

The Amherst County School Board met on Thursday, February 14, 2019, in the Public Meeting Room of the School Administration Office, Amherst, Virginia at 6:00 p.m.

PRESENT: W. Michael Henderson, Chairman  
Priscilla M. Liggon, Vice Chairman  
Francisco D. Mayo  
Craig S. Terwilliger  
Abby J. Thompson – Joined meeting at 7:50 p.m.  
Amanda Wright

Indeya Paige, Student Representative

ABSENT: David S. Cassise

Mr. Henderson called the meeting to order, asked that a moment of silence be observed and asked everyone to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Henderson asked if there was a motion to approve the agenda for the February 14, 2019, School Board meeting.

Upon motion by Mr. Mayo, seconded by Mr. Terwilliger and unanimously carried, the Board approved the agenda for the February 14, 2019, School Board meeting.

Dr. Arnold stated the first item on the agenda was the presentation of the Amherst County Public Schools' Human Resources recruiting video created by the Amherst County High School Tech Club. Mr. Jim Gallagher, Director of Human Resources and Mr. Mike Cargill, Instructional Technology Resource Teacher, presented the video to the School Board.

In recognition of School Board Appreciation Month, February 2019, Dr. Arnold recognized Board members for their dedication and service to excellence in education on behalf of the students of the Amherst County Public Schools and the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Dr. Arnold stated there were gifts of appreciation at each Board member's place from Amherst Middle School and Monelison Middle School.

In appreciation to Board members, Mrs. Wanda Smith, Principal at Central Elementary School, assisted by students from Central Elementary School, presented each Board member with a painting of a tree that included each student's fingerprint in the school.

Mr. Henderson stated the next item on the agenda was public comment.

Mr. Henderson asked if anyone wished to address the Board. No one addressed the Board.

Mr. Henderson stated the next item on the agenda was the consent agenda.

Upon motion by Mrs. Liggon, seconded by Mr. Mayo and unanimously carried, the Board approved the minutes of the January 10, 2019, School Board meeting and confirmation of the Superintendent's personnel actions for the period of January 7, 2019 through February 8, 2019.

Dr. Arnold stated that he is pleased to introduce Mr. Bob Christmas, football coach at Amherst County High School.

Mr. Bob Christmas addressed the Board thanking them for the opportunity to be a part of Amherst County Public Schools.

Dr. Arnold stated Mr. Cocke would provide an update on Capital Improvement Projects in Amherst County Public Schools.

Mr. Cocke provided information to the Board members concerning the Capital Improvement Projects in the schools. Mr. Cocke stated we are moving forward with the CIP Projects. He distributed a diagram of areas at the Transportation Department concerning the lighting and paving of the parking lot. The initial date to pave the parking lot is over Spring Break. If weather does not permit during this time, paving will be rescheduled to take place during the summer.

Mr. Cocke stated the RFP's for the roof drains at Central Elementary School, the bathroom updates at Amherst County High School, and the door replacements at Amherst Elementary School, Elon Elementary School and Temperance Elementary School are being put together for a planned release in mid-March for bids, due in mid-April, for work to begin in June 2019 when school is out for the summer.

Dr. Arnold stated Mrs. Marie Petrone, Supervisor of Accountability and Student Wellness, would provide Board members information concerning trainings in Amherst County Public Schools. Mrs. Petrone stated there was a Bed Bug Training on February 11, 2019, at 10:30 a.m. in the Public Meeting Room at the School Administration Office. She stated there will also be a Gang Awareness Training on February 15, 2019, at 9:00 a.m. in the Public Meeting Room at the School Administration Office.

Dr. Arnold informed Board members the report on student suspensions for the month of January 2019 was available on BoardDocs.

Dr. Arnold informed the Board the budget monitoring reports, revenue receipts, and enrollment information through January 2019 was available to Board members on BoardDocs. Board members reviewed the information. He stated the Object Code report will be provided to Board members next week via email. No action was taken.

Dr. Arnold stated Dr. Norman would provide an update on accountability measures. Dr. Norman provided the following information to the Board concerning accountability measures.

*Dr. Norman informed the Board the Amherst County Public Schools Instructional Team completed the requirement for conducting school/classroom observations for those schools identified by the state as a possible Level II or Level III due to subgroups performance for the 2017-2018 school year. This update is specific to that review.*

1. *Update on Attendance by Ms. Hollie Jennings and Ms. Patron shows;*
  - a. *Based on data from the first 90 days the number of students who have missed more than 10% is slightly up for two schools; Amherst County High School and Central Elementary.*
  - b. *Each school has made it a priority to create an incentive program for attendance, as well as continually contact and stress to parents/guardians the importance of student attendance. (Example Incentives: ice cream tickets, pizza parties, parent contacts, lunch with the principal, morning announcement leader, etc.)*
  - c. *Reminder: The VDOE required rate for accreditation is 85%.*
2. *An update from members of the Division Team was provided to the Office of School Improvement Director Bev Rabil regarding the monitoring of strategies and intervention put into place last year with Amelon, Central and Madison Heights Elementary.*
  - a. *Reading Plus program was once again purchased for all three schools and is being utilized with struggling readers in each school.*
  - b. *Lesson alignment was a focus that was stressed by VDOE for the last several years and has been the focus for the division instructional team when observing teacher classrooms this year. Specific feedback to administrators and teachers was given to help provide support for all lessons to be aligned; written, taught, and tested in the cognitive level required by the standard.*
  - c. *A focus on the number of minutes for students to be reading grade level text was an ongoing effort at all three schools and continues to be a focus for the instructional team in their work with teachers in all schools.*
3. *Focus moving forward to the end of the school year (Next Steps):*
  - a. *Continued work on tight alignment (from beginning to end of lesson-emphasis with closure) including increased time in text.*
  - b. *Understanding of new English standards and feedback on the crosswalk year*
    - *Follow through on the delivery of instruction with new standards*
    - *Understanding the connection between skill/strategy*
  - c. *Remediation / Intervention next steps*
    - *Remediation:*
      - *Utilizing data reports in Power Assessment to determine focus of specific strands and individual students needing additional instruction.*
      - *Planning remediation and utilizing pre/post-test, as well as, reporting on post-test outcomes at each PLC. Data training has been conducted at each elementary school and instructional specialist will continue to work with teachers during their PLC's*
    - *Intervention:*
      - *Skill specific and student specific interventions.*
      - *Focus on prior year(s) content & skills in order to help close the gap.*
4. *Master Schedule Requirements for Upcoming School Year:*
  - a. *At the close of the school year a review of master schedules for each elementary school will be completed based on the following;*
    - *Mr. Josh Neighbors to discuss supports for students with disabilities.*
    - *TBD – Math Supervisor to ensure math instruction time allotments.*

- *Mr. Wayne Lyle to confirm reading specialist schedule and allotment of time for reading instruction.*

The Board reviewed and discussed this information concerning accountability measures. No action was taken.

Dr. Norman provided information concerning the Title I School-wide Program. The following information was shared with Board members.

*As you recall, the ACPS Title I and Title III federal programs were monitored last year by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE). Although there were no findings for our Title I Program, the VDOE suggested that we apply to have the status of Title I schools changed from Targeted Assistance to Schoolwide. This recommendation was based primarily on giving our federally-funded teachers (reading specialists) the flexibility of co-teaching with classroom teachers and supporting students who may not be on their caseloads. This model is similar to that followed by our special education teachers who are allowed to work with students with and without disabilities.*

*The applications we submitted earlier this year to have the status of our five Title I schools (Amelon, Amherst Elementary, Central, Madison Heights, and Temperance) changed from Targeted Assistance to Schoolwide were approved based on notification I received from the VDOE on January 9, 2019. This change will allow our reading specialists to support all of our classroom teachers and students while still giving their primary attention to students who struggle the most in the area of literacy.*

The Board reviewed and discussed the information. No action was taken

Dr. Norman and Mr. Craig Maddox, Supervisor of History, CTE, ITRT, and Elective Programs, provided Board members with an update on the Program of Studies for Amherst County High School. The following information was shared with the Board along with a copy of the Program of Studies.

*As information to the ACPS School Board this memo outlines changes for the 2019-2020 Amherst County High School Program of Studies. First, there is no overall budget impact in connection with these changes. Offerings for students in the areas of math, history/social sciences, science, art and career and technical education (CTE) have been changed as follow:*

#### ***Changes for the 2019-20 Program of Studies***

- *Based on request from ACHS School Counselors two Programs of Studies were created due to the changes in graduation requirements per the Virginia Department of Education.*
  - *Program of Study for rising 11<sup>th</sup> and 12 grade students*
  - *Program of Study for rising 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade students*

#### **MATH**

*Computer Math – Will contain elements of Applied Math within the curriculum to support Applied Technical Math*

*Pre-requisite for the Applied Technical Math should be either Algebra I and Geometry OR Algebra I and Computer Math.*

The Board reviewed and discussed the information provided. No action was taken.

Dr. Norman provided Board members with an update on the Technology Plan for Amherst County Public Schools. The following information was shared with the Board.

*Since the 1980s, the Virginia General Assembly, the Virginia Board of Education and the Virginia Department of Education have recognized and supported technology's role in meeting their collective vision for schools in the Commonwealth. The 2018-2023 Educational Technology Plan for Virginia is the latest revision of long-range technology plans adopted by the Board of Education to support their Comprehensive Plan. The most enduring consistency is the emphasis on integrating technology into the classroom, as a tool for providing ways for students to achieve in school more broadly and more deeply. The state plan is composed of the following subsections:*

- *Learning (Enhance Personalized, Equitable Student Learning Experiences with Technology),*
- *Teaching (Support Innovative Professional Learning with Technology),*
- *Leadership (Create Cultures of Change through Innovative Leadership Practices), and*
- *Infrastructure (Secure and Robust Infrastructure).*

*The state plan has two distinct but related purposes. It provides a plan for the Virginia Department of Education in regards to the use and support of educational technology to support the State Board of Education's Comprehensive Plan. A second purpose is that it also serves as a model and standard for each school division as the local technology is created.*

*Amherst County Public Schools (ACPS) formed a group consisting of the Director of Academics, three Supervisors, and three Instructional Technology Resource Teachers (ITRT) to create the ACPS 2018-23 Technology Plan. The team began working on the plan in April of 2018 and filed the completed plan with the VDOE in December of 2018. The ACPS Technology Plan promotes and supports the 5 C's (critical thinking, creative thinking, communication, collaboration, and citizenship) associated with the Profile of a Virginia Graduate.*

The Board reviewed and discussed this information. No action was taken concerning the information.

Dr. Norman shared with the Board a recommended list of teachers to serve on the Math and History Textbook Review Committees. The Board reviewed and discussed the list of teachers for the Math and History Textbook Review Committees.

Upon motion by Mr. Terwilliger, seconded by Mrs. Wright and unanimously carried, the Board approved the list of teachers to serve on the Math and History Textbook Review Committees.

Dr. Arnold stated that Mr. Gallagher would provide an update from the Human Resources Department.

Mr. Gallagher shared the following information with the Board concerning the Amherst County Public Schools' recruiting schedule for the Spring 2019.

*The following is a list of universities currently scheduled as recruiting sites for Amherst County Public Schools during the spring of 2019.*

*February 15, 2019 – University of Virginia*

*February 19, 2019 – Fayetteville State University\**

*February 20, 2019 – University of Lynchburg*

*February 22, 2019 – Radford University*

*February 26, 2019 – Norfolk State University\**

*March 5, 2019 – Liberty University*

*March 8, 2019 – Longwood University*

*March 12, 2019 – North Carolina A&T State University – (On wait list)\**

*March 19, 2019 – James Madison University*

*March 21, 2019 – Virginia State University\**

*\*New recruiting sites added in the 2018-2019 school year.*

The Board reviewed and discussed this information. No action was taken.

Dr. Arnold stated the next item on the agenda was from the student representative, Miss Indeya Paige.

Miss Paige shared with the Board discussions held at the Open-Floor Forums (Student Forums) at Amherst County High School concerning some of the weaknesses and strengths at the school.

Miss Paige stated a weakness is cell phone use in the classroom being prohibited. She addressed the possibility of changing the cell phone policy to allow limited use in the classroom.

Miss Paige also stated a strength at Amherst County High School is that students feel like they can go to teachers and staff for help.

Miss Paige stated she feels like the Open-Floor Forums (Student Forums) at Amherst County High School are proving to be beneficial with students being able to share their thoughts and concerns.

Miss Paige stated the sports programs at Amherst County High School are very inclusive for all students; however, she has concerns about the football stadium not meeting special needs of some of the students. She believes there needs to be railings on the steps to help with the special needs of students getting to the bleachers. Mr. Wayne Cocke, Supervisor of Maintenance, stated that he would be glad to address this matter.

Dr. Arnold informed Board members concerning the VSBA Hot Topic Conference which will be held on March 13, 2019, in Wytheville, Virginia. Registration deadline for the conference is March 1, 2019.

Dr. Arnold updated the Board members concerning principals' mid-year evaluations.

Dr. Arnold reminded Board members of the following upcoming meetings:

- a. Superintendent's Proposed 2019-2020 School Operational Budget will be presented to the School Board on February 28, 2019, at 6:00 p.m. at the School Administration Office in the Public Meeting Room.
- b. Budget Work Session will be held on March 7, 2019, at 9:00 a.m. at the School Administration Office in the Public Meeting Room.

Dr. Arnold provided an update concerning the Alternative to Suspension Program which began on February 11, 2019.

Dr. Arnold shared information with the Board concerning the G3 Planning Grant for the Regional CTE Center.

Mr. Henderson stated the next item on the agenda is citizen comment.

Mr. Henderson asked if anyone wished to address the Board. No one addressed the Board.

Mr. Henderson stated the next item on the agenda was items from School Board members.

Mrs. Wright stated she attended several of the appreciation luncheons at the schools and enjoyed all of them.

Mr. Terwilliger informed the Board that his meeting with Mrs. Rhonda Campbell, Director of Transportation, was a productive meeting.

Mr. Mayo thanked everyone for their acts of kindness for School Board Appreciation month.

Mr. Mayo thanked Mr. Gallagher for his efforts in recruiting for the Amherst County Public Schools.

Mrs. Liggon thanked everyone for their acts of kindness in recognition of School Board Appreciation month.

Mrs. Liggon responded to Miss Paige's concerns about the possibility of making changes in policy concerning cell phone use in the classroom. Mrs. Liggon recommended that a committee be established to discuss guidelines for cell phone use in the classroom.

Mrs. Liggon asked if the middle schools have Open-Floor Forums (Student Forums). Dr. Arnold stated the middle schools currently conduct surveys with their students and do not have Open-Floor Forums (Student Forums) at this time.

Mrs. Liggon stated she is excited about the Alternative to Suspension Program at Amherst Education Center.

Mr. Henderson stated he had the opportunity to interact with Amherst County High School seniors at the physical therapy office and was very impressed with the students.

Mr. Henderson stated he attended the talent show at Amherst Middle where students showcased their talents. It was a very impressive evening to be able to see the talents of these students.

Mr. Henderson stated the Central High School Alumni Day will be held at Amherst Middle School on February 28, 2019, from 9:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. He stated he hoped Board members could attend this event.

Mr. Henderson stated Youth Art Month will be held at Second Stage on March 7-9, 2019. He invited Board members to please try to stop by to see the artwork.

Mr. Henderson stated he received an appreciation letter from Mr. Glen Burley concerning receiving an honorary degree from Amherst County Public Schools. He has met the criteria in order to receive the honorary degree from Amherst County Public Schools.

Mrs. Wright stated Temperance Elementary School raised over \$3,000 for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

Mr. Henderson stated the next item on the agenda was a closed session.

Pursuant to Section 2.2-3711 (A) (2) and 2.2-3711 (A) (1), of the Code of Virginia, upon motion by Mrs. Wright, seconded by Mr. Mayo and unanimously carried, the Board convened a closed meeting for (A) (2) student matters and (A) (1) personnel matter.

Upon motion by Mr. Mayo, seconded by Mrs. Liggon and unanimously carried, the Board resumed its meeting in open session.

#### **CERTIFICATION OF CLOSED MEETING**

**WHEREAS**, the Amherst County School Board has convened a closed meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative record and in accordance with provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, and

**WHEREAS**, Section 2.2 - 3712 (D) and 2.2 - 3711 of the Code of Virginia requires a certification by this School Board that such closed meeting was conducted in accordance with provisions of the Freedom of Information Act; and



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

Upon motion by Mrs. Thompson, seconded by Mr. Mayo and unanimously carried, the Board certified they discussed only permissible topics.

AYES: Henderson, Liggon, Mayo, Terwilliger, Wright

ABSTAIN: Thompson

NAYS: None

Upon motion by Mr. Mayo, seconded by Mrs. Liggon and unanimously carried, the Board confirmed and upheld the decision of the Discipline Committee for Student Matter 19-16.

Upon motion by Mr. Mayo, seconded by Mrs. Liggon and unanimously carried, the Board adjourned the meeting at 9:11 p.m.



Teresa C. Crouch, Clerk  
Amherst County Public Schools



W. Michael Henderson, Chairman  
Amherst County Public Schools