

Minutes
Anson County Board of Education
Regular Meeting
Monday, August 31, 2015, 5:30 p.m.
Charles Riddle Staff Development Center

The Anson County Board of Education met in regular session on Monday, August 31, 2015. All members were present. Others in attendance were Michael Freeman (Superintendent), Howard McLean (Associate Superintendent), Marty Godwin (Assistant Superintendent), Holly Berry (Chief Financial Officer), Mike Flake (Board Attorney) and Anne Hyatt (Board Clerk).

I. Call to Order

Chair Bobbie Little opened the meeting and welcomed all visitors.

II. Invocation

Chair Little asked Frank Liles to give the Invocation.

III. Conflict of Interest Statement

In compliance with the requirements of Chapter 138A-15(e) of the State Government Ethics Act, Chair Little 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 Little 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 her attention. She further explained it would then be the member's duty to abstain from participating in discussion and from voting on the matter.

IV. Adopt Agenda

Lisa Davis made a motion to approve the agenda. Frank Liles seconded the motion and the agenda was unanimously adopted by the Board. Motion carried.

V. Approve Minutes

(Regular Meeting 07-27-15)

Upon a motion by Brian Johnson, seconded by Carol Gibson, the regular meeting minutes of July 27, 2015, were unanimously approved by the board. Motion carried.

VI. Closed Session

- Matters Related To Personnel

Chair Little entertained a motion that the Board go into closed session for the purpose of considering a personnel action that involves an officer or employee of this Board pursuant to North Carolina General Statute 143.318.11(a) (6) and for the purpose of discussing the acquisition of real estate pursuant to North Carolina General Statute 143.318.11 (a) (5). This motion was made by Frank Liles, seconded by Mike Turner and unanimously approved by the board. The Board went into closed session at 5:33 p.m.

There was no action taken.

VII. Reconvene Open Session

- The Board returned to open session at 6:28 p.m. upon a motion by Mike Turner, seconded by Beulah Pratt. There was no discussion. Motion carried.

VIII. Public Comment

Patti Poulcott was present to speak on behalf of a group that had concerns about the recent relocation of Anson New Technology High School to the Anson High School campus. Some of the concerns communicated by Ms. Poulcott were they felt Anson New Tech lost its home and they felt blended into the high school environment without concern for the element that made New Tech what it was supposed to be. She said they felt they have been swallowed up in a plan that had not been shared with them and said she realizes there was no intent for this to happen; however, for the other three high schools, they all have their own unique space. She said they feel the loss of their campus and (on top of that), the facilities weren't ready for them including no access to technology that defines their school culture. Ms. Poulcott also stated they returned to school to learn their secretary was no longer theirs but was centralized in the Anson High offices and the same for their counselor. Ms. Poulcott said they have mostly new faculty and most were not prepared for their needs and caused them to think their needs had been sacrificed to the needs of the majority. She further explained and summarized that Anson New Tech parents and students are in attendance because they feel their school culture has been lost and they want it restored. Ms. Poulcott said they chose Anson Tech High School based on what they were seeking; however, they don't feel or see the New Tech culture any longer and that frightens them. She said their students need to feel safe and secure again in the Anson New Tech environment and culture that caused them to thrive. Ms. Poulcott stated they sincerely request the board (regardless of cost) remain committed to the design of Anson New Tech as the desired high school option that moved students from children to adults as they exit graduation.

Mr. Freeman thanked Ms. Poulcott for allowing the leadership team to meet with her and other parents last week. He assured the group the leadership team's commitments that were made at that meeting will be followed through. Mr. Freeman said as everyone goes through the transition and gets accustomed to new comfort zones, he knows the board expects their superintendent and leadership team to ensure them that not only will Anson New Tech sustain the quality program they have but that they will and grow. He commented that he is excited that members of his team have been in contact with the folks from California that did the original training for New Tech Staff. He said he thinks they will all be proud of Anson New Tech as they always have been.

Dannie Montgomery was present to speak about her frustrations that the school board has not come together to work on efforts needed to move children forward. She said she was in attendance to try and work together to increase the academic achievement of all students, increase student graduation rates, partner with whatever resources that are possible and with community leaders to increase the students' physical and mental health, to work on student attendance, absenteeism and tardiness, to work on suspensions and the dropout rate. She said NCAE across the state is very concerned about the school-to-prison mentality that has engulfed society. She said she knows a lot of that has to do with the educational proficiency of our children. She continued to further explain in detail her frustrations listed above.

Mr. Freeman said he applauds Ms. Montgomery for representing NCAE and identifying national trends in so many cases that apply right here at home in some instances. He explained how proud he is that we have teachers that hug our children and make sure they have clothing and food and teachers that will help children become educated regardless of where they started. He said teachers put in endless hours. Mr. Freeman remarked that what he liked most about what Ms. Montgomery shared was that working together with the people in the room and the board with the same goal that our students will continue to increase in their academic learning as well as the parameters that go with their learning. He thanked Ms. Montgomery again for so passionately advocating for the children in Anson County.

Several children were present with "All Means All" signs that stood up and displayed the signs to all in attendance. The children listed on the public comment sign-up sheet and displaying the signs were, J'moihi, Brandon and Naizareus.

Marcus Bass (Region 3 NCAE representative) said he not only had the luxury of being a classroom educator but he is active in many communities through the NCAE. He stated this time last year, Ms. Montgomery and other citizens came before the school board and asked to have serious, in-depth conversations about exactly what Superintendent Freeman just talked about. He mentioned for the past year, the community has been having conversations by themselves without the school board of education around ways to help improve relationships and improve the lives of not just the students of Anson County but also the employees that teach the kids every single day. He said the community is coming back with it being a new school year with different allies across the state to try and have these conversations again. He commented that every single problem can't be solved by the state and some situations and solutions have to be provided on a local level. Mr. Bass said he is committed to working with Dannie Montgomery and all other community members and especially the parents and the students to provide positive solutions to bring about change for a big portion of our community that is underserved by the school district by being placed in alternative programs. Mr. Bass said they are asking the board again when the call comes for conversation that he hopes they can come up with some serious solutions. He said it shouldn't just be only the board's responsibilities to educate these kids, he said it should be the community and parents. Mr. Bass thanked the board for being a strong school board and he hopes next year they can talk about the successes that Anson County has done and will continue to do to be a model in this State.

Mr. Freeman thanked Mr. Bass for traveling to Anson County as a member of national and local NCAE and said he certainly endorses the work through his membership. He stated he is sure that Ms. Montgomery has informed Mr. Bass that she recently met with his leadership cabinet and they are working on options at the full cooperation of the board for them to review the community conversation model as a way to collect data. He said they are also fortunate (as Ms. Montgomery knows) in Anson County, Carolinas Healthcare System has conducted extensive research and they are planning to share with them as partners and they are attempting to intentionally not select the same window of time they will do their community forum to reveal the extensive research about Anson County that will also focus on the education system. Mr. Freeman stated Ms. Montgomery has agreed on behalf of NCAE on some particular windows of time (there will be ongoing meetings where he thinks Ms. Montgomery has a meeting with our organization in a couple of weeks) and said he is

sure she will give an update at that point about the official work that is occurring from the NCAE group that works so diligently for our children in Anson County. Mr. Freeman thanked Mr. Bass again for his endorsement in helping in Anson County.

IX. Chair's Report

Public Engagement: Several board members discussed the opportunities they have had to visit schools and attend events and programs. Mr. Turner asked Superintendent Freeman to communicate with principals about how clean schools looked during opening day. Lisa Davis commented on how excited she is that we have free meals for all students this school year.

X. Superintendent's Report

Mr. Freeman gave a report on the Budget, Personnel, Current Job Postings, Community Use of Facilities, Current Projects Update and Instructional Programs.

Budget: Mr. Freeman explained we are waiting for the budget to be finalized in Raleigh. He shared concerns with the possible number of teaching positions we could lose associated with the teacher assistant allotment. Mr. Freeman encouraged everyone to lobby for positions and to sustain the funds necessary to keep our teachers and our teacher assistants in the classrooms. He also discussed the concern with how driver's education is currently unfunded and if Raleigh doesn't sustain the services, there could be more cost associated with staying at the current level of services. Mr. Freeman thanked the local county commissioners for trying their best to hold strong in the local support they provide to our district.

In the area of instructional programs, Mr. Freeman said they are launching a new Math program and in the last few years, they have updated the reading program. He further commented in October, he will have the instructional team give an overview of the programs.

Mr. Freeman gave an overview of the opening of school and he detailed information about Anson New Technology High School. He said he is feeling more and more comfortable with the transition of the two schools that moved this summer. He commented that Anson Academy has gotten settled into their new location at Ashe Street and they are off to a good start with over 100 students enrolled at that school. He said many people may not realize that most students at Anson Academy self-select to attend that school. Additionally, he mentioned more details about staff training at Anson New Technology High School. He further stated one of focus points right now will be Anson Academy and Anson New Tech due to the recent transitions and they will make sure they have the resources necessary to support the kind of programs that they operate. He said they will continue to work with those schools diligently as they continue to address the needs they are aware of and other needs that may arise.

Mr. Freeman updated the board on a question from Ms. Gibson from last month's meeting where she asked how many Anson County students were attending schools in another county. Mr. Freeman said pertaining to documented children that we know of, there are 30 students that have been approved. He said there are also 5 students that have come to us from other school districts (they travel to us from Scotland, Robeson, Union). He said currently they do not have any requests from Charter Schools yet and we won't know about Charter school students until we get a bill.

XI. **Consent Items**

Upon a motion by George Truman, seconded by Mike Turner, the following consent items were approved by the board (Personnel Report and Security Monitoring Contracts for Morven Elementary, Lilesville Elementary and Ansonville Elementary Schools). Motion carried.

XII. **New Business**

Upon a motion by George Truman, seconded by Lisa Davis, the board approved the copier lease agreement as presented by administration between Sandhills Office System and Anson County Schools. Motion carried.

Mr. Freeman presented the following policies and stated they will lay on the table until the next meeting for possible approval. Mr. Freeman mentioned if members had any questions, to inform his office.

- 9000 Planning to Address Facility Needs
- 9010 Site Selection
- 9020 Facility Design
- 9030 Facility Construction
- 9110 Selection and Use of Architects and Engineers
- 9115 Prequalification of Bidders for Construction Projects
- 9120 Bidding for Construction Work
- 6441/9121 Bidders' List
- 9125 Participation by Women- and Minority-Owned Businesses
- 9130 Supervision of Construction Contracts
- 9200 Care and Maintenance of Facilities
- 9210 Care and Maintenance of Grounds and Outdoor Equipment
- 9220 Security of Facilities
- 9300 Naming Facilities
- 9400 Sale, Disposal, and Lease of Board-Owned Real Property

XIII. **Calendar Items**

Mr. Freeman stated Anne will make contact with board members about who will be attending the district meeting on September 17, 2015, in Scotland County.

XIV. **Adjourn**

A motion to adjourn was made by Mike Turner, seconded by Frank Liles. There was no discussion. The motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 7:37 p.m.

Dr. Bobbie Little, Chairperson

Mr. Michael Freeman, Secretary