

## **MEETING MINUTES**

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### **Attendees**

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#### **Voting Members**

Karen Etheridge, Chairman  
Dwan Craft, Vice Chairman  
Dr. Bill Dobney, Board Member  
Janet Rose, Board Member  
Kelly Williams Peters, Board Member

#### **Non-Voting Members**

Dr. Matt Lutz, Superintendent  
Albert Mercado, Student Board Member  
Daniel Walker, Student Board Member

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### **A. Call to Order**

#### **1. Invocation**

For the invocation, Janet Rose read the obituary of Julie Douglass. Mrs. Douglass was a retired educator who was born in Currituck, a lifelong educator who also served as the Assistant Superintendent for the district.

#### **2. Pledge of Allegiance**

#### **3. School Spotlight- Principal Greta Nelson & Shawboro Elementary School and Dr. Justin Durham & Currituck County High School**

Principal Greta Nelson and Shawboro Elementary were showcased. Ms. Nelson introduced 4th grade teacher Lacey Iacano. Ms. Iacano recently received several grants to purchase items to help her teach math and science. Students demonstrated their knowledge on circuits and battery charges.

Janet Rose thanked the Currituck Education Foundation for providing one of the grant opportunities.

Dr. Justin Durham, Principal of Currituck County High School, gave a brief overview of the school. The school's mission is to be student focused and student led. The school recently hosted a club

fair, blood drive and the Special Olympics, which was supported by all students. Dr. Durham said that learning was organic and hands-on. He thanked all of his schools' teachers for their teaching styles which promote this type of learning. Students Daniel Walker and Dylan Seamster spoke on their involvement at the high school which includes academic rigor and clubs. The students performed a duet on their instruments. Although the school has athletics - academics are at the forefront. Dr. Durham introduced his Assistant Principals, Mike McCullough and Tenia Maurer, Math Department Chair Robert Griffin and John Weeks, Band Instructor.

Dr. Lutz thanked Dr. Durham for his work at the high school -which is a pleasure to visit. The Board agreed.

**B. Public Comment Session**

Robert Griffin, teacher, spoke on the mask mandate. He added how he appreciated Administration and Dr. Durham for all of their work. Mr. Griffin said that schools have been wearing masks since almost the start of school. It was his opinion that students should be learning in the buildings. Quality of teaching and learning matters. If he is required to teach in a mask - so be it.

Jeffery Sadomo, parent, said he was still awaiting the final outcome regarding the mask requirement. The Board has been speaking regularly since last year about removing masks. He hopes masks are removed soon because of the negative impact on younger students.

Jason Smith, parent, recently visited and reviewed the COVID guidelines on the NC Health and Human Services website. He asked that the Board question the narrative along with the validity of testing and the difference between the flu and COVID. He spoke about contracting COVID and the mild effects he experienced. He asked the Board to throw out the State's COVID toolkit. He also called the local health department and was informed it was the Board of Education who set policy regarding COVID protocols.

**C. Approval of Agenda (Action)**

Removal of Item F.

Motion made by: Dr. Bill Dobney

Motion seconded by: Janet Rose

Voting:

Unanimously Approved

**D. Student Board Member Report**

Student BOE Members reported on school events, student competitions and athletics. The Board will be accepting applications for the next Student Board Member Representatives. Interviews will be conducted in February.

**E. Recognition of JP Knapp Early College**

Dr. Lutz recognized JP Knapp Early College for their graduation rate of 98.3% . Principal Denise Fallon accepted the certificate and spoke on the students' success.

**F. Anderson Smith & Wike PLLC - Audit Report (Action)**

Removed from agenda.

**G. Facilities Update:**

Dr. Lutz provided the current status of the schools' expansion projects. Moyock Elementary and Moyock Middle School expansions are on track. Aerial footage was presented of the campuses so the expansion areas could easily be seen. In addition to the increased classroom space at MES, the cafeteria will now be located within the building. Along with the cafeteria expansion and increased classrooms at MMS, the renovation of the multi-purpose room will provide a savings rather than adding on. The additional room will support the band program.

Regarding the land purchase and building a school off of Tulls Creek Road, the RFQ has been sent out and will close January 28, 2022. Updates will be shared each month.

Dwan Craft liked the safety aspect of having the MES cafeteria within the building. Kelly Peters asked what students would be attending the new school. Dr. Lutz said the school is projected to open in 2025. The district will begin reviewing school boundaries in 2023. Janet Rose thanked Dr. Lutz for moving forward with the district's needs. She was delighted with the work that he and the Board had done to address the growth in the north end of the county. Chairman Etheridge said the Board and County Commissioners had been meeting on an annual basis but no one had any idea the County's growth would explode like it has in the past two years. The Board will continue to work with the County Commissioners and the County Manager to address the growth. She applauded Dr Lutz for his work.

**1. Expansion Projects**

**2. New Construction**

**H. Safe Schools Update**

Virginia Arrington, Student Services Coordinator, presented an update on COVID in the schools. The state's toolkit has been updated. The quarantine time has lessened from 10 to 5 days - depending on the length of symptoms. A negative COVID test is not required. Ms. Arrington added that the district

never required negative testing following quarantines.

She presented the most current data on positive cases and quarantines in the schools . If the district was unmasked, there would be over 400 students quarantined -accumulating approximately 2,000 absences. Due to demand the testing turnaround time has increased from one to two days.

The Department of Health and Human Services is recommending a booster for school aged students along with vaccines for even younger children. Kelly Peters clarified that quarantine time starts with the start of the symptoms not the testing date. She understands the mask frustration but the main goal is to keep students in schools. The Board discussed the concern with the high number of student absences in addition to quarantines. They know staff are tired and going above their normal job duties in order to keep students in school.

Janet Rose mentioned that some schools are missing nurses. The Board and Dr. Lutz discussed increasing nursing hours at the schools - which has been done at JP Knapp Early College.

Janet Rose inquired about testing availability for those who have been vaccinated. Ms. Arrington replied that testing was available. Janet Rose asked that the district work with teachers and staff who are required to quarantine. The Board discussed the possibility of removing the mask mandate when positive cases declined. The goal is to keep students in schools with their teacher(s). Teachers needed to be protected as well. Dr. Dobney cautioned about creating an arbitrary number. Instead he recommended continuing with masks and reassessing the situation using data at the next Board meeting. Dr. Lutz was also cautious but willing to review the mask mandate if positive case numbers dropped and could be compared to the low numbers in early December '21. Chairman Etheridge spoke on the possibility of a soft opening with K-2, however, a spike in cases would require implementing the mask mandate again.

**1. Masks in the Schools (Action)**

Motion made by: Dr. Bill Dobney

Motion seconded by: Karen Etheridge

Voting:

Unanimously Approved

**I. Consent Agenda (Action)**

Motion made by: Dwan Craft

Motion seconded by: Dr. Bill Dobney

Voting:

Unanimously Approved

**1. Personnel Report Dated January 20, 2022**

- a. Confidential Leave Report January 20, 2022
2. Closed Session Minutes for December 1, 2021
3. Board Meeting Minutes December 16, 2021
4. Quarterly Finance Report
5. Banking Reconciliation
6. Contracts:
  - a. Modular Technologies - 2022 Mobile Classroom Project
  - b. Trafera - Laptops
7. Revision to Policy 2118 Student Board Members - 1st Reading
8. 2021 Fall Policy Update: 1st Reading (remaining policies)
  - a. 3100 Curriculum Development
  - b. 4150 School Assignment
  - c. 5030 Community Use of Facilities
  - d. 7262 Communicable Diseases-Employees
9. 2021 Fall Policy Update - 2nd Reading & Adoption
  - a. 5210 Distribution & Display of Non-School Material
  - b. 6305 Safety & Student Transportation Services
  - c. 6320 Use of Student Transportation Services
  - d. 6340 Transportation Services/Vehicle Contracts
  - e. 7100 Recruitment & Selection of Personnel
  - f. 7130 Licensure
  - g. 7262 Communicable Diseases - Employees

**h. 7340 Employee Dress & Appearance**

**i. 7510 Leave**

**j. 7530 Military Leave**

**k. 7820 Personnel files**

**l. 8305 Federal Grant Administration**

**m. 8310 Annual Independent Audit**

**n. 9000 Planning to Address Facility Needs**

**J. Information Items**

1. Work Session - February 9, 2022- Knapp Professional Learning Center, 4:00 p.m.
2. Board of Education Meeting - February 9, 2022 - Historic Currituck County Courthouse, 6:30 p.m.

**K. Board Members & Superintendent Comments**

Janet Rose was happy to see prom being planned. Teachers and staff have worked hard. She was hoping for a great 2022.

Kelly Peters said the KIES play was terrific with a lot of the community in attendance. She thanked the district's nurses for the extra work and for filling in various positions. She was very proud of the students and thanked parents for their patience as the Board works through the pandemic.

Dawn Craft recently visited all the schools including attending a recent basketball game which was filled with fans. She invited everyone to attend. She thanked Currituck Kids for inviting her to the 2022 kick off event and for all that they do for the district's children. She wanted to assure everyone that her decisions were not only for the education of students but to keep them safe as well.

Dr. Dobney said that due to impending weather he would not further delay the ending of the meeting and let Dr. Lutz speak.

Dr. Lutz thanked the Finance Department for their hard work with issuing the state bonuses and any required back pay to teachers and staff. He also thanked Melissa Reynolds, Assistant Principal, at MES for her work with Currituck Kids. He added that he was very proud of staff and the community with the effort to keep students in schools. Tomorrow will be a snow day instead of a remote learning day. The district's wrestling team is currently undefeated.

In recognition of Nation School Board Month, Dr. Lutz presented each Board member with a token of appreciation.

In closing Chairman Etheridge spoke on visiting the schools and she thanked Principal Nelson and Dr. Durham for showcasing their schools.

**L. Adjourn Meeting (Action)**

Motion made by: Janet Rose

Motion seconded by: Dwan Craft

Voting:

Unanimously Approved