

Board of Education Meeting
August 11, 2025
6:30 PM, in the Stearns Education Center Boardroom

Members Present: Chairman Ashworth, Ms. Allen, Ms. Gibbs, Ms. Jackson, Ms. Page, Mr. Stich (virtual)

Members Absent: Vice-Chairman Mr. Covil

Others: Superintendent Todd Murphy, Director of Curriculum and Instruction Jan Crump, Human Resource Specialist Tonya Odel, Director of Operations Brandon Schweitzer, and Attorney Chris Campbell.

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 June 9, 2025 Board Minutes (Action)

Chairman Ashworth called the Board's attention to a copy of the June 9, 2025 Board Minutes. Mr. Ashworth asked if there were any additions or corrections and there were none. Mr. Ashworth entertained a motion to approve minutes as presented. Ms. Allen made the motion to approve the minutes as presented. Ms. Page seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Board Attorney Agreement – Chairman Mike Ashworth (Action)

Chairman Mike Ashworth requested approval from the Board to approve attorney Chris Campbell with Campbell Shatley PLLC as the Board's attorney. Ms. Jackson made a motion to approve the request and it was seconded by Ms. Gibbs. The request to approve Mr. Campbell was approved 6-0.

I. INSTRUCTIONAL

Pre-K Half Days- Kathy Harding (Information)

Director of Pre-K Kathy Harding informed the Board of the beginning of year schedule for Pre-K, and that Pre-K students would attend half days for the first week. She stated that the half days give the students extra time to become acclimated to the setting, and it gives Pre-K staff time for the extra required training.

Head Start One-Time Supplemental Request for Nutritional Services - Kathy Harding (Action)

Kathy Harding presented plans to the Board to apply for the Head Start One-Time Supplemental Grant – Nutrition and Healthy Eating. The funding request is for the amount of \$15,050.00 to support the purchase of essential equipment and supplies. Chairman Ashworth called for a motion to approve submission of the one-time supplemental grant. Ms. Gibbs made a motion to approve the grant as presented and it was seconded by Ms. Allen. The supplemental funding grant was approved 6-0.

District's Occupational Therapist Pay Scale –Todd Murphy (Information)

Superintendent Murphy informed the board that Polk County Schools does not currently have an established Occupational Therapist pay scale. Human Resource Specialist Tonya Odel and the Human Resource Department will contact surrounding counties to help establish a suitable pay scale. Once a pay scale has been established, it will be brought back to the board for approval.

Overnight Field Trip Requests –Todd Murphy (Action)

Superintendent Murphy requested approval from the Board to approve the overnight FFA State Veterinary Science Career Development Event. Chairman Ashworth called for a motion to approve the presented overnight field trip request. Ms. Jackson made a motion to approve the request and it was seconded by Ms. Page. The overnight field trip request for the FFA State Veterinary Science Career Development Event was approved 6-0.

II. ADMINISTRATIVE

Summer Food Giveaway – Jennifer Peeler (Information)

Jennifer Peeler, Child Nutrition Director discussed her handout. She spoke about the increased number of students that participated this summer. She wanted to acknowledge that this program would not have been a success without the help from her staff and the staff from Stearns. In addition, 4,263 snacks were distributed to FENCE and the YMCA Summer Programs. The department total profit from the Summer Program was \$87,062.82. Superintendent Murphy complimented Ms. Peeler, Ms. McIntyre and the food nutrition staff for all of their hard work towards such a huge undertaking.

Out of District Tuition Approval – Todd Murphy (Action)

Superintendent Murphy presented an “out of district” tuition recommendation to the Board. He reminded the Board that CFO Lovelace calculates the “per child” receipt of local revenue to arrive at the yearly figure, and this year’s calculation resulted in a recommendation of \$2,894 per student for Out of District tuition. Chairman Ashworth called for a motion to approve the Out of District Tuition. Ms. Allen made a motion to approve the tuition and it was seconded by Ms. Gibbs. The Out of District Tuition was approved 6-0.

2024-2025 Year-End 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. Ms. Allen made the motion, which Ms. Jackson seconded. Chairman Ashworth called for questions or comments and there were none. The motion was approved 6-0.

Micro-purchasing Resolution – Debbie Lovelace (Action)

Superintendent Murphy presented a Micro-purchasing Resolution to the Board. This is the same resolution from previous years that must be approved annually. This resolution affords the CFO and the Superintendent the ability to make purchases up to amounts for different source purchases to be sure all funding streams are consistent with Board approval thresholds. Chairman Ashworth called for a motion to approve the Micro-Purchasing Resolution. Ms. Gibbs made a motion to approve the Micro-Purchasing Resolution and it was seconded by Ms. Allen. The Micro Purchasing Resolution was approved on a vote of 6-0.

Student Transfer Request – Brandon Schweitzer (Action)

The Board agreed to vote on the Student Transfer Request as presented. Chairman Ashworth called for a motion to approve the Student Transfer Request. Ms. Jackson made a motion to approve the Student Transfer Request as submitted and it was seconded by Ms. Page. The Student Transfer Request was approved 6-0.

Facilities Update – Brandon Schweitzer (Information)

Dr. Schweitzer spoke briefly regarding the presentation that was attached electronically to the agenda. Chairman Ashworth called for questions and there were none. Dr. Schweitzer recognized Michelle Fagan for the effort she put in to getting the track resurfaced. Mr. Murphy and Dr. Schweitzer both spoke regarding their appreciation of Darren Green and his maintenance team and the technology team regarding their hard work over the summer.

Policy 4318 – 2nd Reading – Brandon Schweitzer (Action)

Dr. Schweitzer presented a revised Policy 4318. There was discussion among the board and legal counsel regarding Policy 4318. Chairman Ashworth called for additional questions and there were none. Mr. Ashworth called for a motion to approve the policy. Ms. Allen made a motion to approve Policy 4318 and it was seconded by Ms. Page. The Policy 4318-2nd reading was approved 6-0.

Superintendent Update – Start of 25-26 School Year – Todd Murphy (Information)

Mr. Murphy reported to the Board that the first day of school proceeded smoothly. He was able to visit all schools in the district. Mr. Murphy extended his gratitude to the Polk County Sheriff's Office for their support in following the school buses both this morning and this afternoon. He noted that they would continue to monitor the buses for the next few days to assist with operational procedures and address any potential traffic concerns. Additionally, Mr. Murphy shared that the first-day enrollment for the 2024-2025 school year was 2,062, with today's enrollment increasing to 2,145. He acknowledged that this number may fluctuate over the coming days, but expressed enthusiasm about the increase of 83 students.

III. OLD BUSINESS

None

IV. NEW BUSINESS

Cell Phone Policy Research

Chairman Ashworth has directed the administration to explore potential strategies for implementing the updated cell phone policy, with the aim of reducing the responsibilities placed on teachers. Superintendent Murphy agreed to research other strategies.

V. INFORMATION

2025-2026 School Year: First day for all Polk County Schools: August 11, 2025

June/July 2025 Preschool Monthly Report

July Pre-K Financial Report

June Monthly Financial Report

July Monthly Financial Report

June Credit Card Report

July Credit Card Report

NCSBA OFFERED OPTIONAL BOARD TRAINING

2025/2026 NCSBA Video Library

WRESA Leadership Education and Training-9/19/25 at WRESA

2025 COSSBA Federal Advocacy Conference-September 7-9 in Washington, D.C.

Best Practices for Governance Teams-September 26, 2025-Raleigh, NC

2025 Fall Law Conference-October 8-10, 2025 in Asheville

Annual Conference-November 12-14, 2025 in Greensboro

VI. PUBLIC INPUT

There was no public input.

VII. CLOSED SESSION

Closed Session

At 7:17 PM Mr. Ashworth entertained a motion to go into closed session for the purposes of discussing personnel. Ms. Gibbs made the motion to go into closed session and it was seconded by Ms. Jackson. The motion carried 6-0.

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 8:05 pm, Ms. Jackson made a motion to return to open session. Ms. Page seconded the motion. The motion carried 6-0.

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. Page made the motion to approve the recommendations of the Superintendent and the Human Resource Specialist. Ms. Jackson seconded the motion. The motion carried 6-0.

Information:

| Name | Position | School | |
|------------------|--|----------------|-------------------|
| Tiffany Dennis | Afterschool Director/Teacher of the Deaf | Central Office | FMLA |
| Kyerra Thomas | Pre-K Teacher Assistant | Tryon | Resigned |
| Clowie Upton | Pre-K Teacher Assistant | Tryon | Resigned |
| Thomas Hensley | High School English Teacher | PCHS | Resigned |
| Amberley Skipton | EC Teacher | PCMS | Resigned |
| Angela Golfieri | Spanish Teacher | PCHS | Resigned |
| Kelsey Filadelfo | Teacher | Polk Central | Non-Certification |

Action:

| Name | Position | School | Hometown | College | Licensure Area | Years Exp |
|------------------------|--|---------------|-----------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| Barbara Deese | EC Teacher | Sunny View | Rutherfordton | Rasmussen University | EC | 4 |
| Mattie "Annette" Toney | Elementary Teacher | Polk Central | Bostic | Grand Canyon University | El Ed (K-6) | 3 |
| Lily Earney | Transfer from PT Teacher Assistant to FT Teacher Assistant | Tryon | Mill Spring | Isothermal Community College | N/A | 2 |
| Anna Russell | Pre-K Teacher Assistant | Tryon | Mill Spring | N/A | N/A | |
| Ginger Helton | Transfer from Food Service Assistant to Food Service Assistant Manager | PCHS | Campobello, SC | N/A | N/A | |
| Valerie Barnes | Food Service Aide | Tryon | Landrum, SC | N/A | N/A | 1 |
| Samantha Sester | Food Service Aide | Tryon | Tryon | N/A | N/A | 10 |

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------|------------------|-------------|---------------|------|-----|----|
| Andrea Fisher | Substitute | All Schools | Mill Spring | N/A | N/A | 20 |
| Ashley Bowden | Substitute | All Schools | Rutherfordton | UNCA | N/A | 1 |
| Christina Mintz | Pre-K TA Floater | Tryon | Columbus | N/A | N/A | 0 |

VII. ADJOURNMENT

With no more business to come before the Board, Mr. Ashworth declared the meeting adjourned at 8:18 pm.

Mr. Ashworth, Board Chair

Todd Murphy, Board Secretary
TM/TO/RC