

The Washington County School Board convened for a School Board Strategic Planning Meeting on Monday, September 18, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. The meeting was held at the School Board Office, 812 Thompson Drive, Abingdon, Virginia. Present were:

Dr. Brian C. Ratliff, Superintendent	Dr. Doug Arnold
Ms. Melissa Caudill, Director of Finance & Clerk of the Board	Mr. Terry Fleenor
Ms. Elizabeth Lowe, Chair	Mr. Tom Musick
Mr. Billy Brooks, Vice Chair	Mr. Dayton Owens
	Mr. Danny Ruble

1. Ms. Elizabeth Lowe, School Board Chair, called the meeting to order.
2. Determination of quorum – seven of seven board members were present.
3. Dr. Brian Ratliff led the Pledge of Allegiance.
4. Upon motion by Mr. Brooks, seconded by Mr. Owens, by 7-0 vote, the agenda was approved as amended with the September 18, 2017, agenda added for approval.
5. Upon motion by Mr. Brooks, seconded by Dr. Arnold, by 7-0 vote, the agenda for the October 16, 2017, School Board Meeting agenda was approved.
6. Dr. Ratliff provided the Board with information regarding Student Learning/Assessment and Accreditation results released by the Department of Education (DOE). There were only sixty-five school systems in the entire state that are fully accredited. Washington County Schools is one of these fully accredited divisions. Accreditation is based on the performance of students on Standards of Learning (SOL) and other state-approved assessments in English, Mathematics, Science, and History for the 2016-2017 school year. Dr. Ratliff said Washington County Schools have made significant gains in these areas over the past three years. He noted that we are making great progress on student performance and learning, as reflected in these assessments and we continue to improve each year. We continue to work on Project Based learning opportunities for our students and we will continue to pursue fiscal resources to provide funding for these student academic programs.
7. Dr. Noe stated that we have seen significant growth over the past three years in our educational progress. The focus is to identify ways to help improve each individual every day. We are working with project REAL (Reinforcing Education through Artistic Learning) in the middle and high schools. This organization helps teach students and assist educators by utilizing theatre techniques and integrating the student's life experiences into the curriculum. Dr. Noe stated that our division's current academic focus is on learning and instruction. The results reflect our continued improvement with student writing abilities. This area was a weakness in previous years that was very concerning and that we aggressively targeted for improvement. The scores demonstrate that the improvement efforts have been effective as reflected in these new stronger student-writing scores. We will continue to target areas for improvement and to be committed to the success of every student every day. Dr. Noe provided information on the progress, noting that we continue to make significant improvements in our state ranking relative to other school divisions. Our overall pass percent rate has increased and we now rank twelfth best in the state. Dr. Ratliff noted the importance of leading by example and encourage students to take ownership of their own learning and help them understand what that looks like. Dr. Noe discussed the importance of our teacher collaboration. Consultants have been retained to assist teachers in

some problematic areas. This training will help provide intensive professional development training to our teachers. This has already shown to be beneficial. We will continue to identify areas for improvement. Dr. Noe said he would provide further updates to the School Board as these initiatives progress.

8. Ms. Lowe said they have heard from those in the community with concerns about the emphasis on (Standards of Learning) SOL testing. They are worried that SOL testing is a priority.
9. Dr. Noe stated that SOL testing is important but it was not the main focus. We will continue to work on improving that perception. He discussed the importance of providing teachers with the resources and training needed to improving their instructional skills.
10. Ms. Lowe committed she had attended and Elementary School presentation of a time line of social studies learning objectives that was coordinated by teachers from many areas. It was provided by a collaboration ranging from kindergarten and special programs through fifth grade. Ms. Lowe stated this was very inspiring to see the students present their knowledge of the standards.
11. Mr. Brooks said he is very proud of the accomplishments that have been achieved with our students. He commented that the results reflect that both students and teachers are doing exceptionally well.
12. Dr. Noe discussed the relationship between Highlands Community Services (HCS) and Washington County Schools, stating a new facility has been built behind the Harry Coomes Center. That facility houses a couple of programs in which we collaborate. One program is the Inter-Change Program for elementary and secondary education. HCS provides other programs in addition to our collaborative programs. Center based programs were also added for students with special needs, currently located at Abingdon Elementary, Meadowview Elementary and E. B. Stanley Middle School. The programs continue to grow due to demand and will be continually monitored to provide enhanced educational services to our students with special needs.

Dr. Noe noted that this year, the School Board is scheduled for an update on the status of our Comprehensive Plan established two years ago. Will be meeting in October for this update to review the plans and progress to date.

Dr. Noe discussed the calendar committee is working on a tentative 2017-2018 School Calendar.

8:15 p.m. – Break

8:20 p.m. – Resume

13. Dr. Ratliff discussed the Division's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) noting that we are internally addressing the lack of funding for our capital infrastructure by assuming as much work as we can with our current maintenance and building staff. Dr. Ratliff noted the 2018 anchor items like roofing; boilers at Abingdon High, E. B. Stanley Middle and Washington County Career and Technical Center; Air Conditioning to kitchens; replace Chiller at Holston High; and other items slated for the FY 2018 CIP needs that require immediate attention.
14. Dr. Wallace provided further updates on the specific areas of the FY 2018 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) list for review and discussion. Specifically noted is the sewage issue at John S. Battle High School. Further discussion ensued regarding the field house at John. S. Battle High School; chillers needed for the high schools, boilers for Abingdon High School, E. B.

Stanley Middle School, and the Washington County Career and Technical Center in relation to the other items on the CIP.

15. Dr. Ratliff noted that the athletic rest rooms and sewage situation at John S. Battle High School must be addressed immediately for health and safety concerns. Recommends that the fieldhouse could be done in phases. The roofing and demolition of the skill center will come out of the 316 fund. Mr. Ruble discussed the idea that it might be cost effective to have one stadium for all schools.
16. Mr. Musick asked to discuss the ongoing roofing projects. Dr. Wallace said when this roofing project cycle is complete, barring catastrophic weather events, our roofs should be in good shape for ten to fifteen years before another enormous roofing cycle will need implementation.
17. Ms. Caudill provided the School Board a copy of the actuarial report received for the Washington County School System's Supplemental Retirement Program. The retirement plan's oversight committee will meet Wednesday, October 4, 2017 to review the actuarial report with the actuarial consulting firm. A committee report will be presented to the School Board after the committee meets to provide a summary of the report and current fiscal standing of the plan.
18. Dr. Ratliff presented the Board a copy of the goals and accomplishments he will be sharing with the Board of Supervisors.
19. Upon motion by Mr. Ruble, seconded by Dr. Arnold, by 7-0 vote, the meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Elizabeth P. Howe, Chair

Melissa Caudill, Clerk

Hula Hussein, Recorder

**MOTION:** Mr. Ruble

**SECOND:** Dr. Arnold

**CERTIFICATION OF CLOSED MEETING**

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

**WHEREAS,** §2.2-3712 (D) of the *Code of Virginia* requires a certification by this School Board that such closed meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia Law;

**WHEREAS, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED,** that the Washington County School Board hereby certifies 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.

AYES: 7

NAYS: 0

ABSTAINED: 0

  
Washington County School Board, Clerk

Meeting Date: September 18, 2017