

Minutes
Anson County Board of Education
Regular Meeting
Monday, July 27, 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, July 27, 2020 after the opening of the meeting at 3:30 p.m. Open session began at 4:42 p.m. Members present via Virtual Go To Meeting were Marilynn 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), Marty Godwin (Assistant Superintendent), Holly Berry (Finance Officer), Anne Hyatt (Board Clerk) 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

George Truman 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.

Closed Session

A motion was made by Frank Liles to go into closed session at 3:30 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 4:42 p.m. upon a motion by Gay Lookabill, seconded by Carol Gibson and approved by the board. Motion carried.

Adopt Agenda

Lisa Davis added Standardized Dress Code to New Business. Gay Lookabill asked for the personnel report to be moved to New Business to be voted on separately. Mike Turner made a motion to adopt the agenda with changes. Beulah Pratt seconded the agenda it was unanimously adopted by the Board. Motion carried.

Approve Minutes
(Regular Meeting 06/25/20)

A motion was made by Gay Lookabill to approve the regular meeting minutes of June 25, 2020. The motion was seconded by Frank Liles and approved by the board. Motion carried.

Recognition

The board recognized Jessica Laney and Mason Chau for being a Duke TIP State Recognition Scorer and for qualifying for a special recognition ceremony.

Public Comment

There was no one present to speak during public comment.

Chair's Report

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

Dr. Truman asked for an update on a teacher supplements. Mr. McLean stated he talked to Barron Monroe on July 20 and discussed the impact of the cuts. He explained Mr. Monroe told him the cuts will be revisited in November which gives hope that the commissioners and county manager know how important those funds are to our district.

Dr. Truman asked for an update on House Bill 1225. Mr. McLean said it looks like we last had an update on June 22 and the bill is stuck somewhere between the house and the senate. He said it looks like we will be getting approximately 6.5 million.

Dr. Truman asked how child nutrition will be affected if we go into remote learning. Mr. McLean asked Ms. Starling (Child Nutrition Administrator) to speak. Ms. Starling said the impact would be financially and we aren't sure if we would reach every child. She explained they are waiting on a national waiver to be able to extend the feeding program. Ms. Starling said they are also waiting to see if they can use yellow buses to feed students.

Frank Liles asked how the meals worked in March – May. Ms. Starling said they did not use buses; they only used the one site at Wadesboro Elementary School. Ms. Bennett asked if students would receive breakfast and lunch and Ms. Starling confirmed they would. Ms. Starling said yellow buses would be a good answer. Corey Ross was present and explained they are not yet sure if we are able to use yellow buses for delivering meals. He said delivering meals via yellow buses can be done if a new order is written to allow the use of those buses.

Dr. Truman asked about the fall athletic programs. Mr. McLean explained Que Tucker (Commissioner with the NC High School Athletic Association) stated there would be no competitive sports for the fall at least until September 1. He said Ms. Tucker will send out surveys to schools to get feedback because she wants to see what the schools are

doing in the state as far as a reopening plan. Mr. McLean said they decided to suspend all workouts and conditioning as well to keep students safe. He said Que Tucker also mentioned alternatives like flipping spring and fall sports and having three seasons in one semester.

Superintendent's Report

Mr. McLean gave a report on Budget, Human Resources, Current Job Postings and Instructional Programs.

Remote Learning Plan: Mr. McLean said he recently examined the data from the parents and staff survey and data indicates the majority of our parents are apprehensive about sending their children to school. He also mentioned he has been in contact with Dr. Fred Thompson with the Anson County Health Department and they discussed the number of rising cases and the possible upward trends in positive cases. Mr. McLean said he is constantly reading the checking updates with the CDC and NCDHHS and with this information he is making a recommendation for all students to attend school remotely for the first nine weeks from August 17 through October 16.

Mr. McLean said during the next nine weeks, the district plans to re-evaluate and look at COVID numbers as well as parent information on what next steps will be for instruction. Mr. Godwin stated the NC Association of School Administrators just reported today that 60 of the 115 school districts have gone with Plan C.

Ms. Bennett asked if there are issues from March that we are addressing now. Mr. McLean said that with remote learning in March, they did not reach the majority of at-risk students. He explained they are working on plans in order to reach more households. Mr. McLean said with the plan they have in place now, they are purchasing external hard drives to reach those students who do not have devices or internet connectivity. Also, he said there are business partners that want to donate funds and those funds would go to help purchase devices and hotspots. Ms. Bennett asked when professional development starts with teachers. Mr. McLean said professional development will start August 3.

Ms. Lookabill said she would like us to educate the public on the difference between homeschooling and virtual learning. Mr. McLean explained homeschooling would go through Raleigh and virtual learning goes through our district. Mr. McLean said they will send out strategies each week to help parents so they can help their children. He explained they have a lot of helpful tips and resources that will be shared to support our families.

Mr. McLean and Mrs. Collard continued to explain specifics and answer questions from board members regarding the remote learning plan.

Ms. Gibson asked if teachers would need to be in dress code during remote instruction. Mr. McLean said teachers will be held accountable for professionalism.

Consent Items

Upon a motion by Mike Turner seconded by Lisa Davis, the following consent items were approved by the board: State Remote Plan and the 2020-2021 Revised School Calendar. Motion carried.

New Business

Lisa Davis made a motion for the board to consider a motion to suspend the standardized dress policy (Section B) at least for the first half of the school year and we could revisit this in December. Bobbie Little seconded the motion and the board approved suspending the standardized dress policy (Section B). Mr. McLean said he will share a copy of the policy with board members. Lisa Davis also mentioned this will give parents extra time to purchase uniforms if we resume the standardized dress policy at a later date. Motion carried.

Gay Lookabill said she does not like how the personnel report shows that we are adding to the central office. Mr. McLean said there are no additions to the central office; personnel are only being re-assigned and that is all. He explained Deborah Davis was a part of our staff two years ago and we didn't have enough funding to replace her so her position stayed dormant for a year. He also explained Heather Campbell was paid out of a grant the high school lost two years ago and they have been trying to find funding to pay Ms. Campbell. Mr. McLean said since he left his position, he thought it would be very wise to put two halves together with Ms. Campbell. He said Ms. Campbell is already doing the work they are just changing her title and funding source. Mr. McLean said Ms. Collard and Ms. McLendon are already working under the supervision of the central office and their duties have increased from the duties that he did when he was associate superintendent. He said Ms. Gerald was asked to take Ms. McLendon's position. Mr. McLean stated they have not created any new spots; they are just using funding more wisely and redistributing the job duties. Mr. McLean said he knows the perception is that we are adding spots to the central office. He said they actually suspended a spot for a year and now we are trying to be creative with our funding. Mr. McLean said the NC Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) is putting pressure on us to have a solid remote learning plan and we will need these resources and staff to meet expectations of the NCDPI. Dr. Truman said the central office is not a huge central office. He said it is not unusual for central staff to be stationed at different schools because we do not have space at the central office. Mr. McLean said they have central office staff based across the street at Wadesboro Elementary School. He said they need certain people at the central office for collaboration purposes and personnel is placed where they are needed. He explained some of the staff will be in the schools working with teachers and other school staff. Dr. Little said it appears there will be four people handling curriculum stationed out of the central office. Mr. McLean said they are only repositioning people with Heather Campbell and Lawanda McLendon at the central office and Ms. Gerald at Wadesboro Elementary School. Dr. Little said what caught her attention was we lost teacher personnel positions and she said they need certified teachers in the classroom. Dr. Little said she thinks Mr. McLean addressed the concern. Mr. McLean explained they have not increased any spots and they actually lost a spot with Ms. Davis retiring.

Lisa Davis made a motion to approve the personnel report. Mike Turner seconded the motion. Bobbie Little and Gay Lookabill opposed the personnel report. The report was approved by the board with a 7-2 vote. Motion carried.

Adjourn

A motion to adjourn was made at 5:58 p.m. by Frank Liles, seconded by Carol Gibson and approved by the board. There was no discussion. The motion carried.

Dr. George Truman, Chairperson

Mr. Howard McLean, Secretary