

Perquimans County Board of Education
Regular Session – January 24, 2022

The Perquimans County Board of Education met in regular session on Monday, January 24, 2022 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. Russell Lassiter led the audience in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag and had prayer.

There was a moment of reflection in memory of Mr. Aubrey Tynch, electrician for Perquimans County Schools, who passed away on January 9, 2022.

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

Upon motion by Amy Spaugh and second by Matt Peeler, the Board voted unanimously to approve the agenda and addendum as presented.

Special Recognitions

Superintendent Dr. Tanya Turner recognized board members for School Board Appreciation Month. Dr. Turner stated the North Carolina School Boards Association (NCSBA) sponsors the annual recognition, which recognizes the important contribution school board members make in the community for the advancement of our school system and public education. Each board member was presented with a certificate of appreciation from the NCSBA, a gift basket from the Perquimans Central School PTA, and a personalized cell phone holder and PQ cookie from the district.

Approval of Minutes

Upon motion by Arlene Yates and second by Amy Spaugh, the Board voted unanimously to approve the minutes for the December 13, 2021 regular meeting as presented.

Consent Agenda

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

Public Hearing / Requests from the Public

None

Unfinished Business

None

New Business

2021-2022 Fall EOC Perquimans County High School Data Analysis

Chief Academic Officer Melissa Fields presented an update on the Fall EOC data for Perquimans County High School. Slide information was arranged to provide a historical prospective for where the State was in 2018-2019 (pre-pandemic) and where it finished last year. The slides also showed Perquimans County High

School data for 2018-2019 and 2020-2021 and the Fall 2021 percent proficient. Information included the number of students that were tested and proficient in Biology, English II, Math I and Math III. Mrs. Fields noted strategies are being implemented in each subject to provide consistency for students. The overall proficiency at the high school was 56.65%. Honor students were 93.62% proficient and general students were 36.1% proficient. When schools were remote last year, there were more honor students in face-to-face instruction than there were general students. Dr. Turner stated that overall proficiency has been impacted across the board in all subjects and the impact will be felt for several years to come. It will also be seen in the graduation rate and the number of dropouts.

Strategic Plan Update – Strategic Priority #1

Chief Academic Officer Melissa Fields stated that when focus groups met, they worked to align our strategic plan goals with the North Carolina State Board strategic plan goals. After our strategic plan was created, State Superintendent Truitt came out with “Operation Polaris,” which is in direct alignment with our strategic plan. Our district strategic plan has four strategic priorities. Mrs. Fields provided an update on Strategic Priority 1: Graduate every student to be a contributing citizen who is confident, competitive and prepared to reach his or her personal goals. Several pages of data were presented for Action Steps 1.1 – 1.7 of Priority 1. Updates on the other strategic priorities will be presented at future board meetings.

After her presentation, Mrs. Fields proposed revising the baseline year to 2020-2021 and extending the plan for one year to 2023-2024 because the district did not have an opportunity to fully implement the three-year plan due to the pandemic. The plan was adopted in January 2020 and the pandemic began in March 2020. Mrs. Fields, Mr. Drew, and Dr. Turner entertained questions and comments from board members. Upon motion by Matt Peeler and second by Amy Spaugh, the Board voted unanimously to revise the baseline year to 2020-2021 and extend the Strategic Plan for one year through the 2023-2024 school year.

Board of Education Representative for the 2022-2023 Calendar Committee

Upon motion by Leary Winslow and second by Amy Spaugh, the Board voted unanimously to elect Russell Lassiter to serve on the 2022-2023 calendar committee which will meet on Thursday, February 17, 2022 at 3:30 p.m. at Perquimans County High School.

Face Covering Policy

Superintendent Turner provided an updated map of the school districts in North Carolina that require masks and those that are mask optional. She provided an update on the COVID count in Perquimans County Schools including updated information from Albemarle Regional Health Services on active cases and trends, as well as vaccination numbers for Perquimans County. Dr. Turner shared changes to the COVID-19 health guidance to schools included in the Strong Schools NC Toolkit which reduce quarantine times.

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. Dr. Turner's recommendation was to continue the mask mandate. After 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 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.

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 Federal (Fund 3) Budget Amendment #3, Capital Outlay (Fund 4) Budget Amendment #2, and Local (Fund 8) Budget Amendment #3 as presented.

Monthly Financial Report

Mr. Blanchard presented the financial report that was run on January 19, 2022. The report did not include payroll or expenditures paid after that date. The benchmark for funds spent was 58%, with the actual percent of funds spent being 46%. He also illustrated the budget summary sorted by 2-digit Purpose Code. In Capital Outlay, \$102,215.53 remains unallocated for unexpected repairs.

RFPs for Auditor

Mr. Blanchard stated that he received notification from our current auditor, Donna H. Winborne, that she would no longer be doing audits for school boards due to a shortage in staff. Therefore, an RFP was submitted to four companies that currently perform audits for school boards in the state. Only one response was received which was from Anderson, Smith & Wike, PLLC, a company in Rockingham. This company is used by 65 school districts in the state. The annual cost for their services would be \$28,500 for FY 2021-2022, \$29,000 for FY 2022-2023, and \$29,500 for FY 2023-2024. In addition to these amounts, the firm will bill for incidentals which they estimate will be \$1,500 to \$2,500. Upon motion by Leary Winslow and second by Russell Lassiter, the Board voted unanimously to enter into a three-year contract with Anderson, Smith & Wike, PLLC, to audit the accounts of Perquimans County Schools for FY22, FY23, and FY24 as presented.

Budget Calendar for Fiscal Year 2022-2023

Mr. Blanchard presented the budget calendar for the 2022-2023 fiscal year, which included required dates set by the Fiscal Budget & Control Act as well as local deadlines. When asked about a date for the annual board retreat / budget work session, board members asked Dr. Turner to send them dates to select from for the annual board retreat / budget work session.

RFQ Designer Proposal Interview

Maintenance Director Jamie Johnson introduced Tim Riordan and Ed O'Hara from CHA Design and Construction Company. Mr. Riordan and Mr. O'Hara were interviewed by the Board of Education regarding their qualifications to provide design services for the proposed track. CHA is the company that did the master plan and the design work for the football stadium at the Nixon Athletic Complex. After Mr. Riordan, Mr. O'Hara, and Mr. Johnson responded to questions from board members, the following action was taken. Upon motion by Matt Peeler and second by Arlene Yates, the Board voted unanimously to secure CHA to provide design services for the proposed track.

Reports / Updates

PCHS Baseball/Softball Concession Stand Update

Maintenance Director Jamie Johnson presented a drawing which illustrated the location of the proposed lean-to or wood/metal building for concessions. Since submitting the drawing, he became aware of a food truck-type trailer that could be used for concessions. It would be portable and cost significantly less than the proposed lean-to or wood/metal building. With multiple projects underway, this would be a quicker and more simple solution at this time. Mr. Johnson said his main concern is doing something for the long-term. To put that much money into something, he would like for it to be here for 10-20 years. Taking into consideration the short timeline and the lack of manpower to do the necessary work, Mr. Johnson stated it might be best

to purchase the trailer to use for concessions this season. He said the bathroom renovations have not yet started. He said it has been challenging for his department not having a full staff since early December. Mr. Winslow stated he has looked at the trailer, which hasn't been used in 5+ years, and said it would need to be cleaned. Mr. Bunch, Dr. Turner, Mrs. Cohen, and others will look at the condition of the trailer and make a decision.

Student Discipline Data

Assistant Superintendent James Bunch presented the student discipline data for December 2021. In December, there were no reportable offenses. At the end of last year, there were five reportable offenses. So far this year, there has only been one. There are no suspensions for Perquimans Central School. In December, there were five out-of-school suspensions for Hertford Grammar, four for Perquimans Middle, and nine for Perquimans High.

School Bus Discipline Update

Mr. Bunch walked through the procedures for school bus discipline which was mentioned at the last board meeting. He said depending on the severity of the violation, normally a warning is given by the bus driver unless it requires some other type of consequence. Usually the bus driver calls the parent with concerns. If the behavior continues or another behavior that warrants a referral, the bus driver fills out a referral just as teachers would do and sends the form to a school administrator. The school administrator will meet with the student, look into the matter and issue consequences which will be recorded in the platform used by the district called Education Handbook. At Central School, there have been no cases of reported bus discipline. There have been three incidents at Hertford Grammar School, eight at Perquimans Middle School, and ten at Perquimans High School. Some of the referrals involve out-of-school suspensions, in-school suspensions, loss of bus privileges, or warnings. Mr. Bunch entertained questions from board members about these procedures.

School Safety Update

Mr. Bunch provided safety measures that are in place at our schools. At each school, there is a buzz-in system with a video camera by the front desk for entry in the building. Each school has a panic alarm in the vicinity of the receptionist. Mr. Peeler asked to hear safety-related items in closed session if the items were not public knowledge. It was the consensus of the Board that Mr. Bunch was providing an overview of safety measures, but not specific information. Mr. Bunch shared that Lobby Guard is a device that each person who enters a school has to enter their driver's license information. They are issued a name label that identifies them as an individual who has completed the Lobby Guard process and has a right to be in the school. SROs are assigned to each school and for extracurricular events as appropriate. There are threat assessment teams at each school for threat communications or possession of a weapon. A threat assessment is done for the particular situation and involves site and district personnel. Forms of communication have been updated throughout the buildings. The new surveillance systems installed in two schools are working very well. In addition, there are drills that each school performs such as fire drills as well as other drills to prepare students and staff for emergencies.

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Turner had no additional information to add to the information provided in her weekly updates. She said that enrollment remains steady, although it is less this month due to early graduates and about 12 withdrawals at the high school for various reasons.

Board Chair's Comments

Dr. White thanked the entire system for the awesome job that they are doing and how everyone comes together to do what needs to be done.

Dr. White sent board members a letter from the NC School Boards Association's Board of Directors which invited local school boards to nominate one of its members to serve on the NCSBA's Legislative Committee. The Legislative Committee's primary task is to develop the NCSBA Legislative Agenda for consideration and adoption by the Delegate Assembly. Mrs. Yates volunteered to be nominated for the Legislative Committee. There were no other nominations. By vote of the Board, Mrs. Yates was nominated to serve on the Legislative Committee with the understanding that NCSBA would decide on who will serve on the Committee.

Mr. Lassiter shared that all the students at Perquimans Central School that did not have swim lessons the past two years due to COVID have now completed their swim lessons thanks to Brenda Lassiter and the Perquimans County Schools Foundation.

Announcements

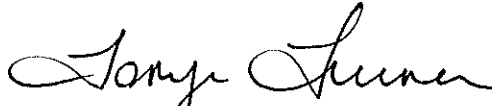
- Regular Board of Education Meeting – Monday, February 22, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. @ Central Office

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.



Dr. Anne White, Chairwoman



Dr. Tanya Turner, Superintendent