

BUNCOMBE COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING
 4:00 p.m. – Call to Order – Executive Conference Room
 (Work Session Updates / Closed Session)
Thursday, September 7, 2023
 5:30 p.m. – Minitorium
 Broadcast live on BCS Communications YouTube Account

MINUTES

BE IT REMEMBERED: That the Buncombe County Board of Education met in a regular session on September 7, 2023, at 5:30 p.m. in the Minitorium located at 175 Bingham Road, Asheville, North Carolina and streamed live on YouTube, when the following business was transacted.

The following Board members were present:

Ann Franklin, Madam Chair
 Peggy Buchanan, Member
 Rob Elliot, Member
 Judy Lewis, Member

Kim Plemmons, Member
 Amanda Simpkins, Member
 Amy Churchill, Vice-Chair

Staff present: Dr. Rob Jackson, Superintendent; Joseph Hough, Assistant Superintendent Auxiliary Services; Dr. Jamie Johnson, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Equity & Student Support; Dr. Shane Cassida, Director of Student Services; Robert Frisby, Director of Technology; Tim Fierle, Director of Facilities; Dr. Donna Lanahan, Director of Secondary Education; Jeremy Stowe, Director of Transportation; Shanon Martin, Assistant Director of Student Services; Scott Emory and Joshua Ponder, Technology Support Specialists; Dr. Stacia Harris, Director of Communications; Tim Reaves, Assistant Director of Communications; Hann Henson, Digital Communications Specialist; Lisa Payne, Director of School Nutrition; Carol Edge, Operational Budget Manager; Dean Shatley, Attorney and Kim Matthews, Executive Administrative Assistant

MOTION TO CLOSED SESSION

Ms. Churchill made a motion to enter into closed session at 4:30 p.m. and Ms. Simpkins seconded the motion – the motion was approved unanimously.

The Madam Chair entertained a motion for the Board of Education to enter into closed session pursuant to G.S. 143-318.11 for the following purposes:

- Under subsection (a)(1) to prevent the disclosure of privileged and confidential personnel information pursuant to G.S. 115C-319-321;
- Under subsection (a)(1) to prevent the disclosure of privileged and confidential student information pursuant to 20 U.S.C. 1232g (FERPA);
- Under subsection (a)(3) to discuss matters protected by the attorney-client privilege.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Plemmons made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:20 p.m. and Ms. Simpkins seconded the motion – the motion was approved unanimously.

WORK SESSION UPDATES

Mr. Hough updated the Board on the installation of new solar panels and tentative results from their use. He also answered questions concerning the use of GPS in our school buses and where BCS stands in hiring more drivers.

CALL TO ORDER

PRESENTATION OF COLORS / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE / ROBERSON HIGH SCHOOL Instructed by Master Sergeant Michael McCrae, USAF (retired) and Colonel Tom Bell, USAF (retired).

MOMENT OF SILENCE

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Ms. Plemmons made a motion to approve the agenda and Mr. Elliot seconded the motion – the motion was approved unanimously.

SUPERINTENDENT'S COMMENTS

- Dr. Jackson welcomed everyone to the 2023-2024 school year. He said it had been an incredible beginning to school. He and senior leadership have experienced smiles and joy throughout their visit to all forty-five schools. Dr. Jackson noted the appreciation that principals and teachers expressed for seeing our leaders in the schools. He further stated that being present in the schools is key to understanding at a deeper level how we may best serve and support the students, teachers, staff administrators and school community.

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- Dr. Jackson highlighted some exciting changes in the new school year. First, he noted that the school system will offer free breakfast and lunch for all students. Additionally, BCS is introducing the Middle School Alternative Program, Eagle Academy, located at Community High School. This year we are also launching our Teacher Advisory Council and our Exceptional Children's Advisory Council.
- The recent passage of Session Law 2023-106, formerly known as SB 49, "Parent's Bill of Rights", has created a lot of conversation in the community Dr. Jackson noted. He further went on to say that Buncombe County Schools values parent involvement and indeed, encourages parents to be involved in their child's education and that some requirements of the new law require further guidance from Raleigh prior to implementation. For now, Dr. Jackson reiterated BCS' commitment to supporting each and every student in the school system and to following state law.
- Dr. Jackson stated that the State Board of Education received the 2022-2023 State Assessment Results, which will become official when the State Board votes on them at the October meeting. Mr. Earwood, Director of Testing, will provide a detailed assessment of the results in his annual report at the October meeting. But for now, Dr. Jackson shared some quick take-aways:
 - 1) Twenty schools exceeded growth! This is the largest number since 2015 and possibly ever.
 - 2) Four schools previously designated as low-performing are no longer low-performing.
 - 3) Seven schools improved by an entire letter grade on their School Performance Grade!
 - 4) 77% of our schools met or exceeded growth.

Dr. Jackson went on to say that we know that there is still work to do and areas to improve, we are not satisfied. These results coupled with our highest ever cohort graduation rate and matching our seven-year highest ACT county average, makes him very excited and enthusiastic for the future. We are well on our way to #GreaterHeights!

- Dr. Jackson thanked the BCS team and Board members for all that they do for the students, families, teachers and staff of Buncombe County Schools and welcomed everyone again to an incredible new school year!

GOOD NEWS

- 2023 AIG Teacher of the Year – Jennifer Harmon, Glen Arden Elementary School
- 2023 CTE Teacher of the Year – Justin Gillespie, North Buncombe High School
- 2023 EC Teacher of the Year – Suzi Hoppes, Enka High School
- BCS School Resource Officers Recognition – School Supplies Drive
- NCSBA Silver Bell Award – BCS' Board of Education

CURRICULUM FEATURE

- BCS Summer Programs – Dr. Donna Lanahan, Director of Secondary Education

Dr. Lanahan shared information with the Board on the 2023 Summer Academy accomplishments. She described the activities and instructional focus on literacy in the K-4 program. Dr. Lanahan also explained what the almost one hundred and fifty students in 5th through 8th grades experienced in their Summer Academy. In the High School Summer Academy, Dr. Lanahan highlighted the Foundations of Math course, AB Tech courses and the NCVPS courses offered, as well as the credit recovery courses offered. The efforts from our students and staff culminated in thirty-five students graduating this summer! Dr. Lanahan also shared programs offered by our Career and Technical Education Department that included the Worx Project at Camp Grier, the eSports Camp, the Summer Bridge for the Career Academy, the Hospitality Camp, and the Extended Content for Summer Academy. Dr. Lanahan expressed her appreciation to all staff for the planning and performance of BCS' Summer Academy!

PUBLIC COMMENT

-Mary Anne Tierney, a resident of the Reynolds District, spoke about the Safe Tech NC initiative. She thanked Robert Frisby, Director of Technology, for taking steps to lower the wi-fi emissions in schools. She invited interested parties to join a state-wide webinar to learn more on safety.

-Sharon Broussard, a Haw Creek resident, spoke in support of public education and advocated for safe, equitable, and full funding of public schools. She expressed concern that public school funding is being given away to private schools.

-The following people expressed their concern and dismay that third-party therapists were not going to be allowed to come into the schools to serve exceptional children during the school day: Chelsey Gaddy, a parent from the Reynolds District; Angela Tipton, an Erwin District parent; and Misty Childs, a Reynolds District parent.

-The following persons spoke in opposition to the newly passed State Law 2023-106, "Parents Bill of Rights", stating that they are concerned it will create an unsafe situation for some students: Amber Meredith, an Owen District parent, who also expressed concern over the discontinuation of third-party therapist support in schools; Adrian Parra, executive director of Youth OUTright; Victoria Lyle, an Enka District resident; Reverend Sara Wilcox, a parent in the Reynolds District; Laurin Robertson Czyzyk, a Reynolds District parent; Christi Cortese, an Owen District parent; Erica Deaten, a BCS parent.

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- Pastor Ronald Gates, a resident of Leicester, stated that he expects the Board of Education to uphold the “Parents Bill of Rights” to the very letter of the law and he voiced his strong concern of inappropriate books located in school libraries.

-Courtney Blossman, a Buncombe County resident, expressed concern that CRT has been installed in our schools, teachings of gender identity, and inappropriate books are in the schools.

-Bill Robinson, a resident of Buncombe County, voiced his concern over teen suicides in the school system stating that he doesn’t feel the issue is being addressed.

ACTION AGENDA

- North Buncombe Middle School Re-Roofing Project: Approval of Change Order

Mr. Elliot made a motion to authorize execution of a change order to Southern Metal Systems, Inc. in the amount of \$147,500 to roof the newly constructed security corridor at N. Buncombe Middle School and Ms. Buchanan seconded the motion – the motion was approved unanimously.

- Central Services Renovations: Approval of Construction Manager at Risk (CMAR) and Architect’s Contracts

Mr. Elliot made a motion to approve and execute the Architect/Owner contract with Native Forms Architecture and the CMAR Contract with RYSE Construction for the Central Services Renovations Project and Ms. Churchill seconded the motion – the motion was approved unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA

- Minutes: August 3, 2023 – Regular Meeting Open Session
- Personnel Report
- Approval of BCS’ Individual School’s Length of Day – Policy 3300 School Calendar and Time for Learning
- Advisory Council Members for Approval
- Advisory Council Members: Request to Add
- Valley Springs Middle School: Easement for Duke Energy Progress, LLC
- Charles C. Bell Elementary School: Approval of MSD Easement
- Special Services Sole Source Procurement Request: N2Y, LLC
- 2023 NCSBA Voting Delegates
- **POLICIES FOR SECOND READING**
 - Policy 3101 Dual Enrollment
 - Policy 3620 Extracurricular Activities and Student Organizations
 - Policy 4310 Integrity and Civility
 - Policy 5028/6130/7267 Automated External Defibrillator
 - Policy 5040 News Media Relations
 - Policy 6315 Drivers
 - Policy 7130 Licensure

Mr. Elliot commented on the approval of the school’s Advisory Council members, pointing out that the Board has had a policy since 1992 that encourages parent involvement. He stated that this is a policy that is not state-mandated. He commended BCS administrators for taking the extra steps to involve more parents on their Advisory Councils in order to seek more parental input to support, educate, prepare, and make our students feel safe. Mr. Elliot also drew attention to the fact that there are over five hundred members serving on these councils and he thanked the parents, teachers, and community members for doing so. Ms. Plemmons also expressed her appreciation to Dr. Jackson and BCS’ administrators for their efforts to reach out to parents.

Ms. Simpkins made a motion to approve the items on the consent agenda and Ms. Plemmons seconded the motion – the motion was approved unanimously.

INFORMATION AGENDA

- 2023-2024 Yellow School Bus List
- **POLICIES FOR FIRST READING**
 - Policy 3225/4312/7320 Technology Responsible Use
 - Policy 3228/7323 Use of Personal Technology to Conduct School Business
 - Policy 4130 Discretionary Admission Release Policy
 - Policy 4155 Assignment to Classes
 - Policy 6330 Insurance for Student Transportation Services
 - Policy 6402 Participation by Historically Underutilized Businesses

ANNOUNCEMENTS / FUTURE MEETINGS

- The next Board of Education Regular Meeting will be held on October 5, 2023. Work session updates and Closed Session beginning at 4:00 p.m. in the Executive Conference Room, and the Open Session beginning at 5:30 p.m. in the Minitorium at 175 Bingham Road, Asheville, NC 28806.

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ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Plemmons made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:08 p.m. and Ms. Buchanan seconded the motion – the motion was approved unanimously.

Rob Jackson, Superintendent &
Ex Officio Secretary

Ann B. Franklin, Madam Chair

Minutes for Approval: October 5, 2023
klm