusing solely on football.

Eva DuBuisson provided the Board with an update regarding the chairperson's ability to make motions and whether the chair must pass the gavel to the vice chair when doing so. She explained that Board Policy 2340 requires the Board to follow Robert's Rules of Order for small boards, with the exception that motions must be seconded and there is no limitation on the chairperson's ability to make motions.

Eva DuBuisson explained that while Robert's Rules allows a chairperson of a small board to make a motion and participate in discussion without passing the gavel, she had previously recommended that the vice chair take over when the chair makes a motion so the chair can participate in the discussion without also having to facilitate the meeting.

Ronald Tillman questioned whether the district's policies should be clarified because another policy states that the vice chair assumes the chairperson's responsibilities in the absence of the chair. Eva DuBuisson explained that she interpreted the policy to mean that the vice chair assumes the chair's duties when the chair is absent but acknowledged that the language could be clarified to address situations in which the chair is actively participating in debate or making a motion.

Ronald Tillman expressed concern that the process could appear unclear to members of the public who are unfamiliar with Robert's Rules and district policy.

Eva DuBuisson recommended that Policies 2210 and 2340 be placed on a future agenda so the Board could review both policies together and determine whether any clarification is needed.

Adjourn
There being no further business, on a motion by Scotty Baldwin, seconded by Daryl Mason, Chairman Satterfield adjourned the meeting at 7:57 p.m.