

Henderson County Board of Public Education

MINUTES

June 9, 2025

The Henderson County Board of Public Education held a meeting on Monday, June 9, 2025 beginning at 4:00 pm, at 414 4th 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 (*joined remotely*); Robert Bridges, Vice Chairperson; Beth Campbell; Blair Craven; Shelia Dale; Alyssa Norman

Board Members Absent: Amy Lynn Holt

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
Absent: Carl Taylor, Chief Administrative Officer

Attorney Present: Chris Campbell

Board Clerk: Tawana Clayton

CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chairperson Robert Bridges called the meeting to order at approximately 4:00 p.m. Mr. Bridges requested everyone present to stand as he led those in attendance in the pledge of allegiance.

MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION

Mr. Robert Bridges asked those present to remain standing and take a moment of silent reflection.

AGENDA APPROVAL

Mr. Robert Bridges acknowledged receipt of the meeting agenda and called for a motion to approve it as presented. Mr. Blair Craven moved to approve the agenda with an amendment, adding Item E – *West Henderson High School Flooring* under New Business. Mrs. Alyssa Norman seconded the motion. (*Unanimously approved.*)

PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

Director of Middle School, AIG & MTSS Dr. Marcie Wilson presented the HCPS AIG Plan - 2025-2028 program highlight presentation. Dr. Wilson shared information on the academically and intellectually gifted program (AIG) and services offered. Dr. Wilson stated that a new AIG plan is developed every three years and is approved by the HCPS Board of Education. The AIG department monitors implementation of the plan along with school administrators and the HCPS Instructional Services Team. Dr. Wilson shared the vision of HCPS AIG program, which is to nurture the potential of all high-ability students through engaging, differentiated instruction that promotes academic, intellectual and emotional growth. Dr. Wilson summarized the new AIG plan which includes updated pathways to identification, increased communication with stakeholders and enhanced curriculum and professional development.

STAFF/STUDENT RECOGNITION

2025 Student Leadership Summit

SGA Advisor: Katie Rogers

Led by: Heather Wetzel, Landon Taylor, Nicki Mejia, Karina Konko & Isis Beck-Williams

The 2025 Student Leadership Summit, held on April 17, was a one day, student-led conference designed to inspire current and emerging high school leaders from across Western North Carolina. Organized entirely by East Henderson High School's Service Learning class—Heather Wetzel, Landon Taylor, Nicki Mejia, Karina Konko, and Isis Beck-Williams—the event featured keynote speakers, team-building activities, breakout

sessions with community leaders, school showcase presentations, and collaborative brainstorming. Focused on fostering connection rather than competition, the summit aimed to spark student-led initiatives and build a ripple effect of leadership throughout Henderson County and beyond.

Henderson County Special Olympics

Superintendent Mark Garrett recognized the members of the Special Olympics Committee for their outstanding dedication, leadership, and year-round commitment to planning and coordinating the Henderson County Special Olympics. He commended their efforts in creating an inclusive and uplifting experience for student-athletes, families, and volunteers, noting the positive impact their work has on the entire community.

Special Olympics Committee Members:

Becca Martin, Toni McDonald, Ryah McDonald, Amiee Bentley, Dena Metzker, Heather Hay and Natalie Stiles

BOARD MEMBERS' OBSERVATIONS

Mrs. Beth Campbell expressed how encouraging it is to witness the camaraderie and mutual support among all the high schools. She shared her appreciation for the opportunity to attend the Special Olympics Spring Games and extended her congratulations to the Class of 2025.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

At 4:41 p.m. Mr. Robert Bridges opened the meeting for public comment. Three people addressed the Board. Public comments ended at 4:52 p.m. No action was taken.

CONSENT AGENDA

Mr. Robert Bridges 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 Special Called Business Meeting [End of Year Matters (Monday, June 30, 2025, 9:00 a.m.) (Boardroom)]
2. HCBPE Administrator In-Service Visit [(Monday, July 28, 2025, 12:00 p.m., Blue Ridge Community College)]

B. Minutes

1. May 12, 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. Mrs. Shelia Dale seconded the motion. (*Unanimously approved.*)

OLD BUSINESS

A. Action – 2025-2026 Child Nutrition Rates – (*Mr. Scott Rhodes, Assistant Superintendent*)

Assistant Superintendent Scott Rhodes provided more information regarding the 2025-2026 Child Nutrition rates for the Board's consideration. Mr. Rhodes shared the monthly financial breakdown for each meal, resulting in a loss of \$54,625.77 each month, totaling an anticipated loss of \$546,257 a year due to the rising cost in labor, food prices and no increase in federal reimbursement rates. Mr. Rhodes explained that raising lunch prices by \$0.25 would have an increase in revenue of \$62,609.00, \$0.50 would have an increase in revenue of \$125,218.00. Mr. Rhodes proposed two options for the Board to consider: Option 1-Continue with Universal Breakfast for K-5, Offer 2nd Chance breakfast for grades 6-12, raise lunch prices by \$0.25 or \$0.50. Option 2- Discontinue Universal Breakfast for grades K-12 except for CEP schools, Offer 2nd Chance breakfast for grades 6-12, raise lunch prices by \$0.25 or

\$0.50. Option 1 would generate an approximate revenue of \$283,595.80. Option 2 would generate an approximate revenue of \$446,301.60.

After Board discussion, Mrs. Shelia Dale moved that Henderson County Board of Public Education discontinue Universal Breakfast for grades K-12 for the 2025-2026 school year. Mrs. Alyssa Norman seconded the motion. *(Unanimously approved.)*

Mr. Blair Craven moved that the Henderson County Board of Public Education increase lunch prices by \$0.25 for the 2025-2026 school year. Mr. Bridges seconded the motion. *(Motion fails 4-2: Campbell-no, Norman-no, Dale-no, Revis-no, Craven-yes, Bridges-yes)*

Dr. Revis moved that the Henderson County Board of Public Education increase lunch prices by \$0.10 for the 2025-2026 school year. Mrs. Alyssa Norman seconded the motion. *(Motion fails 3-3: Craven-no, Dale-no, Campbell-no, Revis-yes, Norman-yes, Bridges-yes)*

Mrs. Dale recommended establishing an account to allow community members to donate funds to the Child Nutrition Department to help offset student lunch costs. Superintendent Garrett will gather information on creating a charitable fund line item within the budget to support this initiative. Following further discussion, the Board agreed not to increase lunch prices for the 2025–2026 school year and directed the Leadership Team to provide a financial update on the Child Nutrition program after the first quarter, along with exploring additional funding options.

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

Assistant Superintendent Scott Rhodes presented the 2025-2026 Child Care Rates for approval. Mr. Rhodes stated due to the increased cost in salaries and benefits, they are proposing the following weekly rate increases of \$15.00 for the HCPS Child Care program: PSPM and Summer Plus starting at the beginning of the 2025-2026 school year. Mr. Rhodes stated there would not be an increase to the PSAM Child Care program for the 2025-2026 school year.

Mr. Craven moved that the Henderson County Board of Public Education approve the weekly Child Care rate increases starting for the 2025-2026 school year. Mr. Robert Bridges seconded the motion. *(Unanimously approved.)*

C. Budget Update – *(Mr. Mark Garrett, Superintendent)*

Superintendent Mark Garrett provided an update on the proposed 2025-2026 budget request presented to the Henderson County Board of County Commissioners for consideration for funding of the Local Current Expense and Capital Outlay Funds. The Henderson County Board of County Commissioners approved the 2025-2026 budget request.

**Henderson County Board of Commissioners
2025 - 2026 Total Budget Allocation**



HCPS Allocations for 2025-26

Current Expense Appropriation	\$36,141,463
Capital Outlay Appropriation[Annual Maintenance/Safety Enhancements]	\$1,500,000
MRTS [Maintenance, Repairs, Technology, Safety]	\$4,603,500
Total Allocations for 2025-26	\$42,244,963

NEW BUSINESS

A. Action – Resolution Authorizing the Chairman to Execute Contracts and Options for the Acquisition of Property and Memoranda Thereof – *(Campbell Shatley, Legal Counsel)*

Attorney Chris Campbell with Campbell Shatley stated this resolution is to enable the Chairman and Superintendent to execute options on property so that the Board can discuss purchase at a regularly

scheduled meeting without the need to call emergency meetings when a unique opportunity becomes available.

Mr. Robert Bridges moved that the Henderson County Board of Public Education approve the Resolution Authorizing the Chairman to Execute Contracts and Options for the Acquisition of Property and Memoranda Thereof.” Mrs. Shelia Dale seconded the motion. *(Unanimously approved.)*

B. Action – Academically & Intellectually Gifted Local Plan – *(Dr. Shannon Marlowe, Assistant Superintendent)*

Assistant Superintendent Dr. Shannon Marlowe presented the Academically or Intellectually Gifted (AIG) Local Plan for approval. Dr. Marlowe stated the AIG program standards help ensure that the needs of AIG students are met and the potential of AIG students is developed. The 2025-2028 plan is designed to work within Henderson County's instructional framework while meeting the needs of our local students.

Mrs. Alyssa Norman moved that the Henderson County Board of Public Education approve the 2025-2028 Local AIG Plan. Mrs. Shelia Dale seconded the motion. *(Unanimously approved.)*

C. Action – Audit Contract for FY2025 – *(Mr. Bernie Sochia, Chief Finance Officer)*

Chief Finance Officer Bernie Sochia presented the Audit Contract for FY2025 for approval.

In accordance with Board Policy #8310, “Annual Independent Audit”, the contract for the HCPS audit for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2024 and ending June 30, 2025 is presented for approval. The State Treasurer’s recommendations for the selection of the auditor include the following criteria: a.) an understanding of the governmental unit’s needs, b.) the approach and methodology, c.) qualifications in governmental auditing, d.) the experience of the audit firm, and e.) the cost of the audit. The history of service by the audit team from Gould Killian CPA Group (formerly Carland and Andersen) as auditor for Henderson County Public Schools has been invaluable, and the continuity is essential. They continue to assist the Finance Department and the individual school bookkeepers on an ad hoc basis, with no additional fees. As to the issue of qualifications and experience, Gould Killian has current experience auditing governmental entities including the City of Hendersonville, the Town of Mills River, the City of Brevard and others. They have also audited other school districts including Transylvania, Madison and Jackson Counties. In North Carolina, accounting firms performing audits are required to have a peer review every three years. Gould Killian’s last peer review was submitted in July 2023 by the Raleigh firm of Batchelor, Tillery & Roberts, LLP. Gould Killian received a peer review rating of pass (firms can receive a rating of pass, pass with deficiency(ies), or fail). Although not the primary basis for the recommendation that they be awarded the contract, Gould Killian continues to have a very reasonable and low fee at \$35,900 to conduct the audit and prepare the financial statements.

Mrs. Shelia Dale moved that the Henderson County Board of Public Education approve the “Contract to Audit Accounts” between the Henderson County Board of Public Education and Gould Killian CPA Group for the period beginning July 1, 2024 and ending June 30, 2025. Mrs. Alyssa Norman seconded the motion. *(Unanimously approved.)*

D. Action – Contracts in Excess of \$90,000 – *(Mountain Professionals, Bayada, Clarity, Advent Health, WNC Source) (Mr. Bernie Sochia, Chief Finance Officer)*

Chief Finance Officer Bernie Sochia presented the Contracts in Excess of \$90,000 for approval.

Mr. Bernie Sochia stated 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 vendor is presented for approval: ➤ Bayada Home Health Care, Inc. (p.2-21) • Nursing services renewal. Bayada was selected in 2023 following a

formal RFP process. Have not required services since 2022. \$9,416 was paid that year, but the potential is \$300,000. ➤ CDW Education (p.22-60) • Chromebooks and licenses. Annual Chromebook replacement portion of the Technology plan. 2,732 Chromebooks. RFQ closed on 6/4/25 with 13 vendors responding. The funding will be a combination of MRTS and local. ➤ Clarity Language Access, LLC (p.61-79) • Sign language interpreter services renewal. Clarity was selected in 2023 following a formal RFP process. The average annual cost under this contract has been \$53,271. The not to exceed amount is \$249,999. ➤ Fletcher Hospital, Inc. dba Advent Health Hendersonville (p.80-116) • Crisis counseling – licensed clinical Social Worker. Advent was selected in a rebid of a RFP process in April 2025. This is a one year contract not to exceed \$90,000 from the Project Serv SOS grant. ➤ Mountain Professionals, Inc. (p.117-126) • Drivers’ education. One year contract to continue with Mountain Professionals. They will provide six hours of behind the wheel instruction for each student enrolled and provide vehicles and all necessary insurance. Funded by the State Drivers’ Education allotment averaging \$240,000. ➤ Western Carolina Community Action dba WNCSource (p.127-135) • Developmental Day Class. Provide developmental day services for up to 40 students. This includes developing, reviewing and providing services outlined in an IEP for each student. Cost is \$1,350 per month per student. \$205,200 was paid in 2024-25.

Mr. Robert Bridges moved that the Henderson County Board of Public Education approve that staff proceeds with contracting with the contracts and purchases as presented. Mrs. Shelia Dale seconded the motion. *(Unanimously approved.)*

E. Action – WHHS Flooring Project – *(Mr. Mark Garrett, Superintendent)*

Superintendent Mark Garrett presented information regarding updating the flooring at West Henderson High School, the anticipated allocation of funds for the project is approximately \$175,000.

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.

Mr. Robert Bridges moved that the Henderson County Board of Public Education approve funds not to exceed \$1750,000 for the carpet installation at West Henderson High School. Mrs. Shelia Dale seconded the motion. *(Unanimously approved.)*

BOARD/SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

A. CAPITAL UPDATE – *(Mr. Mark Garrett, Superintendent)*

Superintendent Mark Garrett 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
 - Pre-Bid Meeting: May 28
 - Bid Opening: June 11
 - Paving Hendersonville Elementary (Main Circle, Parking Lot) Flat Rock Middle (Back Drive Repair) Fletcher Elementary (Bus Lot Repair) Glenn Marlow Elementary (Bus Lot Repair)

Hillandale Elementary (Seal and Restripe Main Parking Lot) Mills River Elementary (Seal and Restripe Main Parking Lot)

- Pre-Bid Meeting: May 8
- Roofing East Henderson (Cafeteria) West Henderson (Cafeteria and X-Building)
 - 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 May 31, 2025: Revenues received totaled \$38,372,714 and expenditures made totaled \$32,803,478. We are projected to finish June utilizing approximately \$1.2 million of the appropriated fund balance in Local Current Expense. No action taken.

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

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

2025-2026 Kindergarten Registration Open - Welcome HCPS Class of 2038!

- June 9-July 25: Summer Meal Program
- June 5-25: Summer Learning (Grade K-8); Read to Achieve Camp (Grade 2-3)
- June 5-17: Summer Learning (Grade 9-12)
- June 30: HCBPE Special Called Business Meeting *(End of Year Matters)*
9:30 a.m., Closed Session 9:00 a.m., Work Session 8:30 a.m.
- July 7-9: Required Teacher/Staff Workdays for Flex Calendar
- July 10: First Day of School for students on Flex Calendar
- July 28: HCBPE Administrator In-Service, 12:00 p.m., Blue Ridge Community College
- August 4: HCBPE Regular Meeting, 4:00 p.m., Closed Session, 3:00 p.m.
Boardroom
- August 4-8: Required Teacher/Staff Workdays for Traditional and Early College Calendar
- August 11: First Day of School for students on Traditional and Early College Calendar

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mrs. Beth Campbell moved that the meeting be adjourned. Mrs. Shelia Dale seconded the motion. *(Unanimously approved at 6:41 p.m.)*

Minutes approved: August 4, 2025