

MINUTES OF  
THE WILSON COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING  
OCTOBER 15, 2018

The Wilson County Board of Education held its regular meeting on Monday, October 15, 2018, at 7:30 p.m. in the Administrative Offices, 113 N. Tarboro Street. Chairman Christine L. Fitch called the meeting to order with the following members present:

Dr. Christine L. Fitch, Chairman  
Henry E. Mercer, Vice-Chairman  
Velma Barnes  
Beverly Boyette  
Gary Farmer  
Robin Flinn  
Debora Powell  
Dr. Lane B. Mills, Secretary

Others present were Assistant Superintendent Eric Davis and Associate Superintendent Dr. Cheryl Wilson, as well as Board Attorneys Brian Shaw and Dr. Amy Clay. Also present were Wilson Times Reporter Drew Wilson, Director of Public Relations Amber Lynch and Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent and Board Clerk Linda Horrison. There were more than 27 citizens in attendance.

1. After calling the meeting to order, Chairman Fitch amended the agenda under Instructional Services Committee by moving the Revised 2018-2019 Traditional Calendar to the November Board meeting; and adding School Safety Plans to the agenda. The Board will hear information on School Improvement Plans and act on it after closed session. Chairman Fitch called for approval of the agenda. Ms. Powell made a motion, seconded by Mr. Mercer, to approve the amended agenda as earlier stated with the removal of the Revised 2018-2019 Traditional Calendar and add School Safety Plans with School Improvement Plans. The motion passed unanimously.
2. At Dr. Fitch's request, Mr. Farmer led the Pledge of Allegiance that was followed by a moment of silence.
3. Dr. Fitch presented for approval the minutes of the October 1, 2018, Regular Board Meeting. Ms. Boyette asked that her name be removed as assisting with the Good News Presentations and replaced with Ms. Barnes. Ms. Boyette presented Good News Presentations at the August Board meeting and Ms. Barnes at the October 1 meeting. Also, Ms. Boyette made corrections under adjournment of the meeting. Mr. Mercer seconded the motion to adjourn, not Ms. Boyette.

Ms. Barnes made a motion, seconded by Ms. Boyette, that the Board approve the minutes of the October 1, 2018, Regular Board Meeting, with the stated corrections. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Under Good News Presentations, Superintendent Dr. Lane Mills, with the assistance of Mr. Farmer, recognized the following groups and individuals:

- MATCH Program Recognition - The Board recognized the coordinators at the school and district levels for their work with the MATCH Program. MATCH is a national childhood obesity intervention program that is funded by a grant through the Healthcare Foundation of Wilson. This is the third year of the program for Wilson County Schools (WCS), and it is taught by PE Teachers in the middle schools to every seventh-grader in the district. The program focuses on nutrition education and increased physical activity. It empowers students to make healthy choices and studies have shown that the program has a significant impact on weight management for students while they are in the program and also in the future. Our district recently received a Bronze Level Certificate of Excellence for the successful implementation of MATCH. The coordinators are: WCS District Coordinator David Lyndon, Eddie Reel from Darden Middle, Brent Pearson from Elm City Middle, Janice Gaetano from Forest Hills Middle, Lydia Crandall from Speight Middle, Katherine Alphin from Springfield Middle and Joanna Farriss from Toisnot Middle. The Board also took a moment to remember Toisnot Middle PE Teacher John Nichols, who led the program at his school prior to his passing in August.
  - Heroes During Hurricane Florence - Wilson County was fortunate during Hurricane Florence not to experience major damage like other areas of the state. Our area did experience minor flooding and a tornado on September 17 that damaged homes and brought down trees and power lines. The Board recognized Mark Letchworth and Greg Woodard from the WCS Maintenance Department and Robert Harvey from the WCS Transportation Department for all of their work during the storm. The Board also applauded Frederick Douglass Elementary Principal Annette Faison, Elm City Middle Principal Will Pope and their staff members for their response after the tornado. They led cleanup efforts and collected donations for those in need. The Board also recognized Gordon Deno and Rodney Dancy from Wilson County Emergency Management for their guidance and expertise during the storm. They also assisted the Red Cross and the WCS nurses in the emergency shelters. The Board thanked the WCS nurses for being in the shelters and always going above and beyond for students. The nurses are: Valerie Kersey, Charlotte Hicks, Shannon Waddell, Wendy Anderson, Ginger Phillips and Kim Strother.
  - Character Education – Principal Jennifer Parker and Staff, Daniels Learning Center - Kindness
5. Under Chairman’s Report, Dr. Fitch shared that the two hurricanes created situations where students lost instructional time, and the Board will consider revising the school calendar at the November meeting to makeup the time that was missed. She added that she was incredibly thankful that all of our students and staff made it through the storms safely.

She also shared that while most people know Dr. Mills for his leadership skills, he has another talent as well. On October 20 from 2-5 p.m., Dr. Mills will participate in a

cooking competition called *Men Who Cook* at St. John AME Zion Church. The event is sponsored by the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority.

6. Under Superintendent's Report, Dr. Mills shared with the Board that since the last Board meeting, Administrators from across the state attended NCSTAR training on October 5 led by the NC Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI). During the training, the presenter from NCDPI recognized WCS for drastically reducing the number of low performing schools and for having great results last school year. Several WCS Administrators were in attendance. "We know that there is so much more to what we do than results on test scores, but it sure feels good to be receiving recognition for the hard work of our students and staff," said Dr. Mills.

He also advised the Board that we are continuing to celebrate our high performance at the local level. Brewmasters graciously agreed to donate chips for every staff member at the 10 schools with the highest performance. Dr. Mills delivered the chips to let the staff members know that they were - All That and a Bag of Chips. The schools also received banners to showcase their excellent performance.

Dr. Mills shared that the Wilson 20/20 (now Wilson Forward) Annual Meeting was held October 11 at Barton College. Dr. Mills and several Board members were in attendance. He was on the agenda and was able to share the highlights of our performance data and also how well the school year was going so far. Dr. Mills thanked Paula Benson and her staff for organizing the meeting and all of their work in the community.

Dr. Mills also reminded the Board of the Wilson Education Partnership Adult Spelling Bee on October 23 at 7 p.m. at Hunt High School. He said that the Senior Staff team was ready to put their brains and checkbooks to work in support of our schools.

7. Under Public Input, no one addressed the Board.
8. Under Committee Meetings/Administrative Services Committee – Committee Chair Mr. Mercer shared that the committee met today to discuss four action items.
  - Under Policy 9000, *Planning to Address Facility Needs* – Second Reading, this is a new policy that will replace WCS current Policy 7510, *Facility Expansion Program/Long-Range Planning*. The new policy aligns with general statutes and the North Carolina School Board Association (NCSBA) policies. Mr. Mercer made a motion, seconded by Ms. Powell, to approve Policy 9000, *Planning to Address Facility Needs*, and upon passage that the Board remove Policy 7510, *Facility Expansion Program/Long-Range Planning*. The motion passed unanimously.
  - Under Policy 9200, *Care and Maintenance of Facilities* – Second Reading, this is a new policy that combines WSC current Policy 3224/4107, *Care of School Property*; Policy 7200, *Maintenance Program*; Policy 7300, *Buildings and Grounds*; Policy 7320, *Duties of Principal in Operations Programs*; and Policy

7410, *Care of School Buildings*. The new policy aligns with general statutes and NCSBA policies. All elements referencing the care and maintenance of facilities will be housed under one policy. Mr. Mercer made a motion, seconded by Ms. Flinn, to approve Policy 9200, *Care and Maintenance of Facilities* and upon approval that the Board remove Policy 3224/4107, *Care of School Property*; Policy 7200, *Maintenance Program*; Policy 7300, *Buildings and Grounds*; Policy 7320, *Duties of Principal in Operations Programs*; and Policy 7410, *Care of School Buildings*. The motion passed unanimously.

- Under Replacement and Relocation of State 1-A Baseball Championship Sign at Rock Ridge Elementary, Policy, 9300, *Naming Facilities*, states, “Individuals may be honored or remembered with a plaque or other appropriate sign in designated areas of a facility, as approved by the Superintendent. Plans for the plaque or sign must be submitted to the Superintendent and approved by the Board.”

Dr. Mills received a request to replace and relocate the State 1-A Baseball Championship sign located at Rock Ridge Elementary to the grass area near Rock Ridge School Road and the bus parking lot. The sign is currently located on the ballfield, but it is not visible to the community. In its current location, the sign has been damaged and vandalized. The WCS Maintenance Department sees no issues with relocating the sign, which will not be any cost to the district. Mr. Mercer made a motion, seconded by Ms. Boyette, to approve the replacement and relocation of State 1-A Baseball Championship Sign at Rock Ridge Elementary. The motion passed unanimously.

- Under Historical Marker at Fike High, Policy, 9300, *Naming Facilities*, states, “Individuals may be honored or remembered with a plaque or other appropriate sign in designated areas of a facility, as approved by the Superintendent. Plans for the plaque or sign must be submitted to the Superintendent and approved by the Board.”

Dr. Mills received a request to place a historical marker at Fike High honoring Coach Henry Trevathan and the members of the 1964-1969 Ralph L. Fike Cyclones Football Teams. The possible location is inside the fence near the concession stand in a grassy area. The historical marker will be installed at no cost to the district. Mr. Mercer made a motion, seconded by Ms. Powell, to approve the placement of a historical marker at Fike High to honor Coach Henry Trevathan and the members of the Cyclones football teams. The motion passed unanimously. The WCS Maintenance Department will work with the school to place the marker.

Under Committee Meetings/Instructional Services Committee - Committee Chair Dr. Fitch shared that the committee met today to discuss several information and action items.

- Under Policy 3410, *Testing and Assessment Program* – First Reading, the Board received a draft of proposed Policy 3410, *Testing and Assessment Program*. The

draft policy aligns with general statutes and NCSBA policies. If approved, the Administration also recommends the removal of WCS Policy 5600, *Testing Programs*; Policy 5601, *Test Administration*; and Policy 5524, *Exam Exemptions*. Relevant items in those policies would be combined into the new policy.

- Under Retentions, in accordance with reporting requirements stated in Policy 3420, *Student Promotion and Accountability*, the Superintendent must report to the Board the number and percentage of students retained each school year. In 2017-2018, WCS had a total student population of 11,365 and out of those students, 813 (7.3 percent) were retained. Dr. Mills shared that staff will continue to work hard to reduce the numbers. Listed below is a breakdown by grade level:
  - Kindergarten: 826 total students, 75 students (9 percent) retained
  - 1<sup>st</sup> grade: 868 total students, 83 students (10 percent) retained
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> grade: 903 total students, 55 students (6 percent) retained
  - 3<sup>rd</sup> grade: 956 total students, 51 students (5 percent) retained
  - 4<sup>th</sup> grade: 932 total students, 46 students (5 percent) retained
  - 5<sup>th</sup> grade: 895 total students, 30 students (3 percent) retained
  - 6<sup>th</sup> grade: 837 total students, 47 students (6 percent) retained
  - 7<sup>th</sup> grade: 818 total students, 66 students (8 percent) retained
  - 8<sup>th</sup> grade: 815 total students, 49 students (6 percent) retained
  - 9<sup>th</sup> grade: 1,031 total students, 153 students (15 percent) retained
  - 10<sup>th</sup> grade: 907 total students, 94 students (10 percent) retained
  - 11<sup>th</sup> grade: 747 total students, 50 students (7 percent) retained
  - 12<sup>th</sup> grade: 795 total students, 32 students (4 percent) retained
- Under Cybersecurity Program Review, the Board received an update on cybersecurity. Last spring, the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee presented their findings on Cybersecurity and Risk Management in North Carolina Public Schools. It revealed that the majority of school districts and charter schools were not prepared for a significant disaster or cybersecurity event.

As a result, there will be a shift in the funding focus of the School Connectivity Initiative from solely building wireless network capacity and infrastructure to offering cybersecurity and risk management services to school districts. NCDPI, The Friday Institute and Microelectronics Center of North Carolina (MCNC) will begin piloting a program in three districts at no charge. WCS is included in this pilot program. A network engineer will be provided to assess our current cybersecurity program in multiple areas.

- Under Wolfpack WORKS, the Board received information about Wolfpack WORKS. The College of Education at North Carolina State University is collaborating with NCDPI to implement a pilot initiative providing literacy-specific, intensive induction support to K-2 teachers who are in their first or second year of teaching. The program is called Wolfpack WORKS (Ways to Optimize Reading/Writing for Kids Statewide). The overarching goal of

Wolfpack WORKS is to support the K-2 beginning teachers in approximately 15, high-need districts across the state as they learn to implement evidence-based literacy instruction in their classrooms for all children.

WCS is utilizing the program for our 24 beginning teachers in K-2 classrooms, many of which are lateral entry teachers who did not graduate from college with a teaching license. WCS has seen an increase in lateral entry teachers over the past few years. In 2014-2015, 36 of our 149 beginning teachers were lateral entry. This number has climbed each year and this current school year, 75 out of our 130 beginning teachers are lateral entry. Based on the number of lateral entry teachers that WCS has, Wolfpack WORKS will also provide funding for three interventionist positions. The district also has a Beginning Teacher Support Program that provides training throughout the year.

- Under Approval of School Improvement Plans, Dr. Fitch advised the Board that according to general statutes, the Board must either accept or reject the School Improvement Plan for each school within its jurisdiction. The Board members received copies of each plan and read them prior to the Board meeting. She advised that they would discuss any questions during the closed session portion of the meeting and then take action on the plans when they reconvened after closed session.
- Under Revised 2018-2019 Traditional Calendar, Dr. Fitch advised the Board that this item is being removed from the agenda and will be discussed at the November Board meeting.

Under Committee Meetings/Human Resources Committee – Committee Chair Mr. Farmer shared that the committee met today to discuss several items.

- Under Policy 7920, *Reduction in Force: Teachers and School Administrators* – Second Reading, this policy is a revision of WCS current Policy 3430, *Reduction in Force*. The revised policy will address substantial statutory changes that impact the Board's consideration of a reduction in force. The revised policy will align with general statutes and NCSBA policies. WCS is not looking at a reduction in force at this time. Mr. Farmer made a motion, seconded by Ms. Barnes, to approve Policy 7920, *Reduction in Force: Teachers and School Administrators* and remove Policy 3430, *Reduction in Force*. The motion passed unanimously.
- Under Policy 7921, *Classified Personnel Reduction* – Second Reading, this new policy is being recommended for adoption and will align with the general statutes and NCSBA policies. There is no legal requirement that the Board adopt this policy, but the Board was advised by legal counsel that it may be helpful to have in place to ensure consistency when making decisions regarding reductions in force for classified

employees. Mr. Farmer made a motion, seconded by Ms. Barnes, to approve Policy 7921, *Classified Personnel Reduction*. The motion passed unanimously.

9. Under Discussion/Action Items, National School Boards Association (NSBA) Magna Award Entry, NSBA annually solicits nominations from local Boards for Magna Awards, which is a national recognition program that honors best practices and innovative programs that advance student learning and ensure equity. The Administration is seeking the Board's approval to nominate The Gentlemen's Agreement Mentoring Program. Mr. Mercer made a motion, seconded by Ms. Powell, to approve The Gentlemen's Agreement nomination for the National School Boards Association Magna Award Entry. The motion passed unanimously. The deadline for submission is October 31.

Ms. Boyette asked if Policy 1326, *Public Address to the Board*, could be placed on the agenda for an upcoming meeting. Ms. Boyette voted on the prevailing side in the original vote during the May 21, 2018 meeting. Dr. Fitch advised that the matter would be placed on the agenda for the November meeting.

10. At 8:25 p.m., Mr. Farmer made a motion, seconded by Ms. Barnes, that the Wilson County Board of Education go into closed session to consider confidential personnel matters as provided in N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(1) and (6) and 115C-319 through 321; to review and adopt the school safety components of school improvement plans, as provided in N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(8) and N.C.G.S. 115C-105.27(c1); to establish or give instructions concerning the Board of Education's negotiating position concerning a potential acquisition and/or lease of real property, as provided in N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(5); and to consult with the Board of Education attorney and preserve the attorney-client privilege as provided in N.C.G.S. 143-318.11(a)(3). The motion passed unanimously.

At 9:46 p.m., Mr. Farmer made a motion to reconvene to open session. The motion, seconded by Mr. Mercer, passed unanimously.

11. Reporting from closed session, Mr. Farmer made a motion, seconded by Ms. Boyette, to approve the closed session minutes of the October 1, 2018, Regular Board Meeting, but not to release for public inspection because of confidential personnel matters. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Barnes made a motion, seconded by Mr. Mercer, to approve a permanent easement to the City of Wilson for the property in front of Darden Middle School for the sidewalk project, approximately .0054 acres, and the Superintendent be authorized to execute necessary documentation with review by the Board attorney. The motion passed unanimously.

Under Committee Report/Human Resource Services, Mr. Farmer made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Mercer, to approve the personnel recommendations as presented by the Administration. The motion passed unanimously.

## **ACTION ITEMS**

The Board approved the following certified and classified positions, as well as the attached list of Substitutes to be Re-approved, Substitute Teachers, and Coaches.

### **Certified**

Nelms, Darnell-EC

### **Classified**

Best, Tishira-Substitute Custodian  
Carter, Jeremiah-Substitute Custodian  
Eatman, Brandon-Substitute Custodian  
Johnson-Lomberk, Reba-Teacher Assistant  
Jones, Alberty-ASCEP Student Assistant  
Hardy, Walter-ISS Coordinator  
Howard, Betty-CN Substitute  
Thompson, Gwen-EC Teacher Assistant  
Washington, Deborah-Teacher Assistant  
Willingham, Shayla-ASCEP Student Assistant  
Willis, Marc-Student Development Coordinator

## **INFORMATION ITEMS**

The Board received the following personnel list as information.

### **Certified**

Griffin, Morgan-Resignation  
Jackson, Kimberli-Resignation  
Malone, Joan-Resignation  
Moore, Jerri-Retirement  
Reed, Catharine-Retirement  
Reed, Melinda-Resignation  
Senger-Knotts,Beth-Resignation  
Scotti,Ann-Resignation  
Thompson, Vickie-Retirement

### **Classified**

Artis, Susie-Retirement  
Farmer, Ginyel-Resignation  
Hicks, Charlotte-Resignation



Hunter, Tamara-Resignation  
Pender, Carolyn-Retirement  
Pittman, Dexter-Retirement

Dr. Fitch turned the meeting over to Vice Chair Mr. Mercer for the purpose of receiving the report and carrying through the motions.

Dr. Fitch made a motion, seconded by Ms. Powell, that the Board approve the School Improvement Plans and School Safety Plans as presented. The motion passed unanimously.

Vice Chair Mr. Mercer turned the meeting back over to Dr. Fitch.

12. There being no further business at 9:50 p.m., Mr. Farmer made a motion, seconded by Ms. Barnes, to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

  
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Dr. Christine L. Fitch, Chairman

  
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Dr. Lane B. Mills, Secretary