

PRINCE GEORGE COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD
PRINCE GEORGE, VIRGINIA
March 18, 2021

A special meeting/work session of the Prince George School Board came to order at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, March 18, 2021, at the Prince George High School.

School Board Members and staff present:

Mrs. Jill A. Andrews, Board Member
Mr. Robert E. L. Eley, III, Chairman
Mr. Chris A. Johnson, Vice Chairman
Mr. Cecil M. Smith, Board Member
Ms. Sherry D. Taylor, Board Member
Dr. Lisa Pennycuff, Superintendent
Mr. William Barnes, Assistant Superintendent
Mr. Dustin Menhart, Assistant Superintendent
Mrs. Rebecca Kirk, Clerk of the Board

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Eley, Chairman, called the special meeting to order at 5:30 P.M.

II. ROLL CALL

Roll call indicated all School Board members present:

Present: Andrews, Eley, Johnson, Smith, Taylor

III. CLOSED MEETING – MOTION TO GO INTO A CLOSED MEETING TO DISCUSS SPECIFIC LEGAL MATTERS RELATING TO POLICIES, CONTRACTS, AND LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS AND PERSONNEL MATTERS RELATING TO THE EMPLOYMENT, ASSIGNMENT, APPOINTMENT, PROMOTION, DEMOTION, PERFORMANCE, SALARIES, OR RESIGNATION OF DISTRICT EMPLOYEES (pursuant to Section 2.2-3711 of the Code of Virginia)

- A. Legal Matter – Section 2.2-3711.A.7
 - 1. L07/20-21
 - 2. L08/20-21
 - 3. L09/20-21
- B. Personnel Matters – Section 2.2-3711.A.1

1. P56/20-21
2. P60/20-21

Mr. Johnson made a motion to go into a closed meeting to discuss specific legal matters relating to policies, contracts and legislative proposals and personnel matters relating to the employment, assignment, appointment, promotion, demotion, performance salaries, or resignation of district employees pursuant to the legal and personnel exemptions of the VA Code §§2.2-3711.A.7 and 2.2-3711.A.1. Mr. Smith seconded the motion.

VOTE: Ayes: Unanimous

IV. CERTIFICATION OF CLOSED MEETING AND ACTIONS

The School Board returned out of closed session. Mr. Johnson stated that the board added two matters to the agenda and closed session. Public Safety Matter PS17/20-21 and Student Matter SM01/20-21 were added to the agenda.

- C. Public Safety Matter – Section 2.2-3711.A.19 [added to agenda]**
 - 1. PS17/20-21**
- D. Student Matter – Section 2.2-3711.A.2 [added to agenda]**
 - 1. SM01/20-21**

Mr. Johnson moved to reconvene in open session and stated that the Prince George County School Board had convened a closed meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and

Pursuant to Section 2.2-3712 of the Code of Virginia requires a certification by this school board that such closed meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia law;

The Prince George County School Board hereby certifies that to the best of each member's knowledge (i) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia law were discussed in the closed meeting to which this certification applies, and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard, discussed or considered.

Mr. Smith seconded the motion.

VOTE: Ayes: Unanimous

No action was taken on Legal Matter L07/20-21.

Mr. Smith made a motion that in Legal Matter L08/20-21 to approve authority to enter into discussions as recommended and accept recommendation as presented. Ms. Taylor seconded the motion.

VOTE: Ayes: Unanimous

Ms. Taylor made a motion that in Legal Matter L09/20-21 to approve authority to draft language as discussed. Mrs. Andrews seconded the motion.

VOTE: Ayes: Unanimous

(For the record, draft language for potential VSBA Legislative proposal).

Ms. Taylor made a motion that in Personnel Matter P60/20-21 to dismiss employee effective March 18, 2021 for job abandonment. Mr. Johnson seconded the motion.

VOTE: Ayes: Unanimous

No action was taken on Public Safety PS17/20-21.
No action was taken on Student Matter SM01/20-21.

V. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – led by Mrs. Andrews

VI. SCHOOL BOARD INVOCATION – led by Mr. Smith

VII. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Mr. Johnson made a motion to approve the agenda as amended including items added to the closed meeting. Mrs. Andrews seconded the motion.

VOTE: Ayes: Unanimous

VIII. RECOGNITIONS

A. School Social Worker Appreciation Week – March 7-13, 2021
“Beacon of Hope: School Social Workers – Lighting the Way”

- Kristin Dunnigan
- Matt Hall
- Sherica Johnson
- Morgan Pennington

Mrs. Partin stated that National School Social Work Week was celebrated March 7-13, 2021. The theme of this year’s celebration is “Beacon of Hope: School Social Workers – Lighting the Way”. In their role, School Social Workers light the way, emphasizing the whole child, collaborating with other professionals, linking students and families with

needed services, and advocating for their profession. She introduced our school social workers with their years of service in the field and with the Prince George School System, along with their college education background and passion points as to why they are dedicated social workers.

Matt Hall (31 years), Sherica Johnson (4 years), Kristin Dunnigan (3 years/ 5 years overall), Morgan Pennington (1st year). Dr. Pennycuff and Mr. Eley expressed their appreciation for these four devoted people who are passionate about advocating for social, mental, and emotional health needs of our students. They thanked our social workers for their support and handling of our students this week from an unfortunate incident.

IX. CONSENT Agenda

- A. Personnel Report
- B. Board Request

Mrs. Andrews made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as amended. Ms. Taylor seconded the motion.

Personnel Report - Appointments

LaNae King – Highly Qualified Paraprofessional, North – April 1, 2021
Rachel Brendal – Learning Specialist, North – April 1, 2021

Resignations

Mike Nelson – Principal, PGHS – March 24, 2021
Rachel Brendal – Highly Qualified Paraprofessional, North – March 31, 2021
Stephanie Gregory – Head Custodian, Harrison – **March 31, 2021**
Elizabeth Massey – Teacher, North – June 18, 2021

Contract Revision

Stephanie Thompkins – SPED Teacher, PGEC – March 3, 2021

Board Requests – Religious Exemption

Teressa Robinette requests permission for her children Baylee Joe and Tatum, to be exempt from compulsory attendance.

VOTE: Ayes
(bold indicates amendments)

X. ACTION ITEMS

- A. Award of Construction Contract for the New Prince George Elementary School – Stephen Halsey, Lisa Pennycuff

Sealed bids were opened for this project on March 2, 2021. Of the six bids received, Loughridge and Company LLC was deemed the lowest responsible and responsive bidder. Recommendation of staff is to approve a construction contract to Loughridge & Company, LLC, to begin with funds already appropriated and available for school construction, 1) with a limitation of not to exceed \$4,200,000.00 for the initial phase of such contract based on available funding and prior appropriation and 2) with a limitation not to exceed the total contract amount of \$30,403,375.00, for the new Prince George Elementary School, with such contract (other than the initial phase) to be contingent on the final appropriation of the total contract amount from the County.

Mr. Johnson made a motion to award the construction contract as recommended. Mr. Smith seconded the motion.

VOTE: Ayes: Unanimous

- B. New Student Organization, Book Club, N.B. Clements – Kimberly Bailey, Thad Sebera

Mrs. Bailey stated the purpose of a new Book Club is to encourage reading and a discussion on a variety of literary genres as well as promote life-long reading in a safe environment. The Book Club will serve as an extension of all English classes and will be open to interested students at N.B. Clements Junior High School.

Ms. Taylor made a motion to approve the New Book Club at N.B. Clements Junior High School. Mr. Smith seconded the motion.

VOTE: Ayes: Unanimous

- C. Approval of 2021-22 Prince George County Public Schools Budget – Lisa Pennycuff

Annually, the Superintendent prepares, with the approval of the School Board, the estimate of the amount of money deemed necessary during the next fiscal year for the support of the public schools of the division. The Superintendent's proposed budget was presented and work sessions followed in February. A Public Hearing on the budget was held on February 22, 2021. The attached PowerPoint Presentation includes the School Division's Mission, priorities taken from the Comprehensive Plan, FY22 Revenue costs and expenditures, comparison of Region 1 per pupil funding and our school division's ranking in Region 1 (13 of 15) state (122 of 132), and local (119 of 132). She spoke of the additional needs of the school division (pages 15-17). This budget includes a raise for those on the Teacher Salary Scale and for support staff. This increase is necessary

to address the teaching shortage in Prince George that is prevalent across the state of Virginia. Currently, Prince George Schools starting salary for teachers is 10th of the 15 divisions in Region 1, placing us in the bottom third of our region with approximately 70% of our competitors offering higher starting salaries. An increase for all experience levels of teaching staff is imperative to improve the division's ability to recruit and retain a quality instructional staff. She also provided a Support Staff salary comparison with other Region 1 staff and spoke about building a sustainable technology budget to support instruction. Dr. Pennycuff presented a proposed FY22 budget of \$77,670,915 (which is \$5,947,847 difference from last year). The budget has been calculated on 5,906 students, as recommended in the General Assembly's Budget and the Future Think "Low" projections; 7.97% increase in Healthcare costs; restoration of the previous salary scales, providing a step increase and revised scales, and includes an average increase of \$3,200-\$3,600 for those on the Teacher Salary Scale and a minimum of \$1,000.00 raise for those on the Support Staff Scale.

An adopted budget needs to be submitted to the Board of Supervisors no later than April 1 per state code. The County is scheduled to hold a Public Hearing on its entire budget on April 27, 2021 and the Board of Supervisors is scheduled to approve the County's FY22 budget on May 11, 2021.

Mr. Smith made a motion to approve the Superintendent's Proposed FY22 Budget as presented. Mrs. Andrews seconded the motion.

VOTE: Ayes: Unanimous

XI. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Special Education Annual Plan 2021-22 – Kae Partin

As part of the annual plan for special education, the Superintendent must provide assurances to the VDOE that Prince George Public Schools conform to all federal and state regulations governing the education of students with disabilities. The components of the plan include the superintendent's certification, policy statements, and statement of assurance. Federal Funds for Section 611 are used for school aged programs (6-21 years of age) for salaries and benefits of Learning Specialists and Section 619 federal funds are used for special education pre-school programs (ECSE 3-5 years of age). Only partial funds are used towards salary and benefits for one of six pre-school teachers in the division and all other salaries/benefits are budgeted by the school division. Deadline for submission of the plan to the VDOE is May 14, 2021. This item will be placed on the agenda for action at the April 21, 2021 meeting.

B. Graduation Planning June 2021 – William Barnes

Matt McAllister, Donna Branch-Harris, and Christina Pope gave a PowerPoint presentation on options for 2021 graduation (attached). Mr. McAllister stated that this is the most exciting

time of the year for our seniors and our seniors have “received the short end of the stick due to COVID”. If all restrictions are lifted, we would exercise Plan 1: Traditional Outdoor Graduation on June 19, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. Ms. Branch-Harris spoke about Alternative Plan 1: Indoor Graduation if restrictions are not lifted. Graduation would be similar to last year’s plan. From June 14-June 18, 9:00 – 5:00 each day, seniors would be assigned individual appointment times, beginning with honor graduates and continuing alphabetically. Seniors shall invite five guests with them, they would enter into the building in graduation regalia and pass through stations (medal pickup, mirror check, photo stop, record short video message, time capsule) before the final station in the gym where the student’s name will be called and student walks across the stage to receive the diploma.

Mrs. Pope spoke about Alternative Plan 2: Small Group Outdoor Graduation (this option used only if the VDH and State Superintendent’s Office change to increase the number of participants allowed at graduation ceremonies). Four ceremonies will occur on June 16 and June 17 (rain date June 18), 50 students per ceremony, 5 guest tickets per student. She outlined the logistics of students meeting in the high school, walking to the football field to be seated, brief ceremony to include the national anthem, short welcome, presentation of graduates, seniors walking across the stage to receive their diplomas, and photographs. Ceremonies will be live-streamed with the link provided on the school website and social media accounts. Seniors will also be given opportunity to participate with the celebration stations in the gym lobby and auditorium on June 14 and 15. Faculty monitors will limit number of students to maintain appropriate health and safety measures.

Mr. McAllister stated that a virtual ceremony video tribute will be posted to the division’s website on June 19 at 9:00 a.m. This pre-recorded video will continue the traditional speeches of a welcome from the administration, Superintendent’s speech and speeches from the student government leaders, the salutatorian and valedictorian, and provide a virtual slide of each graduation candidate. Additional traditions will include Friday Night Lights, celebratory Class of 2021 yard signs, PGHS Class of 2021 masks will be provided to each graduation, commemorative programs printed for each graduate, and a senior parade. As restrictions are amended by the state, staff will modify our guidelines for graduation. All planning will be based upon current guidelines from the VDH and CDC. Additional questions and issues were addressed by Ms. Branch-Harris for indoor ceremonies and Mrs. Pope addressed additional considerations for outdoor ceremonies.

Dr. Pennycuff stated she is expecting the next Governor’s Executive Order April 1 or 2, and we will modify our plans as needed.

Board members provided some feedback for consideration of alternating times or considering virtual or early release of other students to avoid distractions, consider times for more user friendly in the evenings, rain date schedule, use of cell phones on graduation day, survey to parents and graduates returning to their elementary schools for a “walk down memory lane” as was started in 2019.

- C. Comprehensive Planning Committee Update – Lisa Pennycuff, Betsy Overkamp-Smith

A group of 32 school leaders, staff and school board members comprise the Comprehensive Planning Committee that has been meeting monthly since October. A final Comprehensive Plan is scheduled to be presented to the School Board for a July approval. Elements of a Comprehensive Plan include a vision, mission, guiding principles, goals, measurable objectives, and action steps. The committee's draft vision and mission states: The vision of PGCPs is to prepare students to navigate tomorrow's changing world. The mission of PGCPs is to engage, encourage, and inspire every child, every day. Input was received from board members, staff from each school, each department, business leaders, high school students, and three town hall meetings to hear from the community. The same five questions were asked of each person. Please see the attached PowerPoint presentation to see the results of posed questions and the survey results. Students, teachers, staff, and environment, appear to be at the center of the questions about what we are most proud of, experiences that demonstrate excellence, and strengths. Life skills, work experience, ability to think, self-management top what graduates need for success in college and career. Pay and retaining staff are the most critical issues that will impact the success of the division the next five years. Less testing, new schools, and support of teachers are the most inspiring stretch goals to achieve and providing students with opportunities for college and careers led comments describing how community wants to see the school division in 2027. The Comprehensive Planning Committee continues working on goals, objectives, and strategies and will provide an update at the April 15, 2021 special meeting.

D. FY22 Schedule for N.B. Clements/PGHS – William Barnes, Jason Chandler

The Scheduling Committee has been reviewing secondary scheduling options for the 2021-22 school year. Option 1: Prior to COVID, the division was on a seven-block alternating day schedule which included six classes on even/odd days and one class every day. Option 2 consists of a 4x4 offering of eight classes in one year (four classes each day for one semester) with multiple components and formats (traditional, stacked, alternating day). A 4x4 Traditional format would include three core subjects/one elective in first semester and two core subjects/two electives for the second semester. A 4x4 Stacked plan includes the same format, except one core/one elective would alternate even/odd days while the other six courses would be split per semesters. This option would still allow for eight courses for the year. Mr. Chandler showed additional stacked scheduling samples to include interventions, advanced studies and Rowanty. He also provided scheduling options with the "Royal" block for eighth graders to help transition students to Clements Junior High School. The Scheduling Committee continues to create course progression and sample schedules for students. This information will be rolled out to student and parent focus groups and presented at faculty meetings for feedback. Mr. Chandler thanked Mrs. Thweatt, Mr. Sorrell, Mr. Sebera, Mr. Nelson and Mr. Barnes for assisting him with the scheduling formats.

E. Policy GBMA – Support Staff/Classified Employees' Grievance Procedures – Lisa Pennycuff

Policy GBMA and GBMA-R offer two different procedures for working through the grievance process. After conferring with the school division attorney, the recommendation was to adopt GBMA-R as the policy for GBMA.

Mr. Smith made a motion to move this item to an action item and to approve Policy GBMA as presented. Ms. Taylor seconded the motion.

VOTE: Ayes: Unanimous

XII. MOTION TO GO INTO A CLOSED MEETING TO DISCUSS A SPECIFIC MATTER RELATING TO THE EMPLOYMENT, ASSIGNMENT, APPOINTMENT, PROMOTION, DEMOTION, PERFORMANCE, SALARIES, OR RESIGNATION OF DISTRICT EMPLOYEE (pursuant to Section 2.2-3711 of the Code of Virginia) [added to the agenda]

- B Personnel Matters – Section 2.2-3711.A.1
 - 1. 56/20-21

Mr. Johnson made a motion to go into a closed meeting to discuss a specific personnel matter relating to the employment, assignment, appointment, promotion, demotion, performance salaries, or resignation of district employees pursuant to the personnel exemptions of the VA Code §2.2-3711.A.1. Ms. Taylor seconded the motion.

VOTE: Ayes: Unanimous

XIII. CERTIFICATION OF CLOSED MEETING AND ACTIONS [added to agenda]

Mr. Smith made a motion to return to an open meeting and certified nothing was disclosed other than what was stated in the original motion. Mrs. Andrews seconded the motion.

VOTE: Ayes: Unanimous

No action was taken on Personnel Matter P56/20-21; information only.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Smith made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:38 p.m. Mrs. Andrews seconded the motion.

VOTE: Ayes: Unanimous

The meeting adjourned at 9:38 p.m.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, we set our signatures this 21st day of April 2021.

Approved:

/s/ Robert Eley - Chairman of the Board

Attest:

/s/ Rebecca B. Kirk, Clerk of the Board

CERTIFICATION OF CLOSED MEETINGS

WHEREAS, the Prince George County School Board has convened a closed meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and

WHEREAS, Section 2.2-3712 of the Code of Virginia requires a certification by this school board that such closed meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia law.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Prince George County School Board hereby certifies that to the best of each member's knowledge (i) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia law were discussed in the closed meeting to which this certification applies, and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard, discussed or considered.

VOTE

Ayes: 5

/s/ Rebecca B. Kirk - Clerk of the Board
March 18, 2021
Meeting Date