

**Lynchburg City School Board
Regular Meeting
January 24, 2017**

**BOARD
MEMBERS
PRESENT:**

Michael J. Nilles, Chairman
Regina T. Dolan-Sewell, Vice Chairman
Sharon Y. Carter
James E. Coleman
Charleta F. Mason
Susan D. Morrison
Derek L. Polley
Katie K. Snyder
Indya M. Page, Student Representative, Heritage High School
Sidney M. Marshall, Student Representative, E. C. Glass High School

**BOARD
MEMBERS
ABSENT:**

None

**ADMINISTRATION
PRESENT:**

Scott S. Brabrand, Superintendent
Ben W. Copeland, Assistant Superintendent of Operations and Administration
John C. McClain, Assistant Superintendent of Student Learning and Success
Anthony E. Beckles, Sr., Chief Financial Officer
LaTonya D. Brown, Director for Student Support, Behavior, and Alternative Education
April M. Bruce, Director for Data, Assessment, and Accountability
David A. Childress, Director for Information Technology
Jason J. Ferguson, Director for Transportation
Steven L. Gatzke, Director for Facilities and Maintenance
Marie F. Gee, Director for Personnel
Ethel E. Reeves, Director for Engagement, Equity, and Opportunity
Michael K. Rudder, Director for School Improvement
Wyllys D. VanDerwerker, Director for Exceptional Learners
Wendie L. Sullivan, Clerk/Recording Secretary

**MEDIA
PRESENT:**

Josh Moody, *The News & Advance*

**Agenda
Items:**

- A. Opening Comments
- B-1. LCS Aspiring Administrators Recognition
- B-2. Update on Schools Denied Accreditation
- C. Consent Agenda
- D. Student Representative Comments
- E. School Board Committee Reports
- F-1. Proposed School Calendar: 2017-18
- F-2. School Operating Budget: 2017-18
- G-1. High School Program of Studies: 2017-18
- G-2. School Board Policy 5-43: Vacations
- G-3. Employee Benefits Enhancements
- H. Superintendent's Comments
- I. Board Comments
- J-1. Notice of Closed Meeting
- J-2. Certification of Closed Meeting
- K. Informational Items
- L. Adjournment

The Lynchburg City School Board met for its regular meeting at 5:31 p.m. in the Board Room at the School Administration Building. Dr. Nilles opened the meeting and asked those in attendance to rise and recite *The Pledge of Allegiance*.

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Upon MOTION by Dr. Dolan-Sewell, SECONDED by Ms. Mason, the school board added an addendum to item C-2. Personnel Report, to add item J. Closed Meeting to discuss personnel matters, and to re-alphabetize the remaining items accordingly.

Yes Votes: Dr. Nilles, Dr. Dolan-Sewell, Ms. Carter, Dr. Coleman, Ms. Mason, Mrs. Morrison, Mr. Polley, Mrs. Snyder

No Votes: None

Abstentions: None

A-1. Public Comments

In accordance with Policy BDDH Public Participation at School Board Meetings, 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.

Mr. Colin Byrne offered comments about the school operating budget for 2017-18 noting the discussion that occurred during the January 17, 2017, work session about the addition of the slots for the Central Virginia Governor's School for Science and Technology which would make the school division for attractive to others moving into the area.

B-1. LCS Aspiring Administrators Recognition

The LCS Aspiring Administrators program, designed to support the professional learning and development of teacher leaders aspiring to become administrators and assistant principals aspiring to become principals, finished up its final session on November 3, 2016. Eight staff members participated in each of the six sessions completing all of the requirements.

During this presentation, the following staff members were recognized by the school board.

Heritage Elementary School
Kellie S. Baldwin

Sandusky Elementary School
Amanda W. Lokar

William Marvin Bass Elementary School
Elizabeth L. Marny

Student Learning and Success
Julia D. Haley

Linkhorne Middle School
Daniel E. Boyers Jaquelyn C. Pinn

Paul Laurence Dunbar Middle School for Innovation

E. C. Glass High School
Krista L. Rawls-Fanning

Heritage High School
Laurie M. Croft

B-2. Update on Schools Denied Accreditation

The school administration provided information to the school board regarding the MOU with the Virginia Department of Education, Corrective Action Agreement, and work in progress at Linkhorne Middle School and Thomas C. Miller Elementary School for Innovation, the two schools in the school division that were denied state accreditation this year.

C. Consent Agenda

Upon MOTION Dr. Coleman, SECONDED by Ms. Carter, the school board approved the school board meeting minutes of December 5, 2016 (Student Discipline Committee Meeting), and December 13, 2016 (Student Discipline Committee Meeting); and the personnel report and addendum for the period January 3 – 24, 2017.

Yes Votes: Dr. Nilles, Dr. Dolan-Sewell, Ms. Carter, Dr. Coleman, Ms. Mason, Mrs. Morrison, Mr. Polley, Mrs. Snyder

No Votes: None

Abstentions: None

(SEE SCHOOL BOARD DOCUMENT FILE, MEETING OF JANUARY 24, 2017, EXHIBIT "A," FOR A COPY OF THE CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS.)

D. Student Representative Comments

Ms. Indya M. Page, student representative for Heritage High School, and Ms. Sidney M. Marshall, student representative for E. C. Glass High School, provided comments about the events and activities occurring at their schools.

E. School Board Committee Reports

Dr. Coleman announced that the Equity Task Force will meet on Thursday.

F-1. Proposed School Calendar: 2017-18

The 2016-2017 school year is the second of two years for the modified school calendar that was approved by the school board in March 2015. Over the last several weeks, there have been three listening tour meetings and a survey to gather input to help shape the development of the calendar for the 2017-2018 school year. In addition, data related to interventions was reviewed and compiled.

The proposed calendar is based on the input received, data reviewed, and research from the review of possible calendars two years ago. The school administration reviewed the data with the school board during its meeting on December 6, 2016, and also reviewed the calendar for William Marvin Bass Elementary School for next year. In addition, the school board conducted a work session on January 17, 2017, and discussed several calendar options for the upcoming school year.

Upon MOTION by Dr. Dolan-Sewell, SECONDED by Dr. Coleman, the school board approved proposed school calendar Option 1 for the 2017-18 school year with a bell schedule and content materials that will make half day sessions instructionally meaningful.

Yes Votes: Dr. Nilles, Dr. Dolan-Sewell, Ms. Carter, Dr. Coleman, Ms. Mason, Mr. Polley, Mrs. Snyder

No Votes: Mrs. Morrison

Abstentions: None

Upon MOTION by Dr. Coleman, SECONDED by Ms. Carter, the school board approved the William Marvin Bass Elementary School Calendar for 2017-18.

Yes Votes: Dr. Nilles, Dr. Dolan-Sewell, Ms. Carter, Dr. Coleman, Ms. Mason, Mrs. Morrison, Mr. Polley, Mrs. Snyder

No Votes: None

Abstentions: None

(SEE SCHOOL BOARD DOCUMENT FILE, MEETING OF JANUARY 24, 2017, EXHIBIT "B," FOR A COPY OF THE SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS.)

F-2. School Operating Budget: 2017-18

The school administration collected budget requests from all principals and department heads and compiled those recommendations into three tiers. At the school board meeting on December 6, 2016, the school administration presented the superintendent's Tier 1 recommendations, which amounts to \$3,551,500. More than \$2 million of those requests are mandatory and include support and services necessary for students with special needs.

The school board has discussed the budget during several public meetings, the most recent being a work session that occurred on January 17, 2017. During that meeting the school board directed the school administration to add a position for the Department for Engagement, Equity, and Opportunity and an additional one percent increase in compensation for all employees.

The school board discussed Budget A, which was the original Tier 1 recommendations, efficiencies identified by the school administration in the amount of \$65,000, and the additional funding from the state in the amount of \$437,134. They also discussed Budget B, which was the Tier 1 recommendations, the personnel efficiency savings, the state funding increase, and the budget deferrals in the amount of \$314,700. The position for the Department of Engagement, Equity, and Opportunity as well as the additional slots for the Governor's School were also discussed at length.

Upon MOTION by Dr. Coleman, SECONDED by Mr. Polley, the school board approved moving the position for the Department of Engagement, Equity, and Opportunity to the Tier 1 recommendations.

Yes Votes: Dr. Nilles, Dr. Dolan-Sewell, Ms. Carter, Dr. Coleman, Ms. Mason, Mrs. Morrison, Mr. Polley, Mrs. Snyder

No Votes: None

Abstentions: None

Upon MOTION by Mrs. Morrison, SECONDED by Ms. Carter to approve Budget Option A in the amount of \$3,050,366 as a budget base failed.

Yes Votes: Ms. Carter, Mrs. Morrison

No Votes: Dr. Nilles, Dr. Dolan-Sewell, Dr. Coleman, Ms. Mason, Mr. Polley, Mrs. Snyder

Abstentions: None

Upon MOTION by Dr. Dolan-Sewell, SECONDED by Dr. Coleman, the school board approved the amount of Budget Option A minus the amount for the 18 slots for the Central Virginia Governor's School for Science and Technology, the addition of the position for the Department of Engagement, Equity, and Opportunity, and the addition of a one percent increase in compensation for all employees for a total of \$3,735,766 to be forwarded to the city manager as a request for additional funding for the 2017-18 school year.

Yes Votes: Dr. Nilles, Dr. Dolan-Sewell, Ms. Carter, Dr. Coleman, Ms. Mason, Mrs. Morrison, Mr. Polley, Mrs. Snyder

No Votes: None

Abstentions: None

G. High School Program of Studies: 2017-18

The school board annually reviews and approves the High School Program of Studies for the next school year. The updated version for 2017-2018

- Adds courses including Astronomy, Physics, World Geography, Hip Hop, Teachers for Tomorrow II, Study Skills;
- Extends course offerings for the math sequence to include an additional math for students who begin Algebra II in eighth grade (and identifies when courses are paid for in a high-level sequence);
- Updates terminology from Foreign Language to World Languages;
- Includes clarifying language regarding when it is acceptable to add/drop a course, take a course outside of LCS, or take more/less than the standard number of courses;
- Modifies DE Biology course to a two-period course;
- Adds fees for AP tests and for dropping a dual enrollment course;
- Modifies the GPA calculation and explanation; and
- Updates language to match state changes regarding graduation, diploma seals, and other areas.

Last year, the GPA formula was revised in order to allow students to take up to two courses per year that did not carry an advanced weight so that they would be able to take career-technical, elective, and/or physical education courses without penalty to their rank in class. The intent was to ensure that the GPA did not incentivize one particular approach to "success" that is considered by some to be out of sync with long-term goals. Further, students were not restricted from taking courses to pursue a higher number of courses that may be preferred by a college or university. The revised GPA formula created a cap for the number of advanced/extra quality points that could be gained in a given year. The implementation of the revised GPA formula was to be grandfathered over a period of time so that in 2016-17 all courses for students in 10th grade and below would be calculated through the new GPA.

When beginning the implementation of the new GPA, it was learned that the software company for the student information system was not readily responsive to the new formula, and the change will create more funding and resources to implement than anticipated. Adjustments to the formula to go from a year basis to a course basis of cumulative averaging would make the formula even more complicated and difficult to understand. This would be necessary because a high school level course taken in eighth grade would have the same weight in a cumulative GPA as seven courses in a ninth grade year.

Proposed changes to the new GPA are to change the cumulative GPA from a year basis to a course basis and remove the calculation cap and replace it with a Summa Cum Laude threshold at each grade level by which those reaching this status would all be at number one in class rank. This approach would maintain the previous emphasis on multiple approaches to success by allowing a couple of non-advanced courses per year, but does go through a Summa Cum Laude approach to class rank rather than a cap on a GPA. The thresholds are equivalent.

The second proposed change would be to add a .5 GPA for an AP course in which a student achieves an AP exam score of at least three. The new transcript and class rank would be calculated after AP scores are received in August after a student's ninth, tenth, and eleventh grade years. This approach would not impact the ability of a student in Early College, STEM, or Governor's School to achieve status of Summa Cum Laude and a class rank of number one.

The school board will consider this item for action at the next school board meeting.

G-2. School Board Policy 5-43: Vacations

Lynchburg City School Board Policy 5-43: Vacations allows employees to accrue and carry over up to thirty (30) vacation days on January 31 of each year. In addition, a maximum of thirty-six (36) accumulated vacation days will be paid at the daily rate of pay to retiring employees.

In order to align the Lynchburg City School vacation policy with fiscal year contracts, the administration recommends that the school board revise the policy to reflect a June 30 accrual cutoff date and increase the maximum number of days that can be carried over to 36.

This item will be placed under the consent agenda for consideration at the next school board meeting.

(SEE SCHOOL BOARD DOCUMENT FILE, MEETING OF JANUARY 24, 2017, EXHIBIT "C," FOR A COPY OF SCHOOL BOARD POLICY 5-43: VACATIONS.)

G-3. Employee Benefits Enhancements

Employee 403(b) and 457 Plans

Lynchburg City Schools currently has six vendors that offer employee 403(b) and 457 Deferred Compensation Programs to eligible employees to help them voluntarily save for their retirement. These vendors charge employees a management fee to manage their retirement investment portfolio which can range from 0.05 percent to more than 2.67 percent. Most investment account holders do not pay attention to the amount of management fees they are charged. While contributions to one's investment account and the earnings on the investments will increase, the retirement income, fees and expenses paid by the plan may substantially reduce the growth in the account which will reduce the retirement income. The following example from the U.S. Department of Labor booklet entitled "A Look at 401(k) Plans Fees" demonstrates how fees and expenses can impact the account.

Assume that you are an employee with 35 years until retirement and a current 403(b) account balance of \$25,000. If returns on investments in your account over the next 35 years average seven percent and fees and expenses reduce your average returns by 0.5 percent, your account balance will grow to \$227,000 at retirement, even if there are no further contributions to your account. If fees and expenses are 1.5 percent, however, your account balance will grow to only \$163,000. The one percent difference in fees and expenses would reduce your account balance at retirement by 28 percent.

The amount of management fees paid to manage a retirement account matters and can significantly reduce the amount of retirement income.

Adding another 403(b) and 457 Vendor

Lynchburg City Schools would like to add a new 403(b) and 457 vendor, The Retirement Plan Company, LLC, to offer retirement plan services to employees. The main reason for adding this vendor is their low management fee structure which range from 0.804 percent to 1.258 percent, max. Like all of our 403(b) and 457 vendors, employees are free to select the vendor of their choice.

This item will be placed under the consent agenda for consideration at the next school board meeting.

H. Superintendent's Comments

The Winter Leadership Conference will occur on January 25, 2017, in the Forum at Heritage High School beginning at 5:00 p.m. School board members were invited to attend the conference.

Dr. Brabrand provided school board members with a list of activities and events that will be occurring throughout the school division over the next few weeks.

The Empowerment Academy will conduct its first graduation ceremony on January 27, 2017, in the Marie Waller Lecture Hall at E. C. Glass High School beginning at 6:00 p.m.

I. Board Comments

Ms. Snyder thanked Ms. Kacey M. Crabbe, director for the Empowerment Academy, for inviting school board members to the graduation ceremony that will occur on Friday. She also announced that she will be attending the NSBA Equity Symposium in Washington, D. C. this coming weekend.

Dr. Coleman thanked Dr. Brabrand for his presence at the various celebrations that were hosted in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Mr. Polley attend the Doughnuts for Dads event at Paul Munro Elementary School, and he thanked all of the fathers, grandfathers, police officers, firefighters, and others who attend this event.

J-1. Notice of Closed Meeting

Upon MOTION by Dr. Coleman, SECONDED by Ms. Carter, the school board convened a closed meeting at 8:09 p.m. pursuant to the Code of Virginia §2.2-3711 (A) (1) to discuss personnel matters.

Yes Votes: Dr. Nilles, Dr. Dolan-Sewell, Ms. Carter, Dr. Coleman, Ms. Mason, Mrs. Morrison, Mr. Polley, Mrs. Snyder

No Votes: None

Abstentions: None

J-2. Certification of Closed Meeting

Upon MOTION by Ms. Carter, SECONDED by Mr. Polley, the school board reconvened in open session at 8:22 p.m.

Yes Votes: Dr. Nilles, Dr. Dolan-Sewell, Ms. Carter, Dr. Coleman, Ms. Mason, Mrs. Morrison, Mr. Polley, Mrs. Snyder

No Votes: None

Abstentions: None

Upon MOTION by Ms. Mason, SECONDED by Mrs. Morrison, 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: Dr. Nilles, Dr. Dolan-Sewell, Ms. Carter, Dr. Coleman, Ms. Mason, Mrs. Morrison, Mr. Polley, Mrs. Snyder

No Votes: None

Abstentions: None

K. Informational Items

Next School Board Meeting: Tuesday, February 7, 2017, 5:00 p.m., Lynchburg Public Library, Community Room

Lynchburg City School Board/Lynchburg City Council Joint Session: Tuesday, February 7, 2017, 5:30 p.m., Lynchburg Public Library, Community

L. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:23 p.m.

Michael J. Nilles, Chairman

Wendie L. Sullivan, Clerk

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