

the jazz band will participate in while they're in Winston-Salem and stated their performance will be Tuesday morning at 10:00. Before leaving on Sunday, the jazz band will perform Friday afternoon at 2:30 p.m. in the J. H. Rose Auditorium, and the Board is invited to attend. He also added that any funding assistance would be very much appreciated.

Under Consent Items, Mr. Benjie Forrest, second by Ms. Mary Williams, moved that the Board approve the Minutes from the Regular Meeting held October 15, 2012, the Personnel Report for November, the Property to be Declared Surplus List and two people recommended to serve on the Parent Advisory Committee for the Northeast Agriscience and Biotechnology Regional High School. Motion passed unanimously.

Under New Business, Chair Peaden asked Superintendent Beverly Emory to present a follow-up on Dr. Del Burn's investigation related to an athletic issue in our district. Dr. Emory began her report by stating there are many complex and emotional feelings surrounding this athletic eligibility issue in our community. She commented that the community has been very engaged in this issue and many are present tonight to understand details of this investigation, though she feels there are some in attendance who will not be happy with the information she's able to share. Dr. Emory thanked the Board of Education for supporting bringing former School Superintendent Dr. Del Burns aboard to investigate this challenging issue. She stated that the focus of this issue has been about athletic eligibility, but there have been numerous allegations made about the actions of adults – everything from conspiracy to historical recruitment procedures. Our goal for Dr. Burns was to collect first hand information and discover if there are any findings of fact, particularly as related to the actions or behavior of adults. Dr. Burns interviewed more than 20 individuals and reviewed all documentation that the district provided including policies, procedures and communications. Dr. Emory commented that last week following a Closed Session with the Board, it was obvious that the community was frustrated with not knowing what's going on and she understands this; but reminded everyone that we are bound by laws that protect privacy and confidentiality and the possibility of further litigation. In that light, she reported to the audience that Dr. Burns found little fact or substantiation of the allegations in this case. He shared several findings with the Board pertaining to adults, and those in our employment are currently being investigated by our Human Resources Department as is consistent with any personnel issue in the system. These employees will be given full due process rights. She added that with regards to a Board member, he/she is governed by this Board of Education through their policies. Dr. Emory cautioned everyone that though there were findings related to decision making, clarification of roles and responsibilities, timing and communication, she wants to be clear that there were no findings about adults, teams, coaches or schools that relate to the cause of athletic ineligibility. She shared that she has discussed a proposal with the Board for quickly making revisions to strengthen our procedures and help us be more structured in how we investigate reports of students who are out of district, particularly at the high school level. Dr. Emory explained that during this process, we have included a section to have stakeholders involved in feedback. One thing is clear she stated, this issue has raised questions about long held beliefs regarding competition in this district; and that's a good thing as people support our schools and teams so passionately. Dr. Emory stated that she wants to assure everyone on every level in this case and in future cases that involve the serious issue of eligibility of an athlete, which everyone takes this very seriously.

She added that we don't go out looking for these issues as these are things that we don't want to do or decisions we want to make. Dr. Emory commented that when our investigation is complete, she doesn't know if she will be able to share many of the details as individuals are protected and what happens with their employment is protected. She expressed that a fair and quick decision will be rendered once all information has been gathered.

Chair Peaden stated that regarding the Board member involved, he will investigate and present a report at our next Board meeting with the Board's recommendation.

Chair Peaden then called on Vice-Chair Mary Williams and Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources Delilah Jackson for a report following the Human Resources Committee Meeting held October 23. Ms. Jackson shared that several items were discussed with the first being Revision of the Classified Evaluation, policy and procedure 7.206. She also mentioned the 2013-14 School Calendar changes that are coming into effect July 1, 2013. Ms. Jackson stated the committee discussed at length the policy and procedure that came up for review this summer involving our classified staff with input from principals during our summer retreat and other administrative meetings. Several things suggested by the Committee include: language to affirm the importance of our classified staff and language to identify performance expectations by focusing on employee strengths, weaknesses and below standard issues. In regards to the procedures, Ms. Jackson discussed the language needed regarding the process if more evaluations are needed related to performance. The probationary period for new classified employees was also felt to need better clarification as well as the chain of command for the supervisor involved should administration be asked to make a decision. Ms. Jackson added that components of the job description will be included in the evaluation instrument, clear documentation of training for the employee will be provided and a pre-assessment of candidates will be completed to create a viable pool of potential employees. This completed revision will be forwarded to the Policy Committee when appropriate.

Ms. Jackson stated the major changes to the 2013-14 calendar involve whether to go with the 185 days or 1025 hours; i.e. adding five more school days to the calendar or using 1025 hours, which could mean extending the school day causing changes with bus schedules and traffic. This topic will be discussed in more detail at a later date.

Mr. Worth Forbes asked regarding classified evaluations, would there be sections for job description performance and regular meetings with different area employees and administrators for updates. Ms. Jackson responded yes, both areas have been discussed and will be implemented.

Ms. Mary Williams added that the lead classified employee, i.e. a head custodian, will meet with the administrator of the school (principal) just as a teacher meets with her administrator. Both Ms. Williams and Mr. Forbes stated that all classified employees should be included in events at the school just as teachers and teacher assistants are invited.

Mr. Marc Whichard asked had there been discussion with classified staff regarding on-line evaluation. Ms. Jackson responded no as this aspect is still being worked on at

the State level. Mr. Whichard commented that he feels the classified staff needs as much preparation as possible as the transition for licensed staff has been difficult.

Chair Benjie Forrest asked Assistant Superintendent of Finance Michael Cowin to present the proposed 2012-13 Budget Resolution to the Board for approval stating that the Finance Committee met October 18 without a quorum present. Mr. Cowin explained that the Budget Resolution is the end point of the proposed budget that was approved by the Board in April of this past year. He shared that changes in the proposed budget occurred during the year related to student enrollment numbers, county allotment and the legislative budget. Mr. Cowin reviewed the total budget of \$221.3 million with operating funds totaling over 91%, capital outlay funds equally 3.1% and child nutrition funding of 5.6% of the total budget. He explained that over \$80 out of every \$100 was spent in the classroom to serve the students of Pitt County – whether teachers, assistants or supplies. Mr. Cowin stated that we invest in people with 79% of our overall dollars devoted to human resources for salaries and benefits. He shared that in our State discretionary reduction, we sent back approximately \$6.8 million last year and this year we're returning about \$5.6 million – which is an improvement but represents 49 teaching positions that we don't have in our classrooms and 90 teacher assistant positions in grades K-3. Mr. Cowin stressed that as we move into the long session for our legislators, we need to emphasize to our representatives how important the dollars lost by State discretionary funding cuts would be to our classroom, as well as continuing our Low Wealth Funding. He shared a positive note in that we fund almost 161 teacher positions above our State allotment formula using our State Low Wealth Allotment for 126 positions and local appropriations for the rest.

Mr. Cowin then presented details of the local budget stating that over the last two years, we have had reductions amounting to over \$1 million with operations losing almost \$122,000 in funding and capital funding losing \$750,000. He explained that we did not want to lose our Low Wealth Funding and this basically brought our capital appropriations to zero. Mr. Cowin stressed that in speaking with our County Commissioners, we need to think ahead and ask for restoration of those capital dollars, which will not exist in another one and one-half years. He named several areas that local dollars supplemented including staff development, technology and facility upgrades, instructional supplies and a textbook warehouse.

Mr. Cowin detailed the Special Revenue Funds and grants involved and Operations using Education Jobs funding, Drivers' Ed, and others. The Capital Budget, he explained, is the State School Bus Allotment of \$2.5 million and lottery funds to retire debt, which is handled through the county. He explained with the County appropriation at zero, we are using our Capital Budget Fund Balance to cover the shortfall. Adding that we have approximately \$1.4 million in our Capital Fund Balance which will carry us through the 2013 Fiscal Year, Mr. Cowin stressed that the "well will run dry" and we need to talk with our County Commissioners. He discussed needed roofing replacements and bleachers at Ayden-Grifton and Farmville Central High Schools.

Mr. Cowin presented the Budget Calendar to the Board and discussed moving forward with current needs, i.e. Chicod and A. G. Cox construction, maintaining Low Wealth

funding, budgets that will be influenced by the elections and keeping the classroom in the forefront for Pitt County Schools.

Mr. Benjie Forrest, second by Mr. Sean Kenny, moved that the Board approve the proposed 2012-13 Budget Resolution. Mr. Marc Whichard commented that he's glad we have a large audience here tonight as we talk about the State budget and the continued budget cuts for 115 school systems in North Carolina that have pushed our schools to a critical point. He explained that we have buses on the road with extremely high mileage, textbooks have not been purchased in at least three years and the entire Common Core/Essential Standards Curriculum is being drilled into our teachers with constant budget cuts. Mr. Whichard asked everyone to go out and "beat the drums" in our communities and contact legislators to stand up for education.

Mr. Worth Forbes asked Mr. Forrest if during the committee meeting was there any discussion regarding field trips and money being built into the budget to cover curriculum related tours. Mr. Forrest responded that the committee did not have a quorum present, but he let it be known that field trips are a crucial part of CTE classes and applied learning with students remembering the trips more than the class work.

Ms. Jill Camnitz asked two questions she hears often since there was a large crowd in attendance: 1. What happens to all the lottery money? Mr. Cowin explained that Capital Funding was affected when our corporate income tax money was reduced to zero, the Article 42 sales tax dollars were reduced, economic impact was felt from reduced sales tax revenue and a million lottery dollars were redirected to cover other aspects of the education budget. In total, he explained, the Capital Revenues over the last two to three years have seen about a \$2.5 million reduction. Mr. Cowin added that these economic impacts have put us in a hold pattern for new projects, as the dollars we do have available in capital funding are being used to pay the debts we already have.

The second item Ms. Camnitz wanted to address is that the system has spent last year and this year a large amount of money for technology updates so that we will be able to test students on-line when the State requires us to do so. She added that though the State will require us to follow this new procedure, they have not provided any funding to implement these changes with Mr. Cowin responding that this is correct.

Ms. Mildred Council reminded everyone that tomorrow is Election Day and asked everyone to look at the candidates' platforms to see who supports education from the local, state and national levels.

Mr. Forrest stated the discretionary budget cuts are funding that is vital to our system and asked Dr. Emory to share this need with all legislators we may have contact with. He also commented that many counties do not use Low Wealth Funding as we do in Pitt County – using it for salaries and benefits in our classrooms. Mr. Forrest thanked County Commissioner Tom Johnson in our audience tonight for their support in Low Wealth Funding.

Chair Peaden called for a vote on the motion which passed unanimously.

Chair Peaden then asked for an update on the Race-to-the-Top District Grant which Superintendent Emory shared stating it was a “no brainer” to apply for this funding considering the economic status of our schools over the last several years. She stated the total amount applied for is \$29.9 million which will include a one-to-one technology initiative in grades K-12, expansion of our teacher leader model cohort adding 53 additional classroom positions with model classrooms to train interns and a STEAM (Science and Technology through Engineering and the Arts, with a Math Foundation) initiative which focuses on career and technical, engineering and robotics in middle and high schools with a small percentage to carry out the grant. One section of the grant that is cutting out systems from applying for the grant is it requires every teacher in the district to vote “yes” or “no” with Pitt County Schools having an 87.4% support rate from the faculty and staff in our 36 schools which we appreciate. Dr. Emory commented that if we don’t receive the grant, the 300 page document asked for data that we will be able to float to other areas in planning funding. We’re not sure of the date for notification but understand that Washington wants to get the funding out by January.

Chair Peaden asked Dr. Emory to report on the incentive for our focus schools, which she explained will be funded by Title I dollars as the Federal government stated we do not have to send back 10% of our Federal dollars previously sequestered. For that reason, we recommend that we give retroactively an incentive to our focus schools that made high growth during the 2011-12 school year which are Wellcome Middle, Pactolus and Northwest Elementary. The high growth component will be \$700 per certified person totally a \$63,700 expenditure. Mr. Sean Kenny, second by Ms. Mary Williams, moved that the recommendation for these high growth schools be approved by the Board. Mr. Kenny commented that this is one of the moments he’s proud to be on this Board as teachers work hard every day and challenged the audience to find a teacher tomorrow and thank her/him for what they do each day. Chair Peaden called for a vote and the motion passed unanimously.

Chair Peaden then announced time for Public Expression with guidelines given that no one can name a specific Pitt County School employee due to FERPA privacy regulations. The first person to speak was Mr. Ronald Vincent who supported the Athletic Director and the Football Coach at Rose High School. Following his presentation, Chair Peaden asked In-House Attorney Rob Sonnenberg to come forward and give further details regarding Pitt County Schools’ Rules of Procedures 1.200, Section B-4, which states that no one may address an issue involving specific personnel and/or students of the school system in order to protect their privacy and due process. As Attorney David Sutton and Ms. Pat Tyson came to offer support for the Pitt County Schools Athletic Director, Football Coach at Rose High and/or a student at D. H. Conley, Attorney Sonnenberg stopped their presentation explaining that their discussions pin pointed specific employees and/or students. With comments from the audience arising, Mr. Worth Forbes stated that the issue now was that the first speaker named the specific titles of employees without giving their names and was not stopped. Attorney Sonnenberg explained that because of the first speaker and his designation of specific positions is the reason he came back to the podium and gave further details of our Rules of Procedures. Other speakers in support of the Athletic Director, Rose High Football Coach and/or a student were Mr. Jackie Morris, Mr. Bill Lee, Mr. Calvin Henderson who asked that all programs be suspended until the truth is rendered regarding the athletic issues, Ms. Carol Phillips, Mr. Chris Miles,

Ms. Scott Wells, Mr. Hugh Vincent who discussed and compared sports facilities at D. H. Conley, J. H. Rose and South Central High Schools, Ms. Norma Warren, Ms. Gwynne Haddock, Mr. Doug Gomes, Ms. Cassandra Haddock and Mr. Paul MacMillan who closed public expression asking that the Board be diligent in deciding what is right and wrong and deal with the findings appropriately.

Under Comments by the Superintendent, Dr. Beverly Emory stated that nothing prohibits her or Board members from receiving individual personal comments regarding specific employees or students through phone calls, e-mails or letters that cannot be expressed in a public forum.

Superintendent Emory congratulated our teams who made the playoffs in different sports – D. H. Conley, Ayden-Grifton, South Central and North Pitt High Schools. She also mentioned Ms. Jordan Moore of North Pitt High School who placed 38th out of 130 young folks who ran in the 2A cross country championship this weekend.

Dr. Emory stated we are proud of the Rose High Jazz Band, and glad many came tonight and had the opportunity to hear them perform. She asked that we continue to support our Arts Program.

Dr. Emory congratulated Farmville Middle School Principal Dr. Lionel Kato who was recognized as the Pitt County Schools Principal of the Year, and H. B. Sugg Assistant Principal Ms. Allison Setser was named Assistant Principal of the Year. Dr. Emory also thanked Mr. Michael Cowin for his presentation and stated this is just a sample of Mr. Cowin's leadership every day as he does a great job keeping our budget in balance.

Superintendent Emory stated that we received from the State a list of 118 schools identified in North Carolina with high poverty and need to improve academically. She added that we have some in Pitt County. Dr. Emory stated that only eight of the schools listed have made high growth two years in a row, and Pactolus School is one of the eight. She explained to the audience that we did not allow teachers to transfer out of low performing schools this year because we need those highly qualified folks in these schools. Dr. Emory shared that the Board approved staff in some of these focus schools receive an incentive for their hard work and increased test scores.

In closing, Dr. Emory asked everyone to remember Board Members Jennifer Little and Ralph Love who have had health challenges over the last few weeks.

Mr. Benjie Forrest commented that there is a large representation of his constituents from the D. H. Conley area in the audience tonight and thanked them for their attendance. He stated that following the last Closed Session meeting the Board had, he and Mr. Worth Forbes wished they had acknowledged the concern and support of our constituents that night, but do recognize them tonight. Mr. Forrest congratulated all schools going to playoffs and commended all schools that advance and move forward; not only in athletics, but through various clubs and competitions in our school district.

Mr. Forrest stated he too would like to see a quick resolution for Dr. Emory's update, including mention of a school board member as well.

In closing, Mr. Forrest encouraged everyone to do their civic duty tomorrow and vote for local, state and national leaders.

Ms. Mary Williams stated on Wednesday, October 10, 2012, she expressed to our school board attorney, Mr. Rob Sonnenberg, that she wanted to make an oral grievance against one of our board members, Ms. Jennifer Little, for her involvement with the 365-day suspension of one of the students in our county according to North Carolina General Statutes and our Code of Ethics for our local school board members in Section 2 as part of our individual responsibilities when we decided to run and decided to serve on this Board. One of our responsibilities, which was mentioned earlier, is Item D. I will not place myself in a position of Conflict of Interest and I shall not use my board position for personal or partisan gain. After learning of Ms. Little's involvement in such severe punishment for one of our students and knowing that she is part of the academic boosters, as well as the athletic boosters, in a rival school, I feel she should resign her position on this Board. Ms. Williams stated she will be, with the help of the school attorney and the board chair, contacting the State of North Carolina School Boards Association to see what sanction and what punishment should be rendered to Ms. Little for her actions and participation in such severe harm and punishment towards this student in our county.

Ms. Williams stated she understands this is very emotional and she understands that a lot have said this thing and that thing, but she's not her. Ms. Williams said she didn't want anyone calling her house or sending her any nasty grams or sending her any kind of stuff. She stated she does not do this to anyone, and no one is going to do it to her. Ms. Williams commented that, "because you elected me for this position, don't mean that you own me." She stated that no one owns her at all. Ms. Williams added that her husband does not disrespect her, her father did not and her brother did not, nor her uncles; and she's not going to be disrespected by you. She stated she does not appreciate the behavior of some of the people who have never come to a board meeting in their entire life. She commented that they do not know everything that has gone on in this situation and show up just to cause trouble; but don't know what they're talking about half the time and added that she's not her. Ms. Williams stated her husband will not allow her to be accosted by anybody and she should not feel that her safety is in jeopardy at any time. Ms. Williams commented that because a few fools feel like they have the right to call her, say what they feel like they need to say to her – she's not that person. She stated not to get it twisted and added that though it might look like she's by herself, she's not by herself. Ms. Williams asked had she made herself clear to those who do not understand and do not know her.

Ms. Christine Waters personally thanked our school Attorney Rob Sonnenberg for his guidance and stated that none of us could have maneuvered their way through the difficulties they've seen in the last week without it. She added that he has a thankless job and stated she would not like to be on this Board without his guidance. Ms. Waters added that she's sorry he was the whipping board tonight. She asked the folks in attendance to remember that the Board is bound by ethics that protect students and employees and if we don't respond, there is a really good reason. She thanked them for understanding and asked that they hang with them as the job is not easy.

Mr. Marc Whichard wanted the people in our community to know that he has read all his e-mails and took them to heart, but he wanted folks to know that they are people also and sit on the Board because they have a heart and care for kids. He shared that he graduated from Conley, had an uncle who was principal at Conley for many years and he himself is a current high school principal – stating that he assures everyone that serious thought goes into every action and every word by the Board and their job is not easy. Mr. Whichard asked that no one take up time from the Board with inappropriate or nasty comments which degrades the situation that is before us. He added that he and his colleagues on the Board understand the seriousness of what's before us and that we value the employees, whether instructional or extracurricular of this district, who receive very little thanks and are told by many how they would like to see the job done. Mr. Whichard stated we will seek a resolution quickly, but will be very deliberate in our steps as we are dealing with precious individuals.

Mr. Worth Forbes apologized to folks who attended the Closed Session meeting last week because they deserved some type of statement following the session. He also believes that we need a rapid decision and one based on facts. As is obvious, there has not been a decision made that satisfies the public, which is what you are waiting for. Mr. Forbes stated it's our responsibility to come up with a decision, whether positive or negative, but is in the best interest of the child and is based on facts regardless of personnel involved. He stated that if personnel or Board members are involved, action needs to be taken. Mr. Forbes added that we should not take lightly a child being suspended from playing athletics for 365 days – a decision that was handed down to us and we have no authority over. The responsibility we do have is what happened up to that point and those are the facts that need to be addressed. Any individual involved in this situation needs to deal with the consequences as the child will not play football in Pitt County Schools for the rest of his life.

Ms. Mildred Council thanked all those who attended tonight to share their concerns. She added that she does not like the rules of the Board regarding sharing information, but the rules were in place when she was elected to the Board. Ms. Council stated she served on the Greenville City Council for over 20 years and people could openly discuss any issue that occurred. She did express a desire that community representatives speak with truth and integrity during an open meeting. Ms. Council stated the Board cannot speak openly due to rules and laws – and added that some may need to be revised. She added that all roles of individuals in a school are important and if problems arise, they need to be worked out together in a respectful manner.

Ms. Council closed by encouraging everyone to get out and vote tomorrow.

Ms. Jill Camnitz asked that everyone hear Dr. Emory's comments about the Del Burns investigation and the situation we find ourselves in. She stated that if you listened to what she said, you will understand the situation the Board is in. Ms. Camnitz echoed Mr. Whichard's words about why we do what we do – because we care. She stated the Board's desire to get to the facts – the students, staff members and school board members deserve the facts before pointing any fingers.

Mr. Sean Kenny stated the jazz band was great and congratulated Dr. Kato and Ms. Setzer for their awards. He also thanked everyone for coming and being involved – in

that light, Mr. Kenny reminded everyone of the holiday season upon us and challenged everyone to help someone who is less fortunate than you including those devastated by Hurricane Sandi. In closing, he encouraged all to vote for the candidate of their choice.

Ms. Barbara Owens stated that the Board in seeking to be fair, just and equal suggested and moved, second by Mr. Benjie Forrest, that the Board adjourn. Motion passed unanimously. Time was 8:50 P. M.

Respectively Submitted,

Mr. Ralph Love, Vice-Chair

Dr. Beverly Emory, Secretary