

MINUTES
ASHE COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION
February 5, 2018

Prior to the regular meeting, a reception honoring employee and student recognitions was held in the Commons area of Ashe County High School. The regular meeting began at 7:00 pm in the auditorium with all members present except Mr. King who was absent due to illness. Chairman Jones called the meeting to order, welcomed those in attendance and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

The agenda for the meeting was approved by consensus of the Board.

During open comments, Judy Current spoke on behalf of Ashe Arts Council which is celebrating 40 years of the ARTS in Ashe County. Children gave Board members and the Superintendent a Hershey candy bar—the wrapper reviewed all the activities provided through Ashe Arts over the past 40 years.

Youth Development Coordinator Alice Arledge recognized the following 6th grade winners in the *Say No to Drugs* poster contest—Abilene D., Blue Ridge; Emma C., Mountain View; and Jillian M., Westwood. These posters were made available for community business partners to display.

Vice Chairman Beckworth recognized Evan W., 6th grade student at Blue Ridge, as the 2018 Ashe County Spelling Bee Champion and presented Evan with a certificate and the perpetual trophy.

Vice Chairman Beckworth recognized the following individual school *Teacher of the Year* nominees and presented each with a certificate acknowledging their achievement: Steve Scott, Ashe High; George Zeller, Ashe Middle; Elizabeth Lauer, Blue Ridge; Kevin Miller, Westwood. Mountain View teacher Lisa Sibaja was then recognized as the *2017/18 Ashe County Oddie Cox Teacher of the Year* and presented with the perpetual plaque honoring recipients of Ashe County's Teacher of the Year award in memory of Mr. Cox.

Ashe County's *2017/18 Classified Employee of Year* nominees were recognized and presented with a certificate acknowledging their achievement: Geneva Spencer, Central Support; Drema Farmer, Blue Ridge; Donna Faircloth, Westwood; Ed Robinson, Westwood; and Michael Harless, Westwood. Blue Ridge custodian Cindy Pugh was then recognized as the *2017/18 Classified Employee of the Year* and presented with a plaque for her achievement.

Ashe County's *2017/18 Support/Supervisory Employee of the Year* nominees were recognized and presented with a certificate acknowledging their achievement: Tim Armentrout, Ashe Middle; Tammy Craine, Blue Ridge; Regan Perry, Mountain View and Laura Bowers, Westwood. Ashe High assistant principal Amanda Hipp was then recognized as the *2017/18 Support/Supervisory Employee of the Year*.

Ashe Middle teacher Holly McClure was recognized as the *2017/18 Teacher of Excellence for Exceptional Children* and presented with a certificate acknowledging her achievement.

Ashe Middle teacher Josh Church was recognized as a 2017/18 National Boards recipient and presented with a certificate acknowledging his achievement.

Blue Ridge teacher Allison Shoemake was recognized as the *2017 North Carolina Council of Teachers of Mathematics Outstanding Elementary Math Teacher* and presented with a certificate acknowledging her achievement.

Ashe High teacher Christina Pennington was recognized for receiving the *2017/18 President Award for Excellence in Math and Science Teaching* at the State level and presented with a certificate acknowledging her achievement. Mrs. Pennington is now one of three final candidates who will be recognized at the national level.

Superintendent Yates and the finance department—Finance Officer Amanda Coldiron, Geneva Spencer, Kevin Anderson and Sandy Rhodes—were recognized for receiving the *2015/16 Excellence Award from the National Government Finance Officers Association*.

A motion by Mr. Williams and a second by Vice Chairman Beckworth gave unanimous approval to the minutes for the regular meeting of the Board on January 8, 2018.

A motion by Vice Chairman Beckworth and a second by Mrs. Jones gave unanimous approval to the request from Scott and Anna Kilby, who reside in Ashe County, to allow their daughter to attend school in Watauga County effective the 2018/19 school year.

A motion by Mr. Williams and a second by Vice Chairman Beckworth gave unanimous approval to the request from Ashe High National Art Honor Society for an overnight trip to attend the honor society retreat in Raleigh, March 23-24, 2018.

A motion by Mrs. Jones and a second by Mr. Williams gave unanimous approval to the request from Blue Ridge 6th grade chorus for an overnight trip to perform at Dollywood's Performing Stars during the Festival of Nations, March 23-24, 2018.

A motion by Vice Chairman Beckworth and a second by Mrs. Jones gave unanimous approval to revising Policy 7410 *Teacher Contracts* as presented at the January meeting.

A motion by Mrs. Jones and a second by Vice Chairman Beckworth gave unanimous approval to the following personnel recommendations.

CERTIFIED

Teacher

- Reassignment of Joan Bach from substitute teacher to 3rd grade interim teacher at Mountain View effective January 22, 2018 through the end of the 2017/18 school year (filling resignation)

Substitute Teacher

- Addition of Alayne Spencer to the approved substitute list

Employee Leaves

- Request from Linda Bennett, teacher for exceptional children at Ashe High, for a family leave of absence beginning on January 16, 2018 and ending on February 5, 2018 (FMLA = 3 weeks)
- Request from Martha Latham, 4th grade teacher at Westwood, for a family leave of absence beginning on January 5, 2018 and extending through February 9, 2018 (FMLA = 5 weeks)

Prior approval to employ the following vacant positions

- Substitute teachers

CLASSIFIED

Interim Cafeteria Assistant

- Re-assignment of Emmy Halsey from interim cafeteria assistant at Ashe Middle to interim cafeteria assistant at Westwood effective January 24, 2018

Substitute Cafeteria Assistants

- Addition of Kayla Moore and Hallie Billings to the approved substitute cafeteria assistant list

Coaches

- Addition of Ben Cheek as head baseball coach at Ashe Middle to the approved coaches list contingent upon screenings (paid—replaces Don Conrad)
- Addition of Christopher Jock Gilley as assistant baseball coach at Ashe Middle to the approved coaches list (split salary for assistant position—TBA on original coaching list)
- Addition of Brandon Dillard as assistant baseball coach at Ashe Middle to the approved coaches list (split salary for assistant position—TBA on original coaching list)
- Addition of Daryan Watson as assistant softball coach at Ashe Middle to the approved coaches list contingent upon screenings (split salary for one position—replaces Mike Jones)
- Addition of Kristi Powers as assistant softball coach at Ashe Middle to the approved coaches list (split salary for one position—replaces Mike Jones)

Instructional Math Support

- Re-employment of Denise Bardon as instructional math support at Ashe Middle effective January 9, 2018 (Gear Up Grant)

Prior approval to employ the following vacant positions

- Substitute bus drivers
- Substitute cafeteria assistants

A motion by Mr. Williams and a second by Vice Chairman Beckworth gave unanimous approval to providing training activities at the local level in the areas of budget, school calendar and re-testing and facility construction for application towards the 12 hours of required training for Board members.

Mike Wike from Anderson Smith & Wike presented the Financial Audit for Ashe County Schools for the year ended June 30, 2017. Professional standards require that the audit firm provide the Board with information about the audit firm's responsibilities under generally accepted auditing standards and *Government Auditing Standards* and OMB Circular A-133. The auditors issued an unmodified, or clean, report on all financial statements, which is the highest level of approval. All compliance requirements received an unmodified rating as well. Mr. Wike commented that the Child Nutrition program continues to operate in the black and is self-supporting, which by his firm's standards is quite an accomplishment.

Westwood presented the focus area for February on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) Learning with Robotics. Principal Jennifer Robinson and Assistant Principal Earl Pennington, along with technology facilitator Kim Miller, explained the why of robotics—prepares students for the future, increases ability to be creative and innovative thinkers, teaches students how to problem solve and

prepare them for real-world situations. Two students also attended the meeting to demonstrate how they used coding to program and control an app-enabled robot.

The Superintendent reported that the school system has missed ten full days plus additional hours for either delays or early releases due to inclement weather. The goal is to keep Spring Break and to not go to school on Saturdays unless absolutely necessary. To help make this happen, February 16, March 16, March 19 and May 4 are now full instructional days for students. As of this date, the last day for students is still May 31, 2018.

The Superintendent gave an update on the architectural plans for the new middle school. In addition to the meeting with the middle school teachers, directors were also given an opportunity to provide input in their particular program areas. The architect will try to incorporate as many ideas and suggestions into the plans as possible while staying within the proposed budget.

The Superintendent reported that a total of 86 applications have been submitted for the Early College—26 from rising sophomores, 58 from rising freshmen and two homeschoolers. Interviews for those eligible will be in February.

The Board was informed that the Compliance Review for the Exceptional Children Programs at Ashe High, Ashe Middle and Westwood schools will be held March 20-21, 2018.

The following items of information were shared with the Board.

- February 2018—CTE Month
- National School Counseling Week—February 5-9, 2018
- Bus Driver Appreciation Week—February 12-16, 2018
- Sunday, February 18—Marc Payne Retirement Celebration—2:00 pm, Ashe County High auditorium
- The next regular meeting of the Board is scheduled for Monday, March 5, 2018, 7:00 pm, at the Central Support annex.
- Friday, March 9—Battle of the Books (BOB)—Grades 6-8, 9:00 am, Ashe County High auditorium
- Thursday, April 12—Battle of the Books (EBOB) Grades 4-5, 9:00 am, Ashe County High auditorium
- DIAL 4 Kindergarten Screenings
 - PreK—March 26-29 (M-Th)
 - Westwood—April 10-12 (T-Th)
 - Blue Ridge—April 17-19 (T-Th)
 - Mountain View—April 23-25 (M-W)
- Monday, April 9, 2018—Board meeting will be held at Ashe County Arts Council beginning at 7:00 pm.

At 8:36 pm, the Board took a short recess prior to going into closed session for the purpose of considering a personnel action that involves an officer or employee of this Board [N.C. General Statute §143.318.11(a)(6)] and real estate [N.C. General Statute §143.318.11(a)(5)]. The Board went into closed session at 8:52 pm and returned to regular session at 9:46 pm. No action was taken.

There being no further business, the Chairman immediately declared the meeting adjourned.