

**REGULAR MEETING
NORTHAMPTON COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION
Monday, December 5, 2011**

Members Present: Donald Johnson, Chair; Marjorie Edwards, Vice Chair; Bill Little, Erica Smith-Ingram, Lafayette Majette, Kelvin Edwards, Rhonda Taylor, Dr. Eric Bracy, ex officio
Others Present: Administration, press and interested parties

The Northampton County Board of Education held its regular meeting on December 5, 2011 in the Board Room of the Northampton County Schools administrative building. Chair Donald Johnson called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Closed Session

On a MOTION by Ms. Smith-Ingram, SECONDED by Mr. Little and APPROVED, the Board convened in closed session at approximately 5:35 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 6-0. Mr. Kelvin Edwards was not present for the vote.

Open Session

On a MOTION by Mr. K. Edwards, SECONDED by Mr. Little, the Board adjourned closed session. The motion passed by a vote of 7-0. The first closed session ended at approximately 6:55 p.m.

Approval of Board Agenda

On a MOTION by Mr. Little, SECONDED by Mr. K. Edwards, the Board unanimously APPROVED the Board Agenda, as recommended by the Superintendent. The motion passed by a vote of 7-0.

On a MOTION by Ms. M. Edwards, SECONDED by Ms. Smith-Ingram, the Board unanimously APPROVED to amend the Board Agenda to add the agenda item, Garysburg School Property under Business Before the Board For Approval and add a second closed session the end of the agenda, as recommended by the Superintendent. The motion passed by a vote of 7-0.

On a MOTION by Ms. Smith-Ingram, SECONDED by Ms. M. Edwards, the Board unanimously APPROVED to amend the Board Agenda to cover personnel action, as recommended by the Superintendent. The motion passed by a vote of 7-0.

Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Johnson requested that the Board and audience stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

Good News Award

Ms. Tanya Byrd-Robinson along with Dr. Eric Bracy and Chair Donald Johnson recognized and presented a Good News Award Certificate to the following recipients:

Speak Up Survey Recognition – The following school staff at Conway Middle School were recognized and presented a Good News Award Certificate for **Conway Middle School** being selected to receive this year's **Project Tomorrow Speak Up 200 Designation: Ms. Kitty**

Mann, Project Coordinator; **Ms. Ashita Harris**, School Improvement Chairperson; along with team members **Ms. Tracy Flythe**, **Ms. Marie Hasty**, **Ms. Diane White**, **Ms. Mary Rowe**, **Ms. Keedra Whitaker**, **Ms. April Deberry**, **Mr. William Leary**, **Principal Barbara J. Drummond** and **Assistant Principal Oliver Holley**. This recognition is awarded to the top schools in the United States that values and empowers student voices in local education decision-making. Conway Middle is part of an elite group of 200 schools across the country that were selected from 30,000 schools nationwide that have participated in the annual Speak Up surveys. The schools are selected based upon total participation and demonstrated commitment to engaging all stakeholders – students, staff, parents and administrators – in local decisions on educational issues. Conway Middle School has consistently had 100% student and staff participation plus increased parent participation for several years. Last year, Conway had 433 students, 28 teachers, and 50 parents to complete the survey and is distinguished for participating at this level for multiple years.

Shining Star Character Education

Ms. Tanya Byrd-Robinson along with Dr. Eric Bracy and Chair Donald Johnson recognized and presented the following students with **Shining Star Award Certificates** for demonstrating the focus of “Integrity” for the month of November:

Vonjae` Stephens, Squire Elementary School

Eriona Joyner, Willis Hare Elementary School

Fisher McInville (absent), Northampton County High School-East

James Douglas (absent), Northampton West Stem High School

Justice Harris, Conway Middle School

Tyheria Carter, Gaston Elementary School

Public Comments

The following persons addressed the Board during Public Comments:

Ms. Shelia Johnson: “I appreciate the opportunity to speak to the Board tonight. I would like to talk about the school merger that I recently read about in the newspaper about sending our students to NCHS-East. I want you all to know that I have a son at NCHS-West and I am opposed to the merger and the kids going to NCHS-East. My son gets on the bus between 6:30 and 6:45 a.m. and he arrives at school by 7:20 a.m. I just cannot imagine adding another hour to the time he has to spend on the bus. I also think about times of inclement weather, because roads can become very, very treacherous in a two hours time. It is not like hauling pigs, cows and chickens; you are hauling precious students. I would be concerned about that time when the weather gets inclement like it does in the winter. I also think it is unequal and unfair to make it so taxing for them to access their education. You know when you get off the bus you have to be alert and ready to learn and I don’t think a two hour ride would provide that opportunity. I don’t know what it looks like in your mind to combine the schools at this time and I don’t know how much you have thought about it and what it looks like to you, but to me right now it looks like you are getting ready to create a big mess. I am surprised we are having this discussion again. You had comments last year and I thought that we had settled that NCHS-East was not a really viable alternative for all the kids in the high schools. I would just like for you to slow down and find something centralized that will give all of the kids equal access and not be taxing on any one particular family. Just take your time in making that decision and don’t just rush into anything that might not be beneficial to everyone. Thank you for the opportunity to express my thoughts.”

Ms. Brittney Squire: “I am a student at NCHS-East and I came to say I am in opposition of combining schools next year. It came to my attention today that you were having a meeting. I am into sports and I am a cheerleader. If we combine the schools, I am not sure if you are planning on changing the colors, but as far as the Rams and the Hurricanes I don’t know how you would work the uniforms out. You would have to purchase cheerleader, football, basketball, tennis and track uniforms and I feel that would be a big financial problem. You would also have to purchase new band uniforms and they are too expensive. I feel financial problems should not be on the list, because I will be a senior next year and I want my senior year to go smoothly. Another concern that I have is there are too many children in one classroom. I feel it is harder to learn when you have a classroom full of children. My third block class is full of children and it is hard for us to comprehend what the teacher is saying. I feel like if we were to merge and we go to NCHS-East, I feel East is a little bigger, but still a lot of students in one classroom would not work out. If we were to go to NCHS-West, it is a little smaller and we would still have too many students in a classroom. Everyone should be comfortable when they are learning. They should be able to learn properly and be comfortable about their learning instead of pushing their ability because there are so many students and the teachers don’t have time to go from one to the other. The bus ride will also be a concern because East is kind of far for the students who live in the farther district of West and West would be kind of far for the students who live in the farther district of East. These are my couple of concerns and other than that, I really disagree with the merger.”

Ms. Cheryl Haskins: “Good evening everyone. I am a parent of a 13 year-old 8th grade student. I personally, along with some other parents here and some who are not here, don’t want my daughter to travel so far every morning, two hours early, to get up and go to school. At this point now, your kids are stable. They get up, they know their bedtime and what they have to do to get up and get themselves prepared. Just imagine them getting up two hours early every morning. If school is opening earlier for these kids to get their education, they have to either stay open later and the kids are going to get home later. They need the proper time to get home and get themselves together to get their homework done and get themselves ready again for school. I don’t feel there is going to be enough time for them to do that. They need their hours of sleep and need to be refreshed each morning when they go to school. They need that time at night to relax and get to school that next morning to be able to function. We don’t want our kids going to school sleeping in class and nodding off, because we are going to have problems with the teachers calling and our kids are not going to learn anything. I hope what I said touches the heart of someone and just slow down like one of the parents said and think about your decision. Just give it some time to figure out a better way. We want the kids to get a proper education. We don’t want them to be crowding into classes where some kids are not learning as well as others. If you could just give us a little bit more time and think about your decision, because it is not just affecting one or two students it is affecting so many. Thank you for your time.”

Rev. Charles Faulcon: “Good evening to all of the Board Members and occupants in this room. I stand here as Pastor of Cedar Grove Baptist Church and the Town of Henrico on the western end of Northampton County. I stand on behalf of the parents and students. I am not the only one speaking out, but I am opposed, with a big capital “O”, to the students being bused from the western end of the county to the eastern end of the county. All things have been said and I am pretty sure you have heard everything you need not to hear over and over again. I just want to ask you, if you had children and you were in the position that the parents are in on the west end of the county line and even if you have children on the eastern end of the county line and they

wanted to bus them to the western end, how would you feel? I ask the Board, take the time to put yourself in the position of these parents who have children. Consider those things of what you are trying to impose on them, because our children are the ones who are going to be affected by it the most.”

Chair Johnson: Thank you for those comments and at this time we will take a five-minute break.

Consent Agenda

On a MOTION by Mr. Little, SECONDED by Ms. Taylor, the Board unanimously APPROVED the consent agenda consisting of the following items, as recommended by the Superintendent. The motion passed by a vote of 7-0.

Board Minutes – Regular Meeting – Ms. Erica Smith-Ingram requested that a correction be made to the August 1, 2011 minutes in that her statement in regards to her vote on personnel should read as follows: “I emphatically vote no regarding personnel and let it go on the record that this is a disservice to the Northampton County residents; that we are not being fair.”

Request for Fund Raiser

Conway Middle – Library Club – Scholastic Book Fair – January 10-18, 2012

Contracted Services

Northampton County Schools and Deborah L. Story, Psy.D. PLLC – Psychological Services – Effective: November 10, 2011 through June 8, 2012

Business Before the Board for Information

Directors’ Updates – Mr. Matthews shared the Directors’ Updates with the Board for the month of November 2011.

Business Before the Board for Approval

On a MOTION by Ms. Taylor, SECONDED by Mr. Little, the Board unanimously APPROVED a Designation of Applicant’s Agent, which is a FEMA Resolution, indicating that Mr. James Tillery, Maintenance Director and Mr. Joe Holloway, Finance Officer, are designated to deal with FEMA on behalf of the Northampton County Board of Education concerning loses and reimbursements resulting from Hurricane Irene, as recommended by the Superintendent. The motion passed by a vote of 7-0.

On a MOTION by Ms. M. Edwards, SECONDED by Mr. Majette, the Board unanimously APPROVED revisions to Board Policy No. 4450 - Drug Testing for Student Athletes for first reading, as recommended by the Superintendent. The motion passed by a vote of 7-0. This policy would become effective for the spring sports if approved for second reading. The recommended changes are as follows on page 2, item 2 under Testing Procedure – Test Frequency for Board Policy No. 4450 - Drug Testing for Student Athletes:

[The policy currently reads, “Initially a drug test shall be performed on every athlete who tries out for all sports. A minimum of one random drug test shall be conducted during each sports season, but the principal may order additional random tests to ensure that there always is a possibility that students may be tested.”

The recommended change would read, “A minimum of one random drug test shall be performed on athletes during the tryout period for all sports. A minimum of one random drug test shall be conducted during each sports season. In addition, the principal may order additional random tests to ensure that there always is a possibility that students who tryout and participate may be tested.”]

On a MOTION by Ms. Smith-Ingram, SECONDED by Ms. M. Edwards, the Board unanimously APPROVED Budget Amendments #01 - #05, as recommended by the Superintendent. The motion

passed by a vote of 7-0. These budget amendments are being presented to reflect various transfers of funds into the appropriate purpose code based on reversions, discretionary cuts, receipt of additional funds or as requested by directors or principals.

On a MOTION by Ms. Smith-Ingram, SECONDED by Ms. Taylor, the Board unanimously APPROVED an audit contract with Anderson Smith & Wike PLLC for fiscal year ending June 30, 2012, as recommended by the Superintendent. The motion passed by a vote of 7-0. Each public school system in North Carolina is required by law to have an independent audit conducted each fiscal year by external auditors. The contract must be forwarded to the Local Government Commission in Raleigh for their approval.

Ms. M. Edwards informed the Board that at their last Facilities Committee Meeting they discussed bringing the Garysburg School Property to the Board and having it put on the agenda to be declared as surplus and be offered to the Northampton County Board of Commissioners.

On a MOTION by Ms. M. Edwards, SECONDED by Mr. Majette, the Board unanimously APPROVED to declare the Garysburg School Property as surplus and offer it to the Northampton County Board of Commissioners for their interest in obtaining the property, as recommended by the Superintendent. The motion passed by a vote of 7-0.

Chair Johnson addressed the Board as follows regarding the Consolidation/Merger of Schools: We have heard the comments and for the last three years now we have been trying to decide which way is best for us. We tried to go before the County Commissioners to have a new school built and we were turned down. Therefore, over the last year we have been sitting still. At our last meeting, we finally came to a conclusion as a group that we needed to do something one way or the other, because we have been going through all of the processes and legal ramifications that we need to do as we go into the merger system. We held a Work Session on November 21, 2011 and at that Work Session six Board Members were in attendance. The merger was discussed at great lengths at that meeting and the ones who were in attendance voted unanimously that we had to do something towards our merger within our school system. The consensus of the group was that the merger is to take place in the school year 2012-2013 and that the merger would be in the Creeksville precinct. Mr. Johnson further stated that it had to be in the form of a motion and that is the way it went. What we accomplished on November 21st was a unanimous decision and I will entertain a motion at this time.

Mr. Little made a motion, seconded by Mr. Majette to merge the two mentioned high schools (Northampton County High School-East and Northampton County West Stem High School) at Northampton County High School-East effective for the 2012-2013 school year and that the location would be in the Creeksville precinct.

The Board held the following discussion regarding the merger of the high schools to the Northampton County High School-East precinct:

Ms. Smith-Ingram: I was unable to attend that meeting on November 21st because I was scheduled for training at my job. It just saddens me that I am the only Board Member who lives in the western end of the county. I am going to be affected by this decision as well as many other parents who live in my community. It just feels that because I was not here and the voice of the western end was not heard. I realize that we are one county. From day one I have been against busing anyone's children for two hours. I see and I teach children everyday and my kids live right in the neighborhood where the school is located. The western end has lost their third high school and it is just unfair. When I joined this Board in 2008, we started rezoning Margarettsville students to Northampton-East. One year later, we rezoned Seaboard students who were in the western end zone and started moving them to the eastern end. We redistricted Occoneechee Neck. I attended Northampton-West along with children from Occoneechee Neck, Garysburg, Henrico, Gaston, parts of Pleasant Hill, Seaboard and Margarettsville

and we all attended Gumberry High School. We lost Gaston High School, you know Chair Johnson, because you were a principal there. So we lost Gaston High School, we lost Gumberry High School and now this community is faced with losing another high school. Of course the eastern end is going to have more high school students, because that school zone represents two-thirds of the county. It does not take a rocket scientist to see that one-third of the county is represented in the western end. So you can't say that you don't have to move that many students if you put the merger at Northampton-East. I would be emphatically no even if the school was located at Northampton-West. Secondly, what bothers me is that there were two forums held and of those two forums held every person who spoke were overwhelmingly against the merger. These people represented here tonight, who deserve to have a voice heard and out of everyone who spoke at Northampton-East, Northampton-West and even at Conway Middle School the year before were overwhelmingly against merging the schools and busing any kids for two hours. What we are saying as a Board is that we don't care what these people have to say and we don't care how many children have to get up and catch a bus at 5:30, 5:45 or 6:15 in the morning. It is appalling and it is unfair, because we on the other end pay our taxes and our taxes pay the salaries and the stipends of the people sitting here on the Board. I have a child who is going to be getting homebound or school one day per week, because I don't want him to have to ride a bus all the way to Central Elementary because he has special needs and he has a tracheotomy. I am not comfortable with him riding on the bus for 40 minutes. We have had to make sacrifices and these parents are making sacrifices. What this Board is doing to make a decision is putting the merger at the school that is in one of the worst conditions. What are we really saying? The people out here asked us a year and a half ago to please consider renovating one of our other structures if the County Commissioners cannot afford to build a brand new high school right now. A viable option is to renovate Central Elementary, because we are making decisions to affect the future. We realize that the Charter School is going to have four Kindergarten classes. If you look into the future and make decisions that are based on the demographical data that we have. We are losing students and to justify busing kids to one of the worst high schools of all the facilities that we have. The Facilities Committee knows that Northampton-East is not in any condition for the current students to be there. I don't know why this administration did not look at renovating Central Elementary. We have the ball fields there for the Cultural & Wellness Center and it all just makes sense, but it seems like the people up here just cannot see it. So I vote no, because I want to be the voice of those people who spoke tonight and those who have spoken at all of our forums. It is not fair to bus these students for four hours per day. It is ridiculous!

Mr. K. Edwards: I concur with Ms. Ingram's passion, because I live in Pleasant Hill, which is on the western end of the county. My children do attend Gaston Elementary School. When you say we are looking at the whole decision piece, Ms. Ingram is correct in that we have looked at and we are now in year three. I have been on the Board only a year and a half. There were a lot of key elements looked at and what Ms. Ingram is saying does make sense. When you look at the whole piece we have 207 students at NCHS-West and 387 at NCHS-East. That was discussed in great detail and also discussed was the piece about more course offerings at the schools. I am just filling in on all of the things that were discussed when you look at the placement.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: Chair Johnson, what was the decision that made this Board put the merger at NCHS-East with the condition of the facility, because this Board was asking for a brand new high school? I don't understand.

Mr. K. Edwards: You are right Ms. Ingram, when that was discussed in the Facilities Meeting, it was based upon the figure brought to us in the amount of \$14 million on the conversion for Central Elementary School.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: What architectural firm submitted that?

Dr. Bracy: The architectural firm was Skinner, Lamm & Highsmith.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: Was that the only company?

Dr. Bracy: Yes, because the administration asked for an estimate from them. It was not a bid.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: Have we done a legitimate study or have we done a legitimate bid? That is no reason to make this decision. I can understand merging, but putting it at NCHS-West or NCHS-East, I have never been more clearer. It looks like you need to put it more centrally located. Look at how much you would save in transportation cost if you put it in a more central location. I look at the mileage and I have some significant mileage just coming to Board Meetings. It takes me 41 minutes to get here. It is just not fair and you still have not presented how it is fair for anyone's children to have to learn after being on a bus for two hours, being in school applying yourself and getting home two hours later. Don't forget about participation in basketball or extracurricular activities. They won't get home until 11:00 p.m. If I am a high school student, I have a job and I am using my money to help my family out, I am going to go to work and skip school. What is that going to do for our dropout rate? Yes merge, but we should not make the decision on where to put it until we have done a logistical study and not grabbing a \$12 million number out of the sky or wherever you got it from. Put some competition behind that number.

Chair Johnson: We have gone through all of the things that you are talking about. There are a lot of studies that have been made and I don't know that there is anyone that would be traveling two hours.

Mr. Matthews, is there anyone who would be traveling two hours from the western end to NCHS-East?

Mr. Matthews: I think it is going to be more like an hour to an hour and a half.

Chair Johnson: We have heard the comments and it is not that we don't feel for the people. I have had children who have traveled on buses, not to the extent that some will have to do this year, but yes my children have traveled by bus. My grandchildren travel by bus also.

Ms. M. Edwards: What I wanted to add to all of this is that we went over this and met for three hours or more discussing this. We asked questions about trying to get NCHS-East up to par and they said everything was ready to go and good for a year or so until we could get money or a bond to build a new school. That is our ultimate goal to build within a five-year time and we hope it is less. We cannot really say because we don't know how the economy is going to be. All of that was discussed and it is very difficult for us to sit here and say that we can financially keep on having two high schools, because it is a strain on us and we are having to duplicate services. We are taking our children and giving them less than what they really deserve. We can't do a lot of things we need to be doing to help our kids have the best education possible. We have tried to do this and it is costing a lot. The County Commissioners have voiced the same opinion that it is very difficult for them to get the money to build a new school right now. We have looked at NCHS-East and we have been updating NCHS-East to fix the heat and everything else to bring it up to par so that the children can go there if it is voted on tonight and if the merger goes through. We looked at trying to go to Central Elementary and we were given this figure by Mr. Matthews who gives us all of the figures for all of the work that is done. We don't know other than what we get from the architects and we are trying our best to do what is best for our children. If everyone would look at it as Ms. Ingram said, it is a long ride. My granddaughter catches the bus at around 6:45 a.m. and arrives at school at around 8:00 a.m. She has an hour ride right now and she is right in Rich Square. We have tried to fix NCHS-East so that if it is merger school. Whatever they decide to do we have looked at all of the options.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: Why can't we divide that motion and have a separate motion for the merger or consolidation and have a separate motion for the location? I don't believe we have to make the decision about location right now. If we put the bid out and let companies bid on it, because you can't say that you need a brand new building and you can't say that you have to put it there to offer those courses. I

know of a school not far down the road and those kids were in mobile units, trailers connected together and they are achieving. You can't tell me that if you use mobile units and renovate Central Elementary that it will cost \$12 million dollars. Why don't we separate the motion and vote on merging tonight, but we do not have to pick a location other than it is just something we want to do without any evidence to the contrary. Numbers can say anything you want them to say, but a decision like this should not be made hastily and should not be made unless you have exhausted all of the other options.

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

Ms. Smith-Ingram: I would like to amend the motion and separate the parts of the motion.

Attorney Rod Malone: If there is a motion, there will have to be a second and then the majority would have to vote for it.

On a MOTION by Ms. Smith-Ingram, SECONDED by Mr. K. Edwards, the Board APPROVED to amend the original motion to state that we recommend the high school merger for the 2012-2013 school year, as recommended by the Superintendent. The motion passed by a vote of 4-3. Mr. Bill Little, Ms. Marjorie Edwards and Mr. Lafayette Majette voted against.

Chair Johnson: The next question would be are we going to merge next year?

On a MOTION by Ms. M. Edwards, SECONDED by Mr. Majette, the Board APPROVED to merge the two high schools for the 2012-2013 school year, as recommended by the Superintendent. The motion passed by a vote of 6-1. Mr. Bill Little voted against.

Chair Johnson: At the advice of our attorney, we have approved a merger of the schools and now there can be a motion to entertain the location of the school or go along with the motion that Ms. Ingram made.

Attorney Rod Malone: At this point, there are multiple options available such as: 1) a motion to merge the schools at NCHS-West; 2) a motion to merge the schools at NCHS-East; 3) a motion that Ms. Ingram proposed to investigate it further; and 4) a motion to table it until later. These are the options for the Board to consider at this point. You now have decided to merge the schools, but you still have open where to locate the schools.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: I think at this juncture, I can say that we have not done a busing route of all of the high school students to Central Elementary. That is one thing that has not been done. Also, with the ball fields, tennis courts and the baseball fields at the Wellness Center, I think it is worthy. Let me be honest and say that did not come from me, it came out of the Public Forum at NCHS-West in February of last year. It was a member of the community who hopes that you will look at Central Elementary. I would like for us if we can to table the decision of where to locate the high school until after we have done a legitimate, detail study that would include bus routes for all of the high school students to Central Elementary, what that cost would be as well as placing a bid for renovation of the school before we make that decision. Even if we can make that decision in January or February, put a time certain that we would vote on that location, because I do know we can't drag our feet.

Chair Johnson: That is correct and that is why we were doing it tonight. I also need to ask, if you renovate Central Elementary as you say, where would those children go? You have got to have a place for them.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: We have already explored that, as we have Seaboard-Coates that we re-opened for the Alternative School and we have some elementary kids that we could possibly look at transportation for them to Gaston or whichever would be the elementary school. That way you can close off two of the oldest buildings in this district, which is NCHS-East and Squire Elementary School. If we close two buildings, then we can make Gaston the elementary school and make NCHS-West the middle school. Keep in mind, you are going to lose some elementary students in kindergarten to the Charter School and the decisions we make right now, we will have to look at what is happening.

Mr. K. Edwards: We will lose students in K-5 for the next five years.

Ms. M. Edwards: I think we are still losing students whether we do anything or not.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: I am talking about losing students right in the location or area, but you are right either way we go we will lose students. If we look at the cost analysis for Central Elementary, because that has not yet been done. The only thing we need to do is to renovate the building and look at some modular units and see what is going to work.

Ms. M. Edwards: That would have been good discussion the night we had the Work Session, because we stayed here a long time. We knew you were at a meeting, but this meeting was set up a long time ago.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: This is information that was presented to this Board and this Board either didn't hear it or chose to ignore it for ten months.

Ms. Taylor: I did ask about renovating Central Elementary and they said it would cost \$15 million and therefore it would not be a good option.

Ms. Smith-Ingram: How could that be said if we have not done a competitive bid? We don't need a Rolls Royce just to perform. There are children in trailers who are performing. Education is no longer tied to a building, because we are doing everything virtually now.

Ms. Taylor: You just said that NCHS-East is not in good condition and you don't need a Rolls Royce, but I have a child at NCHS-East. I don't know what his position is in regards to the merger, but let me tell you that my child needs to be able to compete with all of the students across the United States when he goes to college next year. No matter where the school is going to be, he is going. If it is at NCHS-East or at NCHS-West he is going to get an education. He is not worried about what his mother thinks or what the adults think. He is going to school with friends and he already knows people at NCHS-West. That is what I want for my child.

Chair Johnson: I will entertain a motion at this time.

On a MOTION by Ms. M. Edwards, SECONDED by Mr. Majette, the Board APPROVED to merge the two high schools (Northampton County High School-East and Northampton County West Stem High School) at Northampton County High School-East in the Creeksville precinct for the 2012-2013 school year, in light of what we have heard and everything that is going on so that we can better our school system financially, as recommended by the Superintendent. The motion passed by a vote of 6-1.

Ms. Erica Smith-Ingram voted against.

Chair Johnson informed the Board that you have heard the motion that was made and I ask for a show of hands of those in favor of the merger of the high schools to be held on the eastern end in the Creeksville precinct. The motion passed by a vote of 6-1. Ms. Erica Smith-Ingram voted against.

Board Information

- December Calendar of Events
- Next Regular Board Meeting – January 2, 2012 – Board Room – 5:30 p.m. (Closed Session) – Open Session beginning at approximately 6:30 p.m.

Closed Session

On a MOTION by Ms. M. Edwards, SECONDED by Mr. Little and APPROVED, the Board convened in closed session at approximately 8:00 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. Little, SECONDED by Mr. K. Edwards, the Board reconvened in open session at approximately 8:40 p.m. The motion passed by a vote of 7-0.

On a MOTION by Ms. M. Edwards, SECONDED by Mr. Little, the Board APPROVED the administration's personnel report below dated December 5, 2011, as recommended by the Superintendent. The motion passed by a vote of 7-0.

Personnel

Certified Recommendation:

Amy Parks, Teacher, Conway Middle School, 12/12/2011

Classified Recommendations:

Ayesha Neal Harry, Substitute Bus Driver, 12/6/11

Velevia Hendricks, Substitute Bus Driver, 12/6/11

Della Deloatch, Mentor, Rich Square-W.S. Creecy Training & Community Center, 12/6/11

Jonas E. Pope IV, Mentor, Rich Square-W.S. Creecy Training & Community Center, 12/6/11

Corey Williams, Mentor, Rich Square-W.S. Creecy Training & Community Center, 12/6/11

Susie Dickens, Mentor, Rich Square-W.S. Creecy Training & Community Center, 12/6/11

Rennie Elizabeth Joyner, Substitute Teacher (LT) Allied Health, NCHS-East, 1/24/12

For Information

Resignations:

Dr. Jose Lobo, Spanish Teacher, NCHS-East, 12/29/11

Heather Ayers, English Teacher, NCHS-East, 12/29/11

Retirements:

Evelyn Ivey, 3rd Grade Teacher, Gaston Elementary School, 2/28/12 (Changed)

Patricia Dickens, 1st Grade Teacher, Willis Hare Elementary School, 2/1/12

Leave of Absence:

Mary June Phelps, Administrative Assistant, Central Services/Exceptional Children Program, 11/15/11

Catherine Thomason, Librarian, Gaston Elementary School, 10/11/11

Adjournment

On a MOTION by Mr. Little, SECONDED by Mr. K. Edwards, the Board adjourned the meeting at 8:41p.m.

Approved: April 2, 2012

Dr. Eric C. Bracy, Superintendent