

# Henderson County Board of Public Education

## MINUTES

September 11, 2023

The Henderson County Board of Public Education held a meeting on Monday, September 11, 2023, 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:

Blair Craven, Chairperson; Jay Egolf, Vice Chairperson; Robert Bridges; Stacey Caskey; Shelia Dale; Alyssa Norman; Kathy Revis

### Administrative Staff Present:

Mark R. Garrett, Superintendent; Shannon Marlowe, Ed.D., Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction; Bernie Sochia, Chief Finance Officer

### Administrative Staff Absent:

Mr. Scott Rhodes, Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources; Carl Taylor, Chief Administrative Officer

Attorney Present: Chris Campbell

Board Clerk: Tawana Clayton

### CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Mr. Blair Craven called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m. Mr. Craven led those in attendance in the pledge of allegiance.

### AGENDA APPROVAL

Mr. Blair Craven acknowledged receipt of the meeting agenda and asked for a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Dr. Kathy Revis moved that the agenda be approved as presented. Mr. Robert Bridges seconded the motion. *(Unanimously approved.)*

### PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT – Attendance (Every Piece Matters) – *(Dr. Shannon Marlowe, Ms. Shannon Auten, Ms. Kelly Beaver, Ms. Kimbrell Arrowood)*

Dr. Shannon Marlowe, Ms. Shannon Auten, Ms. Kelly Beaver, and Ms. Kimbrell Arrowood presented to the board the district attendance campaign: Every Piece Matters. Dr. Marlowe shared research and statistics about attendance and the impact it has on a child's education. For elementary school, a 2007 study by the National Center for Children in Poverty, they reported that, greater absenteeism in kindergarten was associated with lower achievement in reading, math, and general knowledge at the end of first grade. *(p. 3)* Data shows the emergence of trajectories of absenteeism early in children's careers in formal schooling: the greater the number of absences in kindergarten, the greater the number of absences in first grade. *(p. 2)* Preliminary data from a California study found that students chronically absent in kindergarten and first grade were less likely to reach proficiently by the end of third grade. For middle and high school, a 2014 report from *Looking Forward to High School and College: Middle Grade Indicators of Readiness in Chicago Public Schools*, two of the key findings include; students' attendance and GPA in the middle grades provide the best indication of how they will perform in their high school classes, compared to other potential indicators such as test scores. Students who were chronically absent or receiving Fs in the middle grades are already very likely to be off-track in ninth grade before they even begin high school. Public Information Officer Kimbrell Arrowood shared the district campaign: Every Piece Matters, stating that each journey to success starts with showing up. The district's absentee campaign began on September 1, 2023. Representatives from each school attended the reading of the attendance proclamation by

Superintendent Mark Garrett. Ms. Kelly Beaver shared more about the district attendance initiatives, discussing in depth the following topics; September Attendance Awareness, Data Tracking & Monitoring, Attendance Meetings, Individualized Support, Districtwide Attendance Committee, School Attendance Committee. Director of Student Services Shannon Auten spoke to the importance of community and agency partners that make attendance matter. No action was taken.

#### BOARD CHAIR OBSERVATIONS

Mr. Blair Craven has no observations at this time.

#### BOARD MEMBERS' OBSERVATION

Ms. Shelia Dale enjoyed her visit at Upward Elementary School during the school board tours last week.

#### PUBLIC COMMENT

At 4:23 p.m. Mr. Craven opened the meeting for public comment. Five people addressed the Board. Public comments ended at 4:38 p.m. No action was taken.

#### 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:

A. Meeting Schedule

1. HCBPE Regular Business Meeting [*Monday, October 9, 2023 4:00 p.m., (Boardroom)*]

B. Minutes

1. August 14, 2023 (*Regular Business Meeting*)

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

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

Mrs. Stacey Caskey moved that the Consent Agenda be approved as presented. Mrs. Shelia Dale seconded the motion. (*Unanimously approved.*)

#### OLD BUSINESS

A. Community Eligibility Provision Update – (*Mr. Mark Garrett, Superintendent*)

Superintendent Mark Garrett presented the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) program update to the board. Mr. Garrett stated the number of lunches served at the beginning of the 2022 school year was 2,973 and 5,671 lunches. In January of 2023, 4,597 breakfasts were served when universal breakfast became available for all schools. CEP began August 16, 2023, the number of lunches served between August 16, 2023 to August 31, 2023 increased to 7,439. This is a 31% increase from last year. Mr. Garrett discussed an occurring deficit of approximately \$2,458 a day after the CEP reimbursement, with a yearly amount of \$440,000. Mr. Garrett expressed gratitude for the school nutrition staff. The Board discussed the positive feedback received from the community. No action was taken.

#### NEW BUSINESS

A. Local Salary Study – (*Mr. Bernie Sochia, Chief Finance Officer*)

Chief Finance Officer Bernie Sochia presented information to the board regarding the upcoming salary study for classified staff paid out of local funds. Since the increase of minimum wage after Covid, HCPS has struggled to become a competitive workforce. There will be new salary schedules from the state in July of 2024. Mr. Sochia recommended using Hill Consultants to conduct the salary study and received a quote in the amount of \$17,500, which is able to be paid using ESSER funds. The salary study is set to begin in October and be finalized by January. Mr. Sochia answered questions from the board. No action was taken.

B. Approval – Procurement Waiver – *(Mr. Bernie Sochia, Chief Finance Officer)*

Chief Finance Officer Bernie Sochia presented the noncompetitive procurement with federal funds for board approval. The Office of Budget and Management (OMB) issued new Uniform Guidance Procurement Standards (UG) for local governments that receive and expend federal financial assistance. These new guidelines were effective July 1, 2018. All purchases of goods that exceed \$30,000 and services that exceed \$50,000.00 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. The following vendor has been reviewed and approved:

Newsela: An instructional content platform used across the district since the 2020-21 school year to provide standards-aligned digital content for ELA, Science and Social Studies to grades 2-12. The cost will be \$169,000 utilizing ESSER approved funds.

Dr. Kathy Revis moved that the Henderson County Board of Public Education approve Newsela as a vendor under the sole source exemption guidelines. Mrs. Stacey Caskey seconded the motion.

*(Unanimously approved)*

C. Approval – Purchase over \$90,000 – *(Mr. Bernie Sochia, Chief Finance Officer)*

Chief Finance Officer Bernie Sochia presented purchases in excess of \$90,000 for board approval. 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 list of vendors is presented for approval of contracts and/or purchases.

Daikin (p.2-8): Part of the 2023-24 approved Capital Outlay project list is a new chiller at Glen Marlow Elementary School. This quote utilizes Omnia Partners cooperative pricing

Grainger (p.10-12): We have identified a need for custodial floor care equipment at all of our schools. This quote utilizes State contract pricing and is funded through the use of approved ESSER funds.

Mrs. Stacey Caskey moved that the Henderson County Board of Public Education approve purchases and execution of contracts with the listed vendors as presented. Mrs. Shelia Dale seconded the motion.

*(Unanimously approved)*

D. Discussion – Vape Detectors – *(Mr. Mark Garrett, Superintendent)*

Superintendent Mark Garrett shared information on vape detectors as requested by the board.

- General Information
  - Vape detectors use sensors to detect specific airborne particles or chemicals.
  - Most detectors can detect THC.
  - One device can typically cover a 150 - 300 square foot environment.
  - Device is mounted 8 - 9 feet above the ground.
  - Alerts administrators through an app when a particle or chemical is detected.
- Advantages of Vape Detectors
  - Promotes health and safety
  - Natural deterrent effect
  - Real-time smoke, vape, and THC alerts
  - Integration with current security system

- Limitations of Vape Detectors
  - Room Dimensions - some larger spaces may require multiple devices
  - Detector Durability - may need a protective cage to prevent tampering
  - False Alarms - presence of other chemicals
  - Effectiveness and capability varies on model, technology used, and environment
  - Students are savvy
- Potential Budget
  - Number of Middle School Restrooms 74
  - Number of High School Restrooms 117
  - Single Unit Installed Price \$3,200
  - Potential Budget \$550,000

The board asked to have future discussion about students and vapes, but the detectors may not be the best option. No action taken.

E. Parents Bill of Rights Policy Updates – *(Mr. Mark Garrett, Superintendent)*

Superintendent Mark Garrett presented the following Parents Bill of Rights policy updates. Attorney Chris Campbell stated most of the updates regarding the policies came from the General Assembly, along with a few recommendations from the attorney’s office. Mr. Campbell’s recommendation was to approve the policies on a first reading basis due to the possibility of the implementation date being extended to December or January.

1. Approval – Policy 1310-4002 – Parental Involvement
2. Approval – Policy 3210 – Parental Inspection of and Objection to Instructional Materials
3. Approval – Policy 3540 – Comprehensive Health Education Program
4. Approval – Policy 4335 – Criminal Behavior
5. Approval – Policy 4720 – Surveys of Students
6. Approval – Policy 6120 – Student Health Services
7. Approval – Policy 7300 – Staff Responsibilities

Dr. Kathy Revis moved that the Henderson County Board of Public Education approve Policy 1310/4002 – Parental Involvement; Policy 3210 – Parental Inspection of and Objection to Instructional Materials; Policy 3540 – Comprehensive Health Education Program; Policy 4335 – Criminal Behavior; Policy 4720 – Surveys of Students; Policy 6120 – Student Health Services; Policy 7300 – Staff Responsibilities for first reading as presented. Mrs. Alyssa Norman seconded the motion. *(Unanimously approved.)*

F. Discussion – Flex Calendar – *(Mr. Blair Craven, Chairperson)*

Chairman Blair Craven led a discussion on the FLEX calendar, specifically for Bruce Drysdale Elementary School. He shared that the parents residing within Bruce Drysdale’s district expressed concerns about the calendar, particularly those with children attending multiple schools. Parents who are in the Bruce Drysdale district do not have other options if they need bus transportation. The Chairman proposed that the board make Bruce Drysdale Elementary a traditional calendar school after much more discussion. The board will get input from parents, staff, and teachers before further discussion. No action was taken.

BOARD/SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

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

Superintendent Mark R. Garrett provided the board with status updates on the construction and facility projects currently underway or planned in the near future. HCPS funded projects consist of the

perimeter fence for East Henderson High and the elementary school playgrounds. Mr. Garrett stated that the perimeter fence is 90% complete. The elementary school playgrounds are in progress, equipment has been delivered to 6 out of the 13 elementary schools and installation is in progress at 1 out of the 13 elementary schools. The MRTS funded projects consist of security cameras at the elementary schools; 11 out of 13 cameras have been installed. Upward Elementary cafeteria renovation and secure entry; schematic design and design development phase is complete. The next phase is pre-construction deliverables. West Henderson renovation and addition design development and pricing phase is complete, the next phase is construction documents and bid process. No action was taken.

B. ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT– *(Dr. Shannon Marlowe, Assistant Superintendent)*

Assistant Superintendent Dr. Shannon Marlowe updated the board on the 2022-2023 state accountability results released last week. Dr. Marlowe stated 17 of 23 schools met or exceeded growth targets, 13 of 23 exceeded growth last year. The following schools exceeded growth:

- Sugarloaf Elementary +3.65
- Rugby Middle +3.23
- Hendersonville High School +4.58 (exceeded growth last year)
- North Henderson High School +4.48
- West Henderson High School +4.02
- Early College High School +5.41(exceeded growth last year)

The General Assembly requires districts to assign grades to schools. The formula used to determine the school grade is 80% proficiency and 20% growth. This past school year's grades for HCPS:

Elementary School Grades

- B = Atkinson
- Etowah
- Hendersonville Elementary
- Glenn C. Marlow
- Mills River
- C = Bruce Drysdale
- Clear Creek
- Fletcher
- Sugarloaf
- D = Dana
- Edneyville
- Hillandale
- Upward

Middle School Grades

- B= Rugby
- C= Hendersonville Middle
- D= Apple Valley, Flat Rock

High School Grades

- A = Early College
- B = Hendersonville High
- North Henderson
- West Henderson
- C = East Henderson

Progressing = The Career Academy

Dr. Marlowe shared the overall proficiency for Western North Carolina districts, Henderson County is ranked 31st in the state based on proficiency. The following schools have been designated at low performing: Dana Elementary, Edneyville Elementary, Hillandale Elementary, Upward Elementary,

Apple Valley Middle and Flat Rock Middle. TSI (Targeted School Improvement) schools are down to 7 from 13 schools. Superintendent Mark Garrett recommended scheduling a workshop for the Board to meet with administrators to discuss the accountability report. No action was taken.

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

Mr. Bernie Sochia presented the Board with the results of operations for the results of operations of the Local Current Expense and Other Restricted Funds for the 2023-24 fiscal year as of August 31, 2023: Revenues received totaled \$6,810,493 and expenditures made totaled \$4,780,661. The State budget is anticipated to be presented for a vote this week so we can then get our initial budget for 23-24 prepared. No action was taken.

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

Superintendent Mark Garrett presented to the Board the following information to the Board.

September 14: Superintendent Teacher Advisory Council meeting, 3:30 p.m. &

Superintendent Parent Advisory Council meeting, 5:30 p.m.

September 15-October 15: National Hispanic Heritage Month

September 18-October 6: Intersession break for Flex calendar

October: National School Principal Month

October 2: National Custodial Workers Recognition Day

October 4: HCBPE School Tours, 10:00 a.m. at Flat Rock Middle School,

Mills River Elementary and Sugarloaf Elementary

October 9: HCBPE Regular Business Meeting, 4:00 pm; Closed Session, 3:00 pm

October 9-13: National School Lunch Week

October 10: World Mental Health Day

October 16: Annual HCEF Golf Classic, Champion Hills

October 16: Optional Teacher Workday, No school for students on

Traditional & Early College Calendar

October 17: Required Teacher Workday (District PD), No school for

students on Traditional & Early College Calendar

October 16-20: NC Countdown to College! College Application Week

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Dr. Kathy Revis moved that the meeting be adjourned. Seconded by Mrs. Alyssa Norman seconded the motion. *(Unanimously approved at 6:38 pm.)*

Minutes approved: October 9, 2023