

Henderson County Board of Public Education

MINUTES

August 8, 2016

The Henderson County Board of Public Education met in a regular business meeting on August 8, 2016 in the Boardroom of the Administrative Offices located at 414 Fourth Avenue West, Hendersonville, N.C.

Board Members Present: Ervin Bazzle, Chairperson; Mary Louise Corn, Vice Chairperson; Colby Coren, Lisa Edwards, Amy Lynn Holt, Joshua Houston and Rick Wood.

Administrative Staff Present: Bo Caldwell, Ed.S., Superintendent; John Bryant, Ed.D., Associate Superintendent, Administrative Services; Kathy Revis, Ed.D., Assistant Superintendent, Curriculum & Instruction; Rick Fender, Chief Technology Officer; Jan King, Ed.D., Chief Professional Development Officer; Scott Rhodes, Chief Human Resources Officer; Bernie Sochia, Chief Finance Officer.

Attorney Present: Dean Shatley

CALL-TO-ORDER – PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairperson Ervin Bazzle called the meeting to order at 6:40 p.m. and requested that everyone present stand as he led those in attendance in the pledge of allegiance to the American Flag.

AGENDA APPROVAL

Mrs. Mary Louise Corn moved that the agenda be approved as presented, seconded by Mr. Rick Wood. (*Unanimously approved.*)

RECOGNITIONS

Schools Win Energy Conservation Awards

Dr. John Bryant reported that Henderson County Public Schools have worked extremely hard over the years to conserve energy, as energy rates continue to increase and energy conservation becomes more and more important. The district enforces compliance with approved energy guidelines, updates equipment and facilities, and continues to monitor and track energy consumption using EnergyMasterPro – a web-based software application. Specifically developed for use in public school systems, EnergyMasterPro enables us to track, analyze and manage energy consumption and expenses. Additionally, audits provide information we need to improve our employee-based energy management program. Tonight we honor energy-saving schools in two different categories: Total Energy Savings compared to the baseline set in 2010 and an MVP – Most Valuable Participant – for having the best energy audits for 2015-16. *Elementary:* MVP Awards for Best Audit go to Fletcher Elementary and Etowah Elementary; Total Energy Savings Award goes to Dana Elementary; *Middle:* MVP Award for Best Audit goes to Rugby Middle; Total Energy Savings Award goes to Hendersonville Middle; *High:* MVP Award for Best Audit goes to West Henderson High; Total Energy Savings Award goes to North Henderson High.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT – SAFETY BELTS AND SCHOOL BUSES

Dr. John Bryant presented information regarding safety belts on school buses. He explained reasons why there is a need for safety belts on school buses. Current Federal Standards require large school buses, defined as a gross vehicle weight rating (GVWR) of over 10,000 pounds, to provide crash protection through “compartmentalization”. Compartmentalization refers to the design of school bus compartments to absorb force impacts from child passengers both forwards and backwards. Research has shown compartmentalization to be effective in protecting bus occupants in frontal and rear-end impacts, but students must be properly seated and remain in their “compartments” to be protected. Seat belts, especially lap and shoulder combination seat belts, provide improved crash protection and are beneficial especially in side-impacts and rollovers. Over the past 10 years (2005-2014) two-thirds of the school buses in crashes were involved in frontal or rear end collisions. A third of the crashes were side impacts or rollovers. Over eighty percent of the students seriously injured as school bus passengers were in side impact or rollover crashes that compartmentalization is not designed for. The use of seat belts can provide a reduction in injuries to out-of-position students kept in their seats by their seat belts. The use of seat belts in school buses can help to reinforce seat belt educational messages aimed at school-age children with the carry-over effect helping to remind children to use seat belts in cars. The Highway Transportation Safety Administration’s goal is a three-point belt for every child on every bus. HCPS implementation sites are Atkinson Elementary School and Upward Elementary School. Both schools have three school buses that have been replaced by three buses that have three-point safety belts. That means that all students who ride buses at those schools will have safety belts. According to Transportation Section Chief Derek Graham, with the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, “We are hearing about a shortage of school bus drivers across the state, compounded in part by drivers leaving the profession due to discipline issues on the bus. We believe this technology can improve student behavior on the bus, let the driver focus on driving, and at the same time provide enhanced safety for student passengers.” Mrs. Mary Louise Corn asked why we have six buses, not four or ten or seven. Dr. Bryant explained that the state of North Carolina, as part of this implementation program, is providing the school systems with the option to select school buses with safety belts as part of their replacement. We were scheduled to get six new buses, and at no additional cost, the state provided us with buses with safety belts. Dr. Bryant stated that to retrofit 100 school buses in our fleet would cost between \$15,000 and \$20,000 per bus. There is concern that with retrofitting buses there may be structural integrity issues. Mrs. Corn clarified that the six buses are new buses we were scheduled to get anyway and we chose to get ones with safety belts at no extra cost. Mrs. Lisa Edwards said that the seat belts were integrated into the seats and to retrofit our buses we would probably have to have new seats. Dr. Bryant said that it would involve complete replacement and then the structural integrity of the floor comes into question. Mr. Rick Wood asked if future new buses would have seat belts. Dr. Bryant said that the Department of Public Instruction has asked us to be prepared to decide if we want them in the future. Mrs. Amy Lynn Holt asked how we would accommodate small children getting on buses and using their safety belts. Dr. Bryant explained that there would be training at the beginning of and during the school year to teach students how to buckle the safety belts. He said there would also be an additional staff component to assist students as they load the buses to see that students are properly belted. Mrs. Lisa Edwards stated that most kids are used to wearing seat belts in cars. Mrs. Amy Lynn Holt said that kids up to age 8 or 80 lbs. are in booster seats and their parents buckle a lot of them in.

Mrs. Edwards said that there are booster seats available in the first two rows of seats on the bus

to be used if needed.

BOARD CHAIRPERSON'S OBSERVATION

None

BOARD MEMBERS' OBSERVATIONS

Mr. Rick Wood asked to reserve his comments until after public comments.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mr. Charles Evans, bus driver at Atkinson, spoke as an advocate for the bus drivers of Henderson County. He expressed his concern about the pay scale of bus drivers. Mr. Evans stated that bus driver pay has been overlooked for decades. He stated the pay has been the same for over thirty years. Recently, pay has increased slightly; however, the number of years has also increased in which to reach the maximum rate of pay. Mr. Evans gave examples of pay scales in other counties and states and made comparisons to Henderson County's bus driver pay scale. He said that other school systems guarantee number of hours for their bus drivers, some offer benefits. Mr. Evans asked the board members to take what he said to heart and to rectify the bus drivers pay in Henderson County. Mr. Ervin Bazzle asked Superintendent Bo Caldwell to take a look at the bus driver pay. He stated that bus driver pay is set by the state and increases in other counties were paid by local supplement.

BOARD MEMBERS' OBSERVATIONS

Mr. Rick Wood said that we seem to constantly have a problem filling bus driver positions. He said that just raising the salary may not take care of the problem. Buncombe County raised bus driver pay last year and it did not seem to help. He said that the State is giving bus drivers a 1.5% increase. He noted that we currently have 17 bus driving vacancies and the need is urgent. Mr. Rick Wood would like to look at increasing bus driver pay a little with local supplement. Mr. Wood stated that some teacher assistants will be making less money this year due to receiving a one-time bonus last year. Mrs. Lisa Edwards commented that bus driver pay versus responsibility does not match up. She would like to see something done for our bus drivers.

CONSENT AGENDA

Mr. Bazzle cited the Board's receipt of the Consent Agenda. Mrs. Lisa Edwards moved that the Consent Agenda be approved as presented. Mrs. Amy Lynn Holt seconded. *(Unanimously approved.)*

Prior to the meeting, Board members received documentation relative to the Consent Agenda as follows:

Meeting Schedule

HCBPE School Visit *[Wednesday, September 7, 2016, 12:00 p.m., Atkinson Elementary]*

HCBPE Regular Business Meeting *[Monday, September 12, 2016, 6:30 p.m., (Boardroom)]*

Minutes

June 30, 2016 *(Special Called Business Meeting, End of the Year Matters)*

Personnel *(as presented in closed session)*

Student Acceptances/Releases *(as presented in closed session)*

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

APPROVAL – NEW POLICY #912 “SCHOOL BUS SAFETY BELTS ” (FIRST READING)

Dr. John Bryant presented proposed Policy 912, School Bus Safety Belts, to the Board for review as six (6) new school buses, outfitted with three-point seat belts, will go in to service in the upcoming school year. The policy requires the use of seat belts by all students on Henderson County school buses so equipped. Mrs. Lisa Edwards asked should we have a process about warning a student who habitually refuses to wear a seat belt. Dr. Bryant stated that we have drafted a local procedures guideline that we are providing to administrators. Mrs. Mary Louise Corn said that it would typically be in the student code of conduct. Mrs. Corn asked about the sentence that the bus driver shall be charged with applying and enforcing this policy requirement, but yet will not be held liable. Mrs. Corn wanted to be sure it was understood that the bus driver would be responsible for enforcing seat belts when students first load the bus, that after the bus is moving would be dealt with according to the student discipline code of conduct guidelines. Mrs. Amy Lynn Holt moved that the Henderson County Board of Public Education approve Policy 912, School Bus Safety Belts, for first reading. Seconded by Mr. Colby Coren. *(Unanimously approved.)*

APPROVAL –“MEALS ON THE BUS” GRANT REQUEST

Dr. John Bryant presented a Community Foundation of Henderson County Grant Application for approval to purchase a retired school bus from HCPS Transportation Department to use for the “Meals on the Bus” program. The bus would enable HCPS Child Nutrition to serve meals in the summer to children who have difficulty with transportation to open sites. Mrs. Mary Louise Corn asked what we usually do with retired school buses. Dr. John Bryant said they are often purchased by different agencies, sometimes churches or other community organizations. Mr. Bo Caldwell said that depending on their mileage, we put some of the buses in the activity bus fleet to use locally. Mr. Rick Wood asked if we keep some old buses for parts, too. Mr. Caldwell said yes. Mr. Ervin Bazzle asked if other than supporting the request, is it all we do. Dr. John Bryant said yes the board would be approving the request. Mrs. Amy Lynn Holt asked if this would be for next summer. Dr. John Bryant said if approved that would be the goal. Superintendent Caldwell explained that they would take an old bus, remove some seats, put in a little counter so when the bus pulls up the children can go on the bus and eat on the bus. Mrs. Mary Louise Corn said it is a great idea and that she is involved in doing this with her church in Buncombe County. School food service prepares the food and delivers it to the kids, but the kids have to sit in the grass to eat. Mr. Bo Caldwell explained that the bus could be retrofitted because it is not hauling children. The bus pulls up, parks, kids get on and eat, then the bus unloads them and drives to another site. Mr. Ervin Bazzle asked if our garage would make sure the bus runs. Mr. Bo Caldwell said yes. Mrs. Mary Louise Corn moved that the Henderson County Board of Public Education approve the Meals on the Bus Grant Application request. Seconded by Mr. Rick Wood. *(Unanimously approved.)*

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORTS

ENROLLMENT UPDATE - FLEXIBLE QUARTER/EARLY COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL

Dr. John Bryant reported that our year-round schools have already started school. Bruce Drysdale Elementary has 470 students attending, Hendersonville Elementary has 425 students. Henderson County Early College has a total of 199 students. Mr. Rick Wood asked how those numbers compare to last year. Dr. John Bryant said that Bruce Drysdale is 52 students fewer.

The greatest reduction is in Kindergarten. Hendersonville Elementary is a couple of students different and Early College is seven students fewer.

SUMMER SCHOOL UPDATE

Dr. Kathy Revis reported that in the Summer School Retest Program we had 592 students attend in grades K-5, 867 assessments were given, and the number of proficient assessments was 261. In grades 6-8 there were 632 students attending, 1013 assessments given, 237 were proficient. In grades 9-12 there were 140 students attending, 144 assessments given, and 14 proficient. Overall we had 25% more students testing proficient. Dr. Revis said that this summer the high school principals managed their own credit recovery program. Attendance was up to 182 students. We had 235 credits recovered in that program. The last program was the Read to Achieve program, which had 403 students attend a four-week reading program. Dr. Kathy Revis reported that we have been concerned for a couple of years now about our end of grade literacy assessments. We see a trend that more students at the end of third grade are not meeting state standards. Two years ago we started examining what is going on in literacy and found out through our walkthroughs that we are doing a lot of different things with literacy framework and phonics. Last fall the state department released data on K-2 assessments and we compared our data with the state. Our K-2 students are performing at grade level or maybe a little bit better. Dr. Kathy Revis stated that this was unacceptable when students in grades 3 – 12 are 8th in the state and in grades K-2 students are at state averages. Dr. Revis said that she brought in Dr. Thompson, who brought us the latest research about what exemplary schools are doing with literacy framework. Dr. Thompson has been on four school visits and walkthroughs and talked about how we can improve. Dr. Revis said there are five components of an effective reading program: phonics, fluency, reading comprehension, writing, and vocabulary instruction. We currently have five different phonics approaches, not consistent with each other. After examination of the five phonics programs, Letterland was selected and agreed upon by the principals. Dr. Revis stated that by the beginning of this year all K-1 teachers will be trained in Letterland and will have the materials in their classrooms. All special education teachers and ESL teachers will also have the training. Superintendent Caldwell said that he has asked Dr. Kathy Revis to present Letterland as one of our board meeting program highlights. He asked her to bring in some teachers and students to demonstrate a couple of short lessons to give us a better understanding of the phonics program. Mr. Ervin Bazzle asked about the schools that are in session and Dr. Kathy Revis said that they are on board with the program.

INNOVATIVE HIGH SCHOOL BUILDING UPDATE

Dr. John Bryant provided information about the innovative high school construction project. He stated that Clark Nexsen and the architects have assured us that the building is scheduled to be complete in August of 2017. Dr. Bryant stated that the architects have been exceptional in working with our teachers, staff, and leadership as well as the county and community college. He also commended the community college for their work in putting this project together. Mr. Ervin Bazzle had some concern about breaking ground in October and starting school on August 4th, but noted that we have been assured that this is going to happen.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS - LOCAL CURRENT EXPENSE/OTHER RESTRICTED FUNDS *(as of June 30, 2016)* / *(as of July 31, 2016)* / CAPITAL OUTLAY *(as of June 30, 2016)* / ENTERPRISE FUND *(as of June 30, 2016)*

Mr. Bernie Sochia reported results of operations of the Local Current Expense and Other Restricted Funds for the 2015- 16 fiscal year as of June 30, 2016: For June, \$2,044,785 was received in revenues and \$4,080,967 was incurred in expenditures. That brings the year to date

totals to \$25,674,496 in revenues and \$25,376,376 in expenditures. A positive balance of \$298,120. He also reported results of operations of the Local Current Expense and Other Restricted Funds for the 2016- 17 fiscal year as of July 31, 2016: For July \$2,104,587 was received in revenues and \$1,838,929 was incurred in expenditures. This includes both the new monthly county appropriation and salary schedules as changed in the State budget law for 2016-17. Results of operations of the Capital Outlay Fund for the 2015-16 fiscal year as of June 30, 2016: The Capital Outlay Fund ended the year with \$1,545,049 in revenues and \$1,444,977 in expenditures. Of the expenditures, \$913,428 was for facility improvements as part of the planned Capital budget. The remainder was for the State's entries on the leases for the replacement yellow buses, which flow through our books. Results of operations of the Enterprise Fund for the 2015-16 fiscal year as of June 30, 2016: (a) the Child Nutrition program ended the year with revenues totaling \$7,502,502 and expenditures totaling \$7,245,442. This is a positive position of \$257,061, and (b) the Child Care program ended the year with expenditures of \$1,087,378 exceeding revenues of \$1,060,477 by \$26,901. This is less use of fund balance than the budgeted amount of \$52,570. Superintendent Caldwell added that he has asked Dr. John Bryant and Mr. Bernie Sochia to carefully watch the child care program because this year they had to go to fund balance to balance the child care budget.

CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES

Superintendent Caldwell cited the Board's receipt of the Calendar of Activities for the months of August and September 2016. Mr. Caldwell reported that we currently have three schools in session. He mentioned that on August 9th and 10th we have a 2-day administrators' retreat. Dr. Jan King explained that the retreat will consist of two days of intense professional learning. Our attorney will bring us legal updates and we will also work on leadership development tools and best practices for the school environment. Mr. Caldwell reported that not listed on the calendar is August 19th, Day of Action. Dr. John Bryant explained that the Day of Action is a partnership between Henderson County Public Schools, United Way of Henderson County, and Pardee UNC Healthcare. They are supporting volunteer activities at our 23 schools on August 19th. Pardee and many local businesses have given their employees paid leave time to volunteer at our schools on this day to help them be prepared for the school year. Kickoff starts at 8:00 a.m. at Hendersonville High School. All the volunteers (over 400) have signed up to go out to the schools to work between 9:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. Mr. Rick Wood stated this is a great thing and saluted the partnership for working on this. He added that if anyone would like to volunteer they could go to the United Way website to sign up, and said they will also collect school supplies and food items at 8:00 a.m. Mr. Caldwell asked Dr. Kathy Revis to explain what is happening on August 24th. Dr. Kathy Revis explained that on August 24th all of our schools will be engaged in a day-long teacher professional development. Elementary schools will be learning about best practices for literacy, middle schools will study literacy comprehensive strategies, and high schools will concentrate on blended learning professional development.

GENERAL OPERATIONS

None

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mrs. Lisa Edwards moved that the meeting be adjourned. Seconded by Mrs. Amy Lynn Holt (*Unanimously approved at 8:00 p.m.*)

Minutes approved: September 12, 2016