

The Amherst County School Board met in regular session on Thursday, September 26, 2013, in the Board Room of the School Administration Office, Amherst, Virginia at 6:25 p.m.

PRESENT: Priscilla Liggon  
Patricia Massie  
Margaret Morton  
Randy Summers  
Alan Wood

ABSENT: Jones Stanley, Chairman  
Elizabeth Gamble, Vice Chairman

Mrs. Liggon, Chairman for the September 26, 2013 meeting, 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. Wood, seconded by Mrs. Massie and unanimously carried, the Board approved the agenda for the September 26, 2013, regular School Board meeting.

Mrs. Liggon asked if anyone wished to address the Board.

Mrs. Cheryl Fails, Teacher at Amherst County High School, stated the high school and middle schools had an awesome AP staff development workshop. Mrs. Fails stated the next workshop is scheduled for March 21-22, 2013, and invited Board members to attend.

Mrs. Melanie Lewis, teacher and President of the Amherst Education Association, addressed the Board requesting support for a resolution concerning high stakes, standardized testing of Virginia Public School students.

Dr. Nichols stated he will place information regarding this matter on the October 8, 2013, regular School Board agenda.

Mr. Summers asked for clarification as to why on September 12, 2013, the Amherst County School Board did not approve the purchase of the refrigerator/freezer combination for the Child Nutrition Program. Mrs. Crouch stated in the event there is an emergency, as in the week of September 12, 2013, Mrs. Klein, Supervisor of Child Nutrition Program, would receive price quotes, provide Dr. Nichols the information and he would approve the purchase and inform Board members of the situation at the next meeting. As a rule, unless there are emergency situations, large purchases would be approved by the Board even though the items are purchased from Child Nutrition Funds.

Mrs. Massie thanked Dr. Rogers for the following information:

Homeless Information

Eleven-month Contract Information

Mrs. Massie stated she attended the Pleasant View Elementary School fall festival.

Mrs. Massie stated members of the Retired Teachers' Association received a Thank You note from Dr. Nichols.

Mrs. Massie asked if a presentation could be made to the Board on Bullying and Suicide Prevention.

Mrs. Liggon stated she has been attending some football games.

Upon motion by Mr. Wood, seconded by Mrs. Morton and unanimously carried, the Board approved an easement between Amherst County Public Schools and Lumos Networks, Inc.

Upon motion by Mrs. Morton, seconded by Mr. Wood and unanimously carried, the Board approved the following consent agenda: minutes of the September 12, 2013, regular School Board meeting, and confirmation of the Superintendent's personnel actions for the period September 9, 2013 through September 20, 2013.

Mrs. Norman, Director of Academics, shared the following information with Board members:

- Informed the Board the Virginia Department of Education had changed the projected date for the public release of 2013-2014 federal accountability data and reports for schools and divisions to Tuesday, September 17, 2013.
- Information received for Amherst County Public Schools had been emailed to Board members.
- Information regarding the state and federal accountability measures for Amherst County Public Schools was shared with Board members.
- 2013-2014 ACPS Division & School Designation Chart
  - Chart 1 provides an overall look at the school designations for both state and federal designations. It is a *Schools At A Glance*, only giving the very basic information regarding each school's designation.
- 2013-2014 State Accreditation Chart
  - Chart 2 provides a detailed analysis of each school's test results analysis showing both current year and the three year average. It also reveals the school designation from the state for the 2012-2013 school year in comparison to the 2013-2014 state accreditation designation.
  - Please note that this information is for all four core areas (English, math, science, and history) and is for overall student performance.
  - Items highlighted in yellow are state designations of schools accredited with warning status.
  - Items in red are the specific area that forced the warning designation.
  - Item in green is the designation of Focus School status.
- 2013-2014 Federal Designation Chart

- Chart 3 provides a detailed analysis of each school's test results showing again, both current year and the three year average. It also reveals the division designation from the federal government.
  - The data for this chart is broken down by English and math only and targets specific subgroups.
  - Items designated in red are the areas of concern for the division and schools.
- Overall, the schools in Amherst County improved in many areas, but due to the new rigor of tests, the removal of the year 2 rolling average for math, and the required increase in performance with a different cohort of children, the declines in state and federal designations are more than have been seen in previous years.
  - It is the goal of the Instructional staff to continue to work with teachers to drill down to the specific weaknesses and provide a more targeted instructional delivery to all students in our division. A detailed plan will follow once the state has assigned the Division Liaison, and the plan is approved.

Mrs. Massie asked what did MHE stand for.

Mrs. Norman stated MHE stands for Meets High Expectation.

Mrs. Massie asked why was Temperance Elementary School in School Improvement if they have MHE.

Mrs. Norman stated Temperance Elementary School was in School Improvement because their variation in scores was more than five percent.

Mrs. Massie stated, when testing began, small schools were to be tested differently.

Dr. Nichols stated that originally it was said that smaller schools would be tested differently; however, that has not been the case.

Mrs. Massie asked how long schools stay as Focus Schools.

Mrs. Norman stated a school is a Focus School for at least two years.

Mr. Wood stated it appears Math is a concern. Mr. Wood asked if there were particular areas.

Mrs. Norman stated concerns in Math were in areas of computation, number & number sense, and Algebra I. Mrs. Norman stated the math test changed two years ago and divisions knew there would be a dip in scores due to the change in test.

Mr. Wood asked if there is a plan of action.

Mrs. Norman stated Mr. Albon is working with a selected math lead teacher group made up of highly qualified math teachers at each school. The group meets with Mr. Albon once a month for staff development. The teachers then go back to their respective schools and teach the teachers.

Mr. Wood asked if schools have a School Improvement Plan.

Mrs. Norman stated that schools do have a School Improvement Plan.

Mr. Wood asked if it was possible to have principals present a brief presentation to the Board on the Individual School Improvement Plan. Mr. Wood suggested over a couple of Board meetings.

Mrs. Ligon asked if Amherst County Public Schools has enough help to facilitate the work that is needed.

Dr. Nichols stated there is a need for additional help. Dr. Nichols stated that teachers are working with teachers. Dr. Nichols stated having a math lead teacher in each school is an instructional strength and believes Amherst County is on the right track.

Mrs. Ligon stated she wants information on how summer school is actually helping with remediation. Also, how many students are recommended to attend summer school verses how many students are attending summer school.

Dr. Nichols stated the students are being recommended to attend summer school; however, it is up to the parents to ensure the students attend summer school.

Mrs. Crouch stated the budget monitoring forms, revenue receipts, and object code report for August 2013, were at their place.

Mrs. Crouch stated the audit information for school activity funds for the 2012-2013 school year was at their place. Mrs. Crouch stated the bookkeepers and principals did a good job. The comments made by the auditors have been shared with the principals and bookkeepers. The principals have submitted a plan of action to correct the comments made by the auditors.

Mr. Guill provided copies of the Crisis/Emergency Plans for Amherst County Public Schools to each Board member. Mr. Guill informed Board members that Amherst County Public Schools have in place the following:

- Cameras at Amherst County High School, Amherst Middle School, & Monelison Middle School
- Lockdown doors at all schools
- Visitor sign-in
- Proper identification to check out students
- Alarm systems at all the schools
- Mandatory fire drills (state requires 2, ACPS has 5)
- Faculty has to wear badges
- Background checks for all volunteers
- Principals will be required to complete CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design)
- Parking Attendants at Amherst County High School
- Radio communication with all buses with possible booster for the Temperance area
- Cameras on buses
- Regular safety meetings for bus drivers

Mr. Guill stated the Board has been proactive with regards to safety issues.

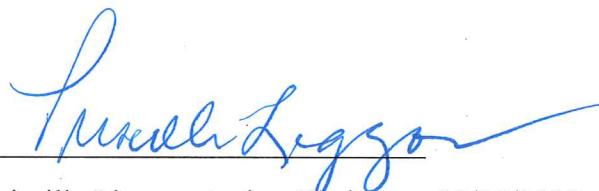
Mr. Cocke informed Board members the roof repairs have been completed at Amherst County High School and Monelison Middle School. The contractor is completing the core testing and he plans to provide the report to Board members at the October 8, 2013, regular School Board meeting. Mr. Cocke stated an update on construction funds will be provided at the October 8, 2013, regular School Board meeting.

Mrs. Liggon asked if anyone wished to address the Board. No one addressed the Board.

Upon motion by Mr. Wood, seconded by Mrs. Massie and unanimously carried, the Board adjourned at 7:40 p.m.



Teresa C. Crouch, Clerk  
Amherst County Public Schools



Priscilla Liggon, Acting Chairman, 09/26/2013  
Amherst County Public Schools