

**Gaston County Schools  
Board of Education  
Monday, September 19, 2022  
Meeting 5:30 p.m.**

**MINUTES**

The Gaston County Board of Education met in a regular session on Monday, September 19, 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, Chief Technology Officer Aaron Slutsky and Board Clerk Dana Luoto.

Chairman Ramsey called the meeting to order at 5:30 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 Mr. Brent Moore; seconded by Ms. Dot Cherry; motion carried unanimously. (9-0)

**Good News – Information**

Superintendent Booker congratulated W.A. Bess Elementary School. The United States Department of Education announced that W.A. Bess is a 2022 National Blue Ribbon School. This year, the National Blue Ribbon School award was given to only five schools in North Carolina and only 297 schools in the United States. This award recognizes W.A. Bess for its long-standing commitment to excellence and high academic achievement. W.A. Bess is a two-time recipient of this award – also winning the National Blue Ribbon School honor in 2006.

Mr. Jeff Ramsey and Ms. Dot Cherry presented a recognition plaque to Principal Laura Clark, assistant principal Charlotte Friday and teachers Nikki Simmons, Kirstin Zeccola, Janet Smith and Michelle Curnow.

Superintendent Booker recognized Art Teacher – Michelle Curnow, W.A. Bess Elementary; Band Teachers – Cindy Owens, W.C. Friday Middle, Kameron Radford, Stuart W. Cramer High; Chorus Teacher – Bethany Jennings, Stuart W. Cramer High; Dance Teacher – Stephanie Bowman, East Gaston High; and Theater Teachers – Chuck Stowe, Stuart W. Cramer High and Shannon Foor, North Gaston High. Last week, schools across the country celebrated National Arts in Education Week. In Gaston County, we believe that the arts are an integral part of a well-rounded education and we like

to celebrate the arts each and every week. The teachers are here to represent all of the fine arts teachers in Gaston County Schools.

Mr. Kevin Collier presented a recognition plaque to the Fine Arts Department.

Superintendent Booker recognized students from the Health Sciences Academy at East Gaston High School — Emily Cerilli, Gracelyn Gaddy, Ashlyn Lewis and Taylor Wright. These students completed the Nurse Aid I class last spring and recently found out that they can call themselves licensed CNAs after passing the state exam.

Mr. Kevin Collier presented a Certificate of Recognition to each student.

Superintendent Booker recognized Zoe Gambino from East Gaston High School. Zoe is the current Miss Mount Holly's Outstanding Teen and represented Mount Holly this summer at the Miss North Carolina's Outstanding Teen competition.

Mr. Kevin Collier presented a Certificate of Recognition to Zoe.

Superintendent Booker recognized four students in the Class of 2022 from Forestview High School (PowerPoint presentation). Upon graduation in June, William Barnes, Susan Christy, Margaret Lu and Jessica Normile received the Advanced Placement Capstone Diploma. To earn the AP Capstone Diploma, students must have a score of three or higher on the AP Seminar and AP Research exams as well as four additional AP exams. Each of these students earned a passing score on six AP exams!

### **Public Expression – Information**

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

Jasmine Clarkson

114 Leeper Avenue

Belmont, NC 28012

RE: Retire the Red Raider Mascot

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

Lori Peabody

2406 Emil Drive

Belmont, NC

RE: Teacher Pay

Pam Miller

2001-D Cramerton Village Drive

Cramerton, NC 28032

RE: Payroll Issues

## **Approval/Correction of Minutes**

The Board considered Approval/Correction of Minutes – Action

Motion to adopt minutes of August 15, 2022 as presented was made by Ms. Dot Cherry; seconded by Mr. Justin Davis; motion carried unanimously. (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)

## **COVID Retention Bonus - Action**

Chairman Ramsey recognized Mr. Gary Hoskins who presented a PowerPoint on COVID Retention Bonus. To be eligible for the COVID Retention Bonus, employees must meet **all** of the stated criteria.

### **Summary of COVID Retention Bonuses**

- 1<sup>st</sup> semester — \$1,000 to eligible employees
- 2<sup>nd</sup> semester — \$1,000 to eligible employees
- Entire School Year — \$1,000 to eligible employees

### **First Semester Bonus**

- Must have been employed on August 9, 2022, and must have been continuously employed through December 21, 2022
- Must be a permanent employee (contract, interim and temporary employees are NOT eligible)
- Works at least 50% on a regular basis

### **Second Semester Bonus**

- Must have been employed on January 5, 2023, and must have been continuously employed through May 26, 2023
- Must be a permanent employee (contract, interim and temporary employees are NOT eligible)
- Works at least 50% on a regular basis

### **Entire 2022-2023 School Year Bonus**

- Must have been employed on August 9, 2022, and must have been continuously employed through May 26, 2023
- Must be a permanent employee (contract, interim and temporary employees are NOT eligible)
- Works at least 50% on a regular basis

### **Projected Payment Dates**

- 1<sup>st</sup> Semester Bonus — January 2023
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Semester Bonus — June 2023
- Entire School Year Bonus — June 2023

### **Motion**

The Motion was made by Mr. Lee Dedmon; seconded by Ms. Dot Cherry that the Board  
**Approve all three COVID retention bonus payments to qualified employees, subject to prior approval from DPI**

Discussion occurred.

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

(View PowerPoint)

### **State Salary Supplement - Action**

Chairman Ramsey recognized Mr. Gary Hoskins who presented a PowerPoint on State Salary Supplement.

### **Motion**

The Motion was made by Mr. Lee Dedmon; seconded by Ms. Dot Cherry that the Board  
**Approve payment of \$843 (net of retirement) State supplement over 10 months (\$84/month) to all qualified full-time, permanent certified teachers and to all qualified full-time, permanent certified instructional support personnel.**

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

(View PowerPoint)

### **School Business Systems Modernization Update - Information**

Chairman Ramsey recognized Mr. Gary Hoskins who presented a PowerPoint on School Business Systems Modernization Update.

Discussion occurred.

(View PowerPoint)

### **Local Assessment Schedule 2022-2023 - Information**

Chairman Ramsey recognized Mrs. Rebekka Powers who presented a PowerPoint on Local Assessment Calendar.

(View PowerPoint)

### **NC Accountability Model Results - Information**

Chairman Ramsey recognized Mrs. Rebekka Powers who presented a PowerPoint on NC Accountability Model Preliminary Results.

(View PowerPoint)

### **Business Advisory Council Meeting Update - Information**

Chairman Ramsey recognized Mr. Brett Buchanan who presented a PowerPoint on Business Advisory Council Meeting Update.

Discussion occurred.

(View PowerPoint)

### **Consent Agenda – Action**

The Board considered the Consent Agenda:

- A. Recommended Personnel
- B. Budget Amendments & Budget Transfers
- C. Construction/Repair Change Orders
- D. Contracts
  - BrightStar Care — Contract Amendment
  - Belmont Abbey College
  - Gardner Webb University
  - Learning Profile — Naviance
  - Cherryville High School — LED Lighting
  - Kiser Elementary School – Roof Replacement
  - Pinewood Elementary School — Roof Replacement
  - New Hope Elementary School — Paving Project
  - Cisco SMARTnet Renewals
  - The Reserves Network, Inc.
  - True Ingenuity Consulting, LLC

Motion to adopt the Consent Agenda as presented was made by Mr. Steve Hall; seconded by Mr. Lee Dedmon motion carried unanimously. (9-0)

### **Superintendent's Comments**

Superintendent Booker reported principals will be updated tomorrow on how to gather information for payroll issues with employees.

Superintendent Booker reported we have had a good start to our school year and he thanked all employees for their hard work.

### **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) (Mr. Lee Dedmon left after regular meeting)

The Board went into Closed Session at 7:17 p.m.

Chairman Ramsey requested a brief break and Closed Session resumed at 7:27 p.m.

The Board returned to Open Session at 8:00 p.m.

**Motion**

The Motion was made by Ms. Dot Cherry; seconded by Mr. Brent Moore that the Board  
**Award a two-year Assistant Principal contract for the following:**

Laquesha Wilkins

A vote was taken and motion to approve the item as presented carried unanimously. (8-0)

**Motion**

The Motion was made by Mr. Justin Davis; seconded by Ms. Dot Cherry that the Board  
**Approve the Engineering Consultant Services Agreement between Gaston County Board of Education and H2L Consulting Engineers for the Phase 1 Retaining Wall repairs at Stuart Cramer High School subject to changes to be approved by the Superintendent and Board Chairman upon recommendation of legal counsel.**

A vote was taken and motion to approve the item as presented carried (7-1) (Mrs. Robbie Lovelace voted against)

**Adjournment**

All business having been conducted, Motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Steve Hall; seconded by Ms. Dot Cherry motion carried unanimously. (8-0)

The Board Meeting adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

Approved:

  
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Jeff K. Ramsey, Chairman  
[Corporate Seal]

  
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W. Jeffrey Booker, Secretary

Date Approved: 10/17/2022