

## **Minutes**

Anson County Board of Education

Monday, July 29, 2024

Regular Meeting 5:00 p.m.

Anson County Schools' Administrative Board Room

The Anson County Board of Education met in a regular session on Monday, July 29, 2024. Board members present were Marilynn Bennett, Lisa Davis, Carol Gibson, Frank Liles, Dr. Bobbie Little, Judy Little, Beulah Pratt, George Truman, and Mike Turner. Others in attendance were Dr. Brian Ratliff (Superintendent), Dr. Josh McLaurin (Executive Administrator), Mike Flake (Board Attorney), and Anne Hyatt (Board Clerk).

### **Call to Order**

George Truman opened the meeting at 5:01 p.m. and welcomed everyone in attendance.

### **Invocation**

Lisa Davis gave the Invocation.

### **Adopt Agenda**

The board voted to adopt the agenda as presented in a motion by Lisa Davis, seconded by Carol Gibson. The motion carried.

### **Approve Minutes**

Carol Gibson moved to approve the June 27, 2024, meeting minutes. Lisa Davis seconded the motion, which was approved by the board. The motion carried.

### **Closed Session**

Chair Truman asked for a motion to go into a closed session. Mike Turner made a motion to go into closed session at 5:03 p.m. to consider a personnel action that involves an officer or employee of the Board pursuant to North Carolina General Statute 143.318.11 (a)(6) and to discuss the acquisition of real estate or to discuss the price and other material terms of a contract or proposed contract for the acquisition of real property pursuant to North Carolina General Statute 143.318.11(a)(5). The motion was seconded by Judy Little and approved by the board. Motion carried.

### **Reconvene Open Session**

The Board returned to open session at 6:01 p.m. upon a motion by Mike Turner. Judy Little seconded the motion, which was approved by the board and carried.

### **Public Comment**

There was no one present to speak during this section.

### **Chair's Report**

Dr. Truman recognized Jamie Caudle and JD Bricken, County Commissioners, who attended the meeting.

### **Superintendent's Report**

Dr. Ratliff gave reports on Budget/Audit Presentation, Human Resources, Current Job Postings, Student Learning, and Operations.

Dr. Ratliff publicly acknowledged Dr. Altheria Patton, who recently passed away. He wanted to honor her legacy and what she meant to Anson County.

### **Audit Presentation**

Nicholas Wicker (Director of Governmental Services with Strickland Hardee PLLC) was present to share a presentation on the 2022-2023 Audit. The outcome shared with the board was that it was a very successful audit.

### **Human Resources**

Dr. McLaurin said we currently have four certified vacancies and performed interviews for two of the positions. He also shared how much shorter the personnel report was this month than last year.

### **Salary Schedule**

Dr. Ratliff said the 3% increases are state-mandated and effective July 1, 2024. He looks forward to budget development and will focus on retention, staffing, and salary schedules, which must be highly considered.

### **Leadership Team Meetings**

Dr. Ratliff shared that leadership team meetings will be scheduled soon, and those will be in-person meetings.

### **School Growth Plans**

Dr. Ratliff said school growth plans will be shared monthly by principals starting in September.

### **Dress Code (Hoodies)**

Dr. Ratliff stated he feels they are in a good place with the discussion of hoodies in school and that hoodie concerns can be handled at the discretion of the school administration. He explained that it can be discussed and brought back up before the board if it becomes an issue. Judy Little said she is concerned because hoodies will cause children not to learn, and she doesn't feel a child should be covered up to learn. Dr. Ratliff said the leadership team will review any issues and have those conversations. He said if it's a widespread problem, they will address it. He explained that if there are concerns in the schools, the administration can handle it at their discretion. Ms. Little said she feels we should also address the teacher dress code. Dr. Ratliff said the administrative staff can handle individual cases.

### **New Anson Middle School Update**

Dr. Ratliff stated he had been invited to all the construction meetings at the work site. He said there are process concerns they have been working on with the county. Dr. Ratliff gave a progress update on where we are in the construction. He said he will share more updates as he receives them. Dr. Ratliff said he was able to meet with Mr. Caudle, Mr. Bricken, and the county manager and how they look forward to fostering a good relationship with both elected bodies. Dr. Ratliff stated that

he plans to invite all elected leaders in the county to the employee convocation on August 20. Dr. Ratliff also noted that meetings with the county manager and others will be held more regularly.

### **Old Anson Middle School Building**

Dr. Ratliff said he wants board leadership to know there will need to be conversations about what to do with the old Anson Middle School building and how we can use it, possibly as alternative education.

### **Board Agenda**

Dr. Ratliff would like the board to consider having agenda information delivered to board members at noon on the Thursday before the board meeting. He asked if we could adjust the policy to give additional time to walk in amendments to the meeting.

### **Capital Improvement Plan**

Dr. Ratliff said they are still working on the Capital Improvement Plan and have settled on a 10-year plan. He stated that the document would be available for viewing shortly. He commended Dr. McLaurin, Mr. Ross, and Mr. Napier for their work on the plan.

### **AXIS/Alternative Education**

Dr. Ratliff said if it is the desire to make the alternative school a separate school to make it a phase-in approach due to needing more time to be ready personnel speaking. He shared other ideas of how the school could look, and the concept of an education center is a thought. Dr. Ratliff recommended continuing at the current location and with it being a program within Anson High School. Dr. Ratliff said he would postpone the separate school until next year. He said he knows the board does not want it to be just a school for behavior problems but for it to be more than that.

### **Consent Items**

Upon a motion by Lisa Davis, seconded by Frank Liles, the board approved the following consent items: Personnel Report, Sole Source Justification Forms (Carolina Thomas LLC – bus parts, White’s International – bus parts and Go Energies – Ekos Software), Salary Schedules and the policy updates listed below. Motion carried.

- Repeal Policy 1725-4035-7236 Title IX Sexual Harassment – Prohibited Conduct and Reporting Process
- Repeal Policy 1726-4036-7237 Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Process
- Repeal Policy 7232 Discrimination and Harassment in the Workplace
- Policy 1510-4200-7270 School Safety
- 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 (New Version) Title IX Sex Discrimination – Prohibited Conduct and Grievance Procedures
- Policy 4023-7233 Pregnant and Parenting Students and Employees
- Policy 4329-7311 Bullying and Harassing Behavior Prohibited
- Policy 1300 Governing Principle – Parental Involvement
- Policy 1500 Governing Principle – Safe, Orderly, and Inviting Environment
- Policy 1600 Governing Principle – Professional Development

- Policy 1700 Governing Principle – Removal of Barriers
- Policy 1742-5060 Responding to Complaints
- Policy 1760-7280 Prohibition Against Retaliation
- Policy 2500 Hearings Before the Board
- Policy 4040-7310 Staff-Student Relations
- Policy 7355 Employee Use of Social Media
- Policy 7820 Personnel Files

### **New Business**

#### AXIS/Alternative School

Mike Turner motioned not to start an independent AXIS school this year, to remove the school code, and to keep it as a program within Anson High School. Frank Liles seconded the motion, which was approved by the board. The motion carried.

### **Adjournment**

Mike Turner moved to adjourn at 7:38 p.m. Lisa Davis seconded the motion, which was approved by the board. There was no discussion, and the motion carried.

---

Dr. George Truman, Chairman

---

Dr. Brian Ratliff, Secretary