

**Board of Education Meeting
August 12, 2019
6:30 PM, Stearns Education Center Board Room**

Members Present: Chairman Covil, Vice-Chairperson Page, Ms. Corley, Mr. Ashworth, Ms. Allen, Ms. Jackson

Members Absent: None

Others: Superintendent Aaron Greene, Director of Curriculum and Instruction Ronette Dill, Finance Officer Debbie Lovelace, Director of Accountability and Technology Dave Scherping, Attorney Phillip Feagan

Call to Order and Welcome

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

Approval of the July 29, 2019 Board Minutes

Ms. Page called the Board's attention to a copy of the July 29, 2019 Board minutes. She asked if there were any additions or corrections and there were none. Ms. Page entertained a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Ms. Jackson made the motion to approve the minutes as presented and Ms. Allen seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

I. INSTRUCTIONAL

Pre K Half Days - Ronette Dill (Information)

Ms. Dill spoke to the Board regarding the first week of school for the district's Pre K Program. The Pre K Program will operate on half days for the first week of school to allow time for home visits required by Head Start and NC Pre K, and for professional development for staff. The shorter days also give Pre K students time to adjust to the school environment. Ms. Dill stated that parents and families were informed of the half days at the Pre-K events and they are being reminded in the acceptance letters. Ms. Corley commended the District for sticking to the half days due to the importance of the transition and the home visits. Mr. Covil asked how many Pre-K Students were registered. Ms. Dill stated there was one class at Sunny View Elementary, one class at Saluda Elementary, two classes at Polk Central Elementary, and four classes at Tryon Elementary. Mr. Covil asked if all students that had applied had been enrolled in a class. Ms. Dill replied that all four year olds did get in but that three-year olds have not been accepted yet.

2018-2019 Testing Update - Dave Scherping (Information)

Dave Scherping handed out information to the Board and spoke to them regarding 2018-2019 testing and 2018-2019 preliminary testing results. Mr. Scherping offered no comparison of scores because results were just received. Mr. Scherping went over the results with the Board. The results will be reported out once the District is confident that the scores and information is accurate from DPI. Mr. Ashworth asked how the district would go about disputing any issues. Mr. Scherping stated that there is a business rule for each measure. The district would have to show that the business rule was not applied correctly. There were no other questions.

ECATS Update - Dave Scherping (Information)

Mike Melton, Exceptional Children Directory, discussed the new ECATS (Every Child Accountability & Tracking System) program with the Board. This software is the new online Individualized Education Plan management system. Mr. Melton anticipates some obstacles in transitioning to the new system, including not

having all information complete during meetings. He also stated that teachers will be out of the classroom for longer periods of time due to having to be at meetings. Superintendent Greene stated that ultimately this system will provide better feedback for District-level staff and will ultimately benefit students and services. Mr. Melton stated that ECATS is a state-wide system and all information will transfer from county to county.

Summer PD Update - Ronette Dill (Information)

Ms. Dill spoke to the Board and covered information that was attached to the electronic agenda. She told the Board of all the professional development seminars that were offered here at Stearns over the summer and who attended those sessions.

Election of Board Chairman & Vice-Chair (Action)

Vice Chairperson Page turned the gavel over to Superintendent Greene for the election of the Board Chairman. Mr. Greene asked for nominations. Ms. Jackson made a recommendation to elect Ms. Page as the Board Chairman. Ms. Page respectfully declined the nomination and nominated Rick Covil for the Board Chairman. Ms. Allen seconded the motion. Superintendent Greene called for any other nominations and there were none. Rick Covil was voted Chairman of the Polk County Board of Education on a vote of 6-0. Mr. Ashworth nominated Ms. Page as Vice Chairperson of the Polk County Board of Education and Ms. Allen seconded the motion. The motion was approved 6-0. Superintendent Greene turned the meeting over to Chairman Covil.

II. ADMINISTRATIVE

Out of District Tuition Approval - Aaron Greene (Action)

Mr. Greene spoke regarding the out-of-district tuition. The proposed amount for this tuition is \$2300.00 per child. Mr. Covil asked how much the tuition had increased. Mr. Greene answered that the tuition has increased about \$80 from last year. Ms. Corley made the motion to approve the proposed amount and Ms. Page seconded the motion. The proposed out of district tuition was approved 6-0.

Administrative Retreat - Aaron Greene (Information)

Superintendent Greene spoke to the Board regarding the Administrative Retreat. "Together we Learn" is the theme for the District for the 2019-2020 school year. Mr. Greene shared the agenda for the retreat with the Board and briefly went over some of the information that was discussed during the retreat.

Construction Update - Aaron Greene (Information)

Superintendent Greene gave an update on construction that has been taking place over the summer. He spoke briefly regarding each item.

Policy Updates - Dave Scherping (Action-2nd Reading)

1. 3460-Graduation Requirements
2. 3450-Class Ranking
3. 4202/5029/7272-Service Animals in Schools
4. Dave Scherping spoke to the Board and asked if there were any questions regarding the three policies for second reading. Mr. Scherping discussed the changes that were made to these policies. Superintendent Greene spoke and said that he believes in light of the public input that was offered, the Board should review Policy 4202/5029/7272-Service Animals in Schools a little longer before it is approved. Mr. Melton reported he was engaged in a discussion with another family regarding a Service Animal and anticipated more requests in the future. Chairman Covil entertained a motion to approve

policies 3460-Graduation Requirements and 3450-Class Ranking on second reading and table Policy 4202/5029/7272-Service Animals in Schools. Ms. Allen made the motion to approve Policy 3450 and Policy 3460 and table Policy 4202/5029/7272. Ms. Page seconded the motion. Policy 3450 and 3460 were approved on second reading and Policy 4202/5029/7272 was tabled. The motion was approved 6-0.

Policy Updates - Dave Scherping (Information)

1. Draft Attendance Policy

Dave Scherping showed the Board a brief video regarding chronic absenteeism before discussing the draft attendance policy. Mr. Scherping discussed with the Board the balance between excused and unexcused absences. There was discussion regarding truancy verses non truancy and excused verses unexcused. Mr. Feagan asked who was on the Attendance Council. Mr. Greene stated that it is a designee, Linley Foster, and representatives from DSS and other agencies brought in to assist families and reduce or eliminate further absences. Mr. Feagan communicated a concern regarding the specific numbers being used and listed in the law versus percentages found later in the policy. Mr. Feagan stated that the Department of Public Instruction is responsible for telling the District how to define excused or unexcused absences. Ms. Corley asked if the district offers education for parents to inform them of the importance of being at school. Mr. Greene responded that each school has attendance incentive programs often mentioned in their school improvement plan. Dr. Schweitzer spoke regarding attendance with online classes and how much more difficult it is to monitor the absences. Superintendent Greene encouraged the Board to begin thinking about what such a policy should or could include to help address chronic absenteeism and that further discussions would be held with the Policy Committee.

Saluda HVAC Phase 2 - Dave Scherping

1. Phase 2 Details - Mr. Scherping spoke to the Board regarding the details of the Saluda HVAC Phase 2 project that were attached to the electronic agenda and the prices that were included. Mr. Feagan asked said that the removal of the radiators from the rock building for cleaning and flushing is not included. Mr. Scherping stated that it was included in the second part of the details. Attorney Feagan requested to look over the agreement further and speak to Mr. Scherping, Mr. Greene, and possibly MSS regarding the agreement.
2. Phase 2 Purchase Order (Action) – Chairman Covil entertained a motion to approve the Saluda HVAC Phase 2 plan pending Attorney Feagan’s review and approval. Mr. Ashworth made the motion to approve the Saluda HVAC Phase 2 plan and Ms. Corley seconded the motion. Mr. Covil asked if the District had the funds for the project. Mr. Greene answered that this amount is factored into this year’s capital budget. The Saluda HVAC Phase 2 motion was approved 6-0 upon the consent and endorsement of counsel, and with the concession if there are substantial issues it will be brought back to the Board for further discussion.

QZAB Lottery Payment - Debbie Lovelace (Action)

Mr. Greene discussed the annual QZAB Lottery Application Payment with the Board. The application allows the county to use lottery funds to pay the QZAB payment for pas work in renovating Tryon Elementary and other sites. It was communicated that this should be the last payment on this QZAB loan. Chairman Covil entertained a motion to approve the QZAB Lottery Payment. Ms. Jackson made a motion and it was seconded by Ms. Page. The QZAB lottery payment was approved 6-0.

III. OLD BUSINESS

Chromebook Lease Agreement – Dave Scherping spoke to the Board regarding the Chromebook lease agreement that was passed at the August Board meeting dependent on counsel approval. While Mr. Feagan was reading through the statute he found that a four year lease requires the County Commissioners to pass a resolution that permits the District to enter a four year lease. Mr. Feagan prepared a resolution for the District and the County Commissioners. It is considered a continuing capital contract. The resolution is on the agenda for the next County Commissioners meeting. Chairman Covil entertained a motion to approve the Resolution as presented. Mr. Ashworth made a motion to approve the Resolution and Ms. Allen seconded the motion. Chairman Covil called for comments and there were none. The Resolution was approved 6-0.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

FFA Officer Retreat – Superintendent Greene passed out an overnight trip request for the FFA Officer Retreat. Mr. Greene explained to the Board that the trip is not within the six week window that the Board requires for overnight trips. The president of the FFA has requested this retreat from Mr. Barber. Dr. Schweitzer spoke and gave the Board his endorsement for the retreat and that he had a discussion with Mr. Barber about future overnight trip requests being in the six week window. Superintendent Greene offered his endorsement and asked the Board to approve the FFA going on this trip. Ms. Jackson asked about the date on the permission slip. The date of payment and the cost of the trip were incorrect. The \$408 total cost has already been paid. Ms. Jackson made a motion to approve the FFA Officer Retreat with the understanding that the permission form will be corrected and it being expressed that it needs to be turned in within the six week window. Ms. Page seconded the motion. Mr. Ashworth asked if it is the second time in a relatively short period that the six week window requirement has not been met. He asked Mr. Feagan if that would cause any problems. Attorney Feagan stated that it was the Superintendent guidelines and not necessarily policy stipulations that were not being followed. Superintendent Greene assured the Board he would impart the importance of compliance to the appropriate individuals. The FFA Officers Retreat was approved with the above mentioned exceptions on a vote of 6-0.

Travel Reimbursement Rate – Mr. Greene handed out the updated travel reimbursement rate. Chairman Covil entertained a motion to accept the updated travel reimbursement rates. Ms. Corley made a motion to accept the updated rates and Ms. Page seconded the motion. It was approved 6-0.

Food Service/WCCA Agreement – WCCA has approached Jennifer Peeler, Food and Nutrition Director, about providing food for the 23-24 students are WCCA. This is a potential revenue source for the Food Service Department. Ms. Corley commented that this was a great way to work with other agencies. Attorney Feagan asked if the District could furnish food somewhere not in the district. Mr. Greene stated that Ms. Harding and Ms. Peeler have both done the research and cannot see a reason not to do it.

Policy Committee – A Policy Committee meeting was tentatively scheduled for September 5 at 6:00.

Student Transfer Request – Ms. Jackson made a motion to approve the newly submitted transfer request and Ms. Page seconded the motion. The motion passed 6-0.

Niche Rankings – Niche is an independent agency that ranks school districts across the state and the nation. Polk County Schools received the distinction of being the second best school district in the state based on their ratings.

V. INFORMATION – Mr. Covil went over these items with the Board:

Governor's Office Visit: Secretary/CTO Eric Boyette, August 23 1:30-2:30 School Supplies Delivery

2019-2020 School Year: First Student Day for All Polk County Schools (Except Early College) will be August 26, 2019.

2019-2020 School Year: First Student Day for Polk County Early College: August 8, 2019.

Head Start Monthly Financial Report Presented to the Board

BOARD TRAINING

Staff Development Webinars 8/19/19-8/23/19

2019 District 8 Meeting September 26 4:00-8:00 - Macon County-Mountain View Intermediate School

NCSBA Annual Conference 11/18/19-11/20/19 - Greensboro, NC

VI. PUBLIC INPUT

Parent June Lefebvre read a statement to the Board in which she thanked the Board for their service and for affording her an opportunity to address the Board. She offered condolences for the passing of Mr. Tennant. Ms. Lefebvre mentioned her appreciation of the communication with district administration regarding the Exceptional Children's program, both areas in which things are going well and concerns about areas to improve. She briefly spoke of her passion for her role as a parent and the immense responsibility on her in learning about how best to advocate and serve her son. Ms. Lefebvre also discussed the presence of laws impacting education including ADA, IDEA, and Section 504. She then moved on to express concerns regarding the Service Animal Policy up for adoption by the Board. Ms. Lefebvre expressed she was opposed to any requirement of liability insurance for a Service Animal, and to any extra requirements placed on families for a handler or other mandates that would cause families to incur additional financial burden. She added concern regarding the "exclusion" language and stipulations found in Section E. Following her comments Superintendent Greene responded to several of the concerns and offered clarification of several items. After the discussion it was recommended that the Board table the policy adoption until it could be reviewed and potentially modified to address the issues raised by Ms. Lefebvre. A verbatim account of public input and all open meeting Board discussion is available via recording.

Dave Scherping spoke to the Board as a member of the public and the Board at Thermal Belt Outreach Ministries. Thermal Belt has recently had some renovations done by Mr. Rimer and the construction students from PCHS. He indicated they had completed work and wanted to comment on the outstanding job they had done.

VII. CLOSED SESSION

Closed Session

At 8:31 PM Mr. Covil entertained a motion to go into closed session for the purpose of discussing personnel and a student matter. Mr. Ashworth made the motion to go into closed session and it was seconded by Ms. Page. The motion carried 6-0.

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

Resumption of Regular Session: With all discussion concluded in closed session, Mr. Covil called for a motion to return to open session. At 9:00 pm, Ms. Jackson made a motion to return to open session. Ms. Page seconded the motion and it carried 6-0.

Mr. Covil called the Board’s attention to those matters on the personnel agenda that required Board approval. Mr. Covil asked the Board’s pleasure in regard to a motion. Mr. Ashworth 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.

INFORMATION:

Mackenzie Lewis	Pre K Teacher Assistant	Sunny View	Resigned
Shirley Case	Food Service Aide	Tryon	Resigned
Megan Ledford	Afterschool Group Leader	Transferring from Polk Central to PCMS	
Molly Hill	Teacher	PCHS	FMLA
Stephanie Gilbert	Teacher	PCMS	Resigned

ACTION:

Name	Position	School	College	Hometown	Licensure Area	Years Exp
Shanna Pittman	Teacher	Polk Central	USC Upstate	Columbus	Early Childhood	18
Anna Russell	Afterschool Group Leader	Sunny View				
Bailey Lowman	Afterschool Group Leader	Sunny View				

VII. ADJOURNMENT

With no more business to come before the Board, Mr. Covil declared the meeting adjourned at 9:03 pm.

 Mr. Covil, Board Chair

 Aaron Greene, Board Secretary

AG/TO