

DATE: September 17, 2012 PRESENT: Billy Peaden, Chair
Jill Camnitz
Mildred Council
Worth Forbes
Benjie Forrest
Sean Kenny
Jennifer Little
Ralph Love, Sr. (Telephone Conf.)
TIME: 6:30 P.M. Barbara Owens
Christine Waters
Marc Whichard
PLACE: Pitt County Office Building ABSENT: Mary Williams

Chair Billy Peaden called the Board of Education to order in Regular Session at 6:30 P.M. in the Third Floor Board Room.

Ms. Mildred Council led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Bishop Ralph Love continued 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.

Chair Peaden offered the Agenda for consideration. Mr. Worth Forbes asked that an item be added to the Agenda regarding the Northeast Agriscience and Biotechnology Regional High School. Mr. Marc Whichard seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously. Chair Peaden added the item under New Business, Item A-1.

During Public Expression, President Barry Dixon and several members of the Pitt County Substance Abuse Coalition were present to share information related to individuals, professional organizations or businesses who contributed extra time and effort in our county for students/adults dealing with substance abuse. Mr. Dixon stated tonight, they would like to give special recognition to Dr. Beverly Reep Emory as she has given much time and support during her tenure with Pitt County Schools. Examples of her involvement include a Call to Action in middle schools, a Youth Behavioral Risk Survey regarding drugs and bullying issues conducted by ECU, as well as other intervention programs/studies. Ms. Debbie Sudekum from PORT Human Services shared the history of Pitt County Schools and Pitt County Mental Health Center developing substance abuse prevention services with the most recent being evidence based programs in grades three – twelve. She informed the Board that approximately 1,500 kids are served each year in Pitt County Schools through the prevention program and during her tenure of 18 years, approximately 27,000 students have been served. Ms. Sudekum quoted her sister who works for Johnston County Schools in closing, “If you continue to treat children as they are, they will remain as they are. If you treat children as what they could be, they will become what they can be.” Mr. Dixon asked Dr. Emory to come forward to receive a plaque in her honor from the Coalition for her continued dedication and commitment to help reduce the pain, suffering and loss caused by the misuse of alcohol and drugs.

For the Spotlight on Teaching and Learning, Ayden-Grifton High School Agricultural Teacher Bill Scott introduced three representatives: NCTTFC Executive Director William Upchurch, NCTTFC Board Member Rick Smith and State FFA Coordinator Jason Davis. Mr. Smith stated it is an honor for him to be present as he’s a resident of Pitt County and product of Pitt County

Schools. As background, Mr. Smith informed the Board that the Tobacco Trust Fund Commission was created in 2000 by the General Assembly to be one of the three agencies responsible for dispersing part of the Master Settlement Agreement funds North Carolina receives each year to assist tobacco farmers, former tobacco quota holders, anyone engaged in tobacco related businesses and individuals displaced from tobacco related employment due to the adverse effects of the Master Settlement Agreement. He reported that up until 2002, Pitt County was the largest tobacco county in the United States for 75 years, now it ranks 16th. Mr. Smith commented that the 18-member Board reviews a large number of grant applications and selects projects they feel will make major impacts on farmers, their families and their communities. Their main goal is to keep farmers in business and help them stay profitable. Students who choose the agricultural path for their future have our support in their education and desire to become farmers, agribusiness professionals, teachers or whatever career they decide. In closing, Mr. Smith stated there are seven billion people on this earth and in 25 years, there will be 9.5 billion who will need to be fed with less land available – asking what's more important than agriculture.

Mr. Davis stated there are 45,000 agricultural students across the state, 420 Ag teachers and 230 FFA Chapters. He reported that all chapters were eligible to apply for grants and of the 32 grants received, two are in Pitt County. Mr. Davis stated this says a lot for the caliber and quality of teachers in Pitt County. He stated the Tobacco Trust Fund believes that agricultural education and FFA provide students with skills for the 21st century involving communication and leadership. Mr. Davis then asked representatives from North Pitt High School to come and receive their check, which will be used for lab upgrades. Next he asked for Ayden-Grifton High School representatives to come forward to receive their check, which will fund installation of an overhead irrigation system in their new greenhouse.

Ms. Barbara Owens asked what are the agencies involved with this grant with Mr. Smith replying the Tobacco Trust Fund, Golden Leaf and the Health and Wellness Trust Fund.

Under Consent Items, Ms. Jill Camnitz, second by Mr. Worth Forbes, moved that the Minutes from the Regular Board Meeting held August 20, 2012, the September Personnel Report, the List of Property to be Declared Surplus and the Lease of the Third Street Warehouse be approved. Motion passed unanimously.

Under New Business, the first item discussed was Mr. Worth Forbes' resignation of his Board seat for the Northeast Agriscience and Biotechnology Regional High School as he has accepted a position as acting Pastor for the Ayden First Baptist Church. He informed the Board that the Board meetings are held on Wednesday night, which will conflict with Bible study on Wednesday night at the church. Mr. Forbes then moved that Mr. Benjie Forrest be appointed as the Pitt County Board of Education representative to fill his seat, which Mr. Marc Whichard seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

The second item of business was an update presented by Chair Worth Forbes and In-House Attorney Rob Sonnenberg following a Policy Committee meeting held September 10. He mentioned the dress code issue and informed teachers that the dress code has not been changed. Mr. Forbes added that a committee has been formed to discuss the employee dress code with representatives being principals, teachers, certified/classified employees, parents and the community. He commented that Board members serving are Ms. Christine Waters, Chair; Ms. Jill Camnitz and Ms. Mary Williams. Mr. Forbes stated the dress code for teachers and shirt tails of students will be discussed.

Mr. Forbes then discussed four policy revisions for Second Reading:

1. Policy 9.801 –Evaluation of Instructional Programs
2. Policy 10.104 - Non-Resident Students
3. Policy 10.105 - Tuition and Exemptions
4. Policy 10.111 – Student Transfers within Pitt County Schools

Attorney Sonnenberg stated the only change involved deals with Policy 10.104 where one sentence was added stating “Currently approved non-resident students will be allowed to continue at that school through the exit grade.”

Mr. Forbes summarized the proposed changes of Policy 9.801 for the Board with many being related to curriculum changes mandated by the State. He then moved, second by Ms. Jill Camnitz, that the Board approve Policy 9.801. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Forbes then brought forward Policy 10.104 which basically states Pitt County Schools does not accept non-resident tuition students unless they otherwise qualify to attend under Federal State Law or Board Policy. Currently approved non-resident students will be allowed to continue at their school through the exit grade. Mr. Forbes, second by Ms. Jill Camnitz, moved that the Board adopt Policy 10.104. Mr. Marc Whichard opposed this motion, motion carried.

As Policy 10.104 was approved, Mr. Worth moved that the Board rescind Policy 10.105, second was made by Ms. Mildred Council. Mr. Marc Whichard opposed this motion, motion carried.

The last policy discussed was Policy 10.111 with Mr. Forbes explaining that there are no longer transfers under No Child Left Behind legislation. He added that students may continue through the exit grade of a school if they provide their own transportation. Mr. Forbes moved that the Board adopt Policy 10.111, second was given by Ms. Barbara Owens. Motion passed unanimously.

The third item of business dealt with ethical violations as Chair Peaden stated two weeks ago he received a letter from Pitt Community College sharing ethical studies that had been conducted. He commented that Pitt Community College had this information provided at no cost by an outside agency. Chair Peaden stated this “raised eyebrows” for Attorney Sonnenberg, Vice-Chair Ralph Bishop and himself. Attorney Sonnenberg stated that based on recent events at Pitt Community College, he was asked to look into outside options for conducting an ethics audit or review of potential ethics complaint within the Board. In looking at Pitt Community College, who recently had work done by the NC Ethics Commission; research with the NC Ethics Commission revealed a community college falls under the State Ethics Act, which allows for reviews and recommendations of potential ethical violations. However, Attorney Sonnenberg continued, our school Board as an LEA does not fall under the State Ethics Act so we cannot be reviewed by the NC Ethics Commission. In searching for other options, he spoke with the NC School of Government and the NC School Boards Association who provided no public/no charge options. The only recommendation by the School of Government was an individual who had completed outside ethics reviews for other entities – specifically Attorney Jimmy Hicks who recently did work for Durham County. Attorney Sonnenberg contacted Attorney Hicks and checked his references through the County and hospital which were good. He asked Attorney Hicks if he was contacted by Pitt County Schools to do an outside ethics review, what would the charge be. Attorney Hicks’ response was that their standard billing rate for an attorney to review this is approximately \$200 per hour with a lesser rate for a paralegal at about \$75-80 an

hour.

Chair Peaden stated the reason for this discussion is that during the last ethics review, the staff felt very uncomfortable completing this process. They believe if another issue should arise regarding ethical violations, a second option will relieve them from added pressure and stress.

Ms. Barbara Owens commented that she appreciates the opportunity to move forward with this issue and believes it's a positive step for the Board. She added that she thinks there is a step in place if each Board member could come to the table with the Amendment that was presented at our last meeting. Ms. Owens stated she didn't have a problem with hiring an additional attorney and understands the staff's reluctance to continue to handle these issues. She stated she would really like to see the Board pursue the Amendment as it was an overall Amendment. Ms. Owens asked to read the Amendment, but Chair Peaden stated it did not pertain to the matter being discussed currently. Ms. Owens stated it is related to the current discussion and would help with not having to hire an outside attorney unless there was a dire need. She added that there are high stress levels around this table, and she would like to come to this Board looking each member in the eye saying I want to serve with you and I appreciate your comments. Ms. Owens asked could the Board afford to hire another attorney for this particular purpose.

Mr. Worth Forbes commented that he's in favor of hiring an outside attorney regarding ethical issues because: 1. We would have a neutral party investigating the issue with no pressure placed on a staff or Board member. 2. If we're able to afford other things discussed recently, he feels we are able to afford this option. Mr. Forbes added that this will not involve every little issue that comes up but major Board problems that arise.

Ms. Christine Waters asked would we be looking at this individual to do any retro study or only look forward at any future possible violations. She added that she would like for this individual to review our ethics policy to see where it might be tweaked as our own policy committee is not willing to address this issue.

Mr. Marc Whichard stated he believes this is a good idea. In looking at most professional Boards, i.e. the hospital Board or ECU's Board of Trustees, most individuals do not investigate themselves. He believes this is part of the implication – those responsible for policing themselves are not doing so. Mr. Whichard added that he hopes the Board can progress together, put this behind us and move forward for our students, which we discussed at the last meeting. He believes this is a step in the right direction in terms of an outside group and agreed that it's unfair to place the burden on staff to research these issues. Mr. Whichard added that saying members of the Board would always be able to act without certain partialities or the implication of there being some partialness – he believes is what has caused some of the issues.

Ms. Jennifer Little stated she's not sure what the answer is for the question that Ms. Waters brought up. Ms. Waters answered that her understanding is that it's not the intent to have anyone investigate anything retroactively but to put us on firm footing to move forward. Ms. Little commented that if there is activity in the past that some may feel has not been resolved, then it's still an open case. Her question is do we have to come to the table as a Board to decide what goes to this person, or can we individually call and request an investigation. The violations may be subjective. Some may think it's a major problem, while others may not. Thus, Ms. Little stated she does not understand how it can be measured as to when this person's services will be used. She added that Ms. Owens was correct in that there was an item to be put in place to protect us from some of these things in the future, and to handle some things in the past; but the

majority decided that we did not need this item in place. Now, many feel we need a service to come and tell us how to put something like this in place. Ms. Little commented that she's a little confused regarding this process.

Attorney Sonnenberg stated that in reading our current ethics policy, it says that the responsibility to look at and investigate an ethics complaint initially falls on the Chair or potentially on the Vice-Chair. As written right now, I would take that to mean at the discretion or action of the Chair unless a change is made to the policy. Ms. Little commented that we were in an uncomfortable and subjective type situation because of the violations of the Chair, so we could not move forward because of that situation. She added that now she wonders how we will move forward, like Ms. Waters said, with a service. Ms. Little stated she's confused about what is a violation that needs to be investigated. Attorney Sonnenberg responded that this would be a decision the Board has to make.

Ms. Jill Camnitz stated she agrees with Mr. Whichard in that self-policing has not worked up to this point, nor did efforts to clarify our policy last winter which was attempted in January or February as it was voted down. She added that she thinks the devil may be in the details. Ms. Camnitz feels if we move forward with this concept, the first thing we need to do is revise our policy so we have clear guidelines as to what constitutes a reason to call the person in, who has the authority to call the person in – is every Board member able to pick up the phone and call the person, who filters when it's appropriate and when it's not, and many other details that need to be worked out which I assume the Policy Committee will need to take a look at. She added, as far as the concept is concerned, it sounds good to me but thinks we have a long way to go before we're there. Ms. Camnitz stated as far as it being retroactive, she believes we have a lot of talking to do about this process before we can actually establish it.

Mr. Sean Kenny stated he agrees with Ms. Camnitz and others. He believes that tonight we are not anywhere near moving forward with this, adding that he's not familiar with Mr. Hicks or anyone in his firm and certainly would not be comfortable with a paralegal. Mr. Kenny stated if we hire someone and that person does find some sort of ethics violation has transpired, then what? He commented that there is nothing in place to guide the Board on what we should do with an ethical violation. Mr. Kenny closed by stating that moving forward with this process is a little bit premature.

Mr. Benjie Forrest stated that our present policy gives the Chair and Vice-Chair the potential to move forward with so-called ethical violations, etc., etc. He sees this as an opportunity for the Chair or the Vice-Chair to be able to move forward, as the staff does not feel comfortable in any future investigation, to allow a neutral party to be involved in the research of a potential violation.

Mr. Worth Forbes stated again he's in favor of this process because we would not be policing ourselves, and it's not an in-house investigation. He added that in listening to comments tonight, by being retroactive, some are already saying that they did not trust how the past issues were investigated. Mr. Forbes commented that this shows you don't trust – Ms. Little stated she said they were not resolved. Mr. Forbes responded that when you look at retroactive, you're saying you do not agree with a decision that was made. Ms. Little stated this is not true. Mr. Forbes stated the Chair and Vice-Chair are our representatives who will decide if a specific item will go forward and be presented to this individual.

Mr. Marc Whichard stated he spoke at our last meeting and most recently at a meeting in

Farmville. By some of the comments, he does agree with Mr. Forbes at this point – that this issue still keeps coming up. Mr. Whichard commented that the Board acted as a corporate body in our last meeting, and we voted to put the issue to bed. He stated the issue that upsets him is it still keeps being brought up. Mr. Whichard added that he doesn't feel this should be retroactive, that it needs to be put to bed and move forward. He remarked that this is the bulk item of our agenda tonight when we have many other important educational issues to discuss.

Ms. Christine Waters stated that she would like individuals on the Board to look at the ethics policy and decide personally where you think the flaws are. She stated it's obvious that some of us do not feel that the present policy addresses all the situations; and until we can agree that the policy will satisfy the needs for resolution, then I don't see that we are in a position to be contacting Mr. Hicks. If we feel he can review the policy and advise us without us all getting our britches in a tangle, Ms. Waters stated, then perhaps that's the way we need to go. She added that nothing was resolved last meeting, we simply voted down the Amendment. The ethics policy still remains hopelessly inadequate.

Mr. Worth Forbes moved, second by Ms. Mildred Council, that we have an outside attorney investigate issues that the Chair and Vice-Chair discern need to be researched by a neutral agency. Ms. Little moved to amend this motion by allowing the entire Board to have access to this person, and it not just be at the discretion of the Chair and Vice-Chair – especially if they are involved in the investigation. Attorney Sonnenberg stated he believes that the proposed amendment would require us to amend our current Code of Ethics. He added that right now policy does state that violations should be reported to the Chair who shall immediately investigate and take steps deemed appropriate. Ms. Little stated again it goes back to Ms. Camnitz's point that the policy needs to be reviewed, and we need to tweak what we have because it's ineffective basically. Ms. Christine Waters seconded the motion for the amendment. Mr. Benjie Forrest stated if we vote for this amendment and it passes, then we will have negated what our policy says. Again, Ms. Little commented that it goes back to reviewing and rewriting the policy. Mr. Worth Forbes stated the Policy Committee has looked at the ethics policy and voted that we did not see any necessary changes which need to be made at this time. Ms. Waters voiced that it is interesting to see who serves on the Policy Committee. She asked that the Board be asked to review the policy as it's obvious that we do not agree. Mr. Forbes responded that this all goes back to what Mr. Whichard said two meetings ago, and this is why we're asking for an outside agency. Ms. Little stated if this was a good, clear cut answer, we would all be in agreement; so obviously it's more sensitive to some than to others. Mr. Forbes then asked Chair Peaden did he give him permission to talk with Chair Peaden responding yes. He asked the Chair did he give Ms. Waters permission to speak with the answer being no. Again, Mr. Forbes stated it goes back to our present policy that we have on the books, and the Policy Committee felt we did not need to make any changes at this time.

Ms. Christine Waters stated that it's that thought that brings us to independent counsel. She added that she wants to go on the record that she's not interested in going back and rehashing this, but is interested in putting policy in place that guarantees that we can monitor ourselves justly. In closing, Ms. Waters commented that she's asking for review of the policy, and if it calls for an independent counsel, I'm in favor of that. She's ready to put the past behind her, but has to have policies that show her a free and clear path forward.

Attorney Sonnenberg stated he understands Ms. Little's proposed amendment, but due to the fact that it will actually change a policy; we have a whole procedure on making changes to a policy, with first and second readings and going through the Policy Committee as directed.

Ms. Barbara Owens asked are you saying that the amendment would not be a valid amendment. Attorney Sonnenberg stated he does not believe it would be at this point. He added that the appropriate method would be going through policy with a first and second reading, unless the Board decides otherwise to temporarily suspend the first and second readings process as we have done in the past.

Ms. Owens asked when the group saw the information regarding Pitt Community, what was your vision or what did you hope to achieve by doing this? Chair Peaden stated when he received the letter, he knew there was no charge for Pitt Community to have an outside agency review the ethics information. He further commented that this is why we researched options to have a neutral party involved to help resolve our ethical issues. Mr. Sean Kenny stated that this is a theory and concept that he certainly would support; but again stressed at this particular time, feels it is premature as he asked to what avail would the results be. He commented that it's like "putting the cart before the horse."

Ms. Jill Camnitz asked are we discussing the amendment or the motion. Attorney Sonnenberg responded that according to the bylaws, the amendment would not be appropriate at this time as it would require a change in our Code of Ethics, which is beyond what is actually on the floor. Ms. Camnitz asked does someone need to rule it out of order as it's on the table right now. Mr. Marc Whichard asked could the amendment be an advisement to the policy committee. Mr. Benjie Forrest stated the Chair can rule it out of order based on the opinion of the Parliamentarian. Attorney Sonnenberg concurred with Mr. Forrest. Chair Peaden stated he rules the amendment out of order on advice of the Attorney. Mr. Kenny then moved that we refer the main motion to the Policy Committee for further deliberation, second by Ms. Little. Ms. Camnitz stated that she's in support of this motion for the primary reason that Mr. Kenny pointed out previously – it's all well and good to spend money to have someone come in and do an investigation; however our policy gives us no guidance on what to do once the report comes back, which is an important part of the process. Chair Peaden called for a vote of Mr. Kenny's motion that we refer the main motion on the table to the Policy Committee for further deliberation. Motion was unanimous.

For the next item of business, Superintendent Beverly Emory lead a discussion relative to the Board becoming paperless in conducting Board activities and proposing a timeline for this endeavor. She discussed having training on the iPad this summer and talking about the goal of going paperless. Dr. Emory added that we're not trying to force something on you that you're not ready for, but asked could the Board pick a date as our goal and then tell her what you need to reach that goal. She commented that not at the meeting so much, but in delivery to you, the materials could be uploaded on the iPads. Dr. Emory stated for those who are interested, we will arrange 30 minute sessions before each meeting to help folks know where information is placed and how to upload it on the screen. Everything will be uploaded on the Board materials site as has been reviewed in the past. Ms. Barbara Owens stated as the dinosaur on this Board, this idea will be really difficult for her as she does not feel comfortable with the iPad. She added that she likes to hold paper in her hand, underline and mark significant details, but she will try to go along with whatever the Board decides as long as they all come to her house and help her!

Mr. Worth Forbes asked if the Agenda book would also be on the iPad or would the Board continue to have a hard copy in front of them. Dr. Emory responded that it's already uploaded on the iPad, and the Board needs to tell us what you desire. The idea here is to have the Board go paperless, but it's your Board meeting, not ours. She stated that this is the reason we're asking – if you're not ready to go paperless, then you need to say so. Dr. Emory added that if

someone told her she has six months before I start using this device, then she's not going to use it each day. So the thinking is, if you set your own goals – January 1st or whenever; then we say okay – before each Board meeting between now and then, we'll be here to try to help you feel comfortable using the iPad – but the Board has to decide. Chair Peaden went back to Ms. Owens and asked her what date would she like to have set – Ms. Owens laughed and commented that she goes off in 2014! She added that she would be willing to pay for a hard copy as she does not feel comfortable with this conception – period. Ms. Christine Waters stated that she's in Ms. Owens' shadow. She added that the iPad is nice, but how does she print – does she have to forward it? She was told she could use a wireless printer. Mr. Marc Whichard stated he is not the most technological savvy person in the world adding that he's never sent a text message before in his life and does not intend to start receiving them. He commented that we ask our teachers in the system to do a lot and many of them have 30+ years of service. They had to learn how to use technology. Mr. Whichard feels it's only fair that if we ask our teachers to do this within a certain period of time that we ask ourselves to do the same. Mr. Whichard stated that he won't put a burden on someone else that he's not going to take on himself. He feels it's fair that if our teachers have learned new tricks – Common Core and new things they have to do – we should have to do the same trick as what is “good for the goose is good for the gander.”

Mr. Forbes commented that he's fine with all the packets being uploaded, but with the Agenda – being able to go back and look at something really quick and refer back to it – that it would be difficult for him. He added that he will have to print it off at home and bring it with him if we go that route.

Mr. Sean Kenny stated first things first as he was going to speak with Mr. Whichard tonight to ask him did he receive a couple of texts he had sent, but he already has the answer to that! He stated he's ready at any time to go paperless, but he's ready to roll with what everyone else on the Board decides. Dr. Emory suggested that we use October and November to have work sessions 30 minutes prior to each Board meeting before making the decision. She asked that everyone bring their iPads, but we'll keep doing what we're doing presently. Dr. Emory stated that it's our job to convince you that it's more efficient and easier for you – then we'll revisit it in December and you can decide if you're more comfortable setting a deadline. Chair Peaden expressed to Ms. Mildred Council that he had not heard her comment and how did she feel about this idea. Ms. Council responded that she used this system on the previous Board she served, but she likes paper better - though she will go along with whatever the Board decides. Mr. Benjie Forrest stated the packet of material is bulky and requires much time, energy and effort to get it out to our various homes. He stated that he saw no problem with going paperless except that on the night of the Board meeting, have the Agenda book at each one's seat, or we'll have to print it off at home to bring with us. Ms. Camnitz stated she understands the discomfort, but told a little story. She commented that she's married to a dinosaur who was terrified that a computer was going to bite him if he put his hand on it. Ms. Camnitz reported that a couple of years ago, he was placed on a Board that was completely paperless. She stated the experience was very painful for him for a month or two, but he learned very quickly. Ms. Camnitz states that there is a lot of good brain power around this table and believes folks will pick it up quicker than you can imagine if you have to do it. But, she added, if you know you can go back to paper – it's not going to happen. Ms. Camnitz stated she agrees with Mr. Whichard that we are asking our teachers to make changes, and we should at least make the effort. If it doesn't work, we can always go back. She stated the only way you will really know is if you get thrown into the water. Ms. Owens asked a County Commissioner in the audience if they are paperless, and he responded no. Ms. Jennifer Little stated she's ready to go paperless whenever the crowd is. Dr. Emory stated to let us help you pull the information up and start using them. If you don't like

them, it's not a hard issue – just a goal. As we get to the first meeting in December, you can gauge how you're doing and we'll go from there.

As the last item of business, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Programs and Services Cheryl Olmsted updated the Board regarding the status of textbooks. She presented a detailed breakdown of funding for textbooks from 2007 through 2013, which totaled nearly \$1.5 million in 2007 down to just over \$250,000 in 2013. Ms. Olmsted stated this is a reduction of 81.99% in dollars for textbooks from the State. Ms. Olmsted informed the Board that in 2009 when the allotment was still \$1.5 million, we purchased the last big State adoption cycle which was K-5 math textbooks. In 2010, she stated we were supposed to purchase grades 6-8/9-12 math textbooks; however, the allotment was reduced, and we could not make that purchase. The textbooks would have cost \$953,000, but we only received \$941,000 - which would have left us no money whatsoever for replacement costs or other textbook costs. Instead, we made the decision to bind math textbooks for \$6.75 each, which would have cost \$87,918 to bind all math textbooks – not leaving money for math workbooks which was approximately \$40,000 and other needed textbook replacements which varies between \$75,000 - \$125,000. This is how we decided to use our money. Ms. Olmsted stated we have not adopted foreign language, arts education, K-12 science, technology, family consumer science, business education, marketing education and this year social studies – because we have not had the money to purchase the said adopted cycles. She reported that the Academic Chief Officer at DPI Rebecca Garland is advocating for E-books. Ms. Olmsted added that the Department of Education is talking about negotiating contracts with the three main textbook publishing companies to try to get E-books between \$15-\$20 per book so we can download them on devices. She said we decided to rebind books as we need to, replace damaged, lost or stolen books and continue buying math workbooks with the money we have. This is why our books are old. Ms. Olmsted commented that we have invested in technology capability so that when the E-books are available at a negotiated price, then we can afford to upload the books for a six-year period. She explained that this is why we are in a holding status, and with the money that we've had, we feel like we made the best investment that we could to try to keep books available and in the hands of the students. Ms. Olmsted strongly stated that we cannot let students take textbooks home because if something happens to the book, we don't have any backup.

Mr. Marc Whichard stated this is where his passion is and thanked Ms. Olmsted for bringing the report. He commented that he has received many phone calls about this – along with the teacher dress code. Parents are very concerned. Mr. Whichard stated the State is sending all new mandates, all new curricula – everything is new. He believes there are going to be many disappointing things involved with this but knows our teachers will work hard to make things happen despite this. Textbook money has not been sent by the State to which Mr. Whichard commented that this is the entity which provided textbooks for schools over many, many years since public education has been going on. He stated that people should not “beat up” on the principals or teachers, but contact folks in Raleigh legislature or Washington, DC who have no clue as to what is going on. Mr. Whichard commented that he feels sorry for the teacher in a classroom who basically “sticks their finger in the wind” as they come to school each morning to see some semblance of direction to go towards for curriculum. He asked that we send this information to every corner that we can – the media, the newspaper, and our school website – letting folks know that we are not the ones holding onto textbook dollars as there is no money to be had.

Ms. Owens suggested Ms. Olmsted write a Bless Your Heart as it's been in there a million times about textbooks. Dr. Emory also mentioned warehouse space, money and the best use of resources – we need to analyze as to where this is going. She reported at the County

Commissioners meeting last week – we are getting into difficult decision making. When a biology book costs \$200 and an iPad costs \$360 and we can upload college textbooks – we have decisions to make. She stated that we have to look at where is the direction in guidance, what kind of access do our kids have and what’s the best use of our resources. Dr. Emory added that this is not an easy process. She commented that \$1.5 million was one K-12 adoption a year and in our last adoption in 2009, it was just a K-5 math adoption. Dr. Emory informed the Board that the cost of a 6-12 adoption would have been over a million dollars – yet people ask the question, “Why don’t you spend your local money?” Ms. Owens asked could we put this on the Pitt County Schools’ website with Ms. Camnitz stating we need to shout it from the roof tops.

Ms. Christine Waters added that last Wednesday, she went to the School Boards Association District Meeting in New Bern and one session she attended talked about a consortium of data and worksheets that appeared to be a one-stop shop for information related to Core Curriculum with ways to teach, videos, etc. She stated that they talked a good story that this would largely replace the need for textbooks. Mr. Whichard added that he had some knowledge of this – but again it’s thought that it will come out in January – with our teachers starting the school year in August with a brand new curriculum in every area across the board. In talking about the cart being before the horse – he commented that this cart is miles out ahead of the horse. Mr. Whichard remarked we’re whipping the horse saying you had better catch up. Ms. Camnitz responded that we need to think of the children who need to learn the information this year. She said you can’t say stop until we figure this out. Mr. Forest stated he’s heard what’s been said around the table and agrees with it though he feels going paperless is the wave of the future. His concern is that we have instances where some kids are having information they can carry home with them, while other kids are not. We need to be sure that all kids in classes at least have available to them the essential information that they need in order to study their lessons for that night. Dr. Emory stated we hope that is covered adding that if a parent calls you with concerns, they need to talk to the teacher and/or the principal as no child should be disadvantaged from that view point. She commented that we can’t say here’s a CD if their home doesn’t have a computer. We need to make whatever accommodations are needed until we can offer this for every child. Mr. Forrest said his short term goal is to be sure all kids have access to those things that they need to study at home on an equal basis. Dr. Emory commented that parents are used to seeing a book; but students take other resources home which are different and parents don’t know how to help them. Mr. Forbes said it’s very important that a child has access to a CD that will load on whatever device they have at home – if not, they have no access to the information. Regarding the State, Mr. Forbes feels you’re “beating a dead horse” if you believe the State will increase the number. He added that eventually, they will want us to go paperless because it will be much cheaper to buy an E-book than buy a textbook – this will be the ultimate goal of the State. Mr. Whichard argued that with mandates, should come resources. Mr. Forbes stated we need to look at reality and decide which direction we’re going to go – being sure in technology that all students have a device that they can load the E-books or whatever is provided.

Under Comments by the Superintendent, Dr. Emory stated it was good for the Board to have discussion tonight as our Region I Director from DPI Tamara Berman-Ishee is here in the audience.

Superintendent Emory thanked the staff and folks from transportation, communications and student services who were instrumental last week in two major transportation issues that the Board was aware of at Ayden Elementary School, as well as Farmville Middle and Farmville Central High Schools. As Farmville Middle Principal Lionel Kato was in the audience, Dr. Emory personally thanked him and FCHS Principal Brad Johnson as well as the administration at

Ayden Elementary for doing a great job. She stated in both cases, we also need to remember bus drivers who are put in positions with a bus load of kids and have to make decisions on the spot which may be difficult and emotional. Dr. Emory added that we're grateful the outcome for the kids was good all the way around last week.

Dr. Emory stated that she knows the Board will be expecting 20-day numbers; and as soon as we get to the 20-day mark, we'll be sure you have the breakdown for these numbers.

Superintendent Emory informed the Board that we have a district team working on a Federal Race-to-the Top Grant. Districts were able to send a letter of intent in August, and she added that we are looking at a reading focus and a 6-12 stem focus. With an October 30th deadline, Dr. Emory stated this is another way we can look at other resources to support technology for our district.

Dr. Emory commented that we had great news today from the US Department of Education related to the TQP Grant which we wrote in collaboration with ECU to improve induction and close the gap for student achievement in first year teachers. This past summer we did a Bridge Program where our beginning teachers had the opportunity to work with experienced folks and students to help them prepare for the classroom. Today we learned that the US DOE was so impressed with this Program that they're extending funding of more than \$400,000 for the summer of 2013 so that we can expand the Program and try to reach all our first year/beginning teachers next summer. She added that we have sixty days to come up with a detailed plan for what we'll do during the summer of 2013 and return it to them.

Dr. Emory said a special thank you to all our staff wherever you work in this district. We have had an awesome opening of school for the 2012-13 year.

In closing, Superintendent Emory recognized Assistant Superintendent of Finance Michael Cowin for having a monumental birthday last Saturday, and today, Attorney Sonnenberg spent his birthday at a Board meeting!

Chair Peaden stated he's talked with Attorney Sonnenberg and Dr. Emory about continuing education. They are working with the School Boards Association in trying to get something on the iPads so that we can receive credits on Saturday or Sunday without having to spend more time here.

Ms. Jennifer Little stated that Mr. Barbour Strickland, who is very involved in the arts community, asked that we save the date of September 26 when art work from Pitt County Schools, Pitt Community College and ECU School of Art will be displayed at the Greenville-Pitt County Airport from 2:00-3:00 p.m. A flyer will be placed in our Board packets to remind us of the event.

Ms. Little stated in years past we have gotten a lot of Alert Now calls about unfortunate incidents at the opening of school, but this year has been really quiet, and she commends our school leaders, teachers, kids, bus drivers and everyone for this starting out to be a great year!

Ms. Owens stated that our Chair through down a challenge to visit as many schools as possible during their open house, and she made a goal to visit all nine schools in the fourth district which she did! She stated it was so much fun, and added that in every parking lot – it was like a party. Ms. Owens commented that people were laughing, kids and parents were jumping up and down

and all seemed happy. When she got inside, Ms. Owens stated everything was organized, people were smiling and having the best time. The morale was great, the floors were shining and all were excited to be there in all nine schools she visited - which made her proud to be a Board member.

Ms. Jill Camnitz echoed what has already been said about the people who work for Pitt County Schools and the jobs that they do. She asked of the Chair, since this is the time we are usually completing goals for the superintendent as part of her evaluation, if this process is going to occur this year. Chair Peaden stated he has talked with Administrative Assistant Brenda Pippin regarding this question and decided that under the circumstances, we will wait until the new Chair takes his/her position.

Ms. Mildred Council stated she's glad to be back and shared some of her summer activities with the Board regarding her family, the Farm Bureau Agricultural Leadership Program and the Democratic National Convention. She also shared several events of interest occurring in the next few weeks.

Mr. Worth Forbes stated in his 27 years of involvement with Pitt County Schools, both as an employee and as a Board member, this has been the best year in regards to bus transportation that he's experienced. He had no calls whatsoever.

Mr. Forbes commented that the TQP grant is very important because in the past, when beginning teachers from ECU were hired for our classrooms, things just didn't match. Now, with the funds and efforts available through the grant, when new teachers are placed in classrooms, they are much better prepared.

Mr. Forbes closed by congratulating North Pitt and Ayden-Grifton on receiving their grants and thanked the Agricultural Education Group from NC State University. He also congratulated Dr. Emory on her award regarding substance abuse.

Mr. Marc Whichard asked all parents to be careful when sending their kids out to the school bus sites. He stated in Edgecombe County, a student was lost in a horrific school bus accident.

Mr. Whichard stated he received a large number of emails, probably the most since being on the Board, regarding dress code issues for teachers. He stated this was a wildfire situation that blew into a significant event for which he was disheartened. Mr. Whichard stated he's a practicing principal in another school district, and this was upsetting to him knowing that teachers started the school year having to pause from delivering instruction and all the worries of getting a school year off to a good start to think about or pen an email regarding a distracting event surrounding dress codes. Mr. Whichard commented that teachers have his support in terms of professionalism, and he trusts the principals in the buildings being able to make decisions about who's dressed appropriately and who's not. Our teachers across the nation are facing greater scrutiny – individuals pointing fingers across different boards and different channels wanting to tell them what to do. Many are conflicting and yet they try to carry out mandates without proper funding to accomplish this. Mr. Whichard believes that most of our teachers have their hearts in the right place and are doing what is best for our students as they are not in the profession for monetary purposes.

Mr. Whichard stated he enjoyed speaking before the Farmville Board of Commissioners, the Mayor and citizens about a week or so back. He discussed accomplishments of our Board for

District 4. Mr. Whichard commented that some in the room were surprised to hear about the test score results and feels we don't do a good enough job with tooting our own horn in terms of what Pitt County has accomplished over the past couple of years. He added that FCHS has moved into the position of being the second highest performing high school in this district, just behind D. H. Conley. This is a very positive move, as well as Farmville Middle School being in their third year of high growth – congratulations to Mr. Kato for his strong efforts at that school. Ms. Christine Waters stated she's also received a lot of emails regarding the dress code issue and that's one reason she wanted to serve on the committee that will address this subject.

Ms. Waters added that she's ready for the Board to move forward. She stated she likes everyone on the Board individually, but we just don't always see eye-to-eye; though she thinks we work together fairly well.

Mr. Sean Kenny congratulated Dr. Emory on her recognition tonight as substance abuse is a lifelong commitment and everyday challenge.

Mr. Kenny stated this morning his alarm went off at 5:30, and the next time it was 6:30. He stated that both times it went off, we already had bus drivers on the road to pick up our students. He thanked those people and stated they do an outstanding job.

Mr. Kenny thanked everyone who works in the schools and meets the needs of over 23,000 students. He recognized Dr. Pokie Noland and her staff, Ms. Cassandra Campbell and Mr. Warren Moore who do a great job. Mr. Kenny recognized Ms. Lavette Ford's staff at Lakeforest and Ms. Woodson, the Counselor. He recognized Ms. Kay Weathington who absolutely meets the needs of every single student and then asked Dr. Kato to stand as he praised his work and the work of the staff at Farmville Middle School.

Mr. Benjie Forrest thanked the Board for the confidence they placed in him to serve as the continuing representative for the Northeast Regional School of BioTechnology and AgriScience. He thanked Mr. Forbes on behalf of the Board for the time, energy and efforts spent in service over the last year as a member of said Board.

As far as EPS, Mr. Forrest asked that field trips be placed on their agenda because he's getting a lot of information from teachers that there might be concerns regarding field trips as they relate to curriculum. He stated he's an advocate for field trips because he believes in applied learning.

Mr. Forrest stated the reception from our restaurants as far as the BioDiesel Program initiative that we've started looks like it will be a tremendous success and will make a positive difference for resources for Pitt County Schools in the future. He encouraged all restaurants to get on board with this program.

Mr. Forrest felt we had a tremendous program tonight by the Tobacco Trust Fund, the Agricultural Program at NC State, and the FFA State Office presenting grants to two of our high school programs – one of which was recently started at North Pitt with efforts by Dr. Emory.

Mr. Forrest stated it's forward movement for us that when we have ethical issues on this Board to give the Chair and Vice-Chair the opportunity to have a neutral party look at the issues. He commented that he feels the public would appreciate this, and he really doesn't see any negatives involved.

In closing, Mr. Forrest believes in going paperless as much as possible and encourages his constituents to do so. He stated that 80-90% of his constituent concerns now come through emails. Mr. Forrest commented that the recent issue of teacher dress code overflowed his email box and was sent to his telephone. He stressed that regarding a teacher uniform policy, he's not in support of teachers wearing uniforms. Mr. Forrest stated that we can look at teacher dress codes as principals can work with them on this. He added that folks don't need to call him anymore, he's not in favor of teacher uniforms.

Mr. Worth Forbes moved, second by Ms. Jill Camnitz, that the Board adjourn. Motion passed unanimously. Time was 8:24 P. M.

Respectively Submitted,

Mr. Billy Peaden, Chair

Dr. Beverly Emory, Secretary