

August 2020 Board Meeting Minutes
Monday, August 3rd, 6:00 pm open session
5:30pm closed session



The August meeting was held electronically due to COVID-19.

The Board met in closed session 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)].

The board was called to order by Chairman Jones. Roll call was taken and all members were present via Zoom.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Senior Tatum B., Head Junior Marshall for Ashe County High School. Chairman Jones also honored by name all of the Junior Marshalls from 2020.

No members of the public were present for comments.

The board recognized Blue Ridge Elementary for receiving the Lighthouse Recertification with Joallen Lowder speaking.

The board recognized David Koontz, Athletic Director/Assistant Principal at Ashe High School as a Certified Athletic Administrator as recognized by the NIAAA. Amanda Hipp, principal, provided the comments for the recognition.

Chairman Jones set forth the approval of the Board Meeting Minutes for the regular meeting on June 29th, 2020 and the special called meeting for discussion on Plan B on July 22, 2020. Dr. Beckworth made a motion to approve with a second from Polly Jones. All approved.

The board approved the request for Samantha and Kyle Earp, who reside in Ashe County, to allow their children to attend school in Watauga County effective the 2020/21 school year. Dianne Eldreth made the motion and Keith McClure provided the second. All approved.

The board approved the request from Emily Hood, who resides in Ashe County, to allow her children to attend school in Watauga County effective the 2020/21 school year. Keith McClure made the motion and Dr. Lee Beckworth provided the second. All approved.

The board approved the request from Simone Clarke, who resides in Ashe County, to allow her children to attend school in Watauga County effective the 2020/21 school year. Dianne Eldreth made the motion and Polly Jones provided the second. All approved.

Jamie Little shared the memorandum of understanding for the Western Youth Network Afterschool program for the 2020-21 school year. The MOU is similar to the former agreement with 4H. Jennifer Warren and 4H will still be involved. If the needs is there, afterschool, Plan B care, daycare on teacher workdays, snow days and summer care can be addressed. The

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prices will be aligned to previous discussions. Dr. Lee Beckworth made the motion and Keith McClure provided the second. All approved.

Jamie Little shared the memorandum of understanding for the SCHOOL BASED MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES BETWEEN APPALACHIAN STATE UNIVERSITY AND ASHE COUNTY SCHOOLS. This for the ASC center to serve mental health needs of children. The price and terms remain the same. Keith McClure made the motion and Polly Jones provided the second to approve. All approved.

Terry Richardson presented the Pre-K general contract between NCDHHS and Ashe County Schools for Pre-K services at 4 sites in Ashe County. Polly Jones made the motion to accept the pre-K contract and Lee Beckworth provided the second to approve. All approved.

David Koontz presented the Athletic Training Services Agreement between Ashe County Schools and Ashe Memorial Hospital. Mr. Koontz clarified when the athletic trainer would be necessary and required. Dr. Beckworth questioned if the contract had a provision that we would not have to pay if athletics did not take place. Mr. Koontz answered questions from board members to clarify the role of the athletic trainer. Dr. Cox agreed to have the board attorney to review the contract for specific language should athletics not take place and bring the contract back to the board. The board agreed to review the contract with changes during the next meeting.

Roy Putman provided the personnel recommendations to the board. Dianne Eldreth made a motion to approve the personnel recommendations and Keith McClure provided a second. All Approved.

Jamie Little provided the update for summer remediation participation. We had summer remediation during COVID for K-4 students. The original plan was for in-person. However, after consulting with Jenn Greene, it was recommended to be virtual. We had about 120 students to participate. Ms. Little provided an overview of the program and feedback from teachers, citing success.

Amy Walker provided a connectivity update and information on a 1:1 deployment, including a new handbook for parents and students for technology. This plan outlines hotspot plans, school busses, deployment, sustainability of a 1:1. Dr. Cox included that this should be a discussion, not an update. Dr. Cox also shared plans to investigate extending the 1:1 long-term and investing in devices. Questions about a 1:1 were answered. Dianne Eldreth makes a motion to move forward with a 1:1 technology plan and Keith McClure provided a second. A discussion took place. Dr. Cox shared that the team would provide a sustainable and comprehensive plan in the near future. All approved.

Amanda Coldiron provided an update on Cares Act funding including about 1.4 million dollars. Prior to June 30, over 300,000 had been spent. Details were shared on expenditures for school nutrition, devices, and PPE. Moneys must be spent by December.

The board took a five-minute break.

Chairman CB Jones began the meeting again.

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Dr. Eisa Cox provided an update on Ashe Online and Plan B. Dr. Cox held Zoom meetings for families and for teachers to answer questions about Plan B and Ashe Online. A survey was provided to gauge interest in all virtual classes through Ashe Online and almost 30% of responding families had signed up, for a total of 813 students. We are keeping an eye on the COVID numbers in the community and working with our Health Department officials to inform our decisions about school opening. Our priority is to keep our students and teachers safe. We are monitoring what is going on in our community and prepared to pivot if necessary. A discussion included the potential of shifting to a Plan C if necessary. Dr. Cox shared that we can provide information from our Health Department later in the week and discuss the potential alternative plans. The board agreed to meet and stream again to discuss plan B and C on August 6th and include an update from Jennifer Greene.

The Board agreed to hold the special budget meeting on August 24th at 5:00pm at the Annex.

Dr. Cox shared that she is inspired by the work our teachers are doing and how we are all looking forward to seeing our students again whether it be virtually or face-to-face.

The Board agreed to hold the September board meeting on Tuesday, September 8th.

Dr. Beckworth made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Polly Jones provided a second.