

HORRY COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION
MINUTES – Board Meeting
District Office
January 26, 2015

The following persons were present:

Board of Education

Joe DeFeo, Chairman	Holly Heniford	John Poston
David Cox	Neil James	Pam Timms
Jeffrey Garland	Kay Loftus	Sherrie Todd
Janet Graham	Janice Morreale	Ray Winters

Horry County Schools Staff

Velna Allen	Tonya Gray	Felisa McDavid
Cindy Ambrose	Roger Gray	Lisa Melchisue
Mary Anderson	Michelle Greene-Graham	Paula Mullins
Judy Beard	Dirk Gurley	Boone Myrick
Ashley Blankenship	Ann Hall	Cecelia Nance
Tammy Boyd	Ben Hardee	Christy Nichols
Edward Boyd	Teal Harding	Regina Pertell
Daryl Brown	Leon Hayes	Tonya Pickett
Dottie Brown	Katherine Hendersot	Beverly Pilkey
Jill Carrill	Leann Hill	Chris Plowman
Dena Chatfield	Becky Hinson	Mark Porter
Janice Christy	Traci Hogan	Ben Prince
Edi Cox	Robert Homer	Lucas Richardson
Samantha Coy	Charles Hucks	Angela Rush
David Cupolo	Angela Huggins	Barbara Schlidt
Jeanie Dailey	Laurie Jackson	Heather Sheehan
Gaye Driggers	Ashley Johnson	Judy Stall
Michelle Dunsford	Sean Junkins	Addie Swinney
Sophia Elison Funderburk	Candace Lane	Diane Thompson
Laura Farmer	Cara LaPier	Teresa Todd
Kandi Fleming-Jones	James LaPier	Tammy Trulove
Penny Foye	Janet LaPlatt	Cindy Tucker
John Gardner	Allyson Larrimore	Lois Turner
W. Reggie Gasque	Mollie Laut	Vicki Underwood
Kenny Generette	H.T. Lee	Robbie Watkins
Sie Gilbert	Cheryl Leonard	Nicole Williams
Angela Gore	Rick Maxey	

**Opening January 26, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. – Call to Order
Invocation, Pledge of Allegiance, and Presentation of Colors**

Chairman DeFeo called the meeting to order.

Mrs. Todd asked for a moment of silence to remember a Myrtle Beach Community visionary, Mary Catherine Canty, for her efforts to save the Myrtle Beach Colored School Museum and Education Center.

Mr. Poston gave the invocation.

Loris High School JROTC presented the colors and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Agenda

Changes to the agenda include: remove Item 4-F Facilities Committee Report, move Executive Session up to immediately follow Recognitions, and add an item under Business as “B. Possible Action Regarding Personnel.” A motion was made by Mr. Cox and seconded by Mr. James to approve the agenda as noted. The motion carried unanimously.

Approval of January 12, 2015 Minutes

A motion was made by Mr. Poston and seconded by Ms. Timms to approve the January 12, 2015 minutes as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Public Comments

Ms. Frankie Bonnette spoke asking the Board to consider naming Dr. Rick Maxey as the District’s Superintendent. Ms. Bonnette is a retired teacher and guidance counselor. She thanked the Board for the job they do. Ms. Bonnette said that she has worked for four different superintendents in Horry County and two of the most effective were from Horry County. She knows that Dr. Maxey is well-qualified, has performed well at everything he has done, and his heart is here. She would like for the Board to consider moving him into the position. This would save the District a lot of effort and money because a superintendent search would not be needed. She also suggested the Board give him a one-year contract because no one else gets more than a one-year contract. She again stated that Dr. Maxey has done an excellent job in the roles in which he has worked in our District. He knows this county, and she would like to see him put into the position of Superintendent.

Recognitions

Students were recognized for having cumulative perfect attendance in grades 1-5, grades 1-8, and grades 1-11. This is a significant accomplishment that requires dedication on the part of the students and their parents, grandparents, and/or guardians. The students recognized for perfect attendance in grades 1-5 were Jordan Calap Peavy, Esteban Charles Cruz-Turner, William Randall Broughman, Isabella Grace Bulleman, Corteria Dilasha Chestnut; and Jonah Edwin Buck, with each receiving a certificate and a medallion. The students recognized for cumulative perfect attendance in grades 1-8 were Isabelle Osorio, Alexis Joelle Lennon, Charli Danielle Watts, Chanel Destiny Cox, and Ashton Ozell Newman, with

each receiving a certificate and a check in the amount of \$50. Alexander Thomas Weshefsky was recognized for having cumulative perfect attendance in grades 1-11, and he received a plaque and a check in the amount of \$100. Teal Harding, Velna Allen, H.T. Lee, and Dottie Brown assisted with presenting the awards.

Executive Session

A motion was made by Ms. Timms and seconded by Ms. Morreale to move into executive session for the purpose of:

A. Receipt of Legal Advice Concerning Building Program Solicitations for Proposed Contractual Relations; and

B. Discussion of Contractual Matters and Personnel Matters Regarding Superintendent

The motion carried unanimously and the Board moved into executive session.

The Board returned from executive session. A motion was made by Mr. Cox and seconded by Mr. Poston to reconvene the meeting in open session. The motion carried unanimously.

Discussion

2013-14 Audit

Mr. Steve Luoma, Managing Partner of McGregor & Company, LLP, gave a presentation on the financial and compliance audit conducted by his firm of the District's books and records for the year ending June 30, 2014. Mr. Luoma reported that their testing on the major programs, Federal programs, internal control and compliance on pages 179 and 180 of the report, reported no issues of non-compliance with the District's administration of its expenditures of Federal funds. Mr. Luoma thanked the Board for allowing his firm to provide this service to our District, and he thanked the Superintendent and the Finance Department for their assistance as well.

Quarterly Financial Statement

John Gardner provided highlights of the Quarterly Financial Report for the period ending December 31, 2014. The only item that we are looking at closely is tax revenue. This has come in less than anticipated from last year. We have learned that this is due to the tax notices having been sent out late by the County. The tax collections for January will give us a better idea of where we will end up for 2014-15. Beyond this issue, our financial shape is fine.

Budget Development Status

February 9 is the scheduled budget workshop. Mr. Gardner stated that we will be presenting to the Board at that meeting information on expected increases in costs and perhaps some additional revenue sources.

2015 Annual Board Meeting Calendar

Consideration of March 30, 2015, Meeting Date

During the Board meeting held on January 12, 2015, the Board voted to move the Board meeting date scheduled for March 23, 2015, to March 30, 2015. March 30, 2015 is during Spring Break. A March meeting needs to be held to allow Human Resources the time needed to accomplish the tasks required to address ADEPT evaluations, verify all recommendations are accurate, and verify any non-recommended employees. The recommended date to reschedule the Board meeting is Thursday, March 26, which will also allow the meeting to be held during the same week it was originally scheduled, and will allow Human Resources the time needed to issue contracts in a timely manner on April 14. There were no issues brought forth with this date. This item will be placed on the agenda under Business for our next regular Board meeting to vote on changing the date of the meeting to March 26, 2015.

Mr. James noted that the Board meeting scheduled for May 26 is on a Tuesday. This is scheduled on a Tuesday due to Memorial Day on Monday, May 25.

Executive Session Start Time

Mr. DeFeo offered for consideration that when the Board has very simple items to be discussed in executive session, they might consider beginning the meeting at 5:15 or 5:30 so that lawyers or others that are required to be present will not have to stay through until late in the evening at an added expense to the District.

Mr. Poston offered that many of the Board members work, and that beginning the executive sessions as early as 5:15 may make it difficult for some Board members to attend. He asked that executive sessions not be set any earlier than 5:30, or as an alternative, hold the executive sessions early on in the meetings as was done today to accomplish the same effect of not having paid professionals be in attendance for more time than necessary.

PDL - Data Report for Middle Schools and High Schools

Cindy Ambrose shared that at the last Board meeting, the Board asked for more data regarding PDL. The administration shared that we do not have summary data because of where we are with implementation. We have two semesters of data for middle schools and one semester of data on high schools. We look at data in two categories, i.e. leading indicator data that is collected on the fly (daily, weekly, monthly) and is ongoing. The other category of data is trailing, and that is concluding data. We do not have a lot of concluding data at this time because of where we are with the implementation. A presentation was made sharing the leading indicator data that we have. This information has been used to help us plan staff development. We look at the data to make mid-course corrections to make sure we are doing all we can to increase student learning.

Edward Boyd gave a presentation on external data as relates to PDL. External data are items that we would expect to be impacted by digital learning over time such as discipline, engagement, and attendance. MAP scores were reviewed Pre and Post PDL. The areas of math and reading showed improvements. There were no gains for language. However, we have no digital content for language.

Normally, if you see improvements in reading, there would be improvements in language, so this is an area we need to review and assess.

We have limited data on the high schools since the high schools just received their devices this school year. There is a drop in English I; however, this was expected. The State Department shared that the end-of-course testing would change significantly this year with longer and more difficult passages. Mr. Boyd shared that one significant way that we are making a difference with PDL is equity. There probably were many students who did not have any type of device prior to the District providing the devices. There was a large disparity between our Title I schools and the non-Title I schools prior to the PDL initiative.

Mr. James asked if the first true measure or assessment would be in February. Cindy Ambrose shared that we will have the survey data for the middle schools by mid-February, and we should be able to compare the pre and post PDL data. Mr. James asked that the survey data be shared with the Board.

Mr. DeFeo asked if we have math intervention for those students performing at a lower level. Cindy Ambrose shared that we do have math interventions. Mr. DeFeo noted that we have a reading intervention program that we spent nearly 3.5 million on. Mr. DeFeo asked if we have language intervention. Ms. Ambrose responded that we do not, but added that we do have curricula that has language embedded, but not a separate intervention for language. Mr. DeFeo added that with reading and math intervention, there is no way to look at this data and say what is helping.

Ms. Ambrose shared that with regard to the elementary PDL devices, it is not the administration's recommendation to provide sets due to the amount of time that students need to access the programs on the devices in order to be successful. Therefore, the recommendation is full implementation, two grade levels, or as a third option to place the devices one grade level at a time.

Mr. DeFeo added that a concern for him is that we were supposed to add two students per class to help pay for the PDL, which we backed off on because the classrooms were not ready and we had too much Common Core going on, which is not an issue now. It concerns Mr. DeFeo from a technology company background, that we do not have the staff to cover the enormous task of handling approximately 9,400 additional devices. Mr. DeFeo does not feel we had enough technology staff to handle the middle schools. He feels we did not have enough to handle the high schools and now does not believe we can handle from a technology standpoint the elementary rollout. For Mr. DeFeo, it is not about whether or not we do PDL, it's about to what degree and how fast we do PDL. Mr. DeFeo sees the advantages to having these devices in the classrooms but has a concern with handing out this number of devices and then repairing and maintaining them.

Mr. Boyd stated that at a committee meeting, it was discussed that we include in the budget a support person for each middle and high school, and we do plan to bring this as a budget request. Staff at the district level is not a question after deployment of the devices. It is in the schools where the support is needed. Ms. Morreale shared her concern when schools are left without services for their devices while the devices are being deployed at other schools such as was the case the beginning of this school year. While high schools were receiving their devices, the middle schools had issues that were not addressed for some as late as October.

Mr. Poston asked if the budget numbers provided for the three separate options only cover the devices or if the numbers include digital content, training, and support. Mr. Boyd stated that the numbers provided only cover the cost of the hardware. Mr. Poston asked if we have the cost for the digital content. Mrs. Ambrose stated that we do have that information. It was shared previously as a 3-year plan. We will pull that information back out and share it with the Board. Mr. Poston also asked if we as a District have digital content for grades 3 – 5 for ELA, math, social studies, and science ready to go. Mrs. Ambrose shared that we don't have it ready, but that we will if approved to proceed. We go through a process to determine the most appropriate and best content for our students based upon our needs.

Mr. James stated that he is a huge supporter of PDL but has a couple of questions. He sees this as having four key components. There is the architecture or hardware that has to be in the buildings, which is already in place. Mr. Boyd added that we do not have this in place in the elementary schools, but we have it ready to be in place, and should be ready by May. The second part is the device selection. We have the Apple iPad for the middle schools and the Dell Venue for the high schools. It seems reasonable to Mr. James that it would be easier for students if they use the same device in elementary school as they would use in middle school. Mr. Boyd said the committee has considered these same thoughts, but in the interest of the committee selection, Mr. Boyd did not want to share his thoughts and bias the selection process in any way. The third area Mr. James deems is curriculum or digital content. Mr. James would feel more comfortable if we already knew what we were going to use and if it is fully encompassing of all grade levels or just particular grade levels. Mrs. Ambrose said that we could do the selection first. The fourth area for Mr. James is the user, both the teachers and the students. Mr. James thinks the PDL devices have been effective and have been a useful tool, but he does not want to inject more frustrations on the users by expanding it.

Mr. Garland stated that he is not sure why we are having this conversation because we approved this two years ago. We have the money to go with it. If it is a financial issue, we have had principals and teachers come here and tell us they will take two more students in the classroom if needed to get these devices. They want the devices in their hands. Another major issue we have been dealing with is closing the achievement gap. This will significantly impact and help with closing the achievement gap in our school district.

Mr. DeFeo stated he understands this process and without saying if the iPad was or was not the best choice for the middle schools, there is no way he would choose anything other than iPads for the elementary schools. Why would you switch from Apple to Windows to Apple? Maybe this process was wrong in the middle schools. He thinks this process should be a little more scientific. There should be a process to choosing the device. *Imagine It!* does not work on an Apple. Mrs. Ambrose added that a lot of these things are Web based and you have to go in through the Web. Mr. DeFeo's point is that there should be a thought process as to what the right device is and not a process of what someone might prefer. Mrs. Ambrose stated that we had a process. Mr. DeFeo said there should be a recommendation, but there should be a reason for that, not just because people happen to like the device. Mr. DeFeo personally has a problem with the way we went about it. Mr. DeFeo stated that he would not vote today to put a device into 3rd, 4th, and 5th graders' hands unless he gets other questions answered. He does not feel the District is ready to manage that problem. He does not want to be shown information with a tilt towards it. He wants the simple factual element, and not what we desire. He asks that the Board be shown we are ready with simple true facts that we can do this instead of extending it, maybe over a two-year period and putting the iPad carts, or whatever, in all of the classrooms, or some of the

classrooms next year, and then move in to full PDL. Mr. DeFeo asked that the Board be given the information that makes them feel that we can implement 9,400 devices in the elementary classrooms without the problems we have had for the past two years. This is a bigger issue for Mr. DeFeo at this point more so than the fact we don't have any real data to prove anything either way. He wants this implemented properly, not just because we set a time table and we feel we have to meet those timelines.

Neil James stated that if he understood Mr. Boyd, he said that at the February 9th Budget Retreat he would bring some proposals that would include some staffing recommendations. Mr. James asked if at that same retreat they could bring some information on which device would be recommended, as well as some curriculum or digital content selection so that some of the questions can be resolved, and maybe we need to add another Budget Retreat to discuss digital content. Mr. James stated that the Board wants to give the administration an opportunity to address the questions the Board has, and as Mr. Garland pointed out, the Board has voted to go in this direction; however, we have dealt with some frustrations with the process to date. Mr. James wants to be sure going forward that we can fully implement it without negatively impacting the user groups that are already out there, and at the same time, ensure that we have a clear and direct direction that we plan to go. Mr. Boyd replied that he thinks we can convene that process to get the device selected by that date. Mrs. Ambrose responded that we bring in leadership teams from the schools, and we will try to have this accomplished by the date of the Budget Retreat.

Ms. Morreale stated that she disagrees that teachers want to increase class size in order to help pay for this. She thinks we could ask any principal present and they would not want to increase class size. Going back to the insurance, can you have a recommendation by the February 9 Budget Retreat? She thinks we also need to reevaluate the insurance plan for all of the schools. Mr. Boyd asked if we could bring a proposal rather than a final decision because there are a lot of moving parts in that and we do not want to commit by February 9th that we know exactly what we are going to do. We can present all of the issues if you can help us think through what that might look like.

Mr. Poston wanted to echo what Ms. Morreale said and that as long as we get reports from our Auditor and our Financial Services that our revenues exceed our expenditures, and we continue to put money in our reserves, he cannot imagine that we as a Board would talk about increasing class size. Mr. Poston added that he is a big proponent of digital devices but just wants to be sure that our curriculum and our content are driving our device and not the other way around. Let's find out what we want to deliver to our students and what we want to accomplish, and then we can decide the best method to get there.

Mr. Winters asked that a proposed rollout schedule be included in the proposal to prevent from happening what happened to his daughter. She was given her device on four different occasions only to have it taken away again and again. He would like this process to be completed rather than what happened at her middle school.

Mr. DeFeo asked that we find out if *Imagine It!* works on Apple.

Facilities Committee Report

This item was removed from the Agenda by a vote of the Board.

Superintendent's Report

HCS Job Fair

Dr. Maxey stated that one of the greatest assets this District has is the educators who serve our children on a daily basis. He shared information about the District's Educator Recruitment Fair scheduled for Saturday, February 21, 2015 at Conway High School from 9:30 until 2:45. The morning session from 9:30 – 11:45 will be an open fair where the applicants may sign up, and there will be representatives from each of the high schools. The afternoon session is from 12:30 until 2:45 when interviews will take place for critical needs areas. Last year's fair was held in March. We had 414 attendees present from 19 states. Approximately 25% of the new teachers hired for 2014-15 attended this job fair. The deadline for those interested in attending the fair and being scheduled for an interview is February 13.

Teacher of the Year

Dr. Maxey shared that we have very high quality personnel, and one way to recognize that is through the Teacher-of-the-Year program. The top 10 semi-finalists for Horry County Schools' Teacher-of-the-Year were named today and they are: Joshua R. Cutright, Conway High School; Martina McKoy, Early College High School; Joey Ray Trail, Forestbrook Middle School; Candice Gwen Turner, Green Sea Floyds Elementary School; Ebony Bethea-Livingston, Loris Middle School; Ine Marion Touzel, Ocean Bay Middle School; Sarah J. S. Ray, Socastee High School; Paul Hudacko, St. James High School; Crystal Reissman, St. James Middle School; and Sheila Fry, Whittemore Park Middle School.

The Teacher of the Year Banquet is scheduled for April 28, 2015 and Horry County Schools Teacher of the Year will be announced at that time.

Business

PDL for Elementary Schools

A motion was made by Ms. Morreale to table this issue until we get more information at the February 9th meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. Poston and carried unanimously.

Mr. DeFeo asked that the Board be given as much information as possible for them to make it right and not to short change this issue, stating that IT is his biggest issue.

Possible Action Regarding Personnel

This item was added to the agenda by a vote of the Board.

A motion was made by Mr. Poston to appoint Dr. Rick Maxey "Acting Superintendent of Horry County Schools", with full authority commensurate with the position of Superintendent. The term of this appointment will be six (6) months. At the conclusion of this 6-month term, the Board of Education will conduct a performance evaluation and consider a course of action relative to District Leadership moving forward.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Cox and carried unanimously.

Consent Agenda

A motion was made by Mr. James and seconded by Mrs. Graham to approve the items under consent agenda, which include: A. Personnel Recommendations as Required by Law; and B. Approval of Requests for High School Diploma. The motion carried unanimously.

Adjournment

A motion was made by Mr. Cox and seconded by Ms. Timms to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried unanimously and the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

**Rhonda Snowden
Executive Assistant to the Superintendent
and Horry County Board of Education**

Approved:
