

Board Work Session Meeting Minutes

DATE: March 15, 2021

PRESENT: Chair Melinda Fagundus, Vice Chair Tracy Everette-Lenz, Amy Cole, Caroline Doherty, Benjie Forrest, Don Rhodes, Anna Barrett Smith, James E. Tripp Jr., Worth Forbes

SPECIAL GUESTS: Senator Don Davis, Representative Chris Humphrey, Representative Brian Farkas and Representative Kandie D. Smith

ALSO PRESENT: Dr. Ethan Lenker, Dr. Steve Lassiter, Matt Johnson, Debra Baggett, Dr. Kristi Rhone, Karen Harrington, Jennifer L. Johnson, Glen Buck, Jeff Smith

IN-HOUSE COUNSEL: Emma J. Hodson

TIME: 12:06 P.M.

PLACE: Carolina Room in the Kathy Taft Center, 2010 Allen Road, Greenville, NC 27834

Chair Melinda Fagundus opened the work session at 12:06 p.m. and introduced the special guests, Senator Don Davis, Representative Chris Humphrey and Representative Brian Farkas. All Board members were physically present. Representative Kandie D. Smith arrived at 1:45 p.m.

Legislative Update

Dr. Ethan Lenker, Superintendent, with assistance from Debra Baggett, Chief Finance Officer, Dr. Kristi Rhone, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources, and Dr. Steve Lassiter, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Programs and Services, presented updates about the school system and its needs to the legislative guests and Board members. Items presented included the following:

- Pitt County Schools Overview
- School Calendar
- Legislation
- Budget
- Accountability
- Legislative Agendas
- Facts and Figures – Education in North Carolina
- Inspire Magazine

Much discussion occurred between Dr. Lenker, the Legislators and the Board members.

Temporary Adjournment to Conduct a Special Called Board Meeting

Benjie Forrest made a motion to temporarily adjourn the work session until 1:43 pm today or after the close of the Special Called meeting that was noticed for today, whichever is later with a seconded Caroline Doherty. There was no discussion. The Board voted unanimously to temporarily adjourn the work session. The time was 1:23 pm.

Return to Board Work Session

The work session resumed at 1:46 pm.

Finance Update

1. Retirement of State Installment Plan

Debra Baggett shared information regarding the retirement of the state installment pay system with the Board members. The information shared included the following:

- Notification from the State concerning the installment plan ending
- Collaboration with other officials
- Current number of teachers using the pay system
- Notification to teachers
- Options for Staff included using the State Employees Credit Union Summer Cash Plan or other Financial Institutions

Much discussion occurred between Ms. Baggett and the Board members.

2. 2021-2022 Proposed Local Budget/ CARES Budget Discussion

Debra Baggett then presented updates to the Board regarding the 2021-2022 proposed local budget/ CARES Budget Discussion. Items discussed included the following:

- Projected Local Budget Increase
- Historical Average Daily Membership
- Projected Funding for 2021-22
- Cost of Increasing Minimum Wage
- CARES Act Funds
- Traffic Light Violations Update
- Proposed Increase in County Appropriations
- Fixed Cost Budget Parameters
- New Money Requests
- Outsourcing Substitutes – Within Budgeted Funds
- Historical Supplement Percentages/Surrounding Counties

Some discussion occurred between Ms. Baggett and the Board members. The Board members requested that Ms. Baggett share the cost of increasing teacher supplements to 6.5% and to 7% with them during the next budget discussion.

3. Substitute Staffing Services

Glen Buck, Director of Personnel, discussed changing how PCS currently manages substitutes to using a substitute staffing service. Mr. Buck's presentation included the following:

- Dilemmas
- Benefits of a substitute staffing service
- RFP Process
- Next Steps

After much discussion, Dr. Lenker noted that Mr. Buck's presentation was for discussion purposes and that additional information, including contract options, would be presented to the Board at a future meeting.

Operations Updates

1. A.G. Cox Middle School Addition/Renovations Update

Matt Johnson, Assistant Superintendent of Operations, shared an A.G. Cox Middle School update with the Board members. The update included the following:

- Modular units have been removed
- Electrical/plumbing demo is complete
- 2 story building pad has been cleared
- Batter boards have been installed
- Column footers are being excavated and prepared for concrete
- Column footer rebar mats have been tied
- Elevator/Wall footers excavation has started

Some discussion occurred between the Board members and Mr. Johnson.

2. C.M. Eppes Middle School Renovations Update

Mr. Johnson then shared a C.M. Eppes Middle School update with the Board members. The update included the following:

- Removal of the old roof continues
- Installation of the new roof metal decking
- Window removal is complete
- Interior framing on corridor wall has started
- Interior framing and blocking for windows has started
- Bathroom piping rough-in has started
- Elevator pit construction is on going
- Roof framing is scheduled to start in April

Some discussion occurred between Mr. Johnson and the Board members.

Student Services Update

Addressing Mental Health Needs

Karen Harrington, Director of Student Services, shared information regarding how Pitt County Schools addresses student and staff mental health needs. The information included the following:

- SEL activities for students and staff
- Access to curriculum Sanford-Harmony, Panorama Playbook, Everfi, Second Step, School Connect
- Training for student services staff on SEL resources
- Check-ins and activities are part of district expectations
- Panorama survey
- Extended SBMH services to staff (PRIDE & Integrated)
- Community Partnerships (Triple P, AHEC SBHA, Real Crisis)
- Youth Mental Health First Aid, ASIST
- School-Based Mental Health Plan
- Importance of Connection appears to be key

Some discussion occurred between Ms. Harrington and the Board members.

Items from the Chair

Chair Fagundus shared the following items with the Board members:

- She will contact the Board members once a tour of the C.M. Eppes construction site is scheduled
- She shared an opportunity for Board members to volunteer at the Health Department Vaccination clinic on March 26, 2021

Adjourn

Chair Fagundus adjourned the work session at 2:49 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Melinda Fagundus, Chair

Dr. Ethan Lenker, Secretary