

**COLUMBUS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
JOINT MEETING with COLUMBUS COUNTY SCHOOLS**

**Tuesday, March 09, 2021
5:30 P.M.**

The Honorable Columbus County Commissioners met on the above stated date and at the above stated time, at Southeastern Community College, 4564 Chadbourn Highway, Room 120, T-Building Whiteville, North Carolina, for the purpose of conducting a Joint Meeting with Columbus County Schools.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Ricky Bullard, **Chairman / Interim County Manager**
Jerome McMillian, **Vice Chairman**
Chris Smith
Giles E. Byrd
Lavern Coleman
Brent Watts
Charles T. McDowell

APPOINTEES PRESENT:

Amanda B. Prince, **County Attorney**
June B. Hall, **Clerk to Board**
Bobbie Faircloth, **Finance Officer**

COLUMBUS COUNTY SCHOOLS:

Dr. Deanne **Meadows, Superintendent**
Worley Edwards, **Chairman**
Ronnie Strickland, **Vice Chairman**
Lisa Nowlin, **Finance Officer**

MEETING CALLED to ORDER and INVOCATION:

At 5:30 P.M., Chairman Ricky Bullard called the meeting to order. The invocation was delivered by Commissioner Lavern Coleman.

PRESENTATION by DR. DEANNE MEADOWS:

I would like to thank you for the extra funding we received last year. We received \$400,000 in COVID funds, and \$570,000+ technology funds. We were able to provide one-to-one chrome books to our students.

MOST EFFECTIVE EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES:

- The **TEACHER** has the biggest impact on student learning
- Vacancies in math all year
- Loss of teachers during the year for higher pay
- Great working environments - facilities
- Support and targeted professional development opportunities
- Access to valid and research-based resources
- Engagement of the community (parents and business)

IMPACT of an EFFECTIVE EDUCATION:

- Education is the #1 consideration for moving to an area
- Provides a skilled and knowledgeable workforce
- Increase economic welfare of the county
- Why We Worry About Education** by Eric A. Hanuskek (National Center for Education Statistics)
 - “Education is valuable to individuals and to society as a whole.”
 - “More educated members of society are generally healthier, they are more likely to become informed citizens who participate in government, they are less likely to be involved in crime, and they are less likely to be dependent on public support.”
 - “The education level of the workforce affect the rate of productivity growth in the economy.”
- North Carolina’s Southeast Competitive Positioning Report 2020
 - High School Graduation
 - Career and Technical Opportunities

820

-Partnership with Southeastern Community College

ADM (ENROLLMENT) PROJECTIONS:

School Year	Average Daily Membership	Difference	Cost
2014-2015	5960	-111	-\$943,500
2015-2016	5883	-77	-\$654,500
2016-2017	5685	-198	-\$1,683,000
2017-2018	5598	-87	-\$739,500
2018-2019	5475	-123	-\$1,045,500
2019-2020	5395	-80	-\$680,000
2020-2021	5162	-233	(held harmless)
2021-2022	5280 (DPI Projection)	-115	-\$977,500

CURRENT EXPENSE PRIORITIES:

- Signing Bonus for Math Teachers (\$15,000 for current math vacancies; budget \$40,000 for unknown future vacancies)
- Supplement Increase (\$260,000 for 1% for certified staff)
- 2 Counselors (\$148,000 average salary with benefits and increased supplement)
- Technology Technician (\$69,000 average salary with benefits and supplement)
- Curriculum Resources
 - Math and Science - HS
 - Science - 5th grade
 - Supplemental - Reading K-8 and Math K-8
- Pay Table Adjustments - Phases

FACILITY CONSIDERATIONS:

Closed 4 Schools - savings in current and capital
2 New Schools - TCES, TCMS, CGES, and EES closures
New school on Eastern End
Maintaining quality sites - moving to preventive

CAPITAL FUNDING

Current Standing of Funding:

- Article 44 - Old Dock Sewer Lines and loan payment for new schools
- Article 40 and 42 - School District Uses for Capital Projects and loan payment for CG until 2028
- Lottery Funds - No funds for five (5) years (2 more years)
- Capital Funds - Received each year
- Fines and Forfeitures - Received each year
- Total the last few years \$1.7 million+

IMPACT of LOAN PAYMENT for NEW SCHOOLS:

- Original Plan - Article 40, 42 and 44 for loan payment
- Resulting in only\$693,557.59 for capital

Today's picture:

- Lower interest rate - reduces the payment
- Article 44 - \$966,749.00
- Allow Article 40 and 42 allocation to CCS to keep funding for capital projects and maintenance

CAPITAL PRIORITIES:

- Safety access control for doors at all sites (\$400,000)
- Technology infrastructure (\$290,000)

- Wrecker for transportation (for both school systems) (\$108,000)
- Activity buses (\$375,000)
- Roof Repairs at HAES, WTS, and NMS (\$720,000)
- HVAC replacement at HAES (\$150,000)
- East and South lighting repairs (\$250,000)
- WCHS reconstruct tennis courts (\$125,000)
- WCHS driveway (\$80,000)

REQUEST for 2021-2022:

- Current Expense:
 - Request a 15% increase in current expense to give a 3% increase in the supplement for recruitment and retention of staff
- Capital:
 - County use only Article 44 to fund the loan payment
 - CCS retain all portions of Article 40 and 42 for life of loan
 - Request additional funding in capital for wrecker (\$108,000)
 - Request additional funding for continued technology recovery from the cyber-incident (\$250,000)

STRATEGIC PLANNING:

- Mr. Watts - representative on steering committee
- Focus Groups - 6 P.M. to 7:30 P.M.
 - March 15 - SCHS
 - March 16 - ECJSHS
 - March 18 - WCHS
 - March 23 - Virtual
- Please join one of the groups to hear the State of the Schools and to provide input.

ADJOURNMENT:

At 6:25 P.M., the meeting was adjourned.

APPROVED:

JUNE B. HALL, Clerk to Board

RICKY BULLARD, Chairman