

MEETING MINUTES



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Attendees

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

A. Call to Order

1. Invocation

For the invocation Dwan Craft offered sympathy to both Matt Mullins, Director of Operations and to Anne Mackin, Director of Human Resources, who both recently lost a parent. Mrs. Craft encouraged everyone to appreciate their parents and loved ones.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. School Spotlight- Principal John Parkman & Currituck County Middle School

Principal John Parkman and Currituck County Middle School were spotlighted. Mr. Parkman showcased the school's clubs which included a FFA chapter and Chess Club. He introduced Agriculture teacher and FFA advisor Lauren Cartwright and English Language Arts teacher Chris Pinto who leads the chess club. COVID interrupted the clubs last year, but students have been able

to be together and even attend competitions this year. Several students spoke on their participation and positive experiences of being club members.

Superintendent, Dr. Lutz and the Board thanked the teachers for their guidance and devoting extra time to make the clubs possible.

4. Student Recognition

The Student Recognition segment of the meeting was rescheduled.

5. Counselor Appreciation

Virginia Arrington, Student Services Coordinator, recognized school counselors as part of National School Counseling Week. Counselors perform a multitude of student services including individual student counseling, family counseling and referrals for outside services if needed. An extra counselor was recently added to Moyock Middle. Ms. Arrington thanked each school counselor for the services they provide to staff, students and parents.

B. Public Comment Session

Mr. Will Crodick, parent and resident, spoke on masking in the schools and understands decisions regarding the topic can be tough ones. He referenced recent studies on the ineffectiveness of masks. He, too, wants to keep students in school but was in favor of masks being optional rather than required. He inquired about COVID contact tracing being conducted by the local health department rather than the schools.

Jamie Miller, Exceptional Children's Director, recognized two organizations who recently donated substantial funds to the district's teachers. Through Knights of Columbus and the Outer Banks Community Foundation, teachers can apply for funds instead of using personal funds to purchase items for the classroom. The two organizations have given a total of \$10,000.

Jennifer Woods, Career Technical Education Director, wished everyone a happy CTE month. The department is celebrating the month in several ways including FFA week, participation in the course fairs, sending notes to nursing homes and having lunchtime speakers available. The department will also encourage students to dress according to their career desires. The department is working towards making 5th graders aware of CTE programs and the opportunities.

Jeffery Sodoma, parent and resident, encouraged the Board to cancel the mask mandate. He shared that he recently read an article that spoke on the various restrictions caused by masks. He added that although the CDC is still recommending masks, the World Health Organization (WHO) does not support younger children wearing masks. The long term consequences and negative effects on children are unknown.

C. Approval of Agenda (Action)

Motion made by: Dwan Craft

Motion seconded by: Kelly Williams Peters

Voting:

Unanimously Approved

D. Student Board Member Report

Student Board Members reported on school events, student competitions and athletics. This month is also Love the Bus. Drivers and the importance of the yellow school bus are recognized and celebrated.

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

Adam Scepurek of Anderson Smith & Wike PPL presented the audit report for the fiscal year ending on June 30, 2021. Mr. Scepurek stated that the district received a clean unmodified opinion letter. He explained the operation of several funds, including the fund balance which increased by \$530,000, compared to an increase of \$133,000 in 2020. This increase can be contributed to by savings caused by the pandemic such as transportation cost and the receipt of federal COVID relief funds. However, the fund balance will also help with the long term cost of the pandemic such as funding summer school and technology needs.

Mr. Scepurek reviewed the special revenue funds . The Board's total government-wide net position increased by \$993,000 which is a very positive financial position. The fund balance was extremely low last year - the ability to add to the fund this past year was a positive note. For the fiscal year ending on June 30, 2021, the Board's governmental fund balance increased from \$1.1 million to \$3.6 million.

Mr. Scepurek guided the Board to the income statement located in the audit report. The School Food Service Fund is a business fund that operates by selling meals. However, the pandemic has greatly impacted the program including the logistics of serving meals to students even while off campus. Although meals are provided free, students must eat at the schools in order for the district to receive the reimbursement. Unfortunately the program is cash-strapped and \$246,000.00 of local funds were moved to fund the program. The General fund was used last year as well. Funding the program will continue to negatively impact the amount of the general fund. Although the federal reimbursement rate is higher than previous years, student participation is needed in order for the program to operate.

In closing, Mr. Scepurek reviewed the Independent Auditors' report which contains the opinion letters on the effectiveness of internal control and/or compliance of the various programs. There were no findings of deficiencies in the programs.

It was noted that the Board reviewed the audit during the early work session as well.

Dr. Dobney clarified that although the ending Capital Outlay balance in June 2021 showed \$758,000, the actual balance was \$144,000. Funding was allocated to summer projects with the funds spent after July 1, 2021.

Voting:

Unanimously Approved

F. Facilities Update:

Dr. Lutz provided the monthly Construction Update. The Moyock Elementary expansion project is moving along. The primary building was demolished. The partial demolishing of the cafeteria will begin soon. Project permits for the Moyock Middle School are moving forward - approximately two weeks behind the Moyock Elementary project.

The Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for the unnamed new elementary school will close February 15, 2022. The elementary school will be located on Tulls Creek Road.

Pictures of the finished Moyock Elementary project will be posted at the school. Currently, the 680 students at Moyock Elementary are being served meals prepared by the School Nutrition staff at Moyock Middle School. Janet Rose noted that teachers are on duty throughout the day and working extremely hard.

1. Expansion Projects

2. New Construction

G. Overnight Field Trips:

1. CCHS - Women's Wrestling Invitational, Greensboro, NC - 2/3-5 2022

2. CCHS- Swimming Regionals, Cary NC - 2/4-5 2022

3. CCHS - Swimming States, Cary NC - 2/10-11 2022

H. Safe Schools Update

Virginia Arrington, Student Services Coordinator, provided a recap of the mask mandate including data showing the number of quarantines. A graph was used to show a current downward trend of positive COVID cases.

Janet Rose noted the downward trend and made the motion to make masks optional on February 14, 2022 - with the provision that an individual school will shift back to wearing masks if the COVID positivity rate increases above 1% for two consecutive weeks and/or a cluster is reported at an

individual school. The motion was second, by Dwan Craft. If the numbers increase the Board will hold a special meeting to address the concern. The Board asked that parents keep sick students at home. Chairman Etheridge said she believes the number of positive COVID cases are skewed because people are working and not reporting. Kelly Peters said parents and students must take responsibility to keep staff safe. Dr. Lutz said that schools are still sanitized once a week.

Dr. Dobney asked who would be responsible for monitoring the number of positive cases. Dr. Lutz responded that cases will be monitored by Ms. Arrington, Student Services Coordinator and school nurses; but the district will work with the local health department. Masks will still be required on buses.

When asked about what the Student Board Members thought about optional masks, Daniel Walker responded that it was the right time to give it a try, but students really want to be in school. Dr. Lutz agreed that this year was the closest to normal since the start of the pandemic.

Motion made by: Janet Rose

Motion seconded by: Dwan Craft

Voting:

Karen Etheridge - Vote Not Recorded

Dwan Craft - Vote Not Recorded

Dr. Bill Dobney - Vote Not Recorded

Janet Rose - Vote Not Recorded

Kelly Williams Peters - Vote Not Recorded

1. Masks in the Schools (Action)

I. Consent Agenda (Action)

Motion made by: Dr. Bill Dobney

Motion seconded by: Dwan Craft

Voting:

Unanimously Approved

1. Personnel Report Dated February 9, 2022

a. Confidential Leave Report February 9, 2022

2. Board Meeting Minutes for January 20, 2022

3. Revised Pay Scale Schedules

4. Summer School Plan 2022

5. Banking Reconciliation

6. Contracts:

a. Audit Contract for FY2022

b. Tharrington Smith LLP

7. Revision to Policy 2118 Student Board Members - 2nd Reading & Adoption

8. 2021 Fall Policy Update (remaining policies): 2nd Reading & Adoption

a. 3100 Curriculum Development

b. 4150 School Assignment

c. 5030 Community Use of Facilities

J. Information Items

1. Work Session - March 15, 2022- Knapp Professional Learning Center, 4:00 p.m.
2. Board of Education Meeting - March 15, 2022 - Historic Currituck County Courthouse, 6:30 p.m.

K. Board Members & Superintendent Comments

Dr. Dobney requested a grassroots effort along with a resolution to create a vocational education track. He asked that the resolution be shared with other counties. He stated how absolutely ridiculous it was not to provide students with education and training that would allow them the opportunity to work in the growing housing industry in Currituck County. An example was the need for Heating, Air Ventilation and Cooling (HVAC) technicians. He asked that County Commissioners and other districts be contacted to support a vocational education diploma. The Board discussed the benefits of students receiving a trade certification. In closing, Dr. Dobney announced that former Currituck County Schools student, Rylan Pay, was recently offered a full scholarship into the nuclear science doctoral program at Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Dwan Craft thanked the community service organization for their donations to the schools. She congratulated all the district's outstanding athletic teams. The demolition of Moyock Elementary was bittersweet since the construction required the removal of the memorial trees located on the campus. Mrs. Craft is one of the school's retired teachers.

Kelly Peters expressed her appreciation to all the school counselors as well as the Transportation Department. Earlier in the day, the Board conducted Student Board of Education interviews which were

outstanding. When visiting school she sees students engaged. She said that once the mask mandate is removed, it will take a community effort to keep everyone in school.

Janet Rose thanked the valuable school counselor. The district has so many reasons to be proud; including students fund-raising for their schools and athletes competing and winning at the region and state levels. Two Currituck students are in the running for the Park Scholarship at NCSU. In closing, Mrs. Rose was excited about the upcoming Dr. Seuss Day which focuses on the importance of reading. She challenged parents to read with their children.

Dr. Lutz provided an update on the accreditation process. The self needs assessment has been completed at Currituck County High School. The district will file a letter for review with the NC Department of Public Instruction. The district will wait to hear from DPI as far as the next step in the process - which may include a visit to the school. In closing, Dr. Lutz thanked the bus drivers, the community and staff for their dedication to the school district.

Karen Etheridge closed by thanking the community for their understanding during the height of the pandemic and allowing the Board of Education to conduct professional meetings. She hoped that the severity of the pandemic was over and again thanked the public for not making the meetings a hostile environment. The Board will continue to strive to make the right decision and to look out for the children. She, too, is looking forward to masks being optional in the schools.

L. Adjourn Meeting (Action)

Motion made by: Dr. Bill Dobney

Motion seconded by: Janet Rose

Voting:

Unanimously Approved