

The Pocahontas County Board of Education met on Tuesday, October 06, 2020, for a Special Board Meeting at the Board of Education Conference Room, Buckeye, WV, with the following members present:

Sue E. Hollandsworth, President

John Burns)	
H. Samuel Gibson)	Members
Jarrett McLaughlin)	
Morgan McComb)	

Call to Order.

IN ORDER TO COMPLY WITH THE COVID-19 SOCIAL DISTANCING GUIDELINES, AND THE OPEN MEETINGS ACT, PLEASE LISTEN TO THE BOE MEETING BY JOINING THE SCHEDULED ZOOM MEETING OCTOBER 06, 2020, AT 6:00 PM. IN-PERSON PUBLIC ATTENDANCE WILL BE PERMITTED.

(the audio link will also be provided on County Website at <http://pocahontas-k12.wvnet.edu/boe/>)

Audio link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88554692036?pwd=YU1MaDhJMXcrNGVpeUZ5UUkvTUg0Zz09>
Meeting ID: 885 5469 2036 Password: 5d314a

Open with the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC HEARING ON 2020-2030 CEFP...

On motion of Mr. Burns and seconded by Mr. McLaughlin, the Board unanimously approved to enter the Public Hearing on the 2020-2030 Comprehensive Educational Facilities Plan, with discussion but no vote on approval of plan.

Mr. Beam introduced architects Matt Breakey and Bill Ratcliffe with the Thrasher Group, and Suzanne Stewart as the Chairperson of the CEFP committee. Mr. Breakey opened the meeting with a brief overview of the three phases of the CEFP process and how it evaluates not only the buildings but the educational plan and community demographics.

Meeting was opened to public comment. Comments are to be recorded and documented as part of the final plan submitted to the state. Mrs. Bland moderated the 55-page plan and monitored the Zoom meeting chat feature.

Board member, Mr. Gibson questioned the most recent statistic study on population and enrollment obtained from the state being from 2017. He was concerned that we are using older data for the configuration. It was explained that the data was retrieved from the United States Census. Mrs. Bland provided current enrollment of Pocahontas County Schools being 966 students, Pre-K—12th grade. Virtual students are calculated in the enrolled.

Ms. Stewart thanked the dedicated community members and businesses for their passion as they devoted numerous hours to meet the educational needs of our students. She enthusiastically announced that no plans in this CEFP are to close any of the facilities. It was discussed and it was considered, but rejected. Instead of closing or consolidating, let us concentrate on what can be done to make the buildings better. Ms. Stewart will assist with the priority list as it is established for the SBA.

Ron Hall, Director of Maintenance, clarified it would be difficult to finance five schools with no SBA assistance. The electrical wiring and plumbing need replaced and upgraded in several buildings. Are we being good stewards of taxpayers' money? Over the next ten years, we will face major issues. Currently, the sprinkler system needs replaced at Marlinton Elementary School, costing minimally \$200,000-250,000. How are we to fund that? Mr. Hall does not want to close schools but it is hard to fund five schools on our declining enrollment and limited budget. Heating and the boilers are another major concern.

Mr. Andy Friel questioned Mr. Hall about the financial burden of the Marlinton Elementary School sprinkler system. Was that the bid price? He was told we have no bid at the present time. The School Board Authority was asked to replace the sprinkler system but they denied the request as it was a lone repair. Mr. Friel inquired further. Why would we need \$250,000? What is wrong with it? The explanation directed that the Fire Marshal has tagged MES sprinkler system 4 years in a row. The system does not maintain pressure any longer, the compressor is shot and the pipes are deteriorating.

Mr. Friel stated that Denmar Prison has a large, older system and it passed the fire marshal inspection every year. Can we not find the pressure leak and repair it? Board member, Mr. Morgan McComb, mentioned having the Town of Marlinton upgrade the incoming water pressure to help the system. New fire system companies determined that due to the disrepair of the pipes it will take replacing the pipes or changing out to the new dry system.

Board member, Mr. Burns, indicated that Marlinton Elementary was vital to that town. We have to improve the school and keep the town. He asked if Mr. Breakey was aware of any other pathways to help fund the necessary project. Mr. Breakey replied, if not source funding, special grants or a needs grant, local funding, is the only way to do this. At the present time, needs grants deem difficult—the pool of money is smaller.

Mr. Andy Friel asked about the sewage system and the plumbing at the high school. Mr. Hall indicated that the sewage system was replaced last year. Plumbing is a problem at each school due to the older pipes in school system.

To the suggestion that the 7th-8th can move to high school, to expose students to Career and Technical Education (CTE), Mr. Friel expressed much apprehension. He stated that a few years ago we were told that the Marlinton 5th grade couldn't go to school with the 8th grade class because of the age difference. Now, you are proposing we send 7th graders to school with 12th grade students? Can you explain that? Why you have switched your thinking on this now? Ms. Stewart responded this is not a brand new concept. It was a suggestion but not in the next ten-year plan.

Mrs. Lucia Mosesso inquired if we can get clear definitions as to CTE for 7th and 8th graders. How many courses, how many hours? Mrs. Bland explained the CTE for 7th and 8th grade students are defined as exposure, not courses or hours. Mrs. Mosesso queried could "exposure" be the same as job shadowing? Computer science, time in school gardens? Ms. Stewart expressed the Computer Science classes offered at Marlinton Middle and Green Bank Elementary-Middle Schools fall under the CTE requirements. Mrs. Bland confirmed we are following the guidelines.

Mrs. Nebraska Scotchie made mention that Mr. Dustin Lambert, State Office of Middle/Secondary Learning Coordinator, explained that CTE programs must be taught by individuals certified to teach at the middle school level. Mrs. Bland offered that most CTE teachers are certified from 5th to adult.

Mrs. Mosesso asked could we send students to PCHS for "exposure" for a few days or a week per year without relocating our students? Mr. Beam said it would depend on the Career and Technical Educational requirements of the 2022-2023 school year.

Mr. Friel quickly added additional questions of would it be more efficient to have a teachers travel instead of the students in buses? How many classes are you talking? Teams and Polycom units offer better support than having teachers travel between schools. Thus, foundational classes could be offered at an earlier stage.

Should additional time be needed for comments on the 2020-2030 CEFP, please see the Pocahontas County Board of Education website. As the CEFP is a living document, it can be modified, amended, and changed. The Board has the latitude to make adjustments.

The questions and responses and/or comments will be placed in a spreadsheet and included as part of the final Comprehensive Educational Facilities Plan when submitted.

NEXT BOARD MEETING...

Next Local School Improvement Council/Board of Education Meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 13, 2020 beginning at 3:30 PM at Pocahontas County High School, Dunmore, WV.

ADJOURN...

On the motion of Mr. McLaughlin and seconded by Mr. Burns, the Board unanimously approved to adjourn the meeting.


Secretary


President