

Currituck County Schools**Board of Education Meeting****10/06/2020 06:30 PM****Meeting Minutes**

Historic Currituck County Courthouse

Printed : 11/16/2020 3:28 PM ET

[Stream Live Meeting Here](#) or Mediacom Channel 18 on the mainland.

Attendees

Voting Members

Karen Etheridge, Chairman
Dwan Craft, Vice Chairman
Dr. Bill Dobney, Board Member
Will Crodick, Board Member
Janet Rose, Board Member

Non-Voting Members

Dr. Matt Lutz, Superintendent
Olivia McDonald, Student Board Member
Taylor McCarthy, Student Board Member

A. Call to Order

1. Invocation
2. Pledge of Allegiance

B. Approval of Agenda (Action)

Motion made by: Dr. Bill Dobney

Motion seconded by: Dwan Craft

Voting:

Unanimously Approved

C. Recognition of Technology Staff

Dr. Matt Lutz recognized the Technology Department. The entire department was in attendance. Sandy Reynolds, CIO and the Director of the Department, also expressed her gratitude. On March 13th the district was forced into remote learning due to the pandemic. The department pulled together as a team and assisted students, teachers and families as well.

D. Public Comment Session

Amy Monroe, teacher, explained that she had made a prior request to allow teachers to have dividers/barriers for their desks. She was informed that Dr. Lutz made the decision that the district would not purchase barriers or allowed barriers due to a false sense of security. She then publicly apologized for misdirecting her frustration towards her principal instead of Dr. Lutz. Mrs. Monroe continued to state information that promoted and/or recommended the use of barriers. She said barriers are being used in the schools' office areas. Due to the late notice she was unable to purchase a barrier but was able to make one, which she displayed. Mrs. Monroe ending by stating she was not asking the district to provide the barriers but to allow teachers to use them in the classrooms.

Dana Parker, parent and staff member, thanked the superintendent and teachers who devoted their time to make virtual learning successful. Mrs. Parker explained that recently she was quarantined at home due to COVID exposure. This gave her the ability to see the

daily instruction provided to her children. She said the dedication of teachers was apparent. She asked the Board to carefully review the demands placed on teachers. She asked them to please choose a school reopening plan that will not over burden the district's teachers.

E. Remote Learning and Return to In-Person Instruction (Action)

Dr. Lutz, Superintendent, explained that on March 13, 2020 all schools were closed by the Governor due to the pandemic. The district has since been working around the ever changing mandates by the state. Dr. Lutz thanked the public and teachers for working through the challenges of online learning. On September 17, 2020, Governor Cooper announced that school districts could choose to open schools for students in PreK- 5th for in-person instruction, but not before October 5th. Dr. Lutz presented the options for reopening schools:

Option 1: PreK-12th grade remain in Plan C (continues remote learning)

Option 2: PreK-5 face to face instruction, 6-8 Plan B (hybrid instruction) and Plan C for 9-12 (remote).

Option 3: PreK-5 Plan B (hybrid instruction) and Plan C for 6-12 (remote).

Option 4: PreK-5 Plan A (face to face) and Plan C for 6-12 (remote).

Dr. Lutz spoke about returning to school and working through the mandates under Plan A. He explained that social distancing also affects bus capacities. The bus capacity for elementary students has been reduced from 72 to 48 students. He explained the district's options for reopening were created by using the state's recommendations and requirements outlined in the Lighting Our Way Forward; NC Guidance on Reopening K-12 Public Schools and Strong Schools NC Public Health Toolkit. Approximately 400 elementary students have registered to remain in online learning when school resumes. This option will be available until December 18, 2020 and students will not be allowed to opt out. Since online learning must be offered the district will need to reorganize; therefore, the district cannot guarantee students will keep their current teachers.

Dr. Lutz thanked the community and staff for taking part in the surveys which provided input for planning. Over 2,800 responses were received. He went on to provide information on safety precautions that will be used in the facilities - such as hand sanitizing stations, proper cleaning of the facilities, organized drop off areas with temperature checks and the requirement of cloth masks in the buildings. Isolation rooms will be available for students and staff. The district will provide a COVID data dashboard which will be updated weekly.

Dr. Lutz continued to speak on the logistics of the reopening. Parents will be encouraged to transport students to and from school. Each morning health checks will be conducted before the students enter the bus. Breakfast and lunches will be available to students at no charge for the remainder of the 2020 calendar year. Grab and go lunches will be served in cafeterias and classrooms - location depends on student capacity.

Schools will not be available to the community for events, etc. The NCHSAA has created the sports schedule and safety protocols. Dr. Lutz said the recommendation is for the district to follow those guidelines.

In addition, Dr. Lutz made the recommendation to revise the district's school calendars to make October 16, 19 & 20 teacher workdays to allow time for grading and rescheduling.

Will Crodick made the motion to select Option 2 of the district's proposal and to seek support to add K-2 classroom support and to keep schools open all day on Fridays. Without a second the motion failed.

Janet Rose made the motion to select Option 2 with less or no professional development so teachers can collaborate and to keep Fridays as a ½ day of remote learning to allow planning time and cleaning of the schools (seconded by Dwan Craft).

Mr. Crodick said that he would like the least distraction for K-2 students so services can be delivered with little or no changing of teachers. He added that the schools needed teacher assistants and it was hard for working parents to deal with childcare for the ½ days on Fridays - students should remain in school.

Dr. Lutz said Friday's 1/2 day of virtual learning would allow time for deep cleaning and should there be an uptick in confirmed COVID cases, the continuation of some virtual learning would be beneficial should students revert back to remote learning.

Mr. Crodick suggested to conduct virtual learning while in school. This would allow parents to work, as well as going through the process of delivering the virtual therefore keeping the skills honed. This way would also cause the least disruption.

Mrs. Rose stated that she understood how hard teachers were working with long hours and believes the ½ days on Friday would help. She agreed teacher assistants were needed but there were funding concerns. Maybe it would be possible to pull/reassigned current staff members.

Mr. Crodick said the Board should prioritize spending. He added that approximately \$250,000 had been invested into Central Office positions when it could have been used for teacher assistants. Dr. Lutz asked him to clarify. Mr. Crodick stated the the new positions included a Director of Transportation, an Instructional Coordinator, and the Director of Student Services. He said instead of spending the money on these positions, it should be spent in the classroom. Chairman Etheridge said Mr. Crodick's statement was not true. Dr. Lutz said when he was serving as Interim Superintendent the positions had been reviewed and he had done the best to stay cost neutral.

Dr. Dobney said he preferred Option C which kept the district in virtual learning because he was concerned for the safety of teachers. However it is his understanding that Dr. Lutz is considering a virtual academy where teachers could apply for virtual teaching positions.

Mrs. Craft said she had visited with a teacher who only had three students online. The teacher initially felt she could conduct in-person teaching and online simultaneously. However after trying the setup she said it would not work. Mrs. Craft said teachers are going beyond their job duties. They need a chance to collaborate and students should be able return to school with everyone on the same page. She added that she was concerned with the density of PreK-5 buses as well as the availability of buses to transport students. Dr. Lutz said the capacity of middle school buses will only allow one student per seat, which is concerning. As far as transporting PreK-5, the district will use 35 out of the district's 43 buses.

The Board voted and approved the motion on the floor.

Mr. Crodick asked if dividers would be allowed in the classroom. Dr. Lutz said he was researching pricing for similar devices. Mr. Crodick asked if the devices would be available before the start of school and asked if teachers would be allowed to bring dividers/shields. Dr. Lutz said he would be making a decision and again would like to see the use of common devices. Mr. Crodick asked if there was policy on teachers bringing items into the classroom. Dr. Lutz said he was unsure at the present time.

Motion made by: Janet Rose

Motion seconded by: Dwan Craft

Voting:

Unanimously Approved

F. Consent Agenda (Action)

Motion made by: Dr. Bill Dobney

Motion seconded by: Dwan Craft

Voting:

Unanimously Approved

1. Personnel Report Dated October 6, 2020
 - a. Leave Report - Confidential
2. Budget Amendment Dated October 6, 2020
3. Banking Reconciliation
4. Revised August 6, 2020 Closed Session Minutes
5. September 3, 2020 Board Meeting Minutes
6. September 10, 2020 Joint Meeting Minutes
7. September 21, 2020 Special Meeting Minutes

G. Information Items

1. Work Session - November 10, 2020- Knapp Professional Learning Center, 4:00 p.m.
2. Board of Education Meeting- November 10, 2020- Knapp Professional Learning Center, 6:30 p.m.
- Date and location changed due to a conflict.

H. Board Member and Superintendent Comments

Dr. Lutz said that the district has been in contact with Cognia and will be reviewing cost and moving forward with accreditation.

Mr. Crodick said he has heard positive and negatives regarding the current state of the schools. He appreciates the hard work of the teachers. He said he was disappointed that he had previously asked about the district's nepotism policy but was yet to receive a legal opinion.

Mrs. Rose thanked everyone for going above their job description. She thanked parents and said based on input 15 % would like to remain online and 85% would like to return to school. Mrs. Rose provided the dates for the November 3rd election and recognized the 100th anniversary of women's right to vote.

Dwan Craft said staff members are amazing. She visited CCHS and CCMS and observed the track being refurbished. She also noticed a little library setup at the entryway of CES.

Dr. Dobney thanked staff, teachers and administrators for working on the plan to reopen schools and he prays for a safe school year. He told everyone to vote.

Dr. Lutz applauded the work of staff and the kind output from the community during his first month as serving as superintendent. He is thankful for the opportunity to lead a wonderful school district.

Chairman Etheridge thanked the superintendent, his team and teachers. She reminded everyone to conduct their research on candidates and to vote on Nov. 3rd for the individual they felt would serve the community in a positive direction.

I. Adjourn Meeting (Action)

Motion made by: Janet Rose

Motion seconded by: Dwan Craft

Voting:

Unanimously Approved

Chairperson

Secretary