

**REGULAR MEETING
NORTHAMPTON COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION
Monday, July 11, 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 July 11, 2011 in the Board Room of the Northampton County Schools administrative building. Vice Chair Marjorie Edwards called the meeting to order at 4:50 p.m.

Closed Session

On a MOTION by Ms. Smith-Ingram, SECONDED by Mr. Majette and APPROVED, the Board convened in closed session at approximately 4:55 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; pursuant to General Statute: 143-318.11 (a)(3) to consult with the Board's attorney in order to reserve the attorney-client privilege; pursuant to General Statute: 143-318.11(a)(5) to instruct the Board's agents concerning negotiations involving employment contracts; 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. Johnson, SECONDED by Ms. M. Edwards, the Board adjourned the first closed session. The motion passed by a vote of 7-0. The closed session ended at approximately 6:30 p.m.

Approval of Board Agenda

On a MOTION by Ms. Smith-Ingram, SECONDED by Mr. Johnson, the Board unanimously APPROVED to amend the Board Agenda to add an open session following the second closed session, as recommended by the Superintendent. The motion passed by a vote of 7-0.

Election of Chair and Vice Chair

Attorney Rod Malone announced to the Board that the floor is now open to entertain a motion for a nominee for the position of Chair of the Northampton County Board of Education.

Mr. Donald Johnson nominated Mr. Bill Little.

Mr. Little: "I will have to decline the nomination due to my hearing is continuing to fail, but I thank you for the nomination."

Mr. Lafayette Majette nominated Mr. Donald Johnson, Seconded by Ms. Rhonda Taylor.

Ms. Erica Smith-Ingram nominated Ms. Marjorie Edwards, Seconded by Mr. Kelvin Edwards.

On a MOTION by Ms. Smith-Ingram, SECONDED by Ms. Marjorie Edwards, the Board closed the nominations on the said names of Mr. Donald Johnson and Ms. Marjorie Edwards. The motion passed by a vote of 7-0.

Attorney Malone announced that the Board would vote in the order of which the names were nominated. He asked for a show of hands to vote for Mr. Donald Johnson. There were 4 votes for Mr. Johnson. He asked for a show of hands to vote for Ms. Marjorie Edwards. There were 3 votes for Ms. Marjorie Edwards. Attorney Malone announced that Mr. Donald Johnson would become Chair of the Northampton County Board of Education for the 2011-2012 school year.

As the new Chair, Mr. Johnson announced that the floor is now open for nominations for the position of Vice Chair of the Northampton County Board of Education.

Mr. Lafayette Majette nominated Ms. Rhonda Taylor.

Ms. Erica Smith-Ingram nominated Ms. Marjorie Edwards, SECONDED by Mr. Kelvin Edwards.

On a MOTION by Ms. Smith-Ingram, SECONDED by Ms. Marjorie Edwards, the Board closed the nominations on the said names of Ms. Rhonda Taylor and Ms. Marjorie Edwards. The motion passed by a vote of 7-0.

Chair Johnson asked for a show of hands to vote for Ms. Rhonda Taylor. There was a 1-5 vote for Ms. Taylor. Chair Johnson asked for a show of hands to vote for Ms. Marjorie Edwards. The vote was 4-2 for Ms. Marjorie Edwards. Chair Johnson announced that Ms. Marjorie Edwards would become Vice Chair of the Northampton County Board of Education for the 2011-2012 school year.

Chair Donald Johnson addressed the Board and audience: "Before we get started on the agenda, I would like to make one statement. I consider this a privilege to be sitting in the chair right now. I consider it an honor to be representing the children of our county. I might not be the sharpest knife in the drawer, but I do try to do my best. I put a lot of prayer behind my decisions and will continue to do so. I might not be able to follow Robert's Rules of Order, but I have two very competent individuals here to keep me straight, Mr. Edwards and Ms. Ingram. I don't mind any assistance from anyone. Thank you again." Vice Chair Marjorie Edwards addressed the Board and audience: "I would like to thank the Board for allowing me to serve as Vice Chair again. I will continue to do my best and do what is right by everyone."

Ms. Erica Smith-Ingram stated, "We would like to thank Mr. Little for the leadership he has given us over the past year."

Public Comments

The following persons addressed the Board during Public Comment:

Mr. Mark A. Barfield – "Good afternoon Board Chair, Board Members and Dr. Bracy. I stand as NCAE President, an educator, a community leader and a proud parent of a student in Northampton County Schools. I am greatly concerned about some of the things that are taking place in our district. Today is July 11th and many of us do not know where we will be employed next year and do not know if they will be riffed. We understand that riffing is necessary, but we think that at this time we should know if we are going to be riffed or not. I know where I will be next year, but I am thinking about those people who do not know. I think we need to be concerned about them and not let them know at this late of a date if they are going to be riffed.

Secondly, I ask you what about the children? Board Members, we have to change our culture and provide a viable curriculum for our district. Our parents and students are complacent where they are. Have we even raised the expectations for every child from kindergarten to 12th grade? Research tells us that students send strong distress signals before they fail or drop out. The question is, are we aware of those signs? I received a call on the weekend from a friend who works at Halifax Community College. He asked me this question. How can a student graduate in the top ten of her class and be placed in the lowest level remediation course for English? That is what we are sending out into the community that represents our school district in this area. In fact, why do we do it, because we don't want to make parents upset. We need to challenge our students. If a child receives an A or B, the child should be able to perform regardless when the child enters the world. We need to challenge our students to a higher level of education to compete in a global society. Our students are set up for failure for we have to cater to unemployed parents and students. We must educate to liberate, not to imprison. We must raise the bar of excellence for all students.

Look at DPI's preliminary reports for our high schools. We need challenging courses for the accelerating students. Look at the SAT and ACT scores. We offer many remediation and bridge courses, but what about the advanced students who are consistently being groomed for charter and

private schools. The cry and call is for qualified and committed teachers to challenge our students, because the more critical is upon us. Our students do not need worksheets, free time and videos. They need to be prepared to compete in a global society. They need to be prepared for the workforce or higher education. Talk about good news, what is the expectation that we have for our students? As I share with my students, the world is larger than Northampton County. Will they be able to compete when they go to NC State, other institutions or go into the workforce?

The administrative staff and teachers at NCHS-East are to be commended for the outstanding progress over the past four years. Look at the test data, East has grown from 44% to nearly 80% this year and has made AYP. How was it done? Not based upon my opinion, but based upon external reviews, the principal's strong instructional leadership, high expectations and vision for every student and staff member. The principal and faculty have been successful in building a climate and culture based on trust and respect. The staff provides a good level of care for the students and recognizes the importance of students' social and emotional needs. Therefore, if Principal Chamblee and staff can raise the bar, why can't we all do it for all students in Northampton County?

Board Members, we need to challenge our educators, our parents, our students and our community to move to the 21st Century for education. We are dealing with the lives of our next generation. What legacy are we leaving behind? Remember, a culture of high expectations and a strong and viable curriculum will make sure that Northampton County Schools continue to move up the ladder of success. Mediocre, you will stay where you are, but if you are a great leader you will want to leave a legacy behind. Let us be a thriving, succeeding county. Let us work together and let us promote unity. There are great things taking place in Northampton County. We can learn from one another, but you must promote the unity among us. Thank you for your time."

Chair Johnson: Thank you for your time Mr. Barfield.

Mr. Charles Tyner – "Congratulations to Mr. Johnson on being selected Chairman and Ms. Edwards for being selected Vice Chairman! I come tonight as I have come to every Board Meeting, because education is first on my list. I want you to understand that there are those in this county like me who will be running the race to be a champion for the children and the people of this county. I came to you at the last meeting to ask you to please let people know if they will be working next year. To let them know if they are going to be working for 10 months, 11 months or 12 months. As of this time, there is only one person who has received a message declaring that they would not be working. It is just not fair to the people of this county. I will stand up for them as long as I live. It is not about me running for the Board of Education; it is about me looking out for the people of Northampton County. These people in Northampton County have been good to me, as I was born and raised here and they need someone to be their voice.

The next thing I want you to know is test scores. Yes, NCHS-East and Ms. Chamblee are to be commended and Northampton-East is one of the best high schools in the State of North Carolina! Look at the test scores when they come out, as the test scores are going to show. But, do you know what I am embarrassed about? I am embarrassed about when Judge Manning and everyone come down to commend Northampton County High School-East. When they walk in that building and see the kind of building that we have Northampton County High School-East in and that we are educating children in. They will say, how in the world did you do it again with the facilities that you have?

Yes, we can say NCHS-West has come a long ways. How great we are! I just don't understand what we are doing in the elementary schools. Board of Education, please look at some type of program to bring our children in the elementary schools to where they need to be. It is just not right for 45% of our children in any school not doing or not accomplishing what the state requires. I beg you to please look at our elementary schools and lets make a move. We made that move the last year I was on the Board with the high schools and they increased. In the

elementary schools, we have not seen that. What are we going to do? We cannot just continue to have 50 to 60% of our students educated.

The next issue that I need to bring to the Board is about you and the County Commissioners. As you know it has been all in the newspapers. All of you knew that there were going to be cuts. I have to say it and it is called sitting down and communicating somewhere along the lines. This is a small county and all of us know each other. We have not sat down with the County Commissioners. I was on the committee that sat down with the Commissioners and I did it for eight years. We said to the Commissioners, this is where we are, please help us and we compromised. No one has done that and it needs to be done. We are spending money for attorneys. They are the ones who will get the money out of this and will get their money upfront. Those same dollars could have come to Northampton County Schools, if someone would sit at the table and say look let's work it out. I will be back for Public Comments at the end of the agenda."

Chair Johnson: Thank you Mr. Tyner.

Consent Agenda

On a MOTION by Mr. Little, SECONDED by Ms. Smith-Ingram, 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 – Closed Session – May 26, 2011, June 6, 2011 and June 20, 2011

Regular Meeting – April 19, 2011 and May 2, 2011

Chair Johnson noted that a correction was needed in the minutes for the Special Meeting of April 19, 2011 in that he was recorded absent, but he was in attendance according to his comments during the meeting.

Request for Fund Raisers:

Willis Hare Elementary School-Wide – Giftware/Candy Sale – August 30, 2011 – September 19, 2011

Willis Hare Elementary School-Wide – Picture Sales – October 21, 2011

Willis Hare Elementary School-Wide – Picture Sales – February 3, 2012

Willis Hare Elementary School-Wide – Picture Sales – April 3, 2012

Grants:

Capacity Building and Improvement (Sliver) Grant

Exceptional Children – IDEA – Part B (611) Grant

Exceptional Children – IDEA – Part B (619) Preschool Grant

Contracted Services:

Northampton County Schools and Educational Sights, Inc. – Psychological Assessment Services –

Effective: July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012

Business Before the Board for Information

Directors' Updates - Mr. Phil Matthews shared the Directors' Updates with the Board for the month of June 2011.

Business Before the Board for Approval

Ms. Smith-Ingram: If my memory serves me correctly, it was a double-digit amount the last time we met. Has it been cut in half?

Ms. Carolyn Williams: Yes, we were recommending a \$.10 increase, but it has been reduced to a \$.05 increase.

On a MOTION by Ms. M. Edwards, SECONDED by Mr. Little, the Board unanimously APPROVED to increase the price of the paid student lunch from \$1.60 to \$1.65 for compliance with ruling and to ensure the gradual implementation of the price increase, as recommended by the Superintendent. The motion

passed by a vote of 7-0. The proposed ruling of the Equity in Pricing Healthy Hungry-Free Kids Act of 2010 became effective July 1, 2011.

On a MOTION by Mr. Little, SECONDED by Ms. M. Edwards, the Board unanimously APPROVED the Application for 2011-2012 Title II, Part A – Improving Teacher Quality for first reading, as recommended by the Superintendent. The motion passed by a vote of 7-0.

Public Comments

The following person addressed the Board during the second Public Comment:

Mr. Charles Tyner – “I just have a few questions for the Board. Has the Board of Education adopted its budget for this coming year?”

Chair Johnson: Yes, we have.

Mr. Charles Tyner: “Can I request a copy of the budget?”

Chair Johnson: Yes, it is public knowledge.

Mr. Charles Tyner: “When I was on the Board, at the end of each meeting the personnel was approved or disapproved and a list was generated. I would like to request that you do the list again since it is public information. We would like to know who is employed in our schools and those who are not. The next item that I want to bring to the Board’s attention is regarding the State Board of Education meetings. I have been keeping up and attending the State Board meetings and all of the cuts that we knew are about to happen. So many of those cuts have been in the Central Office, because the school system wanted to keep all of the people they possibly could in the classroom where the children are. I don’t know what this Board has done, but I am asking the Board to let us not cut our children out. Our Central Office is not that large, but wherever you need to cut, lets consider persons in the Central Office and keep as many teachers and administrators with our students as you possibly can. I look forward to getting those two lists from you and discussing the budget with you about where you are making those cuts and in my opinion making sure the cuts are where you would do the least damage.”

Chair Johnson: Thank you Mr. Tyner.

Superintendent’s Information

Although we have identified multiple certified positions that have been eliminated earlier this year, we wish to inform everyone that due to the certified resignations and retirements and those who volunteered to leave the system, we will have only one certified, rif termination.

Board Information

- Joint Meeting with Commissioners – July 14, 2011 – Commissioners’ Room – 2:00 p.m.
- Next Regular Board Meeting – August 1, 2011 – Board Room – 5:30 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 reconvened in closed session at approximately 7:05 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.

At approximately 8:30 p.m., Chair Donald Johnson came out of closed session and announced to the audience that nothing discussed in closed session will be brought to the public’s attention tonight. We will not adjourn tonight, but we will be recessing until Wednesday, July 13, 2011 at 10:00 a.m., because

there are still some other items that we need to discuss. We did not want to keep you waiting around tonight until we come out of closed session. There is no action being taken and I appreciate your willingness to stay around to hear the decisions of the Board. You will not hear it tonight, but you will hear it later. The Board is working very diligently and we appreciate all of the comments that have been made here tonight.

Open Session

On a MOTION by Ms. M. Edwards, SECONDED by Mr. Little, the Board adjourned the second closed session. The motion passed by a vote of 7-0. The second closed session ended at approximately 9:35 p.m.

Adjournment

After the Board adjourned its second closed session on July 11, 2011, the Board voted to recess the Special Meeting until Wednesday, July 13, 2011 at 10:00 a.m. The motion was made by Mr. Little and seconded by Mr. K. Edwards. The motion passed unanimously.

Approved: November 7, 2011

Dr. Eric C. Bracy, Superintendent