

**WESTMORELAND COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD
MONTROSS, VIRGINIA
BOARD WORK SESSION MINUTES
August 15, 2023**

The Westmoreland County School Board met in work session on Tuesday, August 15, 2023 at 4:00 p.m. at the Gerald B. Roane Center for Excellence Building, Montross, Virginia.

Present:

Mr. Ralph Fallin, Chair

Ms. Iris Lane, Vice Chair (arrived during closed session)

Mrs. Katherine Lewis, Member

Mrs. Ramsey (participated remotely)

Dr. Daniel Wallace, Member

Others Present:

Dr. Michael Perry, Superintendent

Ms. Cathy Rice, Deputy Superintendent

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Fallin, Chair. Mr. Fallin shared that Member, Mrs. Ramsey, requested to participate remotely due to another commitment with her church revival. Dr. Wallace made the motion to approve Mrs. Ramsey's request. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Lewis. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Board Member Dr. Wallace made a motion that the Board convene into closed session as provided in Section 2.2-3711(A) of the Code of Virginia, for the purpose of discussing personnel matters dealing with specific personnel of the Westmoreland County School division pursuant to Section 2.2-3711 (A)(1) of the Code of Virginia. Board Member Mrs. Lewis seconded the motion.

Voice Vote: 4 Ayes/0 Nays; Mr. Fallin, Aye; Mrs. Lewis, Aye; Dr. Wallace, Aye; Mrs. Ramsey, Aye

Ms. Iris Lane was not present at this time but arrived at the end of closed session.

At 5:00 p.m. the meeting was reconvened into work session on the motion by Board Member Dr. Wallace and seconded by Board Vice Chair, Ms. Lane. Voice Vote: 5 Ayes/0Nays; Mr. Fallin, Aye; Ms. Lane, Aye; Mrs. Lewis, Aye; Mrs. Ramsey, Aye; Dr. Wallace, Aye.

The motion for the approval of the following certification was made by Board Member Dr. Wallace and seconded by Board Vice Chair Ms. Lane.

WHEREAS, the Westmoreland County School Board convened a closed meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with the provision of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act; and

WHEREAS, Section 2.2-3712(D) of the Code of Virginia requires a certification that, to the best of each member's knowledge, (i) only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia law were discussed in the closed meeting to which this certification applies, and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard, discussed, or considered. Voice Vote: 5 Ayes/0Nays; Mr. Fallin, Aye; Ms. Lane, Aye; Mrs. Lewis, Aye; Mrs. Ramsey, Aye; Dr. Wallace, Aye.

Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved by unanimous consent.

Action Items

After a brief discussion on letters of resignation and exit interviews, Dr. Wallace made the motion to approve the list of appointments and resignations. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Ramsey.

Voice Vote: 5 Ayes/0Nays; Mr. Fallin, Aye; Ms. Lane, Aye; Mrs. Lewis, Aye; Mrs. Ramsey, Aye; Dr. Wallace, Aye.

New Business

Crisis Plan Review

Dr. Perry presented the Crisis Plan and shared updates with board members. Dr. Perry shared that when revisions are made to the Crisis plan, they are recorded on page four of the plan.

There are three versions of the plan. Version Orange is intended for key leadership and those directly involved in the planning and implementation of the plan. Version Gold is intended for faculty and staff, or those that provide important supportive roles in the implementation of the plan. Version Green is intended to inform parents and guardians of Westmoreland students and selected other appropriate recipients. Versions Orange and Gold contain information considered sensitive and require safeguarding.

Mr. Fallin asked board members if they had any questions. The board will take action on August 21st after they have a chance to review it.

COGAT Testing

Ms. Rice, Deputy Superintendent, shared that the search for and identification of gifted students is a continuous process. The first step in the

process is to create a pool of candidates. Students may enter the pool through direct referral or general screening.

The Cognitive Abilities Test (COGAT) is a tool used for general screening. It is administered in the Spring of second grade to identify candidates for further testing.

Direct referrals are accepted any time throughout the school year up to March 1st. Referrals may be made by parents, teachers, other school personnel, community members, student peers or the student him/herself.

Mrs. Lewis asked how many students were added to the pool this year through COGAT screening. Ms. Rice indicated she would email that number to all board members. Other questions were discussed and clarified.

Recruitment of International Educators

Ms. Rice shared that we are working with three companies to help recruit international educators. We currently have ten teachers through the Participate Learning Program and two through Global Teaching Partners, as well as one teacher recently hired through Global Recruitment, LLC.

Participate Learning and Global Teaching Partners place teachers through J-1 Visas, while Global Recruitment, LLC places teachers through H-1B Visas.

One board member inquired about whether language differences have any impact in the classroom. Ms. Rice shared that the international educators recruited through these programs have strong English skills, and clarity of verbal communication is observed in the interview process.

Ms. Lane stated VCU Health System (Tappahannock hospital) has hired a few employees from the Philippines through a similar program. She offered to connect Ms. Rice with the Human Resource leaders at VCU Health to explore potential opportunities to collaborate and assist new international employees in becoming acclimated to the local community.

Policy on Naming Facilities

Chairman, Mr. Fallin, facilitated a discussion of the Board policy on naming facilities. Mr. Fallin asked two questions: What do we define as facilities? Do we want to name facilities after individuals? An extended conversation ensued on defining the word facilities and on naming facilities after people. This discussion will be continued.

Salaries for School Board Members

Chairman, Mr. Fallin, shared that other school divisions are increasing the salary of their board members. Information was shared on regional and state salaries of board members. It was noted that an increase would apply

to future board members. The Board agreed that it was probably time but did not agree on a total. The Board was not in agreement on whether the chairman should receive more pay than regular members.

Plans for Employee Appreciation Event(s)

Dr. Wallace suggested we do a picnic again this year. Ms. Lane suggested doing something like a "Chat and Chew" reception prior to or after the State of the Schools on September 25th to increase participation. Discussions continued and it was agreed to go back to the State Park. Ms. Lane agreed to check on the dates available for the cookout.

Recognition of Exceptional School Employees and Community Members

Mr. Fallin stated that the intent of this issue was to try to find ways of recognizing exceptional school employees and community members. Conversations determined that the Board needed to define what makes an employee/community member exceptional. It was agreed that more discussion is needed.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by unanimous vote.