

The Amherst County School Board met in regular session on Thursday, September 25, 2014, in the School Administration Office, Amherst, Virginia, at 6:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Alan J. Wood, Chairman  
Alan H. Bumgarner  
Elizabeth S. Gamble  
W. Michael Henderson  
Priscilla M. Ligon  
Randy V. Summers

ABSENT: Patricia C. Massie, Vice Chairman

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.

Upon motion by Mr. Summers, seconded by Mrs. Gamble and unanimously carried, the Amherst County School Board approved the September 25, 2014, regular School Board meeting agenda.

Dr. Rogers recognized the following teachers who had received their National Board Certification over the past year:

Mrs. Kimberly Thomas -School Counselor, Amherst County High School  
Mrs. Patricia Emmert -Teacher, Amherst County High School  
Mr. David Emmert -Teacher, Amherst County High School

Each teacher shared information with the Board regarding the process that is required to receive National Board Certification. Mrs. Thomas stated it took three years of research, writing, rewriting, editing and studying to complete the work for the National Board Certification. Mrs. Emmert stated they are encouraging other teachers at Amherst County High School to consider applying for National Board Certification.

Mr. Wood asked if anyone wished to address the Board.

Mr. Jim Thompson, citizen, addressed the Board to gather additional information on the potential of constructing cell towers on the property of Amherst County Public Schools, specifically at Elon Elementary School.

Dr. Nichols informed Mr. Thompson the Board would be discussing and considering a marketing agreement at this School Board meeting. Dr. Nichols indicated the marketing agreement gives authorization for Milestone Communications to market the property of Amherst County Public Schools. Dr. Nichols stated the marketing agreement does not give authorization for construction of cell towers on the property owned by Amherst County Public Schools. In order for cell towers to be placed in any location, there would be hearings, notifications to all citizens in the community in which the cell tower was placed, as well as approval by the Planning Commission, the Amherst County Board of Supervisors, and the Amherst County School Board.

Mr. Bumgarner commented on the article in *The News and Daily Advance* regarding SOL scores. Mr. Bumgarner stated he just wanted to say hats off to the whole school system.

Mrs. Liggon stated she enjoyed the article as well and congratulated administration and staff for a job well done.

Mrs. Liggon stated she visited Amherst Education Center and spoke to the students about her career.

Mrs. Gamble stated the article in the newspaper was positive for Amherst County Public Schools.

Mr. Henderson stated he visited with the staff at Amherst Elementary School and Amherst Middle School and saw the students in action.

Dr. Nichols stated Board members had at their place information regarding an opportunity for the Amherst County High School football team to travel to Orlando, Florida in September 2015, to play a football game at the ESPN Complex.

Dr. Wells stated the cost of the trip would be covered through fundraising efforts led by Coach Phillips, the football program, the athletic boosters and the parents. The cost was approximately \$75,000.

Dr. Nichols stated this was a once in a lifetime opportunity for some of the students at Amherst County High School. Dr. Nichols recommended the School Board approve the trip request and the fundraising events.

Mr. Summers stated he thought this was a good opportunity.

Mr. Wood asked if the students would be flying in a commercial or charter plane.

Dr. Wells stated the students could be flying commercial or charter depending on funds as well as flights available.

Mr. Wood asked if there would be enough chaperones.

Dr. Wells stated the number of chaperones would be at least based on policy; however, he was sure there would be more.

Upon motion by Mrs. Gamble, seconded by Mr. Summers and unanimously carried, the Board approved the Amherst County High School football team to travel to Orlando, Florida, September 3, 2015 through September 6, 2015, to play a football game at the ESPN Complex.

Upon motion by Mr. Summers, seconded by Mr. Bumgarner and unanimously carried, the Board approved the Marketing Agreement between Amherst County Public Schools and Milestone Communications for wireless infrastructure.

Mrs. Liggon stated it was important to keep citizens informed about what is happening with the cell towers.

Mr. Wood stated that Mrs. Crouch had provided a revised copy of the minutes and asked if Board members had a chance to review the revised minutes. Mr. Wood asked that the minutes be approved separate from the consent agenda items.

Upon motion by Mrs. Gamble, seconded by Mr. Henderson and unanimously carried, the Board approved the minutes of the regular School Board meeting held on September 11, 2014, as amended.

Upon motion by Mrs. Ligon, seconded by Mr. Henderson and unanimously carried, the Board approved the following consent agenda: confirmation of the Superintendent's personnel actions for the period September 8, 2014, through September 19, 2014, the Amherst County Public Schools Local Plan for the Education of the Gifted 2014-2019, and approval of a field trip request for Amherst County High School Theatre Arts students to travel to Norfolk, Virginia to participate in the 2014 Virginia Theatre Association State Competition held on Thursday, October 23, 2014 through Sunday, October 26, 2014.

Dr. Norman informed Board members that an acronym key was at their place.

Dr. Norman stated a copy of the School Improvement Notebook was provided to Mr. Bumgarner and Mr. Henderson with 2013-2014 data. Dr. Norman stated information was available for all Board members concerning the 2014-15 data release.

Dr. Norman informed Board members that SOL results for specific schools would be discussed at the School Board Retreat.

Dr. Norman stated she planned to share information with the Board members regarding the Division level results of the SOL test scores:

- Form that reviews Accreditation
- Status of Accreditation and Federal AMOs for each school and their designation
- Two page Federal AMO Alignment (reading & math scores)
- Form that shows State Accreditation in all four areas (reading, math, science & history)
- Regional comparison – Amherst County compared with area divisions

Dr. Norman stated Amherst County Public Schools was the only division that showed improvement.

Dr. Norman introduced Mrs. Marymargaret Cardwell, Supervisor of Federal Programs, Mr. Wayne Lyle, Supervisor of Humanities, Mr. Jim Gallagher, Supervisor of Student Services, and Mr. Brendon Albon, Supervisor of Math and Science. Information was shared with Board members regarding each content area and the memos are attached to the minutes.

Dr. Nichols introduced Ms. Mary Mays, Supervisor of Guidance and Assessment Testing. Ms. Mays presented information to the Board regarding existing Amherst County Public Schools Scholarship Preparation Program. Ms. Mays provided sample tools that are used regarding financial aid, scholarships and student cost for Virginia Universities and 2-year colleges. Ms. Mays provided a list of the 2014 senior awards for students. Ms. Mays stated there are many opportunities for students to get funding for colleges. Ms. Mays shared with Board members a copy of a newsletter that all seniors receive.

Mrs. Gamble asked if the information is on-line.

Ms. Mays stated approximately 85% of the information was on-line.

Mrs. Gamble asked about the possibility of people from the community helping students and parents on completing college applications as well as scholarship applications.

Dr. Nichols stated he wanted to make sure that everyone knew the information was available for parents and students regarding scholarship opportunities.

Ms. Mays suggested Mrs. Gamble contact the school counselors at Amherst County High School.

Mr. Wood stated he recently read an article in the *American School Board Journal* regarding the dropout rate for first year college students because the students become overwhelmed with the college experience. Mr. Wood asked if it were possible for school counselors to keep in contact with the students the first year of college to ensure there were no problems.

Ms. Mays stated she and Dr. Nichols had been discussing ways that school counselors could stay in contact with students once the students graduate high school.

Ms. Mays stated that college recruiters are proactive because they come in and meet with prospective students to discuss issues that students may have in the first year of college.

Dr. Norman stated proposed revisions to Section I, Instruction, and Section J, Students, in the Amherst County Public Schools Policy Manual were at their place. Dr. Norman stated that some of the revisions to policies included references to compliance with new and existing laws and regulations. The proposed revisions would be reviewed at the October 9, 2014, regular School Board meeting.

Dr. Rogers stated proposed revisions to Section G, Personnel, in the Amherst County Public Schools Policy Manual were at their place. Dr. Rogers stated that revisions to policies included references to compliance with new and existing laws and regulations as well as a new policy, which cross-referenced a policy in Section J, regarding electronic cigarettes. The proposed revisions would be reviewed at the October 9, 2014, regular School Board meeting.

Mr. Cocke stated he did not have any updates on construction.

Mr. Henderson asked what the update was on the chiller at Amherst Middle School.

Mr. Cocke stated the company was researching to see if the motor could be rebuilt.

Dr. Nichols stated the Board had at their place the Proposed Budget Calendar. Dr. Nichols stated the Board would consider action at the next School Board meeting.

Dr. Nichols reminded Board members the School Board Retreat was scheduled for Wednesday, October 8, 2014, at 9:00 a.m.

Dr. Nichols shared with Board members that Amherst County Public Schools received a School Security Safety Equipment Grant in the amount of \$93,446. Dr. Nichols expressed his appreciation to Mr. Guill and Mr. Cocke for their assistance in completing the grant application.

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

Upon motion by Mrs. Gamble, seconded by Mr. Bumgarner and unanimously carried, the Board adjourned at 7:02 p.m.



Teresa C. Crouch, Clerk  
Amherst County Public Schools



Alan J. Wood, Chairman  
Amherst County Public Schools