

Gaston County Schools  
Board of Education  
Monday, February 20, 2023  
Meeting 5:30 p.m.

MINUTES

The Gaston County Board of Education met in a regular session on Monday, February 20, 2023 at 5:30 p.m. in the Board Room, 943 Osceola Street, Gastonia, NC. 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 Ramsey, Vice Chairman Dot Cherry, Josh Crisp, Lee Dedmon, Dot Guthrie, Tod Kinlaw, Robbie Lovelace, Brent Moore, and A.M. Stephens III.

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 5:31 p.m. and welcomed everyone.

**Invocation**

Superintendent Booker paused for a “moment of silence and 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 Mr. Brent Moore; motion carried unanimously. (9-0)

**Good News – Information**

Superintendent Booker recognized Josh Crowder of South Point High School. Josh was named the recipient of the Michael A. Kahn Community Service Scholastic Scholarship Award. The prestigious award is presented to a high school senior in the Charlotte region who best exemplifies the spirit of community stewardship, academic excellence and accomplishment on the football field. Josh was recognized by the Charlotte Touchdown Club at a ceremony in December. The scholarship is valued at \$40,000 and requires Josh to participate in at least two separate community service projects while contributing a total of 24 hours of service each school year. Also, Josh learned last week that he has been accepted into the United States Military Academy at West Point.

Mr. Tod Kinlaw presented a Certificate of Recognition to Josh.

Superintendent Booker recognized the top five spelling bee winners. Earlier this month, the Gaston County School Spelling Bee was held at Ashbrook High School.

Rex Dover of Belmont Middle School was our spelling bee champion. Rex emerged from a field of 38 students to win the district competition. Rex has earned the opportunity to compete in March at the Carolina Panthers Regional Spelling Bee.

Lawrence Martin of Pleasant Ridge Elementary was the runner-up, Kari Clay of Southwest Middle took third place, and Cassidy Allen of Bessemer City Central and Harmony Vann of Woodhill Elementary tied for fourth place.

Ms. Dot Cherry and Mr. A.M. Stephens III presented a Certificate of Recognition to each student.

Superintendent Booker recognized the ten schools that led the way in our 2022-2023 fundraising campaign for the United Way of Gaston County. The 2022-2023 total for Gaston County Schools is \$89,409.10, and we want to express our appreciation to everyone who gave a contribution and participated in our fundraising efforts. Cramerton Middle School and Hunter Huss High School both contributed more than \$5,000 each. Below are the top ten fundraising schools:

**Cramerton Middle School** — principal Kevin Doran and assistant principal Beth Crosby

**Hunter Huss High School** — principal Bryan Denton and assistant principal Whitney Hill

**Woodhill Elementary School** — principal Anarah Henderson and assistant principal Doneen Johnson

**Southwest Middle School** — principal Glenn Cook

**Grier Middle School** — principal Amy Holbrook and staff member O'Bryan Williams

**H.H. Beam Elementary School** — principal Ryan Smith and Deon Kennedy

**Forestview High School** —assistant principal James Hilburn

**North Gaston High School** — administration staff unable to attend

**Highland School of Technology** — administration staff unable to attend

**Warlick Academy** — principal Lucretia Rice

Dr. Booker expressed appreciation to the central level departments for their contributions and thanked Valerie Yatko, who served again as our districtwide coordinator.

Mrs. Dot Guthrie and Mr. Jeff Ramsey presented a Recognition Plaque to each school.

#### **Public Expression - Information**

Elisabeth Haywood  
4024 Hereford Lane  
Dallas, NC 28034  
RE: Payroll Issues

Melinda Goddard  
801 S. Main Street, Apt. 136  
Mt. Holly, NC 28120  
RE: Payroll Issues

Laura Farmer  
672 Easthampton Drive  
Gastonia, NC 28056  
RE: Payroll Issues

Stephanie Best  
Gaston County  
RE: Payroll Issues

### **Approval/Correction of Minutes**

The Board considered Approval/Correction of Minutes – Action

Motion to adopt minutes of January 27, 2023 (Regular Meeting) and January 27, 2023 (Board Retreat) as presented was made by Mr. Lee Dedmon; seconded by Mr. Josh Crisp; motion carried unanimously. (9-0)

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

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

(View PowerPoint)

### **Gaston County Schools Calendar 2023-2024 – Action**

Chairman Ramsey recognized Dr. Kecia Coln who presented a PowerPoint on School Calendar Survey Results 2023-2024. Discussion followed.

### **Motion**

Motion was made by Mr. Josh Crisp; seconded by Mr. Tod Kinlaw that the Board  
**Approve Calendar “C” as presented for the 2023-2024 school year**

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

(View PowerPoint)

### **Gaston Early College Calendar 2023-2024 – Action**

Chairman Ramsey recognized Dr. Kecia Coln who presented a PowerPoint on Gaston Early College High School Calendar. Discussion followed.

### **Motion**

Motion was made by Mr. Lee Dedmon seconded by Mrs. Robbie Lovelace that the Board  
**Approve the Gaston Early College Calendar for 2023-2024**

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

(View PowerPoint)

### **EOG/EOC Summer School – Information**

Chairman Ramsey recognized Dr. Rebekka Powers who presented a PowerPoint on EOG/EOC Summer Testing Program.

(View PowerPoint)

### **Camp Gaston – Information**

Chairman Ramsey recognized Dr. Derrick Jackson who presented a PowerPoint on Summer Camps.

(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. Policy Update – Policy 6335/7270 — Drug & Alcohol Testing of Commercial Motor Vehicle Operators
- E. Contracts
  - Forestview High School — LED Lighting Replacement

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

### **Superintendent’s Comments**

Superintendent Booker announced that Lowell Elementary and its business partner Dominion Energy won the “Are You Smarter Than a Gaston County Fifth Grader?” competition on Thursday, February 9, 2023. Tindol Subaru presented a \$12,000 check to the Education Foundation as part of the car manufacturer’s “Share the Love” campaign. Proceeds from the competition are used by the Education Foundation to support the Ron L. Ensley grant program for teachers.

Superintendent Booker announced that Courage Kia conducted a promotional campaign and pledged \$200 to Gaston County Schools for each car sold. We received a check in the amount of \$14,400 from the general manager, Mr. Gabe Faria. The money will be used to have a positive impact on our schools and students.

Superintendent Booker announced our Teacher of the Year finalists were announced in January and they are:

Jamie Monk, Highland School of Technology  
Michael Kaufman, East Gaston High School  
Lindsay Dickerson Beverly, Forestview High School  
Joanna Kirk Dotson, Tryon Elementary School  
Melissa Clements, Belmont Middle School

Superintendent Booker announced that the finalists for Gaston County Principal of the Year have been announced and they are:

Justin Beam, North Belmont Elementary School  
Jaime Wallace, Brookside Elementary School  
Bryan Denton, Hunter Huss High School  
Jessica Steiner, Stuart W. Cramer High School  
Sheila Wyont, Bessemer City High School

Our Teacher of the Year and Principal of the Year will be announced during the Evening of Excellence ceremony on Tuesday, May 2, 2023.

Superintendent Booker reminded everyone that the deadline to submit a school choice application is Friday, March 3 at 5:00 p.m. Additionally, if you have a child who is eligible for pre-kindergarten or kindergarten for the 2023-2024 school year, registration is currently underway and parents can complete the application process online.

Superintendent Booker announced that our annual RoboGASTON robotics competition will be held on Saturday, March 4 at Forestview High School.

Superintendent Booker announced starting today and continuing through Wednesday, March 15 we have a Gaston County High School Senior Art Show in the Jeanne Rauch Gallery at Gaston College.

Superintendent Booker announced that Thursday, March 9, 2023 is Parent-Teacher Conference Day for our schools. Students will be dismissed early and conferences will be held from 1:00 until 7:00 p.m.

Chairman Ramsey announced that our Committees will meet on Monday, March 6, 2023. Mrs. Dot Guthrie is the chair of the Curriculum & Instruction Committee and Mr. Brent Moore is the chair of the Operations Committee.

#### **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 Ms. Dot Cherry; seconded by Mr. Brent Moore; motion carried unanimously. (9-0)

The Board went into Closed Session at 7:16 p.m.

The Board returned to Open Session at 8:07 p.m.

Chairman Ramsey announced the Gaston County Schools calendar approved earlier tonight for the 2023-2024 school year is Calendar "C".

#### **Motion**

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

Erik Terrance Barton, Jr.

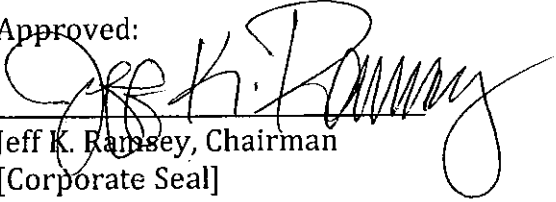
A vote was taken and motion to approve the item as presented carried unanimously. (9-0)

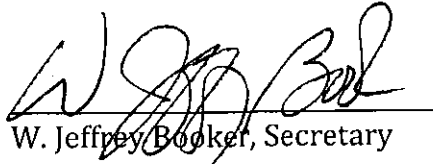
**Adjournment**

    ll business having been conducted, Motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Lee Dedmon; seconded by Mr. A.M. Stephens III motion carried unanimously. (9-0)

The Board Meeting adjourned at 8:09 p.m.

Approved:

  
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Jeff K. Ramsey, Chairman  
[Corporate Seal]

  
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W. Jeffrey Booker, Secretary

Date Approved: 3/20/2023