

HORRY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

MINUTES – Board Meeting

District Office

September 22, 2014

The following persons were present:

Board of Education

Joe DeFeo, Chairman	Janet Graham	John Poston
David Cox	Neil James	Pam Timms
Harvey Eisner	Karen McIlrath	Jimmy Washington
Jeffrey Garland	Janice Morreale	

Horry County Schools Staff

Velna Allen	Kenneth Generette	Boone Myrick
Cindy Ambrose	Angela Gore	Kathy Nieto
Mary Anderson	Sharon Harris	Charles Ann Parker
Robin Bolling	Teal Harding	Beverly Pilkey
Edward Boyd	Becky Henson	Lucas Richardson
Daryl Brown	Leann Hill	Angela Rush
Dottie Brown	Mark Hill	Jennifer Scott
Ryan Carter	Traci Hogan	Beth Selander
Dena Chatfield	Georgia Holley	Morgan Sellers
Carolyn Chestnut	Angela Huggins	Angie Smith
Samantha Coy	Robin Jones	Judy Stall
Margie Crane	HT Lee	John Washburn
Gaye Driggers	Rick Maxey	Kim Williams
Dwight Dutton	Vencie Maxey	Kristin Wilson
Jodi Everhart	Britt McDowell	Michelle Chevalier Zeigler
Laura Farmer	Norman McQueen	

Chairman DeFeo called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm

Mr. Washington gave the invocation and the St. James Army JROTC presented the colors and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman DeFeo recognized School Board candidate Ray Winters (Dist. 3) in the audience. Current members seeking reelection introduced themselves: Jimmy Washington (Dist. 3), Neil James (Dist. 10), Pam Timms (Dist. 6), Janet Graham (Dist. 7).

As required by SC Law 30-4-80, local news media were informed of the date, time, place, and agenda of this meeting. Copies of the agenda were posted at the district office and distributed to schools for posting.

Moved by Mr. Poston, seconded by Mr. James the agenda was unanimously approved.

Moved by Mr. Washington, seconded by Mr. James, the Board unanimously approved the minutes of the September 8, 2014 meeting.

Public Comments

No public comments were made.

Recognitions

Chairman DeFeo noted that Jeffrey Garland would be participating in the Dancing with the Horry County Stars this year. This event is a major fundraiser for Early College High School sponsored by BE².

Laura Farmer recognized recipients of Certification from the School Nutrition Association.

Discussion

Mr. Jack Moore was called to speak regarding the support of FIRST Robotics. Chairman DeFeo noted that this is a valuable program and commended Mrs. McIlrath for her continued commitment to robotics. Mr. Poston asked how much was given last year. Mr. Moore answered that he was very appreciative of the \$20,000 received last year. Mr. Poston asked if other organizations also gave donations. Mr. Moore informed the Board that the City of Myrtle Beach donated as well as other community donors. Ms. McIlrath added that \$57,000 was raised last year. Chairman DeFeo stated that this item will be a business item on the next agenda. *(Note: Review of previous minutes indicates that this item was approved as a recurring line item and a vote is not necessary.)*

Recommendation of Scholars Academy Study Committee - Cindy Ambrose and Velna Allen

Mrs. Allen gave an overview of all meetings and recommendations from those meetings. Mrs. Allen noted that after the first two meetings, the committee agreed there were four options – with minor variations – for consideration.

Mrs. Allen stated that during the fourth and final meeting the consensus of the committee was to take a vote in an effort to narrow the focus. After voting, the committee decided to eliminate the option that received no votes – *Scholars Academy becomes a stand-alone high school* – leaving 3 options for discussion. As the Committee began to discuss the remaining options, one of the committee members made a recommendation that was a modification of the 4th option which, when votes were cast, earned 5 votes. The recommendation was discussed and modified multiple times. The committee reached consensus on the recommendation and agreed to move forward with it. Initially, the Committee started with 4 options. In an effort to narrow the focus of our work, we took a vote to eliminate options that had no support. There were 10 votes cast and the results were as follows:

- Scholars Academy continues to operate as a program – 2 votes
- Scholars Academy becomes a stand-alone high school – 0 votes
- Scholars Academy remains a program. HCS will seek legislative action to not rank 11th and 12th graders. Scholarships will be based on 10th grade rank. – 3 votes
- Scholars Academy continues as a program. SA students will not speak at base school Graduation ceremonies – 5 votes

Mrs. Ambrose added that there would be new, state-mandated assessments and accountability in the near future.

Chairman DeFeo commended all the participants of the Committee, noting that Mrs. Allen did an excellent job as facilitator. He suggested that the Board consider all the information provided thoroughly before any decisions are made. Mrs. McIlrath asked for clarification on the number of Palmetto scholarships versus Life scholarships with regard to class rank; would ranking in 10th grade

have the same impact. Mrs. Allen explained that the data was not analyzed to answer that particular question.

Mr. Poston echoed Chairman DeFeo's compliments of the Committee. He noted that he had read a great deal about this subject and appreciates the letters parents sent to the Board. He asked if the concern that the current program status penalizes the gifted & talented at the base schools was considered. Mrs. Allen answered that the topic was discussed at length. She added that the basic concern is course offerings and that many misconceptions exist regarding Advanced Placement (AP) courses. Mrs. Allen noted that the staff will make it a priority to educate students and parents about course offerings.

Mr. James asked if the issue of communication with the base schools was addressed. Mrs. Allen stated that the communication concerns were addressed as well as the need for base schools to include Scholars students in more events and activities. Mr. James asked if report card ratings would be impacted if Scholars students were removed. Mrs. Allen said that base school scores would not be impacted. However, Mrs. Allen reported that the average SAT score and average AP passage rate would be affected, as reported by Heather Sheehan at the final meeting. Mr. James asked if that information could be provided. Mrs. Allen assured Mr. James that she would ask Mrs. Sheehan to forward it to the Board members.

Mr. Eisner noted that he agreed with the recommendation to gather more information before a vote is taken on this matter.

Mrs. Allen added that the Commission on Higher Education is currently looking into scholarships and how they are awarded.

Superintendent Report

Dr. Elsberry shared an article with the Board from the September 18th issue of Forbes Magazine. Horry County Schools' Personalized Digital Learning is recognized in the article for pedagogical excellence. The partnership between Whittemore Park Middle School and Education Elements is attracting national attention as a model for success.

Dr. Maxey presented the Board with a preliminary student enrollment report based upon Day 17 of the new school year. He noted that the approved budget for the 2014-15 school year included a projection that the district would grow by 882 students above last year's 45-Day Average Daily Membership (ADM). Calculations indicate that on Day 17, the district has 1,421 more students (539 of whom were not included in the budget) than last year's 45-Day ADM figure of 40,131, with most growth occurring at the high school level. Mr. James asked for the enrollment including Pre-Kindergarten. Dr. Maxey answered that he would obtain that number and let Mr. James know. He noted that enrollment of three year old students is minimal and difficult to forecast from year to year.

Mr. Poston asked how the numbers for the North Myrtle Beach schools were calculated as the attendance lines have changed since last year. Dr. Maxey answered that Joe Burch pulled the projections and cross-referenced the various attendance areas.

Charles Hucks updated the Board on the Personalized Digital Learning (PDL) rollout. Mr. Hucks addressed the following:

- **PDL Initial Device Distribution—High School.** To date **approximately 11,500 devices have been distributed** to students in grades nine through twelve at all high schools/program schools except Scholars Academy and Early College High School. Due to concerns over interoperability with their respective colleges, these students are issued Dell laptops.
- **PDL Device Insurance.** A \$50 Device Annual Protection Plan is available for all middle and high school students. Purchase of this optional insurance allows students to take devices home, covers a single damage repair event, and includes a padded carrying bag for transport of the device. As of today, approximately **12,350 of the 21,662 (57%)** students in grades six through twelve have elected to accept the insurance.
- **Device Bags.** An order for 10,000 bags was placed mid-July with the expectation they would be delivered prior to September 2nd. A little over half of the bags did arrive on time and have been distributed to students but due to a mix-up with the bag manufacturer the balance will not arrive until next week. A second order of 6,000 bags was made once we had a general idea of how many were needed.
- **Connectivity, etc.** Before iPad distribution at middle schools last January the wireless infrastructure in all schools was enhanced to support the additional load of each child having a device all day, every day. Similar enhancements were completed at all high schools in August and generally speaking the results have been positive. During device distribution connectivity problem areas have been identified at CFHS, NMBHS, CHS and LHS. We are working through these issues internally and with our vendor partners, including a great deal of work completed the previous weekend by Thom Mountain, our network engineer, at CFHS and CHS. We will continue to work to resolution as problem areas are identified. At this time there have been no reports of significant connectivity issues at middle schools.
- **PDL Device Redistribution—Middle School.** iPad redistribution turned out to be a problem area. This has been in large part due to the constantly changing environment and our decision to move forward with two very new Apple capabilities for this year—the Device Enrollment Program (DEP) and the Apple ID for Students program, which facilitates the approval and creation of accounts for children under 13 in a Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA)-compliant way. DEP is an *amazing* new capability from Apple for large enterprise/education customers that provides an amazing level of management and security to Apple devices when linked to an approved mobile device management system
- **Device Repairs and Returns.** A large number of the iPads damaged last year were not turned in for repair until the end of the school year, resulting in a large number (350) to be repaired over the summer. We now have five vendors engaged to do this future work and should have devices back in schools as needed.

Mr. James asked if the 350 iPads in need of repair fell within the 3% predicted margin of breakage. Mr. Hucks answered that we ended the year closer to 9-10% breakage. He added that this was much higher than expected and he hopes it will level off to 4-6%. Mr. James asked if the Venue was expected to have the same percentages. Mr. Hucks answered that while the older students should be more responsible, the device itself is more vulnerable due to the weight of the screen compared to the keyboard.

Mr. James asked if the costs of repairs would be covered by the insurance fee charged. Mr. Hucks answered that he is hopeful that it will, but time will tell.

Mrs. Morreale asked if there is a way of assuring parents that the device their child is issued is without defects or prior problems. Mr. Hucks answered that devices are inspected prior to distribution and any

visible problems would be discovered. Any internal problems can be traced to determine when damage occurred.

There was discussion regarding the necessity for schools to be ready for the first day of classes for both newly issued devices and redistributed devices.

Mrs. Morreale asked if devices were being sent home with students in those cases where bags were not received yet. Mr. Hucks answered that yes, with the understanding that the student is responsible for the device.

Mr. Cox inquired if the programs could be used at home. Mr. Hucks explained that students can either use their iPad at home or use any HCS web-based app.

Business

South Carolina School Board Association Delegates

Chairman DeFeo asked if any members of the Board wished to be delegates for the upcoming School Board Association's Annual Business Meeting. Motion was made by Mr. James to appoint Jeffrey Garland, Janice Morreale, Jimmy Washington, and Janet Graham as delegates. Seconded by Mr. Washington, the motion was unanimously approved.

Adjustment of Millage Rate Based on Reassessment

Chairman DeFeo reminded the Board that the data presented was received from the County Assessor and is not compiled by the District. Dr. Elsberry gave an overview of the presentation from the last meeting which explained the process and recommended that the millage rate for the 2014-15 fiscal year be established as follows: General Fund – 123.1; Debt Service – 10.0. Moved by Mr. Eisner, seconded by Mrs. McIlrath, all voted in favor

Consent Agenda

Moved by Mr. James, seconded by Mr. Garland, all voted in favor of approving the personnel recommendations on the consent agenda.

Adjournment

Moved by Mr. James, seconded by Mr. Washington, all voted in favor of adjournment.