

A Business Meeting of the Albemarle County School Board was held on May 11, 2017 at 6:30 p.m., Lane Auditorium, Albemarle County Office Building, 401 McIntire Road, Charlottesville, Virginia 22902.

PRESENT: Mr. Jonno Alcaro; Mr. Stephen Koleszar; Mr. Graham Paige; Mrs. Pamela Moynihan (arrived at 6:05 p.m.); Dr. Kate Acuff; Mr. David Oberg; and Mr. Jason Buyaki.

ABSENT: None.

STAFF PRESENT: Dr. Pamela Moran, Superintendent; Dr. Matthew Haas, Deputy Superintendent; Mr. Vince Scheivert, Chief Information Officer; Mr. Dean Tistadt, Chief Operating Officer; Mr. Kevin Kirst, Director of Student Services; Ms. Rosalyn Schmitt, Assistant Director of Facility Planning; Mr. Jackson Zimmermann, Executive Director of Fiscal Services; Ms. Amanda Farley, Senior Assistant County Attorney; and Ms. Jennifer Johnston, Clerk to the School Board.

Agenda Item No. 1.1. Closed Meeting.

At 6:03 p.m., Mr. Alcaro offered a **motion** that the School Board go into a closed meeting as authorized by the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, section 2.2-3711(A) of the Code of Virginia under subsection 1 to discuss and consider the performance, assignment, and resignation of specific employees. Mr. Buyaki **seconded** the motion, **and the motion passed with Mrs. Moynihan absent.**

Agenda Item No. 1.2. Closed Meeting Certification.

At 6:30 p.m., Mr. Alcaro offered a **motion** that the Board certify by recorded vote that to the best of each Board member's knowledge, only public business matters lawfully exempted from the open meeting requirements of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act and identified in the motion authorizing the Closed Meeting were heard, discussed or considered in the Closed Meeting. Mr. Buyaki **seconded** the motion. **Roll was called, and the motion passed by the following recorded vote:**

AYE: Mr. Buyaki, Mrs. Moynihan, Mr. Oberg, Mr. Alcaro, Dr. Acuff, Mr. Paige, and Mr. Koleszar

NAY: None.

Motion carried by a 7:0 vote.

Agenda Item No. 1.3. Call to Order.

At 6:30 p.m., Dr. Acuff, Chairman, called the meeting to order.

Agenda Item No. 1.4. Pledge of Allegiance.

Agenda Item No. 1.5. Moment of Silence.

Agenda Item. No. 2.1. Approval of Agenda.

Mr. Alcaro offered a **motion** to approve the agenda. Mr. Paige **seconded** the motion, **and the motion passed.**

Agenda Item No. 3.1. Consent Agenda

- 3.1 Approval of Consent Agenda
- 3.2 CTE Equipment Grants
- 3.3 Making Spaces Grant
- 3.4 Carl D. Perkins Local Plan for Career and Technical Education
- 3.5 Personnel Action
- 3.6 For Information: Policy Reviews and Revisions
- 3.7 Alternative Education Fund (ISAEP or Individual Student Alternative Education Program)

Mr. Alcaro offered a **motion** to approve the consent agenda without Policy JC. Dr. Acuff said that she had a question regarding policy JFC. Mrs. Farley said that she would review the language. Mr. Koleszar **seconded** the motion. Mr. Buyaki pulled Policy EBAB from the consent agenda. Mr. Alcaro then offered a **motion** to approve the consent agenda as amended. Mr. Paige **seconded** the motion, **and the motion passed.**

Agenda Item No. 4.1. Items Pulled from the Consent Agenda.

Agenda Item No. 5.1. Spotlight on Education.

Mr. Koleszar said that our Superintendent was at a meeting this week of the Virginia Association of School Superintendents and she came back with a very thought-proving book. It is written by Gary Marx, president of the Center for Public Outreach and it is titled, *21 Trends for the 21st Century*.

The book is receiving a great deal of interest around the country, especially among educators, since it deals with such topics as shifting demographics, new technologies, the economy, energy and the environment and other societal challenges.

The reason I bring this up is that we have our own futurists with us this evening.

They are the Walton team members from SchoolsNEXT, a competition designed by the Association for Learning Environments, an international organization that has been around for nearly 100 years.

In addition, the students with us this evening are not just members of an outstanding team, but they are state champions. They won the competition for the design and presentation they developed on what our schools should look like in the future.

These remarkably talented futurists recently made outstanding presentations of their concepts in Greenville, South Carolina in a regional competition and earlier this month, In Williamsburg.

I am going to ask our students to share their ideas with us in a minute but first I wanted to note what really impressed me about their work.

When you talk about schools of the future, all sorts of gadgets, practices and far-off ideas come to mind.

These students did not follow that path. They focused instead on a real world problem facing middle school students and they proposed practical solutions that can be implemented today.

The challenge they chose was wellness, addressing such issues as childhood obesity and depression. If we can achieve wellness for all students, that indeed would be an accomplishment that will stand the test of all time.

Josh Walton, the school principal and Bill Bradley, who served as team mentor, are with us this evening, together with several members of the Walton team. He then asked them to join us at the podium to share their learning.

Agenda Item No. 5.2. Announcements.

Agenda Item No. 6.1. Public Comment.

Mr. Forrest Marshall spoke to the Board about Yancey Elementary. He asked that the Board keep Yancey open, as it is a focal point of the community.

Mr. Ryan Underwood is a student at Monticello High School. He presented the Board a Citizen Action Project regarding school choice.

Ms. Skylar Field is a student at Monticello High School. She presented the Board a Citizen Action Project focusing on HB 2191, which would have required notification of all sexually explicit content in instructional materials.

Ms. Peggy Scott spoke about Yancey Elementary School. She spoke about the importance of the Yancey in community. She challenged the Board to redistrict students to Yancey to help with enrollment.

Mr. J.R. Washington spoke about Yancey Elementary School. He asked if the students have been included in this process, what happened to the rainy day fund, why is the discussion centered on grants, and how many schools have been closed in this county and what happened to those communities?

Mr. Kyle Lee spoke to the Board about Yancey Elementary School. He asked that the school remain open. He was a student at Yancey, and is currently a student at Walton Middle School.

Ms. Christine Thomas is an Esmont community member. She provided the Board with a redistricting proposal to move students to Yancey Elementary School.

Ms. Berlinda Mills is an Esmont community member. She spoke to the Board about Yancey Elementary. She asked that the Board support the Esmont community and keep Yancey Elementary open.

Mr. Leroy Thomas is an Esmont community member. He spoke to the Board about Yancey Elementary. He supports keeping the school open. He encouraged the Board to look for alternatives to closing the school.

Ms. Brittney Anders is a student at Monticello High School. She presented the Board with a Citizen Action Project focusing on standardized testing.

Ms. Waltine Eubanks is a member of the Esmont community. She spoke to the Board about Yancey Elementary. She asked that the Board keep the school open.

Ms. Rosa Hudson spoke to the Board about Yancey Elementary. She asked that the Board keep the school open.

Mr. Bruce Lune is a Scottsville resident and pastor of church in Esmont. He spoke to the Board about Yancey Elementary. He feels that Yancey Elementary is a grounding place for the Esmont community. He also spoke about the benefits of having the Little Learners Preschool in Yancey as well. He supports keeping Yancey Elementary open.

Ms. Joy Wearing is a member of the Esmont community. She supports keeping Yancey Elementary open. There is an amazing sense of family at the school. She also noted that Club Yancey is a critical piece of the Yancey Elementary community.

Mr. Julian Waters spoke about Yancey Elementary. The students do not lack motivation. The students care about their education. He noted that the projections for enrollment may be flawed, and he encouraged the Board to consider the possibility. He asked that the school remain open.

Mr. Andre Thomas spoke to the Board about Yancey Elementary. He asked that the Board look for reasons to keep the school open rather than looking for reasons to close the school. He encouraged the Board to keep Yancey Elementary open.

Mr. Edward Brooks is a member of the Esmont community. He noted that the colored people's association gave the land for the purpose of a school – Yancey Elementary School; it is noted in the deed. He asked that the Board keep the Yancey Elementary.

Ms. Cheryl Knight is a teacher at Yancey Elementary. She asked that the Board consider other options for Yancey Elementary rather than closing the school. She urged the Board to understand the impacts of all options on the community.

Mr. Lucian Jackson submitted to the Board a packet of signatures of individuals wanting to the keep Yancey Elementary open. He encouraged the Board to look for reasons to keep Yancey Elementary open. He said that moving the students from Yancey would increase transportation times. He asked that the Board think of the children when making a decision.

Ms. Kimberly McLaughlin is the director of Club Yancey. Her children attend Yancey Elementary. She asked that the Board keep Yancey Elementary open.

Mr. Frank Bollinger spoke to the Board about Yancey Elementary. He asked that the Board keep the school open. Many thriving individuals in the community were educated at Yancey Elementary.

Ms. Sharon Ayers is a member of the Esmont community. She asked that the Board keep Yancey Elementary open. She said the Board needs to consider what is best for the children.

Ms. Stacy Rush is a Yancey parent and employee at Little Learners preschool housed within Yancey Elementary. She feels that her child is not going to get the education that she deserves by closing Yancey Elementary. She asked that the Board keep the school open.

Ms. Bridgett Ingle is a Yancey parent. She asked that the Board keep the school open.

Ms. Sherry Brody was the chairman of the Yancey Committee from several years ago. She said that closing the school would be seen as a racist act. She asked that the Board consider other options.

Ms. Lashana Grey is a Yancey parent. She asked that the Board keep the school open.

Ms. Raquel White is a Yancey parent. Her son has succeeded at Yancey Elementary. She encouraged the Board to keep the school open.

Agenda Item No. 7.1. School Board/Superintendent Business.

Dr. Moran said that SOL testing has been taking place this week into next week.

Agenda Item No. 8.1. Special Education Advisory Committee Annual Report.

Mr. Kirst and Dr. Jennifer Schaeffer, chairman of the Special Education Advisory Committee, provided the Board points of consideration regarding the recommendations from the Special Education Advisory Committee. The recommendations are as follows:

Albemarle County has a thriving Special Education community, and the personnel and programs in our public schools have considerable strengths. While our committee celebrates the commitment and dedicated work of our Special Education department, we have identified several areas for improvement in efforts to best serve our students.

- 1. Expand Professional Development about Special Education:** We continue to recommend dedicated professional development time on Special Education topics to Special Education teachers, general education teachers, Specials teachers (PE, art, music, etc.), and after-school supervisors. With the

increasing move toward inclusion for Special Education students, there should be emphasis on educating the myriad teachers these students see each day on specific conditions, instructional methods, best practices, etc. Teaching Assistants currently have training requirements (including an extensive series of online training modules) which could serve as a guide for useful topics. This general professional development time should also include contact time with the county's Autism Specialists.

2. **Address the Special Education Achievement Gap:** The Special Education Performance Report of June 2016 indicates a concerning disparity between reading and math proficiency amongst Special Education students in our county and state targets – 37.66% vs. >54.0% and 41.02% vs. >57.0%, respectively. We advise that an individual or small committee be appointed to study the causes of these discrepancies and to make recommendations on potential remedies. Existing reading and math specialists, instructional coaches, and Special education/General education/Gifted education teachers should be utilized as resources. Our committee would like to be notified of the findings of this research.
3. **Extend Social Skills Development Curriculum to all Special Education Students:** We continue to advocate for the implementation of the Social Skills curriculum (Skills Streaming) broadly to all Special Education students. This curriculum is currently made available to students with Autism in the B.A.S.E. classrooms. However, as many Special Education students do not access this resource, we recommend working to incorporate it into the General Education environment – including all grade levels, Specials, and after-school programs. Many Special Education students struggle with typical social development, yet these skills are critical for future success academically, in relationships, and in the workplace. Additionally, a study of broad implementation of a social learning curriculum in a different school division yielded benefits such as decreased disciplinary referrals and improved academic achievement, which could serve as rationale for implementation.
4. **Expand the Autism B.A.S.E. and Behavioral B.A.S.E. Programs:** The B.A.S.E. program has been a success in the years since its inception. It provides a unique, integrated approach to serve the needs of students with Autism and/or behavioral/emotional challenges. In these dedicated classrooms, focus can be given to a child's individual needs – specialized instruction, accommodations, or crisis intervention. Initially, the Autism B.A.S.E. classrooms were created as an experiment in several elementary schools. This year, they have expanded to additional elementary schools, three middle schools, and two high schools. We support the goal of Autism B.A.S.E. and Behavioral B.A.S.E. programs serving all children with need within the timeframe of one calendar year.
5. **Improve Continuity of Advocacy/Services When Changing School Setting:** Our committee recommends that protocols be developed and implemented to allow easier continuation of services when “moving up” from elementary to middle school and middle to high school. Streamlining this process benefits the administrators and teachers but more importantly, maintains thoroughness of care and services for our students. Additionally, we advise that funding be allocated to hire a Transition Specialist to provide guidance to our Special Education students as they move from high school to college, trade school, or the workplace.
6. **Increase Awareness of Existing Special Education Resources for Parents and Families:** The Special Education Advisory Committee sees a need for improved outreach to the general public, our current Special Education families, and those families new to the Special Education process. Navigating the Special Education world is, at best, complicated, and at worst, frightening and potentially adversarial. We feel that these negative experiences are best addressed by readily providing families with the information and tools that they need to feel empowered and to act as equal team members in providing the best care for their children. These resources are already available through the Parent Resource Center, and we continue to support this organization. The improvement to be made is in increasing awareness of the resources and services provided here amongst Special Education teachers, general education teachers, and administrators. We also intend to work with the Parent Resource Center to target non-academic locations where improved visibility would be beneficial (pediatricians' offices, child psychologists, UVA's Sheila Johnson Center, etc.).

Dr. Acuff asked about the differential in discipline.

Agenda Item No. 8.2. Yancey Update. (Discussion occurred after the break.)

Mr. Tistadt provided for the Board points of consideration regarding Yancey Elementary School. During the course of the 2016-2017 school year, staff has been providing the School Board with a series of reports and updates on Yancey Elementary School. Specifics of these reports can be found as part of the School Board agendas on the following board meeting dates:

- August 11, 2016
- January 12, 2017
- March 9, 2017
- April 27, 2017

The first three updates addressed student achievement and climate survey information. The April 27 update addressed the status of two major grants that are significant to Yancey Elementary School. For both grants, a 21st Century Grant and a Title I School Improvement Grant, staff cautioned the School Board that it was likely that the funding would not be available for the 2017-2018 school year.

At the April 27 meeting, staff also informed the School Board that it now appears that Yancey might not reach the original student enrollment projection for the 2017-2018 school year. The 2016-2017 enrollment is 118 and the projection for next year is 108 as the graduating 5th grade class is larger than the projected kindergarten class. Updated estimates for the kindergarten class suggest that it may be less than projected such that Yancey may have an enrollment next year of less than 105 students.

The School Board discussed all of the above information. The School Board asked staff to bring back to the next board meeting on May 11 information related to the potential of closing Yancey and absorbing its students into Scottsville and Red Hill Elementary Schools. The purpose of this report is to provide the School Board with relevant information so that the board has the information that it needs to make decisions on next steps.

This report consists of the following sections:

1. Enrollment
2. Community Use
3. Capital and Operating Budgets
4. Student Transportation
5. Demographics
6. Yancey Workgroup Report (2014)
7. Scottsville and Red Hill Capacities
8. Yancey Climate Survey
9. Yancey Staff
10. Legal Authority
11. Options Available to the School Board

Mrs. Moynihan asked if there was some way to turn Yancey into a preschool center for County programs in the area.

Mr. Oberg asked if it was feasible to make the school a public charter school. What would it look like and how would it work?

Mr. Paige feels that the Board should be looking at alternatives for use of the school.

Mr. Alcaro asked if the accreditation standards were the same for charter schools. If the school became a charter school, would the accreditation issue remain the same?

Mr. Buyaki noted that the suggestion for closing the school is not for budgetary reasons. He also asked staff for more information on the language in the deed as noted by several during public comment.

Dr. Acuff said that the Board's obligation is to all students within the County. She also noted that the enrollment projections for the school do not show any great increase.

Mr. Paige said that the enrollment decline in the 1970's when students from Yancey were moved to Scottsville. In addition, the development in the County is not focused on the southern part of the County. This part of the County is being forgotten.

Mr. Alcaro said that in 2008/2009 the enrollment at the school was more than 150. Has there been any redistricting since that time? He noted that there have been accreditation issues over the last five years. Would it hurt the kids to keep them somewhere with fewer resources available?

Mr. Buyaki said that the core of the issue is academics and accreditation. The Board has the ability to put more money at the school.

Mr. Paige said that for four months the program partnering UVA with Yancey did not happen. He does not feel that the school has had enough time to work on academic issues.

Dr. Acuff said that more money is spent at Yancey than other schools with similar demographics but more students.

Mrs. Moynihan said that the Board has been spending more money at Yancey for many years. If more money were put towards Yancey Elementary, where would the money be spent? Moreover, where would the money come from in the budget? She hears that we cannot get professional development and cannot get the same quality of education for students in the school because it is too small. She feels that the students at Yancey would be better served at Red Hill and Scottsville Elementary Schools.

Mr. Buyaki agreed that professional development and small class sizes are issues.

Dr. Acuff said that the school has an important history. She feels that the facility could be used for another purpose to serve the needs of the community. She feels that the current enrollment in the school is too small, and she is looking at what is in the best educational interests of the students there.

Mr. Oberg feels that there are some educational issues at the school, and it would be a disservice to not acknowledge it. He hears that students are getting something from the school that staff is not seeing. This issue is not budgetary.

Dr. Acuff said that the letters from current parents at the school are asking for the school to be closed. Not all are asking for closure, but many are asking for closure or transfer to another school.

Mr. Koleszar said that all of our elementary schools have great diversity. He feels that the Board needs to look at what is best academically and socially for students. He asked if a school could become too small. He asked staff if there was research on small schools that could be shared with the Board. He also asked if there are less students in the Esmont area or are there the same number of students who are being educated in another location. Finally, the report shows that transportation times would go down for Yancey students. He asked that transportation double check the numbers.

Mr. Oberg said that most of the members on the present Board were not included in previous discussions on redistricting students from Yancey.

Mrs. Moynihan said that parity is an issue. She feels that the students will have more opportunity at either Scottsville or Red Hill Elementary.

Mr. Alcaro asked about the timeline for transfer of the school to the State because of non-accreditation.

Mr. Buyaki asked when the Board would see the SOL scores from the current year for the school.

Mrs. Moynihan asked Dr. Moran if consolidating grades at the school was feasible.

Mr. Oberg said that if the school was to be kept open another year, then it is playing with student lives. He also feels that rushing a decision is not beneficial.

Mr. Buyaki said that he is concerned about the timing of the issue coming to the Board. He feels that the Board should have started this discussion in January. He would like to see average cost of student across the division and per school.

Mr. Paige said that he is not in favor of closing the school. He would like research on consolidating grades and the possibility of a charter school.

Mr. Koleszar said that a process needs to be developed for discussion of closing the school. He does not feel that the school could be closed at the end of the current year.

Dr. Acuff noted that the Board has been receiving updates on the school over the last two years, including the challenges of the school and the issues around accreditation. The Board has an obligation to all the students of the County. The Board has known for years that Yancey had academic trouble. With the loss of the grant funding and state money, the professional development support will be lost and the afterschool funding will be lost. She is in favor of closing the school but also to look at possible ways to use the facility for other services in the southern part of the County.

Mr. Alcaro said that closing Yancey does not mean that the school facility is closed. There are other uses that would be beneficial to the southern part of the County. He feels that the Board can still gather information while going through the legal process of potential consolidating.

Mrs. Moynihan said that she has dealt with this issue for the last sixteen years. There is a lot of emotion in the community. She feels that previous Boards and this Board have done everything to keep the school open. It has now come to a head. The issue of accreditation is the crux of the issue. Small schools are hurt by accreditation. The only thing that is going to make it better is a large influx of students, which is not going to happen. We have known about the issues at the school for many years. She is favor of closing the school at the end of the current school year.

Mr. Alcaro offered a **motion** that pursuant to Va. Code §22.1-79.8 to hold a public hearing to receive public comment regarding the consolidation of schools and options available regarding the operation of Benjamin F. Yancey Elementary School, namely whether to keep the school open, close it effective June 2017, or close it effective June 2018. Said hearing shall be held on May 25, 2017 during the school board meeting beginning at 6:30 p.m. Mrs. Moynihan **seconded** the motion. Dr. Acuff asked for discussion. Mr. Koleszar said that he would vote no because of his concern about process. Mr. Buyaki said that he would vote no for the motion because of his concern for process. Dr. Acuff said that the motion is for a public hearing. The Board could still receive additional information. Mrs. Moynihan said that this is process. Mr. Alcaro said that this is keeping all the options open. Mr. Oberg asked Dr. Moran if the Board votes to have a hearing, does it prohibit her from hiring a principal. Dr. Moran said that the principal position is being currently advertised. Mr. Oberg said that he will vote in favor of the motion, but it does not mean he will vote to close the school. **Roll was called, and the motion passed by the following recorded vote:**

AYES: Mrs. Moynihan, Mr. Alcaro, Dr. Acuff, and Mr. Oberg.

NAYS: Mr. Buyaki, Mr. Paige, and Mr. Koleszar.

Motion carried by a 4:3 vote.

Agenda Item No. 8.3. Break. (Break taken prior to Agenda Item No. 8.2)

There was a break from 8:23 p.m. until 8:37 p.m.

Agenda Item No. 8.4. Building Capacity Update.

Mr. Tistadt and Ms. Schmitt provided for the Board points of consideration related to building capacity. Building capacity calculations are a critical metric in facility planning to ensure schools have space adequate to deliver all aspects of their instructional program.

In 2013, the Board adopted a policy revision that modified the methodology to calculate capacity. The revision made three distinct changes: it created a variable classroom multiplier, it increased the number of specialty classrooms that are excluded from capacity calculations and it counted rooms in a more rigorous manner. The result was a calculation for each school that is more responsive and applicable to a school's specific population & program.

This proposed revision expands on those changes. While the current method does an adequate job of articulating the quantity of classrooms spaces, it does not articulate the quantity of other spaces in the building. In addition to classrooms, the instructional program requires smaller, auxiliary spaces for pull-out instruction and administrative functions. Examples include a school psychologist, ESOL instruction, or Family Support Workers who support the Bright Stars program. Each school has unique needs for these types of spaces based on both the size and demographics of their population. The era of the construction of each school is impactful as newer buildings were built with these types of spaces while older and smaller building do not. The goals of this update were as follows:

- ♣ Continued refinement of our methodology to calculate building capacity to ensure we are planning for and providing optimum learning environments
- ♣ Quantify and articulate adequate auxiliary/small spaces outside of classrooms
- ♣ Ensure our planning tool is informed by instruction

Mr. Koleszar said that if we decide to close Yancey, we might wish to delay the Scottsville security addition.

Mr. Koleszar asked if in schools where there is not enough small spaces, could larger classrooms be divided to create the smaller spaces.

Policy revisions reflecting changes to building capacity would be presented to the Board at its next meeting.

Agenda Item No. 8.5. FY 2017-18 Budget Update.

Mr. Zimmermann provided for the Board points of consideration related to the proposed FY 2017-2018 budget. The Board will vote on a budget on May 16, 2017.

Agenda Item No. 9.1. Other Business by Board Members/Superintendent.

Mr. Buyaki asked that the podcast of tonight's meeting be uploaded to the website.

Agenda Item No. 10.1. Closed Meeting. None.

Agenda Item No. 11.1. Certify Closed Meeting. None.

Agenda Item No. 12.1. Adjournment.

At 10:34 p.m., hearing no objections, Dr. Acuff adjourned the meeting of the Albemarle County School Board.

Call Back to Order.

Dr. Acuff called the Board back to order at 10:36 p.m.

Other Business

Mr. Koleszar offered a **motion** to hire the employees as presented by staff for the 2017/2018 school year. Mr. Alcaro **seconded** the motion, **and the motion passed.**

Adjournment

At 10:37 p.m., hearing no objections, Dr. Acuff adjourned the meeting of the Albemarle County School Board.

Chairman

Clerk