

Minutes
Anson County Board of Education
Regular Meeting
Monday, August 31, 2020, 3:30 p.m.
Anson County Schools' Administrative Conference Room/Board Room
Virtual Go To Meeting

The Anson County Board of Education met in closed session on Monday, August 31, 2020. Members present via Virtual Go To Meeting were Marilyn Bennett, Lisa Davis, Frank Liles, Bobbie Little and George Truman. Board members present in-person were Carol Gibson, Gay Lookabill, Beulah Pratt and Mike Turner. Others in attendance were Howard McLean (Superintendent), Holly Berry (Finance Officer), Anne Hyatt (Board Clerk), Mike Flake (Board Attorney) and Pete Swails (Administrator: Technology).

Call to Order

Dr. George Truman opened the meeting at 3:30 p.m. and welcomed everyone in attendance.

Invocation

Gay Lookabill gave the Invocation.

Conflict of Interest Statement

In compliance with the requirements of Chapter 138A-15(e) of the State Government Ethics Act, Chair George Truman reminded Board Members of their duty to avoid conflicts of interest and appearances of conflicts of interest under Chapter 138A. There were no conflicts of interest communicated by the members. Chair Truman then requested that if, during the course of the meeting, members became aware of an actual or apparent conflict of interest that they bring the matter to his attention. He further explained it would then be the member's duty to abstain from participating in discussion and from voting on the matter.

Adopt Agenda

Dr. Truman asked that a closed session be added at the end of the meeting if closed session business is not completed by 4:30 p.m. Marilyn Bennett made a motion to adopt the agenda. Mike Turner seconded the agenda it was unanimously adopted by the Board. Motion carried.

Approve Minutes

(Regular Meeting 07/27/20)

A motion was made by Frank Liles to approve the regular meeting minutes of July 27, 2020. The motion was seconded by Beulah Pratt and approved by the board. Motion carried.

Closed Session

A motion was made by Gay Lookabill to go into closed session at 3:38 p.m. The motion was seconded by Beulah Pratt and approved by the board. Motion carried.

There was no action taken.

Reconvene Open Session

The Board returned to open session at 4:17 p.m. upon a motion by Mike Turner, seconded by Beulah Pratt and approved by the board. Motion carried.

Public Comment

Rhonda Wright signed up for public comment and her remarks are below:

How, not why, are preschoolers able to attend daycares but school-aged children cannot?

Why can we not individualize who teaches in person as well as who may need in-person instruction during this time of crisis?

What is the school system doing about the decrease of language development that is so crucial during these early years of instruction?

Even though the most remarkable teachers and principal are at PPES and I know they are trying their absolute best, my youngest grandson (beginning K) has not been able to attend as he needs to when at a screen. Parents who work and/or have multiple school aged children, etc. aren't prepared to take the place of in-person instruction where such things as proximity control techniques can be implemented. They are taught how to teach not only content but methodology. Parents do not know nor can they be asked to perform this with their other duties. How does the system (additional resources and programs) intend to address the students' lack of preparedness to move on to the next grade level if it happens.

Dr. Truman mentioned a follow-up communication would be shared with Ms. Wright.

Chair's Report

Public Engagement: There was no public engagement information shared due to COVID-19.

Dr. Truman asked for an update on House Bill 1225. Mr. McLean mentioned we last had an update on June 22 and the bill is stuck somewhere between the house and the senate.

Dr. Truman asked the board for discussion on board meeting times. Mr. Turner said he feels meetings need to be held at a time when parents can join if they are interested. Mr. Turner suggested starting closed session at 4:30 p.m. and open session at 5:30 p.m. Mrs. Hyatt stated that meetings are currently already in place and were approved by the board last year to begin at 4:30 p.m. for closed and 5:30 p.m. for open session. Mr. McLean said he would update the board with a mid-monthly update instead of having additional meetings.

Dr. Truman asked that administration endorse a letter of gratitude to Pilgrims for the generous donation.

Upon a motion by Mike Turner, seconded by Lisa Davis, the board voted to switch agenda items X. (Board Member Questions and Concerns) and XI. (Superintendent's Report). Motion carried.

Superintendent's Report

Mr. McLean gave a report on Budget, Human Resources, Current Job Postings, Child Nutrition Services, Instructional Programs, Athletics and the District Website.

Mr. Bobbie Tillman (Published Book): Mr. Tillman talked to the board about the book he wrote and published called, We are all different COLORS. But yet.....we are all the SAME. Mr. McLean said he will check with the Instructional Leadership Council to have them review the book and see if it can be placed in our schools.

Ms. Anna Strassner (Discovery Education): Ms. Strassner was present to speak on the STEAM program. She explained STEAM is looking at instruction differently. Ms. Strassner stated STEAM brings the standards into real life problems and it allows students to engage on how they want to be a part of the solution. She explained the four C's (Critical Thinking, Creativity and Collaboration) and how this program may open up a passion and career paths for students. She said this is what STEAM is in Discovery Education. Ms. Strassner asked for questions from the board. Mr. McLean asked for the difference between STEM and STEAM. She said STEM is more recognized in the business community. She stated in STEAM, it is having extra emphasis on the arts. Dr. Truman said Anson New Tech High School used the STEM approach and he asked would this be hands-on models and collaborative learning. Ms. Strassner confirmed hands-on and collaboration is essential on both the student and teacher side and it's the cornerstone for instruction. Dr. Truman asked if this will be funded from Title I. Mr. McLean asked Mrs. Berry for funding details and she indicated it would come from small county funding. Ms. Gibson asked about the start date for the program. Mr. McLean explained no decision has been made at this time; he stated they are only fact-gathering. Mr. McLean did mention it would be for 2021 if the board wants to move forward. Mr. McLean said this is for approval to move forward only. Ms. Strassner said there is a lot of groundwork that will need to be done before the implementation of the program. She explained gearing this toward middle school 6th graders is essential because that is where we start to lose our kids. She said this is a grow and sustain model and in order to do that, administrators must be equipped to implement the program. Dr. Truman said it's a good conversation to have and he feels students need hands-on learning now. Mr. McLean said tonight should have been an information only type setting and he indicated he needs to take the contract off the consent item section and it will be revisited in the next phase. He stated again they are only fact-gathering. Dr. Truman said the board will address the contract removal later in the meeting.

Meals Update: Anita Starling (Nutrition Director) said they provided over 8,000 curbside meals. Mr. Turner asked about meal delivery. Mr. McLean said funding was found to deliver meals on Mondays and Wednesdays until funding runs out. He explained the meal delivery will cover five days on those two delivery days. He said external hard drives and hotspots will also be delivered on those same routes. Ms. Starling said the important part was making sure students are on bus routes.

Ms. Starling said principals are also checking in with families to be sure students are getting what they need. Ms. Gibson asked how this affects our Community Eligibility Program. Ms. Starling said it does not affect the program. Ms. Bennett wanted to know how many more students need to be reached and how can we reach them. Mr. McLean said principals are calling and we are using SwiftK12 to call parents. Ms. Bennett asked when the issue will be resolved. Ms. Collard said they are using a two-step approach where surveys are utilized and then that information is used to send to principals where they begin to reach out to families.

Attendance: Ms. Cureton was present to discuss attendance for the district since school began. Ms. Cureton said there were 287 absences for today and the numbers are in line with numbers from last year. She also explained those could change with work submission from students. Ms. Lookabill asked how many of those are Kindergarten and 1st grade. Ms. Cureton said she can get that information to Ms. Lookabill. Ms. Gibson said it would be good to know the enrollment for September 2019 as a comparison. Ms. Davis asked how many of those students are absent due to technology issues and if that is going on, what are we doing to prevent that from happening. Mr. Stinson said some high school students are working during the day and are submitting assignments in the evening, which will change the absences to them being present. Mr. Stinson said they are working to be sure students are engaged and their school is tracking how many students are on zoom and engaged and participating in virtual sessions and work. Mr. Fred Davis said they have 255 students enrolled at Wadesboro Primary and they had 189 online today. Mr. Davis said all of his kids are accounted for and they are only looking for eight kids. He said some of those kids could have moved and they could be involved in homeless situations. Mr. Davis said parents have what they need and they don't have any technology issues. He said if there are issues, he does have hard copy work he can give to them.

Guidelines for COVID-19 Procedures: Dr. Ratliff was present to speak on COVID-19 procedures. She confirmed there are no positive cases right now. She explained there are some active cases that are no longer positive. Dr. Ratliff continued to explain the protocol with checking temperatures, appropriate face coverings, etc. Ms. Gibson said she is more concerned about asymptomatic people. Dr. Ratliff said that is why contact tracing is so important. Ms. Lookabill asked if Dr. Ratliff could find the percentage of cases. Lisa Davis asked if we were utilizing the Child and Family Support Team (CFST) at each school and if not what are we doing otherwise. Dr. Ratliff said the CFST consists of a school nurse and social worker. She explained they have a new social worker at Peachland-Polkton and they share her with Anson Middle School. Dr. Ratliff stated there are COVID Teams at each school. Ms. Davis asked if COVID Teams authorize directing employees home if someone answers positive to the COVID questions. Dr. Ratliff said yes they have that authorization as they consult with the principal. She said once they get to the door, that is the gate and they are not allowed in until they have a temperature check and answer the questions. Ms. Davis asked what equipment was purchased for the schools. Mrs. Berry said sanitizer, disposable gloves, thermometers, cleaning supplies, masks, masks for students, clear masks and face shields have all been ordered and placed in schools. There are also digital thermometers at five schools that were purchased through Child and Family Support Team funds. Mrs. Berry said if those schools are successful with the digital

thermometers, they will look at purchasing some for the other schools. Ms. Davis asked to clarify that there are some schools that don't have what others schools have as far as COVID equipment. Mrs. Davis also asked if one of the digital thermometer kiosks could be moved to a school that doesn't have one. Mrs. Berry said that equipment must stay at the school where funding is located. Mr. McLean said if they are moved, we could violate our funding source requirements. Mr. McLean said they will try to find a funding source to purchase additional temperature kiosks for those schools that do not have one. Mrs. Berry said the additional funding would be around \$16,000 if you purchased two for each location that currently does not have a temperature kiosk.

Mr. Stinson/Athletics: Mr. Stinson said the NCHSAA is still in Phase 2. He said phase 2 means you can play with equipment and wipe down and disinfect after each use. He said we are currently not participating in any workouts and conditioning. He explained they could start up at any point when the district is ready for students to begin. Mr. Stinson stated if we don't move into phase 3 in North Carolina, we will not have an athletic season. He said if they were to move to Plan B, they could transition within two days. Mr. Stinson said they will follow the board's lead. He said they do have students who are participating in other youth sports not affiliated with NCHSAA. Mr. Turner made a motion to start back athletics. Ms. Lookabill asked if there could be practices if we are in Plan C. Mr. McLean said it is a local decision based on NCHSAA guidelines. Mr. Stinson said if workouts resumed, they would not be mandatory. Mr. Turner made a motion to resume athletic workouts. Mr. McLean asked to have two weeks to collaborate and discuss the topic of returning to athletics. Mr. Turner withdrew his motion.

Mr. McLean mentioned to the board that our website is being updated and it will take a few weeks for everything to transition. He said he thinks the board and community will be pleased with the updated website once it is completed.

Questions & Answers from the Board:

Ms. Lookabill asked about middle school athletics. Mr. Stinson said they would follow the high school's lead on athletics. Ms. Lookabill asked Mr. Martin if they would be ready and he said they were prepared.

Ms. Gibson asked Mr. McLean to check on training of sanitation. Mr. McLean said custodians have been trained and they will get a refresher course in the next few weeks. He also mentioned he has done walkthroughs of the school buildings for monitoring purposes. Mr. McLean said he will update the board on training in the mid-month report.

Ms. Davis asked what we are doing for staff appreciation at the schools and she would like that to be in the mid-month report. She also asked how we are addressing Wi-Fi issues and are we still having trouble with connectivity. Mr. McLean said he will add that info in the mid-month report. Mr. McLean said they are trying to reach families and he will explain more in the mid-month report. He said hotspots will be here within the next 10 days.

Lisa Davis asked if we have we considered offering any afternoon or evening teaching support since some parents are working during the day. Mr. McLean and Mrs. Collard stated that zoom lessons are recorded so parents can watch them later with their child.

Mr. Turner made a motion to remove a.04 Discovery Education Contract and Ms. Gibson seconded the motion. The motion was approved by the board. Motion carried.

Consent Items

Upon a motion by Gay Lookabill, seconded by Carol Gibson, the following consent items were approved by the board: CTE Local Plan Application, Title I and II Spending Plans, Agreement between Gardner-Webb University and Anson County Schools, 2020-2021 NC New Teacher Support Program Memorandum of Agreement and Title IX Special Policy Updates listed below. Motion carried.

New Policies Approved:

- Policy 1710/4020/7230, Discrimination and Harassment Prohibited by Federal Law
- Policy 1720/4030/7235, Title IX Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex
- Policy 1725/4035/7236, Title IX Sexual Harassment - Prohibited Conduct and Reporting Process
- Policy 1726/4036/7237, Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Process
- Policy 4329/7311, Bullying and Harassing Behavior Prohibited
- Policy 7232, Discrimination and Harassment in the Workplace

Policy Revisions:

- Policy 1730/4022/7231, Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Disabilities
- Policy 4040/7310, Staff-Student Relations
- Policy 4331, Assaults, Threats, and Harassment (renamed "Assaults and Threats")
- Policy 4340, School-Level Investigations

Policies Rescinded:

- Policy 1710/4021/7230, Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying
- Policy 1720/4015/7225, Discrimination, Harassment, and Bullying Complaint Procedure

**Administrative Regulation 1725/4035/7236-R is "issued" directly by the superintendent and is being shared with the board for informational purposes.*

New Business

Mike Turner nominated Dr. Bobbie Little for the Raleigh Dingman Award. Ms. Lookabill seconded the motion and it was approved by the board. Motion carried.

Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made at 7:14 p.m. by Frank Liles, seconded by Mike Turner and approved by the board. There was no discussion. The motion carried.

Dr. George Truman, Chairperson

Mr. Howard McLean, Secretary