

**MINUTES OF THE
GLOUCESTER COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD
GLOUCESTER, VIRGINIA 23061**

March 9, 2021

A Gloucester County School Board monthly meeting and public hearing on the School Board's recommended budget, was held on Tuesday, March 9, 2021 at Page Middle School in the Schola. Robin Rice, Chairperson called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

- I. **ROLL CALL** – Roll call was taken by the clerk, and the following persons were recorded as present: Robin M. Rice, Chairperson, Elisa A. Nelson, Vice-Chairperson, Troy M. Andersen, George R. (Randy) Burak, Brenda F. Mack, Anita F. Parker, and Daren P. Post, Members.
- II. **MOTION TO ALLOW ELECTRONIC PARTICIPATION OF SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS** – Mrs. Nelson made a motion to allow electronic participation of school board members Anita Parker and Brenda Mack. Mr. Burak seconded the motion, with all members approving unanimously.
- III. **MOMENT OF SILENCE/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** – Mrs. Rice and Ms. Bonnie Wilson, Student Representative, led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, followed by a moment of silence.
- IV. **ADDITIONS/CHANGES/ADOPTION OF AGENDA** – Dr. Walter Clemons, Superintendent, recommended combining "IX. Superintendent Items - Item A" (GCPS Survey Results/In-Person Learning Update) with "VIII. Instructional Department Items – Item B" (2020-21 Student Performance Summary). Superintendent Item B would become Item A. Mr. Burak made a motion to approve the agenda with the recommended change. Mr. Andersen seconded the motion, with all members approving unanimously.
- V. **APPROVAL OF ITEMS CONTAINED IN THE CONSENT AGENDA** – Mr. Burak requested to discuss the membership report due to the large enrollment at Botetourt compared to other elementary schools. Dr. Clemons indicated this could be added to the work session agenda on March 11 for discussion and to the April 13 regular monthly meeting for recommendations. Mr. Andersen made a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented. Mr. Burak seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously in a roll call vote as follows:

Mr. Andersen	AYE	Mr. Post	AYE
Mr. Burak	AYE	Mrs. Nelson	AYE
Ms. Mack	AYE	Mrs. Rice	AYE
Mrs. Parker	AYE		

- A. Approval of Minutes of February 9, 2021 School Board Meeting
- B. Informational Central Food Service Financial Report as of January 31, 2021
- C. Informational Membership Report as of February 26, 2021
- D. Informational Visiting Teachers Report for February 2021

- VI. **PUBLIC HEARING ON SCHOOL BOARD'S RECOMMENDED BUDGET/CITIZENS' COMMENT PERIOD**– Speakers were asked to state their name, the district in which they reside and limit their remarks to 3 - 5 minutes per citizen (non-deferrable), to be determined by the Chairperson. – Mrs. Rice

(Mrs. Rice asked for comments on the recommended budget to be held first.)

Don Mitchell/York District Spoke regarding salaries in general remaining stagnant; loss of enrollment; unisex sports; moving to private education; and School Board proposing more money instead of less when fewer students equal fewer dollars.

Teresa Altemus/Gloucester Point Asked for more clarity and transparency in the School Board's recommended budget.

Eric Madison Spoke about lack of management in funding; grass growing at the old Page site; and the superintendent's salary increase.

Catherine Carter/Roanes Spoke about T.C. Walker and his accomplishments; mentioned Dr. Richards (VDH) recommendations regarding COVID; GCPS advocating ignorance by calling off exams; sales tax and superintendent's salary increase.

(General Citizen Comments)

Kayla Shill/Student who spoke about grades defining students; students suffering and schools failing to hear them. The pandemic has brought to light what has already existed. Three students have taken their lives. Mental health is an issue for students. Put me back in school!

Skylar Merinda/Student Grace Smiley was her name; she tried to get help and the school only called her parents. Her suicide could've been prevented.

McKenzie/Student Mental Health is struggling; isolation has led to more suicides and no one saw each other to recognize the signs. School is more than grades. Please help us with mental health.

Jenny /Student Grades dropping leads to emotions issues. This year has been stressful for students.

Kenton Watkins/Student Spoke about mental health; at home stressors; siblings needing help with school work and this year destroying dreams for the future. GPA's have dropped, creating frustration and depression. Students need to be in school.

Owen Ranier/Student whose mother is a teacher, said it has been hard for them to adapt. Hopes to be back to as many days as possible in school; referenced loss of learning statistics, and mental health statistics.

Brian Teucke/Teacher spoke regarding the four day model saying it would place stress on the structure that is in place. Staff feels like they are drowning and need to get a different job. Referenced a long history of bullying and retaliation and believe administration spies on their social media accounts. Does not feel included in the decision-making process

Teresa Altemus/Gloucester Point has never heard students speak as they have tonight. Her daughter is an assistant principal in Florida where full in-person learning has occurred since August. Students need to see eye to eye every day. She would ask that our students be allowed to go back to school five days per week.

Rachel Hennon/Botetourt moved to Gloucester three weeks prior to the shutdown. Canvas is an advanced learning system and is not easy for children. PTSD is being caused by students being out of school when the survival rate for COVID is 99.8 – 99.9, with transmission rates in children close to zero.

(Pre-Recorded Citizen Comments)

Brian Dodier/Abingdon a teacher at Peasley M.S. concerned about in-person learning.

Diane Carter-Demao/Abingdon a teacher who believes the current hybrid system is working.

Anastasia Bodurtha/Abingdon parent of two students at Abingdon E.S. who are completely virtual. Hopes children won't have to lose their teacher and readjust to a new teacher/zoom time at this point in the year.

- VII. STUDENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SAC) ITEMS** – Ms. Wilson, student representative, asked for support for students, teachers and the community. Many are struggling during this time as indicated in the comments above. Ms. Wilson will be leading a discussion regarding the effects of the pandemic on mental health March 15 at 3:00 in the GHS library.
- VIII. INSTRUCTIONAL DEPARTMENT ITEMS** – Dr. Chuck Wagner, Assistant Superintendent of Instruction
- A. Monthly Departmental Report – Dr. Wagner presented the monthly departmental report as information, expressing his appreciation to teachers and encouraging the public to look at the report in the agenda packet. Dr. Wagner also commended Mrs. Kersmarki and staff for hosting the Governor of Virginia during a recent visit.
- B. 2020-21 Student Performance Summary – Dr. Wagner & Instructional Team Members provided data from PALS and STAR , both showing regression from last year. Dr. Wagner showed data on total number of subjects failed, with all grades showing increased failures (K-2 not included). Only 2/3 of our students are in person two days per week. At the high school level, this will require credit recovery. Semester attendance indicated many more students missed over 17 days in 2020 than 2019. Student withdrawals are at 188 for home instruction and 56 who have been withdrawn for 15 consecutive absences, which have educational and financial implications. Most would not have occurred during a normal year.

** Mrs. Nelson called for a brief recess, which was seconded by Mr. Burak and approved unanimously.*

Lisa Jones, Director of Nursing, provided COVID data indicating 474 employees have been vaccinated through GCPS, with an additional 120 signed up to receive the second round being offered and 25 receiving the vaccine on their own. The remaining declined or did not complete the survey. Survey results indicated 83% (overall) of hybrid parents would prefer to move to a four day in-person schedule and 38% of students. Overall, 82% of virtual parents prefer their students remain virtual. Of the 68% of staff who responded, 40% desired to move to the four day schedule. Executive Leadership Team members provided information regarding classroom spacing, transportation, CDC, VDOE, and VDH guidelines, as well as data from divisions across the state.

Dr. Clemons asked the school board to adopt the four day weekly in-person learning schedule as presented. Mr. Post made a motion to accept the recommendation. Mr. Andersen seconded the motion, which passed 5/2 in a poll vote as follows:

Mr. Andersen	AYE	Mr. Post	AYE
Mr. Burak	NAY	Mrs. Nelson	AYE
Ms. Mack	AYE	Mrs. Rice	AYE
Mrs. Parker	NAY		

IX. SUPERINTENDENT'S ITEMS – Dr. Clemons

- A. FY'22 School Board Recommended Budget – Dr. Clemons and the Executive Leadership Team reviewed the proposed recommended budget. Mrs. Lucas highlighted changes from the General Assembly, including a 5% compensation increase for SOQ positions and no loss funding to compensate for enrollment losses. The County Administrators' proposed funding for the school division is about 1 million less than was requested by the School Board and includes Option 3 for the roof replacement for a total recommended FY'22 budget of \$126,947,984.

X. BUDGET AND FINANCE ITEMS – Mrs. Heather Lucas, Chief Financial Officer

- A. Monthly Departmental Report – Heather Lucas, Chief Financial Officer, indicated the monthly departmental report was available in the packet. There were no questions.
- B. Financial Report for January 2021 – Mrs. Lucas also indicated the Financial Report for January 2021, was available in the packet. Currently, 94% of the estimated expenses for FY'21 have been expended, which is on track for the year.
- C. Acceptance of Donations – Mrs. Lucas read the donations received for the previous month. Mr. Andersen made a motion to accept the donations, which was seconded by Ms. Mack and approved unanimously in a poll vote as follows:

Mr. Andersen	AYE	Mr. Post	AYE
Mr. Burak	AYE	Mrs. Nelson	AYE
Ms. Mack	AYE	Mrs. Rice	AYE
Mrs. Parker	AYE		

- D. Revised Resolution Returning Unspent CARES Act Funding – Mrs. Lucas asked members to reapprove the resolution to return unspent CARES Act Funding to the county, with a wording change suggested by the county attorney. Mr. Post made a motion to approve the updated resolution, Mrs. Nelson seconded the motion which was approved unanimously in a poll vote as follows:

Mr. Andersen	AYE	Mr. Post	AYE
Mr. Burak	AYE	Mrs. Nelson	AYE
Ms. Mack	AYE	Mrs. Rice	AYE
Mrs. Parker	AYE		

- E. Purchase Approval Request – Mr. Post made a motion to separate the two purchase approval requests. Mr. Andersen seconded the motion, which was not supported. Mrs. Lucas requested approval to purchase a dump truck, which has been in the budget for a couple of years. It is necessary to replace at this time, due to an immediate need and the cost would be \$72,434 from operating funds. An additional request was made to execute Category 2 E-Rate funds awarded for network equipment for FY'21. Mr. Andersen made a motion to approve the requests, which was seconded by Ms. Mack and approved 6/1 in a poll vote as follows:

Mr. Andersen	AYE	Mr. Post	NAY
Mr. Burak	AYE	Mrs. Nelson	AYE
Ms. Mack	AYE	Mrs. Rice	AYE
Mrs. Parker	AYE		

XI. OPERATIONS DEPARTMENT – Mr. Bryan Hartley, Director of Operations

- A. Monthly Departmental Report – Mr. Hartley indicated the monthly operations department report is available in the packet. Mr. Post asked for an update on WIFI on Wheels. Mr. Mecca indicated the usage is very minimal and he made a recommendation not to continue.

B. Policy Revisions/Deletion: (1st or 1st/2nd Readings) – Mr. Hartley presented the following policy changes and deletion as 1st or 1st/2nd readings. Mr. Burak made a motion to approve the policy changes and deletion as 1st and 2nd readings. Mrs. Nelson seconded the motion, which was approved 6/1 with Mr. Post being the opposing vote.

- 1) BBA School Board Powers and Duties
- 2) BBBA Qualifications of School Board Members
- 3) BDDC Agenda Preparation and Dissemination
- 4) BDDH Public Participation at School Board Meetings
- 5) DIA Reporting Per Pupil Costs
- 6) GBDH Family and Medical Leave
- 7) KN Sex Offender and Crimes against Minors Registry Information
(formerly Sex Offender Registry Notification)

Policy Deletion:

- 1) KNA Violent Sex Offenders on School Property

XII. HUMAN RESOURCES ITEMS – Mrs. Rachel Blankenship, Director of Human Resources

A. Monthly Departmental Report – Mrs. Blankenship indicated the monthly Human Resource report is available in the packet. There were no questions.

XIII. SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS' ITEMS – Mrs. Rice presented the following items:

- A. VSBA Eastern Region Spring Network Forum – Virtual on March 10, 2021
- B. VSBA Hot Topic Conference – April 13, 2021 (Mrs. Rice is registered to attend.)
- C. VSBA Equity in Education Month is in March – Information
- D. VSBA Business Honor Roll Nominations – Members postponed selection until the work session on March 11, 2021.
- E. Air Quality Management Plan – Mrs. Rice asked to move this item to the work session on March 11, 2021.
- F. Committees/Boards/Commissions Updates from Board Members – Mrs. Parker reminded everyone of the GCPS EF Virtual 5K being held Mar 20 – Apr 10.

Mrs. Rice reminded anyone watching of the National Suicide Hotline at 1-800-273-8255.

XIV. PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS – Mrs. Rice read the following public announcements:

- A. Thursday, March 11, 2021, School Board Budget Work Session without Public Input @ 5:30 p.m. in the Page Middle School Schola
- B. Tuesday, March 16, 2021, Joint Meeting with Board of Supervisors @ 7:00 p.m. in the Gloucester High School Auditorium
- C. Monday, April 5 – Friday, April 9, 2021, Spring Break – Division Closed
- D. Tuesday, April 13, 2021, Monthly School Board Meeting at 5:30 p.m. (Location – TBD)

XV. CALL FOR CLOSED MEETING


At 10:36 p.m., a motion was made by Mrs. Nelson, seconded by Mr. Burak and unanimously approved to recess for a Closed Meeting pursuant to Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, Section 2.2-3711, (A), Subsection 1, for the discussion of personnel matters (monthly appointments, resignations, etc.).

Note: Dr. Chuck Wagner, acting clerk, recorded the remainder of the meeting. The acting clerk noted all members were present for the closed meeting.

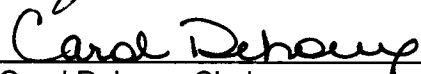
XVI. RETURN TO OPEN MEETING/CERTIFICATION OF CLOSED MEETING – At 10:45 p.m. a motion was made by Mrs. Nelson to reconvene the meeting into open session and certify that the Gloucester County School Board, while in closed session, discussed only public matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements provided in Subsection A of Section 2.2-3711; and that only public business matters that were identified in the motion convening the closed session were heard, discussed or considered. The motion was seconded by Mr. Post and approved unanimously.

XVII. PERSONNEL ITEMS – A motion was made by Mr. Post, seconded by Ms. Mack and adopted to approve the monthly listing of personnel appointments, resignations, etc.


XVIII. CALL FOR ADJOURNMENT – At 10:47 p.m., there being no further business, a motion was made by Mr. Post, seconded by Mr. Andersen and approved to adjourn the Regular Monthly Meeting of March 9, 2021, until the work session on , March 11, 2021 at 5:30 p.m. at the Page Middle School Schola.



Robin Rice, Chairperson



Carol Dehoux, Clerk



Chuck Wagner, Acting Clerk

Attachments (3):

1. Bound Agenda for March 9, 2021 Monthly Meeting
2. Approved Monthly Personnel Listings