

**REGULAR MEETING
NORTHAMPTON COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION
Monday, October 14, 2013**

Members Present: Marjorie Edwards, Chair; Kelvin Edwards, Vice Chair; Erica Smith-Ingram, Donald Johnson, Rhonda Taylor, Phil Matthews, Clinton Williams, Dr. Eric Bracy, ex officio
Others Present: Administration, press and interested parties

The Northampton County Board of Education held its regular meeting on October 14, 2013 in the Board Room of the Northampton County Schools administrative building. Chair Marjorie Edwards called the meeting to order at 5:11 p.m.

Closed Session

On a MOTION by Mr. Matthews, SECONDED by Mr. Williams and APPROVED, the Board convened closed session at approximately 5:15 p.m. pursuant to General Statute: 143-318.11(a)(1) to prevent the disclosure of confidential personnel files under G.S. 115C-321 or other information that is privileged or confidential pursuant to state or federal law, or not considered a public record and pursuant to General Statute: 143-318.11(a)(6) to consider matters relating to initial employment of an individual employee or a complaint, charge, or grievance by or against an individual employee. The motion passed by a vote of 4-0. Ms. Rhonda Taylor and Ms. Erica Smith-Ingram were not present for the vote.

Open Session

On a MOTION by Mr. Williams, SECONDED by Ms. Smith-Ingram, the Board adjourned closed session. The motion passed by a vote of 6-0. The Board's closed session ended at approximately 6:40 p.m.

Mission Statement

Chair Marjorie Edwards read the Northampton County Schools' Mission Statement to the audience as follows: To provide each student the opportunity to gain skills, knowledge, and values necessary to function effectively in society through a cooperative effort of school, family, and community in a safe and nurturing environment.

Pledge of Allegiance

Tierny Huff, a student at Gaston Middle School, led the Board and audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Board Agenda

On a MOTION by Ms. Smith-Ingram, SECONDED by Mr. Williams, the Board APPROVED to amend the agenda to add the item Board Inquiry that would become #11.08 and the item Garysburg Elementary School Property Final Disposition of Contract that would become item #12.03 to the agenda. The motion passed by a vote of 4-2. Mr. Phil Matthews and Ms. Rhonda Taylor voted against.

Good News Award

Mr. Hans Lassiter along with Dr. Eric Bracy and Chair Marjorie Edwards recognized and presented Good News Award Certificates to the following recipients:

NCAE Instructional Professional Development Committee Vice Chairman Selection – Principal Oliver Holley, Conway Middle School, was recognized for being commissioned by the North Carolina Association of Educators’ (NCAE) President Rodney Ellis to serve as the Instructional Professional Development Committee Vice Chairman. The NCAE Instructional Professional Development Commission is responsible for planning appropriate professional development activities for North Carolina teachers across our state and instructional support personnel.

Alternative Behavior Education System – Principal Oliver Holley and Dean of Students Margaret Powell of Conway Middle School were recognized for Conway Middle School’s implementation of stage 1 of their Alternative Behavior Education (ABE) System and process. The ABE System provides teachers with the opportunity to make documentation on student behaviors, submit discipline referrals to administration, and offers a great intervention, which assists in redirecting and teaching students appropriate behaviors. Parents have access to students’ records in ABE, which allows them to be acutely aware and partner with the school to help modify student behaviors, reduce the number of instructional days lost due to in-school or out-of-school suspension days. Conway Middle is in the midst of implementing the program in stage 2 processes, which will develop further the Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS) model at the school.

Shining Star Character Education

Mr. Hans Lassiter along with Dr. Eric Bracy and Chair Marjorie Edwards recognized and presented the following students with **Shining Star Award Certificates** for demonstrating the focus of “Respect” for the month of September:

Diamond Wheeler (absent), Central Elementary School
Ebony Haywood, Conway Middle School
Ja`Liyah Sledge (absent), Gaston Elementary School
Tierny Huff, Gaston Middle School
Yannique Heslop, Northampton County Alternative School
Ryan Daughtry, Northampton County High School-East
Giles Hill, Squire Elementary School
Anaysha Greene, Willis Hare Elementary School

Introduction of New Personnel

Mr. Hans Lassiter introduced the following Northampton County Schools’ new personnel to the Board and audience:

Vivian King-Jackson, Guidance Counselor, Gaston Middle School

Ms. King-Jackson addressed the Board as follows: “I am elated to be home again! I am a Northampton County native—home grown. Mr. Johnson was my principal at one time. You would not think that I had never left, because when I see kids in Gaston with their parents, they still ask me for suggestions and ideas as I was going and coming while I was in the neighboring county. Therefore, I am glad to be back with the students and the family that I already know.”

Public Comments

No one signed up to speak during Public Comments.

Chair M. Edwards announced that Vice Chair Kelvin Edwards was unable to stay for open session, but he would be participating in the Board Meeting by telephone conference call.

Break

The Board recessed in a five-minute break at 7:00 p.m.

Consent Agenda

On a MOTION by Mr. Matthews, SECONDED by Ms. Taylor, the Board APPROVED the consent agenda consisting of the following items, as recommended by the Superintendent.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: How will the school keep account of the Graduation Project Fundraiser?

Mr. Joe Holloway: A school account will be established for this project and the money will be receipted in a Northampton County High School receipt book. The teacher in the second block normally accounts for that.

The motion to approve the consent agenda items below passed by a vote of 6-0.

Board Minutes – Closed Session – September 9, 2013 and September 30, 2013

Regular Meeting – May 14, 2013 and June 3, 2013

Request for Fund Raisers

Willis Hare Elementary School – School-wide – School T-Shirts/Book bags – October 28, 2013 – November 8, 2013

Gaston Middle School – Student Government – School Store/School Dances/Game Day Concession Sales – September 25, 2013 – June 8, 2014

Northampton County High School – FCCLA – Funnel Cakes/Pies/Cup Cakes/Lemonade Sales – September 27, 2013 – December 13, 2013

Northampton County High School – FCCLA – Funnel Cakes/Pies/Cup Cakes/Lemonade Sales – February 14, 2014

Graduation Project Fundraiser

Austin Watkins is a senior at Northampton County High School and he has requested as his graduation project to develop a marketing plan for local businesses that would require him to create signs for their establishments that would be placed on the school campus' dugout near the baseball field. He would charge the businesses a fee for the development of the signs and the money that he collects would go to assist the baseball team in purchasing additional supplies for the team members. He has begun working on his project and he has solicited the assistance of local experts to include Mr. Kevin Lynch of Lynch's Signs and Graphics, which are both located in Roanoke Rapids. As directed by Finance Officer Joe Holloway with Board approval, Austin would be issued a Northampton County High School receipt book and a school account would be created for him to deposit the money that he collects.

Contracted Services

Northampton County Schools and Choanoke Area Development Association, Inc. – Transition Services- Effective: September 19, 2013 until September 19, 2014

Business Before the Board for Information

State Approved Cut Scores and its Potential Impact for Northampton County Schools – Mr. Joe Holloway presented to the Board the State Approved Cut Scores and it's Potential Impact for

Northampton County Schools. He informed the Board that if they have any questions regarding this information, Ms. Geneva Squire is available to answer your questions.

Mr. Matthews: I would just like to compliment the report that Ms. Squire put together. I know it took some time, but I feel your invested time will help some folks understand the direction we are going in.

Chair M. Edwards: Thank you Ms. Squire from this Board. Your work is always untouchable and you do such a marvelous job.

Dr. Bracy: I asked Ms. Squire to put this report together for the fact that everybody knows that we were tested on the Common Core and we are about to get our results back from that test. I want everybody to realize the ramifications of that test. Ms. Squire, are we anticipating or has the state instructed all of the districts to anticipate a 30% drop in proficiency?

Ms. Geneva Squire: At least a 30% drop across the board, because the Common Core's initial year is new cut scores, new norms, etc.

Dr. Bracy: The essence of Ms. Squire's report was to give you details on the fact of where we were last year and if we get the 30% cut that the state is suggesting that we get, this is where we would have been last year for 2011-2012 if this were in place. This is just some of the information that she has to share.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: Are we just dealing with the cut scores or are we also dealing with the SAT Report?

Dr. Bracy: The SAT Report is next on the agenda.

Chair M. Edwards: Are both of those reports coming in the month of October or November?

Ms. Geneva Squire: The state will release our cut scores on November 7th and we will have preliminary data on October 21st. On October 23rd, the state is asking districts to look at their data to see if there are any questions about any unnatural drops. We can look at it and it allows us to review it and ask questions before it is presented. It does allow the opportunity for the district to see the overall scores, but we just will not be able to see the individual student data and individual teacher data until November 7th.

Dr. Bracy: Ms. Squire, will you pick some highlights of the report to share with the Board?

Ms. Geneva Squire: On page 2, you will see the state drops so that people can see statewide what the proficiency would be looking like in each tested area.

Dr. Bracy: Are you saying that out of all the 3rd grade students statewide last year, only 46.64% were proficient in Reading?

Ms. Geneva Squire: That is correct and in Math I, which is a form of Algebra I, only 36.45% of the students were proficient across the state. Also, in 8th Grade Math only 36.45% of the students were proficient. In 8th Grade Science and Biology, because for our district our Biology scores were always higher than the state average, our Biology drop did not look so bad, but in other areas our district was either at or slightly below the state average. If this is the state average and those predictions could be that we did better than other districts in terms of pushing the Common Core, then we may be better students at the end. But, if we were not as well positioned with our Common Core on the state average, then we could be a little low this year.

Chair M. Edwards: I think it is noteworthy that our State Superintendent made that comment you included in your report.

Ms. Geneva Squire: What you need to understand if you look at that second paragraph on page 2 and I quote from State Superintendent June Atkinson, "North Carolina students didn't lose ground in their learning last year, but they are being measured against a higher standard with more rigorous expectations for applying knowledge and skills to real-world problems," said State Superintendent Atkinson. "In order for our students to be competitive upon graduation, we have an obligation to expect more from them."

Ms. Squire further stated that this is our short-term challenge helping the general public, which are those who sit before me and our Board Members, who are a lot better behind the scenes of understanding the difference in performance of students and schools compared to previous years. This year, compared to last year is a total different ball game. It is comparing apples to oranges and the curriculum is all areas from art to math, science, and ELA, which is totally, drastically different than before. The expectations are towards Career and College Readiness, even for our 3rd grade students. The report was just about content mastery, now it is about preparing our students for the world that lies beyond 12th grade English.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: Madam Chair, the reason I asked about the SAT Results was because when you are looking at these results together and I understand that it is going to be very painful, but at the same time I am glad that we are a part of the Common Core, because it is what all 50 states except for about three are doing. I happen to teach in a non-Common Core area, but this is one of the things that concerns me. The Governor and our State Legislature changed the funding for colleges so that now in order for them to obtain funding it is based on their graduation rate and their retention of students. Now, colleges are making tough decisions in North Carolina about whether they are going to accept maybe a student from Virginia despite their out-of-state quota, because they know the SAT student is going to be able to come there, be able to come back each semester, not flunk out their freshman year, and they are going to be able to graduate on time. It is all about the colleges' dollars. I think that everyone knows that the SAT Results that were released and I understand that Northampton County's students are doing better than the average, but North Carolina out of 50 states came in last place in SAT performance. I know we are bracing ourselves and we need to understand the data, but at the same time in realizing that our students are already behind the eighth-ball. We are really going to have to get abreast in terms of what we are offering students to get them prepared for college. Right now, they are not able to compete with students in the surrounding states. Even our state colleges are accepting fewer and fewer graduates and if they do get in they have to be accepted to an alternative program until they can prove they can handle that type of work. Therefore, in as much as we can in being proactive, as soon as we get the data can the Board be called in so that we can look at the data when you get it Dr. Bracy? Then we can determine what needs to be done so that we can booster our students into doing what they need to do.

Dr. Bracy: It sounds like we need a Work Session. Also, Ms. Squire before we move on to the SAT Results I want you to go to the math portion under Math I New Assessment. Am I reading it correctly that last year for 2011-2012 Northampton County Schools' Algebra I was 81.5% proficient? Is that correct?

Ms. Geneva Squire: Last year, the state average was in the first column (78.70%) and the difference between 2011-2012 and the state's 2013, which was the drop (-42.25%) that was experienced statewide; the next column shows what our district was for 2011-2012 (81.5%) as Dr. Bracy mentioned; then we experienced the same drop as the state (39.25%) and what you see in blue is what we would anticipate our students' overall proficiency to be.

Dr. Bracy: Again, Northampton County Schools' 81.5% proficiency in Algebra I in 2011-2012 was higher than the state. Ms. Squire, what you are saying to this body is if all else is equal to that percentage drop predicted accurately, that would equate to 39.25% proficiency.

Ms. Geneva Squire: Please note that the state is the lowest if our prediction is dropping the same. The state is truly at 36.45% proficiency.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: In times past, sometimes it is very difficult to look at the data, break it apart, unwrap it and really understand what it is truly saying. I think as a Board it was very unfair of us to compare elementary schools to middle schools to high schools in terms of making growth and high growth. If you look at the elementary school, they have 3rd grade math and reading and in some cases science. Then you have 4th, 5th and 6th grades and when you look at the high school there are only three (3)

tested subjects: Algebra I, Biology and English under the old standards. There was a time when we were testing in 2003 up to 2006-2007 Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry, Chemistry, Biology, Social Studies, Civics, English, Reading and Writing. I appreciate what we are doing, but when you say this school has high growth and you compare three subjects to an elementary school that has a whole lot of other areas.

Ms. Geneva Squire: It is more than test scores, because in growth they also look at the graduation rate and the dropout rate and those things impact growth that doesn't appear in elementary and middle schools. The proficiency for now will have English II, Math I, and Biology and will also have the ACT. The state has moved to an ACT state instead of a SAT state. The ACT is more about the Common Core and the SAT is more about endurance and vocabulary, therefore, the state chose the ACT to push and our district was actually contracting with Princeton Review who trained our teachers and our students are working towards that large testing date. We have the ACT Reading, Math, Science and Writing that are actually going to be in our performance composite. So we have those courses plus English, Math I, Biology, and Workkeys Assessment; therefore, the high school has more subject areas and more tests than the elementary and middle, because it use to be the reverse.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: If there is an opportunity for Ms. Squire and other members of your staff to come together, it might be good to offer a Public Forum on what the data means and compare apples and oranges. It is wonderful because we are going to need the parents' support and we are going to need accountability across the board and it is going to take a community effort.

Ms. Geneva Squire: Those partners that want to work with us it would help for them to understand what the new test actually entails. As you know the retired educators remember the old test, the old standards and the old way of teaching reading. Now, for them to see the more rigorous standards and see how they can fit in with where we are; some of them have decided that they want to work more with getting more students to come to school, getting students to respect themselves, their teachers and their peers is something they feel like they can do more and impact more than that rigorous content. Explaining and showing is something that is fair to the entire public to be able to understand.

Dr. Bracy: I think that is something that is so important what Ms. Ingram just said, because the fact that people need to understand when you put information before them. In fact, when this comes out in the newspapers and with the example Ms. Squire just gave with that 81.5% a year ago and now it comes out that it is 39.25%, immediately your mind goes to, "what are they doing out there?"

Ms. Smith-Ingram: If I were not a teacher I would not know how to help my own child. This real world stuff is really tough and parents need to be educated about what the implications are.

Chair M. Edwards: That is why we are so happy that we have a dynamite person like Ms. Squire and Ms. Hoggard with the Community Café and the Parent University, because you are trying to help our parents. That is because we know the parents are so important in order for our children to get what they need. We are not there at night and what you do during the day we certainly need the additional help at night. I had to help my own and sometimes I had to get some help.

Dr. Bracy: Chair Edwards, one of the things I have asked Ms. Squire to work on is creating a Q & A (questions and answers) to get out to the community about the Common Core, the new cut scores and these results. A fast fact sheet is needed to explain those items. Ms. Squire, can you briefly explain the A to F grades initiative that the General Assembly passed?

Ms. Geneva Squire: The A to F is a General Assembly initiative, not a State Board of Education initiative where they will take your performance composite and put you in a category basically of whether you are an A to an F. The growth that you are able to depict if you have 80 to 100% proficiency you are not able to use the fact that you made growth. So schools that perform lower can actually end up with the equivalent grade, because they scored lower than 80 they get to jump with

growth. Every school in the state will have a grade. It is so subjective and it does not allow you to really capture everything, because we teach more than English, Language Arts, Math and Science in our schools. You saw the students up here tonight and we teach Character Education, Health & P.E., and Social Studies and those things are not captured in this data. A lot of times, the school report card allows the school to put in a letter to share all of those highlights about the others things that are going on in the school that they don't see.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: Is it the trend that the drop becomes the cut scores and then it will hopefully rise?

Ms. Geneva Squire: The trend has always been when the scores dip, because usually it has been that Reading will drop with a new test or Math will drop two years later with a curriculum and a new assessment. This time, everything is taking the same hit; therefore, as you learn the curriculum teachers get more comfortable with teaching and students get more comfortable with the mode of assessment. You will begin to see that natural trend. You can't keep doing the same thing year after year. You have to get better, you have to sharpen your tools, you have to bring in more resources, you have to focus harder, and you have to figure out your weaknesses and capitalize on them.

Dr. Bracy: We will do now as we did then, dig deeper and step our game up.

Chair M. Edwards: Thank you so much Ms. Squire.

State Release District & School Level SAT Scores – Ms. Geneva Squire informed the Board that in regards to the SAT data the numbers there show that we don't fair well in some areas. In your board packet, I did share how high our students jumped in so many areas compared to 4 (four) points the state jumped in one area. Our students jumped 27 (twenty-seven) points. We may have started off behind the ball, but our teachers, principals, parents, and our students have dug in even when that was not the assessment that the state chose. Our students still focused on the SAT, Writing, and are still moving forward. We may have started slow, but again we are going to win this testing animal until we can make sure our students are ready for that college admission. Our students took the SAT even when they didn't have to take it and even when they had an ACT ready, free and available for them and they had a score and they still took it.

Mr. Johnson: Comparable to the SAT, what is the ACT going to do for our students?

Ms. Geneva Squire: The SAT is the same instrument and uses a scholastic aptitude test where basically the ACT Company has proven that the SAT does not measure scholastic aptitude or achievement, because the SAT shows that males out perform females in college, but the reverse of that actually was not true, females out perform males. It shows that the SAT really does not measure college readiness, it measures endurance. The ACT is a college admissions test and they can take that test to any state college, private college or any college in the country just like the SAT. Many colleges are valuing the ACT over the SAT.

Pastor Christopher Haywood, a parent from the audience, responded to Ms. Squire's Report: I just want to commend Ms. Squire on the material research you have done. With that in mind, I would also like to say that our universities are being pushed by globalization. They have a term that is not new to us which is called "transfer" so that they transfer what happens in the learning environment into the real world. At some point, we need to realize our work is going to get harder, because we have go to find a way to help our kids articulate thoughts. Even though the numbers are low across the state, we can't be satisfied with those numbers.

Ms. Geneva Squire: Just to make it is a bare minimum, but we want them to make it at the highest level possible for that individual student; mastery versus proficiency.

Dr. Bracy: What I tell our staff every Monday is, now more than ever we need to stick together and stay focused. Now is not the time to point fingers. We clearly have a bar to set high and we need to work hard and do what we can to reach that bar.

Ms. Geneva Squire: This information is going to be publicly available on our District Accountability Website. This is all of the information that is available on the state website, but this makes it a lot clearer for you to understand.

2013-2014 Testing Calendar – Dr. Bracy informed the Board that they also have a copy of the 2013-2014 Testing Calendar. If you have any questions about the calendar or if there is anything you want to highlight, let us know.

Ms. Geneva Squire informed the Board and audience of the following information regarding the Testing Calendar:

~The ACT Plan Test is scheduled for tomorrow October 15, 2013 (High School).

~ The Testing Calendar is on our District Website. If you are a parent and you are going to plan a trip during the spring, please look at the Testing Calendar first to make sure that the students are not pushed up against a test being on the same day as the trip. Kids don't normally do as well on a make-up day. We will not have the re-test this year; therefore, it is what it is the first time. That is why it is late testing and most of the time we have tested earlier, but we are trying to put in as many opportunities for learning at the forefront before the test and at the end of the test. The state is only giving us a 10-day window this year and that includes all make-ups and all tests. In the past, we had a 10-day window after the test to do make-ups. Therefore, we need all of our students to be in school the first time, we need all of our buses to roll the first time, we need all of our students to be early and ready the first time, because if they come late we cannot give the test. We also need as many volunteers as possible, because proctors are going to be at a premium in our area. If you know of someone who can help or an organization that can help, please help our schools as they are digging deep to make sure the schools have the appropriate settings for our Exceptional Children, 504 children, regular children, and staff. Also, the high school has to give all of their final exams within that 10-day window.

Chair M. Edwards: Are we going to need to advertise in the newspaper that we need volunteers to help with testing?

Ms. Geneva Squire: Yes, we can do that.

Dr. Bracy: You have done a wonderful job Ms. Squire! This has been great conversations and needed conversations. Once Ms. Squire and I get our hands on that data and digest it, we are going to ask Ms. Edwards to call for a Work Session.

Chair M. Edwards: We will be glad to do that Dr. Bracy so just let us know when.

Ms. Geneva Squire: If the community wants to host a session on their end for middle schools and the high school I will be happy to. Test results will be back on October 21st for internal review only. On November 7th, once that gavel hits at the State Board, they will be available for everyone.

Community Café Flyer - Dr. Bracy informed the Board that for their information there is a Community Café Flyer attached under Board Information. It is scheduled for November 4, 2013 at the Wellness Center from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: Are we inviting the community at-large? If so, can we offer it at a later time during the day, because a lot of people who need to be there are working? At least, can we offer it again at possibly 7:30 p.m.?

Ms. Catina Hoggard addressed the Board as follows: We have various sessions that we started last year and the first one was during lunchtime and the next one we had later in the evening. We try to vary the times so that we can meet everyone's demographic area.

Chair M. Edwards: Is this the first one of the two that you are planning on having for this school year? Have we advertised this in the paper?

Ms. Catina Hoggard: This is the first one for this school year. We have not advertised it in the paper, but we actually mail the flyer out to businesses in the community, Mayors, Pastors, CADA, the Health

Department, Parent University Partners and parents receive a personal invitation in the mail. We also do a follow-up call.

Dr. Bracy: Obviously, we need to do an Alert Now call also.

Professional Learning Communities (PLC) Training Flyer – Dr. Bracy announced to the Board that we have a professional development day on October 17-18, 2013 for all Pre-K-12 teachers at the Kirkwood Adams Civic Center. Ms. Maria Nielsen with Solution Tree will present the Professional Learning Communities (PLC).

Directors' Updates - Directors' Updates – Dr. Bracy shared the Directors' Updates with the Board for the month of September 2013. The Director's Updates included the following attachments: #1 Fall Science Festival Outline and #2 Parent University Flyer for October.

Potential Affects of Government Shut-Down – Dr. Bracy informed the Board that when Ms. Carolyn Williams originally asked for the Potential Affects of Government Shut-Down item to be put on the agenda in regards to the Child Nutrition Department, she has since received some new information from government officials. Ms. Williams will share that information with the Board at this time.

Ms. Carolyn Williams addressed the Board as follows: Good evening Board Members. Child Nutrition received the following statement: Our nation was faced with uncertainties of a Government Shut-Down, but as of Friday afternoon at 7:30 p.m. we received a correspondence that the USDA is providing assurance that the Federal funds will be available to support the meal service without further congressional interference.

Board Inquiry - Mr. Clinton Williams addressed the Board as follows regarding a Board Inquiry: Board Members, I have served and continue to serve the students in Northampton County, Halifax County, Roanoke Rapids School District, Weldon School District and I render services as far as Edgecombe County. My specialty services in Northampton County of which I have contracted with in the past has been to provide services to the students in the Exceptional Children's Program as well as our Alternative School. I served in the capacity of consultant to both of those programs. I even offered services pro bono to the entire district about how we can handle some of the behavior, emotional, and mental problems that we experience in this county with some of our students. I have sat on the IEP Team Meetings at every school here in Northampton County and the surrounding counties. In regards to the 504, I have attended student hearings. I am a Licensed Professional Counselor by profession, trait and education. Without being so self-absorbed, I am very good with the services that I provide. A while back, there were some conversations around the table about whether I could serve in the capacity as a Board Member and serve in the capacity as a Licensed Professional Counselor providing services to the students in this school district, because I am a Board Member here. Before I ran for the Board of Education and I made my decision over a year ago, I consulted with our School Board Attorney. He clarified that issue for me that there would be no conflict per state statute or state law. When I was elected to the Northampton County Board of Education, I attended the New Board Member 101 Training with the North Carolina School Boards Association in Raleigh. That was the July School Board Meeting. I went to Raleigh and spent the day and I drove back here for the Board Meeting. We had our meeting until after 11:00 p.m. that night. I drove back to Raleigh and continued to complete my sessions on July 18th. At the School Boards Association meeting, Allison Schafer presented a session on Conflict of Interest. One of the things she talked about was School Board Members having contracts with School Boards and that would be a sheer conflict of interest and I believe even illegal. I raised a question at that point to make sure that I was clear. My question was that as long as I am receiving no funds from the Northampton County Board of Education that I could indeed provide services to the students in this school district. Ms. Schafer clarified that. Following that discussion, there were a lot of

conversations that took place between Board Members and perhaps some other folks with Board Members in reference to my role as a Licensed Professional Counselor in this school district and we clarified that. I said to you all at our Retreat, the only Retreat we have had since I have been back on the Board, that it was a problem for me. I asked what other questions needed to be answered at that particular time and I asked if there were any other questions if you would present them at that time and if not then I expected that to be the last conversation that I would have. Therefore, I am going back on my word, because I am having this conversation again tonight, because I understand that there are yet some questions about my role in Northampton County as a Board Member who provides services to students in this district. We talk about homegrown, we talk about us providing services, and we talk about just having a vested interest. This is where I live, I was born here, and I went to school here in some of these same buildings that we have open now and some of them have closed. I offer a very valuable service here and because I sit on this Board of Education I bring a lot of valuable information back to this Board to help us make, I think, good decisions about our students. By the way for the public's information, I wanted to discuss this in closed session, but I was advised by our Board Attorney that this issue is an open session item. After thinking about that, I think that it is a good idea that it is open session so that we could go ahead and get this on the table so that the public knows, the school staff, and this Board can resolve this issue once and for all.

What I want to do tonight is to leave here with some clarification about any questions or comments that any Board Member has in reference to the professional services that I provide in Northampton County. Before I go any further, I will pause here to answer or entertain any questions that anyone may have.

The Board held the following dialogue regarding the Board Inquiry:

Mr. Johnson: I don't have a question Mr. Williams, but I had a concern because back in the 80's when I retired from teaching I became a salesman and I sold school athletic equipment with several counties from the coast up towards Raleigh. In order to do that I had to check, I am sure as you had to, the General Statutes. They said as long as there was no municipalities in this area of no more that 2,500 people of which we didn't have any, but I was permitted to do it as long as I did not have an invested interested in the company. The owner of the company wrote a letter to the Board of Education stating that I was a hired individual and I had no money invested in the company. Knowing my legal ramifications with what I could do and could not do as a salesman for the county, then I knew what I could do and could not do. I felt that as a salesman selling things that were of a necessity to our students and I knew the cost of the item of which they might be interested in that. I could offer that at a cheaper rate, because I was not on commission and I knew what I had to sell it for. But, in talking with my boss, I had to keep a very detailed account of how much I had sold. My concern was not when you came on the Board, because this is your second term with me, but the use of our facilities. I have heard you say on several occasions, "Well in going around the schools I have talked with some of my clients." Now, if you are there to give advice or to teach them or whatever your situation might be for that child, then the conversation about things that are happening should not be a part of your responsibility. Such as, how are things going, what has just happened here, and I am not saying you are doing that, but I am saying if they are coming to you are trying to open yourself up for the opportunity to say, "This should not be done" and bringing it back to us. I also recall at one meeting, you came in and said, "I spent all day at the schools today or I spent several hours at the schools today." I left the meeting with a terrible headache that day, because of all of the situations that were going on at the schools and being the Chair of the Facilities Committee I felt that I should have known some of those things prior to the general public being informed. The next morning, you met at the high school with Mr. Matthews, Dr. Bracy, Mr. Tillery, and myself and we went over everything that you complained about the day before. Then we left that day and not once did I hear anything about a migraine, a headache or how sick you were,

because you had been exposed to the same things you had been exposed to the day before and more. I was concerned about, are you utilizing your entrance to the buildings to do your job as a way of being able to come back and form your opinion? That is the only thing and there is nothing personal. I just feel that everybody should, as you said many times, "All be fed out of the same spoon." I know what I had to go through and I know that I could not utilize the building, except to go in and talk to the athletic directors or the principals and then leave. I did not utilize that being on the Board and I did not utilize that to find out what was going on.

Mr. Williams: I appreciate you sharing that Mr. Johnson and as a matter of fact, I do take it quite personal that you would make those comments. The reason why I take that personal is because that you appear to be calling and questioning my better judgment and my ethics. The day that I indicated that I went to the school, I went to the school specifically for one reason. I wish Ms. Whitaker was here, because I spent my entire day walking around the school and yes I did have a terrible headache and I do have sinus problems. That should not be a question, because you have had how many students to go out in ambulance due to sinuses and respiratory type issues this school year; therefore, this is not just an issue about just Clinton Williams. We have had staff members who have complained who work in that school condition everyday and has issues. We had a gentleman who just resigned and we just filled that position this evening. He walked around the entire school year, last year, with a white mask on his face. We have had a JROTC staff person out for quite some time because of respiratory issues. This is not an issue that I complained about, because I wanted to grandstand; it is an issue for real. We have had students to go out this school year by way of ambulance and we have a student right now who has transferred to another school district because she spent almost none of her time in school over the last school year because her situation was so severe. By her being exposed to the conditions of that building has caused her not to be able to be in school. Is this a question now of whether I am being honest about what I experienced or not, because if that is the question I would take that very personal.

The next thing is, when I am in those school buildings I know how to divvy up my time. I have contractual agreements with almost every insurance panel in the State of North Carolina and other states. Each of those panels tells me this is what you can do and this is what you cannot do. So if I chose to use 38 minutes of therapy with John Doe and spend the next hour with staff member, June Doe; student being John Doe and staff member being June Doe, there is nothing that says I cannot do that. There is nothing that tells me how I should divvy up my time, but I should be professional enough to know what I can do where. If I am not sitting in a classroom or in a counseling session talking to staff, I am also having a session with John Doe. I could provide services basically on the same day if I choose to do that and there is nothing that says that I cannot do that. In terms of use of the building, for those of you who have been around for a very long time, Mr. Matthews and Mr. Johnson, you all have been around longer than most of us and even on this Board. You all have approved contracts for contractors to come in to provide services and that is their dedicated area that you all have given them to use without cost. Prior to 2004, when I became a Private Practitioner, you all have allowed companies from all over Northampton County and some in other counties to come in every facility in this school system and provide services at no cost. Let me help you understand, I provide a great service to this Board of Education; this is just not a business for me. I provide services to a lot of children and families and if I were not here they would not receive those services. There again, a premium service that I take to them. Do you all remember when I first came back on the Board of Education and I said to this Board, "We have to learn the people that we serve and when we learn those people we can serve them better?" I know whom we serve, so I can't sit in my office and wait for little Johnny to come from Conway or Rich Square or whomever to come from Garysburg. I take my services into homes and sometimes at this time of the night I am in clients' homes. Therefore, I take that valuable service into the schools and

if I wasn't there in a lot of cases, the teachers, principals, and counselors who are here tonight would tell you that they would not be able to teach their other children.

Ms. Taylor: I am the one who brought the question up at the Retreat. The reason why I did it was because I believe in face to face. I don't believe in talking behind the person's back when I can go and confront the person. On that day, I did ask you about going to the school while the children are in school. We did straighten that out, because you told us the answer to that question that night. At that point, the question dropped. The only concern that I do have now, which we addressed that as well, is having one of your children long-term suspended and they are requesting a hearing and you are involved in that hearing. I guess to me in my opinion that is a conflict of interest, because they are coming to you for services, but they are also coming before the Board of Education. In my opinion, that is the conflict of interest that I see. I am just going to make a suggestion, but you don't have to follow it. I know you see children in the school and you said something about seeing them and speaking to them for however many hours and also speaking to the teachers. I don't know if that is causing some conflict with the teacher or the other children. I would suggest that you go towards the end of the day. That is why I addressed you with the concerns that I have. When they asked to amend the agenda that is why I said no, because that is something I can talk with you about. It did not have to be discussed in open session.

Mr. Williams: I appreciate that concern and your looking out for the best interest of the children. But, once again I just feel sort of insulted that you all would or whoever had concerns that I did not have the professional fortitude to consider that particular issue for our students. I talk to every principal when I go into his or her school. I don't go to anybody's school and not share information and not figure out the best time. Ms. Stephenson and I recently had a conference along with Ms. Soloman who works in my office about what is the best time of the day to see the students. It is not at the end of the day, it is first thing in the morning.

Ms. Taylor: I am a Social Worker and I can't go into a school and walk the entire school. I have to go into an office and the child is brought to me. Is that how it is being done? Are the students brought in to you?

Mr. Williams: Generally, I will go in and get with an administrative staff person or someone in the office and they will contact my students for me. Sometimes I will go down and observe my students; therefore, it depends upon what is going on. Sometimes I may go there for an IEP Team Meeting or maybe a special meeting, so wherever that takes place I may be in that particular part of the school building.

Chair M. Edwards: Do you go to the classes and pull the student out yourself?

Mr. Williams: Generally, someone calls my students for me.

Chair M. Edwards: Do you go into the office and tell them to get the child for you?

Mr. Williams: Generally, I present them a list of students.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: This is my sixth year on the Board and within the last six years that I have been on the Board we have afforded opportunities for other providers to come into our schools. As was shared previously, we have allocated workspace for these companies to come in and work with our children. I am sitting here reading the flyer from the Community Café and it is something Dr. Bracy said. The slogan on this flyer reads, "Changing the lives of children through conversations that matter". I am not saying that this is a conversation that does not matter, but we are at the point where we seem to be picking each other apart based on the professional expertise that we bring to the table. That is unfortunate, because this is a conversation that we should not have to have again. We beat it like a dead horse at a Work Session about a year ago. It has come up before and it has been fact checked through several people and we got the confirmation that it is not a conflict of interest. To have to take out time in this meeting to deal with this subject again, it is beginning to feel like it is personal. I tried to bring

this up at a previous meeting, but I did not get enough Board Members to accept the motion so that we could bring this up and talk about it and finally deal with it. I do understand why because the media was here that night and we don't want to air our dirty laundry, but if we are going to change the lives of children with conversations that matter, can we as a Board come together and not try to second-guess one another and call people to question? I have limited my visitations to schools, because when I have gone my visitation there has always been called into question. There was a Board Member who went to talk to a principal and asked the principal why was I there, how long did I stay, and who did I talk to. When people talk to me, they are afraid to talk to me, because they feel it is going to come back to Dr. Bray. If I ask Dr. Bracy a question about a teacher, somebody feels like I was down there talking to the teacher, talking about the teacher, or advocating for the teacher and now the teacher is going to get put on the flag list. We have got to stop this Board Members. It is just not fair and it interferes with the work that we do. There have been Board Members who have talked so negatively about me and about the functions that I don't go to, but I am going to tell you all that I have a job and it is all I can do to teach the students that I have. I am held responsible to make sure that my students make growth. Due to the fact that I work in Virginia and my commute is an hour and ten minutes, I don't get to go to the schools. So be thankful for that because when I do go, there are Board Members who come back and ask the people that I talked to, "What did I talk to them about?" There are Board Members who will sit in that room and vote down giving travel to people, but these very Board Members will attend Camp Get Connected on celebration day and bill for travel. I don't bill for travel. I went to California and the Board paid for my registration and they bought my airplane ticket, but my travel I did not request. You can ask Ms. Harris and she will tell you that since I have been a Board Member I always pay for my travel to and from the conferences. I buy my own food. I don't fill out per diem, because I know I am going to get my reward and get my pay. I would like to be able to represent the people who serve me and I would like to think that Board Members would not try to challenge the things that I do. Madam Chair, with all due respect if we could end this conversation and ask our attorney to draft a letter indicating what the conflict of interests are and there being no conflict of interests and the avenues we have taken to explore it. Draft the letter, get you to sign it Madam Chair, and get a copy of that letter to every Board Member so that we can put this issue to rest and be about the business of serving the children and having a conversation that matters.

On a personal note, Mr. Williams is doing a great job with these children, because he helped my son. My son was able to stay in school because of the work that Mr. Williams does for problem children like him. He is in those schools trying to help calm those children down and give them the resources that they need so that they can be successful. If we can put this to rest and get that letter done, because I am ready to move on.

Chair M. Edwards: Ms. Ingram, will you write down that request you just spoke of?

Mr. Matthews: A lot of things that Ms. Ingram said, I was going in that same direction. I made a note that an opinion letter is needed to be written by an expert, because I am certainly not an expert on this matter. We should get Allison Schafer or Attorney Malone or both get together and create a document. Maybe we need this for protection of the entire Board and for Mr. Williams. Just so that the entire Board and Mr. Williams are functioning above board, I need Mr. Williams to exclude his work with the students and his work with the counselors. I believe I heard him say in his opening comments that he attends the IEP Meetings and the 504 Meetings and that kind of made my antennas go up a little bit. Mr. Williams, when you attend those meetings are you attending them with your clients?

Mr. Williams: Yes. When I attend the IEP Team Meetings it is because in most cases, the school district asked me to be there. But, in other cases the parent of my client has asked me to be there.

Mr. Matthews: I don't know the details and I am not an expert, but my antenna just went up, because if you are in an IEP Meeting or a 504 Meeting representing your client, which is a student and the meeting is being conducted by employees of the school system of which you are a School Board Member, that is what made my antenna go up. As I said, I don't know the details and I am not an expert; therefore, Ms. Edwards I will conclude by saying that I think the entire Board as well as Mr. Williams needs an opinion letter formulated explaining what he does and that it is okay or it is not okay for him to do it. Just draw the line in the sand. That is my view and of course this is the information section of the meeting. I am not going to put that in the form of a motion.

Also, I would like to share that a lot of Board Members talked about visiting schools in this conversation. When I first got on this Board the first issue that was coming up was the Uniform Policy. So I visited every school that day and talked with every principal and got their input on the Uniform Policy. I came back to the meeting, voted, and was told by some Board Members on this Board that I had no business visiting the schools and talking to the principals. I haven't been back to a school and visited any principals since, because some Board Members told I that I had no business doing that.

Chair M. Edwards: Get that right Mr. Matthews, because it was not all of the Board Members and I know Ms. Edwards did not say that.

Mr. Matthews: No, it was not all of the Board Members. But, Board Members go in the schools all of the time; therefore, I am learning all of the time to be a Board Member.

Mr. Williams: I guess it would be appropriate for me to respond to Mr. Matthews' comments. I think that we have as a Board assumed that IEP Team Meetings and Section 504 Meetings are contentious as far as hearing types or legal matter almost it seems, but it is not. It is a support and my purpose at the IEP Team Meetings is not to say, "Look this child is not getting what he deserves or what she does not or what she may need." Instead, that is a time for us to talk about support that we can put in place for these children in order for them to be successful. Who is a better person to do that than Clinton Williams. I am highly qualified and I think it is safe to say I am the guru in this area contracted by multiple school systems, and I have sat through probably over one hundred IEP Team Meetings. I don't think too many other therapists can say that. I know what the laws are and I keep us out of hot water, because in most cases when I sit around that table I may have a cutting edge on a lot of people for whom we are having the discussion whether it is in Northampton County, Halifax, or Edgecombe. Those are the children that I serve and I work very diligently to serve them well; therefore, when I come back to this Board and say that this is something that we need to be considering, it is not out of I think this is fair or unfair, because in this society people really don't care about fairness and unfairness. Otherwise, we would do better by our brothers and sisters. Here is what you have to look for. What does the General Statute say? What does the code of federal regulations say about our Exceptional Children? If you all would be honest, you would agree that I said some things in this board room that we need to be looking at or else we are going to get into some hot water; therefore, we have looked at those things and we made some changes last school year. Dr. Bracy has given his principals some different instructions and I believe that is going to avoid some of the legal issues that we could have had. So I think I serve a very good position on this Board. I bring this side of expertise that I don't think anyone else at this table has.

Chair M. Edwards: Mr. Williams, we do know what you bring and we certainly appreciate it. I know that your services are well needed, but we just want to be sure that we stay within the guidelines. I think that it is our attorney's job to be sure that we stay within the law. Let us put this to rest so that we don't have to keep bringing it up, because we are very busy like everyone else and we should not have to sit here and talk about something for about two hours.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: I would like to ask that we call for a consensus to have our attorney draft a letter of information regarding the disposition of what the conflicts of interest are and what the repercussions of them are.

Chair M. Edwards: Attorney Malone has heard that and he told me he would start looking into that and get that information together. Are all of the Board Members okay that our attorney investigating the conflict of interests? We need to get a consensus from the Board that it is okay that he does his work on this issue and come back and let us know that is it all right, because Mr. Williams provides a marvelous service and we want to be sure that he is within his rights and not out of the will of this Board.

Mr. Matthews: Can I ask Mr. Malone about a calendar of a starting time to get back with the Board?

Attorney Rod Malone: I will probably call Mr. Williams during the week to get specific clarifications of what he is doing, such as at what point are kids being pulled out of class. I think there is a lot going on that we want to make sure that we address it. I would like to think that by the November Board Meeting that would be a reasonable amount of time.

Chair M. Edwards: We also have a meeting for the NCSBA Annual Law Conference coming up tomorrow and we will be there the rest of this week. With all of the attorneys who will be there we may ask the question again, but we do have our attorney looking into it.

Mr. Williams: I think it would be a good time to do it, because the next time I will be asking my attorney for his opinion.

Chair M. Edwards: We ask you to please not do that Mr. Williams.

Business Before the Board for Approval

Annual Independent Audit Presentation

Mr. Joe Holloway informed the Board that each year an independent audit is required to be performed of the school administrative unit and each individual school. For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2013, the Board of Education contracted with Anderson, Smith & Wike PLLC of Rockingham, NC. The audit contract was in writing and approved by the Board of Education and the Local Government Commission. The auditors completed their review in August 2013. Here tonight is Mr. Dale Smith and he is going to present the audit to you for your approval.

Mr. Dale Smith addressed the Board and Dr. Bracy as follows: I wish to thank the Board for allowing us to perform your audit. As Mr. Holloway said, this audit is as of June 30, 2013 and I wish to report that the audit went very smoothly. The books and records were found to be in good order.

Mr. Smith referred the Board to page 1 of the audit report, which showed the audit opinion on the financial statements. He stated that this is a clean unqualified opinion and that is exactly what you want to receive. A clean unqualified opinion means that we feel the numbers in the report are reliable and that the financial statements are free from material misstatement. As far as our compliance audit procedures at this point, there is a significant amount of detailed general expenditures and payroll transaction testing. There were no findings or question cost reported in your audit report that would result in the Board having to repay any state or federal grant funds as a result of those procedures. Overall, it was a very good audit report.

On page 12 – Mr. Smith reviewed the Balance Sheet of the Governmental Funds of the district, which includes everything except Food Service Funds. Under the first column, the *General Fund* has a fund balance of \$797,092.00 as of June 30, 2013, but there is no fund balance under the *State Public School Fund* or *Federal Grants*. Another column that is reporting a fund balance is *Other Special Revenue* of \$744,616.00 and that fund balance is more like the *General Fund Balance*. The majority of that fund balance is available for the Board to appropriate and

spend the way that it wants to and also the *Special Revenues* of \$579,586.00, which is right above *Other Special Revenues*, can be spent on whatever the Board wants to spend it on. The other columns showing fund balances are *Capital Outlay* of \$275,745.00 and *Individual Schools* of \$48,823.00. Mr. Smith directed the Board back to the *General Fund* column showing *Subsequent Year's Expenditures* in the amount of \$400,000.00. He explained that is the amount of fund balance that the Board has set aside to balance its Fiscal Year 2013-2014 Budget. If this Board was to spend that \$400,000.00, it would leave the school system with the \$299,702.00 (*Unassigned*) amount that would be available for future years' balances. That means if you spend the \$400,000.00, you would not have \$400,000.00 available again to appropriate. You would be down to only having the \$299,702.00 amount.

Chair M. Edwards: That means our fund balance would drop down to \$299,702.00?

Mr. Dale Smith: But, keep in mind that you would still have the *Other Special Revenue* amount of \$579,586.00 that I mentioned earlier.

Chair M. Edwards: You are said that the \$579,586.00 amount we could use any way we want to?

Mr. Dale Smith: That is correct and you can also spend the \$299,702.00 amount any way that you want to.

Dr. Bracy: We have to remember that those are rainy day funds.

Chair M. Edwards: We are having a rainy day right now.

Mr. Smith: Let me point out that you all spent \$646,000.00 in fund balance last fiscal year 201-2013. You are budgeting to spend another \$400,000.00 in fund balance for fiscal year 2013-2014. As I stated, once you spend the \$400,000.00 you are down to a \$299,702.00 amount and you still have the \$579,586.00 amount that you don't want to touch. Also, the Board has added about \$1.2 million to Fund Balance over the previous 3 fiscal years, if you go back starting with fiscal year ended June 30, 2010, June 30, 2011, and June 30, 2012. About \$1.2 million of that you were getting was federal stimulus money through those years and your fund balance was being built up. You have a good, healthy Fund Balance right now for a district of this size.

Mr. Johnson: But, doesn't the state require you to have a certain amount of fund balance?

Mr. Dale Smith: Not a school district, as they are not require to have a certain amount. I suggested that it is not wise not to spend it all; otherwise, you would be having problems with the County.

Mr. Johnson: I thought we had to have a certain amount that would carry us Mr. Holloway? Suppose you spend that amount down and we don't have the money to meet those suggestions?

Mr. Joe Holloway: We would have to beg the county. On another note, with the \$579,586.00 fund balance we received Golden Leaf money and some of that money is in that particular account also and we have to be careful with that.

Dr. Bracy: How much of that is Golden Leaf?

Mr. Joe Holloway: It is \$500,000.00.

Dr. Bracy: Therefore, we actually don't have \$579,586.00. We realize and respect this economy during this recession, but is there any way possible that we can not allot that \$400,000.00? Mr. Holloway and I have had this conversation. Do we really have to spend that much out of fund balance, because we are looking to cut back on things like travel?

Mr. Dale Smith: Hopefully, that would be on the high end. I have talked with Mr. Holloway and they are looking at some things they can do.

Chair M. Edwards: Mr. Edwards, do you have any questions for Mr. Smith?

Mr. K. Edwards: I would like to piggyback on the question that Mr. Johnson asked about the amount of Fund Balance required by the state. What was the answer to that question?

Chair M. Edwards: There is no requirement of the state.

Mr. K. Edwards: Madam Chair, I also wanted to comment in reference to Mr. Williams, but I could not get through. I do understand the work that Mr. Williams does and I would like to comment at the end.

Mr. Smith directed the Board to page 20, *Statement of Revenues, Expenses, and Changes in Fund Net Position Proprietary Fund Type – School Food Service*. He noted that at the bottom of that page, *Net Position, End of Year* is basically the same thing as fund balance. The School Food Service Fund had an ending fund balance in the amount of \$889,762.00. If you would look two numbers above that number there was a slight decrease of \$15,875.00 (*Change in Net Position*) from the previous year. The Food Service Program had added \$29,000.00 to fund balance the year before that. It is just a slight change and overall the program is doing well. Revenues dropped a little bit, the ADM has dropped, participation is down and sales are down. The program is paying full Indirect Cost of \$116,000.00 and the Board is being able to use in its General Fund to help operations. Some districts don't pay any Indirect Cost.

Ms. Taylor: So we can use this money since we are paying for free lunch for all of the children.

Chair M. Edwards: No child is going to fail under Ms. Edwards, because every child is going to eat. Mr. Holloway knows that line item should be there. No child will go unfed.

Mr. Smith directed the Board to page 53, *Schedule of Findings and Questioned Costs* stating that the state last year or year before last started making us look at the Compliance for Concussion Awareness Act. We took a sample of players off of the high school football roster and all players are supposed to have a form signed by the parent and the player. The form, *Student-Athlete & Parent/Legal Custodian Concussion Statement*, is basically saying that they understand the risk of playing football or any other sport. All sports are required to have this form signed. We noted that there were two students that we selected from the sample who did not have a form on file. That should not result in having to pay any monies back; this is just informational. The state does require us to write this up, but you just need to make sure you have good control and procedures in place and have those signed forms on hand for several years. I would not allow the students to get onto the football field, basketball court or whatever without having those forms in place.

Chair M. Edwards: Has that been rectified Mr. Holloway?

Mr. Holloway: Yes.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: That is so important, because people have gone off to college and have come back to the school looking in their medical records, because they have problems once they get to school. I know that has happened at my school.

Mr. Smith informed the Board that they issued one letter with a comment relating to *Temporary Employees*. There was one individual that was being paid as a "temporary" employee on an hourly basis and was not receiving benefits. When we looked at this employee's contract, they were employed longer for a ten-month period and there is a specific rule that you have to go by in order to pay a "temporary" employee. Finance has corrected that situation and this is something to look out for when hiring people to be sure that they do meet the definition of "temporary" and to pay them in that fashion.

Mr. Dale Smith: That concludes my report and it was a lot of information to cover.

Chair M. Edwards: Thank you so much, you and your company, for the great audit that you do for us every year.

Mr. Dale Smith: Your staff does a great job and we are quite a burden on them when we come in. We ask them for a lot of stuff and they are always ready for us.

Chair M. Edwards: We do have a great staff!

On a MOTION by Mr. Matthews, SECONDED by Mr. Johnson, the Board APPROVED the Annual Independent Audit for Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2013 as presented and as recommended by the Superintendent. The motion passed by a vote of 6-0.

Chair M. Edwards: Mr. Holloway, please give our true appreciation to your staff for the hard work that they do.

On a MOTION by Mr. Johnson, SECONDED by Ms. Taylor, the Board APPROVED the personnel list below as presented, as recommended by the Superintendent. The motion passed by a vote of 4-2. Ms. Erica Smith-Ingram and Mr. Clinton Williams voted against. Chair M. Edwards informed the Board that she would not be voting on any issue unless there is a tie.

Personnel

Certified Recommendations:

Katrina Evans, Teacher, Gaston Elementary School, 10/15/13

Polly Drake, Substitute Teacher, Northampton County Schools, 11/1/13

Vivian Flythe Hunter, Interim Counselor, Conway Middle School/Substitute Teacher, 10/15/13

Dwander Dawson, Homebound Instructor, Northampton County High School, 10/15/13

Janett Walker, Homebound Instructor, Northampton County High School, 10/15/13

Kathleen Bredland, Substitute Teacher, Northampton County Schools, 10/15/13

Vivian King-Jackson, Guidance Counselor, Gaston Elementary School, 10/28/13

Classified Recommendations:

Antoine Graham, Custodian, Willis Hare Elementary School, 9/16/13

Dorothy Moore-Shields, Exceptional Children Teacher Assistant, Northampton County Schools, 10/15/13

Julius Webb, Wrestling Coach, Northampton County Schools, 10/15/13

Leave of Absence:

Mary June Phelps, Administrative Assistant, Central Services/Exceptional Children Department, 11/12/13 through 2/17/14

Yvonne Martin Stewart, Teacher, Willis Hare Elementary School, 10/2/13 until 11/13/13

Dequetta Boyd, Teacher, Gaston Middle School, 9/7/13 until 9/15/13

Teneka Newsome, PC Technician, Central Services/Technology Department, 9/3/13 – Unknown Retirement: Geraldine Langford, School Secretary/Bookkeeper, Squire Elementary School, 12/31/13

Resignations:

Linwood Lambertson, Custodian, Willis Hare Elementary School, 9/16/13

Jasmine Turner, Teacher, Northampton County Alternative School, 9/25/13

Susan Glover, Child Nutrition Manager, Central Elementary School, 10/12/13

For Information

Robert Webb, Custodian, Northampton County High School, 8/12/13 (request to change status from temporary to permanent employment)

Cynthia Lloyd, Substitute Teacher (Retired), Northampton County Schools, 8/26/13 (request to be added back to substitute list)

Final Disposition of Garysburg Elementary School Property

Chair M. Edwards: Board Members you already know about the Garysburg Elementary School Property and we are so grateful to have Mayor Roy Bell and Pro Tem Lola Ausby here with us

tonight. We know this item has been lingering around a long time and we had just one or two things to get clarified. I believe we have ironed those things out and I think we are ready. Attorney Malone, do we have the contract?

Attorney Rod Malone: I have the contract that we received this afternoon at 6:30 p.m. We have a draft of the proposed contract and I have the proposed changes to the document. I have reviewed those changes with Mayor Bell and they are obviously subject to the Town of Garysburg lawyer's review. There are minor changes to the document and if the Board is inclined to proceed that you approve it subject to my minor changes and whatever additional minor changes may be required after I confer with the Town of Garysburg's attorney.

Chair M. Edwards: Mayor Bell, you have looked over what the attorney has talked about and are you okay with allowing your attorney to look at the agreement as well since some additional things that have been added since it was sent to us.

Mayor Roy Bell: Yes I am okay with that.

Chair M. Edwards: If we vote on it tonight we vote on it pending your attorney being okay with everything we are talking about.

Mayor Roy Bell: Yes.

Chair M. Edwards: Mr. Edwards, are you still with us?

Mr. K. Edwards: Yes, I am still with you.

On a MOTION by Ms. Smith-Ingram, SECONDED by Mr. Johnson, the Board APPROVED the agreement for the purchase of real property for Garysburg Elementary School with the Garysburg Town Hall, pending the approval by the Garysburg Town's Attorney along with the changes made by our School Board Attorney, as recommended by the Superintendent.

Mr. Williams: Attorney Malone, because I understand that the Town of Garysburg is ready to move on this and has missed out on a lot of opportunities, how soon can you get this document to their attorney so that we can get this resolved?

Attorney Rod Malone: Mr. Williams, just so there is no confusion the delay in this has not been on the side of the school system; therefore, any confusion about that should be eliminated. I will hand these changes to my secretary in the morning and there is no reason why it should not go out to Attorney Maria Misse tomorrow afternoon.

Chair M. Edwards: Attorney Malone, I would like to have a copy of those changes you made as well and if any other Board Member wants one. Since this has been going on so long we would like to see what the additional information includes.

Attorney Rod Malone: I will copy the Board on the final changes.

Ms. Taylor: Initially, we rushed into a vote and during that meeting a comment came and it was a great idea that the legalities should have been worked out before we rushed into that vote in the first place. Now, I have no problem with agreeing to this transaction. You always have to look at the entire picture, not just what you want to do right then and there. We make a lot of mistakes when we rush into things; therefore, I hope in the future that we take our time and meet with our attorneys, because they could have had this worked out without a problem.

Chair M. Edwards: Ms. Taylor, let me say that from what I understood from Mayor Bell was everything was on go after he and Dr. Bracy talked and got the lease of the building straightened out.

Dr. Bracy: I recall that I did that months ago.

Chair M. Edwards: The problem came up when Mayor Bell asked that the School Board remove the tanks from underground.

Mayor Roy Bell: That is correct.

Chair M. Edwards: Then that put another stumbling block in the plan. Mayor Bell called back and said, “The Town of Garysburg will take care of the tanks themselves. Take that request off the table and let’s move forward with everything else that had been decided upon.”

Ms. Taylor: But, we were not told that and from that night when you all left here we were surprised that we were talking about the Garysburg School again. We had been having conversations with our attorneys, Dr. Bracy and Mayor Bell.

Chair M. Edwards: Ms. Taylor: The oil tanks only came up a couple of weeks ago.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: I wanted to share there was some delay on both parties, but as far as the tank issue there was some delay in the two heads getting together and we accept our responsibility for that. But, that is not even the goal we were clearly voting on to move us forward provided we could find the school use. Just like tonight, provided the minor changes would be acceptable.

There is one thing of having what you need to make an informed vote and another thing of dragging your feet. We tend to drag our feet on things and there are things that we are supposed to be entertaining right now based on the information that we have had. This whole Garysburg School thing has been going on more than a year. I believe it has been three years. I am just glad tonight that we are moving forward and I call for the question.

The motion to approve the agreement for the purchase of real property for Garysburg Elementary School with the Garysburg Town Hall, pending the approval by the Garysburg Town’s Attorney along with the changes made by our School Board Attorney passed by a 5-1 vote. Mr. Phil Matthews voted against.

Chair M. Edwards: All Board Members will receive a copy of the revisions made by our attorney this evening.

Mayor Roy Bell: First of all, I want to thank the Board for the decision you made and I assure you that the property is being used as we speak. The Garysburg Public Library is about to open the first of November. We will be having an Open House and we will be inviting you all. We just want you all to see the work that has been done to that school since we have been utilizing it and the people that we are using are people throughout Northampton County. That library is going to be for everybody throughout Northampton County and our Board is made up of people throughout Northampton County. We are also looking for other teachers to help us. I was just looking at the presentations that were made here tonight. We have a serious problem, because I work with the kids in our church and our kids are not reading at a level they should be reading. I know that personally. That is one of the reasons why I was very, very strong about this school and very strong about starting a library there. We are going to work in conjunction with you all and you are already having your meetings there at our Town Hall. I see no reason why we can’t partner and do the same thing. Thank you very much and you all have a blessed night.

Chair M. Edwards: Thank you Mayor Bell and Pro Tem Ausby.

Superintendent’s Information

Dr. Bracy addressed the Board and audience as follows:

- I want to thank everybody in this room tonight. I sincerely think that we have had our finest discussion tonight when Ms. Squire presented our test scores. I want to say that is the business that we are going to be about this year. That is what our community wants us to talk about; the progress of our students, how our students are doing, and what are we as the leadership of this district doing to move our students to the next level. We are planning to have discussions like that for each and every Board Meeting. I want to thank you

Ms. Edwards, because that is real stuff that we talked about tonight and everything matters. Those numbers, that data, and how our students are performing are extremely important. I just want to thank everybody in this room for that, because that is what we are about. That is what this school system has to be about, the business of educating children. It is paramount, it is first, second, and third.

Board Information

Chair M. Edwards: I want to also thank Northampton County High School for this nice bag and calendar that you gave all of the Board Members. I see the principal is not here tonight, but I really want her to know that I really love this calendar, because my mother likes big print.

- NCSBA Annual Law Conference – October 16-18, 2013 – Asheville, NC
- NCSBA Celebrating Holidays in the Public Schools Webinar – November 12, 2013 – 7:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m. – Jane Murphy, Presenter
- Next Regular Board Meeting – November 12, 2013 – Board Room – 5:00 p.m. (Closed Session) – Open Session beginning at approximately 6:30 p.m.
- NCSBA Annual Conference – November 18-20, 2013 – Greensboro, NC

Mr. Clinton Williams: I would like to ask this Board to look some dates real soon so that we can spend time together for a Work Session.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: Is everyone planning to attend the Annual Conference in Greensboro? If so, could we get together at least one night while we are there?

It was the consensus of the Board to meet in Greensboro at the Sheraton Greensboro Koury Convention Center during the NCSBA Annual Conference on Sunday, November 17, 2013 to hold a Work Session/Retreat at 6:30 p.m.

Adjournment

On a MOTION by Ms. Smith-Ingram, SECONDED by Ms. Taylor, the Board adjourned the meeting at 8:50 p.m.

Approved: March 10, 2014

Marjorie Edwards, Board Chair