

**Board of Supervisors Joint Meeting with School Board (Wednesday, April 10, 2024)**  
*Northumberland County, Virginia*

**Members Present:**

James M. Long, Richard F. Haynie, James W. Brann, Chip Williams, AC Fisher, Jr.

**Other Staff Present:**

Mr. Luttrell Tadlock, County Administrator

Mr. Drew Basye, Assistant County Administrator

Ms. Morgan Wilson, Executive Assistant

Ms. Mary Dodson, Benefits & Bookkeeper Administrator

Mr. Carl Hayden, IT Technician

**1. Opening of Meeting 5:30 P.M.**

The joint meeting with the School Board was convened by Chairman Haynie and held at the Northumberland Courthouse located at 220 Judicial Place, Heathsville, VA 22473.

The School Board Chair called the School Board meeting to order as this was a joint meeting. Attending the meeting was Betty Christopher, Dave Curran, Denise Mazyck, Cheryl Davis, and Dana O'Bier.

**Information: A. Discussion - Joint Meeting with School Board**

Superintendent Wargo stated that the School Board will be sharing some comments tonight and the Finance Director will be providing an update on the ESSER funds as requested by the Board of Supervisors. Additionally, Finance Director Booth will be presenting several special appropriations on behalf of the School Board. Dr. Wargo informed the Board that their presentation tonight will serve as their update for the week, and they will not be attending tomorrow's regular Board of Supervisors meeting.

Mrs. Booth provided the Board with a chart that gives an update on the ESSER funds. Included in the chart was the expiration date for these funds. ESSER II expired in September 2023 so that grant is completely closed. Included is the budgeted amount, the amount that has already been reimbursed back to the County as of today, and the OMEGA amount (how much is remaining as of today that is not reimbursed). Mrs. Booth stated that there was also a question about the amount that has been spent and reimbursed for this fiscal year, so provided were the totals spent and reimbursed for each grant. She stated that the ARP Before and After School was budgeted for \$100,000.00 and \$70,389.52 has already been reimbursed back to the County. The remaining amount is \$29,610.48 and Mrs. Booth explained that those funds are specifically going toward a before and after school Saturday school program. Their hope is to spend the remainder of those funds by the end of the school year, but if not, the funds can be used for the summer school program. Mrs. Booth continued to present the total amounts for the ARP summer school and the ARP Unfinished Learning. The chart presented can be accessed in board docs.

Vice Chairman Brann asked what monies are used for the school's expenses when the grant funds are not received up front and are on a reimbursement basis.

Mrs. Booth explained that the upfront monies come from the County's coffer.

**Action: B. Supplemental Appropriation - School Board**

Finance Director Booth then presented four special appropriation requests. The first request was the VDOE Grant Funded Vision Screening Program which is done annually. The school already received these funds through electronic deposit on October 20, 2023, in the amount of \$2,513.00 and these funds have already been spent. The school is requesting the Board appropriate these monies so they can eliminate that negative line item.

Supervisor Williams asked how much local funding is associated with the program.

Mrs. Booth explained that there is no local funding involved.

Motion to approve the supplemental appropriation request from the School Board for the VDOE Grant Funded Vision Screening Program to line item 30-6000-6200 (Administration & Health) in the amount of \$2,513.00.

Motion by: AC Fisher, Jr., second by: Chip Williams.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Aye: James M. Long, Richard F. Haynie, James W. Brann, Chip Williams, AC Fisher, Jr.

**Action: C. Transferring Funds - School Board**

The second request from the school was a transfer of funds. Mrs. Booth stated that they requested \$7,859.00 for Debt Service in their FY24 budget and the only expense in that category is for their ISAEP program at the Northern Neck Technical Center. The original invoice received from the Technical Center was in the amount of \$7,859.00, however on November 1, 2024, the school received a revised invoice in the amount of \$8,173.37, so the school is requesting to transfer the difference, \$314.37, from Instruction to Debt Service to cover the cost.

Supervisor Williams asked what caused the difference in the invoice.

Mrs. Booth stated the number of students participating.

Motion to transfer funds from 30-6000-6100 (Instruction) to 30-6000-6700 (Debt Service) to cover the difference in cost for the ISAEP Program in the amount of \$314.37.

Motion by: Richard F. Haynie, second by: AC Fisher, Jr.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Aye: James M. Long, Richard F. Haynie, James W. Brann, Chip Williams, AC Fisher, Jr.

**Information: D. Transferring Funds - School Board**

The third request is the Cafeteria fund carry over monies from FY 23 to FY 24 in the amount of \$487,585.39. Mrs. Booth explained that all of these funds have already been received by the County and they cannot be used for anything other than school nutrition. The funds would be applied as follows:

Capital Outlay	\$ 158,000.00
Food	\$ 275,000.00
Non-Food Supplies	\$ 54,585.39

Supervisor Williams asked how the capital outlay was determined.

Mrs. Booth stated that Mrs. Hamlett included a plan/list of items that she would like to purchase for school nutrition.

Vice Chairman Brann asked what is normally budgeted for food.

Mrs. Booth stated she is unsure and doesn't have this amount with her.

Vice Chairman Brann asked if the \$275,000 was in addition to what's already budgeted.

Mrs. Booth explained that this was in addition to what is budgeted. She stated that this would allow her to make more of the fresher food purchases that she would like to provide for the students.

Chairman Haynie stated that he doesn't understand why they need additional funding for food when money has already been appropriated and hasn't been spent.

Mrs. Booth stated that she could request further information from Mrs. Hamlett on this.

**Action: E. Supplemental Appropriation - School Board**

Mrs. Booth went on to the last appropriation request and informed the Board that the way the money is put into the system on the school's side does not align with the County's side. The school is able to break it out into subcategories whereas the County is unable to do so. Mrs. Booth made the Board aware of this because the final appropriation request is broken down into categories. She stated that the ESSER III funds total \$1,165,745.24. \$583,031.24 would be spent in Instruction and the remainder (\$582,714.00) would be spent in Capital Outlay. The Unfished Learning as well as the Before and After School Program funding will both be spent out of Instruction.

Chairman Haynie asked for an explanation on the Capital Outlay.

Mrs. Booth stated that the majority comes from expenses related to Connemara for the JROTC/STEM building.

Dr. Dave Curran asked what it's going to take to bridge the gap in the finances between the school and Mr. Tadlock's office.

Mrs. Booth stated that they have a pretty good idea of how they are going to fix it, they just need to get together and discuss it.

County Administrator Tadlock informed the Boards that this process is really through the Treasurer's office and not through County Administration. He explained that Ms. Dodson has reached out to RDA and there is a bridging opportunity there, so that information has been provided to the Treasurer's office.

Vice Chairman Brann asked if a software program is available for the County and the School to use.

Mr. Tadlock stated that most Counties and School Divisions are kept separate and if the County chose to switch programs, there would be no bridging opportunity between the two systems anymore.

Vice Chairman Brann believes that Counties and School Divisions should implement the same software program so that information can be shared easily. He stated that this is setting us up for failure being on two different programs.

Supervisor Williams asked if there was a reason why they are typically on separate programs.

Mr. Tadlock and Ms. Dodson explained that the school uses different modules than the County.

Supervisor Williams asked if the funds were to be appropriated, would it exhaust all the monies in ESSER III?

Mrs. Booth confirmed that was correct and stated that they are hoping to have all the funds spent by June 30, 2024.

Chairman Haynie asked how their standing of funds is in their instruction category.

Mrs. Booth stated that right now they are on track, and everything looks good at this time.

Supervisor Williams asked what would happen if that money was not appropriated.

Chairman Haynie explained that if the money is not appropriated by September, it would go back to the Federal Government.

Dr. Wargo explained that waiting until September is not something any School Division would want to do because the VDOE is flooded with reimbursement requests at their expiration date.

Mrs. Booth stated that the appropriation must be completed before the end of the fiscal year.

Vice Chairman Brann stated that he thought the JROTC building was paid for.

Mrs. Booth stated that it has been but some of the payments occurred after June 30<sup>th</sup>, so they ran into this fiscal year.

Vice Chairman Brann asked what the Saturday School Program consists of.

Dr. Wargo stated that students come to Saturday school in the morning and receive targeted instruction in any subject matter that they are experiencing difficulty with. It's intended to help with learning loss from the pandemic.

Supervisor Fisher asked what grades Saturday school are available to.

Dr. Wargo stated that it was originally started in the middle and high school, but there was great success, so it is now offered at the elementary school as well.

Supervisor Fisher asked if the hours were the same as a regular school day.

Dr. Wargo explained that it is only in the morning for four hours.

Supervisor Fisher asked how much of the four hours is dedicated to instruction.

Dr. Wargo stated that they view it as four hours of instruction. She also informed the Board that if a student is having attendance issues, they can also use Saturday school as an intervention to count towards their seat hours.

Supervisor Fisher asked if the students receive any meals or get recess time.

Dr. Wargo stated they do provide meals. Their students eat free of charge, and they do get recess time if it's appropriate.

Supervisor Fisher questioned how much time is dedicated to instruction since they have meals and recess.

Dr. Wargo stated that she'd have to get with the individual principals on this and get back to him on that question.

Supervisor Williams asked what would make a child need to make up for absenteeism. What would make a student come to school on a Saturday if they didn't come Monday through Friday.

Dr. Wargo stated they have attendance plans so hopefully parents are supportive about making up that time. Students in the higher grades have to earn locally verified credits so that would be an incentive to earn that. Additionally, if a child is having extreme attendance challenges, they will do a CHINS through the court system and they can be ordered to attend school.

Supervisor Fisher asked how much school bus time is needed for the program.

Dr. Wargo stated that there are fewer buses needed because it's a smaller group of students.

Chairman Haynie asked how many students typically attend on average.

Dr. Wargo stated 20 or under.

Supervisor Long asked how the school gets the parents involved when it comes to their child's attendance.

Dr. Wargo stated they have in-person meetings and phone calls if the parent is unable to come in person. She stated that staff contacts the parent, and they come up with a plan on how to take action.

Supervisor Williams stated that 20 students or less sounds like a very small number.

Dr. Wargo stated that since she is following up with Mr. Fisher, she will follow up with attendance totals as well.

Supervisor Fisher asked if the program is experimental.

Dr. Wargo stated that the school has these unfinished learning funds with certain parameters of use, right now it's hinged with Covid-19, and once they are spent, there will not necessarily be local dollars to support a Saturday School Program.

Supervisor Williams asked if the program has been totally funded with grant money since its existence.

Dr. Wargo and Mrs. Booth stated that it has been.

Supervisor Williams asked what happens when the monies run out.

Dr. Wargo stated that it's possible that there will be no Saturday School Program depending on the budget allocation and where they are in the instruction category.

Supervisor Williams stated the only reason he sees to not appropriate these monies is the potential of the program being funded on local dollars down the road. On the other hand, he mentioned that these monies are going to be lost if they do not spend them.

Motion to approve the supplemental appropriation request from the School Board as follows:

ESSER III - 30-6000-6100 (Instruction) - \$583,031.24

ESSER III - 30-6000-6600 (Capital Outlay) - \$582,714.00

ARP ESSER - Unfinished Learning - 30-6000-6100 (Instruction) - \$313,363.41

ARP ESSER - Before and After School - 30-6000-6100 (Instruction) - \$29,610.48

Motion by: James M. Long, second by: AC Fisher, Jr.

Final Resolution: **Motion Failed**

Aye: James M. Long, AC Fisher, Jr.

Nay: Richard F. Haynie, James W. Brann, Chip Williams

Mrs. Booth requested the Board let her know if they need further information on that.

Supervisor Williams asked the Board if they'd be more inclined to appropriate the money if it did not include the Before and After School funding.

Chairman Haynie would like to discuss this matter later.

Mrs. O'Bier asked for clarification on who voted against the appropriation of the funds.

Chairman Haynie clarified that he also voted against the appropriation.

Vice Chairman Brann asked Mrs. Booth to provide the Board with a breakdown of the categories that these monies will be placed in as well as what is left in those categories now.

Mrs. Booth asked if she could address some questions related to one of the Board's previous meetings. One item was related to the auditor's report stating that reconciliations are still an issue. She explained that's correct for that report because it reported the 2022-2023 school year. She'd like to remind everyone that she didn't accept her position with the school until November 2022. Mrs. Booth assured the Board that the reconciliations are being done correctly now and unfortunately the report included months prior to her start date.

Vice Chairman Brann asked Mrs. Booth to speak on the lack of invoices also noted in the audit.

Mrs. Booth explained that was also before she started her position and a lot has changed. She stated they have a brand new finance team and they've made a lot of improvements.

Dr. Dave Curran asked if there's a need to go back and do the journal entries for fiscal year 2023 to make sure all funds are flowing properly.

Vice Chairman Brann stated that journal entries are going to change numbers and that fiscal year is closed out.

Dr. Wargo stated that may be a question to ask the auditors since that is closed at this point.

Chairman Haynie asked if Mrs. Booth was up to date on the reconciliations.

Mrs. Booth stated that she just received the March information from Mrs. Gail Dungan and she will have them done before the Board meeting on Monday. She explained that she always has them done before the School Board meetings.

Finance Director Booth stated that there was a comment made about changing the numbers of a budget year that has already closed out. She stated that she's been trying to think of what the comment was referring to, but the only thing she could think of was the recapitulation documents. She explained that she corrected last year's recapitulation when creating this year's recapitulation because she wanted the figures to reflect what was actually appropriated and not what their original request was to the Board of Supervisors. Mrs. Booth stated that if this wasn't the document they were referring to, she'd be happy to look into it further and answer any questions.

Mrs. Denise Mazyck stated that there have been some concerns in the public and in the community regarding their policy of terminal pay for unused sick leave. Mrs. Denise Mazyck read the policy as follows:

The initial policy was adopted in December 1983 and then revised in 1988, 2009, 2012, 2015 and 2023. "Northumberland County School Board will pay qualified employees at retirement for accumulated unused sick leave at a rate established by the Board. The employee must satisfy the following conditions to qualify.

1. Provide the superintendent with written notice of retirement prior to March 15th of the year retiring. Requests for exceptions may be made to the board in emergency situations.
2. Be eligible for full VSRS retirement benefits in accordance with established age and experience requirements.
3. Have worked a minimum of five years immediately prior to retirement in the Northumberland County Public Schools. Payment will be made at a rate of \$55 per year, not to exceed 210 days. Payment will be made on or before the last working day in July following retirement. Payment will not be made posthumously."

Mrs. Mazyck wanted to make everyone aware that this policy was not new, and it has been in place since 1983. She stated that the only thing that has changed over time is the increase in pay.



Mrs. Betty Christopher explained that they chose to increase the pay from \$40 to \$55 last year because substitutes were getting paid \$80 a day. She stated that last year they couldn't get substitutes because the pay was too low, so they increased their pay to \$110 a day. She stated years ago it was put in place that half the pay would go toward the person retiring and the other half would go towards the taxpayers.

Dr. Dave Curran stated if the retiree has 210 days, it's \$11,550.

Mrs. Christopher stated that a lot of the teachers are not going to have those days. Dr. Wargo also stated that the work ethic is not what it used to be, and teachers like to take their leave.

Mrs. Christopher explained that they've realized the value of the teacher being in the classroom as opposed to a substitute and they want the teacher in the classroom as much as possible.

Supervisor Williams asked what neighboring counties are doing.

Mrs. Christopher stated that she was told Gloucester paid \$100 a day, and Mrs. O'Bier stated that Richmond County pays \$40 a day.

Supervisor Fisher stated that it would help the Board of Supervisors if the School Board would make them aware of actions such as these ahead of time, so they have the facts.

Dr. Wargo stated that after every School Board meeting, they release a press release on all action items, so she would try to remember to forward that information to Mr. Tadlock in the future so he can forward it to the Board of Supervisors.

Dr. Curran suggested the press release be sent to the Board of Supervisors prior to releasing the press release so they have time to ask any questions.

Dr. Wargo stated that the School Board could consider that but the only concern there is that the public typically wants information as soon as possible after an official meeting.

Vice Chairman Brann stated that it would help the Board to have a heads up on any increase so they can prepare and know what to expect. He thinks discussions and making a plan together ahead of time before implementation would be beneficial.

Mrs. O'Bier stated that she hopes the Board of Supervisors will consider covering the school's health insurance increase as they did for County employees.

Chairman Haynie stated that the Board always tries to look out for their employees and they're not going to give the school employees anything less for health insurance.

Vice Chairman Brann asked if the school does anything different from the County for the family plan.

Dr. Wargo stated that they are consistent with the County.

Vice Chairman Brann then referred to the questions and answers list related to the school's FY25 budget. This list can be accessed in board docs. He stated that question one's response said there was a lot of movement among categories in funds as they work to align expenditures. Mr. Brann asked if they were moving money from category to category.

Mrs. Booth stated no monies are being moved, but they simply are moving expenditures.

Dr. Dave Curran motioned that the School Board go into closed session with the Board of Supervisors on a personnel matter. Mrs. O'Bier seconded the motion.

Chairman Haynie stated that the Boards employees are separate. He asked Mr. Tadlock if that was correct.

County Administrator Tadlock stated that he could contact the County Attorney to see if the closed session between both Boards is possible.

Mrs. O'Bier asked if the Board has gone into closed session with other departments.

Chairman Haynie stated yes if there are personnel issues or budget items that are not allowed to be discussed in the public.

Dr. Curran asked if Mr. Tadlock would check with the County Attorney to see if this was possible.

*\*Chairman Haynie requested a 10-minute recess while Mr. Tadlock contacts Mr. Gregory.*

Chairman Haynie called the meeting back to order and stated that the County Attorney informed Mr. Tadlock that to his knowledge there is no way to have a joint closed session. Mr. Gregory advised the school to contact their attorney and have them contact him on this topic to see if there's any way to have a joint closed session.

Mr. Tadlock further explained that it's just a matter of seeing if there's an allowable provision under the closed meeting code section and if there is, they'll certainly follow up on that.

Dr. Curran believes there are times when the two Boards should meet to discuss any decisions to be made or issues in the County to allow for complete transparency.

The School Board's Chair, Betty Christopher, adjourned to close the joint meeting.

## **2. Items Related to Closed Meeting**

### **Action: A. Convene into Closed Meeting**

Motion to Action: A. Convene into Closed Meeting: convene into closed meeting as permitted by Virginia Code Section 2.2-3711 (A)(1),(29); 1. Discussion, consideration, or interviews of prospective candidates for employment; assignment, appointment, promotion, performance,

demotion, salaries, disciplining, or resignation of specific public officers, appointees, or employees of any public body; and evaluation of performance of departments or schools of public institutions of higher education where such evaluation will necessarily involve discussion of the performance of specific individuals. Any teacher shall be permitted to be present during a closed meeting in which there is a discussion or consideration of a disciplinary matter that involves the teacher and some student and the student involved in the matter is present, provided the teacher makes a written request to be present to the presiding officer of the appropriate board. Nothing in this subdivision, however, shall be construed to authorize a closed meeting by a local governing body or an elected school board to discuss compensation matters that affect the membership of such body or board collectively. 29. Discussion of the award of a public contract involving the expenditure of public funds, including interviews of bidders or offerors, and discussion of the terms or scope of such contract, where discussion in an open session would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the public body.

Motion by: James W. Brann, second by: AC Fisher, Jr.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Aye: James M. Long, Richard F. Haynie, James W. Brann, Chip Williams, AC Fisher, Jr.

**Action: B. Reconvene into Open Meeting**

Motion to reconvene into open session.

Motion by: James W. Brann, second by: AC Fisher, Jr.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Aye: James M. Long, Richard F. Haynie, James W. Brann, Chip Williams, AC Fisher, Jr.

**Action: C. Certification of Closed Meeting**

Motion that the Northumberland Board of Supervisors return to Public Meeting and certify by roll call vote that only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, and as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard, discussed or considered during the closed meeting.

The vote on the motion was passed by a roll call vote as follows:

Aye: Richard F. Haynie, AC Fisher, Jr., James M. Long, James W. Brann, Charles H. Williams

Motion by: James W. Brann, second by: AC Fisher, Jr.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Aye: James M. Long, Richard F. Haynie, James W. Brann, Chip Williams, AC Fisher, Jr.

**3. Closing of Meeting**

**Action: A. Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn.

Motion by: James W. Brann, second by: James M. Long.

Final Resolution: Motion Carried

Aye: James M. Long, Richard F. Haynie, James W. Brann, Chip Williams, AC Fisher, Jr.