

Regular Session Board Meeting Highlights
March 9, 2020

The Gates County Board of Education met in regular session on Monday, March 9, 2020, at Buckland Elementary School. Chairman Ray Felton was in attendance by phone. Mrs. Glendale Boone called the meeting to order at 4:04 p.m. The following board members were present: Mr. Ray Felton (via phone), Mrs. Glendale Boone, Mr. Leslie Byrum, Mrs. Claire Whitehurst and Mrs. Sallie Ryan.

Mr. Leslie Byrum made a motion to amend the agenda to add presentation by Mr. John Leidy, Board Attorney, providing information about year-round school calendar, as Item 1.b. under IV. - Items for Information. Mrs. Claire Whitehurst seconded the motion. There was no discussion and the motion carried unanimously.

Mrs. Glendale Boone made a motion to enter into closed session to discuss personnel as outlined in North Carolina General Statute 143-318.11(a)(6). Mrs. Claire Whitehurst seconded the motion. There was no discussion and the motion carried unanimously.

The board reconvened open session at 5:00 p.m. with all board members present, including Mr. Ray Felton, by phone.

Mrs. Glendale Boone made a motion to approve the agenda, as amended by Mr. Leslie Byrum. Mrs. Claire Whitehurst seconded the motion. There was no discussion and the motion carried unanimously.

During Public Comments, Mrs. Lisa Wilkins, teacher at T.S. Cooper Elementary, invited the board to attend a special Letterland event, being held at the Merchants Millpond on April 22-23, 2020, for the elementary students. She asked for the board members to volunteer to read books to the students during the event. Mrs. Barbara Toti's drama students from the high school will be performing as Letterland characters.

Maegan Watson expressed concerns about the community center not offering enough sports for our youth. She feels the fees charged are excessive, and there isn't a welcoming atmosphere. She also feels this has contributed to the decline in participation in school sports. Ashley Horne also expressed the same concerns. She had researched surrounding counties and provided information about their sports programs. The board noted they do not comment when presented with public comments, but will research the matter. They thanked Mrs. Watson and Mrs. Horne for sharing their concerns.

During the Superintendent's Report, Mrs. Gail Hawkins, principal at Buckland Elementary, thanked the board for providing funding for tutoring. She showed a video and shared some recent and upcoming Panda events:

- Gates on the Go
- Girls on the Run – Obici Grant
- Battle of the Books – Buckland won 1st place
- Dr. Seus Birthday

- Free Book Fair
- Kindergarten Registration – 31 signed up
- March Madness Attendance Challenge
- Fourth Grade will hold a wax museum on Friday, March 13 at 9:30 AM in the gym. Students have researched a famous person, which they will portray at the wax museum.

Mr. John Leidy, Board Attorney, provided information regarding school calendars. In 2004, the school calendar law was implemented so that counties across the state would operate on the same basic calendar. The calendar required 180 student instructional days or 1000 instructional hours. The school start date and ending date guidelines, and the number of teacher work days and holidays were set by the state, not the individual counties. It has since been adjusted to the current regulation of 185 instructional days or 1025 instructional hours, with the same guidelines for start and end dates, and for teacher workdays and holidays. Education waivers are not allowed. Waivers are provided for weather related events, but must meet certain criteria. There are 3 types of calendars:

- Traditional calendar
- Year Round calendar
- Modified Year Round School

The modified year round calendars are only used in counties that had approved them prior to the 2004 law. There are no provisions for approval of modified calendars at this time. Our board voted, on February 3, 2020, to draft a bill to be sent to Raleigh, to allow the board to modify our county calendar to meet the needs of our students. The board would like to pursue this, and asked Mr. Leidy if he would assist in this endeavor.

In the Report from the Board, Mrs. Sallie Ryan reminded everyone of the importance of everyone participating in the census this year. The information gathered, helps our county get funding for various projects. All the board members were appreciative of the hard work and dedication provided to complete the Central Middle School project. They all felt it was a success story a long time in the making.

Mrs. Sandra Pittman, Finance Officer, had provided monthly reports to the board prior to the meeting. She noted we are where we should be with the budget for this time of the year.

Dr. Paula Simpson, School Nutrition Director, had provided the board with a report prior to the meeting. She handed out a revised report and noted that meal participation was slightly down from the previous month, due to fog delays and school closures in February.

Dr. Williams approved the following Out-of-District Request for 2019-2020:

- Ella Harrell to attend Gatesville Elementary

Dr. Williams approved the following Out-of-District Request for 2020-2021:

- Mary Grace Baker to attend Central Middle School, and James Baker to attend Gates County High. Approval is contingent upon release from Perquimans County Schools

Dr. Williams approved the following donations less than \$500.00:

- Buckland Elementary School – Donation of two Bouncy Houses for April 3, 2020 Panda Pride Event
- Buckland Elementary School – Donation of Coloring Books and Stickers for Fire Safety

Unfinished Business:

- Policy 3620 – Extracurricular Activities and Student Organizations
Mrs. Claire Whitehurst and Mrs. Sallie Ryan met with Mr. Jeremy Wright, Student Services Director, to discuss this policy, and they made recommendations. Mrs. Claire Whitehurst made a motion to approve the policy with the recommendations from the committee. Mrs. Glendale Boone seconded the motion, and the board unanimously approved.

The following Consent Agenda Items were approved:

1. Approval of Minutes – February 3, 2020 Regular Session
2. Approval of Minutes – February 25, 2020 Budget Retreat Meeting
3. T.S. Cooper Elementary Fundraisers and Field Trips
4. Exceptional Children Transportation Contract
5. GCHS HOSA Club Overnight Field Trip
6. GCHS Robotics Club Overnight Field Trip
7. Wide Area Network Renewal for 2020-2023
8. Buckland Elementary Out-of-State Field Trips (K, 2nd & 5th)
9. Budget Amendment No. 2 – State Public School Fund
10. Budget Amendment No. 1 – Local Fund No. 2
11. Donation of Copy Paper from QVC
12. Budget Amendment No. 2 – Local Fund No. 2
13. Central Middle School Athletic Boosters Fundraiser

Under New Business Mrs. Heather Boyd, Speech-Language Pathologist for Gates County Schools, presented her request to use one of the trailers at Buckland Elementary to offer extra tutoring services after school, to students with special learning needs. She has received extra training, at her own cost, and would like to utilize this to help our students and parents. This would be a private tutoring service and there would be a cost to the parents. However, she feels the cost would be much less than what parents are paying for these services now. Also, there is an added benefit, to the parents, of having these services offered locally. Mrs. Boyd presented a proposal to pay Gates County Schools for the use of the trailer. The Board was concerned about the liability insurance, and asked Mrs. Boyd to research this and report back to the board, before they make a decision.

The following personnel recommendations were approved:

NEW HIRES

- Kevon Beasley – Part-time Custodian Buckland Elementary replacing Kendrick Harrison
- Iris Wiggins – 1:1 EC Teacher Assistant – T.S. Cooper Elementary replacing Susan Baker

- Kimberly Riddick – Part-time Teacher Assistant – New Beginnings Daycare – replacing Shanese Eaton
- Felisha Walton - EC Teacher Assistant – Central Middle replacing Lekisha Holley
- Constance Arline – Part-time School Nutrition Assistant – Gatesville Elementary replacing Deanna Heilbrun
- Shantisha Watford –School Nutrition Assistant – Gates County High School – replacing Patricia Boone

TRANSFER

- Keri Askew – transfer from Accounting Specialist to Payroll Specialist effective 2-7-2020

TUTORS

- Lou Riddick – Gatesville Elementary (ELA)
- Elaine Vaughan – Buckland Elementary (ELA)
- Katherine Byrum – Gatesville Elementary (ELA) & Buckland
- Kathy Sissons – T.S. Cooper Elementary (Math)
- Marva Bond – T.S. Cooper Elementary
- Jessica Harrell – Gatesville Elementary (Remediate)
- Lori Lories – Gatesville Elementary (Remediate)

STATUS CHANGE

- Carla Clark – from Permanent Sub Driver to Regular Permanent Driver

INTERNSHIP

- Dana Forsythe – Gatesville Elementary

VOLUNTEERS

- Robert Paris – Gates County High School & Central Middle
- Nina Swinks – Buckland Elementary

SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

- Amy Moore – Certified
- Deana Elizabeth White – (Student Teacher guidelines)

RESIGNATIONS

- Deanna Heilbrun – School Nutrition – Gates County High
- Carol Drewy – New Beginnings Daycare

STUDENT OBSERVATION

- Marilyn Hall – Gates County High School

CENTRAL MIDDLE SCHOOL ATHLETIC COACHES

- Jennifer Dail – Head Softball Coach
- Katelyn Collins – Asst. Softball Coach
- Mark Pierce – Asst. Baseball Coach

TRANSFER OF GCHS ATHLETIC DIRECTOR SUPPLEMENT

In Other Business the following items were discussed:

- The April Regular Session Meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 8, 2020 at the Gates County Board of Education Central Office. Closed Session will begin at 9:00 a.m. and Open Session at 10:00 a.m.
- Board members will participate in the NCSBA Webinar – What Every School Employee Must Know About Inappropriate Staff-Student Relationships – on Tuesday, March 24, 2020.

Mr. Leslie Byrum made a motion to adjourn. Mrs. Claire Whitehurst seconded the motion. There was no discussion, and the motion passed unanimously.

There being no further business, Chairman Felton adjourned the meeting at 6:14 p.m.