

The Amherst County School Board met on Thursday, May 5, 2016, in the School Administration Office, Amherst, Virginia at 6:04 p.m., for a Special School Board Meeting for Public Comment to give citizens an opportunity to comment on the potential closure of Pleasant View Elementary School.

PRESENT: Alan J. Wood, Chairman
W. Michael Henderson, Vice Chairman
Alan H. Bumgarner
Jennifer E. Cumby
Priscilla M. Liggon
Patricia C. Massie
Randy V. Summers

Camryn Garrett, Student Representative

ABSENT: None

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

Mr. Wood asked if there were any changes to the agenda of the May 5, 2016, special School Board meeting. There were none.

Mr. Wood asked if there was a motion to approve the agenda for the May 5, 2016, special School Board meeting.

Upon motion by Mr. Bumgarner, seconded by Mr. Summers and unanimously carried, the Board approved the agenda for the May 5, 2016, special School Board meeting.

Mr. Wood stated before the Public Hearing begins, Dr. Nichols and staff would provide follow-up information from the April 28, 2016, regular School Board meeting.

Dr. Nichols made the following statement for the record:

Superintendent's Statement to the School Board Prior to Public Hearing

5 May 2016

This evening before we begin the Public Hearing, I have two pieces of data we have just received that I will present, but first for the record, I want to provide some points of information:

- Enrollment has declined over the last ten years from 120 to 56. For the school division from 4600 to 4000*
- At Pleasant View Elementary School two classes have 6 children with no class over 12*
- Average class size is less than 10*

- *Temperance Elementary School will receive approximately 37 students should Pleasant View Elementary School close. With the current 82 the total will be 119; still below building capacity. Class sizes would be favorable.*
- *Elon Elementary School would receive approximately 17 students should Pleasant View Elementary School close. The school can easily accommodate that number*
- *Currently Capital Improvement needs at Pleasant View Elementary School total \$1,700,000*
- *New HVAC/roofing expenditure is proposed to be approximately \$1,400,000*
- *With the proposed closing and consolidation the savings would be approximately \$483,000*
- *Closure would permit reallocation of shared staff (among some of the changes):*
 - + *Temperance Elementary School would have full-time principal*
 - + *Temperance Elementary School full-time Health Assistant*
 - + *Elon Elementary School full-time PE teacher*
 - + *Elon Elementary School full-time Counselor*
- *Bus rides, on average, would be comparable with current. Moving zone boundaries would add to time*
- *Prismatic suggested the school division consider redistricting. Basic analysis on the scale needed to add students to Pleasant View Elementary School is neither practical nor beneficial to the county schools as a whole*

As to the new data, I would like to report the second and final piece of the requested Weldon Cooper Center Study has been received and you have been provided a copy. For the benefit of the record, I would mention a few points from the second part of the study.

- *Having declined by over 12 % since 2006, Amherst County Public Schools student population will continue to decline for the remainder of the decade*
- *This is not an Amherst phenomena in that 91 of Virginia's 133 school divisions has declined in enrollment over the same period.*
- *Those areas most affected by student population declines are rural and suburban.*
- *Of the school divisions in the Weldon Cooper study, Amherst has shown the greatest decline. From 2010 to 2014, Amherst County Public Schools has dropped 8.5%; the Lynchburg metro area declined by 2.8%, yet Virginia as a state has declined only .8%*
- *Through 2015, Amherst County Public Schools had 10% fewer kindergartners than births five years earlier; indicating fewer young families are moving to the county*
- *The county's overall population has grown slightly since 2000, but the under ten population has declined over the same period. The largest decline in the under ten population was in Census Tract 101, making up most of the Pleasant View Elementary School and Temperance Elementary School attendance zones*

- *Birth rate declined with the Great Recession in 2008 across the country; steeper in rural/ suburban areas. Virginia's birth rate (statewide) decreased by 5 % but in Amherst nearly 9%*
- *Kindergarten classes will likely remain small for the rest of the decade with elementary enrollment declining further*

Secondly, since our last meeting, I had directed Mr. Cocke and members of staff to develop some level of mapping for the Pleasant View Elementary School area. I want to make a couple of points before I ask Mr. Cocke to walk you through the mapping:

- *This has been a highly time consuming effort as software does not permit an easy shifting of lines.*
- *These maps are to be taken as general in nature. These cannot be specific to a particular child/ house as the Board has not made a decision on the status.*
- *These maps were drawn to show in general terms where additional students could be identified that could be moved to support Pleasant View Elementary School.*
- *No analysis was made of school zones outside those mentioned in the Prismatic study or general discussions (Pleasant View Elementary School, Temperance Elementary School, and Elon Elementary School)*

Now, Mr. Cocke will address the specific mapping information.

Mr. Cocke shared the following information with Board members:

Members, First I would like to thank Mr. Randall and the transportation staff who have worked many hours over the last several days assisting me in preparing this information. As Dr. Nichols mentioned our software does not easily permit shifting of boundary lines; it also does not lend itself to printing maps with details like names or route numbers on standard printer paper.

In order for you to see and compare current and possible new boundaries side by side, staff has drawn the boundary lines onto maps of the county.

I would like to reiterate these lines were hand drawn and we have taken care to have them match as close as possible the lines as they are shown in our software.

You have three maps before you.

The first map I ask you to look at is labelled "Current Boundaries". It shows the current elementary school zones.

The second map is labeled "Boundaries if Pleasant View Elementary School Closed". On this map the only boundary line that would be shifted is the one separating Temperance Elementary School and Pleasant View Elementary School. It would be moved south and west to become the boundary between Elon Elementary School and Temperance Elementary School.

The third map is labelled "Boundaries Redistricting all Elementary Schools". As you look at this map, I would like to point out that thus far staff has only worked with the lines relating to Pleasant View Elementary School, Temperance Elementary School, Amherst Elementary School and partially Central Elementary School. Staff is still working on the remaining lines for Madison Heights Elementary School and Elon Elementary School as well as the lines between those two schools and Elon Elementary School.

- *Currently the Pleasant View Elementary School and Elon Elementary School lines run to the east of East Perch Road and to the west of Ambrose Rucker Road and Mistover Drive.*
 - *The new boundary line for Pleasant View Elementary School and Elon Elementary School would run to the east of Monacan Park Rd and south of Cedar Gate Road.*
 - *The Pleasant View Elementary School and Temperance Elementary School boundary on Puppy Creek Road would also be shifted from west of Pryor Creek Road to east of Puppy Creek Farm Road.*
- *Currently the Temperance Elementary School and Amherst Elementary School boundary is North of Burley Hollow Rd. on 60 and South of Hartless Road on 151.*
 - *The new Temperance Elementary School and Amherst Elementary School boundary would move down 60 almost to the Town of Amherst to run just south of Christian Springs Rd.*
 - *It would move also down 151 to run just south of Alcock Road.*
 - *The current areas along Toytown Road that attend Central Elementary School would be shifted to Amherst Elementary School.*

The Board reviewed the maps provided.

Mr. Wood thanked the staff for their work. The maps assisted the Board with visualization of how the boundaries would change. Documentation was shown that staff had looked at the options and to redistrict the whole County was not a viable option.

Mr. Wood stated members of the School Board are citizens of the County. As your representatives the Board members work many hours every year addressing issues. Mr. Wood stated as issues were raised and ready for discussion, Board members researched the topic and appreciate the input from their constituents. Mr. Wood asked that citizens be respectful and appropriate in making comments when addressing the Board. He asked that everyone remember we are educating the students of Amherst County and asked that citizens set a proper example for the children. The Board is representing all of Amherst County and is trying to weigh all of the options available before making a decision. Mr. Wood thanked everyone for attending and participating with comments.

Mr. Wood asked the citizens who wished to address the Board to provide their name and address and limit their comments to three minutes. Mr. Wood stated the Public Hearing would begin.

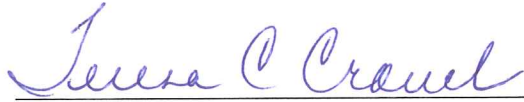
The following citizens addressed the Board regarding the potential closure of Pleasant View Elementary School:

Ms. Mikayla Davila	109 Slapp Creek Road, Amherst, Virginia
Mrs. Heather Davila	109 Slapp Creed Road, Amherst, Virginia
Mrs. Eliza Vest	4338 Lexington Turnpike, Amherst, Virginia
(Mrs. Vest spoke on behalf of Heather Chenault)	
Ms. Crystal Jamerson	202 Neighbors Drive, Amherst, Virginia
Mr. Joshua Lloyd	1363 Buffalo Springs Turnpike, Amherst, Virginia
Mr. Ian Moore	610 Lewis Keith Road, Monroe, Virginia
Mrs. Lisa Lloyd	1363 Buffalo Springs Turnpike, Amherst, Virginia
Mr. Tyler Bauer	2251 Buffalo Springs Turnpike, Amherst, Virginia
Ms. Nelly Branson	252 Waughs Ferry Road, Amherst, Virginia
Ms. Rosemary Urban	577 Wagon Trail Road, Monroe, Virginia
Mr. Samuel Mays	1171 Sugar Hill Tunnel Road, Amherst, Virginia
Mr. Steve Collins	183 Stagecoach Lane, Amherst, Virginia
Mrs. Julie Meeks	2828 Lexington Turnpike, Amherst, Virginia
Mrs. Melissa Mays	1171 Sugar Hill Tunnel Road, Amherst, Virginia
Mrs. Dawn Wooten	1410 Wagon Trail Road, Monroe, Virginia
Mrs. Joy Foster	1100 Pera Road, Monroe, Virginia
Mr. Shane Turner	125 High Peak Road, Monroe, Virginia
Mr. Raymond Lloyd	3135 Buffalo Springs Turnpike, Amherst, Virginia
Mr. David Woodridge	107 Little Piney, Lowesville, Virginia
Mr. William (Bill) Tucker	713 Indian Creek Road, Amherst, Virginia
Mrs. Martha Lloyd	3135 Buffalo Springs Turnpike, Amherst, Virginia
Mr. Kenneth (Elwood) Mays	1983 Buffalo Springs Turnpike, Amherst, Virginia
Mrs. Chelsea Jones	1093 Smith Street, Big Island, Virginia
Mr. Terry Bateman	193 Garland Avenues, Amherst, Virginia
Mrs. Lindsey Terwilliger	3140 Buffalo Springs Turnpike, Amherst, Virginia
Ms. Marie Petrone	Thomas Road, Madison Heights, Virginia
Mrs. Cindy Turner	708 Minor's Branch Road, Monroe, Virginia
Mrs. Sarah Lewis	515 Emmanuel Road, Amherst, Virginia
Mrs. Christy Neas	2911 Puppy Creek Road, Amherst, Virginia
Ms. Haley Haberly	223 Greenwood, Madison Heights, Virginia

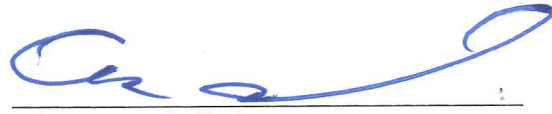
Mr. Wood expressed appreciation to everyone who attended the Public Hearing regarding the potential closure of Pleasant View Elementary School.

Mr. Wood asked if there was a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Upon motion by Mr. Summers, seconded by Mrs. Massie and unanimously carried, the Board adjourned the meeting at 8:05 p.m.



Teresa C. Crouch, Clerk
Amherst County Public Schools



Alan J. Wood, Chairman
Amherst County Public Schools