

**Lynchburg City School Board  
Regular Meeting  
October 7, 2014**

**BOARD  
MEMBERS  
PRESENT:**

Regina T. Dolan-Sewell, Chairman  
Mary Ann Hoss, Vice Chairman  
James E. Coleman  
Michael J. Nilles  
Jennifer R. Poore  
Katie K. Snyder  
J. Marie Waller  
Thomas H. Webb  
Charles B. White  
Alexandra T. Wieczorek, Student Representative Pro Tem, Heritage High School  
Jamison R. Spinner, Student Representative, E. C. Glass High School

**BOARD  
MEMBERS  
ABSENT:**

None

**ADMINISTRATION  
PRESENT:**

Scott S. Brabrand, Superintendent  
Ben W. Copeland, Assistant Superintendent of Operations and Administration  
John C. McClain, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction  
Anthony E. Beckles, Sr., Chief Financial Officer  
April M. Bruce, Director of Testing, Gifted, and Guidance  
Jason J. Ferguson, Director of Transportation  
Steven L. Gatzke, Director of Facilities  
Marie F. Gee, Director of Personnel  
Ethel E. Reeves, Director of Culture and Engagement  
Marianne Turner, Director of Student Services  
Wyllys D. VanDerwerker, Director of Special Education  
Brian S. Wray, Director of K-12 Instruction  
Wendie L. Sullivan, Clerk/Recording Secretary

**MEDIA  
PRESENT:**

Michael Neary, *The News & Advance*

**Agenda  
Items:**

- A-1. Public Comments
- B. Consent Agenda
- C. Student Representative Comments
- D. Unfinished Business
- E-1. Substitute Pay Increase
- E-2. Special Education Advisory Committee: 2014-15
- E-3. Fund Balance Recommendation: 2013-14
- E-4. Employee Benefits Enhancements
- F. Superintendent's Comments
- G. Board Comments
- H. Informational Items
- I. Adjournment

The Lynchburg City School Board met for its regular meeting at 5:31 p.m. in the Board Room at the School Administration Building. Dr. Dolan-Sewell opened the meeting and asked those in attendance to rise and recite the *Pledge of Allegiance*.

Upon MOTION by Mr. White, SECONDED by Ms. Poore, the school board replaced item E-3. Fund Balance Recommendations: 2013-14 with a revised agenda report.

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

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 Ms. Hoss, SECONDED by Mr. Webb, the school board approved the school board meeting minutes of September 16, 2014 (Regular Meeting) and the personnel report for the period September 16 – October 7, 2014.

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

No Votes: None

Abstentions: None

(SEE SCHOOL BOARD DOCUMENT FILE, MEETING OF OCTOBER 7, 2014, EXHIBIT "A," FOR A COPY OF THE CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS.)

**C. Student Representative Comments**

Miss Alexandra T. Wieczorek, student representative pro tem for Heritage High School, and Mr. Jamison R. Spinner, student representative for E. C. Glass High School, shared comments about events and activities occurring at their schools.

**D. Unfinished Business**

None

**E-1. Substitute Pay Increase**

Based on the information that is now available through Aesop, an immediate need has been determined in the area of instructional substitutes. The school administration continues to work to increase the overall number of available substitutes for teachers, instructional assistants, secretaries, and health assistants, but these positions continue to be difficult to fill with substitutes at an acceptable level. For the month of September, only 67 percent of positions needing a substitute were filled. Thus, the unfilled positions, which are critical to continue instruction and the overall function of a school building, are causing other staff members to assume more responsibilities which makes them less productive in the areas for which they were hired. In order to make progress, we need quality people in all positions each day.

In an effort to attract and increase the number of available substitutes, school administration is proposing an immediate increase in the substitute rate in these hard to fill areas. It has been five years since an increase for substitutes has been proposed, and the increase would make Lynchburg City Schools more competitive with surrounding school divisions. The attachment to this agenda report provided the proposed change and a comparison with nearby counties.

While the school administration recognizes there are other substitute positions that need to be examined, this proposed change addresses an immediate need within our schools. The administration will continue to evaluate other areas and determine other steps that will help remedy the shortage of quality substitutes.

This pay increase is a good first step toward helping with the problems the school division is having obtaining substitutes. The increase would be covered through salary lapse, which is posted by position by department in the operating budget.

This item will be considered for action at the next school board meeting.

(SEE SCHOOL BOARD DOCUMENT FILE, MEETING OF OCTOBER 7, 2014, EXHIBIT "B," FOR A COPY OF THE SUPPORTING DOCUMENT.)

**E-2. Special Education Advisory Committee: 2014-15**

State regulations governing the education of students with disabilities require the Lynchburg City School Board to appoint a Special Education Advisory Committee annually. This committee meets a minimum of four times per year. Members serve two-year terms.

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The Virginia Department of Education guidelines define the role of the Special Education Advisory Committee as follows:

- To advise the school division of unmet needs in the education of students with disabilities
- To assist the school division in the formulation and development of long range plans designed to provide needed educational services for students with disabilities
- To participate in the development of priorities and strategies for meeting the identified needs of students with disabilities
- To submit periodic reports and recommendations regarding the education of students with disabilities to the division superintendent for transmission to the school board
- To assist the school division in interpreting plans to the community for meeting the special needs of students with disabilities.

The proposed membership appeared as an attachment to the agenda report. New members were noted in bold.

Upon MOTION by Mr. Webb, SECONDED by Dr. Coleman, the school board approved the Special Education Advisory Committee for 2014-15.

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

No Votes: None

Abstentions: None

(SEE SCHOOL BOARD DOCUMENT FILE, MEETING OF OCTOBER 7, 2014, EXHIBIT "C," FOR A COPY OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR 2014-2015.)

**E-3. Fund Balance Recommendation: 2013-14**

The fund balance for the 2013-14 school year is \$2,948,287. The school administration has discussed possible uses for those funds and recommends the following:

Establishment of Contingencies	
Weather	\$ 25,000
Maintenance	\$ 200,000
Increase in Health Insurance Reserve	\$ 300,000
Purchase of Middle Schools Athletic equipment	\$ 35,000
Installation of security system at DMS & LMS local match	\$ 25,000
Purchase of access and intrusion system for E.C. Glass	\$ 30,000
Installation of Fire Lane pavers at Bedford Hills ES	\$ 23,000
Replacement of boiler at Dunbar Middle School	\$ 150,000
Purchase of tractor with snow plow & back hoe	\$ 50,000
Purchase of scissor lift	\$ 20,000
Capital Improvement Projects: 2015-16	\$2,090,287
	<hr/>
	<b>\$2,948,287</b>
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Mr. Beckles explained that the school administration had discussed the possibility of creating a salary contingency fund, but it was suggested that since contingency funds are typically used for one-time purchases/payments, this was not included as a recommendation. It was also explained that one of the situations that occurred this year with capital improvements was that the city was running low on funds because of Heritage High School and other city-wide projects, therefore, the school division is funding the 2013-16 CIP with the school division's fund balance.

This item will be considered for action at the next school board meeting.

**E-4. Employee Benefits Enhancements**

The actual total medical expenditures for the past two years have been low resulting in significant cost savings. We have also increased the medical reserves to prepare for if or when our actual medical expenditures exceed the budget.

Several years ago due to budget cuts, the decision was made for the school board to cease contributing to the employee cost of dental coverage. Due to the reduction in the medical claims expenditure, the administration is recommending that the school board restore contributing 100 percent (\$28.00) to the employee only cost of employees enrolled in the dental insurance plan. Currently the school board contributes 48 percent (\$11.00) of the dental monthly premium. This would result in an additional annual cost of \$267,036 which can be covered without any increase in our existing medical expenditure budget.

**Changing from Advanced Deduction of Employee Benefits Cost**

Currently employee's benefits costs are deducted from their pay check a month in advance. This practice results in having to make benefits refunds and other adjustments to employee's final payout when they cease employment with the school division. By changing to a current month deduction for employee benefits cost, the need to make these adjustments will be eliminated resulting in a more efficient administrative operation. The school administration is recommending that to make the change in the month of December, which means that benefits will not be deducted from employee pay checks in December. This would have the effect of increasing the employees take home pay in December by the amount of their monthly benefits deductions not considering taxes. Beginning in January, employee's benefits cost for January will be deducted in January. This change will not result in any catch-up payment in the future.

Both of the above changes will be consistent with the practices followed by the city. The city and schools are continuing collaborative efforts in as many areas as possible in order to follow the same practices.

The school administration continues to work with the city to make our health services more comparable. This past year, the city and schools have experienced low medical expenses. This will be the first time that the school division and the city have the same dental insurance and have the same dental rates where city and schools pay 100 percent of the employee portion of this coverage.

This item will be considered for action at the next school board meeting.

(SEE SCHOOL BOARD DOCUMENT FILE, MEETING OF OCTOBER 7, 2014, EXHIBIT "D," FOR A COPY OF THE SUPPORTING DOCUMENT.)

**F. Superintendent's Comments**

Lynchburg City Schools employees participated in the 10-miler this year as a team and wore matching t-shirts donated by the Lynchburg City Schools Education Foundation, Inc.

Secretary of Education Ann Holton visited the school division, and Dr. Brabrand was able to talk with her about provisional accreditation for Sandusky Middle School and expedited retakes for elementary school students on SOL tests.

Touching Bases will occur at all three middle schools on Thursday evening.

The Partners In Education/Lynchburg Regional Chamber of Commerce annual golf tournament will occur tomorrow. This event raises funds for the school division.

Community budget forums will occur on October 8 at 7:00 p.m. at the Kemper Street Station; on October 14 at 5:30 p.m. at the Kemper Street Station; and on October 23 at 4:30 p.m. at the Information Technology Center.

The school culture survey will be administered October 12-28, 2014.

**G. Board Comments**

Mrs. Snyder announced that she had been to see *Rent*, and she applauds students for their wonderful performance.

Mr. White stated that he had signed into the Infinite Campus accounts for his children and found the information to be very useful. He also thanked Dr. Brabrand for engaging state-level government in discussions about the school division.

Mr. Webb provided comments about his attendance at a performance of *Rent*, a Neighborhood Watch activity in which Fort Hill Community School was involved, the VSBA Hot Topic Conference.

Ms. Waller provided comments about her attendance at the VSBA Hot Topic Conference and thanked the school administration for bringing *Rachel's Challenge* to middle and high school students.

Dr. Coleman thanked those on the school board who attended the community engagement meetings and commended Ms. Reeves on her department during the meetings.

Dr. Dolan-Sewell commended Ms. Reeves on the community engagement meetings and stated that she was thankful to be part of such a committed board that is concerned about all students. She also stated that the Key Communicators Advisory Committee will be seeking members from the school board to participate on the committee.

**H. Informational Items**

Next School Board Meeting: Tuesday, October 21, 2014, 5:30 p.m., Board Room, School Administration Building

**I. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

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Regina T. Dolan-Sewell, 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.)