

**Lynchburg City School Board  
Regular Meeting  
September 1, 2015**

**BOARD  
MEMBERS  
PRESENT:**

Mary Ann Hoss, Chairman  
J. Marie Waller, Vice Chairman  
Sharon Y. Carter  
James E. Coleman  
Regina T. Dolan-Sewell  
Michael J. Nilles  
Derek L. Polley  
Jennifer R. Poore  
Katie K. Snyder  
Diamond L. Rosser, Student Representative, Heritage High School  
Stephen M. Farmer, Student Representative, E. C. Glass High School

**BOARD  
MEMBERS  
ABSENT:**

None

**ADMINISTRATION  
PRESENT:**

Scott S. Brabrand, Superintendent  
Ben W. Copeland, Assistant Superintendent for Operations and Administration  
John C. McClain, Assistant Superintendent for Student Learning and Success  
Anthony E. Beckles, Sr., Chief Financial Officer  
David A. Childress, Director for Information Technology  
Steven L. Gatzke, Director for Facilities  
Marie F. Gee, Director for Personnel  
Michael K. Rudder, Director of School Improvement and Grants  
Wyllys D. VanDerwerker, Director for Exceptional Learners  
Wendie L. Sullivan, Clerk/Recording Secretary

**MEDIA  
PRESENT:**

Katrina Dix, *The News & Advance*

**Agenda  
Items:**

- A-1. Public Comments
- B. Consent Agenda
- C. Student Representative Comments
- D-1. Crisis Plan: 2015-16
- D-2. School Board Retreat
- D-3. School Board Self-Evaluation Committee
- D-4. Credit Recovery Academy Update
- E-1. Lead Turnaround Partner: Dearington Elementary School for Innovation
- F. Superintendent's Comments
- G. Board Comments
- H. Informational Items
- I. Adjournment

The Lynchburg City School Board met for its regular meeting at 5:30 p.m. in the Board Room at the School Administration Building. Ms. Hoss opened the meeting and asked those in attendance to rise and recite *The Pledge of Allegiance*.

Upon MOTION by Dr. Coleman, SECONDED by Mrs. Snyder, the school board added an addendum to item B-2. Personnel Report.

Yes Votes: Ms. Hoss, Ms. Waller, Ms. Carter, Dr. Coleman, Dr. Dolan-Sewell, Dr. Nilles, Mr. Polley, Ms. Poore, Ms. Snyder

No Votes: None

Abstentions: None

**A-1. Public Comments**

In accordance with Policy BDDH Public Participation at School Board Meetings, the school board welcomes requests and comments as established in the guidelines within that policy. Individuals who wish to speak before the school board shall have an opportunity to do so at this time.

There were no individuals who wished to speak before the school board.

**B. Consent Agenda**

Upon MOTION by Mrs. Snyder, SECONDED by Ms. Poore, the school board approved the school board meeting minutes of August 18, 2015 (Regular Meeting); the personnel report and addendum for the period August 18 – September 1, 2015, and the requests for religious exemption

Yes Votes: Ms. Hoss, Ms. Waller, Ms. Carter, Dr. Coleman, Dr. Dolan-Sewell, Dr. Nilles, Mr. Polley, Ms. Poore, Ms. Snyder

No Votes: None

Abstentions: None

(SEE SCHOOL BOARD DOCUMENT FILE, MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 1, 2015, EXHIBIT "A," FOR A COPY OF THE CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS.)

**C. Student Representative Comments**

Miss Diamond L. Rosser, student representative for Heritage High School, and Mr. Stephen M. Farmer, student representative for E. C. Glass High School, provided comments about the events and activities occurring at their schools.

**D-1. Crisis Plans: 2015-16**

Pursuant to the Code of Virginia §22.1-279.8, each school board shall ensure that every school develops a written school crisis, emergency management, and medical emergency response plan. The school must also review the plans on an annual basis.

On August 18, 2015, the school administration provided the school board with information about the process for updating the crisis plans for each school and indicated that the plans would be completed and submitted to the Virginia Department of Education by August 28, 2015. The school board has received a copy of those plans, and the school administration requests that they be approved during this presentation.

Upon MOTION by Dr. Coleman, SECONDED by Ms. Poore, the school board approved the Crisis Plans for 2015-16.

Yes Votes: Ms. Hoss, Ms. Waller, Ms. Carter, Dr. Coleman, Dr. Dolan-Sewell, Dr. Nilles, Mr. Polley, Ms. Poore, Ms. Snyder

No Votes: None

Abstentions: None

**D-2. School Board Retreat**

The Lynchburg City School Board will conduct its annual retreat on October 15, 2015, in the Board Room at the School Administration Building. The topics identified for discussion are as follows:

- Data for Economically Disadvantaged Students
- Equity: From Rhetoric to Rigor to Results (Narrowing the Achievement Gap)
- School Safety
- Greater Awareness of LCS is Needed in the Community
- Failure to Meet Graduation Requirements
- Teacher and Personnel Retention
- AP Test Scores
- What or How to Address the Inequity in the Two High Schools
- Office of Civil Rights Update

Dr. Brabrand reviewed the draft agenda with school board members and requested that they send any changes to the agenda to Mrs. Sullivan. The school board will review the agenda once more at the next school board meeting.

**D-3. School Board Self-Evaluation Committee**

During the school board meeting on August 18, 2015, a committee was formed to investigate school board self-evaluation. Members of that committee were accepted through consensus by the school board. Those members are Sharon Y. Carter, Regina T. Dolan-Sewell, and J. Marie Waller.

Upon MOTION by Dr. Nilles, SECONDED by Mrs. Snyder, the school board approved the membership of the School Board Self-Evaluation Committee.

Yes Votes: Ms. Hoss, Ms. Waller, Ms. Carter, Dr. Coleman, Dr. Dolan-Sewell, Dr. Nilles, Mr. Polley, Ms. Poore, Ms. Snyder

No Votes: None

Abstentions: None

#### **D-4. Credit Recovery Academy Update**

Dr. McClain and Mr. Copeland provided a review of activities that have occurred since the school board received information about the school division's proposal to create a program for students who are behind in earning credits toward graduation. The school division currently has programs at the Amelia Pride Center and the Fort Hill Community School that help students with behavior needs or other needs that are beyond behavior and require a long-term placement for students who are not successful in a regular high school setting. This new "Empower Academy" would be housed at the Boys and Girls Club and operate on two four-hour shifts with supports that are specific to the student's needs. In addition to providing instruction through technology, students would receive workforce readiness skills and internship program placement. The program would house approximately 60 students with six teachers, a counselor, and an administrator.

The school administration proposes the renovation of 10,000 square feet on the lower level of the facility. The renovated area would include classrooms, computer labs, tutoring rooms, offices, a cafeteria, and restrooms. Students would attend the program during the school day, and students in the Boys and Girls Club would have use of the space after school hours for tutoring and homework. The school division would pay to renovate the 10,000 (\$200,000) square foot space and will also pay to renovate a 4,500 (\$100,000) square foot area on the top floor for the Boys and Girls Club teen program. There will be an additional \$50,000 for owner-related costs and A&E fees.

The owner of the facility will allow the school division to have the space for one year rent free. The rental charge for years two through five will be \$3.00 per square foot, and for years six through 10, there will be a rental charge of \$5.00 per square foot.

School board members expressed concern about renovating a privately owned building using public funds. There was also discussion about the school division renovating the top floor area for a program that is outside of the school board scope of power. Mr. Gatzke explained that, in the past, the school division had several alternative education programs housed at different sites that were privately owned, and the school division renovated the areas to meet the programs' needs.

Further questions were asked about how the name for the program evolved. Dr. McClain explained that the name was generated through the conversation of individuals who work in the alternative education program and how they want to teach students to make good choices which will carry them through life.

School board members had questions about recurring costs, how utilities will be shared with the Boys and Girls Club, and what would happen if the Boys and Girls Club vacated the facility. The school administration will investigate these questions and provide information at a future school board meeting.

#### **E-1. Lead Turnaround Partner: Dearington Elementary School for Innovation**

Five percent of Virginia's Title I schools (currently 36) are identified as priority schools based on overall performance in reading and mathematics achievement and graduation rates in the case of high schools. During the summer of 2014, Lynchburg City Schools (LCS) was notified that Dearington Elementary School for Innovation (DESI) had been designated as a Priority School for 2014-2015 based on Identification Criterion C outlined in the ESEA Flexibility Waiver Agreement between the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) and the US Department of Education (USED). This designation requires LCS and DESI to implement a three year intervention model and meet federal Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs) for "all students" for two consecutive years in order to exit. At the conclusion of the first year of implementation, DESI met federal AMOs for "all students" in reading and mathematics, realizing 11 percentage points gain in math (32-43) and 8 in reading (35-43).

One of the major requirements for priority schools is to select a Lead Turnaround Partner (LTP) from the VDOE approved list (or solicit VDOE approval and follow LEA procurement policy). LCS made a decision to select an LTP from the approved VDOE list and began the selection process in November 2014. Proposals from seven LTP vendors were screened and four vendors were selected to participate in onsite interviews. From those interviews, American Institute for Research (AIR) was selected as the LTP for DESI.

Following the selection of AIR in December, a Scope of Work was developed and included as part of the School Improvement Grant (SIG) submitted to VDOE in December 2014. VDOE approved the SIG and Scope of Work in January 2015 with the grant award notification received on April 3, 2015. Due to the timing of the grant award, AIR began its work at DESI on May 18, 2015.

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The needs assessment was completed by AIR May 20-21, 2015. Classroom observations were conducted by AIR content specialists, and recommendations were given for technical support, coaching, and professional development in the areas of English language arts and mathematics. These recommendations were used to develop a school improvement grant application and a Scope of Work.

Dearington's school improvement goals are as follows:

- By the end of the 2015-16 school year, the school's performance on the reading Standards of Learning test, as measured by the annual measurable objective results for all students will increase 20 percentage points as compared to the 2014-15 school results.
- By the end of the 2015-16 school year, the federal annual measurable objective achievement results for all students will increase by 15 percentage points as demonstrated on the mathematics SOL test results when compared to 2014-15 school year results.

A service calendar providing dates when specific coaching events will occur was presented which includes content coaching in English language arts and mathematics, leadership coaching, and family engagement and on-site support.

**F. Superintendent's Comments**

Dr. Brabrand announced that back-to-school nights were beginning tomorrow night beginning with Paul Munro Elementary School. A schedule of the open house events have been forwarded to the school board.

Last Friday, the school administration received an email from the state superintendent of public instruction indicating that SOL test results will not be released until late October due to the restructuring of accreditation standards.

The school administration along with community organizations continue to conduct School Summit meetings. The next meeting will occur on September 10, 2015, at the Information Technology Center beginning at 2:00 p.m.

**G. Board Comments**

Dr. Dolan-Sewell thanked community members for their volunteer service and financial support for Lynchburg City Schools.

Ms. Carter provided information about the schools she had visited and the various programs and activities available at those schools.

Ms. Waller commented on how wonderful the buildings looked during her visits.

Dr. Coleman commended the school administration for seeking out better opportunities for our students to succeed.

Ms. Poore thanked staff member who make all students feel safe and secure, and she welcomed community members to visit the schools.

**H. Informational Items**

Next School Board Meeting: Tuesday, September 15, 2015, 5:30 p.m., Board Room, School Administration Building

**I. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 7:03 p.m.

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Mary Ann Hoss, Chairman

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Wendie L. Sullivan, Clerk

(SCHOOL BOARD DOCUMENT FILES ARE LOCATED IN THE DEPARTMENT FOR FINANCE AT THE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION BUILDING.)