

BRISTOL VIRGINIA SCHOOL BOARD
REGULAR SESSION
September 11, 2023

The Bristol Virginia School Board met in Regular Session on Monday, September 11, 2023, in the Bristol Virginia Public Schools Administration Office, 280 Lee Street, Bristol, Virginia. A quorum was present with the following Board members in attendance:

Mr. Randy Alvis, Chair
Mr. Steve Fletcher
Mrs. Vanessa Guffey

Mrs. Breanne Forbes Hubbard, Vice Chair
Mr. Frank Goodpasture

Also present were:

Dr. David Scott, Superintendent
Mrs. Stephanie Austin, Deputy Clerk

Mr. Gary Ritchie, Assistant Superintendent

Absent:

Mrs. Tammy Jones, Clerk

Mr. Randy Alvis, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. He welcomed all in attendance and opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Alvis asked for a motion to approve the Agenda. Mrs. Vanessa Guffey so moved. Mrs. Breanne Forbes Hubbard seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Alvis addressed Item 2 (A) Superintendents Report. Dr. David Scott, Superintendent, noted the last school board meeting was right before the start of the school year, and we have had a number of things to be excited about and report in that time. Dr. Scott highlighted the new school construction continues at the site of the new intermediate school. He added, himself, Mr. Ritchie, and Dr. de Nobriga had an opportunity to tour the site with the teams from J.A. Street and Skanska a couple of weeks ago. He noted we are starting to see colors on the walls and windows being installed. The gymnasium and cafeteria areas are getting closer to completion each day. The office area is still mostly just roughed in, but we were able to see how the various corridors will divide up the individual office spaces. The academic wings are beginning to get paint and definition. The carpentry work for those will wait until the painting is substantially completed. There has been a lot of discussion about the playground and drainage challenges in the courtyard between the two main academic wings. We have pushed the playground out to the end of those wings without giving up any square footage for the playground or compromising the drainage system. We are very proud that the playground surface will allow for handicap and wheelchair access, and the fence that encloses it during the day for our students will also be opened for public access in the evenings.

He added families at Van Pelt Elementary have begun to use the new access road that enters the school campus from the Suncrest Drive side of the property. Use of this feature will ease the

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traffic pattern in the morning. Our hope is that this access road will be the primary approach for car and bus traffic next year and reduce concerns for the surrounding neighborhood streets.

Dr. Scott noted on Friday night; our football stadium had no restrictions on seating. He added he knows this has been a concern for Bearcat fans. Because both end sections on the home side needed attention, and because they could not be repaired simultaneously, we opened the season with one section unavailable for usage. We will be able to have access to all sections for the remainder of the season. After the season, the largest phase of the repair project will take place, and that should be all that is needed for the next ten years.

Dr. Scott noted another concern with fall athletics getting underway has been our inability to secure an athletic trainer. There is good news on this front, but he wanted to provide a sentence or two about the journey. With the retirement of Randy Hodge, the fiscally responsible plan to secure athletic trainer services was to follow the Request for Proposals (or RFP) process in hopes of paying basically what we have paid in the past. Unfortunately, that procurement process takes time, and we did not receive any proposals. So, we have been back to the drawing board, and we are in the process of advertising a new full-time position, which we believe will attract some qualified candidates. This position is not in the budget, but we believe that with some revisions and some additional funds coming in from the state, we will be able to manage.

He added at our August meeting; we had a discussion about the elevator at Virginia Middle School. He noted he knew that not every person who attends or views these meetings has had the opportunity to visit the middle school, but he wanted to report back, that we have secured the necessary permits to be in compliance with all safe usage codes while we receive service on this elevator. It is functional and safe, and United Elevator Services will be upgrading the hardware as materials are received over the next several weeks.

He highlighted Mrs. Jennifer Hurt has secured funding for our before and after school tutoring programs at Highland View Elementary and Virginia Middle School through a 21st-Century Grant. This is a three-year grant for almost \$250K at each school. Our intention is to apply future years of the grant award to the new intermediate school once it opens and apply for an additional grant for what will become the primary school. And the BAM grant has been awarded for approximately \$4,800. This grant will put brand new books in our school libraries and serve readers for years to come.

Dr. Scott added just a couple of notes from the State level – Dr. Lisa Coons, the State Superintendent, is launching three initiatives this fall. One is #ElevateEducatorsVA, which intends to highlight the truly outstanding work of all categories of school employees, from teachers and aides to directors and principals and bus drivers, etc. Dr. Coons is also launching #AttendanceMattersVA to bring awareness to the chronic absenteeism rates that are affecting student achievement all across the state. Her initiative will parallel our efforts almost perfectly in

this area. And the third initiative is #EverybodyReadsVA, which will be used to support the intensive effort to make sure that all students are reading on grade-level by the end of third grade. Our teachers will have a great deal of professional development on the implementation of the Virginia Literacy Act and meeting the expectations of that legislation. Of course, these initiatives are all implicated in the Governor's ALL In VA initiative, which was announced publicly last week amid a very sobering look at student achievement data and student attendance data during the time period immediately prior to the onset of the pandemic through last spring.

Regarding the budget, Dr. Scott added the keen observer may have also noticed last week that the State has finally agreed upon a budget. While we continue to see those details come into focus, we have reason for optimism. Bristol City schools will definitely receive an increase in funding in January, which will give us some flexibility in our budget that quite simply wasn't going to be there otherwise. We should be able to report on specifics between now and our next board meeting as the Department of Education shares their distribution calculations with the school divisions across the state.

Mr. Alvis thanked Dr. Scott for his report.

Mr. Alvis addressed Item 2 (B) School Board Representative Report. Diya Turakhia and Katie Rankin presented a PowerPoint introducing themselves. They reported students were excited to be back in school and teachers have reported a smooth start. Teachers feel that so far, the students have been engaged and focused on the work they have been assigned. In sports, the Virginia High Varsity Football team celebrated a win against John S. Battle on Friday, September 1st and the volleyball teams have also had a good start to their season. Also, the student section has been spirited and they love to see our students support their fellow Bearcats!

Mr. Alvis thanked Diya and Katie for their report and welcomed them back.

Mr. Alvis addressed Item 2 (C) Discussion of Crisis Plans. Dr. Scott noted revised Crisis Plans for each school are attached for the Boards review.

Mr. Alvis addressed Item 2 (D) Discussion of Cell Phone Policy. Dr. Scott noted anytime there are concerns from our teachers or our parents, he feels we have a responsibility to look at the problem. He added there are concerns about having to keep students on task and some of the distraction that comes with cell phones. We are dealing with a generation of students that spend a lot of time on their cell phones, so it's a matter of finding a balance. After a lengthy discussion, Dr. Scott recommended our Student Board Representatives to survey our student body and a survey to be done with our parents. After this information is received, this discussion will be brought back in front of the Board.

Mr. Alvis addressed Item 3 (A) Public Comment. No one addressed the Board.

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Mr. Alvis addressed Item 4 (A) Approval of Consent Agenda. Mr. Frank Goodpasture moved approval. Mrs. Forbes Hubbard seconded the motion and the motion carried unanimously.

The Consent Agenda consisted of the following:

- A. Approval of Payment of Bills
- B. Approval of Minutes – Regular Session – August 7, 2023

Mr. Alvis addressed Item 5 (A) Approval of 2023-2024 School Board Goals. Mrs. Forbes Hubbard moved approval. Mr. Steve Fletcher seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Alvis addressed Item 5 (B) Approval of Contract Purchase Greater than \$50,000.00 – PowerSchool Holdings, Inc. - \$52,935.53. Mrs. Forbes Hubbard moved approval. Mrs. Guffey seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Alvis addressed Item 5(C) Approval of Contract Purchase Greater than \$50,000.00 – Age of Learning, Inc. - \$91,480.00. Mrs. Forbes Hubbard moved approval. Mrs. Guffey seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Alvis addressed Item 5 (D) Approval of 2023-2024 School Board Budget Revision #1. Mr. Fletcher moved approval. Mr. Frank Goodpasture seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Alvis addressed Item 5 (E) Approval of Dedication Plaque of Virginia Intermediate School. Mr. Fletcher moved approval. Mrs. Guffey seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Alvis addressed Item 5 (F) Approval of Granting Superintendent Permission to Hire New Employees Between September 12, 2023 and October 1, 2023, in Consultation with the School Board. Mrs. Guffey moved approval. Mr. Goodpasture seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

Pursuant to Section 2.2-3711(A)(1) of the Code of Virginia, Mrs. Forbes Hubbard moved that the Board convene a Closed Meeting for the purpose of discussing the following specific matters as authorized by Section 2.2-3711(A)(1) the Code of Virginia, Specifically,

- A. Discussion of Certain Personnel and Recommendation for Employment.

Mr. Goodpasture seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

The Board went into Closed Session at 7:00 p.m.

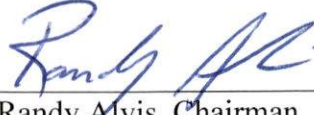
Back in Public Session at 7:50 p.m., Mrs. Forbes Hubbard moved Certification of Closed Meeting as such: the Bristol Virginia School Board certifies that, to the best of each member's knowledge, only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia law were discussed in the closed meeting and only such public matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were considered. Mr. Goodpasture seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

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Mrs. Forbes Hubbard moved Approval of Attachment (A) as recommended. Mrs. Guffey seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Alvis adjourned the meeting at approximately 7:52 p.m.

Stephanie R. Austin, Deputy Clerk



Randy Alvis, Chairman