

# Henderson County Board of Public Education

## MINUTES

November 18, 2024

The Henderson County Board of Public Education held a meeting on Monday, November 18, 2024, beginning at 4:00 pm, at 414 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue West, Hendersonville, NC. The meeting was accessible to the public via a livestream link at, <http://hcpsnc.org/live>.

Board Members Present: Kathy Revis, Acting Chairperson; Stacey Caskey; Blair Craven; Alyssa Norman; Shelia Dale attending the meeting the via phone

Board Members Absent: Robert Bridges

Administrative Staff Present: Mark R. Garrett, Superintendent; Shannon Marlowe, Ed.D., Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction; Bernie Sochia, Chief Finance Officer; Mr. Scott Rhodes, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources; Carl Taylor, Chief Administrative Officer

Attorney Present: Chris Campbell

Board Clerk: Tawana Clayton

### CALL TO ORDER

Acting Chairperson Dr. Kathy Revis called the meeting to order at approximately 4:00 p.m. and acknowledged that Mrs. Dale had joined the meeting via phone. Dr. Revis requested everyone present to stand as the North Henderson High School JROTC presented the colors. Dr. Revis led those in attendance in the pledge of allegiance.

### MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION

Acting Chairperson Dr. Kathy Revis asked those present to remain standing and take a moment of silent reflection.

### AGENDA APPROVAL

Dr. Kathy Revis acknowledged receipt of the meeting agenda and asked for a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Mr. Blair Craven moved that the agenda be approved as presented. Seconded by Mrs. Stacey Caskey. *(Unanimously approved.)*

### RECOGNITIONS

The West Henderson volleyball team was honored as the 3A State Champions after an impressive performance in the North Carolina High School Athletic Association (NCHSAA) 3A state championship. The team secured a 3-1 victory in a hard-fought four-set match against J.H. Rose at N.C. State's Reynolds Coliseum. Melea Humiston was awarded the NCHSAA Sportsmanship Award, and Emma Bryson was named MVP. Congratulations to the players, coaches, and the entire school community on this outstanding achievement!

Superintendent Mark R. Garrett and School Principals recognized and presented certificates to the following staff members:

- HCPS Teacher of the Year: Kelly Stepp
- HCPS Beginning Teacher of the Year: Holly Miller
- HCPS Exceptional Children's "Educator of Excellence": Torey Owens
- HCPS CTE Teacher of the Year: Alison Garrett
- HCPS Outstanding Mathematics Teacher of the Year: Erin McMunigle
- HCPS Media Specialist of the Year: Ashley McVey
- HCPS School Nurse of the Year: Bethany Markey
- HCPS Principal of the Year: Dr. John Shepard

## Board Recognitions

Jay Egolf has stepped down after six years of dedicated service on the board to join the Henderson County Board of Commissioners. To honor his contributions, Mr. Egolf was presented with a gavel and his favorite snacks.

Stacey Caskey completed her four years of service on the board and was recognized with a gift—a rocking chair—to commemorate her time and dedication.

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT – Post Secondary Planning: Exploring the Paths to Enrollment, Enlistment or Employment – (*Mr. Scott Moore, Director of Middle Schools and CTE & Ms. Shannon Auten, Director of Student Services*)

Mr. Scott Moore, Director of Middle Schools and CTE, and Ms. Shannon Auten, Director of Student Services, joined HCPS career coaches; Anne Hafer, April Ricketts, Michael Bartley and students to share insights on post-secondary planning. Self Exploration: Helps students explore their interests, strengths, and values to identify potential career fields that align with them. Early Planning Stages: Integrates self-exploration with the essential high school courses that align with personal interests and future goals. Secondary Alignment: Allows students to select courses that directly contribute to their career aspirations, while also refining their career development plans. The board heard from five high school students and one middle school student as they shared their experiences working with a career coach, completing assessments, and exploring Career and Technical Education.

## BOARD MEMBERS' OBSERVATIONS

Mrs. Alyssa Norman expressed her gratitude for Henderson County and her opportunity to serve on the board. Mrs. Sheila Dale gave a big shoutout to Sugarloaf Elementary during the school board tour.

## PUBLIC COMMENTS

At 4:58p.m. Dr. Kathy Revis opened the meeting for public comment. Four people addressed the Board. Public comments ended at 5:12 p.m. No action was taken.

## CONSENT AGENDA

Dr. Kathy Revis 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:

- A. Meeting Schedule
  - 1. HCBPE Regular Business Meeting [*Monday, December 9, 2024, 4:00 p.m., (Closed Session at 3:00 pm)(Boardroom)*]
- B. Minutes
  - 1. October 15, 2024 (*Regular Business Meeting*)
- C. Personnel (*as presented in closed session*)
- D. Student Acceptances/Releases (*as presented in closed session*)
- E. Budget Amendment
- F. Policy Updates with Minor Changes
  - 1. Policy 3620 – Extracurricular Activities and Student Organizations
  - 2. Policy 4040/7310 – Staff-Student Relations
  - 3. Policy 4120 – Domicile or Residence Requirements
  - 4. Policy 6200 – Goals of School Nutrition Services
  - 5. Policy 6430 – Purchasing Requirements for Equipment, Materials, and Supplies
  - 6. Policy 6450 – Purchase of Services
  - 7. Policy 7130 – Licensure

8. Policy 7650 – Employee Travel and Other Expense Reimbursement
9. Policy 9110 – Use and Selection of Architects, Engineers, Surveyors, and Construction Managers At Risk

Mr. Blair Craven moved that the Consent Agenda be approved as presented. Mrs. Shelia Dale seconded the motion. *(Unanimously approved.)*

#### OLD BUSINESS

A. Low Performing Schools – *(Mr. Mark R. Garrett, Superintendent)*

Superintendent Mark R. Garrett provided an update to the designated low performing schools: Apple Valley Middle School, Dana Elementary School, Edneyville Elementary School, Hillandale Elementary School. Low Performing Districts and Schools in North Carolina are defined by the NC General Assembly and are based on the School Performance Grade and EVAAS growth.

“Low-performing schools are those that receive a school performance grade of D or F and a school growth score of "met expected growth" or "not met expected growth" as defined by G.S. 115C-83.15.” (G.S.115C-105.37(a)) One of the requirements of the law is the development of a school or district plan for improvement that specifically addresses the strategies the school or district will implement to improve both the School Performance Grade and School Growth designation. These final plans are shared with the public, including parents, guardians, and staff and are made available through the local district website and the NCDPI website. All plans are located in NCStar. G.S. 115C-105.37 (a1) Plan for Improvement of Low Performing Schools. If a school has been identified as low-performing as provided in this section and the school is not located in a local school administrative unit identified as low-performing under G.S. 115C-105.39A the following actions shall be taken:

Step 1: Superintendent must recommend status of school principals. Mr. Garrett recommended to the local board the principal be retained in current position.

Step 2: School Improvement Plan- Within 30 days of the initial identification of a school as low-performing by the State Board, the superintendent shall submit to the local board of education a preliminary plan for improving both the school performance grade and school growth score, including how the superintendent and other central office administrators will work with the school and monitor the school’s progress. Superintendent Garrett noted that members of the Instructional Services Team are assigned to attend each School Improvement Meeting.

Step 3: Parental Notice of Low-performing School Status at the five schools

Step 4: Preliminary plan is shared with school board (November 18, 2024)

Step 5: Final Approval at the December board meeting

Mr. Blair Craven moved to approve the preliminary Low Performing Schools plan for Apple Valley Middle School, Dana Elementary School, Edneyville Elementary School, Hillandale Elementary. Mrs. Stacey Caskey seconded the motion. *(Unanimously approved.)*

#### NEW BUSINESS

A. Approval – School Improvement Plans – *(Dr. Shannon Marlowe, Assistant Superintendent)*

Assistant Superintendent Dr. Shannon Marlowe presented the School Improvement Plans for approval. Henderson County houses the school improvement plans within the NCSTAR/IndiStar platform. This platform is provided by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) at no-cost to districts. Dr. Marlowe discussed the continuous improvement process; Each School Improvement Team has assessed the required Key Indicators of NCSTAR, selected targeted goals for improvement, and mapped a plan for assessing and monitoring the school’s progress. Transparency and Public Access: Board members may access and review School Improvement Plans online using information in the guiding document or as PDFs in the link provided to them. When approved by the Board, guest access for all school plans will be posted on school websites. Updates to information are added after each School Improvement meeting.

Mrs. Alyssa Norman moved that the Henderson County Board of Public Education approve the 2024-2025 School Improvement plans as presented. Mr. Blair Craven seconded the motion. *(Unanimously approved.)*

B. 2024 Fall Policy Updates – *(Mr. Carl Taylor, Chief Administrative Officer)*

Chief Administrative Officer Carl Taylor presented the following 2024 fall policy updates for approval. The Board postponed approval of policy 3420 - Student Promotion and Accountability until the December meeting after additional guidelines have been developed regarding parents and students' access to their career development plans.

1. Approval – Policy 1310/4002 – Parental Involvement
2. Approval – Policy 3225/4312/7320 – Technology Responsible Use
3. Approval – Policy 3227/7322 – Web Page Development
4. Approval – Policy 3410 – Testing and Assessment Program
5. Approval – Policy 3420 – Student Promotion and Accountability *(not approved)*
6. Approval – Policy 3460 – Graduation Requirements
7. Approval – Policy 4320 – Tobacco Products-Students
8. Approval – Policy 5022 – Registered Sex Offenders
9. Approval – Policy 5026/7250 – Smoking and Tobacco Products
10. Approval – Policy 6120 – Student Health Services
11. Approval – Policy 6140 – Student Wellness
12. Approval – Policy 8305 – Federal Grant Administration
13. Approval – Policy 9125 – Participation by Minority Businesses

Mr. Blair Craven I moved that the Henderson County Board of Public Education approve the following policy agenda items 1-4 and 6-13 as presented. Mrs. Alyssa Norman seconded the motion. *(Unanimously approved.)*

C. Approval – Contracts/Purchases in Excess of 90,000 – *(Mr. Bernie Sochia, Chief Finance Officer)*

Chief Finance Officer Bernie Sochia presented contracts/purchases in excess of \$90,000. The Office of Budget and Management (OMB) issues Uniform Guidance Procurement Standards (UG) for local governments that receive and expend federal financial assistance. All purchases of goods that exceed \$30,000 and services that exceed \$50,000.00 and will include federal funds, require issuing a bid solicitation using the Uniform Guidance 'micro-purchase' procedures. One exception to these new guidelines is for 'noncompetitive procurement' which means that the item is only available from a single source provider or that a specific item is necessary for continuity of equipment. Procurement under this exception requires annual local Board approval. A local HCPS committee reviews all potential sole source vendors using established NC DPI and UG guidelines. Additionally, pursuant to board policies 6420, Contracts with the Board, and 6430, Purchasing Requirements for Equipment, Materials, and Supplies, any purchases or contracts in excess of \$90,000 must be approved by the Board. The following is presented for approval of purchase and contract:

➤ Carolina Hardwood & Construction, Inc.

- During the insurance adjuster's visit to Atkinson, it was decided that the gym floor condition needed further evaluation. This led to the determination that it needed to be removed and replaced. The bid details are attached, and Carolina Hardwood is the recommended vendor for this work at a cost of \$103,453.73. This project is included in the insurance claim from Helene.

Mr. Blair Craven moved that the Henderson County Board of Public Education approve that staff proceed with entering into a contract with Carolina Hardwood as presented. Mrs. Stacey Caskey seconded the motion. *(Unanimously approved.)*

D. Hurricane Impact & School Response Updates – *(Mr. Mark Garrett, Superintendent)*

HCPS leadership provided the board with updates on the district's response to Hurricane Helene. Superintendent Mark Garrett thanked HCPS staff members, families and the community for ensuring students made it to school, despite challenges with road closures and altered bus stops, stating that attendance was 95% or better since returning to school. The updated school calendar, approved during

the last board meeting, was discussed further by Superintendent Mark Garrett to address common questions: Why is the second semester longer than the first?

High school administrators unanimously chose to conduct first semester exams before Winter Break. This decision supports early graduates, avoids testing after a long holiday, and aligns with Blue Ridge Community College schedules. Why were 7 Helene Days used instead of all 12?

The calendar decision added 30 instructional hours (1 week) for students while keeping the last day of school in May. Mr. Garrett discussed ongoing support for students and staff, stating that the Hurricane Helene Fund through the Education Foundation is helping address needs across the district. Mr. Garrett provided an update on three campuses that were impacted by Hurricane Helene. Atkinson Elementary had interior flooding and damage to the pedestrian bridge. East Henderson High had damage to the visitor-side stadium. Rugby Middle had damage to the pedestrian bridge. HCPS has filed all necessary insurance claims for repairs and replacements. Mr. Garrett shared how counselors and custodians from HCPS have been assisting neighboring counties impacted by the storm. Counselors have traveled to Buncombe County and Yancey County to support colleagues, and custodians helped at Burnsville Elementary in Yancey County as a way to give back for the support HCPS received.

### **Additional Responsibility Stipend for Staff**

Assistant Superintendent Scott Rhodes requested board approval for additional compensation for 11- and 12-month employees who were asked to report back to work on Tuesday, October 1st, and made personal sacrifices to support our school system and community during this time. Since all employees received their full October paycheck, this stipend is specifically for those who worked during the Hurricane Helene Days. The funding of this initiative will cost the district approximately \$250,000 and will come from fund balance.

Eligible employees will receive their hourly rate of pay for the hours worked on those days, in addition to their full October paycheck. This compensation does not include the Superintendent or Leadership Team and impacts approximately 200 employees.

Mr. Blair Craven moved that the Henderson County Board of Public Education approve the recommendation of the Additional Responsibilities Stipend as presented. Mrs. Stacey Caskey seconded the motion. (*Unanimously approved.*)

### **BOARD/SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

#### **A. CAPITAL UPDATE – (Mr. Carl Taylor, Chief Administrative Officer)**

Chief Administrative Officer Carl Taylor provided the board with status updates on the construction and facility projects currently underway or planned in the near future:

- HCPS Projects
  - Gymnasium HVAC - EHHS - In Progress
  - Gymnasium HVAC - NHHS - Completed
  - Gymnasium HVAC - WHHS - Completed
  - Flooring Replacement - Atkinson - In Progress
- MRTS Projects
  - Chiller Replacement - Apple Valley
    - Pre-Bid Meeting: October 9
    - RFP Closing Date: October 23
  - HVAC Replacement (Phase 1) - Atkinson- In Progress
  - New Front Office & Building Connection - West Henderson - In Progress

No action was taken.

B. FINANCIAL STATEMENTS – *(Mr. Bernie Sochia, Chief Finance Officer)*

Chief Finance Officer Bernie Sochia presented the financial statements and results of operations of the Local Current Expense and Other Restricted Funds for the 2024-25 fiscal year as of October 31, 2024: Revenues received totaled \$15,387,530 and expenditures made totaled \$10,472,583. For the year, expenditures are \$529,892 more than last year at this point. But the month of October had \$225,322 less expenditures than October 2023. Results operations of the Enterprise Fund for the 2024-25 fiscal year as of September 30, 2024:

- a. For Child Nutrition, first quarter revenues of \$1,717,169 and expenditures of \$1,710,584 resulted in a net positive operation of \$6,585.
- b. For Child Care, first quarter revenues of \$270,073 and expenditures of \$342,547 resulted in a net negative of \$72,475. This includes \$29,841 spent from Covid grant funds received last fiscal year. No action was taken.

C. GENERAL OPERATIONS – *(Mr. Mark R. Garrett, Superintendent)*

Upcoming dates and events shared by Superintendent Mark R. Garrett:

- November: NC Veterans' History Appreciation Month & National Native American Heritage Month
- November 22: National Substitute Educators' Day
- November 27-29 No School; Thanksgiving Break for All Students and Staff
- December 3: School Board Oath of Office Ceremony, 12:00 p.m.
- December 7: Hendersonville Christmas Parade, 6:00 p.m.
- December 9: HCBPE Regular Business Meeting, 4:00 pm; Closed Session, 3:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mrs. Stacey Caskey moved that the meeting be adjourned. Mr. Blair Craven seconded the motion. *(Unanimously approved at 6:23 p.m.)*

Minutes approved: December 9, 2024