

**Board of Education Meeting**  
**February 21, 2022**  
**6:30 PM, at Polk County High School Auditorium**

**Members Present:** Chairman Ashworth, Vice-Chairman Mr. Covil, Ms. Page, Ms. Allen, Ms. Gibbs, Ms. Jackson, Mr. Parsons

**Members Absent:** None

**Others:** Superintendent Aaron Greene, Director of Curriculum and Instruction Jan Crump, Assistant Superintendent Dave Scherping, Finance Officer Debbie Lovelace and Attorney Phillip Feagan

**Call to Order and Welcome**

Mr. Ashworth called the meeting to order at approximately 6:30 PM and welcomed all in attendance.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Recognition of Board Member Achievement**

Superintendent Greene recognized Board of Education Member Judy Jackson for her completion of her Bachelors Degree in Business Administration. Ms. Jackson graduated with Honors from Montreat College. He commented on the hours and hard work that Ms. Jackson put into the degree, and how she set the goal and continued until it was achieved. Ms. Jackson spoke to the students and parents of Polk County. She encouraged them to strive high, reach for their dreams and do their best.

**Approval of January 10, 2022 Board Minutes (Action)**

Chairman Ashworth called the Board's attention to a copy of the January 10, 2022 Board Minutes. Mr. Ashworth asked if there were any additions or corrections and there were none. Mr. Ashworth entertained a motion to approve the attached minutes. Mr. Covil made the motion to approve the minutes as presented. Ms. Jackson seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**I. INSTRUCTIONAL**

**The Janice Anderson Brumley Educational Grant Recipient (Information) - Ronette Dill**

Ms. Ronette Dill made a presentation to the Board regarding The Janice Anderson Brumley Educational Grant Recipients. This educational grant fund was established by the family of Janice Anderson Brumley. Ms. Brumley was a teacher in Polk County for many years and strived to be the best educator she could. This grant fund will award up to \$1,000 annually to educators who share Ms. Brumley's passion and dedication to education. Ms. Dill presented Ms. Natalie Heatherly, Math teacher at PCHS, and Mr. Eric Eaton, Social Studies teacher at PCMS, with The Janice Anderson Brumley Educational Grant Award for the 2021-2022 academic year. Ms. Heatherly plans to earn her National Board Certification and Mr. Eaton plans to attend and present at the NC Council for Social Studies.

**PCMS Stem Program (Information) - Dale Rush, Teacher**

Mr. Dale Rush, STEM teacher at PCMS, gave a presentation to the Board on the Polk Middle STEM program. Mr. Rush went over the current program, different projects and research that his current classes participate in, and the projects he hopes to do in the future. Mr. Rush recognized three students from the PCMS Bridge Building Team and explained what they have to do and accomplish during the competitions. One student from the group talked about his experience on the Bridge Building Team and how much he enjoyed the STEM class.

**2020-2021 Fall Semester Update (Information) - Jan Crump/Dave Scherping**

Ms. Jan Crump gave an update to the Board regarding mCLASS reading assessment results. She went over data comparing beginning of year and middle of year measures. Assistant Superintendent Dave Scherping went over the End-of-Course (EOC) testing data from PCHS and PCEC. Mr. Scherping explained how the snow days effected testing at PCHS, and he noted PCEC tested approximately 25 students and PCHS tested approximately 160 students. Chairman Ashworth thanked Ms. Crump and Mr. Scherping for the information.

**II. ADMINISTRATIVE**

**Cliff Marr (Information)**

Cliff Marr, Director of the Polk County Board of Elections, provided an update to the Board on the status of filing for candidacy and upcoming Board of Education elections. He explained that candidates who already filed will remain filed. Now that the redistricting issue has been solved, another filing window will be open from February 24-March 4. He explained that the vacancy for the Saluda township will be added to the ballot for 2022. Mr. Marr stated one must be a registered voter for the specific township to file to run for the township seat, and there is a \$36 filing fee. Ms. Jackson asked what times the filing would be starting. Mr. Marr stated that normally office hours are 8:30am-5:00pm but on 2/24 the office will open at 8:00am. Mr. Marr offered his appreciation to Superintendent Greene, the administration and staff of Polk County Schools for the support and cooperation with the use of facilities during elections. Superintendent Greene stated that he would be glad to meet with any person interested in running for a Board seat to share information about the district and answer any questions about the District and its operations.

**Budget Amendment - Debbie Lovelace (Action)**

Debbie Lovelace reviewed the budget amendment included with the agenda. Chairman Ashworth asked for a motion that the budget amendment be approved as submitted. Mr. Parsons made the motion to approve the Budget Amendment as presented, which Ms. Page seconded. Chairman Ashworth called for questions or comments. The motion was approved 7-0.

**Audit Contract (Action) - Aaron Greene**

Superintendent Greene spoke to the Board regarding the Audit Contract with Anderson, Smith, & Wyke, LLC. Administration is seeking approval for the group to continue with the contract for the 2021-2022 school year. Chairman Ashworth called for a motion to approve the audit contract. Ms. Gibbs made a motion to approve the audit contract with Anderson, Smith, and Wyke, LLC and it was seconded by Ms. Allen. The 2021-2022 Audit Contract was approved 7-0.

**Spring Budget Workshop (Information) - Aaron Greene**

Superintendent Greene held discussion with the Board regarding the Spring Budget Workshop. Mr. Greene asked the Board's pleasure of when they would like to have the Spring Budget Workshop. The Board agreed to have the workshop prior to the March Board meeting on March 14, 2022.

**PCHS HVAC Project Update - Dave Scherping (Information)**

Assistant Superintendent Dave Scherping gave a PCHS HVAC Project Update to the Board. Mr. Scherping went over the attached information. He explained what has been completed and what is still in process. He went over the information on how thermostats will work once the process is completed. The project is a little over half complete. Chairman Ashworth asked if the cost of the project will increase due to the rise of prices. Mr. Scherping stated that the Design-Build project was approved at a specific price so that price will not change. Ms. Jackson asked about a blank temperature measure on the presentation. Mr. Scherping stated that that particular measure has not been turned on yet but would be as the project progresses.

**Calendar Updates (Action) - Dave Scherping**

Assistant Superintendent Dave Scherping presented the most recent school calendar updates to the Board. Mr. Scherping stated that there are now five different calendars due to each school having experienced different closures due to weather, COVID, or utilities maintenance, etc. He also explained which days would be moved where and the details of the changes of each calendar. Chairman Ashworth called for a motion to approve the five school calendars that were attached. Mr. Parsons made a motion to approve the attached calendars and it was seconded by Ms. Gibbs. The five attached calendars were approved 7-0.

**Virtual Counseling Services (Information) - Toni Haley**

Ms. Toni Haley spoke to the Board regarding a virtual counseling service, covering details of the program for staff and for students. The service will be accessible to all permanent staff and students in grades 6-12. Ms. Haley went over the presentation that was attached to the agenda. She explained to the Board what areas and conditions the service could address, and how the system works. She stated that all sessions are confidential and the school does not have access to specifics regarding who uses the services. Ms. Haley stated that parents will have the opportunity to “opt-out” or decline their student’s access to services. Ms. Jackson asked what the cost per staff member for this service is, and if parents would be with the student during the counseling. Ms. Haley stated that the cost is based on an eligibility report and numbers, and it comes to approximately \$2.50 per staff member for Polk Schools. For students it is approximately \$1.00 per. Ms. Jackson asked how parents will be notified regarding this service. Ms. Haley stated that those details are still being worked on at the moment. Mr. Greene stated that it will be an “opt out” policy similar to the county library program that is in place and parents will be notified.

**Forbes/TES PreSchool Addition (Information) Dave Scherping**

Assistant Superintendent Dave Scherping held discussion with the Board regarding the Forbes/TES PreSchool Addition. Polk County Schools received a grant of \$1.5 million dollars to build on an annex to Tryon Elementary School specifically for PreSchool. This will be a “design-bid-build” project just like when the middle school and high school was built, and it will require a substantial match in funds. More information on the project will be brought to the board for approval in the future.

**Local Retention Bonus (Action) - Aaron Greene**

Superintendent Greene presented a proposal to the Board for using ESSER funds to provide a local retention bonus to all staff. The Board voted in favor of a local retention bonus and setting aside the ESSER funds to do so. Polk County Schools Administration is proposing that all full-time employees, those working 30 hours or more per week, receive a \$1500 retention bonus for the 2021-2022 school year, and all part-time employees, those working less than 30 hours per week, receive a \$750 retention bonus for the 2021-2022 school year. These bonuses will be paid during the regular March 2022 pay period. Stipulations include that staff members must have been employed by December 31, 2021 and each must sign an agreement indicating their intent of stay through the end of the academic year, June 30, 2022. If the employee leaves the district prior to that date they will forfeit the bonus and pay the amount back to the district. Substitutes and contract employees would not be eligible for this bonus. Chairman Ashworth called for a motion to approve the Local Retention Bonus as presented. Mr. Covil made a motion to approve the Local Retention Bonus and it was seconded by Mr. Parsons and Ms. Page. The motion carried 7-0.

**Bus Driver Rate Increase (Action) - Aaron Greene**

Superintendent Greene spoke with the Board regarding a bus driver rate increase. Superintendent Greene is recommending a \$2.00 per hour rate increase for all bus drivers. Chairman Ashworth called for a motion to approve the recommendation of the Superintendent. Ms. Gibbs made a motion to increase all bus driver pay rates by \$2.00 an hour. Mr. Parsons seconded the motion. The motion carried 7-0.

**Superintendent Update - Aaron Greene (Action)**

Superintendent Greene gave a School Update to the Board. He stated that currently the District has a temporary mask requirement, and according to the CDC there is still high community and regional spread. He noted there has recently

been a significant drop in cases. The current NCDHHS required rules for investigation of cases, contact tracing, and exclusion of positive or exposed students and staff are expiring and will become recommendations only. Mr. Greene reiterated that the Board had returned to a face covering requirement earlier in the year because of the significant number of exclusions of students and staff and related impacts resulting from the NC DHHS requirements. Ms. Jackson made a motion to make masks optional effective immediately and to only send home students that are sick. The motion was seconded by Ms. Gibbs and Ms. Page. Mr. Covil asked what the minimum the district has to do to keep students in school. Mr. Greene stated given the motion as presented, there would be no more investigation or contact tracing when positives occurs. There is still a requirement to address symptomatic students and to isolate positive cases. It was clarified that schools will be reopened for activities for the public and to school volunteers. Mr. Greene is to communicate to Ms. Harding and the school nurses that the Board is in support of the nurses using their clinical judgement when a child is having symptoms. Mr. Parsons asked if there was protocol in place if numbers start to rise again. Mr. Greene stated that NCDHHS and the Public Health Department have every ability to dictate control measures if the need arises. The Board, also, at any time can come back together and discuss the issue if the need arises. The motion was approved 7-0.

### **III. OLD BUSINESS**

Superintendent Greene made a statement on behalf of the Board regarding Critical Race Theory (CRT): *Polk County Schools is required to teach the North Carolina Standard Course of Study. CRT is not referenced or mentioned in the standards in any subject. The District is not aware of any teacher or classroom where CRT is being taught or will be taught. Polk County Schools has no plans to use those materials or approaches while teaching the standards. The Polk County Board of Education has a standing policy and process for parents or community members to express concerns about or submit objections to instructional materials or approaches. The Superintendent and district administration is expected to handle any calls or contact that is received regarding objection to materials or instruction.* Chairman Ashworth called for questions and there were none.

### **IV. NEW BUSINESS**

Superintendent Greene Recognized Lambert Ridings and the Polk Schools Transportation department for the response to the recent bus accident that occurred. He also offered his appreciation to all first responders, EMS, Polk County Sheriff's Office, all emergency workers that responded to the accident, St. Luke's Hospital and Pardee Hospital. Mr. Greene also asked those in attendance to recognize a moment of silence for Mr. Jay Gardner, an employee that recently passed.

### **V. INFORMATION**

January Head Start Policy Council Minutes Presented to the Board  
January Pre-School Monthly Report Presented to the Board  
Pre-K Financial Report Presented to the Board  
Monthly Financial Report Presented to the Board  
Month to Date Credit Card Report Presented to the Board

### **BOARD TRAINING**

Spring Law Conference - Virtual Event - March 3 @ 10:00am - March 4 @ 1:00pm

**VI. PUBLIC INPUT**

Chairman Ashworth stated that there were 46 people signed up to speak which would go over the 30 minutes approved for public input. Mr. Covil made a motion to hear from all public that signed up to speak and it was seconded by Ms. Jackson. The motion passed on a vote of 7-0. Several Polk County residents attended the meeting and offered public input to the Board. A verbatim account of public input and all open meeting Board discussion is available via digital audio recording.

**VII. CLOSED SESSION**

**Closed Session**

At 8:41 PM Mr. Ashworth entertained a motion to go into closed session for the purpose of discussing personnel, and an attorney client matter. Ms. Page made the motion to go into closed session and it was seconded by Mr. Parsons. The motion carried 7-0.

**RETURN TO OPEN SESSION**

Resumption of Regular Session: With all discussion concluded in closed session, Mr. Ashworth called for a motion to return to open session. At 7:44 pm, Ms. Jackson made a motion to return to open session. Ms. Page seconded the motion. The motion carried 7-0.

Mr. Ashworth called the Board’s attention to those matters on the personnel agenda that required Board approval. Mr. Ashworth asked the Board’s pleasure in regard to a motion. Mr. Covil made the motion to approve the recommendations of the Superintendent and the Human Resource Officer. Ms. Allen seconded the motion. The motion carried 6-0 with one-member recusing from the vote.

There was an attorney client matter discussed during closed session.

There was discussion regarding the Spring Budget workshop. The Board agreed to change the date of the Spring Budget workshop to April 11, prior to the Board Meeting.

**Information:**

Name	Position	School			
Roger Byars	Head Custodian	Polk Central	Retiring		
Dori Wallace	Cost Clerk/TIMS Coordinator	Bus Garage	Retiring		
Beverly Logan	School Nurse	PCMS	Resigning full time position/staying on PRN		
Brandon Moore	Teachers Assistant/Afterschool Site Director	Tryon/Polk Central/PCMS	Resigning		
Jay Gardner	Bus Driver	Transportation	Resigned		
Amber Styles	Teacher	Polk Central	FMLA		
Melanie Harris	Food Service Aide	PCMS	Leave *		

Harold Burnett	Custodian	PCHS	Leave *
Jamie Kilgore	Teacher	Tryon	Leave *
Lisa Pack	Teacher Assistant	Polk Central	Leave *
Beverly Logan	School Nurse	PCMS	Leave *
Kalie McCrain	Speech	Polk Central	Leave *
Michelle Richardson	Teacher	Saluda	Leave *
Wanda Reid	Food Service Aide	Polk Central	Leave *
Andrea Hill	Teacher	PCMS	Leave *
Brooke Scoggins	Teacher	Tryon	Leave *
Ellen Rogers	Teacher	Saluda	Leave *
Felicia Pegg	Food Service Aide	Tryon	Leave *
Gloria Logan	Food Service Aide	Tryon	Leave *
Katherine Geisler	Food Service Aide	Tryon	Leave *
Katie Conolley	Food Service Aide	Tryon	Leave *
Kaye Hall	Title I Tutor	Tryon	Leave *
Mackenzie Lewis	Teacher	Tryon	Leave *
Michelle Bean	Asst Principal	PCHS	Leave *
Nancy Johnson	Teacher Assistant	Tryon	Leave *
Sandra Trottier	Food Service Aide	Tryon	Leave *
Amanda Lammers	Teacher Assistant	Polk Central	Leave *
Anna Nelon	School Nurse	Polk Central	Leave *
Ashley Bell	School Counselor	Polk Central	Leave *
Donna Godley	Teacher	Tryon	Leave *
Jessica Wilkins	Teacher	Tryon	Leave *
Kendall Stoney	Teacher	Tryon	Leave *
Shanna Pittman	Teacher	Tryon	Leave *
Sherrie Ford	Teacher	Polk Central	Leave *
Stefanie Tyler	Teacher	Tryon	Leave *
Wanda Jackson	Title I Tutor	Tryon	Leave *
Whitney Yelton	Food Service Aide	Polk Central	Leave *

Brandy Alm	Teacher	PCHS	Leave *
Donna Brice	Teacher Assistant	Polk Central	Leave *
Donna Hall	Teacher	PCMS	Leave *
Emily Moore	Teacher	Polk Central	Leave *
Josh Hill	Asst Principal	PCHS	Leave *
Leann Wilson	Teacher	Polk Central	Leave *
Shanea Tingling	Teacher Assistant	Tryon	Leave *
William Alm	Teacher	PCHS	Leave *
Julie Wilson	Teacher	Sunny View	Leave *
Leah Hudgens-Bey	Clerical	PCHS	Leave *
Ashlyn Searcy	Teacher	Polk Central	Leave *
Lori Byars	Teacher	Polk Central	Leave *
Megan McDaniel	Teacher	Polk Central	Leave *
Nicole Kemp	Teacher	Polk Central	Leave *
Roger Byars	Custodian	Polk Central	Leave *
Susie Kimbrell	Teacher	Polk Central	Leave *
Anastasia Ballard	Afterschool Group Leader	Polk Central	Leave *
Angela Lawter	Custodian	Sunny View	Leave *
Angie Upton	Teacher	Tryon	Leave *
April Crowder	Teacher Assistant	Sunny View	Leave *
Caroline Smith	Teacher	Tryon	Leave *
Deborah Fagan	Teacher Assistant	Polk Central	Leave *
Julie Wilson	Teacher	Sunny View	Leave *
Markesia Jackson	Teacher	PCHS	Leave *
Shelley Upton	Teacher	Sunny View	Leave *
Stephanie Blanton	Teacher	Sunny View	Leave *
Tracy Gray	Clerical	PCHS	Leave *
Amy Crowder	Teacher	Polk Central	Leave *
Christen Smith	Teacher	Tryon	Leave *
Emily Moore	Teacher	Polk Central	Leave *
Heather Bailey	Teacher Assistant	Sunny View	Leave *

Tonya Odel	Clerical	Stearns	Leave *
Brian Taylor	Teacher	PCHS	Leave *
Courtney Edney	School Nurse	Stearns	Leave *
Doug Lanning	Teacher	PCHS	Leave *
Edith Simpson	Food Service Aide	PCMS	Leave *
Nicole Travieso	Teacher	Tryon	Leave *
Sherrie Ford	Teacher	Polk Central	Leave *
Brooke Laughter	Teacher Assistant	Polk Central	Leave *
Carey Upton	Teacher	Polk Central	Leave *
Kelly Dailey	Speech	Tryon	Leave *
Kyerra Thomas	Teacher Assistant	Tryon	Leave *
Laura Howald	Teacher	Tryon	Leave *
Molly Hill	Teacher	PCHS	Leave *
Sylvia Avellaneda	Teacher	Tryon	Leave *
Brian McKaig	Custodian	PCHS	Leave *
Crystal Lawter	Clerical	PCMS	Leave *
Josh Trejo	Teacher	PCMS	Leave *
Lacey Bolt	Teacher Assistant	Polk Central	Leave *
Maria Llanos	Teacher	Tryon	Leave *
Michelle Fagan	Teacher	PCMS	Leave *
Richard Hall	Maintenance	PCHS	Leave *
Stacy Harris	Afterschool Group Leader	Saluda	Leave *
Lydia Ramsey	Teacher	Sunny View	Leave *
Shelly Twitty	Teacher Assistant	Polk Central	Leave *
Belinda Painter	Food Service Aide	Polk Central	Leave *
Melanie Harris	Food Service Aide	PCMS	Leave *
Leah Foster	Teacher Assistant	Polk Central	Leave *
Cassidy Page	Occupational Therapist	All Schools	Leave *
Erin Aldrich	Custodian	Tryon	Leave *
Rachael Haynes-Wood	Human Resource Director	Stearns	Leave *
Eric Morlino	Teacher	PCHS	Leave *

Erin Aldrich	Custodian	Tryon	Leave *
Eli Edwards	Technology	Stearns	Leave *
Hannah Rimer	Teacher	Polk Central	Leave *
Rachel Childers	Teacher Assistant	Polk Central	Leave *
Rhonda Hill	Teacher	PCHS	Leave *
Jennifer Carney	Teacher	Tryon	Leave *
Kenny Blackburn	Custodian	Polk Central	Leave *
Lauren Harris	Afterschool Group Leader	Sunny View	Leave *
Wes Curry	Custodian	Polk Central	Leave *
Holly Jolly	Food Service Aide	Polk Central	Leave *
Jessica May	Teacher	PCMS	Leave *
Katy Montgomery	School Counselor	PCHS/Saluda	Leave *
Linley Foster	Afterschool Director	Stearns	Leave *
Rachel Goettert	Clerical	Stearns/PCEC	Leave *
Beth Blanton	Clerical	Stearns	Leave *
Beth Queen	Teacher	Polk Central	Leave *
Brandi Roddy	Teacher	Sunny View	Leave *
Jennifer Stewart	Teacher	Tryon	Leave *
Kellie Bradley	Teacher	Sunny View	Leave *
Larissa Ingle	Teacher Assistant	Saluda	Leave *
Trey Staton	Technology	Stearns	Leave *
Heather Elliott	Teacher Assistant	Polk Central	Leave *
Emma Bradley	Afterschool Group Leader	Sunny View	Leave *
Jessie Roush	Teacher	Tryon	Leave *
Nikki Gilreath	Teacher	Polk Central	Leave *
Heather Bailey	Teacher Assistant	Sunny View	Leave *
Rita Booth	Teacher	PCMS	Leave *
Shelley Upton	Teacher	Sunny View	Leave *
Shrilla Honeycutt	Teacher Assistant	Tryon	Leave *
Amanda Lammers	Teacher Assistant	Polk Central	Leave *

Anita Bowyer	Afterschool	PCMS	Leave *
Joshua Thompson	Custodian	Tryon	Leave *
Katherine Geisler	Food Service Aide	Tryon	Leave *
Lacey Bolt	Teacher Assistant	Polk Central	Leave *
Lisa Briere	Teacher Assistant	Polk Central	Leave *
Rhonda Brown	Clerical	Tryon	Leave *
Tracy Gray	Clerical	PCHS	Leave *
Ashley Bell	School Counselor	Polk Central	Leave *
Lindsey Burnett	Teacher	Polk Central	Leave *
Megan Williams	Teacher	Tryon	Leave *
Kathy Harding	Nurse/Pre K Director	Stearns	Leave *
Sherrie Huffman	School Counselor	PCMS/Saluda	Leave *

**Action:**

Name	Position	School	Hometown	College	Licensure Area	Years Exp
Amber Scott	Part-Time School Psychologist	All Schools	Brevard	Western Carolina	School Psychologist	Years
Tiffany Fowler	Add Afterschool Site Director to duties	Tryon	Forest City	Vanderbilt University	EC	
Priscilla Billings	Food Service Aide	PCMS	Columbus	N/A	N/A	
Shanelle Smith	Substitute Teacher	All Schools	Mill Spring	N/A	N/A	Years
Kenneth Burnett	Custodian	Polk Central	Medical Leave/Short Term Disability extended through 3/21/2022			

**VII. ADJOURNMENT**

With no more business to come before the Board, Mr. Ashworth declared the meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm.

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Mr. Ashworth, Board Chair

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Aaron Greene, Board Secretary  
 AG/TO