

**RITCHIE COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION
MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING
RITCHIE COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION OFFICE
HARRISVILLE, WV
JULY 06, 2020 – 6:00 p.m.**

The regular meeting of the Ritchie County Board of Education was called to order on Monday, July 06, 2020, at 6:06 p.m. by President Dr. Torie Jackson.

ROLL CALL

Present: Dr. Torie Jackson, President
Mrs. Betsy Wells, Vice-President
Mrs. Misty Ingram-Keen (via phone)
Mr. Denny Nelson
Mr. Ryan Reed

Administrative Staff Present: Mr. James G. Brown, Superintendent, Mr. David Weekley, Director of Support Services and Attendance and Mrs. Debbie Bever, Director of Special Education, Federal Programs and School Improvement.

*All Board Members, Administrative Staff and Newspaper Representatives remained six feet apart to meet social distancing requirements.

AGENDA ITEMS TO BE TABLED OR REMOVED

None

MINUTES

Mr. Reed made the motion, seconded by Mrs. Wells to approve the preliminary minutes of the regular meeting of June 22, 2020. Motion passed unanimously.

DELEGATIONS

Ryan Alexander and Gavin Vincent each spoke on behalf of those who want the Ritchie County High School mascot and name changed. They informed the Board of their reasons why they feel the change is necessary as well as shared the results of their survey.

Shelly Denise Lynch Starcher spoke on behalf of those in favor of keeping the Rebel mascot.

Remote Participants: Crystal Wilson, Ryan Alexander, Gavin Vincent, Debbie White, Christopher Dowell (WBOY), Kelly Waggoner, Chris Wells, Greg Der, Dustin Weekley (WDTV), Jodie Lusk, Shelly Starcher, Criss Streets, Angela Sellers, Lauren Gebhardt-Kram, Kym Layfield, Kristie Campbell, Brianna Clark (WBOY), Brian Daugherty.

Mr. Brown informed all those in attendance that this was not an issue which generated from school administration nor was it presented as a matter of issue with the Board of Education. This came from within the community.

Board of Education President, Dr. Torie Jackson, asked for a five minute recess. Upon returning from recess Dr. Jackson presented a written statement to each board member. After reading the statement all board members were in agreement. Dr. Jackson read the following statement:

The Ritchie County Board of Education acknowledges the need for our schools to provide a learning environment and culture inclusive and sensitive to the diversity in our student and community population, as well as the broader population. The Board also values and respects the long-standing traditions of our schools and communities. The Ritchie County High School mascot name, Rebels, originated from a principle of unity. Students and the community at large understand the historical perspective and importance of the Rebel name. The school colors of silver and navy blue associated with the Rebel mascot also have no probative contribution to any connotation of discrimination. However, as articulated and impressed upon the school administration for many years, the confederate flag does not have a purpose in our schools, nor shall it be officially or unofficially emblematic of the school mascot. Furthermore, the Rebel mascot has never officially been trademarked and over the years has morphed beyond its original conception. The Board, therefore, directs the Superintendent of Schools and the Ritchie County High School administration to identify a Rebel mascot characterization that reflects the original intent and the current values of our school system. This task must be addressed quickly and codified through the trademark process. Immediately upon approval, the process of replicating the mascot across all aspects of the school environment must be accomplished swiftly and prudently. As a community, we hope this discourse serves to unite us for the betterment of our school system.

RECOGNITIONS

None

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Superintendent Brown reviewed the following information:

West Virginia Department of Education Reentry Toolkit - Guidance

- The re-entry toolkit from the state department is on the third revision
- The document is currently embargoed
- Our team has spent a great deal of time reviewing this document

Draft Ritchie County Schools Re-entry Plan 2020-2021

- Very important to keep employees safe. Without healthy staff school does not function.
- Sent notice to service employees that schedules might change during the school year.
- Working on signage as to where to enter and exit buildings, flow direction, guidelines, etc.
- Need to identify an isolation room at each location and someone to supervise isolation
- Purchasing gloves for all staff who choose to wear them
- Looking at the best option for masks for employees. We have an ample supply of masks currently but are aware that there will be a high demand for masks. Mr. Weekley is working with vendors to find the best avenue.
- Sanitization of equipment and materials is critical. Electrostatic guns have been ordered that can sanitize an entire room relatively quickly. These guns are on back order but we have been promised that they will be here before the start of the school year.
- Panhandle Cleaning and Restoration will begin cleaning and sanitization of all buildings beginning July 27th
- Considering securing extra subs at Ritchie County Middle / High School to specifically clean bathrooms and main areas
- Mr. Weekley is also working on how to best establish splash guards in our school offices. Building this barrier for safety is critical.
- We will be purchasing three devices for the Ritchie County Middle / High School Complex which have the capability of taking 16 temperatures in three tenths of a second. There will be one device installed at the front door of the high school, one at the front door of the middle school and one at the door to the parent drop off area. The \$47,000.00 cost will be funded through COVID money.
- At the elementary levels we will have a temperature reading device on a stand. As students and staff walk up to the device it takes an immediate reading and stores it digitally. An adult will monitor the device.
- Hand sanitizer will be placed at every entrance, in classrooms, bathrooms, cafeterias and on each school bus
- Bottled water will be provided for each student. Water fountains will not be utilized.
- We will be sanitizing school buses before and after each run. This will necessitate hiring an additional custodian to sanitize buses.
- Would like to utilize COVID money to place Licensed Practical Nurses at each of our elementary schools and one at the middle / high school complex
- Unless we get a directive from our Governor we will be going back to school on August 13th in person. We are considering a model of going to school 4 days a week for the immediate future and re-evaluate as conditions change. Students will attend in person on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. Students will complete schoolwork in a blended learning model on Wednesdays. This will allow for intensive cleaning and sanitization of facilities on Wednesdays. All of this is contingent on good health and COVID numbers.
- Students will be required to wear masks on buses, in hallways and congregate areas. Students will be provided with two masks.
- Students will be contained to small groups as much as possible

Mr. Reed said "I think you have got the best plan you can come up with". He trusts Mr. Brown, Mr. Weekley, Mrs. Haught, and Mrs. Bever and feel they have in mind what is best for the children. Safety comes first.

Ritchie County Schools 4-Year Master Plan to Upgrade School Facilities

- Our Municipal Bond Council has been secured. Joe Nassif will represent our Board.
- Mr. Brown and Dr. Jackson will present notice to the County Clerk and County Commission on Thursday at 9:00 a.m.
- A special board meeting will be held on Thursday, July 16, 2020 at which the Bond Council will present the bond from a financial standpoint as well as the construct of a facilities bond
- Mr. Brown presented the Board with preliminary numbers for each phase of the funding plan

DIRECTOR REPORTS

Mr. David Weekley, Director of Support Services and Attendance reviewed the following information:

- Working on the many and varied preparations that are necessary to ensure that the students attend school in the safest environment we can provide under the current circumstances
- All interior doors at Ritchie County High School have had the locks replaced. Keys will be delivered to teachers soon.
- Roof replacement on the athletic buildings will begin around August 13th
- Floor waxing is done at Smithville Elementary. Harrisville Elementary still needs hallways waxed and Creed Collins Elementary has a few classrooms and hallways left to wax. The middle / high school complex waxing should be done by the time Panhandle Cleaning comes on July 27th.
- The bus antenna at Brohard will be up and operational soon
- The kitchen floors at Harrisville Elementary and Creed Collins Elementary have been completed as far as asbestos tiles being removed and replaced with new tile. Still need to install a pedestal sink and stainless steel table in each kitchen.

Mrs. Debbie Bever, Director of Special Education, Federal Programs and School Improvement reviewed the following information:

- We were not selected as a county to receive the 21st Century Grant. We can apply again next year.
- We have worked very hard on the strategic plan, federal programs applications and budgets and have received feedback. We are on our second revision and very close to finishing.
- Mrs. Bever has been communicating with teachers who are case managers for students with special needs. Caseloads will not be changed for the coming year. Meetings and collaborations are to occur soon after school starts.
- Preschool registration will not be traditional this year. Have been having conversations about how to make this happen.
- The safe schools web site for employee training went active on July 1st.

POLICY REVIEW

Upon recommendation of the superintendent, Mrs. Wells moved, seconded by Mr. Reed, that the Board approve the following policy as presented. Motion passed unanimously.

- Update 2020-2021 District Policy Schedule
- Waive reading and re-approve Policy 5200 Employment of Substitute Teachers in Areas of Critical Need and Shortage

CONSENT ITEMS

Upon recommendation of the superintendent, Mr. Nelson moved, seconded by Mrs. Wells, that the Board approve the following consent items. Motion passed unanimously.

- Approve four Out-of-County Student Transfers to Ritchie County for the 2020-2021 school year
- Approve one Volunteer Commitment Agreement for the 2020-2021 school year
- Approve Ritchie County Middle / High School Cross Country Team off-campus practice schedule

PERSONNEL

Job Descriptions

Upon recommendation of the superintendent, Mrs. Wells moved, seconded by Mr. Reed, to approve the following job descriptions. Motion passed unanimously

- Professional Teacher
- Physical Education Coordinator Countywide
- English Language Arts Coordinator Countywide
- Math Coordinator Countywide
- Science Coordinator Countywide
- Social Studies Coordinator Countywide
- Spelling Bee Coordinator Countywide
- Coach
- Assistant Coach
- Athletic Coordinator at Ritchie County Middle School

Resignations

Upon recommendation of the superintendent, Mr. Reed moved, seconded by Mr. Nelson, to accept the following resignation. Motion passed unanimously.

- Approve the resignation of Mollie Hinzman, Elementary School Counselor Countywide effective July 06, 2020.

Resignations Submitted after Publication of the Agenda

Upon recommendation of the superintendent, Mrs. Wells moved, seconded by Mr. Nelson, to accept the following resignation. Motion passed unanimously

- Approve the resignation of Marjorie Rose, Substitute Teacher Countywide effective July 06, 2020.

Employments or Transfers and Rescissions

Upon recommendation of the superintendent, Mrs. Wells moved, seconded by Mr. Reed, that the Board approve the following employments or transfers and rescissions. Motion passed unanimously.

- Approve Haley Stephenson, Elementary Teacher (Assignment Art) at Harrisville Elementary School and Creed Collins Elementary School effective for the 2020-2021 school year.

ALLOWED AND AUTHORIZED PAYMENT OF BILLS

Upon recommendation of the superintendent, Mr. Nelson moved, seconded by Mr. Reed, that the Board approve and authorize payment of the following bills. Motion passed unanimously.

- Approve Payment of Bills in the Sum of \$756,652.19

FINANCIAL REQUESTS FOR APPROVAL

Upon recommendation of the superintendent, Mrs. Wells moved, seconded by Mr. Reed, that the Board approve the following financial requests. Motion passed unanimously.

- Approve Budget Revision Requests: Transfers in the amount of \$12,686.00 and Supplements in the amount of \$478,293.00
- Approve monthly payment to Union Bank for Energy Performance Contract in the sum of \$10,531.90

REQUESTS FOR AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT BOARD MEETING

A special board meeting on July 16, 2020 will include an update on the re-entry plan, personnel approval and presentation from the Bound Council. Individuals wishing to attend this meeting virtually must request a link by emailing RCSBOARDMEETING@ritchie@k12.wv.us by Wednesday, July 15, 2020 at 4:00.

Mr. Nelson asked if hiring of Licensed Practical Nurses would be for a limited amount of time. Mr. Brown stated that we are viewing these positions as being specific to the circumstances we are currently experiencing. We will be upfront with applicants and make sure they understand that this position may not be long term.

BOARD MEMBER COMMITTEE REPORTS

Mr. Reed and Mr. Brown recently attended a MOVTI meeting and discussed how the counties would work together to meet COVID 19 safety guidelines.

NEXT REGULAR MEETING DATE

The next regular meeting will be held on Monday, July 27, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. at Ritchie County Board of Education Office.

Individuals who wish to attend this meeting virtually must request a link by emailing RCSBOARDMEETING.ritchie@k12.wv.us by Friday, July 24, 2020 at 4:00 p.m.

MEETING ADJOURNED

Mrs. Wells moved, seconded by Mr. Nelson, that the meeting be adjourned at 7:39 p.m. Motion passed unanimously.