

Board of Education Meeting
January 9, 2023
6:30 PM, at Stearns Education Center Boardroom

Members Present: Chairman Ashworth, Vice-Chairman Mr. Covil, Ms. Page (via zoom), Ms. Allen, Mr. Parsons, Ms. Gibbs, Ms. Jackson

Members Absent: None

Others: Superintendent Aaron Greene, Director of Curriculum and Instruction Jan Crump, Director of Operations Brandon Schweitzer, 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

Approval of December 12, 2022 Board Minutes (Action)

Chairman Ashworth called the Board's attention to a copy of the December 12, 2022 Board Minutes. Mr. Ashworth asked if there were any additions or corrections and there were none. Mr. Ashworth entertained a motion to approve both sets of minutes. Ms. Jackson made the motion to approve both sets of minutes as presented. Mr. Parsons seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Board Appreciation Month: Recognition of Polk County Board of Education - Superintendent Greene

Mr. Greene read a statement expressing the District's appreciation of the Board's valuable service and dedication to excellence. The Superintendent thanked the Board for what they do for Polk County Schools and Polk County's students. A copy of the statement has been included in a press release and is available upon request.

I. INSTRUCTIONAL

DARE Program Presentation - Aaron Greene (Information)

Superintendent Greene introduced School Resource Officer (SRO) Supervisor Tim Martin and SRO Shelton to present an update on the DARE Program. Officer Shelton went over the DARE curriculum and explained that the program is now expandable to K-12 students. The K-4 program consists of the SRO giving guided presentations and information about making good decisions to the students. The program moves into more specific deterrence conversations in fifth grade through eighth grade, and ninth through twelfth is geared more toward awareness around smoking and vaping. Polk County Schools will begin DARE activities in the coming weeks and will continue through the end of the year.

LETRS Training Update - Jan Crump (Information)

Jan Crump, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, gave a presentation to the Board regarding the recent literacy initiative the state is requiring of public schools. Ms. Crump provided details on the new NCDPI Early Literacy Specialist (ELS) position allotted to each public school district in NC. Brooke Benfield was chosen as the ELS for Polk County Schools. Ms. Benfield offered a brief summary of LETRS training to the Board. All Elementary School teachers are required to take this professional development. The program requires 160 hours of training over two years delivered virtually with online sessions and coursework to be completed. Some recent research on literacy after the pandemic indicates 35% of students are reading proficiently but most professionals agree that 95% of students can read. Ms. Benfield gave statistics on how LETRS training has worked across the country and stated she felt it would help Polk County teachers and students as well.

II. ADMINISTRATIVE

2021-2022 Audit Presentation - Anderson, Smith, & Wike PLLC (Action)

Chairman Ashworth turned the floor over to Mr. Andy Deal of Anderson, Smith & Wike, PLLC, to go over the 2021-2022 Audit findings for Polk County Schools. Mr. Deal began by letting the Board know that in regards to all aspects of the audit, Polk County Schools had received an unmodified report, meaning that there were no findings, and that the audit was a “clean”. Mr. Deal briefly went over the audit report with the Board, and went over the audit report in more detail with the Budget Committee prior to the Board Meeting. Chairman Ashworth called for a motion to approve and accept the 2021-2022 Audit. Mr. Covil made the motion to approve the audit as presented. Ms. Allen seconded the motion. The motion carried 7-0.

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, which Ms. Allen seconded. Chairman Ashworth called for questions or comments and there were none. The motion was approved 7-0.

2023-2024 Budget Calendar - Debbie Lovelace (Action)

Debbie Lovelace presented the 2023-2024 Budget Calendar to the Board for approval. Chairman Ashworth called for a motion regarding the 2023-2024 Budget Calendar. Ms. Jackson made the motion to approve the calendar as presented by Debbie Lovelace. Ms. Gibbs seconded the motion. The motion carried 7-0.

III. OLD BUSINESS

Construction Update - Brandon Schweitzer (Information)

Director of Operations, Brandon Schweitzer, updated the Board regarding the PCHS HVAC and the Tryon Elementary addition. Dr. Schweitzer stated that the final payment has been made on the PCHS HVAC project. There is \$150,000 held in retainage for the district to make sure there are no more damages to the gym floor and all leaks are fixed. Dr. Schweitzer stated the Tryon Elementary addition project is currently entering the bidding phase and dates have been set for the bids in the coming weeks. Mr. Covil asked if the district expected many bids. Dr. Schweitzer stated that he could not speak in detail regarding any specifics as he would be in violation with the bid protocols but indicated he thought we would receive bids for the project.

2023-2024 Calendar Adjustment - Aaron Greene (Action)

Superintendent Greene held discussion with the Board regarding a 2023-2024 calendar adjustment. The included revision has an adjustment to spring break. Chairman Ashworth called for a motion to approve the 2023-2024 Calendar adjustment. Ms. Jackson made a motion to approve the calendar adjustment as presented and it was seconded by Mr. Covil. The 2023-2024 Calendar adjustment was approved 7-0.

Mr. Greene offered his appreciation to the Board for completing 3 hours of training with Campbell-Shatley.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

Superintendent Greene spoke to the Board about an updated Memorandum of Understanding for School Resource Officers between the district and the Polk County Sheriff’s Department. Attorney Feagan advised the consideration of the MOU be paused until after closed session so on of the specific safety items could be discussed. The board agreed.

Superintendent Greene questioned the Board regarding their desire to adjust committee assignments. The Board agreed to keep committee assignments the same as they have been for now.

V. INFORMATION

December 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
Optional Teacher Workday-January 16, 2023
Required Teacher Workday-January 17, 2023

OPTIONAL NCSBA OFFERED BOARD TRAINING

Leadership Education and Development-Waynesville-January 26-1:00-3:00
Spring Law Conference - Virtual Event - March 23, 2023 - March 24, 2023

VI. PUBLIC INPUT

There was no need to amend the time limit for Public Input. One Polk County resident 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 7:15 PM Mr. Ashworth entertained a motion to go into closed session for the purpose of discussing personnel, and an attorney-client matter. Ms. Gibbs made the motion to go into closed session and it was seconded by Ms. Allen. 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 7:58 pm, Mr. Covil made a motion to return to open session. Mr. Parsons 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. Parsons made the motion to approve the recommendations of the Superintendent and the Human Resource Officer. Mr. Covil seconded the motion. The motion carried 7-0.

There was discussion in closed session regarding an MOU between the District and The Polk County Sheriffs Department. Chairman Ashworth called for a motion to approve the MOU. Ms. Allen made a motion to approve the MOU and it was seconded by Ms. Gibbs. The MOU was approved as presented 7-0.

Information:

Name	Position	School	
Laura Spinks	Substitute Teacher	All Schools	Resigned
Emily Moore	Teacher	Polk Central	Parental Leave
Natalie Ezell	Media Coordinator	PCHS	Resigning
Shelly Bolt	Food Service Aide	PCHS	Resigned

Action:

Name	Position	School	Hometown	College	Licensure Area	Years Exp
Jackie Crump	Transportation Director	Bus Garage	Nebo	N/A	N/A	10
James "Robbie" Price	Temp Part Time Custodian	Stearns/PCEC	Columbus	Spartanburg Tech	N/A	0
George Alley	Temp Part Time Asst Athletic Director	PCHS	Columbus	N/A	N/A	N/A
Kylee Waters	Afterschool Group Leader	All Schools	Mill Spring	N/A	N/A	0
Courtney Christmann	Afterschool Group Leader	Tryon	Tryon	N/A	N/A	0
Riley Lawter	Substitute Teacher	All Schools	Mill Spring	ICC	N/A	0
Maria Proctor-Price	Substitute Teacher	All Schools	Columbus	Catawba College	Exceptional Children's	30
Christa Woodlief	Substitute Teacher	PCMS	Landrum, SC	Clemson	N/A	3
Kelly Lovelace	Teacher	Polk Central	Ellenboro	UNC	Elementary/Middle Grades	8
Nicola Roos	Substitute	Sunny View	Lake Lure	N/A	N/A	0
Kelley Dow	Transfer from Part-Time Food Service/Teacher Assistant to Full-Time Teacher Assistant	Saluda	Saluda	N/A	N/A	N/A
Karen Pruitt	Bus Driver	All Schools	Rutherfordton	N/A	N/A	N/A

VII. ADJOURNMENT

With no more business to come before the Board, Mr. Ashworth declared the meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm.

Mr. Ashworth, Board Chair

Aaron Greene, Board Secretary
AG/TO