

**Gaston County Schools
Board of Education
Monday, May 23, 2022
Meeting 5:30 p.m.**

MINUTES

The Gaston County Board of Education met in a regular session on Monday, May 23, 2022 in the Board Room, 943 Osceola Street, Gastonia, NC. Additionally, the meeting was live on Spectrum Cable Channel 21 and the Gaston County Board of Education YouTube page. Those Board Members in attendance were: Chairman Jeff K. Ramsey, Vice Chairman Dot Cherry, Kevin Collier, Justin Davis, Steve Hall, Lee Dedmon, Dot Guthrie, Robbie Lovelace and Brent Moore.

Additional attendees include: Superintendent Dr. W. Jeffrey Booker, Attorney Sonya McGraw, Associate Superintendents Melissa Balknight and Gary Hoskins, Chief Communications Officer Todd Hagans, Administrative Assistant Andrea Stephens and Board Clerk Dana Luoto.

Chairman Ramsey called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m. and welcomed everyone.

Invocation

Superintendent Booker led the invocation.

Pledge of Allegiance

Superintendent Booker led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Agenda Adoption - Action

The Board considered Agenda Adoption – Action

Motion to adopt the Agenda as presented was made by Ms. Dot Cherry; seconded by Mrs. Dot Guthrie; motion carried unanimously. (9-0)

Good News – Information

Superintendent Booker recognized Joseph Norris from Highland School of Technology. Joseph received a prestigious appointment to the United States Air Force Academy in Colorado. Joseph plans to major in aeronautical engineering and minor in nuclear weapons and strategy.

Ms. Dot Cherry presented Joseph a Certificate of Recognition.

Superintendent Booker recognized Avery Lester from South Point High School. Avery has earned the Congressional Gold Medal Award, which is presented to young adults by the United States Congress for accomplishments in volunteer service, personal development, physical fitness and exploration.

Mr. Lee Dedmon presented Avery a Certificate of Recognition.

Superintendent Booker recognized Ajhinae Brooks from Highland School of Technology. Ajhinae won the QuestBridge Scholarship to attend Rice University in Houston, Texas. The scholarship is a full-tuition award valued at \$200,000.

Mr. Lee Dedmon presented Ajhinae a Certificate of Recognition.

Superintendent Booker recognized Wehazit Mussie from Highland School of Technology. Wehazit is the recipient of the prestigious Morehead-Cain Scholarship from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Wehazit plans to major in environmental health science.

Mr. Justin Davis presented Wehazit a Certificate of Recognition.

Superintendent Booker recognized Allen Chen from Gaston Early College High School. Allen has been accepted to attend MIT and his schooling at MIT is paid for through scholarships and grants.

Mr. Steve Hall presented Allen a Certificate of Recognition.

Superintendent Booker recognized Samantha Bolton from Forestview High School. Samantha plans to attend Georgia Tech in Atlanta and plans to become an engineer.

Mrs. Robbie Lovelace presented Samantha a Certificate of Recognition.

Superintendent Booker recognized Rex Dover from Belmont Middle School and Paolo Sexton from York Chester Middle School. Rex was our spelling bee champion and correctly spelled "ramification" to win The Gaston Gazette Spelling Bee and earn the opportunity to compete at the Scripps National Spelling Bee in Washington, D.C. Paolo did an outstanding job in the competition, finishing in second place as the runner-up.

Mr. Justin Davis presented Paolo a Certificate of Recognition.

Principal Susan Redmond accepted a Certificate of Recognition on behalf of Rex.

Superintendent Booker recognized Seth Samonds from Bessemer City High School. Seth had the opportunity to participate in the SATELLITE (Science and Technology Enriching Lifelong Leadership in Tomorrow's Endeavors) leadership conference at N.C. State University.

Ms. Dot Cherry presented Seth a Certificate of Recognition.

Superintendent Booker recognized Jerry Bradley from South Point High School, Aaron Hollar from East Gaston High School and Ruby Ruiz from W.C. Friday Middle School. These three talented musicians recently performed as members of the North Carolina Bandmasters Association All-State Honors Band. All three students also performed during the South Central All-District Band Concert held at Stuart W. Cramer High School.

Mr. Brent Moore presented Jerry, Aaron and Ruby a Certificate of Recognition.

Superintendent Booker recognized Erin Watson from Forestview High School. Erin represented Gaston County Schools in the all-state chorus.

Mr. Jeff Ramsey presented Erin a Certificate of Recognition.

Superintendent Booker recognized Rhiannon Wollmuth from Hunter Huss, Erin Poteat from Ashbrook High School and Trinity Ledford from Southwest Middle School. The three were overall winners from the Gaston County Schools "Through an Artist's Eyes" art show. Rhiannon won the Best in Show award; Erin received the Directors Choice Award; and Trinity earned the James C. Biggers Award.

Mr. Jeff Ramsey presented Rhiannon, Erin and Trinity a Certificate of Recognition.

Superintendent Booker recognized the Cherryville High School cheerleading team. The cheerleaders were state champions at the North Carolina High School Athletic Association Cheerleading Invitational in two categories, and they participated in the North Carolina cheerleading Coaches Association competition and won another first place state award.

Mrs. Robbie Lovelace presented the Cherryville High School cheerleading team a Certificate of Recognition.

Superintendent Booker recognized the East Gaston High School cheerleading team. The cheerleaders placed first in the super varsity category at the North Carolina High School Athletic Association Cheerleading Invitational, and prior to winning the state competition, the team took first place at the Piedmont Regional event.

Mr. Kevin Collier presented the East Gaston High School cheerleading team a Certificate of Recognition.

Superintendent Booker recognized Lauren Tolbert from Highland School of Technology. Lauren is a 9-time state champion in cross country and track and field. Lauren has set state records in track and field and cross country and she has received the Most Outstanding Performer Award.

Mr. Steve Hall presented Lauren a Certificate of Recognition.

Superintendent Booker recognized Asher Neumann from Highland School of Technology. Asher won the individual state swimming championship in the 1A/2A 200-yard freestyle event.

Mr. Lee Dedmon presented Asher a Certificate of Recognition.

Superintendent Booker recognized Ashlynn Stephens of Highland School of Technology. Ashlynn was named the 1A North Carolina Volleyball Player of the Year. This honor is presented by the North Carolina Volleyball Coaches Association.

Mr. Kevin Collier presented Ashlynn a Certificate of Recognition.

Superintendent Booker recognized Janiya Adams and Randall Pettus from Bessemer City High School. Last year, Janiya set a new Gaston County single-game scoring record, and this year, she broke her own record by scoring 55 points in a game. Janiya was named an all-conference and all-district performer in basketball.

Randall broke a single-game scoring record, totaling 60 points in a single game. Randall is a two-time winner of the Gaston County Basketball Player of the Year Award and was named the Conference Player of the Year.

Mr. Brent Moore presented Janiya and Randall a Certificate of Recognition.

Superintendent Booker recognized Ryan Harris from South Point High School. Ryan was presented the Luke Kuechly Defensive Player of the Year Award. The honor is given by the Charlotte Touchdown Club.

Mr. Jeff Ramsey presented Ryan a Certificate of Recognition.

Superintendent Booker recognized Sullivan Absher from South Point High School. Sullivan announced, live on CBS Sports HQ, his decision to attend the University of Notre Dame. Only a junior, Sullivan is a highly-recruited left tackle and ranks as the 10th best football prospect in North Carolina.

Ms. Dot Cherry presented Sullivan a Certificate of Recognition.

Chairman Ramsey announced that Dr. W. Jeffrey Booker, Superintendent, earned the prestigious Southwest Region Superintendent of the Year recognition for 2022-2023. This is the second time Dr. Booker has earned this recognition the first time being in 2016-2017. In the fall, Dr. Booker will compete against seven other regional winners for the A. Craig Phillips North Carolina Superintendent of the Year title.

Public Expression – Information

Ava Clarkson

114 Leeper Avenue

Belmont, NC 28012

RE: Retire the Red Raider Mascot

Although Ava Clarkson completed the Request to Speak Form, Ava Clarkson did not appear at the meeting.

Ryan Simms

105 N. Woodcliff Lane

Mt. Holly, NC 28120

RE: Retire the Red Raider Mascot

Although Ryan Simms completed the Request to Speak Form, Ryan Simms did not appear at the meeting.

Lauren Frady

1327 Perfection Avenue

Belmont, NC 28012

RE: Retire the Red Raider Mascot

Although Lauren Frady completed the Request to Speak Form, Lauren Frady did not appear at the meeting.

Josh Sawyer
2741 Smethwick Lane
Gastonia, NC 28056

RE: Allowing foreign exchange students in GCS for the 2022-2023 school year
Although Josh Sawyer completed the Request to Speak Form, Josh Sawyer did not appear at the meeting

Chairman Ramsey requested a brief recess at 6:28 p.m. Meeting resumed at 6:35 p.m.

Approval/Correction of Minutes

The Board considered Approval/Correction of Minutes – Action

Motion to adopt minutes of April 11, 2022 (Regular Meeting) and April 12, 2022 (Joint Board of Education/Board of Commissioner Meeting) as presented was made by Mr. Lee Dedmon; seconded by Mr. Steve Hall; motion carried unanimously. (9-0)

COVID-19 Update – Information

Chairman Ramsey recognized Superintendent Booker who presented a PowerPoint on COVID-19 Updates.

(View PowerPoint)

Action on Whether to Maintain or Amend the Board's Current Face Covering Policy as Required by S.L. 2021-130 – Action

Motion

The Motion was made by Mr. Justin Davis; seconded by Mr. Steve Hall that the Board
Approve that masks are optional for Gaston County Schools (including buses) for all students, staff and visitors on all campuses.

A vote was taken and motion to approve the item as presented carried. (9-0)

Operations Committee Report – Information

Lee Dedmon is chair of the committee and members are Dot Cherry, Kevin Collier and Brent Moore. Chairman Ramsey recognized Ms. Dot Cherry of the Operations Committee who provided a summary of topics considered and discussed at the most recent meeting.

(View report)

Curriculum & Instruction Committee Report – Information

Dot Guthrie is chair of the committee and members are Justin Davis, Steve Hall and Robbie Lovelace. Chairman Ramsey recognized Mrs. Robbie Lovelace of the Curriculum & Instruction Committee who provided a summary of topics considered and discussed at the most recent meeting.

(View report)

Gaston College Board of Trustees Appointment – Information

Chairman Ramsey recognized Mr. Todd Hagans who explained the process to be used to select the Gaston College Board of Trustees Appointment. The term of this appointment will run from July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2026. Mrs. Jennifer Davis is completing her current term. For those interested in being considered, the application will be posted on our website and should be returned by 12:00 noon on Tuesday, June 14, 2022. Applicants will participate in an interview to be held immediately before the Board of Education’s regular meeting on Monday, June 20.

2022-2023 Career and Technical Education (CTE) Grant Application – Action

Chairman Ramsey recognized Mr. Brett Buchanan who presented a PowerPoint on 2022-2023 Career and Technical Education Grant. Discussion followed.

(View PowerPoint)

Motion

The Motion was made by Mr. Kevin Collier; seconded by Mr. Lee Dedmon that the Board
Approve the CTE local grant application for the 2022-2023 school year

A vote was taken and motion to approve the item as presented carried unanimously. (9-0)

School Nutrition SY 2022-2023 Procurement Plan/Formal Bids – Action

Chairman Ramsey recognized Mrs. Angela Calamia who presented a PowerPoint on School Nutrition SY 2022-2023 Procurement Plan/Formal Bids. Discussion followed

(View PowerPoint)

Motion

The Motion was made by Mr. Kevin Collier; seconded by Ms. Dot Cherry that the Board
Approve the 2022-2023 School Nutrition Procurement Plan/Formal Bids

A vote was taken and motion to approve the item as presented carried unanimously. (9-0)

Alternative School’s Modified Accountability System — Warlick Academy – Action Alternative School’s Modified Accountability System — Webb Street School - Action

Chairman Ramsey recognized Mrs. Rebekka Powers who presented a PowerPoint on Alternative School’s Modified Accountability System for Warlick Academy and Webb Street School. (Item 15 and item16 combined into one motion)

(View PowerPoint)

Motion

The Motion was made by Mr. Kevin Collier; seconded by Ms. Dot Cherry that the Board
Approve Alternative School’s Modified Accountability System for Warlick Academy and Webb Street School.

A vote was taken and motion to approve the item as presented carried unanimously. (9-0)

Board Policy Updates – Information

Chairman Ramsey recognized Mrs. McGraw who reported recent changes require revisions to GCS policies. Staying current on board policies keeps us in alignment with North Carolina State Board of Education policies and NC law. This item will come before the Board as a Consent Item at the June 20, 2022 Board of Education Meeting. Draft policies will be posted on the GCS web page for review.

Consent Agenda – Action

The Board considered the Consent Agenda:

- A. Recommended Personnel
- B. Budget Amendments & Budget Transfers
- C. Construction/Repair Change Orders
- D. Reduction in Force – Strategic Planning
- E. Title I Plan
- F. Exceptional Children’s Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Grant
- G. Contracts
 - Winthrop University
 - Thrive
 - Support Inc.
 - SpeechCenter
 - Riverside
 - Public Consulting Group
 - Pacific Interpreters
 - The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
 - National Paideia Institute
 - N2Y
 - Melmark
 - Invision
 - Residential Funds
 - EDU Healthcare
 - DocuSign
 - Developmental Day Funds
 - Continuum
 - Cobb Pediatric-Stepping Stones
 - BrightStar Care
 - Bayada
 - AMN Healthcare
 - Teacher Assistant to Teacher Program with Gardner-Webb University
 - Home Turf Landscaping Services (Robinson Elementary, Hawks Nest STEAM and Gardner Park Elementary)
 - Bobby Sanders Landscaping Services (Woodhill Elementary, Southwest Middle, H.H. Beam Elementary, Lingerfeldt Elementary and Forest Heights)
 - Home Turf Landscaping Services (North Belmont Elementary, Mount Holly Middle, Stanley Middle and East Gaston High)
 - Wise Lawnmower Company (Bessemer City High, Bessemer City Middle, Bessemer City Central and Bessemer City Primary)
 - Dump Truck Purchase

—Sanitary Sewer Easement — Belmont

Motion to adopt the Consent Agenda as presented was made by Ms. Dot Cherry; seconded by Mrs. Dot Guthrie motion carried unanimously. (9-0)

Superintendent's Comments

Superintendent Booker reported that we continue to make progress with our payroll system and appreciate everyone's patience and understanding. A retro-payment for bi-weekly employees for payroll errors from January, February and some of March ran today. Employees are able to log into their Oracle account and see the retro pay.

Superintendent Booker reported that Chairman Ramsey and Mr. Steve Hall joined him for the commencement ceremony at Gaston Early College High School. 51 seniors received their high school diploma and 49 seniors also earned an associate degree from Gaston College.

Superintendent Booker announced that Wednesday, June 1 is graduation ceremonies for the Gaston County Virtual Academy, Warlick Academy and Webb Street School. Ceremonies for our traditional high schools are Saturday, June 4.

Superintendent Booker reminded parents to take our parent survey by Friday at 5:00 p.m.

Superintendent Booker announced that end-of-year testing continues this week for our elementary and middle schools and high school exams begin on Wednesday. We also have award ceremonies, concerts and other year-end activities taking place this week.

Superintendent Booker announced that Monday, May 30, is the Memorial Day holiday which means no school for students and employees. We will finish out the school year on Wednesday, June 1, which is the last day of school.

Superintendent Booker thanked students, parents, teachers and all employees for their hard work and dedication. It has been a good school year.

Superintendent Booker reminded everyone that our first day of school for students is Wednesday, August 17.

Closed Session

Chairman Ramsey asked the Board to consider going into Closed Session under, N.C.G.S. §143-318.11(a)(6) Personnel and N.C.G.S. §143-318.11(a)(3) Consultation with Attorney.

Motion to go into Closed Session was made by Mr. Kevin Collier; seconded by Ms. Dot Cherry; motion carried unanimously. (9-0)

The Board went into Closed Session at 7:36 p.m.

The Board returned to Open Session at 8:35 p.m.

Motion

The Motion was made by Mr. Steve Hall; seconded by Mr. Lee Dedmon that the Board
**Award a four-year contract effective July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2026 for the position of
Executive Director of Human Resources to the following:**

Dr. Kecia Coln

A vote was taken and motion to approve the item as presented carried unanimously. (9-0)

Motion

The Motion was made by Ms. Dot Cherry; seconded by Mr. Brent Moore that the Board
**Award two-year Assistant Principal contracts effective July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2024 for
the following:**

Stephanie Moose
Carmin Adams
Jenny Carper

A vote was taken and motion to approve the item as presented carried unanimously. (9-0)

Motion

The Motion was made by Ms. Dot Cherry; seconded by Mrs. Dot Guthrie that the Board
**Award two-year Principal contracts effective July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2024 for the
following:**

Anarah Henderson
Aimee Tolleson
Patrick Watson
Joshua White
Jada Owenby
Bridgette Best
Kimberly Reese

A vote was taken and motion to approve the item as presented carried unanimously. (9-0)

Superintendent Booker announced the following placements effective July 1, 2022:

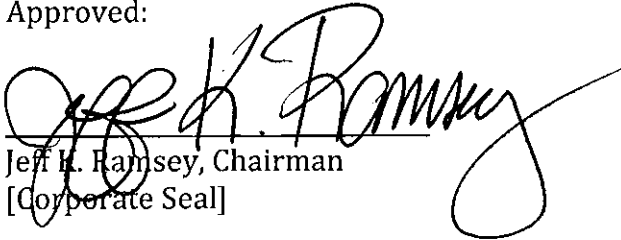
Catawba Heights Elementary – Stacy Bradley
Woodhill Elementary – Anarah Henderson
Belmont Central Elementary – Aimee Tolleson
Cherryville Elementary – Patrick Watson
W.B. Beam Intermediate – Joshua White
Costner Elementary – Jada Owenby
Southwest Middle – Glenn Cook
Pleasant Ridge – Bridgette Best
North Gaston – Crystal Houser
Forestview High – Jamie Peoples
Mount Holly Middle – Tyler West
Pinewood Elementary – Kimberly Reese

Adjournment

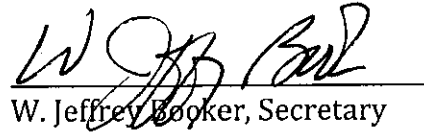
All business having been conducted, Motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Justin Davis; seconded by Mr. Lee Dedmon motion carried unanimously. (9-0)

The Board Meeting adjourned at 8:38 p.m.

Approved:



Jeff K. Ramsey, Chairman
[Corporate Seal]



W. Jeffrey Booker, Secretary

Date Approved: 6/20/2022