

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE SCHOOL BOARD
CITY OF CHESAPEAKE, VIRGINIA
April 9, 2020**

A meeting of the School Board of the City of Chesapeake, Virginia, was held on Thursday, April 9, 2020, at 5:30 p.m. in the Board Room of the School Administration Building. Ms. Victoria L. Proffitt, Chairman, presided.

The Call to Order

Ms. Proffitt called the meeting to order and stated the meeting would appear different from other meetings, as some Board members would participate remotely due to restrictions put forth by the Governor's declaration of emergency in response to the COVID-19 Pandemic. She provided roll call instructions to those Board members who participated remotely.

Roll Call

Dr. Jean Infantino called roll and recorded attendance noting that Board members included in a motion to approve their remote attendance should not participate in that vote:

Mr. Samuel L. Boone, Jr., responded, "Chairman Proffitt, in keeping with the School Board Bylaw 2-33 and following a declaration of emergency brought on by the COVID-19 Pandemic requesting that Virginians stay at home as much as possible, I wish to participate in tonight's meeting by remote means."

Mr. C. Jeff Bunn – Present

Dr. Patricia Y. King responded, "Chairman Proffitt, in keeping with the School Board Bylaw 2-33 and following a declaration of emergency brought on by the COVID-19 Pandemic requesting that Virginians stay at home as much as possible, I wish to participate in tonight's meeting by remote means."

Mr. Thomas L. Mercer, Sr., responded, "Chairman Proffitt, in keeping with the School Board Bylaw 2-33 and following a declaration of emergency brought on by the COVID-19 Pandemic requesting that Virginians stay at home as much as possible, I wish to participate in tonight's meeting by remote means."

Mr. Harry A. Murphy – Present

Mrs. Christie New Craig responded, "Chairman Proffitt, in keeping with the School Board Bylaw 2-33 and following a declaration of emergency brought on by the COVID-19 Pandemic requesting that Virginians stay at home as much as possible, I wish to participate in tonight's meeting by remote means."

Mr. Michael J. Woods – Present

Mrs. Colleen C. Leary, Vice Chairman – Present

Ms. Victoria L. Proffitt, Chairman – Present

Mrs. Leary moved that remote participation be authorized for Mr. Sam Boone. Mr. Bunn seconded the motion, which passed with a vote of 8-0 in favor of the motion with Mr. Sam Boone abstaining.

Mrs. Leary moved that remote participation be authorized for Dr. Patricia King. Mr. Murphy seconded the motion, which passed with a vote of 8-0 in favor of the motion with Dr. Patricia King abstaining.

Mrs. Leary moved that remote participation be authorized for Mr. Tom Mercer. Mr. Bunn seconded the motion, which passed with a vote of 8-0 in favor of the motion with Mr. Thomas Mercer abstaining.

Mrs. Leary moved that remote participation be authorized for Mrs. Christie New Craig. Mr. Bunn seconded the motion, which passed with a vote of 8-0 in favor of the motion with Mrs. New Craig abstaining.

Also present at the meeting were Dr. Jared A. Cotton, Superintendent; Ms. Victoria Lucente, Chief Financial Officer; and Dr. Jean A. Infantino, Chief of Staff/Clerk of the Board.

The following individuals participated in the meeting remotely: Dr. Anita B. James, Chief Academic Officer; Dr. Jacqueline C. Miller, Chief Student Support Services Officer; Ms. J. Paige Stutz, Chief Operations Officer; Dr. Alan L. Vaughan, Chief Human Resources Officer; Mr. Robert J. Barry, Attorney, and Mrs. Darlene N. Gorman, Deputy Clerk of the Board.

Adoption of the Agenda

Dr. Cotton had no amendments to the agenda but said he would need a closed session for consultation with the attorney. Mrs. New Craig moved to adopt the agenda as presented. Mr. Murphy seconded the motion, which passed with all participating Board members voting in favor of the motion.

Closed Meeting

Ms. Proffitt asked Mr. Barry to prepare the language for the Board to go into closed session. Mr. Barry stated that the motion should read as follows:

“The Board should convene in closed session pursuant to Section 2.2-3711 of the Code of Virginia for consultation with the attorney.”

Mr. Murphy moved that the Board go into closed session as provided in the Code of Virginia. Mrs. Leary seconded the motion, which passed with all participating Board members voting in favor of the motion.

Reconvene in Open Meeting

The meeting reconvened in open session. Mrs. Leary moved that the record show the only items discussed in the closed meeting were those specifically cited in the motion to convene into closed session. Mrs. New Craig seconded the motion, which passed with all participating Board members voting in favor of the motion.

Action – Closed Meeting

None.

Moment of Silence/Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

A moment of silence was observed, and Board member, Mrs. New Craig, led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Awards and Recognitions

None.

Hearing of Citizens

None.

Consent Agenda

The chairman requested approval of the consent agenda. Items included the following:

- A. Approval of the Minutes of the Previous Meeting
- B. Bids
- C. Proposed Revisions to School Board Policy P 4-34 – Educational Facilities Specifications – Second Reading and Final Action
- D. Proposed Revisions to School Board Policy P 4-35 – Construction Planning– Second Reading and Final Action
- E. Proposed New School Board Policy P 4-36 – Electronic Room Partitions – Second Reading and Final Action
- F. Department of Human Resources - Personnel Report

Mrs. Leary moved to approve the Consent Agenda and the motion was seconded by Mrs. New Craig. The motion passed with all participating Board members voting in favor of the motion.

Information Agenda

Special Education Annual Plan and Report: Dr. Craig S. Pinello, Director of Exceptional Learning, reviewed the State-Required Special Education Annual Plan and Report for 2020-2021. Information is available in BoardDocs. No action was requested at the meeting. These items will be under Consent Agenda and approval will be requested at the next scheduled School Board meeting on April 23, 2020.

2020-2021 Budget Update: Dr. Cotton stated both city and state budgets would be reviewed due to significant changes in the economy because of the COVID-19 Pandemic. He noted potential shortfalls to current city and state budgets, therefore adjustments may be made to our current budget and to the FY 2020/2021 budget. The General Assembly will meet for the veto session on April 22, 2020, and modifications to their adopted budget due to the economic impact of the Governor's Emergency Orders 53 and 55 are possible. The Governor's order could impact local revenues. Dr. Cotton stated the short turnaround time from the Governor's veto session to our next Board meeting scheduled for April 23, 2020, may not allow much time to provide budget information to Board members at that meeting. Mrs. Leary asked how these changes might affect our early commitment teachers. Dr. Cotton did not anticipate any problems, as he plans to monitor the situation closely.

Monthly Financial Report: Ms. Lucente presented the interim financial report for the period ending February 2020. This report is included in BoardDocs. Ms. Lucente stated the current economic situation and forecasts for both state and local revenues have changed substantially since the January 2020 interim report. At that time, we were expecting a revenue surplus; however, expectations are that the General Assembly may modify the FY 2019/2020 Caboose budget when the veto session convenes on April 22, 2020. Significant areas of concern are sales tax revenues, which will affect both state and local revenues, as well as Basic Aid calculation. At this time, the City has not indicated a need to reduce the appropriation for the FY 2019/2020; however, an adjustment is possible. Ms. Lucente noted due to changes since mid-March 2020, additional monitoring and expenditure controls are in place for all funds.

Action Agenda

Proposed Revisions to School Board Bylaws B 2-10 – Board Organization, Officers and Their Duties – Second Reading and Final Action: Mrs. New Craig motioned to approve the revisions on second reading. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Leary and passed with a vote of 6-3. Mr. Bunn, Mr. Murphy, and Mr. Woods voted in opposition of the motion. Mr. Bunn did not support the change because he felt it was unnecessary as several years ago the Board chose to allow anyone the opportunity to serve in a leadership role. He appreciates the hard work and friendship of the chair and vice chair. Mr. Murphy asked who put the revision on the agenda. Ms. Proffitt stated the chair and vice chair placed the revision on the agenda, and the first reading took place at the March Board meeting. Mr. Murphy agreed with Mr. Bunn's position and asked why the revision was necessary.

Mrs. Leary responded that typically in the past, the vice chair moves into the chairman position after serving his/her two-year term. However, with the passing of her husband and daughter over this past year and as she continues to help raise her grandson, she has chosen not to pursue the chairman position. Mr. Murphy shared he sympathized with Mrs. Leary but did not support this revision. He felt change was healthy for an organization, and the system currently in place works. Mr. Woods also agreed with Mr. Bunn and Mr. Murphy. He stated when he served his two-year term as vice chairman years ago, he was not voted into the chairman position the following year. The Board has the ultimate vote/decision of who will serve in leadership roles. He recalled when Mrs. Barbara Head (former Board Chairman) instituted two-year term limits in the leadership positions to ensure fairness to all Board members. Mrs. Leary's shared the intent was to ensure consistency for the next year. Mrs. New Craig stated each position must still receive 5 out of 9 votes to fulfill either of those leadership roles, and this revision permits a chairman to run again after serving his/her two-year term.

Mr. Bunn suggested a possible "gentlemen's agreement" where no one solicits votes for a leadership role prior to the election of the current year. Dr. King thanked the chair and vice chair for their strong leadership during the past two years and stated everyone still has the opportunity to vote for their choice. Although he agreed with the revision, Mr. Boone saw both sides of the argument and appreciated the hard work and dedication of both the chair and vice chair. Mrs. New Craig motioned to approve the revisions on second reading. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Leary and passed with a vote of 6-3. Mr. Bunn, Mr. Murphy, and Mr. Woods voted in opposition of the motion.

2020 National Blue Ribbon School Application: Dr. Anita James, Chief Academic Officer, was delighted to share that Camelot Elementary School was selected by the Virginia Department of Education to submit an application for recognition as a 2020 National Blue Ribbon School. Under the current leadership of Mr. Robert Sander, principal, Camelot Elementary School meets eligibility requirements that include achieving all performance targets in reading, mathematics, and other academic and on-academic indicators. Dr. James asked for approval to submit the application to the United States Department of Education (USDOE) to receive this distinct recognition. Mrs. New Craig motioned to approve the application. The motion was seconded by Mr. Bunn and approved by all participating Board members in the meeting.

Resolution Regarding the Suspension of School Board Policies: Mr. Robert Barry, attorney, stated that due to the COVID-19 crisis, the Governor and State Department of Education took action to suspend some of the rules and regulations that govern local school divisions. The Virginia School Board Association (VSBA) sent a draft resolution similar to the resolution before the Board to achieve suspension of regulations and rules to the extent already permitted at the state level and enabling flexibility for our division when dealing with the crisis. A copy of this resolution is included on pages 6372 and 6373 of the minutes. Mrs. New Craig moved to approve the resolution. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Leary and approved by all participating Board members in the meeting.

Superintendent's Report

Superintendent's Spotlight: Dr. Cotton stated that although his Spotlight appeared different from the last Board meeting, it does not change how proud he is of our students, staff, and the community for coming together to support one another during this difficult time.

Serving Students: Immediately upon the Governor's order to close our schools, our school nutrition and transportation departments developed a plan for our students to continue to receive access to healthy meals every day. Dr. Cotton thanked all of our dedicated employees and shared a video of these coordinated efforts. Mr. Larry Wade, director of school nutrition services, and Dr. David Benson, director of student transportation, helped serve approximately 1300 meals every day to our students. Dr. Cotton reminded everyone at our meal distribution locations to continue to follow the CDC guidelines by practicing physical distancing and to wear face coverings as much as possible to ensure the safety of our staff and families.

Community Support: Dr. Cotton extended his sincere appreciation to Chesapeake Churches United, who teamed up to provide school and cleaning supplies, non-perishable food items, and other essentials to families in need at our meal distribution locations. He mentioned the website, faithinchesapeake.com., for anyone who wanted additional information.

#StayConnectedCPS: Dr. Cotton expressed his appreciation to the Teaching and Learning department for their immediate action when schools closed. Emergency learning plans were developed to keep students engaged during the initial two-week closure. Since then, our teachers have been involved in our enhanced learning plan phase, and our students and teachers have stayed connected in a variety of innovative ways.

Month of the Military Child: Dr. Cotton reminded everyone that April is the month of the Military Child. He shared a video and thanked Captain Klein, one of our military partners, for his support for our students. He encouraged everyone to wear purple on April 22, 2020, in support of our military families.

Teachers of the Year: Dr. Cotton encouraged everyone to tune into our YouTube premier ceremony on Tuesday, April 10, 2020, to celebrate our teachers of the year and reveal the elementary, middle, high school, and citywide teachers of the year.

Continuity of Learning Plan: Dr. Cotton provided an update on Phase 3 of our Continuity of Learning Plan. Students will continue to receive instruction through the remainder of this school year to provide an opportunity to demonstrate grade level or course competencies for credit or promotion. Chromebook distribution began with priority given to seniors and other students enrolled in credit-bearing courses. He informed high school students who were unable to respond to the technology needs survey to contact their homeroom teacher or principal directly for assistance.

The disruption of a public health crisis should not have a negative impact on students' grades. Therefore, the Division of Teaching and Learning worked to define a plan for grading which he hopes will alleviate some of the stress families feel at this time. He thanked the school community for their patience as we all work hard to provide answers to many questions during these challenging times.

Board Member Items

Mrs. New Craig thanked everyone for coming together to continue to teach and feed our students. She appreciated the hard work of Board members, the Superintendent and his staff, all essential employees, along with our first responders.

Mrs. Leary reiterated how Mrs. New Craig felt and thanked all the parents, teachers, and staff for their hard work through this difficult time and learn new technology. She enjoyed participating with her grandson in his Google Classroom meeting.

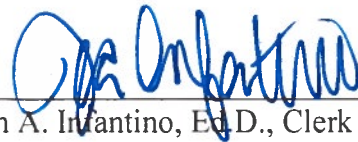
Mr. Bunn thanked Mr. Wade and his team, along with Mrs. Andrea Vail, administrator of business and community partnerships, for all they have done. He also thanked the community volunteers and Mr. Taylor Grissom for coordinating help from our church community.

Mr. Bunn asked Dr. Cotton if lawn maintenance is continuing at our schools and facilities during the crisis. Ms. Stutz stated all grounds continue to be maintained and reminded everyone we are in the middle of the growing season. Mr. Bunn has received several questions regarding graduation plans. Dr. Cotton has put together a team to review potential graduation arrangements and will provide an update in the coming weeks.

Ms. Proffitt also thanked our staff, teachers, students, and parents and encouraged everyone to stay safe, stay well, and stay connected.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:56 p.m.



Jean A. Infantino, Ed.D., Clerk



Ms. Victoria L. Proffitt, Chairman

Resolution of the Chesapeake School Board

WHEREAS, on March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization declared the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak a pandemic; and

WHEREAS, on March 12, 2020, Governor Ralph S. Northam issued Executive Order Fifty-One declaring a state of emergency regarding the anticipated effects of COVID-19 constituting a disaster and such Order school boards to render appropriate assistance to prepare for the event, to alleviate any conditions resulting from the situation, and to implement recovery and mitigation activities so as to return to pre-event conditions as much as possible; and

WHEREAS, Executive Order Fifty-One authorized executive branch agencies, including the Virginia Department of Education, to waive any state regulation as appropriate; and

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020, the President of the United States declared a national emergency in response to the spread of COVID-19; and

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020, Governor Ralph S. Northam ordered all K-12 schools to close for a minimum of two weeks and on March 23, 2020 to close schools for the remainder of the school year; and

WHEREAS, on March 13, 2020, Virginia's Superintendent of Public Instruction encouraged local school divisions to consider options and ideas to engage students in reading, thinking and learning while schools are closed and on March 27, 2020 indicated that he would provide flexibility in responding to the crisis and later announced that certain regulatory requirements would be waived; and

WHEREAS, on March 30, 2020, the United States Department of Education gave permission to Virginia to cancel federally mandated Standards of Learning tests during the 2019-2020 school year; and

WHEREAS, on April 2, 2020, the Virginia Board of Education indicated its approval for waiving certain regulatory requirements regarding awarding standard units of credit and locally awarded verified credits; and

WHEREAS, CHESAPEAKE School Board's usual practice is to make changes to policies only after the proposed policy change is considered at two school board meetings, but the Board may need to be able to adapt School Division operations to rapid changes in circumstances, law and regulation; and

WHEREAS, enforcing the requirements of existing policies could result in ineffective outcomes or be inconsistent with current laws and regulations as they exist after waivers.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the CHESAPEAKE School Board suspends for so long as statewide waivers are in place such policies or provisions within policies and also the application of regulations which reflect legal and/or regulatory requirements that have been waived or modified by proper governmental authority ; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Superintendent is directed to inform the School Board of any regulations that are suspended by the Superintendent and the duration of such suspensions; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the execution of this Resolution is proper documentation of the CHESAPEAKE School Board's approval of this action.

Adopted and approved this 9th day of April, 2020.



Chair



Date