

Henderson County Board of Public Education

MINUTES

February 10, 2020

The Henderson County Board of Public Education met in a regular business meeting on February 10, 2020, in the Boardroom of the Administrative Offices located at 414 Fourth Avenue West, Hendersonville, N. C.

Board Members Present: Blair Craven, Chairman; Rick Wood, Vice Chairman; Michael Absher; Dot Case; Mary Louise Corn; Jay Egolf and Amy Lynn Holt.

Administrative Staff Present: Bo Caldwell, Ed.S. Superintendent; John Bryant, Ed.D., Associate Superintendent, Administrative Services; Jan King, Ed.D., Assistant Superintendent, Curriculum & Instruction; and Rick Fender, Chief Technology Officer.

Administrative Staff Absent: Scott Rhodes, Chief Human Resources Officer and Bernie Sochia, Chief Finance Officer

Attorney Present: Chris Campbell

CALL TO ORDER – PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chairman Blair Craven called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and requested that everyone present stand as the North Henderson High School Air Force JROTC posted the colors. Mr. Craven led those in attendance in the pledge of allegiance to the American Flag. The AFJROTC unit is under the direction of Colonel Eric Rundquist.

AGENDA APPROVAL

Mr. Craven acknowledged the receipt of the meeting agenda and asked for a motion to approve. Mrs. Mary Louise Corn moved that the agenda be approved as presented, seconded by Mr. Rick Wood (*Unanimously approved.*)

RECOGNITIONS

Dr. Jan King, Assistant Superintendent for Instructional Services, recognized the WNC Regional Scholastic Art & Writing Awards Gold & Silver Key Winners from the high schools. She stated that sixteen students from three of Henderson County's traditional high schools earned a total of 2 Gold Keys, 5 Silver Keys, and 18 honorable mentions in the 2020 WNC Regional Scholastic Art & Writing Awards. Student artwork earning Regional Gold Keys will advance to the national competition, and artwork earning Regional Gold and Silver Keys will be on display at the Asheville Art Museum through March 9.

Dr. John Bryant, Associate Superintendent, recognized Mrs. Molly McGowan Gorsuch, HCPS Public Information Officer, as a N.C. School Public Relations Association 2019 "Blue Ribbon Awards" Winner. Molly McGowan Gorsuch received seven Blue Ribbon Awards from the N.C. School Public Relations Association for her marketing, advertising, and public relations work in the 2018-19 school year. She earned four gold awards in the "Marketing," "Digital Media Engagement," and "Excellence in Writing" categories; two silver awards in "Marketing" and "Excellence in Writing," and one bronze award in "Publications."

Principal Chad Auten recognized students from Mills River Elementary School as the Kiwanis Spelling Bee Champions. Coached by Tamara Byrd, Holly English, and Becky Marks, Mills River Elementary spelling bee team took 1st Place at the 2020 Kiwanis Spelling Bee. Team members included Audrey Andes, Liam Barrett, Daniel Debiase, Ellie Drake, Walker Houlihan, and Abril Nicolas-Miranda.

Principal Peggy Marshall presented members of the Apple Valley Middle School Wrestling team who recently completed an undefeated season on Feb. 1, 2020 and won both the 2020 Blue Ridge Conference's Dual Team Championship and Individual Tournament with a total of 207.5 points.

Principal Luke Manual presented members of the Hendersonville Middle School boys basketball team that completed an undefeated season (15-0) and won the 2020 Blue Ridge Conference Tournament Championship 46-35 over Rugby Middle on Feb. 3, 2020.

Principal Bobby Wilkins presented the Boys & Girls Club of Henderson County 2020 Youth of the Year winner from Hendersonville High School, Xzavier Jacobs. Jacobs was named the 2020 Youth of the Year for his contributions to family, community, school and Club, and for overcoming personal challenges. He received a \$1,000 scholarship and serves as a community leader and teen ambassador.

Mr. Wilkins also recognized, Erin Price who has been named the WLOS Scholar-Athlete of the Year for 2019-20. She carries a 4.476 GPA, participates in several clubs on campus, and works annually with a local charity to make backpacks for students in need. As Scholar-Athlete of the Year, Price has won a \$3,500 scholarship sponsored by Arby's to a college of her choice, where she plans to major in investigative journalism.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

Amanda Jones, HCPS Child Nutrition Supervisor and Molly McGowan Gorsuch, HCPS Public Information Officer, presented information regarding the 2019 Comfort Food initiative which provided meals to students over our winter break. They stated that due to a generous donation from the Grossman family, we were able to provide meals to students throughout Christmas break who depend on free and reduced meals and face food insecurity. Ms. Jones said that she coordinated employees to work over the holiday break, plan the meals and transportation of the food to the pre-designated locations. Ms. McGowan Gorsuch added that the school system provided press releases so that students and parents would know the dates and scheduled times of food delivery. With help from the Education Foundation, funds were donated for employee paychecks, food purchases and marketing materials. Through these combined efforts, we were able to provide: 1059 Meals on the Bus lunches; 1211 Boys & Girls Club lunches; and 250 Family holiday meals. Total donated funds were \$21,200 and food, labor and marketing costs were \$13,855. They stated there is a \$7345 funds balance.

Since this is the first time providing this service, Ms. Jones stated that they were pleased with the overall outcomes but feel future improvements could be made by increasing awareness in the community and the transporting of the family meals. They stated that the program is donation dependent so in order for the program to continue, funds must be secured from outside sources. They would like to develop a budget for the program costs, explore bus route expansion and the possibility of additional sites for food delivery.

BOARD CHAIR OBSERVATIONS

Mr. Craven mentioned the *WLOS Person of the Week* report on Mr. Roderick Brown, Assistant Principal at the Innovative High Schools. Mr. Craven said it was a nice story and that Mr. Brown represented the system well. He added, Mr. Brown is doing a great job for us.

BOARD MEMBER OBSERVATIONS

Ms. Dot Case stated that the second chance breakfast program is a wonderful idea and she is very happy that schools are offering it; she hopes other schools can offer it in the near future. She also thanked all of the students and staff members who sent cards and other goodies to Board members for School Board Appreciation Month. Ms. Case added that since the state hasn't passed a budget, she feels the school board should do something representing our teachers, so they know the Board supports them. Mr. Rick Wood agreed. Board Chair, Blair Craven asked Mr. Caldwell to draft a letter to be sent on behalf of the Board urging the General Assembly to pass the budget and to provide the teacher's wage increase as promised. Mr. Wood added that the letter should emphasize that we urge them to negotiate with each other, work together to find a compromise and to stop using our teachers as pawns. Board members agreed that non-certified staff salaries should be addressed in the letter as well.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

CONSENT AGENDA

Mr. Blair Craven cited the Board's receipt of the Consent Agenda presented for approval upon recommendation of the Superintendent. Prior to the meeting, Board members received documentation relative to the Consent Agenda as follows:

Meeting Schedule

1. HCBPE School Visit [*Wednesday, March 4, 2020, 12:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. (Central Office, Room 1A)*]
2. HCBPE Regular Business Meeting [*Monday, March 9, 2020, 6:30 p.m., (Boardroom)*]

Minutes

1. January 8, 2020 (*School Visit, Hendersonville Elementary*)
2. January 13, 2020 (*Regular Business Meeting*)

Personnel (*as presented in closed session*)

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

Records Retention and Disposition Schedule (*as presented in closed session*)

Budget Amendment *(as presented in closed session)*

Mrs. Amy Lynn Holt moved that the Consent Agenda be approved as presented. Mr. Michael Absher seconded. *(Unanimously approved.)*

OLD BUSINESS

- A. Dr. John Bryant presented Policy 4240/7312 – Child Abuse and Related Threats to Child Safety for second reading and final approval. He stated there had been no changes to the policy since it was presented for first reading in January.

Mr. Michael Absher made a motion to approve Policy 4240/7312 as presented. Ms. Dot Case seconded. *(Unanimously approved.)*

NEW BUSINESS

- A. Dr. John Bryant presented the Child Care Program Rate Increase request for board review. He stated that based on increased program costs for operation and historical revenue, the Henderson County Child Care program proposes a rate increase beginning July 1, 2020. Dr. Bryant presented three options for the board to consider:

Option 1, PSAM rates would be \$5.00 per day and PSPM would be \$13.00 per day with weekly rates of PSAM \$25.00 and PSPM \$65.00.

Option 2, would PSAM rates would be \$6.00 per day and PSPM would be \$13.00 per day with weekly rates of PSAM \$30.00 and PSPM \$65.00.

Option 3, PSAM rates would be \$6.00 per day and PSPM would be \$14.00 per day with weekly rates of PSAM \$30.00 and PSPM \$ 70.00.

In all of the options, fees for PSPlus remain will at \$125.00 per week.

Dr. Bryant stated that enrollment numbers were taken into consideration while formulating the suggested options and that our goal is to stair step our way to a revenue neutral position, even if enrollment numbers were to decrease. He stated that if no rate change is implemented, the program could run on its cash reserves for 4 more years. At this time, the program is losing approximately \$70,000 annually. Mrs. Amy Lynn Holt asked what the fees were for surrounding organizations that offer this type of child care? Dr. Bryant stated he didn't have those numbers but he feels we are the lowest price in town. Mr. Blair Craven and Mr. Jay Egolf feel that there may be other organizations that we could turn this program over to and eliminate it from the school system programs. Mrs. Mary Louise Corn stated that we should try the rate increase first before giving up on the program and she would like more information on how other organizations would plan to run the program and what their program locations would be before making any decisions. Mr. Dot Case said she did not want to end the program because it would cause latch-key kids throughout the county. Board members agreed that fees should have been raised intermittently over the years and that would have been beneficial to the program. Superintendent Caldwell added that raising the Child Care Program rates over the next three years is a stop gap measure enabling us to keep the program viable while the administrative staff investigate options throughout the community. Dr. Bryant added that we value our loyal employees and we support them by suggesting small increases to the program. Mr. Craven directed Superintendent Caldwell to send out RFPs (Request for Proposal) to organizations in Henderson County for the Board to review its options. The School Board members were unanimous in selecting Option 3 for approval; Option 3, PSAM rates would be \$6.00 per day and PSPM would be \$14.00 per day with weekly rates of PSAM \$30.00 and PSPM \$ 70.00.

After discussion, Mrs. Amy Lynn Holt made a motion that the Henderson County Board of Public Education approve Option #3 for the Child Care Program fee increases, as presented. Mr. Rick Wood Seconded. *(Unanimously approved.)*

- B. Dr. John Bryant presented the Out of County Tuition Rate Increase request for board review. He stated that the out of county tuition is based on Henderson County's Local Current Expense per student; therefore the tuition fee for the 2020-2021 school year should be increased by \$100.00 from \$1900.00 to \$2000.00 per year.

Board members unanimously agreed that the rate should be increased.

Mrs. Mary Louise Corn made a motion that the Henderson County Board of Public Education approve the increase to Out of County tuition from \$1900.00 to \$2000.00 for the 2020 – 2021 school year. Mrs. Amy Lynn Holt seconded. *(Unanimously approved.)*

- C. Superintendent Bo Caldwell, presented the NC Lottery Application for approval. He stated that the Public School Building Capital Fund/N. C. Education Lottery Application presented is to request funds currently available (\$229,080.82) to pay debt service on the 2008 Installment Financing Contract debt issue for the

Hillandale and Mills River Elementary School construction projects. All funds received from the N. C. Education Lottery are currently being used for debt service on these school building projects.

Mrs. Amy Lynn Holt made a motion the Henderson County Board of Public Education approve the Public School Building Capital Fund/North Carolina Education Lottery Application as presented. Mr. Michael Absher seconded. *(Unanimously approved.)*

BOARD / SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORTS

- A. Dr. Jan King discussed proposed changes to the North Carolina Social Studies curriculum. Dr. King stated that through the social studies standards revision process (per SBE Policy SCOS-012,) the state Board of Education will vote on new standards this spring. She added that Session Law 2019-82, adds Founding Principles of the USA and NC: Civic Literacy (Civics) along with Economics and Personal Finance (EPF) to the curriculum. The law states that the State Board of Education may not require more than four full-course credits in social studies for high school graduation. Under the new standards, EPF is recommended to be a junior or senior year course. Dr. King has met with all of our high school social studies teachers and administrators to create a draft course sequence to include the new standards. Dr. King stated that concerns from our high school teachers include: teaching only one American History course; changing graduation requirements for students already in high school, the training timeline and resources to implement the new EPF course. The state has requested public feedback through February 15, 2020. Board members shared their concerns regarding the new curriculum change and feel it will not benefit our students. Ms. Dot Case stated that the new timeline is not sufficient for teachers to fully cover the information that our students need for a proper education in American History. Board members agreed that students should have a Personal Finance course but the American History revisions are not adequate. Board members added that other barriers to success of the plan are that we do not have enough staff in place to teach the additional course and keep a second American course as a local requirement, the lack of funding from the state for the implementation process and the uncertain timeline for teacher training. Dr. Jan King will share a link for board members to complete a survey regarding the proposed standards change.
- B. Per discussion at the November 12, 2019 board meeting, Dr. John Bryant presented the Draft 2021-2022 School Calendars for the board to review. Dr. Bryant stated that the calendar committee, principals and assistant principals have reviewed the proposed calendar so far. He added that the benefits of the proposed calendar are that it aligns with the community college calendar, all students will have the same week off for Christmas break and spring break and all students in Henderson County will end school by Memorial Day. Students will lose one week of summer break the first year of calendar implementation but will return to the regular summer breaks thereafter. Dr. Bryant stated that Superintendent Bo Caldwell contacted the North Carolina Youth Camp Association leaders to discuss the proposed school start dates. NC Youth Camp Association Leaders stated they are in favor of the new calendar as long as the first day of school is no earlier than August 15. Dr. Bryant added that Mr. Caldwell's efforts to include the camp industry personnel and hear their approval of an earlier start date for students is a great asset to the process since the camps are a 200 million dollar industry in Henderson County. Superintendent Bo Caldwell, Dr. John Bryant and Dr. Jan King will host meetings with teacher, parent and stakeholder groups throughout the district in February and early March 2020 to obtain further feedback. The draft calendar with suggested edits will be presented for first reading to the Henderson County Board of Education at their March 11, 2020 meeting. It will go for final approval at the April 20, 2020 meeting. If approved, students, parents and community stakeholders will have 15-month advanced notice of the new calendar dates.
- C. Dr. John Bryant discussed the upcoming bid opening dates on future construction projects: Rugby Middle School, February 17, 2020; Upward Elementary, February 18, 2020; Hendersonville High School, Bid Package B, February 18, 2020. Dr. Bryant stated the importance of Bid Package B for Hendersonville High school is to see where we currently stand and to ensure we are still on track with ongoing work and the budget. Dr. Bryant added that two loads of brick salvaged from the old Edneyville Elementary School have been delivered to the Maintenance Department for future disbursement to the community.
- D. Superintendent Bo Caldwell presented the financial statements for Mr. Bernie Sochia, Chief Finance Officer, who was not in attendance. Results of operations of the Local Current Expense and Other Restricted Funds for the 2019-20 fiscal year as of January 31, 2020: 1. Revenues total \$20,992,050 and expenditures total \$17,217,121. The expenditures are 55.5% of the current combined budgets for both funds. 2. Results of operations of the Enterprise Fund for the 2019-20 fiscal year as of December 31,

2019: a. Child Nutrition: The second quarter ended with expenditures exceeding revenues by \$88,348. Sales for the year of \$3,152,484 are up \$320,470 from last year while food and supply expense increases have slightly exceeded that and increased by \$481,718. b. Child Care: The second quarter ended with year to date expenditures of \$560,988. These exceed revenues of \$547,203 by \$13,785. The program has seen an increase in tuition and DSS reimbursements from enrollment this year, while salary expenses have declined due to several jobs remaining vacant for a period of time.

- E. Mr. Caldwell acknowledged the receipt of the Calendar of Activities for February and March. Mr. Caldwell mentioned Bus Driver Appreciation Week and said he has asked assistant principals to submit a list of the recognition activities for drivers at their schools. Mr. Caldwell added that March 3, 2020 is an optional teacher workday for students since polling sites for the State Primary Elections are in many of our schools. Mr. Caldwell encouraged our teachers and staff to educate themselves on the candidates and to get out and vote.

- F. General Operations – *(Superintendent Bo Caldwell)*

Mr. Caldwell thanked Dr. John Bryant and Mr. Fred Klumpp for their efforts on the recent bad weather days. He closed by stating it is his honor and pleasure to serve as superintendent of Henderson County Public Schools.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mr. Rick Wood moved that the meeting be adjourned. Seconded by Mr. Jay Egolf *(Unanimously approved at approximately 8:48pm.)*

Minutes approved: March 9, 2020