

Perquimans County Board of Education
Regular Session – December 13, 2021

The Perquimans County Board of Education met in regular session on Monday, December 13, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. in the boardroom at the Central Office. Audio access was available to the public by dialing a telephone number and entering a meeting ID and passcode.

Chairwoman Dr. Anne White called the meeting to order and welcomed parents, grandparents, employees, and other guests to the meeting. Leary Winslow led the audience in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag and had prayer.

Board members present: Chairwoman Dr. Anne White (in person), Vice Chair Russell Lassiter (in person), Matt Peeler (in person), Amy Spaugh (in person), Leary Winslow (in person), and Arlene Yates (in person).

Approval of Agenda

Leary Winslow made a motion to approve the agenda with the addendum and Amy Spaugh seconded the motion. Before the vote, Mr. Peeler asked the Board to consider adding prayer to future agendas after the matter was raised at the last meeting. Dr. White stated the matter could be researched at discussed at the next meeting. Mr. Winslow asked if our bus routing situation could be discussed at the end, perhaps under the Superintendent's Report. The Board voted to approve the agenda with the addendum and discussion of the bus routing situation.

Special Recognitions

Assistant Superintendent James Bunch announced the first place winners of the 2021 Superintendent Christmas Card Contest and presented each student with a framed copy of their school's winning card and verse.

Perquimans Central School

1st Place Drawing – Kaylee Bateman, 2nd Grade
1st Place Verse – Braxton Kime, Kindergarten

Hertford Grammar School

1st Place Drawing – Allison Ford, 5th Grade
1st Place Verse – Faith Jackson, 4th Grade

Perquimans County Middle School

1st Place Drawing – Mattison Winslow, 8th Grade
1st Place Verse – Aubrey Dykes, 8th Grade

Perquimans County High School

1st Place Drawing – Rhianna Tucker, 12th Grade
1st Place Verse – Evalina Marshall, 11th Grade

Mr. Bunch presented a certificate to Eliza Jethro, a third grade student at Hertford Grammar School, for winning the regional DAR essay contest.

Approval of Minutes

Upon motion by Amy Spaugh and second by Arlene Yates, the Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes for the November 22, 2021 regular meeting as presented.

Consent Agenda

Upon motion by Leary Winslow and second by Arlene Yates, the Board voted unanimously to approve the personnel recommendations in the Personnel Summary Report and addendum as presented.

Public Hearing / Requests from the Public

There were no requests from the public.

Unfinished Business

Upon motion by Arlene Yates and second by Amy Spaugh, the Board voted 5 to 1, with Mr. Peeler opposing, to adopt the revisions to the policies included in the Fall 2021 legislative and other policy updates as presented.

Fall 2021 Legislative and Other Policy Updates

1310/4002	Parental Involvement
1510/4200/7270	School Safety
1720/4030/7235	Title IX Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex
2125/7315	Confidential Information
2302	Remote Participation in Board Meetings
3100	Curriculum Development
3115	Curriculum and Instructional Guides
3225/4312/7320	Technology Responsible Use
3410	Testing and Assessment Program
3420	Student Promotion and Accountability
3460	Graduation Requirements
4050	Children of Military Families
4120	Domicile or Residence Requirements
4150	Student Assignment
4152	Unsafe School Choice Transfer
4300	Student Behavior Policies
4316	Student Dress Code
4400	Attendance
4700	Student Records
4720	Student Surveys
5020	Visitors to the Schools
5022	Registered Sex Offenders
5030	Community Use of Facilities
5210	Distribution and Display of Non-School Material
6305	Safety and Student Transportation Services
6320	Use of Student Transportation Services
6340	Transportation Service/Vehicle Contracts
7100	Recruitment and Selection of Personnel
7130	Licensure
7262	Communicable Diseases-Employees
7340	Employee Dress and Appearance
7510	Leave
7530	Military Leave
7820	Personnel Files
8305	Federal Grant Administration
8310	Annual Independent Audit
9000	Planning to Address Facility Needs

The policies listed below have only minor changes to wording, legal references, and/or cross references.

1725/4035/7236	Title IX Sexual Harassment-Prohibited Conduct and Reporting Process
1726/4036/7237	Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Process
2310	Public Participation at Board Meetings
4329/7311	Bullying and Harassing Behavior Prohibited
7110	Information Provided by Applicant or Employee
7400	Job Descriptions
7520	Family and Medical Leave
9020	Facility Design

New Business

Face Covering Policy

Mr. Bunch provided an update on the COVID count in Perquimans County Schools including updated information from Albemarle Regional Health Services on active cases and trends.

Senate Bill 654 that was signed into law on Monday, August 30, 2021, requires school boards to vote each month on their pandemic-related mask or face covering policy. Mr. Bunch presented Dr. Turner's recommendation, as well as the recommendation from ARHS, to continue the mask mandate. After discussion, the following action was taken. Upon motion by Arlene Yates and second by Amy Spaugh, the Board voted 5 to 1, with Mr. Peeler opposing, to require the wearing of masks for all students, staff, and visitors/spectators of Perquimans County Schools while inside school facilities in order to limit the number of quarantines and spread within the district. This requirement will expire at the end of each month dependent on the Board's decision at each monthly meeting when metrics for the school system are analyzed.

Field House/Restrooms Renovations

With the new grandstand project underway, Russell Lassiter stated that a concession stand and restrooms would be needed at the baseball field since the existing concession stand and restrooms building would be torn down. Last Friday, Mr. Lassiter had a meeting with Maintenance Director Jamie Johnson, Assistant Superintendent James Bunch, and Athletic Director Justin Roberson to discuss options. They discussed renovating the old field house which is down the left field line of the baseball field to include a lean-to for concessions and updating the restrooms in the field house. A second and third option would be a metal or wooden building for a concession stand from Stateline. The concession stand and restrooms would be utilized by both baseball and softball. The estimated cost for either option is \$25,000 to \$30,000. According to Mr. Johnson, the cost for renovating the restrooms in the old field house is not included in those figures and would be done regardless of the option selected. Leary Winslow explained the reasons for tearing down the existing press box/concession stand/restrooms building. Board members asked questions and discussed the options presented. It was the consensus of the Board to not take action on this item since the Superintendent has authority to approve expenditures up to a certain dollar amount without approval of the Board according to board policy. The Board will refer to Dr. Turner, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Bunch, and Coach Roberson to determine the best option for this project to be completed by the opening of baseball season on February 19th. The Board asked, however, to receive updates in the form of drawings and/or descriptions, along with the cost of the project.

PCHS Track Design Consultant

Mr. Bunch and Mr. Johnson described the process used to secure a company to produce the track design in order to put the plans out for construction. Mr. Johnson said there was no interest when the RFQ was put out the first time. The company that responded the second time was CHA, the same company that designed the football field. The district did not have issues with this company on the football field project; the issues came from the district's execution. CHA has built a lot of athletic facilities, including four tracks, at high schools and colleges not only in North Carolina but nationwide. Based upon the information they provided, it appears CHA would be a suitable company to do the design for the track. Mr. Bunch asked the Board to interview this design team to determine if they would provide appropriate services based on our needs. If the Board allows the company to move forward, they will present the costs involved for this project.

Upon motion by Leary Winslow and second by Arlene Yates, the Board voted unanimously to interview CHA at the regular January meeting or on another date the Board deems appropriate.

Budget Amendments

Chief Finance Officer Rube Blanchard presented budget amendments for the Board's consideration, explaining in detail the reason for each amendment. Upon motion by Russell Lassiter and second by Matt Peeler, the Board voted unanimously to approve State (Fund 1) Budget Amendment #2, Local (Fund 2) Budget Amendment #1, Federal (Fund 3) Budget Amendment #2, Capital Outlay (Fund 4) Budget Amendment #1, and Local (Fund 8) Budget Amendment #2 as presented.

Monthly Financial Report

Mr. Blanchard presented the financial report that was run on December 6, 2021. The report did not include payroll or expenditures paid after that date. The benchmark for funds spent was 50%, with the actual percent of funds spent being 39%. He also illustrated the budget summary sorted by 2-digit Purpose Code. In Capital Outlay, there is \$102,215.53 that remains unallocated for unexpected repairs.

Child Nutrition Salary Schedule

Chief Human Resources Officer Michelle Maddox presented a non-flattened, 40-step salary schedule which was developed for Child Nutrition staff with the new state minimums and maximums for pay grades 52 and 56. Currently, Child Nutrition staff are being paid a total of \$352,692.09 in salary and benefits. The proposed non-flattened salary schedule with no step increase would cost an additional \$48,819.58 for a total of \$401,511.66 for salaries and benefits. The proposed non-flattened salary schedule with a step increase would cost an additional \$52,450.23 for a total of \$405,142.32 for salaries and benefits. Ms. Maddox reminded the Board that the Child Nutrition program is an enterprise fund, which means it does not receive state funding, but it does receive federal funding. The majority of their funding comes from sales, paid lunches and lunches they bill for. Their operating expenses come from the revenues they are able to produce.

Health insurance is \$7,019 per employee. All of these employees work enough hours to receive health insurance. That means the program will have to absorb an additional \$105,285 added to these totals. These employees also get to participate in the retirement system because they work 30 hours or more a week. That means the school system has to pay the state-mandated retirement rate of 22.8%. The program is doing well since every child is eating for free right now and all the meals are reimburseable. Next year, the rate for employees will increase to \$15.00 for the minimum which will be another mandated added expense that Child Nutrition will have to incur. Based on this information, the recommendation to the Board was to adopt the new, non-flattened salary schedule and provide each employee a step. Board members asked questions of Ms. Maddox, School Nutrition Director Kim Cullipher, and Chief Finance Officer Rube Blanchard. After questions and discussion, the following action was taken.

Upon motion by Russell Lassiter and second by Amy Spaugh, the Board voted 5 to 1, with Mr. Peeler opposing, to adopt the Child Nutrition salary schedule to reflect a 2.5% increase or \$13.00 hourly minimum, whichever is greater, plus a step increase on the salary schedule. New salaries will be paid in January 2022 retroactive to July 1, 2021 as presented by Ms. Maddox.

Classified Salary Schedule

Ms. Maddox presented a salary for schedule for all classified staff, except for bus drivers and Child Nutrition. She stated right now the district cannot afford to unflatten what has happened over the years. In the future, the school system hopes to work toward developing a budget with the County Commissioners to take categories of employees and try to do what has been for Child Nutrition. The staff being paid 51 and 52 will be held harmless at \$13.00. Next year, they will be paid \$15.00, but the salary schedule will still be "out of

whack.” Other school districts are facing this as well. Ms. Maddox entertained questions and comments from board members.

Upon motion by Arlene Yates and second by Amy Spaugh, the Board voted to adopt the current salary schedule for classified employees to reflect a 2.5% increase or \$13.00 hourly minimum, whichever is greater, plus a step increase on the salary schedule for classified staff and central office. New salaries will be paid in January 2022 retroactive to July 1, 2021.

Reports / Updates

Student Discipline Data

Assistant Superintendent James Bunch presented the student discipline data for November 2021. The one reportable offense at Perquimans Central School was for the month of December. Perquimans Central School had no suspensions for the month of November. Hertford Grammar School had 13 suspensions, Perquimans County Middle School had 6 suspensions, and Perquimans County High School had 2 suspensions for the month of November. Mr. Bunch referenced pre-COVID suspension numbers for 2019-2020. Three of the four schools had lower suspension numbers than their current suspension numbers. One school has less students now than it did then. Suspension numbers will continue to be monitored as well as certain grades, acts, and violations of student conduct.

Superintendent’s Report

Enrollment Summary

School	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Diff in 2020-2021
PCS	386	393	418	400	411	+11
HGS	437	415	372	332	359	+27
PCMS	343	381	415	417	397	-20
PCHS	468	465	460	465	493	+28
Total	1634	1654	1665	1614	1660	+46

COVID Testing

Mr. Bunch stated that COVID testing began September 30th. As of today, 93 students have been COVID tested. Of the 93 students tested, 29 students or 31% tested positive.

Board Chair’s Comments

Dr. White thanked teachers and staff for doing an amazing job. Mrs. Yates thanked Jill Cohen for the initiative to involve students in the school nutrition program. Mrs. Cohen stated that the guidance counselors and the Family Consumer Science teacher put the word out to our students. There are 10 or 11 students on the list to be potentially interning in periods one, two or three starting in January. They will receive a high school credit for their 135 hours of work. CTE will contract with Mrs. Mountjoy-Riddick who will offer ServSafe for foodhandlers coursework for the students on two Saturdays in January. CTE pay for the students’ certifications. A number of other students will be doing workplace learning internships with EMS, the Chamber of Commerce, and the PCHS Theater Department.

Bus Routing

Mr. Winslow expressed his concerns about bus drivers not being available to drive their routes and students having to be picked up from school. He stated that he supports combining bus routes and having fewer buses on the road. He said the Board has been told on several occasions that this couldn't be done, but something has to be done. Mr. Lassiter echoed Mr. Winslow's concerns. When asked about the responsibility to secure substitute bus drivers, Mr. Bunch stated that there was a shift this year to move the responsibility from transportation to the administration at each school to secure substitute bus drivers. Mr. Winslow also expressed his concern about students missing instructional time due to this situation.

Mrs. Yates asked to receive information at the next meeting about how discipline is handled on school buses and the safety of our schools due to what has recently happened in our area. Mr. Bunch stated that the district would continue to provide metal detectors and wands for our schools and increase the number of safety devices for our schools.

Mr. Winslow thanked Dr. White for allowing him to bring up the topic. He said that with the beginning of a new semester in January, it would be a good time to introduce new bus patterns and routes and would give drivers time over the break to practice those routes. In addition, he mentioned the idea of staggered school start times. Dr. White asked Mr. Bunch to discuss this topic with Dr. Turner taking into consideration the holidays over the next two weeks.

Announcements

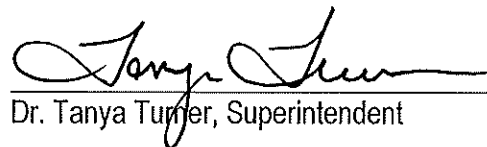
- Christmas and New Year's Holidays – December 20, 2021 – December 31, 2021
- Optional Work Day – January 3, 2022; Required Work Day – January 4, 2022
- Students Return to School – Wednesday, January 5, 2022
- Regular Board of Education Meeting – Monday, January 24, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. @ Central Office

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:24 p.m.



Dr. Anne White, Chairwoman



Dr. Tanya Turner, Superintendent