

Henderson County Board of Public Education
MINUTES
July 13, 2020

The Henderson County Board of Public Education met in a regular on Monday July 13, 2020, beginning at 2:00 pm, at 414 4th Avenue West, Hendersonville, NC.

Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the July 13, 2020 regular business meeting was held in accordance with approved, safety thresholds for public gatherings established by local health officials and Governor Roy Cooper. Capacity for the public/staff to attend was capped at no more than 10 persons. Therefore, no members of the public were allowed into the meeting room. The Board received public comment via email prior to the meeting. The meeting was accessible to the public via a live stream link on the HCPS YouTube channel, <http://tiny.cc/HCPSlive>.

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

Board Members Absent: Jay Egolf

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

Administrative Staff Absent: Bernie Sochia, Chief Finance Officer.

Attorney Present: Mr. Chris Campbell

Board Clerk: Mrs. Kathy R. Johnson

CALL TO ORDER

Board Chairman, Mr. Blair Craven called the meeting to order at approximately 2:10 p.m. and led those in attendance in the pledge of allegiance.

Mr. Blair Craven asked for a moment of silence in honor of Henderson County Commissioner, Mr. Charlie Messer who passed away suddenly on Friday, July 10, 2020.

AGENDA APPROVAL

Mr. Blair Craven asked for a motion to approve the meeting agenda. Mrs. Mary Louise Corn moved that the agenda be approved as presented, seconded by Ms. Dot Case (*Unanimously approved.*)

Mr. Blair Craven asked if it was still necessary to take roll call votes on action items. Board Attorney, Mr. Chris Campbell stated that this is not considered an electronic meeting so the Board does not have to use the roll call vote on each item. Mr. Campbell added, the Chairman should announce which board members are in attendance.

BOARD CHAIR OBSERVATIONS

Mr. Blair Craven asked for patience as we all await the reentry decision from Governor Roy Cooper. Mr. Craven stated that we will do our best to get our kids back in school as safely as possible.

BOARD MEMBER OBSERVATIONS

Mr. Michael Absher echoed condolences on the loss of Mr. Charlie Messer. He also added that the recent passing of Mr. Frank Byrd was a great loss to our community as well. Mr. Absher gave kudos to Dr. Jan King on the parent surveys sent to collect information regarding reentry plans in August.

Ms. Dot Case recognized Dr. Wendy Frye and her excellent work on the CTE Plan submitted for approval. She also stated that Dr. Jan King has done tremendous work on the reports submitted to the Board of Education.

Mr. Rick Wood agreed that Mr. Frank Byrd was involved in many nonprofit organizations and was a true public servant. He stated that Mr. Charlie Messer was a champion for education as well as an advocate for our parks and recreation needs throughout our community. Mr. Wood stated that our relationship with our County Commissioner has improved due to people like Charlie. He will be missed.

Mrs. Amy Lynn Holt stated that as a citizen of the state, she believes it should be the parent's decision if they send their children back to school in August or not. She said that our school system is providing online instruction for parents who are not comfortable sending their students back to school. Mrs. Holt stated that this has been a huge

weight on her shoulders and she is fearful of the decisions that need to be made for our system. She acknowledged the huge responsibility on our Leadership Team the School Board. She stated that we are literally making decisions where people's lives are on the line and it is not an easy decision.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Board members shared three pre-submitted public comments. Ms. Tammy Thielemann shared her suggestions for flexible scheduling for the 2020/2021 school year and beyond. Mr. Eric Clonch asked that students be allowed to return to classroom instruction this fall. Mr. Colby Coren shared his disagreement with the proposed asphalt plant in East Flat Rock and its proximity to our schools.

Mr. Blair Craven stated that for voting purposes, all board members were present except for Mr. Jay Egolf.

CONSENT AGENDA

Mrs. Amy Lynn Holt made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented in Closed Session. Mr. Rick Wood seconded the motion. All board members voted, yes. *(Unanimously approved.)*

A. Meeting Schedule

1. HCBPE Administrator Visit *[(Wednesday, August 5, 2020, 12:00 p.m., (Blue Ridge Community College))]*
2. HCBPE Regular Business Meeting *[Monday, August 10, 2020, 2:00 p.m., (Boardroom) (Closed Session 1:00 p.m.)]*

B. Minutes

1. June 30, 2020 *(Regular Business Meeting)*

C. Personnel *(as presented in closed session)*

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

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

A. Approval – 2020-2021 Career and Technical Education Plan – (Dr. Jan King)

Dr. Jan King stated, as required by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and with great thanks to CTE Director Dr. Wendy Frye, the local plan for Career and Technical Education is being presented to the Board of Education for review. Dr. King said that Dr. Frye has done a tremendous job pulling this plan together and congratulated Dr. Frye on being named the Western Region CTE Administrator of the Year. Mr. Michael Absher made a motion to approve the 2020-2021 Career and Technical Education Plan as presented. Ms. Dot Case seconded. *(Unanimously approved.)*

Dr. John Bryant stated that our PIO, Mrs. Molly McGowan Gorsuch, recently received the following awards from the NSPRA: Golden Achievement Award for: "In the Lab" Videos; Golden Achievement Award for: "Why Shop Around?" Marketing Campaign; and Honorable Mention in Video Production category of Publications and Digital Media Awards for: "Say Something" Video. Dr. Bryant offered his congratulations to Mrs. McGowan Gorsuch on a job well done!

Spring Policy Updates – April 2020

Dr. John Bryant discussed the following policy updates as of April, 2020. He stated that these updates had been put on hold due to the COVID-19 closures and are now being brought for approval.

- B. Approval – Policy 1320/3560, Title I Parent and Family Engagement – (First Reading) (Dr. John Bryant) *Revisions include: Updates the parental notice requirements in Section E to be consistent with new regulations implementing the Every Student Succeeds Act and Updates the footnotes.*
- C. Approval – Policy 3460, Graduation Requirements – (First Reading) (Dr. John Bryant) *Revisions include: Updates the policy to eliminate references to students who entered ninth grade prior to the 2014-15 school year, as presumably such students have graduated by now. Adds new graduation requirements based on ninth grade entry year to reflect changes to social studies credit requirements. Updates notes to graduation charts to reflect changes to state law and SBE policy and to update hyperlinks. Updates Section B to reflect change to state law which eliminated the NC Final Exams after the current school year. Updates the legal references.*

Updates the footnotes.

- D. Approval – Policy 4110, Immunization and Health Requirements for School Admission – (First Reading) (Dr. John Bryant) *Revisions include: Updates the vaccine requirements to include a booster dose of meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MCV) for students entering the 12th grade after August 1, 2020, or who have reached age 17 by that date, in accordance with state immunization requirements.*
- E. Approval – Policy 7241, Drug and Alcohol Testing of Commercial Motor Vehicle Operators – (First Reading) (Dr. John Bryant) *Revises paragraph B.4 to clarify the prohibition on post-accident alcohol use by CDL holders.*

Spring Policy Updates – April 2020 *(minor changes to wording, legal references and/or cross references)*

Dr. Bryant stated there were no substantive changes to policies F-Y. There was no discussion of these policies.

- F. Approval – Policy 1310/4002, Parental Involvement – (First Reading) (Dr. John Bryant)
- G. Approval – Policy 3102, Online Instruction – (First Reading) (Dr. John Bryant)
- H. Approval – Policy 3227/7322, Web Page Development – (First Reading) (Dr. John Bryant)
- I. Approval – Policy 3300, School Calendar and Time for Learning – (First Reading) (Dr. John Bryant)
- J. Approval – Policy 3405, Students at Risk of Academic Failure – (First Reading) (Dr. John Bryant)
- K. Approval – Policy 3420, Student Promotion and Accountability – (First Reading) (Dr. John Bryant)
- L. Approval – Policy 3610, Counseling Programs – (First Reading) (Dr. John Bryant)
- M. Approval – Policy 4040/7310, Staff-Student Relations – (First Reading) (Dr. John Bryant)
- N. Approval – Policy 4152, Unsafe School Choice Transfer – (First Reading) (Dr. John Bryant)
- O. Approval – Policy 4210, Release of Students from School – (First Reading) (Dr. John Bryant)
- P. Approval – Policy 4345, Student Discipline Records – (First Reading) (Dr. John Bryant)
- Q. Approval – Policy 5040, News Media Relations – (First Reading) (Dr. John Bryant)
- R. Approval – Policy 6306, School Bus Idling – (First Reading) (Dr. John Bryant)
- S. Approval – Policy 7360/8225, Crowdfunding on Behalf of the School System – (First Reading) (Dr. John Bryant)
- T. Approval – Policy 7500, Workday and Overtime – (First Reading) (Dr. John Bryant)
- U. Approval – Policy 7505, Compliance with State Board of Education Employment Policies – (First Reading) (Dr. John Bryant)
- V. Approval – Policy 7510, Leave – (First Reading) (Dr. John Bryant)
- W. Approval – Policy 7540, Voluntary Shared Leave – (First Reading) (Dr. John Bryant)
- X. Approval – Policy 7805, Superintendent Evaluation – (First Reading) (Dr. John Bryant)
- Y. Approval – Policy 8350, Fixed Assets Inventory – (First Reading) (Dr. John Bryant)

Mrs. Amy Lynn Holt made a motion to approve the updates to School Board Policies B-Y April, 2020 as presented for first reading. Mr. Rick Wood seconded. *(Unanimously approved.)*

Mrs. Mary Louise Corn asked if a second reading was required for the non-substantive updates as in Policies F-Y. Mr. Chris Campbell stated that per Board policy, the School Board could vote to waive the second reading of this type of policy. If so, the policies would be approved on first reading.

Mrs. Mary Louise Corn made a motion to waive the second reading of Policies F-Y and approve them on first reading. Mrs. Amy Lynn Holt seconded. *(Unanimously Approved.)*

BOARD / SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORTS

ACT REPORT [ALL CHILDREN TODAY]

Superintendent Bo Caldwell stated that per Mr. Blair Craven's instruction at the June 30, 2020 meeting, a new Superintendent's report will be presented monthly. The ACT Report will discuss our system's efforts to close the learning gap for all students in Henderson County Schools and will provide updates regarding ongoing equity efforts across the system. Superintendent Caldwell stated that the first step in this process would be to form a focus group and listen to their ideas and concerns. Mr. Caldwell provided a list of ACT Focus Group members and their first meeting will be held Thursday, July 16, 2020 at 3:00 pm.

CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

Dr. John Bryant stated that all ongoing projects are proceeding well. He expects the work at Edneyville Elementary School and Rugby and Flat Rock Middle Schools to be completed before students return to school on August 17, 2020. Dr. Bryant stated that our new fiscal year began July 1, and capital projects previously approved have gone out to bid.

ReENTRY REPORT

Dr. King updated the Board on two issues related to curriculum. First, she shared that the State Board of Education delayed implementation of the new social studies standards. Due to the local plan to teach Economics and Personal Finance (EPF) as a senior course for the incoming freshman class of 2020-2021, there is no local impact of this decision. The second update involved the North Carolina General Assembly's Session Law 2020-78 which adds a high school graduation requirement of an Arts Education credit beginning with the incoming 6th grade class of 2022-2023. The district awaits additional guidance from NCDPI and will update the Board as more information becomes available.

Superintendent Bo Caldwell stated that we are still awaiting Governor Roy Cooper's decision on how students and staff will return to school in August. He reiterated that this decision will come from the governor and state health officials and not the Henderson County Schools. Mr. Caldwell said that once the overall decision on *Plan A, B or C* is made by the state officials, his Leadership Team will finalize their pre-planning documents specific to Henderson County Public Schools. The school system sent parent, staff and community surveys out asking for input on school reentry concerns. There are seven task force groups working daily to meet the back to school mandates already in place by the state. Mr. Caldwell assured Board members and parents there will be a remote learning plan available for any of our students or parents who do not feel comfortable with the return to face to face instruction in August. Once the governor makes his decision, Mr. Caldwell stated that he would like to call a special Board meeting to share the HCPS reentry plan with the members of the school board and the community. Board members agreed.

Mr. Scott Rhodes, Chief Human Resources Officer, shared preliminary numbers from the Staff Survey. Mr. Rhodes stated that there were 1417 staff responses to the survey. 65% of our teachers replied they would be able to return to face to face instruction. 82.4% of our staff members have reliable, unlimited internet access. 41.1% of our staff members were most comfortable with the option of face-to-face instruction with safety protocols in place when they return. 55.1% of our staff members felt somewhat comfortable returning with some concerns. Mr. Rhodes will share the full results with the board.

Dr. John Bryant, Associate Superintendent, shared preliminary numbers from the Parent Survey. He stated that there is great fluidity to the numbers and is certain the data will change along with community conditions over the next several months. Looking at the summary data, there were 7415 responses. The responses show that the majority of people are most comfortable with the option of Face-to-face instruction with safety protocols in place and least comfortable with 100% remote online instruction through HCPS. He said that if state and local public health officials believe it is safe to allow in-person instruction with social distancing measures in place, 25% of the responses indicate the parents were 'not at all comfortable' returning to school in August. 77.5 % of parents feel their child is at least somewhat comfortable returning to school but do have some concerns. Dr. Bryant stated the most equitable distribution of data was across all grade levels with the greatest disparity was between specific school communities. Dr. Bryant will share the full survey results with the Board of Education and the community.

Ms. Dot Case asked Mr. Scott Rhodes, County Athletic Director, how the return to athletics was going so far. Mr. Rhodes stated that in speaking with Dr. Dwayne Durham, of Pardee Health and our high school coaches, he believes the workouts are going well. Student athletes and coaches are very aware of the social distancing and safety protocols they are expected to follow. Mr. Rhodes stated that he hopes to get more guidance from the state after Governor Cooper makes his decision on what *back to school* will look like. Mr. Craven stated that he hopes we are not giving our athletes a false sense of hope on having a fall sports season. Mr. Rhodes stated that his son is grateful for the opportunity to be out and exercising with his teammates. Rhodes stated that once the decision is made from the state, his coaches and staff are ready to move to the next phase as permitted. More information will be forthcoming as decisions are finalized across the state.

Mr. Caldwell closed by saying it is his expectation that we have control of our schools on August 17 and that we will be successful with our reentry plan. He believes there is no picture-perfect plan anywhere in the country but he is confident that we will do the best we can to bring the safest, healthiest options for our students and staff.

GENERAL OPERATIONS

Superintendent Bo Caldwell stated it is his honor and privilege to serve as superintendent for Henderson County Public Schools.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mr. Rick Wood moved that the meeting be adjourned. Seconded by Mr. Michael Absher. *(Unanimously approved at 3:58 pm.)*

Minutes approved: July 20, 2020