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|--------|-----------------------------|----------|---------------------|
| DATE: | January 23, 2012 | PRESENT: | Billy Peaden, Chair |
| | | | Jill Camnitz |
| | | | Worth Forbes |
| | | | Benjie Forrest |
| | | | Sean Kenny |
| TIME: | 7:00 P.M. | | Jennifer Little |
| | | | Ralph Love, Sr. |
| | | | Barbara Owens |
| | | | Christine Waters |
| | | | Marc Whichard |
| PLACE: | Pitt County Office Building | | Mary Williams |

ABSENT:

Chair Billy Peaden called the Board of Education to order in Regular Session at 7:00 P. M. in the County Commissioners' Auditorium. Roll Call followed.

Ms. Barbara Owens led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Bishop Ralph Love followed with a Moment of Silence asking that we remember anyone who has suffered a tragedy, sickness or loss of a loved one in our Pitt County Schools system. He specifically asked that everyone remember Board Member Matthew Ward's family following his death this past week.

Chair Peaden then offered the Agenda for consideration. Bishop Ralph Love, second by Mr. Benjie Forrest, moved that the Agenda be approved. Motion was unanimous.

There were two members of the audience who asked to speak during Public Expression. Mr. Walt Pollard and Mr. Stanley Nichols both voiced opposition to changing the middle school athletic seasons. Issues of the weather, physical conditioning and possible injuries of the students, and the Department of Public Instruction Handbook guidelines for playing football were shared with the Board. Mr. Nichols ended the discussion by saying, "If it's not broke, there's no need to fix it."

Under Spotlight on Teaching and Learning, Coordinator of Instructional Technology and Media Services Tim DeCresie shared with the Board that in the last four years, efforts have been made in classrooms and media centers to leave traditional settings and move toward a more collaborative environment. He stated strong support has been provided for media coordinators to meet 21st century goals and meet the Common Core and Essential Standards implemented by the Department of Public Instruction. Mr. DeCresie introduced IT/Media Specialist Joanna Gerakios who described the vision for this updated technology to assist students in becoming competent readers and providing them use of effective technological tools for the 21st century. As some students only visit their school libraries; we want them to read to learn, but also to read for pleasure – it only takes one special book to get them hooked on reading. Ms. Gerakios explained

that since 2007-08, twelve media centers have been transformed into more modern, safe and tech-friendly learning environments funded by \$600,000 grant money for media conversions and \$137,000 for new books in addition to what the district budgets us each year. With better use of technology, more students are engaged in an updated learning environment for small and large student groups.

Mr. DeCresie added that to implement these changes; a plan was established, the plan was worked and now the plan is working for us. He introduced North Pitt High School Media Coordinator Laura Mangum stating she has done a tremendous job collaborating with classroom teachers in the school and made great strides in transitioning the staff and students to the 21st century. Ms. Mangum stated that she has developed staff development for her teachers during their planning periods – devising student centered lessons and projects. She added that teachers become facilitators and introduce new lesson ideas, i.e. audio lessons. Ms. Mangum also commented that she works with different departments – i.e. English Department-using paperless note cards, citations and outlines. By using instructional software and handheld boards, teachers and students interact as well as collaborative interaction with guidance counselors through websites, mental health topics and other resources.

Another North Pitt High School Media Coordinator Sara Levin explained “Panther Tales” where students work with storybook folk tales learning to research the story and adapt it into a script. In April these high school students will share this project with third graders while learning to step up to be leaders, tutors and role models for the younger students. The “Panther Tales” members also form support groups to help 9th graders feel comfortable in a high school setting and providing them with a safe place to “hang out” in a new environment.

Ms. Mangum also explained to the Board that Pitt County Schools is teaming with Barnes and Nobles in February participating in a month-long Book Fair where each school is involved in a school spirit night to include readings, musical performances, cheerleader involvement or live appearances of known children’s books illustrators.

Under Consent Items, Bishop Ralph Love, second by Mr. Benjie Forrest, moved that the Board approve the Minutes from the Regular Meeting held December 5, 2011, the Personnel Report for January 2012, A Resolution of the Pitt County Board of Education Requesting Changes to the School Pay Date Provisions that Were Enacted in 2011, and two contracts – Facility Use Agreement Between Pitt County Public Schools and East Carolina University and Non-Exclusive License Agreement. Motion carried unanimously.

Under New Business, Chair Ralph Love asked Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources Delilah Jackson to update the Board regarding the Approved Qualified Observer List. Ms. Jackson shared that in the new growth plans presented by the Department of Public Instruction and the Legislature and General Assembly, there is a new method introduced in the mandatory improvement plan where teachers are observed by qualified personnel at the end of their 60 instructional days on the plan. She added that these qualified observers were reviewed by principals and administration from the district and the PCAE. Ms. Jackson stated the NC Schools Board Association and legal counsel suggested this list be approved by both groups.

Mr. Sean Kenny moved, second by Mr. Worth Forbes, that the Approved Qualified Observer List be approved by the Board. Motion was unanimous.

Ms. Jackson stated there will not be a Human Resources Committee Meeting tomorrow.

Chair Marc Whichard introduced Assistant Superintendent of Educational Programs and Services Cheryl Olmsted who reported to the Board following a Committee Meeting held January 5, 2012. Ms. Olmsted explained that no action needed to be taken by the Board, but the Committee wanted to share the revised Student Wellness Procedure. She asked Ms. Alice Keen to describe these procedures which basically pertain to having safe routes to school – whether walking or riding a bicycle. Ms. Keen commented that principals in schools work with parents in the community to plan safe routes to school, i.e. the walking school bus. She added that the procedures also implement minor changes in nutrition.

Mr. Sean Kenny stated he has received phone calls from parents stating that their child does not have the specified exercise time period as mentioned in the procedures. Ms. Olmsted advised that in grades K-2, students should have the stated recess period each day and if not, she would like more details from the parents. Superintendent Beverly Emory commented that there are energizers in the classrooms, music movement is implemented as well as outside recess time. Ms. Keen added that five years ago, elementary teachers were given energizers and activity bags of equipment to help provide appropriate movement and exercise.

Mr. Marc Whichard complimented Ms. Keen on her strong, persistent efforts to implement these procedures in our schools and stated she is a tireless advocant for healthy initiatives for the students in our district. Ms. Keen responded that it was with the help and support of our tremendous community partners – the Brody School of Medicine, the Hospital Foundation and the Health Department – that this program is working, and we are blessed to have them.

Ms. Olmsted also stated that an update of the Teacher Quality Partnership with East Carolina was presented by Administrator Bill Frazier. She added that 9-12/Testing Director David Jenkins and K-8 Director Sandra Jones were introduced to the Committee members.

Chair Benjie Forrest asked Assistant Superintendent of Finance Michael Cowin to share with the Board information following a Committee Meeting held January 19, 2012. Mr. Cowin informed the Board that the first item reviewed was the Annual Audit Report for School Year 2010-11 presented by Mr. Michael Jordan of Pittard, Perry and Crone, Inc. He stated the Report earned an unqualified auditor opinion with no identified material weaknesses, significant deficiencies or instances of noncompliance material in financial operations. Awards presented for the Audit were the Government Finance Officer's Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting and the Association of School Business Officials Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting.

Mr. Cowin then presented details of 2011-12 Budget Amendment # 1 with explanation as follows:

- 1. State Public School Fund:**

The first Amendment to the State fund represents an increase of \$1,902,650.00. This increase represents amounts appropriated from the State Public School Fund through allotment revision #19.

2. Local Current Expense Fund:

The first Amendment to the Local fund does not represent an increase from the Fiscal Year 2011-12 Budget Resolution. Budget Amendment #1 represents adjustments at the purpose code level to reflect actual operating activity through December 2011.

3. Special Revenue Fund:

The first Amendment to the Special Revenue fund represents an increase of \$50,611.99. The increase represents increases in funding related to State, Federal, and/or Local Grants accounted for in the Special Revenue fund.

4. Federal Programs Fund:

The first Amendment to the Federal fund represents an increase of \$140,354.10. The increase represents an increase related to program increases to adjust the Federal planning allotments to actual.

The total increase to the Pitt County Schools' budget per Amendment #1 is \$2,093,616.09 with the vast majority coming from the State relative to the second transportation allotment, which is not submitted to the district until the month of December.

Mr. Benjie Forrest, second by Mr. Sean Kenny, moved that 2011-12 Budget Amendment # 1 be approved by the Board as presented.

Upon Chair Peaden asking for discussion, Mr. Benjie Forrest commented that we are fortunate to have a positive relationship with our County Commissioners. Mr. Worth Forbes added that Mr. Cowin's hard work and conservative hand for the penny provide strong leadership in our budget. With no further discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

Chair Sean Kenny asked Associate Superintendent of Operations Aaron Beaulieu to update the Board following a Facilities Committee Meeting held at 5:00 p.m. just prior to the Board of Education Meeting tonight. Mr. Beaulieu stated the first item of business was in reference to a request from Ms. Frances Mills to name the newly constructed road running beside D. H. Conley High School connecting Worthington Road to Edwards Farm Road after her husband, Mr. Laverne Mills. Mr. Worth Forbes, second by Mr. Benjie Forrest, moved that the new road beside D. H. Conley High School be named after Mr. Mills as requested. Discussion was held amongst Board member with some asking what had he done for D. H. Conley over the years. Mr. Worth Forbes commented that this family has lived by the school for many years with thousands of students coming and going around them all day, but did not complain to the school or community. He added that Mr. Laverne Mills was well respected in the community and well known to D. H. Coley; and feels this would be a way to honor him for years to come. Ms. Barbara Owens asked would this action be complete upon the Board's vote with Mr. Forbes explaining that the request would then be presented to the County Planning Board and County Commissioners for their approval.

Ms. Christine commented that the school system purchased the land to have an access road placed for D. H. Conley. She stated that Mr. Mills and his wife have no direct ties to Conley, but have been very good neighbors to the school. Ms. Waters added that the Board has policy in place pertaining to naming schools after people who have given great service to the county and she does not see any merit in this recommendation. Mr. Sean Kenny clarified that we would be recommending this request to the Planning Board, the Board of Education will not actually make the decision. Ms. Owens asked what would happen if the motion did not carry with Mr. Forbes responding the road would remain as it is. Ms. Waters asked was this a private or county road with Mr. Beaulieu answering that it is a county road and that the actual request had been presented to the county planners who wanted the schools' input. Chair Peaden called for a vote to the motion. Those in favor of naming the road beside D. H. Conley High School after Mr. Laverne Mills were: Mr. Worth Forbes, Mr. Marc Whichard, Mr. Sean Kenny, Mr. Benjie Forrest, Bishop Ralph Love, Mr. Billy Peaden and Ms. Mary Williams. Those against this motion were: Ms. Jill Camnitz, Ms. Jennifer Little, Ms. Christine Waters and Ms. Barbara Owens. Motion passed.

The second item discussed by the Committee was renaming the Facilities Committee - upon looking at the Committee structure and workload involved - to the Operations Committee. Mr. Sean Kenny, second by Mr. Worth Forbes, moved that the Facilities Committee be renamed the Operations Committee of the Pitt County Board of Education. After some discussion between operation, operations and operational, the motion passed unanimously.

The last item discussed at the Operations Committee Meeting was a demonstration of a GPS tracking solution involved with bus ridership from Everyday Solutions. Ms. Jill Camnitz stated at the committee meeting, there was discussion about bus issues. Mr. Beaulieu shared that 12,500 students ride buses in the morning, and even more in the afternoon. He commented that the schools would be a better source for bus concerns/complaints, especially during inclement weather. Ms. Camnitz asked regarding the cost of a pilot project. Mr. Beaulieu responded that the cost can be obtained.

Ms. Camnitz also asked about the athletic equity study discussed at the meeting to be conducted for middle and high schools over the next couple of months with Mr. Beaulieu stating the study will probably be done at the new constructions which are up to DPI standards for middle and high schools and compare this to our other schools across the district. She then asked when this study is considered, is there a way to look at academic needs also with Mr. Beaulieu stating this information could be obtained but he's not sure of the time frame for response – stating it would depend on the scope of assistance.

Mr. Worth Forbes added that he spoke to the presenter regarding the GPS tracking solution and was informed that the cost could be broken up into thirds – thus being able to use the profits during the first quarter of the year to apply to the costs of the second and third payments. Ms. Camnitz stated that this would be a good phase in cost approach. Mr. Benjie Forrest commented that this was a quick discussion in the meeting, and possibly Mr. Beaulieu could contact the presenter for a more in depth discussion and perhaps a better price.

Chair Worth Forbes and In-House Attorney Rob Sonnenberg shared information with the Board following a Committee Meeting held January 9, 2012. Several new and revised policies were brought before the Board for a First Reading:

Policy 10.612 (new) – Service Animals in School

Policy 4.103 (revised) – Crowd Control at School Sponsored Activities

Policy 7.005 (revised) – Professional Development

Policy 7.014 (revised) – Conflict of Interest

Policy 7.107 (revised) – Re-Employment Probationary Period

Policy 7.110 (revised) – Plans for Growth and Improvement of Licensed Employees

Policy 7.111 (revised) – Evaluation of Certified Employees

Policy 7.120 (revised) – Teacher Planning

Policy 7.121 (revised) – Extracurricular and Non-Instructional Duties

Policy 10.111 (revised) – Student Transfers Within Pitt County Schools

Mr. Forbes explained that the new policy Service Animals in School is not currently used in our district as there is no need, but could be forthcoming in the future, i.e. a seeing eye dog. Discussion followed regarding other animals involved, psychiatric disorders and recognized mental disabilities. Exceptional Children's Director Cathy Keeter responded to questions and made valid points related to other health impaired students. Mr. Sean Kenny expressed concerns with the term psychiatric disorders in this day and age and asked that caution be taken with its use. Attorney Sonnenberg stated this policy was given as a guide by the NCSBA and felt with IEP evaluations and EC input, we should proceed as it appears. Superintendent Emory added that the wording of an identified mental disability would cover the question of need for a service animal. Mr. Kenny also mentioned that the animal will have to use the bathroom and how will this be handled. Mr. Forbes stated the animal will need to be housebroken or perhaps wear a diaper.

Most of the revisions in the remaining policies are wording changes or better clarification of the policy.

Regarding Policy 7.014 Conflict of Interest, Mr. Forbes asked was a teacher who made items at home and then sold their merchandise at school covered under this policy as they use their position to create an audience for selling their wares. Ms. Mary Williams asked about a teacher selling their merchandize to staff, but not students. Mr. Michael Cowin stated an employee should not sell on the school grounds, but be carried through Community Schools and Recreation. Superintendent Beverly Emory stated there is a difference between a fundraiser and personal selling with Mr. Forbes adding that personal gain is the issue. Ms. Jill Camnitz stated a section of this policy also involves Board involvement with a conflict of interest as stated in our Ethics Policy and feels this has caused a hardship for some in the past several months. She commented that perhaps this should be addressed to help future Board members when issues arise.

Policy 7.111 Evaluation of Certified Employees adds an abbreviated evaluation for career status teachers who are not in renewal year and without issues consisting of Standards One, Four and Six (when implemented) of the Teacher Evaluation Process to include summative evaluations to be submitted to the central office personnel file in accordance with state law, local board policy and evaluation system guidelines.

In the discussion regarding Policy 10.111 Student Transfers Within Pitt County Schools, questions were raised about identifying a “hardship” to grant a student transfer to another school. Better guidelines and criteria are felt necessary to define “hardship” with Superintendent Emory asking who decides “extenuating circumstances” - adding that specific language is needed. Mr. Forbes and Attorney Sonnenberg had contacted other counties and the NCSBA regarding wording to define “hardship” and were told they had no defining points listed and to be careful when being specific about “hardships”. Ms. Mary Williams asked shouldn’t these questions be answered before the issue comes before the Board Hearing Panel with Bishop Ralph Love stating the circumstances are not written in policy. Superintendent Emory stated there is no point in having a time frame if no mechanism for processing a “hardship” has been set up. Mr. Marc Whichard commented that we could clarify in the policy that the Board Panel would be the determining factor regarding the “hardship”, which in reality is what is already in place. Chair Peaden asked Mr. Forbes to bring this policy back up to the Policy Committee.

Mr. Worth Forbes then moved, second by Mr. Benjie Forrest, to temporarily suspend By-Law 1.112 (Policy Development), which normally requires two readings of a Policy recommendation before Board action, for the Board to consider and act on the current Policy recommendations regarding the proposed new Policy 7.024 (new) – Pitt County Schools Staff Wellness Policy in one reading as this program is funded by a grant and needs approval as soon as possible. Motion was unanimous.

Mr. Worth Forbes moved, second by Mr. Sean Kenny, that the Board approve new Policy 7.024 – Pitt County Schools Staff Wellness Policy. Motion was unanimous.

Athletic Director for Pitt County Schools Ron Butler then came before the Board for action regarding a change of sports seasons for middle school athletics stating that a middle school athletic director/coach and another coach are present in the audience if the Board should have any questions. He thanked Mr. Pollard and Mr. Nichols for their voice tonight during Public Expression. Mr. Butler responded to some questions raised by Mr. Pollard and Mr. Nichols regarding February weather, time period between 8th grade sports and 9th grade sports, Department of Public Instruction handbook changes relative to football, student health issues, trainers being present at football games and the ability of Pitt County Schools’ middle school teams to play each other during a season.

Mr. Worth Forbes moved, second by Bishop Ralph Love, not to change the middle schools’ athletic seasons. In discussing the issue, Mr. Forbes mentioned problems regarding more field maintenance, clothing issues, potential for injury and healing between 8th and 9th grades, issues of student choice for playing sports and seasons for Fast Track students. Mr. Butler assured everyone that Fast Track students will still be able to play ball with regular rules applied. Ms. Jennifer Little commented that she has received more phone calls of late in opposition to the middle school season change with most parents being worried about their child choosing travel ball over middle school sports. Mr. Butler informed the Board that travel ball has been considered and some schools have dropped middle school sports completely though some have been picked up by private sectors. He did comment that times are changing for middle school sports, and the future for it is uncertain at this time. Ms. Little stated she thinks switching

seasons will be a huge pro for trainers being at middle school games, but feels she needs to support her constituents in District 5. Mr. Benjie Forrest added that the rain in February is different than the rain in July and August as summer rains evaporate quickly due to the heat. He added that in baseball, players are standing up; but in football, players are often knocked down to the ground. Ms. Mary Williams stated that several parents are afraid students will eventually have to pay to play sports, middle school sports will be dropped or intramural sports will not offer the same opponent effect as playing sports from different school districts brings. She commented that we can't afford trainers, but couldn't we have volunteer EMTs in place. Mr. Butler stated we can have EMTs, but if they get an emergency call – they will have to leave and answer the call. He added that trainers can diagnose an injury, but are not qualified to set a broken bone or perform other medical interventions. Ms. Williams stated she's been swayed from her earlier thoughts and reminded all that March can bring our really bad weather including snow. Ms. Jill Camnitz stated a survey had been sent to all middle and high school athletic directors with thirteen responses. Mr. Butler commented that he himself believes a change of seasons will be safer for our student athletes. Ms. Camnitz asked about heat related events in the fall with Mr. Butler responding that most of these incidents were due to students not being in shape at that point. Ms. Camnitz stated that once we go down the path of changing seasons, how difficult will it be to change back if the majority feels the switch was a mistake. Mr. Butler responded that we would implement the switch as a trial, and can switch to the regular schedule if it is deemed a better method of playing without difficulty. Ms. Camnitz asked about students playing travel ball and middle school sports, can they do both with the response being there would be difficulty in some sports. Mr. Butler feels this change will allow students to play more than one sport. Mr. Sean Kenny asked if the trainers were coming from ECU with Mr. Butler stating yes, the trainer and two to three assistants. Mr. Kenny feels Dr. Katy Walsh should come and explain to the Board exactly what athletic trainers do and their full capabilities, and then have the Board explore opportunities to get athletic trainers in middle schools if the sports seasons are not switched. Mr. Butler emphasized that with a change in seasons, trainers will be available for middle school games; if not, there will be additional cost to have other trainers present.

Mr. Marc Whichard feels this discussion should end and the Board move forward. Mr. Whichard moved, second by Mr. Benjie Forrest, that the debate over changing middle school athletic seasons be closed. Those voting against closing the discussion were: Ms. Jill Camnitz, Mr. Sean Kenny and Ms. Jennifer Little. Those in favor of ending the debate were: Mr. Benjie Forrest, Mr. Worth Forbes, Bishop Ralph Love, Mr. Marc Whichard, Ms. Mary Williams, Ms. Barbara Owens, Mr. Billy Peaden and Ms. Christine Waters.

Chair Peaden then called for a vote by the Board to leave the middle school athletic seasons as they currently exist. Ms. Jill Camnitz voted against the motion. Motion passed.

Under Comments by the Superintendent, Dr. Emory explained that during the Spotlight on Teaching and Learning, different departments are going to update the Board on what they do as Mr. DeCresie had shared tonight. She thanked the Media Department for their presentation and also the Perkins, Wells and West Trust who for many years has donated considerable funding to Pitt County Schools.

Superintendent Emory discussed State Law on enforcing revoking student driver's license for failures or dropouts and stated this was implemented during first semester of this school year. She warned Board members that they may receive phone calls from upset parents when the letters are sent to respective students.

Dr. Emory commented that in our Board goals, our proposed plan for Unitary Status will be in place by the end of January and the strategies and measures will be presented at the February 6th Board meeting. We will get public feedback for this plan in the spring.

Superintendent Emory reminded Board members that the CNN documentary regarding the tragedy of the loss of a student athlete, as well as all the processes that have evolved since then to improve what we have in place for safety with our football program, will air Sunday night, January 29, at 8:00 p.m. A preview will be held at Rose High School Wednesday evening, January 25, at 7:00 p.m. Dr. Emory thanked all those who had a part in producing this documentary.

Superintendent Emory shared with the Board that the Attends Company contributed another \$10,000 to our Dropout Prevention Program which will help tremendously with the Twilight Academy, Pitt Academy and Project Equal Programs.

Dr. Emory also reminded Board members of the National Board Certified Teachers Pinning Ceremony which will take place at South Central High School Wednesday, January 25 at 4:30 p.m.

In closing, Superintendent Emory commented that she was proud to see all eleven Board members at the visitation service for former Board Member Matthew Ward. She stated that this action enforced how Matthew touched each of us during his short time on the Board.

Chair Peaden reminded each Board member of the Board Retreat to be held Wednesday, January 25 at 10:00 a.m.

Bishop Ralph Love stated he was still touched by the loss of Dr. Matthew Ward, who was a personal friend as well as a great Board member. He stated that once again the Board is faced with the task of finding someone to fill this seat on the Board and work for the students of Pitt County. Bishop Love also shared that he will miss the Board Retreat Wednesday as his father-in-law had passed and he will be out-of-town.

Mr. Benjie Forrest announced that Ag Carolina Financial has financed 100% of the FFA dues for Pitt County students. He stated that agriculture education provides great leadership skills for students enrolled in the organization.

Mr. Forrest stated that Dr. Matthew Ward was a fine man, which was testified to by the hundreds who came to his services, and touched the lives of many as commented on by Dr. Emory, Bishop Love and Mr. Worth Forbes during his wake.

Mr. Forrest recognized HOSA at Ayden-Grifton High School and the services they perform throughout their community.

In closing, Mr. Forrest informed the Board that Board Member Worth Forbes was recently installed to the Board of Directors of NERSBA - the Northeast Regional School for Biotechnology and Agriscience, and Chair Peaden was made a member of the Fundraising Committee. He feels updates to the Board are vital from time to time as we voted to support this new school several months ago. Mr. Forrest stated that nine applications have been received for Principal of the school, and hopefully, this position will be filled and employment will begin March 1.

Mr. Sean Kenny stated one of the best times of remembering during his time on the Board was at the Board Member 101 Conference when he had dinner with Dr. Ward and Ms. Christine Waters. He said as he interacted and learned about Matthew, he also learned about himself. Mr. Kenny added that he was devastated by his death and has kept Dr. Ward's family in his thoughts and prayers. He remembers in the discussion of exam exemption a few months back, that Dr. Ward mentioned exempting a child who had made a "C" from an exam; but to him, a "C" is average and should not be held in high regard for exemption from an exam. Mr. Kenny closed saying that sometimes we don't take the time to say what's in our hearts, and he wanted to say now that he's glad to serve with everyone on the Board.

Ms. Christine Waters shared that she also felt a closeness to Dr. Ward since attending the Board Member 101 Conference.

Ms. Waters commented that last week she visited the AG teacher at Stokes School who is putting a Latin curriculum together for her students – and the teacher was one of her "darlings" she taught in the past – which is an example of what makes a teacher grateful that she/he touched a student's life.

Mr. Marc Whichard echoed the sentiments expressed about Dr. Matthew Ward and his positive impact on our school system.

Mr. Whichard also stated he attended the Pitt Academy Graduation and saw what a great job Mr. Mike Lutz has done in reaching these students. He commented that many folks expressed thanks to Mr. Lutz for his work with the students to help them succeed.

Mr. Whichard praised Ridgewood staff and students as he attended the Writer's Workshop Program at Barnes and Nobles, which was held earlier in the evening.

Mr. Worth Forbes stated it was tough tonight to look at Dr. Matthew Ward's empty seat. He added that Matthew congratulated him a couple of days ago as he graduated in December receiving his degree in Theology; and knows that it takes a lifetime to build a reputation, and only a few seconds to tear it down. Dr. Ward built up his fellow man, and he knows that Matthew's in a better place with Christ and has no pain or suffering. Mr. Forbes asked that we support Ms. Ward and Matthew's family with encouragement in the days ahead as we are all here to help our neighbors.

Ms. Jill Camnitz commented that like Mr. Michael Dixon who had previously sat in his seat, Matthew worked hard to be a unifying force for the Board and we have big shoes to fill.

Ms. Mary Williams stated that Matthew was her friend and had been since childhood. She said they used to skate together, and he has always been a leader – even as a child. Ms. Williams commented that when they were younger, the guys belonged to the Boys Club and Matthew was a good example for the younger boys. She added that her heart and prayers go out to his family.

Ms. Jennifer Little discussed the great work and support from parents at Rose High, which she shared recently with the Board through a Rose newsletter. She mentioned the Academic Booster Club raising \$25,000 to be used for academic growth and achievement, and shared some events held for students who make “As” and “Bs”.

Ms. Little stated that Matthew was a great man, husband and father who left a positive impression on those who met him.

Ms. Barbara Owens stated she had been at ViQuest today for physical therapy and saw a group of men and women who talked about Matthew for a good 30 minutes – laughing and giving testimony to Matthew’s life. She said as she began her time on the Board, she sat beside Board Member Don Carson and more recently, she sat by Board Member Matthew Ward – feeling she has come full circle. Ms. Owens shared the following statement made to a friend in her presence, “You thrive on conflict.” with the response being, “I thrive on resolving the conflict, and appreciate the ability to do so.” To that end, Ms. Owens vowed to all schools, students, faculty and staff and the citizens of Pitt County, that she will faithfully perform and faithfully discharge the duties of her office as an elected member to the Board of Education; and in so doing, appreciates the privilege to serve on the Board of Education and serves on this Board with great honor and great joy.

Bishop Ralph Love moved, second by Mr. Sean Kenny, that the Board go into Closed Session to consider the qualifications, competence, performance, condition of appointment of a public officer or employee or prospective public officer or employee; or hear or investigate a complaint, charge or grievance by or against a public officer or employee. [N.C.G.S. §143-318.11(a) (6)] Motion was unanimous.

Upon returning to Open Session with no further business to discuss, Mr. Sean Kenny moved, second by Mr. Marc Whichard, that the Board adjourn. Motion passed unanimously. Time was 10:20 P. M.

Respectively Submitted,

Mr. Billy Peaden, Chair

Dr. Beverly Emory, Secretary