

The Pocahontas County Board of Education met on Tuesday, March 09, 2021, beginning with a Public Hearing on the 2021-2022 School Calendar at 5:30 PM immediately followed by the Board of Education 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, INCREASE IN ACTIVE CASES, AND THE OPEN MEETINGS ACT, YOU MAY ALSO LISTEN TO THE BOE MEETING BY JOINING THE SCHEDULED ZOOM MEETING MARCH 09, 2021, AT 5:30 PM. IN-PERSON PUBLIC ATTENDANCE WILL BE LIMITED.

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

Audio link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85840260399?pwd=QjF3Qno5N0Z3S0kyL2g3OW9adyt6UT09>

Meeting ID: 858 4026 0399 Password: 6p354h

Open with the Pledge of Allegiance.

CALENDAR HEARING...

The Board of Education held the second of two calendar hearings on the 2021-22 school calendar. Calendar is consistent with those in the past. The public had no questions concerning the 2021-22 calendar.

AGENDA...

On the motion of Mr. Burns and seconded by Mr. McLaughlin, the Board unanimously approved the agenda with the following two changes under personnel: inserting Earnest R. Hendrick in the blank space as Baseball Coach and pulling Devan Simmons as Volunteer Track Coach. Dr. Hollandsworth requested an Executive Session to be held after Matters of the Board on personnel matters, no action taken.

DELEGATIONS...

Dr. Hollandsworth defined the rules of the delegations' process.

- I. Blair Campbell—PCHS ELA Curriculum. Mrs. Campbell wanted to show her support for teachers in general, Mrs. Mann, issues with the books, and ELA Curriculum. She is passionate about support and community involvement, encouraging teachers to build critical thinking. Mrs. Campbell would like to see the development of committees and review groups to discuss these controversial subjects to address liberty and justice for all with love and support for on another. She believes this to be a positive way to set a tone in this unique area and get students ready for what the world has to offer.

2. Jenny Anderson—PCHS ELA Curriculum. Ms. Anderson represented by numerous organizations provided the Board a letter supporting the book, *The Hate You Give*, and Mrs. Mann's choice to include this book in her curriculum. A petition depicting signatures in favor of the books is forthcoming. Ms. Anderson supported providing equal and diverse education for all and asks the Board to stand behind Mrs. Mann teaching methods.
3. Summer Martin—Athletics. As a parent with one child at the high school, one child at the Marlinton Middle, and three children at Hillsboro Elementary, Ms. Martin has asked the Board to reevaluate the policy concerning the number of attendees per player at the home sporting events.
4. Owens Brown—PCHS ELA Curriculum. President of West Virginia NAACP addressed the Board with support for the book, *The Hate You Give*. It was his understanding that students selected this book and he commended them for having the courage to decide a difficult manuscript. The world students see today is not one we have seen. Mr. Brown applauded Mrs. Mann and her students for choosing *The Hate You Give* as a navigational "moral compass" to alter the course of racism. May Pocahontas County allow Mrs. Mann to continue teaching *The Hate You Give*.
5. Andy Friel—Character. After defining character, Mr. Friel first addressed the Board with an apology. He retracted his February 16, 2021 statement about the Marshall University and the University of Kansas banning these specific books. Unfortunately, the information he googled was misrepresented. Mr. Friel continued by presenting the Board his issues and concerns. Policies have been broken and the trust aspect from administration has been compromised. Your word is your bond, a form of good character. Mr. Friel would like the Board to further investigate the wrong-doings.
6. John Paul Burks—PCHS ELA Curriculum. Mr. Burks addressed the appalling language content of *The Hate You Give*. Recently, he and his family, including his high school daughter, traveled to the inner city of Dallas, Texas, for a High School Rodeo competition in which children of different ethnical backgrounds were present. While there five days he and his daughter heard only four cuss words—unlike the walls of an ELA classroom in our local high school.
7. Susan Lane—PCHS ELA Curriculum. Mrs. Lane requested that the Board further research the ELA Curriculum and the policies that have been broken. In the vast 350 pages, *The Hate You Give* exploits the "F-word" over 90 times. There is better way to teach love, tolerance, acceptance, and character rather than the recent, educational venue. Mrs. Lane presented the Board with a different ethical perspective, "Hold the Door: Lessons for My Kid" written by Kim Bongiorno. Mrs. Lane believes we can teach our children "to love one another, to be kind and accepting without discrimination" without vulgar language or sexual and drug content. She would like the Board to consider other methods of educating our students.
8. Manar Hesino—PCHS ELA Curriculum. Ms. Hesino, a current WVU student, addressed the Board with a different perspective on *The Hate You Give*. She stated the book has been rated for middle school students and gives an honest account of what is happening in our society today. When included in the ELA Curriculum, it offers students an opportunity for open classroom questions and discussions as they form their own opinions on the controversial topics.

Dr. Hollandsworth concluded the delegations by asking three individuals if their concerns were more the idea of teaching racism in the school system or rather the specific books chosen for the ELA Curriculum. The materials seem to be the root of the concerns.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT & SPECIAL RECOGNITION...

Superintendent Beam opened his special recognition with the Young Writer's Contest winners. Mrs. Bostic will be announcing later in the meeting.

Additionally, Mr. Beam praised Mrs. Beverage and Mrs. Wilfong as 54.3% of our high school students have completed the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) forms. We are way above the State average of 38.7%!

Mr. Beam updated the Board on Summer School applications and interested personnel to work the program. An Administrative Coordinator deems necessary to guide the platform on a daily basis. The rate of pay would be the same as the teachers though hours would be extended to reflect increased duties. Mr. Beam has been working with Cara Rose, Executive Director at the Pocahontas County Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB), to offer Summer School incentives for student attendance. Tickets will be offered to the recreational "hot spots" in the county.

On March 22, 2021, Mr. Beam has a conference call with Mr. Henry Woods about the upcoming April mediation to recoup the loss of State Aid Funds, totaling over one million dollars.

Mr. Beam reminded the Board that the Superintendent's Evaluation needs to be placed on the agenda before the end of the school year. June 1, 2021 is the last scheduled Board Meeting. A copy of the 2020-2021 goals have been provided.

Spring Break will be ½ day, Wednesday, March 31, 2021 returning to regular instruction Tuesday, April 6, 2021.

Lastly, Mr. Beam shared his perspective on the controversial book topic. He listened to everyone's concerns about *The Hate You Give* and *This Book is Anti-Racist* and the need and appropriateness of these two books at the high school level. He does not believe parents have a problem with the teachings but rather the manner in which it was approached. Topics of diversity, racism, and multicultural awareness are topics that we have failed to give the proper attention to in our school system.

Adequate staff development is being designed by the newly formed committee including Mrs. Ruth Bland, Mrs. Lynne Bostic, and ELA Coach Stephanie Burns. Mrs. Bland will serve as Chairperson as she is the Title IX Coordinator. Other committee members will include at least one teacher and one parent per school. Additional community members may deem necessary. The intent of the committee will be to determine how we educate our students on issues of diversity, racism and equity, the appropriate grade level and with appropriate teaching materials.

As a Superintendent, Mr. Beam does not uphold banning books but supports the teachers' right to offer instruction on controversial topics. In this particular situation, Mr. Beam shared an alternative solution with the principal and the teacher. A list of book titles and substitute literary works should be offered to the parents for review prior to the assignments. This practice should continue with all teachers in the 2021-2022 school year. Mr. Beam continues to believe that the local schools should have the final word on the curriculum as long as it meets state standards, is thoroughly reviewed by entire department and administration.

Lastly, Mr. Beam assures "the Board and the community that this is something that will not be ignored. We will continue to address these issues and not hide from them." We are attempting to make fair and just decisions on the curriculum with the controversial issues at hand.

INFORMATIONAL REPORTS/CENTRAL OFFICE UPDATES...

- a. Alan Gibson, Student Representative—Mr. Gibson reported good news at PCHS. Basketball and other spring sports are having good practices. Some classes are utilizing outdoor learning and going outside to breathe fresh air. There has been some concern about the new schedule but mostly all is well.
- b. Lucia Mosesso, WVU Extension Service—Ms. Mossesso gave an annual report and update from the Extension Office. Board Representative, Mr. Gibson, was able to attend in February meeting. As a reminder, 4-H promotes healthy living and agriculture. 148 youth enrolled in our county 4-H program. Highlights include the approval of the Energy Express program for 2021. Therefore, plans are in the making for an exciting summer. Ms. Mosesso gave an open invitation for the Board to visit the high tunnel at Marlinton Middle School.
- c. Mr. Ron Hall, Needs Project—Mr. Hall explained the general idea of the upcoming needs on the \$4.5 million SBA application that includes windows at the Green Bank Elementary-Middle School, Marlinton Middle School and Pocahontas County High School, new sprinkler system at Marlinton Elementary and HVAC to replace all units at PCHS and the HES gymnasium. He expressed that odds of receiving funding are slim due to state allocation but, the future looks better with our matching Energy Savings funds.
- d. Mrs. Lynne Bostic, Young Writer's—Mrs. Bostic proudly announced the winners of the Young Writer's Contest. Students will represent Pocahontas County at the state level. She will present them with certificates later this week.

Aliza Cedarleaf	Nicole Rose-Taylor's 1 st Grade Class (HES)
Trey Sattler	Melissa Taylor's 4 th Grade Class (GBEMS)
Madalynn Landis	Dondi Stemple's 5 th Grade Class (MES)
- e. Mrs. Ruth Bland, Technology update—Mrs. Bland discussed the telephone issues as Frontier Communications and the PRI installed at Marlinton Elementary School. It is imperative that we have a reliable phone service. Intercoms and video surveillance cameras are being installed at the schools. More devices have been purchased and distributed to all students 8th grade through 12th grade.
- f. Mr. Joe Riley, PCHS ELA Curriculum—Mr. Riley read his letter expressing the process for obtaining his approval of the books for the controversial topic in Mrs. Mann's English/Language Arts class and ELA curriculum supported by the National Teachers' Council for English. Mr. Riley approved said curriculum and books at the beginning of the school year. After much parental concern, Mr. Riley paused the curriculum for further inspection. He found the books to be an acceptable educational tool for high school students for teaching diversity, equity and improvement. As principal of Pocahontas County High School, it is Mr. Riley's recommendation that the curriculum will stand and resume at Mrs. Mann's earliest convenience. In conclusion, Mr. Riley agreed that parents would receive a syllabus depicting additional literary works for the 2021-2022 school year.

Dr. Hollandsworth addressed the matter by expressing much disappointment that things have “blown out of proportion.” What began as concerns over inappropriate language and content became as widely advertised issue that Pocahontas County Schools do not support teaching racism. Dr. Hollandsworth offered guidelines so this may not happen again.

APPROVAL TO AUTHORIZE PAYMENT OF VENDOR LISTING...

On the recommendation of the superintendent and motion of Mr. McLaughlin, seconded by Mr. Burns, the Board unanimously approved to authorize payment of vendor listing of claims in the amount of \$75,382.38.

APPROVAL TO AUTHORIZE PAYMENT OF VENDOR LISTING OF CLAIMS (LOCAL GOVERNMENT PURCHASING CARD)...

On the recommendation of the superintendent and motion of Mr. McLaughlin, seconded by Mr. Burns, the Board unanimously approved to authorize payment of vendor listing of claims (Local Government Purchasing Card) in the amount of \$22,693.94.

APPROVAL OF GRANT AWARDS...

On the recommendation of the superintendent and motion of Mr. Burns, seconded by Mr. McLaughlin, the Board unanimously approved the grant awards.

APPROVAL OF PAYROLL...

On the recommendation of the superintendent and motion of Mr. McLaughlin, seconded by Mr. Burns, the Board unanimously approved the following employee payroll:

February 17, 2021 – \$243,285.22

March 03, 2021 – \$244,619.61

APPROVAL OF EXTRA DUTY PAY...

On the recommendation of the superintendent and motion of Mr. Burns, seconded by Mr. McLaughlin, the Board unanimously approved the Extra Duty Pay for the month of February 2021, in the amount of \$7,228.65.

APPROVAL OF BANK RECONCILIATION...

On the recommendation of the superintendent and motion of Mr. McLaughlin, seconded by Mr. Burns, the Board unanimously approved the Bank Reconciliation for the month of January 2021.

APPROVAL OF THE POCAHONTAS COUNTY SCHOOLS SUMMARY OF SCHEDULE OF REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES...

On the recommendation of the superintendent and motion of Mr. Burns, seconded by Mr. McLaughlin, the Board unanimously approved the Pocahontas County Schools Summary of Schedule of Revenues and Expenditures on a Cash Basis for the month ended February 2021.

APPROVAL OF BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS...

On the recommendation of the superintendent and motion of Mr. McLaughlin, seconded by Mr. Burns, the Board unanimously approved the Budget Adjustments.

APPROVAL OF THE SCHEDULE OF PROPOSED LEVY RATES...

On the recommendation of the superintendent and motion of Mr. McLaughlin, seconded by Mr. Burns, the Board unanimously approved the Schedule of Proposed Levy Rates, as listed below, for the fiscal

year ending June 30, 2021.

Class I	\$19.40
Class II	\$38.80
Class III	\$77.60
Class IV	\$77.60

APPROVAL OF CASH MANAGEMENT/ACH CLIENT PROCESSING CHANGES...

On the recommendation of the superintendent and motion of Mr. Burns, seconded by Mr. McLaughlin, the Board unanimously approved the Cash Management/ACH Client Processing Changes with Pendleton Community Bank, no fees, retroactive to March 1, 2021.

APPROVAL OF UPDATED LOCAL GOVERNMENT PURCHASING CARD POLICIES

On the recommendation of the superintendent and motion of Mr. McLaughlin, seconded by Mr. Burns, the Board unanimously approved the updated Local Government Purchasing Card Policies and Procedures, retroactive to March 1, 2021.

APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION REGARDING THE PUBLICATION OF FINANCIAL STATEMENTS...

On the recommendation of the superintendent and motion of Mr. McLaughlin, seconded by Mr. Burns, the Board approved the Resolution Regarding the Publication of Financial Statements by County Boards of Education at a 4-1 vote, with Mr. Gibson casting the only descending vote.

APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION REGARDING THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE LEGISLATIVE ALLOWANCE...

On the recommendation of the superintendent and motion of Mr. McLaughlin, seconded by Mr. McComb, the Board unanimously approved the Resolution Regarding the Distribution of the Legislative Allowance for Increased Student Enrollment.

APPROVAL OF THE 2021-2022 POCAHONTAS COUNTY SCHOOLS CALENDAR...

On the recommendation of the superintendent and motion of Mr. Burns, seconded by Mr. McLaughlin, the Board unanimously approved the 2021-2022 Pocahontas County Schools Calendar.

APPROVAL OF COUNTY EXTENSION SERVICE MOA...

On the recommendation of the superintendent and motion of Mr. McLaughlin, seconded by Mr. Burns, the Board approved the Annual Memorandum of Agreement, West Virginia University Cooperative Extension Service and the County Extension Service Committee, with the Pocahontas County Board of Education, for the 2021-2022 school year.

REVIEW OF RE-ENTRY PLAN...

On the recommendation of the superintendent and motion of Mr. McLaughlin, seconded by Mr. Burns, the Board unanimously approved the Review of Re-Entry Plan (action to be taken, if necessary) with no revisions at the present time.

PERSONNEL...

On the recommendation of the superintendent and motion of Mr. McLaughlin, seconded by Mr. Burns, the Board unanimously approved personnel.

Pocahontas County High School:

- EMPLOYMENT:** CYNTHIA L. SOLAK, as Teacher of Science/Biology, at Pocahontas County High School, at state minimum salary based on degree and experience plus equity, effective first day of the 2021-2022 school year, term of employment is 200 days.
- RESIGNATION:** RANDALL W. IRVINE, as Baseball Coach for Pocahontas County High School, effective February 26, 2021.
- EMPLOYMENT:** EARNEST R. HENDRICK, as Baseball Coach for Pocahontas County High School, effective for the 2020-2021 season, supplement being \$1,125.00, pending sufficient number of players to make a team.
- VOLUNTEER COACH:** RANDALL W. IRVINE, as volunteer assistant Baseball Coach for Pocahontas County High School for the 2020-2021 season, as needed.
- VOLUNTEER COACH:** LAUREL B. DILLEY, as a part-time, volunteer assistant coach, for the Pocahontas County High School Boys' and Girls' Track and Field teams for the 2020-2021 season, as needed.
- VOLUNTEER COACH:** JUSTIN M. DILLEY, as a part-time, volunteer assistant coach, for the Pocahontas County High School Boys' and Girls' Track and Field teams for the 2020-2021 season, as needed.
- VOLUNTEER COACH:** ~~DEVAN E. SIMMONS, as a part-time, volunteer assistant coach, for the Pocahontas County High School Boys' and Girls' Track and Field teams for the 2020-2021 season, as needed.~~

Pocahontas County Schools:

- UNPAID MEDICAL LEAVE:** CAILEY D. MOORE, as Itinerant Teacher of Special Education (Multi-categorical)/Autism for Pocahontas County Schools (assignment: Marlinton Elementary School), effective March 17, 2021 (or upon exhaustion of personal leave) for a period of up to 12 weeks, as needed.
- REQUESTED TRANSFER:** SARAH A. COVER, as Itinerant Special Education Classroom Aide/Bus Aide for Pocahontas County Schools (assignment: Green Bank Elementary-Middle School) to Itinerant Special Education Classroom Aide/Bus Aide for Pocahontas County Schools (assignment: Pocahontas County High School), at state basic pay, effective first day of the 2021-2022 school year, term of employment is 200 days.
- REQUESTED TRANSFER:** STEPHEN D.MICK, JR. as School Bus Operator for Pocahontas

County Schools from his current run to run as follows:

Morning Run: Morning Run: Beginning at Marlinton Middle School travel USR 219 North to Woodrow Road, travel Woodrow Road to East Woodrow Branch Road, return to Woodrow Road, travel Woodrow Road to Jerico Road, travel Jerico Road to intersection of USR 219, proceed to Marlinton Elementary School and then to Marlinton Middle School, where bus will be parked during the school day. If an additional bus is needed to go to PCHS, this shall be added to the morning and evening run.

Evening Run: Reverse of morning run.

SNOW ROUTE: Beginning at Marlinton Middle School, travel 219 to Woodrow Road, travel Woodrow Road to intersection of Woodrow Road and Woodrow Branch Road, return to 219. Travel 219 to Marlinton Elementary School and then to Marlinton Middle School. May pick up students that other buses cannot.

Afternoon Run: Reverse of morning run.

Effective March 11, 2021 for the remainder of the 2020-2021 school year, at state basic pay, term of employment is 61 days, (in addition to the days already worked). Note: Term of employment shall be 200 days each year thereafter.

EMPLOYMENT: ANGELA N. WILLIAMSON, as Substitute Teacher for Pocahontas County Schools, at state basic pay, effective March 11, 2021 for the 2020-2021 school year, as needed.

EMPLOYMENT: JANESEA K. BELL, as Substitute Cook for Pocahontas County Schools, at state basic pay, effective March 11, 2021 for the 2020-2021 school year, as needed.

Dr. Hollandsworth recused herself while the Board voted on the following personnel item that included her sister, which passed 4-0.

Hillsboro Elementary School:

EMPLOYMENT

BARBARA L. SIERS, as Academic Interventionist at Hillsboro Elementary School, at \$22.00 per hour, three hours per day, as needed, not to exceed 195 hours or \$4,290.00, effective March 11, 2021 for the remainder of the 2020-2021 school year.

MATTERS OF THE BOARD...

Mr. McComb and Mr. Burns voiced no concerns for Matters of the Board at the present time.

Mr. McLaughlin inquired about the property update. Mr. Barr has not completed the survey.

Mr. Gibson had a few items for discussion. He inquired about feedback from the teachers concerning outdoor learning. Though the outside learning environment is utilized, Mr. Gibson would like future discussion on an actual Outdoor Learning Policy.

Mr. Gibson requested that the Central Office looks into applying for the Revised Hero Act, a \$5 billion COVID Stimulus Relief package, offered to K-12 schools for air flow improvement quality and ventilation systems if it becomes available. Superintendent Beam explained that the State Department informs him when new grants are accessible.

Lastly, Mr. Gibson questioned the Basketball sports schedule and why we did not play neighboring counties. Mrs. Tritapoe explained scheduling conflicts and COVID quarantines as major constraints to sports schedules this season.

Dr. Hollandsworth reminded the Board to review the 2020-2021 Superintendent's goals. On April 20, 2021, during Executive Session, the goals will be evaluated. Additionally, suggestions for the 2021-2022 school year objectives will also be discussed.

EXECUTIVE SESSION...

On the motion of Dr. Hollandsworth, seconded by Mr. Burns, the Board unanimously approved a call for Executive Session to discuss personnel matters. The Board went into Executive Session at 8:33 PM and at the conclusion of the Executive Session, on the motion of Dr. Hollandsworth, seconded by Mr. Burns, the Board unanimously agreed to return to the agenda at 9:10 PM.


NEXT BOARD MEETING...

Next Board of Education Meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 30, 2021, beginning with a Local School Improvement Council Meeting at 3:00 PM immediately followed by regular agenda items at Green Bank Elementary-Middle School, Green Bank, WV.

ADJOURN...

On the motion of Mr. McLaughlin and seconded by Mr. Burns, the Board unanimously agreed to adjourn to reconvene on April 20, 2021 at 8:00 AM in the Board of Education Conference Room, Buckeye, WV.


Secretary


President