

**Lynchburg City School Board
Regular Meeting
March 4, 2008**

**BOARD
MEMBERS
PRESENT:**

Julie P. Doyle, Chairman
Sterling A. Wilder, Vice Chairman
Keith R. Anderson
Mary Ann Barker
Leslie J. Faircloth
Ellis M. Frankfort
Darin L. Gerdes
Alison A. Reynolds, Student Representative, Heritage High School
Aster D. Mengesha, Student Representative Pro Tem, E. C. Glass High School

**BOARD
MEMBERS
ABSENT:**

Albert L. Billingsly

**ADMINISTRATION
PRESENT:**

Paul McKendrick, Superintendent
Roger L. Roberts, Deputy Superintendent
Stephen C. Smith, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction
Beverly A. Padgett, Chief Financial Officer
Michael K. Rudder, Director of Elementary Education
Gregory P. Sullivan, Director of Information Technology
Trenay L. Tweedy, Public Information Officer
Edward R. Witt, Jr., Director of Facilities and Transportation
Wendie L. Summers, Recording Secretary/Clerk

**MEDIA
PRESENT:**

Annie McCallum, *The News & Advance*

**Agenda
Items:**

- A-1. Notice of Closed Meeting
- A-2. Certification of Closed Meeting
- B-1. Public Comments
- C-1. Lynchburg Public Library: Lynchburg Reads
- C-2. Virginia Index of Performance Competence to Excellence Award
- D. Consent Agenda
- E. Student Representative Comments
- F-1. School Operating Budget: 2008-09
- F-2. Religious Exemptions
- G-1. School Calendar: 2008-09
- G-2. School Calendar: 2009-10
- H. Superintendent's Comments
- I. Board Comments
- J. Informational Items
- K. Adjournment

The Lynchburg City School Board met for its regular meeting at 5:30 p.m. in the Board Room at the School Administration Building. Ms. Doyle opened the meeting and requested that those in attendance stand and recite *The Pledge of Allegiance*.

Upon MOTION by Mr. Wilder, SECONDED by Mrs. Barker, the school board added consultation with legal counsel under item A-1. Notice of Closed Meeting and removed item G-3. Administrative Regulation 7-12: School Attendance Areas from the school board meeting agenda.

Yes Votes: Ms. Doyle, Mr. Wilder, Mrs. Barker, Mr. Faircloth, Mr. Frankfort, Dr. Gerdes

No Votes: None

Abstentions: None

A-1. Notice of Closed Meeting

Upon MOTION by Mr. Wilder, SECONDED by Mr. Faircloth, the school board convened a closed meeting at 5:32 p.m. pursuant to the Code of Virginia §2.2-3711 (A) (3) (7) to discuss the acquisition of real property of a public purpose because discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the school board and consult with legal counsel.

Yes Votes: Ms. Doyle, Mr. Wilder, Mrs. Barker, Mr. Faircloth, Mr. Frankfort, Dr. Gerdes

No Votes: None

Abstentions: None

Rev. Anderson arrived at 5:34 p.m.

A-2. Certification of Closed Meeting

Upon MOTION by Mr. Frankfort, SECONDED by Mrs. Barker, the school board reconvened in public session at 6:16 p.m.

Yes Votes: Ms. Doyle, Mr. Wilder, Rev. Anderson, Mrs. Barker, Mr. Faircloth, Mr. Frankfort, Dr. Gerdes

No Votes: None

Abstentions: None

Upon MOTION by Mr. Wilder, SECONDED by Rev. Anderson, the school board approved by roll call vote the following Certification of Closed Meeting:

The Lynchburg City School Board certifies that, in the closed meeting just concluded, nothing was discussed except the matters specifically identified in the motion to convene in a closed meeting and lawfully permitted to be so discussed under the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act cited in that motion.

Yes Votes: Ms. Doyle, Mr. Wilder, Rev. Anderson, Mrs. Barker, Mr. Faircloth, Mr. Frankfort, Dr. Gerdes

No Votes: None

Abstentions: None

B-1. Public Comments

In accordance with School Board Policy 1-41: Public Participation, the school board welcomes requests and comments as established in the guidelines within that policy. Individuals who wish to speak before the school board shall have an opportunity to do so at this time.

Ms. Rena Lindevaldsen spoke to the school board about the school board's consideration of new procedures regarding requests for religious exemptions. Mr. Rick Boyer also spoke before the school board regarding this topic.

C-1. Lynchburg Public Library: Lynchburg Reads

For 2008, the Lynchburg Public Library's Lynchburg Reads program is featuring the book *Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together?* written by Dr. Beverly Daniel Tatum. Dr. Tatum will be speaking at Lynchburg College on March 20, 2008.

During this presentation, Ms. Mary Lippard and Ms. Michelle Jackson from the Lynchburg Public Library provided members of the school board with information about Dr. Tatum and presented each member with a copy of the book. They also invited the school board to attend Dr. Tatum's lecture.

C-2. Virginia Index of Performance Competence to Excellence Award

In response to Governor Timothy M. Kaine's call for a formal system to recognize schools and school divisions that exceed minimum state and federal accountability standards, the Virginia Board of Education approved the Virginia Index of Performance (VIP) in July 2007. The VIP program provides incentives for schools to challenge students to higher levels of learning and achievement.

The Board of Education established four levels of recognition intended to measure the extent to which students are progressing towards advanced proficiency levels on state academic assessments and on other indicators of school and student performance. The levels are: the Governor's VIP Award for

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Educational Excellence, the VIP Excellence Award, the VIP Competence to Excellence Award, and the VIP Rising Start Award. The first three levels were awarded in January 2008, based upon student performance on the 2006-07 SOL testing. The VIP Rising Star Award requires baseline data which was established with the 2006-07 SOL testing and will be awarded based upon the results of the 2007-08 SOL testing.

Three of the school division's elementary schools met the criteria to receive the second level of recognition, the CIP Excellence Award. This means that these schools met all state and federal accountability benchmarks for two consecutive years and made significant progress toward Governor Kaine's goals for increased student achievement and expanded educational opportunity. These schools were Paul Munro Elementary School, Robert S. Payne Elementary School, and Sandusky Elementary School. Three other elementary schools met the criteria to receive the third level of recognition, the CIP Competence to Excellence Award. This means that these schools also met all state and federal accountability benchmarks for two consecutive years and they are making progress toward governor Kaine's goals for increased student achievement and expanded educational opportunity. These schools were Heritage Elementary School, Perrymont Elementary School, and Sheffield Elementary School. In addition, the Lynchburg City Schools was one of 25 school divisions to meet the criteria to receive the CIP Competence to Excellence Award.

During this presentation, representatives from these schools were presented with the award for their schools.

D. Consent Agenda

Upon MOTION by Mr. Wilder, SECONDED by Rev. Anderson, the school board approved the school board meeting minutes for February 5, 2008 (Regular Meeting); February 12, 2008 (Student Discipline Committee Meeting); and February 19, 2008 (Regular Meeting); and the personnel report for the period February 5 – March 4, 2008.

Yes Votes: Ms. Doyle, Mr. Wilder, Rev. Anderson, Mrs. Barker, Mr. Faircloth, Mr. Frankfort, Dr. Gerdes

No Votes: None

Abstentions: None

Dr. McKendrick announced that Ms. Pamela D. Smith-Johnson will assume the position of assistant director of personnel. The school administration will begin the process of selecting a new instructional specialist for the PETAL program within the next several weeks.

(SEE SCHOOL BOARD DOCUMENT FILE, MEETING OF MARCH 4, 2008, EXHIBIT "A," FOR A COPY OF THE CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS.)

E. Student Representative Comments

Ms. Alison A. Reynolds, student representative for Heritage High School, and Ms. Aster D. Mengesha, student representative pro tem for E. C. Glass High School, provided the school board with information about the events and activities occurring at their schools.

F-1. School Operating Budget: 2008-09

Ms. Padgett announced that the city manager will submit his proposed budget to the Lynchburg City Council on March 6, 2008. The budget will be reviewed during the city council meeting on March 11, 2008. On March 18, 2008, the school administration and the school board will meet with city council during a study session to discuss the school operating budget for 2008-09.

F-2. Religious Exemptions

During the school board's retreat, one of the topics discussed was the process associated with requests received from parents for their children to be exempt from mandatory attendance at school due to religious beliefs. The school board, pursuant to the Code of Virginia 22.1-254 (B) (1) must approve requests for exemption from school attendance because of "bona fide religious training or belief."

Following discussions with the city attorney, the school administration developed a letter to send to parents who request religious exemption for their children. The letter asks that parents send specific information to support their request. Parents/Guardians will also be asked to sign a Statement of Religious Training or Belief. The letter and the form appeared as attachments to the agenda report.

Ms. Doyle began by clarifying that requests for religious exemptions are received from those parents who want their children exempt from mandatory attendance at school due to religious reasons. These requests are not associated with religious observances or religious holidays. Once a child is exempt from

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mandatory attendance due to religious reasons, that student and family have no further contact with the school division.

It was suggested that the Statement of Religious Training or Belief be used as the request for religious exemption. The form would list the name of each child, the address of the family, and would be signed and dated by the parent/guardian. No additional documentation will be required.

Upon MOTION by Mr. Faircloth, SECONDED by Dr. Gerdes, the school board approved the revised Statement of Religious Training or Belief form for use as the request from parents/guardians for exemption from mandatory school attendance.

Yes Votes: Ms. Doyle, Mr. Wilder, Rev. Anderson, Mrs. Barker, Mr. Faircloth, Mr. Frankfort, Dr. Gerdes

No Votes: None

Abstentions: None

(SEE SCHOOL BOARD DOCUMENT FILE, MEETING OF MARCH 4, 2008, EXHIBIT "B," FOR A COPY OF THE SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS.)

G-1. School Calendar: 2008-09

The school administration anticipates that the Virginia Department of Education will approve Lynchburg City Schools' application for a waiver to start the 2008-09 school year prior to Labor Day, September 1, 2008. Therefore, the recommended 2008-09 school calendar reflects the following features of the current 2007-08 school calendar:

- 1) The first student day, August 25, 2008, is before Labor Day.
- 2) There are 180 instructional days.
- 3) There are five work days for returning teachers prior to the first student day.
- 4) There are work days at the end of each six weeks (one of which is combined with the Best Practices Conference day).
- 5) There are three professional development days (not counting the Best Practices Conference and work day).
- 6) Graduation is the Saturday following the second semester exam week.

The recommended 2008-09 school calendar has been modified based on input from the Elementary and Secondary Leadership Teams. The recommendations include the following:

- 1) Moving the first professional development day from the third Friday in September to after the workday at the end of the first six weeks. This change would provide more consistent instructional time at the beginning of the year, and it would allow a professional development day on an existing federal holiday, Columbus Day, on October 13, 2008.
- 2) November 4, 2008, is a presidential election day. In order to ease traffic concerns at our schools that serve as polling locations, all school faculty will have election day off rather than the Monday before election day.
- 3) The specific dates for evening parent-teacher conferences are now set and printed at the bottom of the calendar.
- 4) The end of the sixth six-week period is now clearly indicated as a partial day for all students.
- 5) The end of the third and sixth six-week periods are now followed by a teacher work day that does not include the first period exam. After considerable discussion, the faculty and school administration at both high schools supported moving the first period exam to the afternoon of the first day of the exam week. This provides teachers with first period classes a full work day at the end of the six weeks.

Once the school board approves the 2008-09 school calendar, the school administration will work with the faculty and staff of William Marvin Bass Elementary School to create an aligned 2008-09 extended-year calendar to bring to the school board for approval in late April.

This item will be considered as a consent agenda item during the school board meeting on March 18, 2008.

(SEE SCHOOL BOARD DOCUMENT FILE, MEETING OF MARCH 4, 2008, EXHIBIT "C," FOR A COPY OF THE SCHOOL CALENDAR FOR 2008-09)

G-2. School Calendar 2009-10

The school administration anticipates that the Virginia Department of Education will approve the Lynchburg City Schools' application for a waiver to start school prior to Labor Day, September 7, 2009.

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Therefore, the recommended 2009-10 school calendar reflects the following features of the current 2007-08 school calendar:

- 1) The first student day, August 24, 2009, is before Labor Day.
- 2) There are 180 instructional days.
- 3) There are five work days for returning teachers prior to the first student day.
- 4) There are work days at the end of each six weeks (one of which is combined with the Best Practices Conference Day).
- 5) There are three professional development days (not counting the Best Practices Conference and workday).
- 6) Graduation is the Saturday following the second semester exam week.

The recommended 2009-10 school calendar has been modified from an original draft based on input from the Elementary and Secondary Leadership Teams. It includes changes proposed for the 2008-09 school calendar such as:

- 1) The first professional development day is October 12, 2009, coinciding with Columbus Day.
- 2) The specific dates for evening parent-teacher conferences are now set and printed at the bottom of the calendar.
- 3) The end of the sixth six-week period is now clearly indicated as a partial day for all students.
- 4) The end of the third and sixth six-week periods are now followed by a teacher workday that does not include the first period exam. After considerable discussion, the faculty and administration at both high schools supported moving the first period exam to the afternoon of the first day of the exam week. This provides teachers with first period classes a full workday at the end of the six weeks.

One difference between the proposed 2008-09 school calendar and the proposed 2009-10 school calendar is the manner in which Election Day and the Monday before it are handled. In November of 2009, the proposal is to have teachers engage in professional development on Election Day rather than on the Monday before.

Once the school board approves a calendar for 2009-10, the school administration will work with the faculty and staff of William Marvin Bass Elementary School to create an aligned 2009-10 extended-year calendar to bring to the school board for approval in late April.

This item will be considered as a consent agenda item during the school board meeting on March 18, 2008.

(SEE SCHOOL BOARD DOCUMENT FILE, MEETING OF MARCH 4, 2008, EXHIBIT "D," FOR A COPY OF THE SCHOOL CALENDAR FOR 2009-10.)

H. Superintendent's Comments

Breakfast with School Superintendent Paul McKendrick will occur on March 5, 2008, at 7:30 a.m. in the Burton Student Center at Lynchburg College. This breakfast is hosted by the Lynchburg City Schools' Education Foundation, Inc., and it also serves as a fund-raiser to support grants for teachers to implement innovative programs in the classroom.

Arts in our Schools events will occur on March 11 and 13, 2008, at E. C. Glass High School beginning at 7:00 p.m.

The Best Practices Conference will occur on March 14, 2008, at E. C. Glass High School. This conference provides an opportunity for teachers to share their knowledge and skills with their colleagues. Dr. McKendrick thanked staff in the Department of Information Technology and the Department of Curriculum and Instruction for their hard work and effort in organizing the conference.

Evita is currently being performed by students at Heritage High School. The production will be performed through March 11, 2008.

Dr. McKendrick thanked Ms. Kim Gafford, SCA sponsor, and students at Heritage High School for hosting a breakfast for School Board Appreciation on February 29, 2008.

Dr. McKendrick recently attended the E. C. Glass High School performance of *Chicago*, and stated that the auditorium was almost filled to capacity.

The Student Discipline Committee will meet on March 6, 2008, at 5:00 p.m. in the Board Room at the School Administration Building.

I. Board Comments

Mrs. Barker also thanked Heritage High School for the breakfast hosted by the SCA on February 29, 2008. She has also attended the performance of *Evita* and *Chicago* and stated that we are fortunate to have such talented youth.

Mr. Wilder encouraged school board members to attend at least one of the Best Practices Conference sessions on March 14, 2008.

J. Informational Items

Next School Board Meeting: Tuesday, March 18, 2008, 5:30 p.m., Board Room, School Administration Building

K. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:54 p.m.

Julie P. Doyle, Chairman

Wendie L. Summers, Clerk

(SCHOOL BOARD DOCUMENT FILES ARE LOCATED IN THE DEPARTMENT FOR FINANCE AT THE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION BUILDING.)