

BUNCOMBE COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING

4:00 p.m. – Call to Order – Executive Conference Room

(Work Session Updates / Closed Session)

Thursday, November 2, 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 November 2, 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; Dr. Jennifer Reed, Associate Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction; Joseph Hough, Assistant Superintendent Auxiliary Services; Dr. Jamie Johnson, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Equity & Student Support; Dr. Donna Lanahan, Director of Secondary Education; Dr. Shane Cassida, Director of Student Services; Clark Wyatt, Director of Maintenance; Jeanann Yates, Director of Federal Programs; Michele Smith, Director of Career Technical Education; Robert Frisby, Director of Technology; Tim Fierle, Director of Facilities; Shanon Martin, Assistant Director of Student Services; Steve Earwood, Director of Testing & Accountability; Scott Emory and Joshua Ponder, Technology Support Specialists; Dr. Stacia Harris, Director of Communications; Tina Thorpe, Chief Finance Officer; Lisa Sharpe, Accounting/Purchasing Manager; Dean Shatley, Attorney and Kim Matthews, Executive Administrative Assistant

MOTION TO CLOSED SESSION

Ms. Plemmons made a motion to enter into closed session at 4:40 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 5:25 p.m. and Mr. Elliot seconded the motion – the motion was approved unanimously.

CALL TO ORDER

PRESENTATION OF COLORS / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE / REYNOLDS HIGH SCHOOL Instructed by Lieutenant Colonel Davide Wise, United States Army (retired) & Sergeant First Class Jamie M. Brown, United States Army (retired)

MOMENT OF SILENCE

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Ms. Lewis proposed that the Board postpone the second reading of the following policies until the December board meeting: Policies 3210, 4335, 4720, 6120 and 7300. Ms. Simpkins made a motion to approve the agenda with Ms. Lewis' proposal included and Ms. Buchanan seconded the motion – the motion was approved unanimously.

SUPERINTENDENT'S COMMENTS

- Dr. Jackson reflected on his first year as superintendent. He stated that over the course of the last year, he has learned much about the school system that he loves. He has discovered that the foundational core values that undergirded the work of the school system decades ago when he was a student in the school system, remain just as central to our work today as they did then. He's also learned that the school system is not the same as it was all those years ago, nor even when he was teaching in the school system. Dr. Jackson said that he is proud of the changes the school system has made over the years because it means the school system is dynamic and thoroughly committed to continuous improvement and to growing in our ability to serve the needs

1644

Open Session Minutes – November 2, 2023

of students and families. He also noted that during this first year he has encountered amazing teachers and staff members throughout our school system who are clearly dedicated to the work they do every single day, and who are clearly making a difference!

- Dr. Jackson noted that the district had an incredible night last week at the Buncombe County Schools District Advisory Council meeting! Members of each of the systems forty-five schools' Advisory Councils came together to add their voice and work to our district strategic plan. Dr. Jackson said that hearing from students, parents, staff members, elected leaders, and community partners is incredibly important in ensuring we are meeting the needs of our students. He was very appreciative to the over two hundred people who gave of their precious time to help our school system continue to achieve [#GreaterHeights!](#)
- A shout-out was given to Black Mountain Primary for being recognized by the state as a "Top Ten ESEA Distinguished School" for their success closing the achievement gap between student groups for two or more consecutive years. Fairview Elementary School was also recognized as a National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence and will be honored in Washington, DC later this month. Dr. Jackson said that there is much to be proud of across our system.
- Dr. Jackson shared his excitement related to the evening's curriculum feature. He reminded everyone that in May when he reported to the board about those things that he had learned during his first one hundred days, among the strengths reported were the students, the staff, the focus on the arts, and our literacy instruction. Tonight, the work of our teachers and students in our classrooms as we grow reading comprehension will be highlighted. Reading is foundational to all learning, and it is this work that creates the opportunity for the historic student academic success that we have witnessed this year.

GOOD NEWS

Dr. Jackson was recognized for his one-year anniversary as Superintendent of Buncombe County Schools. Board members expressed their appreciation for his leadership and dedication to the students, staff, and community of Buncombe County, stating that it is evident in the authenticity of his interactions with all. Members also commented that they valued his positive focus on the good work in public education at both the local and state level. Dr. Jackson thanked the Board for the opportunity to serve as Superintendent and he also thanked the teachers and leadership of BCS who show up for our students every day.

CURRICULUM FEATURE

- Growing Successful Readers in BCS: Our Early Grades Literacy Journey – Dr. Jennifer Reed

Dr. Reed presented information to the Board on the different literacy strategies and programs used in BCS' early grades. She also shared information on proficiency trends and ensuring equitable reading outcomes for all students. Dr. Reed described the evidenced-based training that our teachers have and are continuing to receive in order to instruct the curriculum consistently in order to benefit our students.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- Bill Robinson, a Buncombe County resident, feels that not enough is being done to prevent suicides in the community.
- Courtney Blossman, a resident of Buncombe County, expressed concern over inappropriate books in schools and gender ideology in schools.
- Talia Wilson, a student at Nesbitt Academy, spoke regarding climate change and Green New Deal for Schools campaign.

PUBLIC COMMENT RELATED TO REQUIRED BOARD POLICIES ADDRESSING THE STATE'S PARENTS BILL OF RIGHTS

- Kristin Keliher, a counselor in the Reynolds District, expressed her concern with the impact of Parent's Bill of Rights statutes, stating that she feels that it will hurt students. She also asked the Board to put in place a policy to address suicide prevention.
- Amber King, a social worker in Buncombe County and member of the Campaign for Southern Equality, expressed opposition to the Parent's Bill of Rights, stating that she feels that LGBTQ are being placed in a hostile environment by this statute.
- Chase Harless, a social worker, and member of the Campaign for Southern Equality, said that SB49 will have a harmful impact on LGBTQ students in the state.
- Craig White, supportive schools director of the Campaign Southern Equality, referred to a memo that he had distributed to the Board that expressed Title IX concerns over SB49 and said that the board is not addressing these concerns.
- John Hinson, a resident of the Roberson district, asked the board to reevaluate threat assessment protocols and to make sure that we have enough CPI certified staff in each school, especially elementary schools, so that issues can be addressed.
- Laurin Robertson, a resident in the Reynolds district, stated that SB49 is discriminatory, and it will hurt students and families.
- Teresa Rhinehart, a resident of Buncombe County, feels that schools need to do more to help students who are falling behind in their education.
- Reverend Sara Wilcox, a parent and resident from the Reynolds District, feels that parts of SB49 do not acknowledge the fact that there is potential harm to students due to parent notification laws.

Open Session Minutes – November 2, 2023

ACTION AGENDA

- 2023-2024 Interim Continuation Budget

Ms. Thorpe answered questions from the Board concerning budgetary concerns. These included; a summary of the State and local budget process; a timeline for approving and implementing Phase 2 and 3 of the salary study; the State raise amounts for certified staff, non-certified staff, principals and central office staff; the local supplement increase for teachers; and the timing of retro pay for employees. Ms. Thorpe stated that the Finance Team is working to bring the 2023-2024 Budget to the Board at the December meeting for approval. Madam Chair and Dr. Jackson thanked Ms. Thorpe and her team for their efforts.

Ms. Simpkins made a motion to approve the 2023-2024 Interim Continuation Budget as presented and Ms. Lewis seconded the motion – the motion was approved unanimously.

- Approval of Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College Memorandum of Understanding

Ms. Churchill made a motion to approve the revised MOU and agreement of contracted services between BCS and AB Technical Community College and Ms. Simpkins seconded the motion – the motion was approved unanimously.

Ms. Lewis thanked those involved in this MOU on behalf of the AB Tech Board of Trustees.

CONSENT AGENDA

- Minutes: October 5, 2023 – Regular Meeting Open Session
- Personnel Report
- AC Reynolds High School: Request to Use Athletic Capital Outlay Funds
- North Buncombe High School: Request to Use Athletic Capital Outlay Funds
- Advisory Council Members: Request to Change
- **POLICIES FOR SECOND READING**
Policy 6220 Operation of Student Nutrition Services

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

The following policies were removed from the Consent Agenda and tabled until the December 7, 2023 Board of Education meeting: Policy 3210 Parental Inspection of and Objection to Instructional Materials; Policy 4335 Criminal Behavior; Policy 4720 Surveys of Students; Policy 6120 Student Health Services; and Policy 7300 Staff Responsibilities

INFORMATION AGENDA

- **POLICIES FOR FIRST READING**
Policy 1310/4002 Parental Involvement
Policy 2400 Board Policies
Policy 3540 Comprehensive Health Education Program
Policy 7650 Employee Travel and Other Expense Reimbursement
Policy 7800/1610 Professional and Staff Development
Policy 7810 Evaluation of Licensed Employees
Policy 7815 Evaluation of Non-Licensed Employees

ANNOUNCEMENTS / FUTURE MEETINGS

- Board of Education members will participate in the North Carolina School Boards Association Annual Conference, November 13 – 15 at the Koury Convention Center in Greensboro, NC.
- The next Board of Education Regular Meeting will be held on December 7, 2023. The Board will hold a Work Session beginning at 2:00 p.m. in the Yeager Room and Closed Session beginning at 4:00 p.m. in the Executive Conference Room. The Open Session will begin at 5:30 p.m. in the Minitorium at 175 Bingham Road, Asheville, NC 28806.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Buchanan made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:10 p.m. and Ms. Simpkins seconded the motion – the motion was approved unanimously.

Rob Jackson, Superintendent &
Ex Officio Secretary

Ann B. Franklin, Madam Chair

Minutes for Approval: December 7, 2023
klm