

## Henderson County Board of Public Education

### MINUTES

May 12, 2025

The Henderson County Board of Public Education held a meeting on Monday, May 12, 2025 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: Dr. Kathy Revis, Chairperson; Robert Bridges, Vice Chairperson; Beth Campbell; Blair Craven; Shelia Dale; Amy Holt; Alyssa Norman

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

Attorney Present: John Henning  
Board Clerk: Tawana Clayton

#### CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Dr. Kathy Revis called the meeting to order at approximately 4:00 p.m. Dr. Revis requested everyone present to stand as the West Henderson High School Army JROTC presented the colors. Dr. Revis led those in attendance in the pledge of allegiance.

#### MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION

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. Mrs. Amy Lynn Holt made a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Seconded by Mr. Robert Bridges. *(Unanimously approved.)*

#### STAFF/STUDENT RECOGNITION

Superintendent Mark R. Garrett and principals showcased the HCPS students who will enlist in the military this year:

**East Henderson High School:** David Phelps - National Guard (Already serving); Manny Navarro - National Guard (Already serving); Jaden Seyller - Navy; Kaelyn Suarez - National Guard

**Hendersonville High School:** Vance Pruitt - Army

**Innovative High School:** Jennifer Salas Orihuela (HCEC) - Army; John Nossiter (HCEC) - Army National Guard

**North Henderson High School:** Fiona Mel - Air Force; John Ballard - Air Force; Grace Vergara-Caceres - Air Force; Orson Slusser - Navy; Luis Diaz Sanchez - Army; Daniel Jacinto-Hernandez - National Guard; Kylie Alicia Matheson - Marines; Tim Mitchusson - National Guard; Lloyd Studebaker-Free - National Guard; Aiden Rodriguez - Air Force; Maurisio Favian Garcia Huerta - National Guard; Callie Walker - Navy; Nicol Guadalupe AYALA-MIJARES - Army; Jonathan Martinez - National Guard

**West Henderson High School:** Ethan Dull - Navy; Monica Fuentes - Marines; Josiah Gritsavage - Coast Guard; Isaac Hendrix - Navy; Diego McCreery - Marines; Dellen Mel - Navy

Principals presented certificates to the following students:

#### **Bruce Drysdale Elementary School**

Assistant Principal April Summey recognized:

- Bruce Drysdale Spelling Bee Squad: Congratulations to the BDS Spelling Bee Squad for winning first place at the 2025 Kiwanis Spelling Bee.
- Battle of the Books Team: Congratulations to the BDS Battle of the Books team for winning first place at the Henderson County Battle of the Books.
- Smith Armstrong: earned first place in the Carl Sandburg Poetry Contest for the 3-5 category. This is a national contest and poems this year had the theme of Freedom. Smith's poem was entitled "The Elements of Freedom".

### **Sugarloaf Elementary School TechnoLions Robotics**

Principal Ashley Newcomer recognized the Sugarloaf Robotics Team. They received the Champion's award which celebrates a team that embodies the FIRST® LEGO® League Challenge experience by fully embracing the Core Values while achieving excellence and innovation in Robot Performance, Robot Design, and the Innovation Project.

### **Hendersonville Middle School**

Principal Joni Allison presented results from the N.C. National History Day State Contest.

Teacher: Courtney Najdek and Kemper Gibson

After spending months on project research and preparation, and successfully competing at school and regional contests, these student scholars competed at the State level Competition for National History Day.

- Lucas Nelson: Special Prize for African American Storytelling
- Abigail Bailey and Henry Bailey: 3rd place group website
- Alex Pearson and Chloe Dixon: 3rd place group exhibit
- Evie Scroggs and Yadira Mendez: 3rd place group documentary
- Kate Huscher and Maddux Hansel: 2nd place group documentary which is an automatic qualification to compete at the national level at the University of Maryland on June 12th.

### **Rugby Middle School**

Assistant Principal Sloan Neuburger recognized two Rugby Middle School students.

- Erin Moore auditioned for and made the All-State band. All-State auditions are competitive, statewide music competitions where students audition for the opportunity to perform in an honor band ensemble representing their state. Students typically progress through regional or district auditions before reaching the state level. These students represent the best of the best in North Carolina.
- Brandon Hamlin competed in the T-Shirt Design Competition - Middle School Division. This competition consists of creating a proposed design to showcase the state of North Carolina & SkillsUSA to potentially be chosen as the design worn on the National competition shirt that is given out to all the students competing & their advisors. The students had to create a design & design process notebook to bring to competition. Then during the competition present a 2-3 minute presentation to a set of judges live. Since Brandon was awarded 1st place in the T-Shirt Design competition which happens to be a national competition, he will now have the opportunity to compete at the National Leadership & Skills Conference in Atlanta, GA at the end of June.

### **West Henderson High School**

Principal Luke Manuel recognized several students:

SkillsUSA:

Cabinetmaking I (Live Build)

- Koi Beal - 1st Place
- Lucky Liebert - 5th Place

Skill Project Showcase: Cabinet & Furniture Making

- Roscoe Greene - 1st Place
- John Dotti - 5th Place

FCCLA:

Sara Kim, Kirsten Radford, Lydia Morgan: competed in the Chapter Service Project Portfolio, level 3 event, earning 3rd place in the state

Kinsley Russell, Ashlynn Kurle, Shea Sullivan: competed in the Interior Design, level 3 event, earning 2nd place in the state, earning them a bid to the National Competition this summer in Orlando, FL

Lauren Verm, McKenna Norman: competed in the Interior Design, level 2 event, earning 1st place in the state, earning them a bid to the National Competition this summer in Orlando, FL

Melody Fuentes, Jaylynn McCormick: competed in the Chapter in Review Display Level 2 event, earning 1st place in the state.

Linda Bryant: competed in the Chapter Service Project Display Level 3 event, earning 4th place in the state

Lucas Fuentes: competed in the Teaching Strategies Level 3 event, earning 4th place in the state

Monica Fuentes: Monica competed in the Leadership Level 3 event, earning 3rd place in the state, earning a bid to the National Competition in Orlando, FL this summer

Kaia Hendrix: Kaia competed in the Entrepreneurship Level 3 event, earning 5th place in the state

DECA:

The West Henderson DECA Chapter traveled to Orlando, FL April 26-30 to compete in DECA's International Career Development Conference. Caroline Frampton competed in Human Resources Management and won the top role play medal for both her role plays and was an overall finalist (top 20 out of 210 competitors).

Aubrey Garrett and Holden Hamlin competed in Buying & Merchandising. They won their top role play medal and were overall finalists (top 20 out of 210 teams).

Caroline, Aubrey, and Holden all progressed to the final round of competition. Aubrey and Holden were recognized on stage as Top 10 Finalists and placed 4th internationally.

#### PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

One County, Many Leaders: Student leaders from all six high schools shared how they've been using their time during the monthly district student government meetings.

Building Bridges Between Schools:

- Structure and Context (Presented by Early College)
- Our Why (Presented by East Henderson)
- What We Share at these meetings (Hendersonville High)
- Competition vs. Collaboration (West Henderson)
- What We've Learned and the Impacts (North Henderson)
- Biggest Takeaways (Presented by Career Academy)

#### BOARD MEMBERS' OBSERVATIONS

Mrs. Beth Campbell shared how impressed she was with Mills River Elementary's spring play, Pirates Past Noon, and praised the phenomenal job the school does with the production.

Mrs. Shelia Dale also praised Mills River Elementary for their play, sharing how much her granddaughters enjoyed it.

Mrs. Amy Lynn Holt gave a shout out to Mr. Rhodes for all the hard work he puts into planning the Retirement Dinner and the Teacher of the Year Luncheon, describing it as a truly first-class event.

Dr. Kathy Revis offered her congratulations to the Class of 2025, wishing them well on whatever adventure comes next.

#### PUBLIC INPUT - 2025-2026 PROPOSED BUDGET

At 4:54 p.m. Dr. Revis opened the meeting for public input on the 2025-2026 proposed budget. Two people

addressed the Board. Proposed budget public input ended at 5:01 p.m. No action was taken.

#### PUBLIC COMMENTS

At 5:02 p.m. Dr. Kathy Revis opened the meeting for public comment. Three people addressed the Board. Public comments ended at 5:20 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, June 9, 2025, 4:00 pm., (Closed Session at 3:00 pm.)(Boardroom)*]
2. HCBPE Special Called Business Meeting [End of Year Matters (Monday, June 30, 2025, 9:00 a.m.) (Boardroom)]

B. Minutes

1. April 14, 2025 (*Regular Business Meeting*)

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

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

E. Budget Amendment

Mr. Blair Craven moved that the Consent Agenda be approved as presented. Mr. Robert Bridges seconded the motion. (*Unanimously approved.*)

#### OLD BUSINESS

NONE

#### NEW BUSINESS

A. Action – (2025-2026) Inter-unit student transfer agreements – (*Mr. Carl Taylor, Chief Administrative Officer*)

Chief Administrative Officer Carl Taylor presented the Inter-unit student transfer agreements for approval. The agreements between Henderson County Public Schools Board of Public Education and Polk County Board of Education and the Rutherford County Board of Education are the same as in previous years under which both parties have cooperated for years.

Mr. Blair Craven moved that the Agreements for Inter-Unit Student Transfers (POLK COUNTY - SALUDA SECTION) and (RUTHERFORD COUNTY - BAT CAVE/LAKE LURE SECTIONS) be approved as presented. Mrs. Alyssa Norman seconded the motion. (*Unanimously approved.*)

B. Action – Authorization to Submit Federal Program Applications – (*Dr. Shannon Marlowe, Assistant Superintendent*)

Assistant Superintendent Dr. Shannon Marlowe presented the authorization to submit federal program applications for approval. On an annual basis, the School Board is asked to grant authorization for staff to submit applications to receive Federal Title I, Part A, (PRC 050), McKinney-Vento, Homeless Education (PRC 026), Title I, Part C, Migrant Education (PRC 051), Title II, Part A Supporting Effective Instruction (PRC 103), Title III, Part A (PRC 104 and 111) funds and Title IV, Part A, Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants (PRC 108).

Mr. Robert Bridges moved that the Henderson County Board of Public Education grant staff the authorization to submit federal funding applications as outlined in the request. Mr. Blair Craven seconded the motion. (*Unanimously approved.*)

C. Action – Alternative Accountability Model Options 2025-2026 – *(Dr. Shannon Marlowe, Assistant Superintendent)*

Assistant Superintendent Dr. Shannon Marlowe presented the alternative accountability model options for the 2025-2026 school year for approval. Dr. Marlowe stated the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction is requesting input as to the accountability option we wish to utilize at our alternative school, the Career Academy. This determination is made and reported on an annual basis. Dr. Marlowe is recommending that the School Board continue to use Option B: Alternative Schools Progress Model that rewards student persistence and weighs heavily on academic growth. This model also allows three years of data for achievement reporting.

Mrs. Shelia Dale moved that the Henderson County Board of Public Education approve Option B: The Alternative Schools Progress Model as the accountability model for the Career Academy for the 2025-2026 school year. Mrs. Alyssa Norman seconded the motion. *(Unanimously approved.)*

D. Action – Sole Source & Purchase/Contract over \$90,000 – *(Mr. Bernie Sochia, Chief Finance Officer)*

Chief Finance Officer Bernie Sochia presented the sole source and purchase/ contract over \$90,000 for approval. 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 service. Procurement under this exception requires annual local Board approval. A local HCPS committee reviews all potential procurement waivers 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 are presented for approval of contract:

➤ PCG (p.5-25) PCG provides all of the HCPS Medicaid billing and support services. Presented as a vendor of highly specialized technical service with continuity of service. This contract is percentage based @ 13% and is approximately \$125,000 per year. The contract is on annual renewal terms. The source of funds is Medicaid (PRC 305/306) which is treated as federal in Fund 8.

➤ Lexia Voyager Sopris, Inc. (p.26-29) Lexia Voyager Sopris provides the English Language Development Digital Platform that provides differentiation of instruction at the student level. The cost is \$66,800 for student licenses with associated lessons and planning tools. Presented as a vendor for curriculum continuity. The source of funds is federal Title III- Language Acquisition (PRC 104).

➤ Emerald Education (p.30-35) The district is planning for a quick turnaround to implement the SELRP summer learning opportunity. Emerald Education will provide new mathematics supplementary resources to be used for remediation purposes during summer programming. However, since the access to the materials includes access to both digital and physical materials, we will be able to utilize these materials for summer learning, as well as into the new school year. The materials provide remedial and grade level content for math. In addition, since the company is local, we are able to quickly get the necessary materials. This is presented as a single source of proprietary supplies. The cost will be \$355,519 and the source of funds is State Hurricane Relief funds (PRC 230) that are dedicated only to the summer learning relief program.

➤ Curriculum Associates (p.36-51) This is presented as curriculum continuity. As of the end of the 2025-26 school year, Henderson County Public Schools have been working with Curriculum Associates for over eight years now. iReady Math is our district math instructional initiative for all students in

K-5, and includes the iReady Math Diagnostic to drive instruction, iReady Math Instruction to differentiate learning, and the iReady Math Teacher Toolbox to provide in-class learning opportunities for students. The iReady program provides student online instruction, teacher-led instruction and progress monitoring for each student. It is the only program we have found that completes a positive correlation study specific to North Carolina end of grade assessment. District PRC 050 funds at the elementary level are used for this purpose, to address learning needs as identified through our data. iReady Math is our assessment in Summer Learning to measure program effectiveness. This provides us with consistency of data, instruction and student and parent communication around the instructional tool. Title II- PRC 131 funds will be used to purchase iReady Reading for all grades 6-8. This includes professional development, the instruction and diagnostic, and iReady Reading Toolbox. Some of our elementary schools are using the Curriculum Associates Ready Classroom Math to address student needs as identified by student outcome data as their PRC 050 funds allow. The cost will not exceed \$325,000 from a combination of Title I (PRC050) and State Textbooks (PRC131). Some of our elementary schools are using the Curriculum Associates Ready Classroom Math to address student needs as identified by student outcome data as their PRC 050 funds allow. The cost will not exceed \$325,000 from a combination of Title I (PRC050) and State Textbooks (PRC131).

➤ Franklin Covey (p.52-55) The Leader in Me website license subscription & The Leader in Me Coaching. These options include:

- Multiple onsite coaching days per year

- District new staff training

- District principal development

- The Leader in Me Online, which includes numerous resources, such as digital training modules, classroom videos, lesson resources, assessment tools, best practice sharing, etc. This is presented for curriculum continuity. Federal funding will not exceed \$50,000 from Title I (PRC050) at the decision of each school and will be combined with State and local funds. This is brought for transparency of sole source because federal funds are potentially involved.

➤ Pearson (p.56-64) Pearson provides evaluation software for school psychologists and speech therapists. The cost is approximately \$30,000 based on a per student formula of identified students. This is presented as a sole source proprietary software and curriculum continuity. The funding will be from federal Exceptional Children (PRC 060) and Medicaid (PRC 305/306) if needed.

➤ Letterland (p.65-67) \$4.00 per student and \$70.00 per teacher/staff. Estimated costs for implementation of Letterland Online in K-2 for 2025-26 are \$25,084.00, estimating the number of teachers for next school year. Additional Letterland classroom kits for new classrooms are between \$339.99 to \$999.99, depending on the grade levels or type of kit needed. We could estimate a need of eight additional classrooms in grades K-2 for an estimated expected cost of \$5,599.92. New Grade 1 and 2 manuals will be \$34,594 for the district. Adding at least two additional trainers for our district over the course of the next year will also require approximately \$5,200, but is needed for sustainability. The total cost estimate is \$70,478 using federal Title I (PRC050) funds. This is presented as a sole source and curriculum continuity.

Mrs. Amy Lynn Holt moved that the Henderson County Board of Public Education approve the procurement waivers and contracts with the vendors as presented. Mr. Blair Craven seconded the motion. *(Unanimously approved.)*

- E. Action – RFQ for Facilities Assessment Study – *(Mr. Bernie Sochia, Chief Finance Officer)*  
 Chief Finance Officer Bernie Sochia presented the RFQ for facilities assessment study for approval. An RFQ (Request for Qualifications) for architectural and planning firms for consideration for the district’s Facilities Assessment Study and collaboration in creating the district’s 10-year Facilities Master Plan was developed and closed on April 15, 2025. Interviews of selected firms were conducted on April 22, 2025. After careful review of submitted proposals; LS3P was identified as the firm to be recommended to the Board for selection based on qualifications, experience with related projects and related clients. Board approval is needed to authorize staff to proceed with this selection, negotiation and execution of a contract.  
 Mr. Blair Craven moved that the Henderson County Board of Public Education approve authorized staff to negotiate a contract with LS3P for the district’s Facilities Assessment Study. Mrs. Amy Lynn Holt seconded the motion. *(Unanimously approved.)*
- F. Action – (2025-2026) County Appropriation Request – *(Mr. Bernie Sochia, Chief Finance Officer)*  
 Chief Finance Officer Bernie Sochia presented the 2025-2026 County Appropriation Request. The local appropriation request is the summary of the Budget Workshop held in April 2025 and is presented for Board of Education approval. The request will be forwarded to the Henderson County Board of County Commissioners for consideration for funding of the Local Current Expense and Capital Outlay Funds. After some modifications, Mr. Blair Craven moved that the Henderson County Board of Public Education approve the 2025-2026 County Appropriation Request as presented. Mrs. Amy Lynn Holt seconded the motion. *(Unanimously approved.)*

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Henderson County Public Schools  
 2025 - 2026 County Appropriation Request



2024-25 Current Expense Appropriation	\$35,378,000
Requested Increase	\$763,463
Current Expense Appropriation Request	\$36,141,463
Capital Outlay Appropriation Request	<u>\$1,500,000</u>
<b>Total Appropriation Request for 2025-26</b>	<b>\$37,641,463</b>

- G. 2025-2026 Child Nutrition Rates – *(Mr. Scott Rhodes, Assistant Superintendent)*  
 Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources Scott Rhodes, alongside Child Nutrition Director Robert Rolfe, presented a financial breakdown of how much money HCPS gains or loses on each universal breakfast and paid/free lunch. The Board expressed significant concern about the financial losses associated with providing Universal Breakfast. They had an in-depth discussion about possibly discontinuing the program and/or increasing lunch prices. In the end, the Board decided to revisit the topic in June and asked Robert Rolfe and district leadership to provide additional data and analysis before making a final decision.

H. 2025 -2026 Child Care Rates – *(Mr. Scott Rhodes, Assistant Superintendent)*

Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources Scott Rhodes presented a financial overview of the district's Child Care program. The Board discussed potential rate adjustments, including raising the summer rate for the 2026 program and increasing PSAM fees by \$5 and PSPM fees by \$10. The Board chose to defer action until the June business meeting to allow for additional review and consideration of the available options.

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:
  - Card Access Installation Various Sites In Progress
  - HVAC Upgrade (F-Hall) Flat Rock Engineering Phase
  - Generator Mills River Academy Pre-Bid Meeting: May 13
  - Classroom Flooring Replacement Clear Creek, Rugby Scheduled for June
  - Stadium Bleacher Replacement (Visitor Side) East Henderson Pre-Construction Meeting: May 8, 2025
- 2024-2025 MRTS:
  - HVAC Controls Replacement Sugarloaf, All Middle Schools, NHHS, WHHS
    - Preparing RFP
  - Paving Hendersonville Elementary
  - Pre-Bid Meeting: May 8
  - Roofing West Henderson Pre-Bid Meeting: May 6

No action 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 April 30, 2025: Revenues received totaled \$38,147,344 and expenditures made totaled \$30,333,494. The full County appropriation has been received leaving only ABC/Fines & Forfeitures to be received. Expenditures at 74.4% are still on pace to be within the amount of fund balance appropriated.

2. Results of operations of the Enterprise Fund for the 2024-25 fiscal year as of March 31, 2025:

- a. For Child Nutrition: through the third quarter, revenues of \$6,108,812 have been received and expenditures of \$6,546,360 have been made. The current deficit is slightly over the initial budget for use of fund balance.
- b. For Child Care: through the third quarter, revenues of \$876,328 have been received and expenditures of \$1,017,795 have been made. Similarly, the current deficit matches the fund balance appropriated to balance the initial budget. With one quarter to go, operating expenditures have reached 71% of projected while revenues are just below at 70%. No action taken.

C. RUTHERFORD COUNTY BUS GARAGE VISIT – *(Mr. Mark Garrett, Superintendent)*

Superintendent Mark Garrett discussed his visit to the bus garage in Rutherford County. In preparation for a potential new bus garage for HCPS, Mr. Garrett, along with several others from the district toured the facility in Rutherford County. No action taken.



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

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

2024-2025 Kindergarten Registration Open - Welcome HCPS Class of 2037: Registrations as of May 12th: 656

- May: Mental Health Awareness Month; Asian American Pacific Islander Month
- May 15: Top Scholars Banquet, 6:00 p.m., Blue Ridge Conference Hall
- May 26: Memorial Day Holiday - No School for all calendars
- May 30: Last Day of School for all calendars (12:00 p.m. dismissal)
- May 30: Henderson County High School Graduations:
  - Henderson County Early College, 5:00 p.m.
  - Hendersonville High School, 6:00 p.m.
  - North Henderson High School, 6:00 p.m.
  - East Henderson High School, 7:00 p.m.
  - Henderson County Career Academy, 7:00 p.m.
  - West Henderson High School, 7:30 p.m.
- June 5-25: Summer Learning (Grade K-8); Read to Achieve Camp (Grade 2-3)
- June 5-17: Summer Learning (Grade 9-12)
- June 9: HCBPE Regular Meeting, 4:00 p.m., Closed Session, 3:00 p.m.
- June 30: HCBPE Special Called Business Meeting (End of Year Matters) 9:00 a.m., Closed Session 8:30 a.m.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mr. Blair Craven moved that the meeting be adjourned. Mrs. Alyssa Norman seconded the motion. *(Unanimously approved at 8:00 p.m.)*

Minutes approved: June 9, 2025