

Gaston County Schools  
Board of Education  
Friday, January 27, 2023  
Meeting 8:30 a.m.

MINUTES

The Gaston County Board of Education met in a regular session on Friday, January 27, 2023 in the Linda Rader Staff Development Center, 240 Eighth Avenue, Cramerton, NC. 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, and Board Clerk Dana Luoto.

Chairman Ramsey called the meeting to order at 8:32 a.m.

**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 Mr. Brent Moore; motion carried unanimously. (9-0)

**Good News – Information**

Superintendent Booker reported that January is designated as National School Board Recognition Month. Each Board Member received a bag from the NC School Boards Association. Inside the bag were a number of items including cards created by students to show their appreciation to our Board Members. It is our tradition for a class to "adopt" a Board Member for School Board Recognition Month. Also included in their bag was a picture of the adopted class with the teacher's name and grade level.

The following schools adopted each Board Member:

New Hope (Chairman Ramsey)  
Pleasant Ridge (Vice Chairman Cherry)  
Carr (Mr. Crisp)  
Brookside (Mr. Dedmon)  
Lingerfeldt (Mrs. Guthrie)  
Page Primary (Mr. Kinlaw)  
Cherryville Elementary (Mrs. Lovelace)  
Bessemer City Primary (Mr. Moore)  
Ida Rankin (Mr. Stephens)

### **Public Expression – Information**

No one signed up for Public Expression.

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

The Board considered Approval/Correction of Minutes – Action

Motion to adopt minutes of December 5, 2022 (Organizational and Regular Meetings) as presented was made by Mr. Josh Crisp; seconded by Mr. Tod Kinlaw; motion carried unanimously. (9-0)

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

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

(View PowerPoint)

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

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

(View PowerPoint)

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

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

(View PowerPoint)

### **Policy Update – Policy 6335/7270 — Drug & Alcohol Testing of Commercial Motor Vehicle Operators – Information**

Chairman Ramsey recognized Attorney Sonya McGraw who reported recent changes require revisions to GCS policies. As of January 6, 2023, school officials are no longer required to contact an applicant's previous Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) – regulated employer to obtain records of an applicant's drug or alcohol violations. This information can now be obtained from querying the Drug and Alcohol Clearinghouse. The revision to Policy 6335/7270, Drug & Alcohol Testing of Commercial Motor Vehicle Operators, will streamline this process. This change complies with 49 C.F.R. 40.25.

### **Consent Agenda – Action**

The Board considered the Consent Agenda:

- A. Recommended Personnel
- B. Budget Amendments & Budget Transfers
- C. Construction/Repair Change Orders
- D. Contracts
  - North Gaston High School Drainage Repair Project
  - Mount Holly Media Center Renovations – Mechanical
  - Mount Holly Media Center Renovations – Electrical
  - Annual Payment – CherryRoad Technologies

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

### **Superintendent's Comments**

Superintendent Booker reported the all-district band concert for the Charlotte region is at 2:00 p.m. on Saturday, January 28, 2023 at Stuart W. Cramer High School.

Superintendent Booker reported that North Gaston High School is hosting a dinner and celebration to honor long-time track coach Trace Barnett from 5:00 until 7:00 p.m. on Saturday, January 28, 2023.

Superintendent Booker reported the Gaston County Schools spelling bee will be held on Wednesday, February 1 at Ashbrook and the winner will represent GCS in the Carolina Panthers regional spelling bee in March.

Superintendent Booker reported that Friday, February 3 from 5:00 until 8:00 p.m. and Saturday, February 4 from 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. is the School Choice Fair at the Gastonia Conference Center.

### **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. A.M. Stephens; motion carried unanimously. (9-0)

The Board went into Closed Session at 9:34 a.m.

The Board returned to Open Session at 10:38 a.m.

On behalf of the Board, Mr. Tod Kinlaw reported the following:

The lawsuit captioned *C.A., a minor, by and through his Guardian ad Litem, Tiffany Scott, and K.G., by and through his Guardian ad Litem, Tiffany Scott; and K.M., by and through his Guardian ad Litem, Holden Clark v. Gaston County Board of Education and Penny Pope Barker*, in the Western District of North Carolina, Case No. 3:20-CV-00228-RJC-DSC, has been settled. The Board's insurer, Liberty Mutual Insurance Company, agreed to pay \$225,000 to each plaintiff in exchange for a full dismissal of the litigation. The settlement is not an admission of liability, but rather a strategic decision by the Board's insurance company to avoid the costs of further litigation, including possible appeals, and to obtain a dismissal and full release of all claims. The settlement agreement must be approved by the court before the matter is dismissed. A copy of the settlement agreement will be maintained in the Board's records.

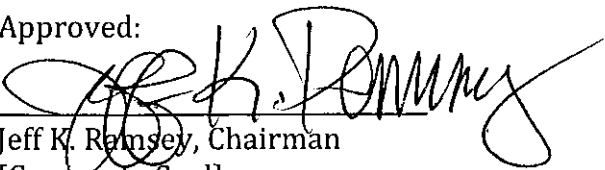
Chairman Ramsey wished Mrs. Dot Guthrie a Happy Birthday.

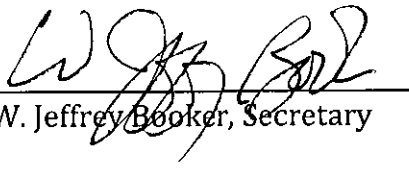
**Adjournment**

All business having been conducted, Motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Dot Cherry seconded by Mr. Brent Moore motion carried unanimously. (9-0)

The Board Meeting adjourned at 10:45 a.m.

Approved:

  
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Jeff K. Ramsey, Chairman  
[Corporate Seal]

  
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W. Jeffrey Booker, Secretary

Date Approved: 2/20/2023