

Regular Session Board Meeting Highlights September 14, 2020

The Gates County Board of Education met in a regular session on Monday, September 14, 2020, through a remote meeting using the Zoom format. This was agreed to by the board members in order to comply with the Governor's Order regarding the Coronavirus Pandemic. Chairman Ray Felton called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. The following board members were present: Mr. Ray Felton, Mr. Leslie Byrum, Mrs. Sallie Ryan, and Mrs. Amanda Pacitto. Due to technical difficulties, Mrs. Glendale Boone joined by phone at 9:16 a.m., and then later by Zoom.

Mr. Leslie Byrum made a motion to enter into closed session to discuss personnel as outlined in North Carolina General Statute 143-318.11(a)(6). Mrs. Sallie Ryan seconded the motion. Chairman Felton called for a vote. Board members stated their name and their vote, and the motion carried unanimously. The board entered closed session at 9:04 a.m.

The board reconvened open session at 10:00 a.m. with all board members present.

Mr. Leslie Byrum made a motion to approve the revised agenda. Mrs. Glendale Boone seconded the motion. Chairman Felton called for a vote. Board members stated their name and their vote, and the motion was unanimously approved.

There was a moment of silence, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Ray Felton read an email from Donald Baker requesting that his children be allowed to attend school face-to-face. Mrs. Chante Jordan, EC Director, is working to resolve this matter. Mr. Felton noted that the board has received letters from Stacy Pierce regarding face-to-face instruction and reinstating the sports programs. They have also received correspondence from others, and all will be considered. One parent noted problems with having students in 3 different schools and the different lunch schedules. Jonathan Jones had contacted Mr. Byrum concerning Food Trucks being able to use the parking lot at the high school and community center. They had moved to the SECU parking lot after COVID-19 restrictions were put in place. The Board agreed that the Food Trucks could move back to the school parking lot. Dr. Williams did ask that the vendors contact him for proper documentation.

Superintendent Report:

- Obici Grant received
- Buckland received a Dollar General Grant to purchase books for struggling readers
- Dr. Williams gave a shout out to the teachers and all employees – everyone is doing a fantastic job
- Mrs. Tammy Boone, Assistant Superintendent, introduced Ms. Savannah Gilbert, the new College Advisor at GCHS. This position is being funded by a grant for the next 7 years. Mrs. Gilbert briefly spoke about her goal to encourage students to continue education beyond high school.

Mrs. Boone then asked each of the principals to present a brief report of their School Improvement Plans.

Board Report:

- Board Members have visited schools and Open Houses, and complimented the teachers and staff for the wonderful job they are doing
- Board Members were impressed that so many people were present for the board meeting today

Due to technical difficulties, Mrs. Ryan left the meeting at 10:53 a.m.

Mrs. Pittman had provided monthly reports to the board prior to the meeting. We still do not have a state budget, but we are on target. Daycare's enrollment has increased.

Mr. Leslie Byrum thanked Mr. Jeremy Wright and John Smith for their assistance in getting the Pay Pal program up and running for donations to the Education Association for Excellence.

Dr. Williams approved the following Out-of-District Request for 2020-2021:

- Emma Ward to attend Gates County High, contingent upon payment of tuition and release from Hertford County
- Bentley Ide to attend Buckland Elementary
- Brandi Horton to be released to attend Edenton/Chowan Schools, contingent upon acceptance from Edenton/Chowan

Unfinished Business

- 1) Purchase of Athletic Items for Central Middle – Tabled until the county can give us firm figures of what money is left
- 2) Pre-K Instruction – Mrs. Jordan reported that 5 EC students are attending face-to-face school, due to their disabilities. We have a total of 37 students enrolled in Pre-K. The State has not given a mandate, and is allowing the Pre-K program to follow the protocol for the county K-12 instruction.
- 3) Reopening Schools
 - Mr. Byrum is in favor of going back but not on October 16th – possibly November 16th - need to make adjustments for high risk personnel. Plan B needs some modifications – need to make decision on sports today – parents need time to prepare – he is ok with starting sports - has concerns about our Exceptional Children and AIG students – has written letters to state officials and utility companies concerning internet problems
 - Mrs. Pacitto is leaning toward students going back under Plan B – need to make decision on sports today – she is ok with sports starting back with proper protocols
 - Mrs. Boone does not feel we should go back due to safety issues – feels that many teachers will leave – need to make decision on sports today

- Mrs. Ryan joined the meeting again at 11:08 a.m. She has concerns with both Plans B and C – would like to see COVID-19 numbers coming down – would like to see data on how students are doing with remote learning – has questions about athletics – need to take precautions
- Mr. Felton reminded everyone that the decisions we make today can effect Gates County Schools for many years
- Mr. Jeremy Wright, Student Services Director, was asked about the NC Athletic Association – he noted that the Association has extensive guidelines in place – COVID tests are not required unless someone is showing symptoms – temperature checks are required - funds can be a problem, and there would not be any spectators
- Mr. Felton asked about showing games virtually and requiring a fee to help with costs
- Mrs. Pacitto suggested a lottery for tickets to help with fundraising
- Mr. Jonathan Hayes, principal at Gates County High, was asked how many athletes are participating – his answer: Volleyball – 24 and Cross Country 10. He noted that other schools are working it out. It is doable, but tricky. Coaches have expressed their concerns – how does the community feel about sports being allowed and we are not back in school
- We have received Hot Spots from the governor’s office. John Smith is doing all he can to get them to students that need them
- Board members noted that some teachers have commented they would not come back if we go with face-to-face instruction

Mrs. Glendale Boone made a motion to add approval of reinstating the sports program as Item Number 23 on the Consent Agenda. Mrs. Amanda Pacitto seconded the motion. Chairman Felton called for a vote. Board members stated their name and their vote, and the motion was unanimously approved.

Mrs. Amanda Pacitto made a motion to vote on athletics being allowed to start at the schools. Mrs. Glendale Boone seconded the motion. Chairman Felton called for a vote. Board members stated their name and their vote, and the motion was unanimously approved. Mrs. Sallie Ryan did state that her vote was for volleyball and cross country. *(This motion was amended later in the meeting – see below)*

Mrs. Sallie Ryan made a motion to reconvene on Wednesday, September 30, 2020, at 10:00 am, using the Zoom format, to vote on allowing schools to return to school under the hybrid Plan B. Mrs. Amanda Pacitto seconded the motion. Chairman Felton called for a vote. Board members stated their name and their vote, and the motion was unanimously approved. *Due to conflicting schedules, this meeting was later changed to Friday, October 9, 2020 at 4:00 p.m., to be held at the county courthouse.*

Mrs. Glendale Boone requested a survey of the teachers and staff to see how many would not return if face-to-face was implemented. Board members would also like information from the parents to see how many students would be returning.

Mrs. Sallie Ryan made a motion for staff to determine the best way to provide this information. Mrs. Glendale Boone seconded the motion. Chairman Felton called for a vote. Board members stated their name and their vote. The motion carried, with Mr. Leslie Byrum abstaining from the vote.

Mr. Byrum made a motion to amend the earlier motion regarding sports. He amended the motion to read that all eligible sports be allowed to start November 4, 2020, using the guidelines as set forth by the NC Athletic Association. This will include provisions for student athlete conditioning. Coaches can put together a schedule. Mrs. Amanda Pacitto seconded the motion. Chairman Felton called for a vote. Board members stated their name and their vote, and the motion was unanimously approved.

The following Consent Agenda Items were approved:

1. Approval of Minutes – August 6, 2020 Regular Session
2. Approval of Minutes – August 17, 2020 Special Called Session
3. Policy 1710/4040/7230 – Discrimination and Harassment Prohibited by Federal Law
4. Deletion of Policy 1710/4021/7230 – Prohibition Against Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying
5. Deletion of Policy 1720/4015/7225 – Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Complaint
6. Policy 1720/4030/7235 – Title IX Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex
7. Policy 1725/4035/7236 – Title IX Sexual Harassment – Prohibited Conduct and Reporting Process
8. Policy 1725/4035/7236-R – Title IX Sexual Harassment Definitions
9. Policy 1726/4036/7237 – Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Process
10. Policy 1730/4022/7231 – Non-discrimination on the Basis of Disabilities
11. Policy 4040/7310 – Staff-Student Relations
12. Policy 4329/7311 – Bullying and Harassing Behavior Prohibited
13. Policy 4331 – Assaults and Threats
14. Policy 4340 – School-Level Investigations
15. Policy 7232 – Discrimination and Harassment in the Workplace
16. Public Consulting Group, Inc.
17. NC Community Colleges Adult High School Agreement
18. Rebecca Ammons Occupational Therapy Contract
19. Memorandum of Understanding with Dr. Steve Folstad
20. GCHS Donations Exceeding \$500.00
21. Transportation Contracts for Exceptional Children’s Department
22. GCHS Fundraisers
23. Reinstatement of Sports Programs

New Business

1. Voting Delegates for NCSBA Annual Conference: Glendale Boone, Leslie Byrum, and Sallie Ryan
2. Nomination of Leslie Byrum for Raleigh Dingham Award

3. Nomination of County Commissioners for NCSBA Award
4. Nomination of Ray Felton for NCSBA School Board Member Leadership Award
5. Nomination of the Board of Education for the School Board Leadership Award
6. Nomination of the Gates County Community Partnership (GDDP) for the NCSBA Award for Excellence in Educational Programs

Mrs. Amanda Pacitto made a motion to approve Items one through six under New Business. Mr. Leslie Byrum seconded the motion. Chairman Felton called for a vote. Board members stated their name and their vote, and the motion was unanimously approved.

Mr. Leslie Byrum asked that the schools be notified about the student contests for the NCSBA Annual Conference.

The following personnel recommendations were approved:

1. **PART-TIME CUSTODIAN**
 - Dennis Lassiter, Jr. – Gatesville Elementary
2. **PARENTAL LEAVE OF ABSENCE**
 - Keri Askew – Payroll Specialist at Central Office – through 6/10/2021
3. **RESIGNATION**
 - Bryanna Custis – New Beginnings Daycare Part-Time Teacher Assistant – Effective: 9/8/2020
4. **VOLUNTEER**
 - Monjetta Spivey Blanchard

Other Business:

- The October Regular Session Meeting will be held on Monday, October 12, 2020. We will use the Zoom format to conduct the meeting remotely. Closed Session will begin at 9:00 a.m. and Open Session at 10:00 a.m.
- The recorded North Carolina School Boards Association District Meeting will be available until September 17, 2020

Mrs. Glendale Boone made a motion to adjourn. Mrs. Amanda Pacitto seconded the motion. Chairman Felton called for a vote. Board members stated their name and vote, and the motion was unanimously approved.

There being no further business, Chairman Felton adjourned the meeting at 12:50 p.m.