

**REGULAR MEETING
NORTHAMPTON COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION
Monday, July 1, 2013**

Members Present: Kelvin Edwards, Chair; Erica Smith-Ingram, Vice Chair; Donald Johnson, Marjorie Edwards, 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 July 1, 2013 in the Board Room of the Northampton County Schools administrative building. Chair Kelvin Edwards called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Closed Session

On a MOTION by Mr. Matthews, SECONDED by Ms. Taylor and APPROVED, the Board convened closed session at approximately 5:13 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 7-0.

Open Session

On a MOTION by Mr. Matthews, SECONDED by Mr. Johnson, the Board adjourned closed session. The motion passed by a vote of 7-0. The Board's first closed session ended at approximately 6:38 p.m.

Mission Statement

Chair Kelvin 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.

Approval of Board Agenda

On a MOTION by Ms. M. Edwards, SECONDED by Mr. Matthews, the Board APPROVED the Board Agenda. On a MOTION by Ms. Smith-Ingram, SECONDED by Mr. Williams, the Board unanimously APPROVED to amend the agenda to add a second closed session after item 12, Superintendent's Information, as recommended by the Superintendent. The motion passed by a vote of 7-0.

Pledge of Allegiance

Ms. Marjorie Edwards led the Board and audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comments

Chair Kelvin Edwards informed the audience of the Board's protocol for Public Comments. You will come to the podium and you will have three minutes to address the Board of Education. Once you start speaking, we will start the timer for three minutes. When the time

reaches one minute, I will raise my hand signaling that you have one minute left and when you have reached 30 seconds I will raise my hand again. Once the three minutes has expired, I will hit the gavel signaling that your time has expired.

The following persons addressed the Board during Public Comments:

Ms. Angie Richardson: “Good evening everyone. I would like to comment on the school uniform. Last year, you waited until it was literally the last minute when we received the revision on the school uniform policy. We were hoping not to have that happen this year and I saw that it was on the agenda. I also hope that you would do away with the uniform, because we have so much drama with the uniform at the school level. Luckily, I don’t have anyone at the high school anymore, but I still have one in middle school and he will be going to high school. We had so much drama surrounding my older two children at the high school with the teachers. All they wanted to focus on was the uniform and it took away from the teaching time. I don’t know how many phone calls I received, because my sons’ shoes had more white in them than black or they didn’t have a belt. Every time I went to the school to rectify the situation I saw kids that were strolling around the school looking way worse than my sons without a belt. I think that more focus is being paid on the uniform than it is actually being paid to the student and the education that they are receiving. I am really hoping that you guys decide that with the uniform policy we need to do something different with that. You either need to be stricter with it if you are going to keep it or just completely let it go. It is very difficult to find the uniforms and I don’t think it stopped the bullying problem, because a lot of kids still dress in the Aeropostle or American eagle and they still have the little insignia on it versus the Walmart uniforms. So I don’t think it solved that problem that everyone was hoping it would.

Also, I know you guys have made the decision on the high school thing with the combination of the two high schools. I just want to touch on that briefly, because I have some friends whom I have met through Gaston and their son was at NCHS-West. When he went to NCHS-East, he opened up. We did not have the drama we thought we were going to have with those two schools combining. Now, their son is being pushed back to NCHS-West and he is just going to close back up again. I don’t know if your decision is a done deal or not, but I would hope that you will rethink that to. Thank you.”

Ms. Michelle Warrick: “Good evening. As well, I would like to address the uniform. I have a small child that goes to Willis Hare. My issues were that the uniforms were supposed to fix, as Ms. Richardson touched on, the bullying and that didn’t change. They said it would save us money, but it does not save me money because I am having to buy street clothes, uniform clothes and more laundry detergent, because I won’t allow my kids to wear their uniform clothes once they get home, therefore they are getting two sets of clothes dirty. I am saying that I feel we need something in place, but I feel that we could maybe go back to regular street clothes and still have a policy to tuck the shirts, wearing the belts, etc. I know we need some guidelines, but I also feel the kids need their individuality. When we clothe them all the same, some of them kind of close up. Let them be open. I think they did very well last year with the relaxed clothes as far as I could see when I would go visit my daughter’s school. I had also visited the middle school a couple of times. So I think they deserve a chance to go back to their street clothes and see if they can follow the rules. I really hope that you all decide to give it a chance to go back to the regular clothes and see what happens. Thank you.”

Chair K. Edwards: This concludes our Public Comments and we would like to thank Ms. Richardson and Ms. Warrick for sharing with us this evening.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: Just for Ms. Richardson and Ms. Warrick's behalf, we will be addressing the Student Dress Policy coming up under Business Before the Board for Approval, but as part of the Business Before the Board for Information, I move to amend the agenda to add item 10.03, Board Relations. Ms. M. Edwards seconded the motion. The motion did not pass by a vote of 3-4 to add the addendum item 10.03 Board Relations to the agenda. Ms. Rhonda Taylor, Mr. Donald Johnson, Mr. Phil Matthews and Mr. Kelvin Edwards voted against.

Break

The Board recessed in a five-minute break at 6:50 p.m.

Consent Agenda

On a MOTION by Mr. Matthews, SECONDED by Ms. Smith-Ingram, the Board unanimously APPROVED the Contracted Services and deleted the closed minutes for June 3, 2013 and June 22, 2013 and the regular minutes for May 2, 2013, as recommended by the Superintendent. The motion passed by a vote of 7-0.

Contracted Services

Northampton County Schools and Nobox, Inc. – Staff Development Services – Effective: 2013-2014 School Year (3 month period)

Northampton County Schools and Invision Services, Inc. – Teacher of the Visually Impaired Services – Effective: June 24, 2013 until June 28, 2013

Northampton County Schools and Invision Services, Inc. –Teacher of the Visually Impaired Services – Effective: July 1, 2013 until July 31, 2013

Northampton County Schools and Carolina Orthopedic and Sports Physical Therapy, Inc. – Physical Therapy and Assessment Services – Effective: August 26, 2013 until June 11, 2014

Northampton County Schools and Lutrino Blalock, MA, LPA – Psychological Evaluations and Assessment Services – Effective: July 1, 2013 until June 30, 2014

Northampton County Schools and Northampton County Health Department – School Nursing Services – Effective: June 1, 2013 until May 31, 2014

Business Before the Board for Information

Budget Amendments – Mr. Holloway requested that the Board pull the Budget Amendments from the agenda at this time, because the Finance Department just received the AS400 System back up after 5:00 p.m. today. We will have them ready for the next scheduled Board Meeting. We are in balance, but we could not get all of the documents prepared.

Directors' Updates – Mr. Holloway also shared with the Board the Directors' Updates for the month of June 2013.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: Mr. Holloway, I wanted to go back to a conversation we have had earlier where some of the directors gave very detailed reports. I know that some people may have been on vacation, but can we ask that the directors give a more bulleted list for easy reading as some are using a very good format?

Chair K. Edwards: According to one of the Director's Updates, are we saying that the Instructional Coaches are going to be working in the month of July?

Mr. Hans Lassiter: Mr. Chair, they have been approved to work an extra month in July and would be paid through Title I funding.

Business Before the Board for Approval

On a MOTION by Ms. M. Edwards, SECONDED by Mr. Matthews, the Board unanimously APPROVED a bid with Surry Insurance in the amount of \$32,900.00 to provide Workers' Compensation coverage for all school employees, as recommended by the Superintendent. The motion passed by a vote of 7-0.

On a MOTION by Ms. Smith-Ingram, SECONDED by Mr. Johnson, the Board unanimously APPROVED the Migrant Education Plan for 2013-2014, as recommended by the Superintendent. The motion passed by a vote of 7-0.

Mr. Johnson made a MOTION to approve the 2013-2016 Three-Year AIG Plan. Ms. M. Edwards SECONDED the motion.

The Board held the following discussion regarding the 2013-2016 Three-Year AIG Plan:

Ms. Smith-Ingram: Looking at the funding on page 1 of 48, is all of the funding available for this program allotted by the state, but none from local or grant funding?

Mr. Holloway: Not at this particular time, but local has assisted with cost as far as transportation is concerned.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: Is that funding adequate to meet all of the needs for AIG student population served? Is there a larger population to be served next year as opposed to the previous year? Do we need to look into anticipation of other funding sources?

Dr. Bracy: If your question is, if we add more funds could we do some more creative things the answer is yes.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: I know we have to be able to reach student needs across the spectrum, but a lot of times that group seems to be left out with us trying to reach the vast population and the other funding sources that we have are for those who need the extra enrichment. It would be nice to be able to push our students, especially in the AIG Program, towards STEM education. I think that until we can get that technology program that we want and if we could look at the lower grades, especially the middle school, towards some avenues for adding additional funding for support locally or through grants.

Mr. Holloway: I think we could allocate some funds out of Title I.

Dr. Bracy: Is that funding still allocated by headcount in the middle grades to? Also, a lot of times Ms. Ingram, there are AIG kids all over the state who are under-identified. Perhaps we need to do a better job of identifying them by using alternative methods to identify our AIG kids. Out of all of the AIG students we have in this district, I am sure there are some still sitting in those classes who are AIG and just don't have the label and have not been identified and screened.

Ms. M. Edwards: Dr. Bracy, can that process be simplified to make it an easier job to identify them?

Dr. Bracy: That is possible, but I think there are just some there that we just have not identified.

Chair K. Edwards: What are we using to identify them?

Dr. Bracy: I would like to ask Ms. Tanya Byrd-Robinson to address the Board regarding your questions.

Ms. Tanya Byrd-Robinson addressed the Board follows: Good evening Board Members. To answer your question regarding what we are using to identify AIG students, we are currently talking with principals and teachers and parents as well, because parents can do a referral as well as teachers.

Ms. M. Edwards: What are the criteria and what does the student have to do?

Ms. Tanya Byrd-Robinson: The student has to be referred either by the teacher, the principal or the parent. The student has to be tested and they have to test within the 85th percentile. We currently use the Kuhlmann-Anderson Test as our major test. A child does not always have to be referred by the teacher, but the principal or the parent can refer a child.

Mr. Williams: We were focusing one time on children who might be appropriate for the Exceptional Children's Program. Ms. Joyner, I believe we talked about creating a policy at one point so that everyone could be looking for the same markers to determine when a referral is necessary. That way, students are not falling through the cracks whether they are AIG or whether they are exceptional or have other exceptionalities. I don't know where we are with that policy or if that policy was ever created or not.

Ms. Tikisha Joyner: I am in the process of working on that policy.

Ms. Tanya Byrd-Robinson: If I may add to that Ms. Joyner, there is a checklist on our website that teachers can look at that shows the different things and levels that children are doing to help them aspire, whether they are AIG or not in reading or math.

Mr. Williams: All of these resources are at one end of the spectrum or another and it falls under exceptionality. I thought that we agreed that we should be looking at a way that everybody across the board could look at students and determine when they need to be assessed to determine if they meet the qualifications for those particular services.

Ms. Tikisha Joyner: Mr. Williams, we do have the Student Assistance Team (SAT) process that every school is implementing where students who are having difficulties goes through that process and it is determined whether the child is referred to the Exceptional Children's Program. I know we are talking about the AIG piece, but you talked about students with disabilities.

Mr. Williams: The process is falling down I believe, because we don't have a consistent way that everybody across the board looks at children to determine when a referral is needed. I think that when a referral is needed, the Student Assistance Team process picks up and takes it course, but prior to that there are so many who slip through the cracks. I believe Dr. Bracy that you have a good point that there are some other students out there that we have not identified.

Dr. Bracy: There is a breakdown somewhere and what I would like to do is to meet with Ms. Joyner and Ms. Byrd-Robinson one day this week and look at a consistent instrument that is prepared for getting more of our AIG students identified. We can look at testing all 3rd graders and that will add more AIG students to increase our numbers and when the numbers increase the funding from the state increases. We are going to look at that and if the Board wants to approve the plan with that amendment being added as well. I think we will be surprised that when you go through lines in certain stores and you tell parents to do a parent referral for their child. What I would like to do is to put this in place for 3rd graders to screen and sweep the entire 3rd grade students on the 7th or 8th day of school and perhaps we can get more students identified.

Ms. Tikisha Joyner: Mr. Williams, I did want to add that at the last Board Meeting I did address the Board saying that we would be attending a Regional Meeting on July 29th & 30th for RTI Training, which the Curriculum & Instruction Team will be in attendance. Then we would have more information and a policy can be put into place as you are looking on both ends for the EC side. Once we go to that meeting, we would have a better understanding of the RTI side.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: Thank you Dr. Bracy and Ms. Joyner. That is some good information you have shared.

The Board unanimously APPROVED the 2013-2016 Three-Year AIG Plan to include screening the entire 3rd grade students on the 7th or 8th day of school to get more students identified as AIG, as recommended by the Superintendent. The motion passed by a vote of 7-0.

Revisions to Student Dress Policy No. 4340

Mr. Clinton Williams addressed the Board and audience regarding the Revisions to the Student Dress Policy No. 4340. He distributed copies of the revised Student Dress Policy No. 4340 and stated that he had intended to get the policy loaded electronically, but it did not happen due to making last minute changes. At the last Board Meeting we talked about adopting a new and fresh Dress Code Policy that would eliminate many of the problems that we have had with the Dress Code Policy or Uniform Policy in the past. We have also just heard from some parents who spoke this evening relative to some of the same concerns that I have had along with many families in this county. This policy that the Board has in front of them is more specific to what we are looking for, such as pants being pulled up on the waistline and under Definitions it tells you exactly what the “waistline” is. I also included definitions for “indecent exposure, tied up shoe laces/strings, sleeve garment, top garments falling at or above fingers, lunch restriction, and expulsion and restriction from extra-curricular activities.” People have different ideas of what these areas mean that is why I was very specific in this policy. I also added some specific consequences for when this policy is not followed. If the Board has any questions at this time I will be glad to answer them.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: Mr. Chair, did Mr. Williams implement all of the recommendations coming from the principals and their staff?

Mr. Williams: I did work on that last evening and I took those recommendations and information from the principals to make some of the categories more specific and some I had overlooked. I appreciate all of the input that the principals and their staffs gave.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: Mr. Chair, we did say we were going to be a Board that is transparent. If there is any way that we could point out some things about this Dress Code Policy from what I see so that our parents and particularly those parents who were here to discuss this very issue. That way they will know what we are seeing and what we are talking about. I believe one of the biggest changes from this year to last year with the policy was that there are no specific colors you have to wear. I do like the addition that you cannot have holes anywhere in your clothes. That means you cannot have rips, tears or holes in any types of clothing whether it is jean material, khakis, capris, etc. Again, there are no specific colors that you have to wear, but you cannot wear shirts that have vulgar, derogatory information or advertises something illegal on it. No images that are worn on the clothing that they wear can be illegal for a minor. We also looked at some of the concerns that the administration had was being able to put a policy together with teeth in it that could allow students to be self-expressive of who they are, in terms of a human growth and development aspect; be able to express themselves. But, at the same time we want to be sure that the rights of other people are protected. I can understand “freedom of speech,” but there is a guideline there for what is considered “freedom of speech”. In doing all of that also providing the need in terms of consequences, because some students were just habitual policy breakers, therefore, we have added more information. At the same time, we want to teach our children social responsibility, because we want them to be able to get a job and be presentable wherever they go, as first impressions always last. We want to

teach students how to do that in a responsible way. In adding the consequences for “indecent exposure” we are allowing students to come together and set up a Teen Court, which would be a learning process for them where they can critique each other and grow from one another about what the expectations are, not just for Northampton County Schools, but for society and going into their future. Mr. Williams, I applaud your hard work on this and I thank everybody for their input. We want to go ahead and pass this policy so that everyone can take advantage of the “tax free weekend”.

Ms. Smith-Ingram made a MOTION for the Board to adopt the amended Student Dress Policy No. 4340 as submitted. Ms. Taylor SECONDED the motion.

The Board held the following discussion regarding the amended Student Dress Policy No. 4340:

Ms. Taylor: Our policies are online now and the Student Dress Policy may be numbered wrong. According to our online policies, No. 4340 is School Level Investigations.

Attorney Rod Malone: You are correct, because when the new policies were implemented the numbers changed and you kept the existing Code of Student Conduct number as listed here. You just need to figure out the new policy number.

Mr. Johnson: Since we no longer have a Uniform Policy and we are not requiring students to wear specific things, why do we have the vendors listed of where to buy their clothing?

Mr. Williams: I thought about that as I was working on the policy. I thought it would be a good idea to leave it on there, because some people don't know about Maxway and the kind of deals they can get there. I have not always known about Maxway myself and I do shop there. This also gives parents ideas of where to go to look for clothes, because there are still some restrictions here although there are no color restrictions. There are still some restrictions about the design of the clothing that students are allowed to wear.

Mr. Johnson: Are the parents going to know of these places where these items can be purchased and if they are school related? When the vendors are stocking student clothing will they be stocking what we need?

Mr. Williams: These are reputable places that generally stock what we need and Old Navy is where children or parents buy most of their clothing. They have a lot of nice fashionable designs and they are what we would be expecting our students to be wearing when they come to school. I believe it is more of an informational piece for the parents.

Ms. M. Edwards: I don't have any problems with what we are doing except the fact that with the information I want to make sure everything is alright from a legal aspect, because since the last time we visited this policy I see some changes. I just want to make sure our attorney takes care of what needs to be done so that we are in compliance. I want to make sure this policy is right before we vote on it. If we are going to be asking parents to sign off on this policy it needs to be right.

Attorney Rod Malone: What you had was a Uniform Policy that needed a lot of detail, because you were telling kids what to wear. What you are now basically telling them is the opposite; what not to wear. What you created by starting with your Uniform Policy I believe will be even more difficult to implement, because I think it is hard to really follow. It never fits in policy anyway, but going in the direction that you are going in now a lot of the introductory language about how you implemented it and the information dissemination can be taken out. Also, we don't really have exceptions now because we are going into a different direction. Students can basically wear what they want as long as it is neat and professional. I don't know that you need all of the detail about every single kind of clothing that is available

now. Looking at Wake and Durham Counties, their policy is a shorter version that says you can't do this and that or cover yourself. You basically want students to dress neat and professional like we are here today. I know you are on a short timeline, but I don't know whether it makes sense to take a look at some other ways to accomplish this and I would think that you are swinging the door open to what parents can buy and you are not really going to be restricting them at all. I don't know that making a decision tonight, unlike in the past will hamper them, because you are going to allow the kids to wear whatever kids normally wear to school as long as it is neat. There is a lot of stuff in this policy that is a carryover from the idea that you had a Uniform Policy that may not be as necessary in this version of the policy. I like the way that you attempted to address the offenses and minimizing kids being out and all of that is really good and solid. Overall, I like the concept, I like what you are doing and I like that it gives kids more ability to be free to express themselves visually within certain parameters. I just wonder if by trying to stick to the old format if you haven't made it more complicated overall. By trying to work from this previous policy it has probably ended up longer and more complicated than you would have wanted it if you could have started from scratch. Those are my initial comments. If you want to take a look at what some other districts are doing, I do have copies of the Student Code of Conducts from Wake and Durham County Schools, as they do not have uniforms.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: I was looking at the Durham County Schools' Conduct Policy and they have a list of items that are also not permitted, such as bare feet, bedroom slippers, spaghetti straps, halter tops, mesh garments, etc. We still have a list and part of the problem was, if we did not exactly spell out the policy, there was so much discrepancy and people wanted to see it in writing, although I hear what you are saying Attorney Malone. In this case, sometimes you know how you say less is more, but this one is more is more. If we can be as direct as we can be on each item and be specific about it, we won't have this issue where one school is following it this way and when that kid goes to another school they are doing it that way. Whatever we come up with, it needs to be a policy. We have talked about this for the last three months so that we would not be in this position where we are going into August trying to make a decision. There will be people who will be shopping between now and our next Board Meeting. Our next Board Meeting is August 5th and "tax free weekend" is August 3-4th. We need to make a decision tonight or when we come back together on July 29th so that it can be quickly disseminated. I feel that we need to delete the two paragraphs on the first page, take off the vendors on the last page and I don't think Attorney Malone is comfortable with the last paragraph under "Student Records Noted".

Attorney Rod Malone: I am not sure I like some of the definitions and may just not understand it, but I am not in any way suggesting that what you are trying to accomplish in branding what goes where although I agree with the process. I am just trying to get it on the paper in a way that is easiest for the principals and everybody to implement. In my mind, something short and sweet is easier to implement than something that is long.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: We met with the principals, they wanted it spelled out, and they emailed their input to Mr. Williams. He incorporated exactly what the principals said. Therefore, why can't we just delete the last two paragraphs on page one, keep the "Purpose" as it is, and delete everything on the last page after the paragraph, "3rd Offense"?

Mr. Williams: I think it is important that we be very specific in each area. I just went through each area and saying this is what is not allowed. I think the more specific we are with the

policies the less wiggle room. I think this leaves little room for interpretation and I think our policy needs to be that way.

Attorney Rod Malone: A lot of the beginning and the end of the policy needs to be cleaned up, because of the way it used to be and where you are headed now. If you felt like the public has enough general understanding that you are swinging the door open if that kid wears whatever they need to school going forward by July 29th I could present a draft by email or however you want to do it to see if we can tighten this up just a little bit. You should always try to keep policies tight.

Mr. Williams: My feelings will not be hurt if you do not adopt this policy tonight, but what I would like for us to do is go ahead and give the public some guidance about what they can and cannot buy for their children. We can work out the logistics of this policy later on. Let's give them some direction tonight rather than waiting until later in the month to do that.

Ms. M. Edwards: This is our second or third time looking at this policy. Last year, we met and changed things and it was a big obstacle for the parents, because they still had to go out and buy clothes. We need to make sure it is real clear for parent who wants to put their child in a uniform (khakis and a shirt), because kids still wear them. It should be open and clear and it should be somewhere in this policy. If we are going to do this, make sure the building persons implement this to follow the rules and be consistent. Allow our attorney to do what he needs to do. Put it on the website and Alert Now.

Mr. Matthews: I would say approve it tonight and we can always amend the policy. Can we put something in place to give the principals lead way?

Attorney Rod Malone: What you use to operate upon goes away.

Mr. Matthews: We don't want this policy to keep the administration from doing what they need to do.

Attorney Rod Malone: You can approve it for first reading.

Mr. Williams: Can we approve the concept tonight to give them something.

Ms. M. Edwards: Dr. Bracy, if we are going to do all of this, we need to be sure that the people who are supposed to be our CEO's of the schools are enforcing the rules. If we are going to put a lot of precious time in, as we did last year and the year before, there is no need to implement anything until everybody on board follows the rules. I will be more comfortable Mr. Williams, if we allow the attorney to do what he needs to do to get the policy where it needs to be. We can certainly get it out to the parents in time as everything else goes on the website once the attorney and his firm says it everything is legally right.

Mr. Matthews: I wish to follow along those same lines as Ms. Edwards. I am in favor to go with the policy tonight just as it is. We can amend policies at any time as we can go ahead and pass it tonight and allow Mr. Malone to bring us back an adjusted policy to make it easier to administer the content. We can amend the policy according to Mr. Malone's recommendation as long as the amendment does not change the intent that we intend to communicate to the public tonight. I also want to ask, can we put something in this policy that gives the principals a little bit of lead way to adjust this policy with the superintendent's approval in a given situation? The best example I can think of right now would be, and as you know we have just lost 19 firefighters, but not in Northampton County. We just lost 19 firefighters and we have a student who lost a parent fighting a fire and the next day someone comes to school with words on their clothes that says "anti-fire arms" and it causes a disruption in the school. Situations like that would be temporary, but I would like to see the principals have to the lead way to come to Dr.

Bracy and say, “I am having this problem in my school and it is magnified by what students are wearing, so I would like to adjust the uniform policy until the problem goes away.

Attorney Rod Malone: I have quickly read through the policy again and I don’t think the current policy stresses any real restraints on what kids can wear as long as they are neat clothes. I think a lot of what you use to operate on goes away, which is the goal here. It allows kids to wear clothes that you would expect to see a regular kid wear. The only thing I don’t know is whether the policy prohibits any writing on clothes.

Mr. Williams: It does prohibit something that is exploitative in nature.

Mr. Matthews: I just don’t want this policy to keep the administration from doing what they need to do.

Attorney Rod Malone: I totally agree with that. I think the net result of this policy in, terms of the real core of the policy is fine. Some of the definitions I think we can work through those, although I understand the point. The only thing I would suggest is that the Board approves the policy at the July 29th meeting for first reading and delay any other readings at that point. I think you can communicate through this meeting and to the press that the concept in this draft the Board reviewed today is what you are intending to do. Then we can bring it back for a second reading.

Mr. Williams: Can we adopt a statement tonight in reference to the dress code that will give the public some guidance of where we are headed and that the policy is forthcoming on that date rather than waiting? As you can see, the parents are here tonight saying, “Can we get something now?”

Attorney Rod Malone: I agree and I think you can say that the majority of the Board is in agreement with the concept in this policy as it relates to what kids will be allowed to wear and that the Board will work with the attorney to clean up the language, but the Board does want the public to know that the concept is in there.

On a MOTION by Ms. Smith-Ingram, SECONDED by Mr. Johnson, the Board unanimously APPROVED to amend the motion to adopt the revisions to the Student Dress Policy as presented for first reading and defer the policy to the attorney for revisions without impacting the substance or intentions of the policy, as recommended by the Superintendent. The motion passed by a vote of 7-0.

Attorney Rod Malone: I need to clarify with the Board that when you adopted your Policy Manual you left the Student Code of Conduct somewhat lofty and the Policy Committee was going to take a look at it. Your Student Code of Conduct will need to go out for the new school year. Dr. Bracy, someone on your staff needs to take a look at the new one that the School Boards Association prepared.

Dr. Bracy: Dr. Smith and I have had conversations about that.

Attorney Rod Malone: Is that also coming to the Board on July 29th or before that?

Ms. Smith-Ingram: We need a meeting before July 29th. Can we look at our calendars for an earlier date than July 29th?

Dr. Bracy: The printers have to have time in advance to print the policy.

Chair K. Edwards: When do you generally have it printed Dr. Bracy?

Dr. Bracy: It is usually printed in July.

Chair K. Edwards: Can we look at an earlier date to convene?

Ms. Smith-Ingram: We could maybe get a sub-committee to look at the policy.

Mr. Johnson: Why can’t we use the Policy Committee?

Chair K. Edwards: We don't really have one of those anymore. Board Members, we would like to form a committee of the Policy Committee in order to review the Student Code of Conduct to get it to the printers.

Mr. Williams: My thinking on this was to really sit down and try to create some framework and Dr. Bracy and his staff would be responsible for the final product. That is the direction I was headed into on that policy.

Attorney Rod Malone: Mr. Williams, can you forward to me the Student Dress Policy version that you worked on last evening, which is a part of the Student Code of Conduct.

Mr. Williams: Ms. Harris can forward a copy of that to you.

On a MOTION by Ms. Smith-Ingram, SECONDED by Mr. Williams, the Board unanimously APPROVED for the Superintendent and the Public Information Officer to present a statement on the website this week about the new flexibility in the Student Dress Policy so that the students and community can be aware of the forthcoming changes, as recommended by the Superintendent. The motion passed by a vote of 7-0.

On a MOTION by Ms. Taylor, SECONDED by Mr. Matthews, the Board APPROVED the personnel list below as presented and recommended by the Superintendent. The motion passed by a vote of 6-1. Ms. Erica Smith-Ingram voted against.

Personnel

Certified Recommendations:

Todd M. Martin, CTE Teacher-Automotive Technology, Northampton Co. High School, 8/19/13

Samantha Valentine, Mathematics Instructional Coach, TBD, 8/1/13

A. Laura Hill, English/Language Arts Instructional Coach, TBD, 8/1/13

Elaina Sabatine, Science Instructional Coach, TBD, 8/1/13

Angie Jenkins, CTE Director, Central Services, 7-1-13

Kathleen Cochran, AIG-Middle Grades, Conway & Gaston Middle Schools, 8/19/13

Classified Recommendation:

James Gay, Maintenance Cost Clerk, Maintenance Department, 7/8/13

Resignation Recommendations:

Ann Debreux-Davis, Principal, Gaston Elementary School, 6/30/13

Mark Barfield, Assistant Principal, Northampton County High School, 6/14/13

Matthew Ryan, Social Studies Teacher, Northampton County High School, 6/10/13

Alexa Baird, Elementary Teacher, Central Elementary School, 6/12/13

Emily Toutkoushian, Elementary Teacher, Central Elementary School, 6/11/13

Emily Ringler, EC Teacher, Northampton County High School, 6/14/13

Vichitra Jagannathan, Science Teacher, Northampton County High School, 6/14/13

Retirement Recommendations:

Alfred L. Solomon, Sr., EC Teacher Assistant, Northampton County High School, 8/1/13

Patricia Gay, Child Nutrition Manager, Conway Middle School, 8/1/13

Leave of Absence Recommendations:

Shanique B. Williams, EC Teacher, Conway Middle School, 9/18/13

Blythem De Sare, EC Teacher, Gaston Middle School, 9/3/13

Introduction of New Personnel

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

Sarah Grace Britton, Exceptional Children's Teacher, Central Elementary School

Superintendent's Information

Dr. Bracy addressed the Board and audience as follows:

- We will have our Administrative Retreat next Monday and Tuesday, July 8-9, 2013.

Board Information

Ms. Taylor: I would like say that "Camp Get Connected" has started and so far it is a success! The "STEM Camp" is getting ready to start next week. The kids and the teachers are excited. Thank you for giving our children something to do this summer that is educational.

Chair K. Edwards: The "Migrant Camp" was also going on last week. "Thank-you" to everyone for the work that you do.

Dr. Bracy: I wanted to remind the Board of the "Way Forward Plan" that we have with the Commissioners. We need to discuss the "Way Forward Plan" for a way that we can build a centrally located high school. It is my intentions to sit down with the new County Manager this week, discuss the "Way Forward Plan" and let him know it is still our intentions to get a high school built in the center of this county. We need to do something with those actions as far as the "Way Forward Plan. I just don't want that to get lost. This is a plan that Mr. Jenkins started and certainly we look forward to working with the new County Manager in the near future.

- NSBA 2013 Southern Region Conference – July 7-10, 2013 – Destin, Florida
- Next Regular Board Meeting – August 5, 2013 – Board Room – 5:00 p.m. (Closed Session) – Open Session beginning at approximately 6:30 p.m.

Closed Session

On a MOTION by Ms. Smith-Ingram, SECONDED by Ms. M. Edwards and APPROVED, the Board convened closed session at approximately 8:14 p.m. 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 7-0.

Open Session

On a MOTION by Ms. Taylor, SECONDED by Ms. M. Edwards, the Board adjourned closed session. The motion passed by a vote of 7-0. The Board's second closed session ended at approximately 9:50 p.m.

Mr. Williams: Certain members of this Board are looked upon as bullies and the authors of confusion. Even the comment made by one Board Member that a particular Board Member was sitting on the fence and did not want to be here because that Board Member did not want to take responsibility for voting his or her conviction and we all know that particular Board Member votes conviction very well. You said that we all have one vote and when that time of reckoning comes we get the opportunity to cast that to make some decisions. I know that particular Board Member so I found myself in the position of defending this Board and trying to share with that individual why we make decisions that we make and why things are not as they appear. Sometimes people take things as the law when it comes from the mouth of certain individuals. Even when we were at the forums I listened to some of the comments that people made from the floor. We sit around at this table all of the time and say, "Oh you know we can share certain information." I don't share information and this is something unethical. This is something

people should not be doing, but I am not sure how many people are going out doing the very same thing that we say we should not be doing. Information that the general public shares with us, I don't know how they could possibly know some of the fine line details unless somebody from this Board shares it with them. I think we have to be careful how we share information outside of room as well and sometimes that refers to me. If you feel like you need to talk about an issue, you have to be so careful about how you talk about that issue and how you talk about people, because folks can have the wrong impression. I was really beside myself to hear some of the comments that were being made and I know that Ms. Ingram stood here on that Saturday and poured her heart out. Even the yearbook she shared with us and she did not have to, but she did and I thought it was a nice gesture from her son's kindergarten class to come and present that yearbook they put together. I thought it was really nice that she shared that and her sentiment was to say to all of us, "I would not want this to happen to my child and I am going to look out for everybody else's child the same way," but that went away from here totally different. I said to the individual, "No, I sat here and I heard what she said. Ms. Ingram said the kindergarten class wanted her to have the yearbook and that teacher brought the yearbook that day, she did not come here with it. The way the individual presented it to me was that she brought it from her home and brought it in this room with an intention to solicit or elicit empathy.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: I wasn't asking for sympathy, but what I was attempting to share with the public was that I understand how it is to put your child on a bus to have to go across the county. Ever since I have lost Elias and after taking off a week, I went back to work at full speed and I have been committed to this Board. I thank you all for putting off that Board Meeting. The month before he passed away, I was jumping up and down at this meeting talking about not putting kids in a position to be bused, especially kids with respiratory problems. Dr. Bracy, remember we were talking about saturation levels when a student's oxygen saturation had dropped to the low 80's by the time the ambulance came. I said, "When your oxygen level is the low 80's or 78 you can have a fatality on your hands." But, what upset me so bad was that the people who were coming back to me were talking about Board Members and I have never been so discouraged, because when I shared with them that I know how it is to bus your child with or without a disability and I am appalled because the only reason I shared that was because I wasn't strong enough to go to his graduation. That is why his teacher brought the yearbook to me at the meeting on Saturday. Every time I have voted on this issue is because, (1) I don't feel that anybody's child should have to be on a bus for two hours in the morning and two hours in the afternoon and thank God I said I don't support it; (2) If at all possible we can put our children in the safest environment and I am always going to say that is what we should do. But, because of the way some Board Members are talking about me and what my motivation was behind this issue; I want you to know I am not in a contest with anyone up here. The only reason I brought it back up was because it passed and it was unanimous, but I didn't support it. But, you did not hear me bring up anything else about how much money we spent in January, February, March and April. I did not say anything else about the money; I just stopped, because I said if it is not positive it is not getting us there. But, after we did it and we saw that there was some mold issues we had in October and November and now with the asbestos issues. That is why I stood up and I do not support any kid going to the high school. If I need to tell the paper that, I will tell the paper that, but I thought I was very clear in what I said and I am sorry if you all think that I am yelling at you, I am not yelling at you. But, the way some of you betrayed

me it is so disappointing, because all I have ever done was to stand up for children and I am going to keep on doing that whether you like it or not.

Ms. M. Edwards: Chair Edwards, I want to say I am definitely in support of our children staying where they are at the high school and that is the way I voted. I feel like if there is a problem with safety, i.e. mold or asbestos that is a problem at NCHS. If we cannot take care of it before we put our children back in there that would be the only reason that I would not support the children being where they are. That is the way I feel and I can sympathize with how Ms. Ingram feels, because sometimes I feel very hurt. But, I am not going to change the fact that our children should be together; this is one county. In high school I feel they should be together, because that is when they start their 9th and 10th grade bonding. Dr. Bracy, every time I ask about that asbestos and mold I am told that everything is alright, there are no problems and there is nothing that is harmful to our children. I want to know, because my children have already gone through there and they may have been exposed. Is there any asbestos in that school that is a danger to our children?

Dr. Bracy: There is asbestos underneath the 9x9 floor tile at Northampton County High School, Squire Elementary School, Rich Square-Creecy School and at Garysburg Elementary School. It is in all of the old schools.

Ms. M. Edwards: Dr. Bracy, have you ever heard anyone say at Creecy or NCHS-East that they had asbestos exposure or problems?

Dr. Bracy: No, I have not.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: The asbestos is there and the carpet has mold at the high school. Don't you recall that when the company came in and when they pulled up a portion of the carpet they had to put it back down because of the asbestos? They have to remove the carpet and to remove the carpet they have to remove the asbestos. Dr. Bracy said he is working on it, but he said it is going to be very expensive. Those schools that are 50 years old or older are going to have asbestos, because that is what they used. Therefore, this study and every study that we have had has told and advised us that perhaps you need to start closing your schools like Willis Hare, Squire, and NCHS.

Ms. M. Edwards: Dr. Bracy, how many students are there at Northampton County High School?

Dr. Bracy: There were 507 students there this past year.

Ms. M. Edwards: The media center is where we have the problem. Do we have to use that room or can we get a mobile unit for this year? I am hearing that we don't have the money to open up two high schools and I know we voted on it, but I was not here and did not vote. My stress is that there is some unsafeness in that area and I have talked with Dr. Bracy about the weight room.

Dr. Bracy: The weight room floor will be replaced.

Ms. M. Edwards: Will they be able to clean out the asbestos in the media center and the weight room this summer while the kids are out?

Dr. Bracy: It is our plan to do that this summer.

Ms. M. Edwards: Therefore, why can't we leave the kids where they are, except for the Alternative School, and move on. I would like to see the high school remain as it is, because we had a wonderful year. People were looking for our kids to go out there and fight and tear up the building and they didn't do any of that. I believe we can make it one more year and work hard at getting a new high school, even if we have to renovate Central Elementary. Just to undo and start that busing all over again we need to leave it as it is.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: Why do you think it is fair to bus the kids one more year from the western end? Since you bused from the western end to the eastern end this year, do you think it is fair to go from the eastern end to the western end for one year?

Ms. M. Edwards: I do, because I feel like the kids have done well. There have not been any big problems with them traveling back and forth and there will be more incentives offered to them if they continue to do well. I think we need to say that to the kids that we are going to remain at NCHS for one more year. We are going to work with you and we are really going to work hard to make our schools more successful than it was last year. We are working on getting a primary school in a central location in this area. I think that makes more sense and the reason I say that is because we already have our Jaguar and all of our stuff is already there. Let them go ahead and tear up the media center while the kids are out and fix it back nice.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: Ms. Edwards, your SFLA Study rated the schools as follows: Squire School scored a (9), Willis Hare scored a (1), NCHS scored a (12), and the Alternative School scored a (3). The score of 18 or more indicates good feasibility such as; Gaston Elementary scored a (25), Gaston Middle, Conway Middle and Central Elementary all scored (24). They were your top scorers. Also, the numbers in a summary such as: air quality testing was \$80,000 and \$70,000 for the asbestos, because you are going to come back in and clean that up. The email report he sent us shows what the mold assessment was for each individual school. What we are looking at with the “Way Forward Plan” it says we are going to optimize the utilization of our buildings. Why are we going to continue to pour money into a building that has served out its 50-year life cycle? If we work on busing from the eastern end to the western end for this one, because the first year we went from the west to the east. Then the second year we go east to west. We go ahead and close that building instead of pouring all of that money into getting the \$80,000 air quality testing going again and the asbestos removal. You are looking at about \$150,000. Instead of putting that money in the building, go ahead and close the building. Again, they are separate buildings and they are no longer safe, especially in light of Sandy Hook Elementary School. They are talking about safe school design and it is better if you have one building that is connected. We have already spent \$270,000, but if we save any more money by closing that building and immediately break ground this year in September or October, renovating Central Elementary, and adding a high school building to Central to become a middle school. That is what Mr. Ferris said would be easier to do. Then Conway Middle would become the elementary school so that in 2014-2015 you can close Squire Elementary, Willis Hare and the high school would have already been closed.

Ms. M. Edwards: I got your point, but let me tell you my point. Leave the kids at the high school where they are and close up the wing at Willis Hare that is terrible. I know it is an old school, but we need to close that wing now. My whole thing is that we don't need to move our children from where they are when they are doing so well just for that one year. We are only going to do it for one more year, because we are going to have a new high school. We have one high school; leave it where it is at for this year and work hard to get a new or a butler building.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: You would not have been in favor of moving them to the best high school building we have on the western end?

Ms. M. Edwards: That means we would be transporting about 300 kids to the western end.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: You can't look at it that way, because you have to look at the map and see where the kids are located. You would look at the kids who were legally in the western

district, Seaboard, Occoneechee Neck, and halfway to Jackson. You just can't say that you are moving 300 kids, because that is not the case.

Ms. M. Edwards: The eastern end goes all the way to the Murfreesboro line and the Roxobel line. I am on that end and I have traveled to the Roxobel line and those buses have to turn around in the swamp and bring those kids back.

Chair K. Edwards: I call for the Point of Order. We are here for dialogue and we want to recognize other Board Members for continued dialogue.

Ms. M. Edwards: I feel like if we are going to do anything, Dr. Bracy has enough on his plate trying to make sure he works hard, making sure the principals do what they are supposed to, making sure the teachers are teaching our kids, and making sure our kids get a good education. We don't need to be moving them anywhere else and let them come to school dressed to learn. We need to be concerned about that, therefore, leave our kids where they are while we as smart Board Members work hard to get our new school and take it to the new County Manager. Let him know and the County Commissioners that we are going to vote them off if they don't help us get a new school. Let them know if they don't work with us to get our kids a new school and why we are getting a Social Services building to put people on welfare when you say you don't have any money. If we have the money Dr. Bracy when you get that budget, leave our kids where they are, because we have put a lot of money in that building, but that is not all that we need. There is no sense in us throwing away money we have already put into that school with the Jaguar, the color and trying to unify our kids. Let them get together and work together with their sports teams and they are working well academically. No, I don't feel we need to turn around and go back when we are trying to eventually stay this way. Go ahead and close up that wing at Willis Hare until we can get the schools that we want.

Ms. Taylor: As I said before, I see no reason to temporarily relocate the students until a long-term plan is decided upon. For 3-5 years, leave things the way they are. My only concern is that students are very upset and parents are saying, "What in the world are you doing," and in reality our teachers have started talking. This is what we need to start thinking about, such as in the morning time the commute time is a little longer ride, but your problem will come in with sports and band because you have to practice. Therefore, you will have to have those kids there. They are either going to miss practice or practice is going to start and they are going to get home really late. On game day, they are going to miss almost a half-day of school for an away game. The teachers are saying, "What are we going to do?" To be honest with you, I agree and I disagree and I respect and listened to what everybody had to say. The reality is, the kids want to be together and they didn't even know they were going to be split up. They are asking, "Why are you all doing this?" I have listened to some of the Central Office staff and they said, "The schedules have already been done and those students received their schedules the last day of school for next year." Now, all of those schedules will have to be revamped and when I visited the annex building the other day, the data managers were learning a new system even though those schedules were already made up. They have a new system to learn so now they are at a loss. Just like everybody stands up teachers and stand up for that, I listened to them as well. It is really going to be a lot of headaches and that is my concern. The reality is that we really took a step back instead of forward.

Ms. M. Edwards: There was a motion on the floor, but I guess it is dead now.

Chair K. Edwards: The Chair recognizes Ms. Ingram to speak, but I did not realize that there was a motion on the floor, because one of my questions was going to be; if we are headed in

the direction and that there is a motion that is going to be presented tonight we need to add that item to the agenda?

Attorney Rod Malone: That is necessary if there is enough support to put it on the agenda.

Chair K. Edwards: What we are talking about is not currently on the agenda.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: Procedurally, I think something needs to be done. But, before I say what I wanted to say, I am really concerned because there were several members of the community who asked me if there was going to be any action after they leave. A member of both newspapers asked me if were we going to be taking any action and I said, "No." I just don't think we are being fair to the public when we made a decision and it passed by 4-2 and it was a vote that we took, therefore, what we are talking about right now is out of order. If we do a Call Meeting and we consider it, I think the public needs to be put on notice. We need to announce it and come back this week and make that decision, whether it is tomorrow night, 48 hours from now or July 3rd.

Attorney Rod Malone: If you recess the meeting you could do it tomorrow.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: I just think legally if that is what this Board wants to do then we need to announce it publicly that we are going to reconsider it and we need to come back and do it.

Mr. Johnson: Attorney Malone is that necessary?

Attorney Rod Malone: At a regular meeting, the Board can do pretty much what it needs to do. During a special meeting, there are some restraints regarding the agenda items and during emergency meetings you are kind of locked in. The first step, Chair Edwards, would be to figure out whether or not there are four votes to put it on the agenda, because if there are not four votes to put it on the agenda tonight then you would look at Option B for recessing. If there is support for recessing, Option C is to try to schedule a Special Meeting to be considered, but you would need the majority of the Board to vote to do something along those lines.

Chair K. Edwards: What I would like to ask the Board at this time, is there a motion to amend the agenda to go back to the previous motion?

Mr. Matthews: I wish to make a motion to add the Location of the High School to the agenda tonight. The reason I am making that motion is because we have already discussed it and if there is going to be a change or if there is not going to be a change. I think the administration needs direction as soon as possible. The sooner we nail this decision down the better.

On a MOTION by Mr. Matthews, SECONDED by Mr. Williams, the Board APPROVED to amend the agenda to add item 11.06, Discussion of the Northampton County High School Location to the agenda. The motion passed by a 6-1 vote. Ms. Erica Smith-Ingram voted against.

Ms. M. Edwards: In that discussion I have a question. Can we talk about the closing of the Alternative School and closing the wing at Willis Hare?

Chair K. Edwards: The Alternative School is closed for the upcoming school year.

Dr. Bracy: Chair Edwards, I don't think we need Board approval to close the wing at Willis Hare. We just don't have to use that wing.

Mr. Williams: We started out talking about board relations and I don't know how we got where we are now. I am certainly willing to go along with the discussion, but that discussion I started needs to finish.

Discussion of the Northampton County High School Location

Chair K. Edwards stated that the floor is now open for Board Member discussion. The Chair recognizes Ms. Ingram first.

Ms. Smith-Ingram directed the Board's attention to the SFLA Report, Feasibility and Cost Analysis tab. Please review the building description, the feasibility analysis building total score and the feasibility analysis site total score for each school. For NCHS, Mr. Ferris did not put a building description there, the historical or architectural significance looks like it was a (1) and changed to a (2), the hazardous materials is a (1), but should be a (0), the feasibility analysis building total score is a (12), and the feasibility analysis site was a (7). When we commissioned this SFLA Report, one of the things that Mr. Ferris said was he thought I was putting words in his mouth, but every Board Member in here knows I would not have to put words in his mouth if he had put a description there for NCHS. If Mr. Ferris said it should be borderline, then he should have put borderline. If that was one of the main facilities we were interested in, why is it that when you look at his table or looking at the comparison school to school, there is a big question mark where you have descriptions, because for whatever reason he did not want to write it down. Secondly, what I am concerned about is the individual scores. Northampton County High School was built in 1964 and Garysburg Elementary School was built in 1965. They were built within one year of each other. The building of those schools, what was so architecturally better at NCHS as oppose to Garysburg? Look where Garysburg was built and look where NCHS was built; look at the purpose for what we were serving at the time. But, Garysburg is closed, Rich Square-Creecy is closed and we now close the Alternative School and every other school that was built in that timeline has been closed with the exception of Willis Hare, Squire and NCHS. I know Mr. Johnson that you had some concerns and you said, "We voted on this last year and we said we would give it 3-5 years." I just don't think there is a good way or a right way to do something bad, but we did try it. When we made that decision to move the high school to the eastern end we said it was for three reasons. We said more of the students live closer to the school, we said the school had the capacity to hold the students, and we were told that the other high school would not hold the capacity of students, because of the numbers we were looking at were way off. In looking at our decision I wholeheartedly supported the children, I like the fact of them coming together, I like what they have accomplished and the relationships that have been built. Ms. Taylor just shared what people had shared with her. Let me tell you what people shared with me. They said, "Thank you because I am tired of my child having to be on the bus two hours in the morning and two hours in the afternoon." I had four staff members call me from NCHS and said, "Well you are moving the children, what about us. You know what, I have felt sick. What about the safety of the staff? Don't you care about the other kids? What is going on that you are going to leave kids in that building? When you were reading from that report is that report public information." I said, "Dr. Bracy said that anybody could get a copy of the mold report that I was reading from and you can see the scores for yourself. If you have a concern, why don't you get your principal to share that with Dr. Bracy?" They said, "No, I fear for my job so I am not going to say anything." There are a lot of staff members who have said they have gotten sick and they said the media center stinks. They talked about the condensation and the dripping and how the systems are so antiquated that when you have this moisture collecting it drips on some of the students. I have had a lot of parents say, "Thank you, because this is the best thing and it is not fair to make those kids bus again for that long journey." If the athletes want to come together that is fine, but you are only causing them to

be on the bus and not a population and not a school. It is a fact that we have got to close Willis Hare, Squire and NCHS. When we are closing them, it no longer makes sense to put \$100,000 more in a school that you are going to be closing within 2-3 years. I want you all to stop and think for a moment about what would be fair. If the school buildings were side by side, which building would you want the high school students to be in?

Ms. M. Edwards: That would be a no brainer if they were side by side, because West have problems too.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: West does have problems, but not in the magnitude. It does not have the age and it has 55 acres of land. All I am asking the Board to do is just think about this from a financial standpoint. If we can keep the kids together and just bus them from the east to the west for one year we can achieve the same results that you are talking about. Forget about a logo painted on a gym floor and forget about colors for a minute, because we say colors don't matter. The other high school building has at least two of the colors. Just for a moment we can forget about the colors and just say what are going to be the buildings for optimization that this school system is going to be utilizing. MBAJ and SFLA recognize it. The best buildings are those that scored 24 and 25. We are going to keep Gaston Middle School in service for at least another 25 years. The eastern building we are only going to keep open at the most 2 years. In making an economical decision tonight, I just feel like it is only fair that you bus kids from the eastern end to the western end and you are concerned about keeping the kids together, it would make sense to move the school for one year.

Mr. Williams: We keep talking about, and those of us who have run for the Board of Education which is not most of us of course, preparing our children for the 21st Century and get them ready for the global economy. We want to prepare them for the global economy, but they are only doing local stuff. That is not going to get our students prepared.

The other thing is that you have the four-core heating and air system that is the most appropriate system for the building. In the MBAJ report, it tells you that multiple four-core heating and air units in that building, aside from the ones that are outdated, are going to have to be replaced on top of that building. It has lived out its life expectancy. So when you all did your cost analysis, I don't believe you added that in there. I don't remember hearing you talk about replacing those units. But, what I do remember was Ms. Edwards raising cane that our children sat in that school one day until around 12:00 and I agreed with you that it was a very cold day. Dr. Bracy, I don't believe we ever did get the Exceptional Children's area straight so that it had a refrigerator and stove and all of the things we should have for those children to be taught life skills. I don't think that ever did come on line. Those children stayed in that classroom for months with no hot water. The Culinary Arts area is a joke. I know about that room, because the school is in terrible shape. Dr. Bracy, you and your staff agreed with me that there are comments made about the locker rooms that visiting teams don't even want to use them. They are in bad shape. These two buildings belong to anybody around this table and you are business owners. Which one of these buildings are you going to put your money into long-term? Would you put your money in the current NCHS building or would you put your money in the former NCHS-West building, with the nice auditorium that our students deserve? The auditorium at the current school is a joke and it looks terrible. The tile on the wall is never going to get better. While we are sitting around this room talking about 2 years or just for 1 year, so if you have not replaced those heating and air units you are going to have to replace them, because they are getting ready to go out. The report tells you that they have lived their life expectancy. One of the things I have done, because we are making a very

serious decision, is I went back and read those books page per page, line for line and word for word, therefore I know what I do know. I also know what these eyes have seen and these ears have heard coming from staff and students alike. I have heard both sides of the spectrum. One young lady stopped me and said, "Why did you all do that I wish we could have stayed." She is on the western end of the county. Do you know how many students have stopped me and said, "Thank you."? Mr. Williams are we really moving?" There are folks on both sides of the spectrum. The conversation that I had in the parking lot of that church on Sunday, the gentleman said, "The people are saying we don't know what you all are doing. You should have left the students together. You should not separate these schools. What sense does it make to have one school in two locations? Put the students back together; they want to see that." But, after talking with him he said, "I think it makes sense to have them in the building on the western end, but they need to be at one school together." I agree with that to a great extent. The other piece is, the other people who were doing the talking they just don't have the correct information. He said, "Why don't you all tell people, because traveling is one thing and busing is one thing, but that is not the issue here." What is major is health and safety. We keep saying the asbestos is okay it is not a real big problem as long as you don't remove it. Do you really believe that? Even the report said, I would yield to a position to make that decision. I would make that decision myself. I think that when you really look at the school, the make-up of the school, that whole model it is just time to do something different. Why would you put that kind of money in a building that we are going to eventually close? I did oppose this whole idea about moving the students there before we had a new high school. The gentlemen said, "You know we think that is hypercritical. But, you all would say, don't move them, but then you would agree to move some and leave the rest of them there." If we really have a concern, why would we leave some there and move the others? I think that we are at a point where we can really look at this and see if our kids are in the best place. We talk about we want to grow the CTE program, but are we in the best location? You are close to a hospital on the western end, close to how many restaurants, close to Kapstone, close to the NCCAR next to Lowes, you are right down the street from Lowes, and you are close to nursing homes for the CNA programs and other programs that you have. You would be in the best location for technology facilities so why wouldn't we put the students there? I asked a while back, why should we close any of these schools? Let's talk about why we should keep them open? I am open to that and I think we need to talk about why we should keep them open. Forget why we should keep them closed; because when we are talking about why we should close them we are not getting anywhere. So can we talk about why we should keep them open?

Chair K. Edwards: Ms. Taylor now has the floor.

Ms. Taylor: The reason we need to keep them open right now is looking at the timeline. Whenever you close NCHS you are going to have to pay to remove that floor before you can tear it down. You either pay for it now or pay for it later. You talked about you what you have on the western end, but the same rest homes, nursing homes, automotives and woodshop are on this end as well. Don't think I am totally against it, because you know I am not. But, all you keep saying is asbestos, but no one is saying anything about the asbestos at Squire. There are plans already in motion to remove the asbestos and replace the carpet at NCHS.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: That is because you don't have to take up the carpet and you don't have to tear up the floor at Squire.

Ms. M. Edwards: How much money would that cost Mr. Holloway?

Mr. Holloway: We have received three (3) estimates: one is for \$12,983 from EME and they have done a project for us before; the second one is from Computer Kahn for \$9,433; and the third one is Dardin for \$14,900.

Ms. M. Edwards: That cost is not bad at all. I still move that we would go back to the way we were and move on for this year or two years or until we get our new high school, which we will get.

Mr. Johnson: Everybody knows how I feel, because I didn't hide it. The reporter called me and said she would like to ask me some questions. She asked the questions and I answered them the way that I felt. I can only speak for myself and that is why you know what my vote was before and it will not change tonight. Number one, you talk about transportation all time, when are we going to talk about education? The benefit of going to a comprehensive high school was for the curriculum to enhance our children for the 21st Century. If we split them now, I will be against it.

Chair K. Edwards: I would like to start with Mr. Johnson's comment, just to piggyback on that from a historical point of view. In year 2008; Northampton County's Reading Scores were 35%, Math Scores were 58.5%, and Teacher Turnover was 76%. Reading today is 51.7%, so that is a very good point you made. There has not been a reduction in the student-age populated children in Northampton County. The problem is, students are choosing not to come to our school system. To answer your question Mr. Johnson, when are we going to start talking about education? That is a very good question, because looking at this data we have a ways to go. That is what we charge Dr. Bracy to do along with the wonderful staff members here in the county. Let us be objective, because I believe in being objective. My second point is that I have heard a lot of conversation regarding the high school. The "Way Forward Plan" when we met with the County Commissioners, let me recap that for you that this county is in debt. The Wellness Center has an outstanding balance as of June 30, 2012 of \$1,742,504; other debts are various projects: \$1,270,466 and \$110,640; Ambulance Medical Equipment \$90,000; and three-24 Hour Ambulatory Services \$800,000. To go back to Mr. Johnson's question, we have to get the County Commissioners to talk about education.

Mr. Johnson: You left out the new Department of Social Services building.

Chair K. Edwards: That has not shown up on our sheet yet. We have two major projects within 5 years occurring in this county. The DSS building could have been a school; therefore, we would not be having this conversation right now. Don't forget there has also been a third conversation on the table within the last 5 years about a new courthouse. That is the next thing that is going to be built in Northampton County. Remember how long the Food Lion sign stood up in the field in Jackson. It stood for a number of years and nothing happened. We are incurring debt at an alarming rate, when is someone going to talk about education? Mr. Johnson, I appreciate you saying that and that is what I have been saying. When you look at the historical prospective of this county, the debt that we are in, we have a "Way Forward Plan", but look at the historical prospective of the school system. How did we get Central Elementary School over there, it was with a QZAB Bond. Therefore, if we are going to sit here and wait for the County Commissioners to build a school, I don't know if anyone will be around. The QZAB Bond is the only way. Mr. Jenkins brought us the "Way Forward Plan," but he is no longer there. It is a good plan, but now we have to establish a relationship with the new County Commissioners. There won't be a County Commissioner on that Board that is a sitting Commissioner by the time this happens and you know what happens to paper when people go.

Ms. M. Edwards: It fades out.

Chair K. Edwards: I said that to say this; if there is a new high school to be built in Northampton County there is going to be a QZAB Bond that is put on the books by this Board of Education, because when you look at this debt please don't forget it, because that was the information the Commissioners brought to us. I get so amazed with the conversations I have with people when they pass through the county they say, "Oh you all are building that new school." I say to them, "No we are building a Social Services building."

Dr. Bracy: Robbie Ferris told me that he thought it was a school.

Chair K. Edwards: It is actually unbelievable. The DSS building is huge and we built a Fitness and Wellness Center, but nobody can get transportation to come to it. For this Board to get down to serious business when you talk about building a school, whether you have west come to east or east come to west, there will not be a facility being built unless we go get some QZAB Bonds to build it.

Ms. M. Edwards: Chair Edwards, you know they said they have plenty of money waiting according to that last meeting we attended about QZAB money. They are begging us to take that money.

Mr. Williams: Chair Edwards, what are your thoughts about wherever the school is for the coming school year that is going to be short-term?

Chair K. Edwards: When you talk about short-term in the economic environment we are in relying on the source that we sat at this table and went through; that is long-term. When you talk about short-term we are going to have to go and get some QZAB money and you are talking about a 3-year process. While we are talking about short-term and short-term for us would be QZAB Bonds only; it won't be the "Way Forward Plan," because we are speaking objectively here. If we are talking about building a centrally located anything, it is going to be with QZAB Bonds.

Dr. Bracy: The other way you would have to raise taxes.

Chair K. Edwards: The County Commissioners are not going to do that.

Attorney Rod Malone: You do understand that whether it is QZAB or any other bonds, the County Commissioners have to sign off on it and they have to pay it back. You are not borrowing the money they are. Under any scenario, the County Commissioners will initially borrow the money.

Mr. Johnson: If you can recall the night the County Commissioners had the meeting with us and we asked about a Bond Referendum, not the QZAB Bonds. They said, "Yes we can. We don't mind having a Bond Referendum." They also said in a comment afterwards, "But we don't have to do it right now."

Chair K. Edwards: They also said we are not going to raise taxes, but in 2010 they were raised \$.09 cents on the dollar.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: They still left themselves a way out of the "Way Forward Plan." They said, "We can still decide in 2014-2015 and opt not to do this." Along with everything that

Mr. Edwards said, if we continue to keep these older buildings open we are going to have to spend more and more money to keep them open. If we know that short-term or long-term dealing with what we have right now, they asked us to go back and make optimization plans to utilize our better buildings. I have talked to County Commissioners and do you know what they told me, (1) we don't manage money well; (2) we are looking at the decisions that you all have made and you are not adequately managing your money and you put the kids in the worst high school building that you have; (3) why would we build you a brand new high school when you

already have a building that is in great shape that will hold every high school student that we have, especially when DPI predictions are showing that by 2016-2020 we will only have that school half full.

Also, I had the opportunity today to sit in a meeting today in a neighboring district. They were talking about building a high school for 240 students for whatever cost it is. He was just sitting there and those kids need a brand new building, but at the same time that person said, "Why would we spend \$1 million dollars for 200 students." What other people are saying is, "We want everybody to be able to attend that school." Luckily, we don't have quite the dynamical problem that they have, but what we do have to do is downsize and optimize our facility use so that we are keeping open our best buildings. The best way to do that is we can do QZAB, Bond Referendum or whatever we need to do, but nobody is going to feel good about spending money when our buildings are at the capacity they are in. With 507 students in a capacity building of 855, that is only at 59% capacity. We are operating a building at 59% capacity. Do you think any County Commissioner is saying that is optimized? I dare say not. If we are looking at our best buildings and looking at the optimization of our best buildings that are going to be short-term and long-term, I don't think that the location where the high school is right now is going to be the best building.

Mr. Williams: Mr. Chair, I open the floor and asked this Board to let's talk about reasons why we should keep these buildings open and stop talking about why we should close them. Mr. Johnson, I heard you say why we should close them and Ms. Ingram, I heard you say why we should close them. I asked you all to be positive. Ms. Edwards, I heard you say why they should be closed and Dr. Bracy, the plan that you talked about with the County Commissioners said why they should be closed. The bottom line is, every indicator says that school needs to be closed. Why do you all keep going against that grain?

Ms. M. Edwards: If you want my opinion as to why it should stay open I would say it is a better school, it has more space, and meets more needs of our students if we fix that media center.

Mr. Williams: But it only meets 59% capacity and we don't need it.

Ms. M. Edwards: Also, we have closed up the Alternative School and we are going to save that money. I don't care how much we need right now we are going to use that building. That is what we need to try to do as a Board and work hard getting that QZAB Bond or whatever we need to do to get a real nice high tech school right here in this district. In the meantime, let us work very hard and let Dr. Bracy do his job with putting money away that we are going to save from the Alternative School and fixing up NCHS a little better than what it was for the next 2-3 years.

Mr. Williams: The maintenance plan said it is not a good idea.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: The SFLA plan said it is terrible for feasibility.

Ms. M. Edwards: That is what I think and I think we can move on with this for another year or two. Mr. Williams asked me what I thought and I tried to give it to him.

Ms. Taylor made a MOTION to rescind the motion made on Saturday, June 22, 2013. Mr. Matthews seconded the MOTION.

Mr. Williams: I think that is a very risky motion to make without a second piece to it, because I don't know what is going to fall upon this point. Do we just undo all of that and nothing else happens from that point? We did make a decision on that day and sent some people out feeling like it was a victory and some feeling not so good. What do we do once we rescind this motion or what would replace that action that we did on Saturday? I would prefer to see Ms. Taylor's motion include a part two.

Chair K. Edwards: A rescission does not have to have that.

Attorney Rod Malone: Because this is a very arbitral issue, I am going to ask that you to make your motion to configure the schools however you want them to be and we will work from there. As a practical matter; however, you look at the rule on that day it only required a majority vote of the entire membership and the entire membership is here. That way there will be no confusion and you won't end up rescinding and have nothing to put in place. Ms. Taylor if you would start you motion over one more time.

Ms. Taylor made a MOTION to rescind the motion made on Saturday, June 22, 2013 as follows: close the Alternative School, keep all current high school students at the Northampton County High School campus, leave Squire Elementary School a Pre-K-K, Gaston Elementary School 1st-4th grades, Gaston Middle School 5th-8th, and leave as is Conway Middle School 5th-8th, Willis Hare Elementary School PreK-K-4th and Central Elementary School PreK-K-4th for this school year 2013-2014. Mr. Matthews seconded the MOTION.

Mr. Williams: I thought it was a good move to combine the high schools, but busing was the primary issue combined with the issue of health and safety of the facility. Looking at the layout and the other conditions we have talked about for a long time, I don't know if the major issue at this point is about busing or not, but I think it would make sense for the schools to be combined if we can do that. If we made the decision for the schools to be combined it would make sense that the schools would continue to be combined offering the students the curriculum to the greater number of classes, but do that in the best location. I don't think that we need to go by this model. I think that the things we did on Saturday; some of it that we did was good, but I think it was better to allow the two schools to merge under one roof in the best facility. As we move forward to vote on this decision, I would like for the other Board Members to consider that.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: I call for a Point of Personal Privilege and I just want to state that none of you have been up in the Lake Gaston area at 5:15, 5:30 or 5:45 a.m. in this year of busing have you? When I leave for work at about 5:45 a.m. in the morning going down River Road and coming down Edwards Beach Road, there are kids outside in the pitch black waiting for a Northampton County school bus. There are times when I go and check on my mother and there are middle school students there on days when I have a teacher workday or a day I didn't have to work. There are middle school kids and some elementary school kids on the side of the road at 6:15 a.m. in the morning in the pitch black waiting for a bus. I have a neighbor whose house is located 3.25 miles from the road; she lives down a long dirt path. Those of you who have been to my house you know I live down a long dirt path. When my son was attending Gaston Middle School, the bus would not come down our dirt path, which was a half a mile. They had to walk a half a mile to Edwards Beach Road early in the morning in the pitch black with a flashlight and their cell phones waiting to catch a bus. Kids have to get up at the crack of dawn just to get dressed and get ready to board a school bus and ride for 2 hours just to get to school and face that same ride in the afternoon. I am looking at the faces and some of you are not paying me any attention, but that is okay I just hope you can hear me, because you don't have to see what I see. Out of all of us sitting in here, guess which one of us gets the biggest check for travel? Does everyone realize I don't live at the county line and once you pass my house you still have to go about 7 more miles? None of us have had to wake our children up or know what these parents are going through having to rush their child all the way across the county. But, when you look out there and you see those kids at 5:45 or 5:50 a.m. in the morning waiting on the side of the road in the dark, how do you think those parents feel? How would you feel if your child had to

board a bus at 5:00 a.m. in the morning and the school day starts at 7:30 or 7:45 a.m. While I don't think it was a good result, but it was a fair result. The majority of us live on the end where the present high school is located and the majority of us don't have to look at kids boarding a bus at 5:15 a.m. The majority of us don't know what these parents are going through with these long bus rides. Yes, it has benefited the athletes and that is one good thing we can say. We have been top in the district. We didn't accomplish that curriculum that we like to talk about and some portions we could not offer, because we didn't have the teachers. Correct me if I am wrong, but not one shuttle bus ran on Friday night from that end of the county so that the community could participate in their child's football game, basketball game or whatever. I don't want to say that you have hard hearts and I don't want to say that you are not sympathetic or understanding, but I don't want to insult you. I don't think you are putting yourself in the shoes of the parents whose kids have to be bused for so long in the morning and afternoon. Is it a coincidence you don't understand because you all live on one end of the county? Do you see how some people could feel like it is because most of you live in that original eastern end district anyway.

Ms. Taylor: I live on the eastern end and my child is the first one to catch the bus and if I drive her to school it would take me 10 minutes.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: At least you have that option, because if you want to take off work to pick your child up it would take 10 minutes tops, but you look at somebody who lives on the western end.

Ms. Taylor: I agree with you that there were some balls dropped this year, because I called and asked about fan buses and there should have been fan buses.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: You said it, but they never did it.

Ms. Taylor: We are in a learning process and the ball dropped, but if someone would have said, I thought you were going to run some fan buses it definitely would have happened. People have to communicate.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: It did come up Ms. Taylor, but nothing was done about it. We say one thing, but then we don't have follow-through. Then we always change our minds. I don't think that you are being fair. You would not even consider busing kids from the eastern end to the western end and putting them in a better building that you don't have to spend money on; putting them in a better building with an auditorium that will hold every student; or putting them in a building that is 25 years old compared to a building that is 50 years old. You would not even consider it or think about it and you are just not being fair. If we can bus from the western end to the eastern end, those same buses can turn around and bus from the eastern end to the western end. That is the building we are going to keep open for a longer time than we are going to keep the eastern end building open. We keep talking about this and that, but none of you have been on the side of the road in the morning driving by kids standing out in the rain, the cold and the pitch black. Those are somebody's children and what we are doing to them is just not right. I know that right now we can't build a school tomorrow, but to undo what you did last week there were more parents who were happy about it than upset about it, especially when you deal with and talk to the people it most affected. The people who were most impacted by having to get on a bus that early in the morning, and can you imagine after getting home 2 hours later how tired you are and then you have to do homework and chores. Also, some of these kids actually have to work to be able to take care of the needs of the household, because they don't have parents there who can get the job done. Those kids, rather than come to school some of them go to work, because they need the money. That is why I compromised, because I know what those families go through and I think you all are turning a deaf ear to them and you are not being fair to the kids

who really have to do this. We can sit up here all day and make decisions that affect people's lives, but we are not going to be making fair decisions if we don't put ourselves in their shoes and walk with them and say I would want someone to do this for my child. You all can go ahead and vote, because I can talk about this until I am blue in the face. It is just not fair that your idea of busing kids can only go in one direction and that happens to be where you live and not in the direction where the other kids live. They have just as much of a right as the kids on the eastern end to be able to have some fairness. It was just said that we are undoing what would have been fair to all students in the county. Mr. Johnson, it is just not right. You pulled me into a hallway of your church and you said, "I would never support busing kids from the eastern end, because we would lose kids to Northeast Academy."

Mr. Johnson: No, I did not say that. What I recall saying was, "Yes, we would lose students to Northeast Academy, but we are also losing students to the Academy, Ridgcroft in Murfreesboro, and Halifax Academy, because they go to my church.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: Why would you vote something for the western end kids that you would not vote for the eastern end kids? Mr. Matthews, would you consider in your heart busing kids from the eastern end to the western end?

Mr. Matthews: I would, but I think we need to give the facility in Creeksville the opportunity to use up the investment that we have put in it before the students go to the school in Gaston. I think we as a Board need to do a better job with planning ahead. Right now for the next school year, it is almost impossible to do.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: What about three years from now?

Mr. Matthews: I could consider that for three years from now, if we don't have a new high school coming up.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: Ms. Edwards, would you consider that three years from now?

Ms. M. Edwards: I would consider it five years from now, because of the way the gentleman talked about how we could get that QZAB money. Give us a chance to use up the money we have spent and get the usage out of the building we are in right now.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: What if we find out two years from now that we have to put \$200,000 into a whole new heating system? Would you be able to support it within two years?

Ms. M. Edwards: If out of three bids we can't get anything lower than \$200,000, I would consider it.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: Ms. Taylor, what scenario could you see busing kids from the eastern end to the western end? Could you picture doing that at any time?

Ms. Taylor: I can. I look at the fact that you talk a lot about the number of kids, but it is the same bus ride for the kids from the Murfreesboro area, Pinetop Road, Menola Road, and Scotland Neck Road. If our numbers are small and it gets to the point where a small amount of kids have to be transferred I would say yes, or of course if there is a major disaster. No matter where the school is, my daughter is going to that school. No matter what decision is made, it is going to be a hard decision.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: I just wanted to ask you all at what point could you vote to bus the kids from east to west. Chair Edwards, you were very clear last week in my conference with you that you just wanted to stop the busing.

Chair K. Edwards: You are correct.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: We have to keep an open mind and say, are we being fair. Under what scenario would we see busing kids from the eastern end to the western end, because it has to work both ways?

Mr. Matthews: I don't see it as busing from the eastern end to the western end or visa versa. I see it as busing 25 to 30 students versus busing 80 to 120 students. That is what I look at.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: Chair Edwards, when we looked at the numbers there was only a difference of 30 students between the further most western end and the further most eastern end. When we looked at the numbers and did comparisons of those students, it was like 67 on one end and 32 on the other end; there was only a difference of 30 students between the eastern most and the western most. Part of the reason we said that was because the school just won't hold 650 students, but we have never had 650 students. I hear you now and if this does not work out within the next 2-3 years or if these reports are accurate and our mechanical systems start failing then I am going to expect this Board to come back and do just what you said tonight.

Mr. Johnson: I thought MBAJ was represented, but the timeframe was not how it could be if we had considered having a survey sent out. When we had Mr. Thomas here he spoke to the committee, then he said it could not be done in 3 months. The email was sent out to vote for two options, but when it came back it was for Option #1, zero for Option #2 and three for no, but I didn't know "no" was an option, because we were voting for #1 or #2. But, that didn't go either. Then we went to the second firm that could get it done within a week, but they could not do it within a week either. Therefore, we found out that people will tell you a lot of things, but when he came I don't think that was accepted either, because there were things that the people didn't like. I think the ultimate decision is based upon when you vote the majority rules. It is the democratic way. I gave my personal view to the newspaper and that is what it was.

Mr. Williams: Did you support the view of the Board?

Mr. Johnson: No, I was not asked was I supporting the view of the Board. They asked me my point of view and that is what I gave. You stated a better curriculum for the students and several things that we had not discussed, such as we would offer the students the opportunity to go to the western end if they continue on the eastern end. Those things we were never given the opportunity to discuss. We just voted 4-2 and that was it. We went to Conway Middle and to the western end and had a forum, but I did not hear one parent there that voiced their opinion as far as curriculum concerns.

Mr. Williams: Well, you didn't listen to them the last time.

Ms. M. Edwards: I call for the question.

The motion to rescind the motion made on Saturday, June 22, 2013 and instead close the Alternative School, keep all current high school students at the Northampton County High School campus, leave Squire Elementary School a Pre-K-K, Gaston Elementary School 1st-4th grades, Gaston Middle School 5th-8th, and leave as is Conway Middle School 5th-8th, Willis Hare Elementary School PreK-K-4th and Central Elementary School PreK-K-4th for this school year 2013-2014 passed by a vote of 4-3. Ms. Erica Smith-Ingram, Mr. Clinton Williams and Mr. Kelvin Edwards voted against.

Attorney Rod Malone: As much as it pains me to say this and it has not been our past history to the extent that we are diligently looking up Roberts' Rules of Order on the internet and diligently trying to follow those rules, but for this particular body you will need 5 votes instead of 4 votes.

Break

The Board recessed in a five-minute recess at 11:05 p.m.

Debate Continued

Mr. Williams: My mind is made up and according to what everybody else said, do you really care and do you really respect that? I don't think I am hearing that in your tone when you say my mind is already made up. It was made up last week or it was made up yesterday? What was really the purpose today? Ms. Ingram, I don't know that I can really agree with the individual who said that people have such thoughts about you and your behavior as a Board Member. I think that all of you need to do some soul searching of why we are on this Board to do and let's try to do a better job of working together to make that happen. If someone has something to say, be willing to listen. I am glad you went around the room and polled people, because sometimes I think we need to be polled individually so that everybody knows where you stand and actually you know where you stand. After all of the things that Ms. Ingram said, we still feel the same. Do we really still feel the same? If we still feel the same then I feel some kind of way, because I think with this go around she was talking about boys and girls. She talked about little boys and girls and the impact that this decision would have on them. Do we still feel the same? I was ready to end the debate, because I thought that maybe someone needed to hear something else. I think when you are fighting for people, you don't ever sit down and say let's stop talking. I wonder what will happen, but maybe nothing will change with the people who go to jail in Raleigh as they have been going for some time now. They are there every day on the doorstep just like Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Ralph Abernathy, and Rosa Parks were. They didn't sit down and they didn't say we will stop here; they kept going. When I go to sleep tonight I will have to sleep with my own conscious and I certainly hope that yours will allow you to rest as I hope mine will allow me to rest. Some of us are a little bit more emphatic about it than others. I don't think we are going to have another school within two years, five years, seven years or ten years. When we come back in here within five years and say, "You know we have spent \$2 million dollars and I think we need to not move out of this building until we get another one because we spent \$2 million dollars. Then, two years from that you come back and say, "We have spent \$7 million. The report was done and we did ask for the report of this gentleman. That report says that school has a lot of problems just like the previous report said. Are we going to just omit all of what the report says? Are we going to omit the people part of it? The report is one thing talking about buildings and grounds, but what is it when you are talking about people? Ms. Edwards, I was not all that pleased with the motion that you made, but the motion that you made was the less of two evils. I think I just said the same things that you and Ms. Ingram said earlier. It is the less of two evils and sometimes that is what you have to go with, because we can't always get the very best. I think it would be a mistake to make a change, unless that change is really standing out from what we did on last Saturday. Keeping the kids in those same conditions, a change would not be worth making.

Mr. Johnson: I know you were alluding to me, because we were discussing a situation over here about not changing their minds. You are alluding to the fact that I had my mind made up and you are absolutely right.

Mr. Williams: You and several other Board Members too.

Mr. Johnson: I have not heard them say that.

Ms. M. Edwards: I move that we would close this discussion.

Chair K. Edwards: The Chair recognizes Ms. Ingram.

Attorney Rod Malone: Ms. Ingram can come in between Mr. Johnson and your motion, but we still have to get five votes.

Ms. M. Edwards made a MOTION to close the debate and move to the vote. Mr. Matthews seconded the MOTION. The motion passed by vote of 4-3 to close the debate. Mr. Kelvin Edwards, Ms. Erica Smith-Ingram and Mr. Clinton Williams voted against.

Ms. M. Edwards: Attorney Malone, as long as I have been on the Board, I have never heard of that before.

Attorney Rod Malone: The answer to that is up until four or five meetings ago, a single Board Member started off the discussion and closed the debate. I talked to Mr. Edwards and informed him that is not the way it works. You don't let a single member start off the discussion and close the debate, because that would not be fair. Roberts' Rules requires there to be a motion, a second and a vote to end the debate. That is what we have been doing for the last four to five months; a motion, a second and a vote to end the debate. I will not at all disagree with you.

Ms. M. Edwards: We always say we are going to do what is right and stop trying to hold up confusion. Why are we trying to hold up confusion tonight? We are saying the same thing over and over again. Chair Edwards, there is no reason for me to keep saying that I am for the debate if I am not going to debate and I have not heard you say debate anymore.

Chair K. Edwards: It is an obligation to recognize everybody's hand before I say anything. The Chair recognizes Ms. Ingram.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: I just keep thinking about children over and over again. I am a person who has loved children all of my life. When I was freshman in college, a Board Committee for Education followed me. When they sat down with me in the Student Union at NCA&T State University, they interviewed me and said, "What do you see yourself doing 10 years from now, 15 years from now or 20 years from now?" I said, "Well I am going to practice in my field or major. I want to be an engineer for a while, but then I want to go back to my hometown and I want to teach." That was my way of giving back to a community that needed it or giving back to people who invested in me. I had a wonderful time as an engineer and I have seen so many things, but it was on a mission trip to Uganda, ten years after being an engineer, after making a whole lot of money, and working for the Bunn Company in Seattle Washington that I saw the depravity and hundreds of thousands of kids who could not receive a quality education and there were no schools. The village that I went to had so many missing children who were just taken and a lot of that was dealing with the sacrifice. It was just a horrible state of living. I said to myself, we can take technology to Jupiter and back, but we can't take technology to third world countries to people who need it. To be honest with you, we can't even get it into certain rural areas within our on county. We live in the United States and it is approximately 58% of the residents in Northampton County who cannot access high speed internet. We are at a point now where we are talking about educating children, giving children a rigorous, relevant experience, and getting them equipped in the STEM field. There is no need to go to online textbooks Dr. Bracy, because half of the children in this county cannot access technology when they go home. Half of them don't understand what it means to compete globally. If we keep spending money trying to keep old buildings in operation we will never be able to get the resources in the right places where they are needed. We need to sit down and take a look at technology for our children, quality teachers for our children, and a quality curriculum for our children. Willis Hare needs over \$200,000 worth of repairs and when those systems fail as MBAJ and DPI have told us that they will fail. We have spent \$29,500 for experts to come in and tell us. Allow me to share this statement from the SFLA Report: "When you look at all that we have and all they we asked them to look at, we have to at the end of the day come together and agree." I don't know

if this Board can come together and agree. Can we agree with ourselves, with County Commissioners or with what is best for Northampton County? Something has to be done to improve.

Ms. M. Edwards: I call for the Point of Order. We need to keep a time limit, because we are spending a lot of time repeating the same thing over and over. According to these rules, if you feel that a speaker is consuming too much time you can move a time limit on such speaker.

Chair K. Edwards: Since Ms. Ingram has the floor, once she finishes and this Board desires to put a time limit on the speaking portion then that is what we will go to.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: On page 3 of the SFLA Report it states: "While concerns exist as listed above, we see no reason to temporarily relocate students until a long-term plan is decided upon and approved by both Northampton County Schools and the Northampton County Board of Commissioners." So we have to come to an agreement. The County Commissioners are not going to agree with what we are doing until we are demonstrating to them that we are optimizing the use of our facilities. When MBAJ did the assessment, they showed that none of our buildings were at the occupancy that they needed to be, but maybe two of them. Northampton County High School's capacity is 850 and under no scenario were we ever close to 850 students at the high school. I can't really say we agreed to a long-term plan, because what we need to agree to is work on a plan to renovate Gaston Elementary so that it will accommodate the PreK-K then we can close Squire School; renovate Conway Middle so that it will become an elementary school that will serve Central Elementary and Willis Hare Elementary then we can close Willis Hare and be able to build that high school building beside Central Elementary. I am all for that, but where we are disagreeing is what is the way to get us there. We can't get there if we are going to continue to dump money into a building that we are not going to use. We are not going to be able to use it, because the building is not in the shape to be used. MBAJ said, we recommend Option #3 and that option had a PreK-12 program on each end of the county, because they said our county was just too long to consider busing kids. They told us that in 2009, but did we listen? Everybody was on this Board at that time, except for Ms. Taylor, Mr. Edwards, and Mr. Williams. Then they said put 7-12 grades on each end. Ms. Edwards, you had the option for your kids to ride a bus across the county to go to a school and you decided not to because you said the distance was a factor.

Ms. M. Edwards: I said I was not going to be getting up at 5:30 a.m. in the morning bringing my kids to meet the bus between 6:00 and 6:30 a.m. and then have to sit out there and wait at the Piggly Wiggly at 6:00 p.m. or later to pick them up in the evening, because a lot of times I have to go out of town. It was not a problem with distance, they just were not going to come to my house to pick them up and I had no other way than to bring them myself to Piggly Wiggly. I knew there would be times when the weather would be bad and other issues.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: You are a parent/grandparent and you made that decision for your grandchildren. Now, look at another mother who may travel for work in and out of town and it is inconvenient, difficult and a burden for them to have their child ready for the bus stop at 5:30 or 5:45 a.m. in the morning. We have to put ourselves in other peoples' places.

Ms. M. Edwards: It worked last year and it wasn't a big problem, but I did not hear that last year.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: It did not work last year for them, because even Ms. Purnell's bus was a two-hour ride. Do you really believe that there is a parent who didn't have a problem with their child getting to the bus stop?

Ms. M. Edwards: I did not say I didn't believe, I said I did not hear about it.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: I am telling you what I know and what parents have told me. They are upset about these long bus rides and they were really happy when the motion was made on Saturday. It is not fair to force kids to get on a bus for two hours. If they chose to do that it is one thing, but it is not fair to put any kids in Northampton County in transition on a bus for four hours per day.

Ms. M. Edwards: Mr. Chair, is there a special rule provided that a member is limited to speak once to a motion?

Attorney Rod Malone: I am reading something similar in that no member shall speak more than twice for the same thing to the same question and only once to the same appeal.

Chair K. Edwards: Let me interject that it has been the practice of this Board to allow members to speak. Thank you for bringing that to my attention, but this Board sets protocol. I stated that after Ms. Ingram finishes we can set a time parameter and we can have discussions that last for 3 minutes, if that is the consensus of this Board. I have two quick comments to make and I will be brief. The motion that I made last Saturday, June 22, 2013 in my opinion was about choice, which is something I think we can definitely look at here in Northampton County. Choice means that when the motion was made, that if a student still desires to come to Northampton County High School where it is currently located they would be able to. Choice—I used that word because for some reason, the research states we still have the same amount of school age children in our district, however, they are choosing to go somewhere else, because we are not providing choice. Dr. Bracy, when you mentioned the Early College that is choice. Choice is when I live in Gaston, but I want to take auto mechanics on the NCHS campus, which is something we did not have when it was NCHS-E and NCHS-W. My concept is about choice and the same amount of students as echoed by the MBAJ and SFLA Reports and I quote, “You are not losing, your enrollment is the same as it was as it relates to children.” The children are choosing to go somewhere else. Choice is why our children are choosing to go to RVAC and KIPP and I can only speak to the power of choice. Dr. Bracy, I have heard over and over about time and you have heard me mention it on June 22, 2013. There is nothing set in stone that says that the high school has to start at 8:00 a.m. Brain research says it is 9:00 a.m. in the morning when the brain functions at its best. I urge this Board for whatever decisions you make, we are looking at the concept of students continuing to travel long distances and that we look at a different start time for the Northampton County High School, wherever it is decided to be located. Ms. Ingram, I piggy back on what you said earlier, that on the day I went to Raleigh I did see students standing on the side of the road at 5:50 a.m. in the morning. I lived in Pleasant Hill in 1984 and I drove bus #96. The route was 1 hour and 52 minutes long then and that was just Pleasant Hill. I don’t know if we considered it East or West, but I think we were right there where they split us. I was right there on Conner’s Mill Pond where the separation line is. When you talk about Northampton County it is not that it has been a traditional problem and I thank God it has not, because in my lifetime I have seen a book go from a college reading list to a 3rd grade reading list. What has happened to us is that our school age population is being depleted because other schools are offering choice. So I thought the motion last week was about choice. I wish to echo this once again, whatever decisions this Board makes please look at the start times for schools. When I was in Richmond, VA, elementary schools did not start until 9:30 a.m. You have plenty of time during the day if a high school starts at 9:00 or 8:45 a.m. Roanoke Rapids High School does not intake until 8:37 a.m. and that is right across the river. That would make a difference when you talk about inclement weather in the wintertime. We have bus drivers cranking up buses at 5:20 a.m. and the idle rule is in effect. If those bus drivers did not

have to crank those buses up until 6:15 it would be a different scenario, because with the 4x4 schedule we know there is enough hours to get in what you need to do if we just started 40 minutes later. Whatever decision is made, the high school does not need to start at 8:00 a.m.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: What is so wrong about giving the kids choice? We said that during their freshman year if they want to take one program on the eastern they could and during their sophomore year second semester they could go to the western end or visa versa. We would have a high school in two locations and that way we are not burdening anyone. Why doesn't the Board see the fairness and equity in not placing that travel burden?

Ms. Taylor: We still would have to provide transportation for those kids if they have choice. My thing is, tell me what the difference is if you are providing choice and some kids want to go down to the eastern end.

Chair K. Edwards: But the difference is you don't know how many that would be. It might not be 176 students, it might be 20. That is one bus versus 12.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: Wouldn't you be a whole lot happier if you could choose? Ms. Edwards, I know I am talking too much, but I just feel that compassion in my heart for those people who want to choose and a lot of them don't choose to have their child on the long bus routes. If they don't want that for their children why can't we understand that as parents?

Ms. Taylor: The longest bus route is what this year?

Dr. Bracy: Mr. Tillery said the longest bus route that goes from the western part to the high school is 1 hour and 25 minutes. In his words, the longest route was an old East route.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: The parents who talk to me said their children are on the bus for two hours and those are high school students.

Dr. Bracy: It may take Ms. Purnell two hours to get there, pick up and then come back.

Mr. Tillery said, when the first student sits on that bus from Henrico that is 1 hour and 25 minutes. When you are picking up those kids, there are no more stops and you go straight to the high school.

Ms. M. Edwards made a motion for the debate to end. Mr. Matthews seconded the motion. The motion passed by a 5-2 vote to close the debate. Mr. Clinton Williams and Ms. Erica Smith-Ingram voted against.

Chair K. Edwards restated the previous motion as follows:

Ms. Taylor made a MOTION to rescind the motion made on Saturday, June 22, 2013 to close the Alternative School, keep all current high school students at the Northampton County High School campus, leave Squire Elementary School a Pre-K-K, Gaston Elementary School 1st-4th grades, Gaston Middle School 5th-8th, and leave as is Conway Middle School 5th-8th, Willis Hare Elementary School PreK-K-4th and Central Elementary School PreK-K-4th for the 2013-2014 school year. Mr. Matthews seconded the MOTION. The motion passed by a 5-2 to rescind the motion made on Saturday, June 22, 2013. Mr. Clinton Williams and Ms. Erica Smith-Ingram voted against.

Mr. Matthews: I would like to say that we were talking earlier about having a retreat or work session before too long, I would like to see on the agenda that we start working on this long-term plan, the future plans and the steps as to how we are going to get there. I would like to make sure that is on the agenda because I think all of these discussions we have had over the last month would be more productive if the meeting was held around November or December. The idea of choice and I personally agree with the idea of choice, but right now with school opening in August, I don't know what they are going to choose and they don't either. The administration

needs time to lay those choices out about what is going to be offered where. I think we need to start working on that now.

Ms. M. Edwards: Mr. Chair, I would like to ask Dr. Bracy and Mr. Holloway to please begin to work on the floor at NCHS to remove the asbestos. We have three bids, but we did not vote on them.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: Those bids were under the threshold so we can go ahead and handle that.

Dr. Bracy: The lowest bid was \$9,000 and we can move forward with that.

Chair K. Edwards: Board Members, would you please check your calendars for July 19, 2013 to hold a Board Retreat.

Ms. M. Edwards: I will be gone July 16-25, 2013.

Ms. Taylor: I am gone for two days, but I don't know when I will have to go back.

Chair K. Edwards: We will take July 19, 2013 off the table. Let's look at holding our Retreat on July 29, 2013 the same day scheduled for the Superintendent's Evaluation.

Mr. Johnson: Are you going to call it a retreat or work session?

Attorney Rod Malone: Either one it is fine, but you are probably going to have to make it a Special Meeting component on the issue of the Student Dress Code.

Chair K. Edwards: Board Members, are you comfortable with having a Retreat/Special Meeting?

Mr. Williams: I thought we talked about have a two-day Retreat.

It was the consensus of the Board to hold a Board Retreat/Special Meeting on Monday, July 29, 2013 from 2:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. The place will be determined.

Chair K. Edwards: If we need another meeting after July 29th we will determine the next date. We will come back for our regular meeting on August 5th. We will also look at scheduling time frames for debates.

Attorney Rod Malone: At that meeting on July 29th we will deal with the Superintendent's Evaluation, the second reading of the Student Dress Policy, and the Student Code of Conduct.

Superintendent's Information

Dr. Bracy addressed the Board and audience as follows:

Board Information

Chair K. Edwards announced that the Board received a letter from Mr. Robert Wilkins regarding the grass on the Jackson-Eastside Elementary School Property. Dr. Bracy and Mr. Tillery are working diligently to rectify the situation with the grass.

Ms. M. Edwards: What are we doing about those positions available over at Conway Middle? Do we have anyone in mind for those positions?

Dr. Bracy: We are working to fill those positions by the August Board Meeting.

Chair K. Edwards: In conferencing with Attorney Malone, we need to look at the possibility of changing our meeting date from the 1st Monday to the 2nd Monday of the month.

Attorney Rod Malone: Due to Ann Majestic leaving and another partner in the firm, they have reshuffled everyone and I am no longer available on the 1st Mondays starting in August. If the Board is willing to change your Board Meeting date it would be a huge help for me.

- NSBA 2013 Southern Region Conference – July 7-10, 2013 – Destin, Florida
- Next Regular Board Meeting – August 12, 2013 – Board Room – 5:00 p.m. (Closed Session) – Open Session beginning at approximately 6:30 p.m.

Adjournment

On a MOTION by Ms. Taylor, SECONDED by Ms. M. Edwards, the Board adjourned the meeting at 12:10 a.m.

Approved: January 13, 2014

Kelvin Edwards, Board Chair