

**MINUTES**  
**WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR BOARD MEETING**  
**Tuesday, July 16, 2024 6:00 p.m.**

**Roll Call**

Board Members Present:

Ms. Linda Byrd

Ms. Victoria Lehman

Mrs. Joyce Long

Ms. Jennifer Sims

Mrs. Ebony Talley-Brame

**Also in Attendance**

Superintendent, Mr. Keith Sutton

Board Attorney, Maura O'Keefe

Chief Human Resource Officer, Dr. Keedra Whitaker

Chief Communication and Engagement Officer, Heather Mallard

Chief Operations Officer, Dr. Dennis Carrington

Chief Academic Officer, Dr. Yakisha Clemons

**1.0 Opening of Meeting**

The Warren County Board of Education met for their Regular Board Meeting on Tuesday, July 16, 2024 at 6:09 p.m. at Warren County Middle School located at 118 Campus Drive, Warrenton, North Carolina.

**1.1 Meeting Call to Order**

Ms. Lehman announced the establishment of a quorum and called the July 16, 2024 Regular Board Meeting to order.

**1.2 Moment of Silence**

Ms. Lehman asked for a moment of silence.

**2.0 Board Chair Announcements**

**2.1 Board Chair's Comments**

Board Chair Lehman stated, "Good evening everyone. I just wanted to say that tonight's meeting is on an off Tuesday. Our regular scheduled meetings are normally held on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month. We will return to our regular meeting schedule in August."

**2.2 Other Board Member's Comments**

Vice Chair Sims thanked all parents and students that participated in summer program. We appreciated your attendance.

**3.0 Superintendent's Updates**

**3.1 Superintendent Updates to the Board**

Mr. Sutton stated, "Good evening everyone, we want to remind everyone that during the summer months, Warren County Schools and offices are closed on Fridays.

We're working 10-hour days Monday through Thursday, so it's still a full 40-hour work week. What does this mean for you? It means all of our schools and offices are open Monday through Thursday from 7:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. All schools and offices are closed on Fridays. We'll resume our standard, 5-day work week beginning Monday, August 5th.

## **2023-24 Highlights**

At our meeting last month, I shared some of our departmental highlights from the 2023-24 school year. Well, we had so many highlights that I couldn't include them all during the last meeting, so I want to continue the list and highlight some additional accomplishments this month.

### **Communications**

We focused last school year on improving our direct communication with students, families, staff, and the community.

- Last school year, the district alone sent out
  - More than 38-thousand calls to students' families and staff
  - More than 31-thousand text messages
  - And more than 12-thousand emails
- We hosted 24 radio shows on WARR
- We also hosted three community information sessions and conducted multiple surveys to collect community input and feedback.
- We gained nearly 600 new Facebook followers, bringing our total to more than 21-hundred. That's up about 45-percent from the previous year.
- We gained 211 new Instagram followers, bringing our total number of IG followers to 407.
- Because of those efforts, we reached 87.5 thousand people through Facebook and 4.1 thousand people through Instagram.

### **Elementary Education**

Our staff have been working hard to refocus on using data-proven best practices to teach students their core subjects, like reading and math.

One of those programs is Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling, commonly known as LETRS training. It's a professional learning course based on the science of reading for elementary educators, teaching them the how, what, and why of literacy learning to improve how they teach and help achieve long-term systemic change in literacy instruction.

- This year, 26 educators in pre-k through 5th grade fully completed the 2-year LETRS training, which requires at least 140 hours to complete all of the training.
- We also had 14 additional pre-k and elementary educators complete the **first** year of the LETRS training, which requires at least 70 hours of training.
- We know this is going to have systemic change in our school district, providing a stronger foundation of reading for our younger students, which will help them throughout their educational career and the rest of their lives.

### **School Performance Team**

- Principals and Instructional Coaches met every other month with teams from similar schools and districts for professional development to help principals build their leadership capacity and strengthen the quality of teaching and learning in their schools.
- Received virtual and in-person coaching
- Helped principals and staff lead data meetings, better focus their teacher observations, and improve the quality of feedback they provide teachers to improve how they teach and interact with students.

### **Mariam Boyd Elementary**

MBES focused on increasing math scores this school year. Examples of how they made math fun include...

- Math Facts Challenges
- Mental Math Competitions
- EOG Escape Room to help students review what they learned all year before taking the End of Grade tests at the end of the year.

### **Vaughan Elementary**

Vaughan's transition to a Leader in Me school has significantly changed its school culture, now focusing on Dr. Stephen Covey's "7 Habits of Highly Effective People."

- The program teaches personal responsibility, goal-setting, and proactive behaviors
- Students have embraced these principles, taking charge of their learning and personal growth, which has led to a more motivated and engaged student body.
- Staff members have used the 7 habits to improve how they teach and work together to create a more supportive and effective teaching environment.
- Parents have also become more involved in their children's education, reinforcing the 7 habits at home and supporting our school's mission of creating happy and successful leaders

### **Warren County Middle School**

- Participated as a pilot school in the Transcend program to help our district reimagine how we teach students, so we can allow students to have a more active role in their education, what they want to learn, and how they learn.
- There were multiple opportunities for student participation and feedback throughout the school year to help guide the Transcend work
- This is already having an impact at the middle school. Their academic proficiency scores improved in
  - 7th and 8th Grade Math
  - 6th and 7th Grade English and Language Arts (ELA)

### **Warren County High School**

- We've talked about many of the highlights from Warren County High School and shared that information at Board meetings throughout the year.

### **Warren Early College High School**

- Sarah Labra-Franco, rising Senior, was selected to attend the 2024 session of the prestigious North Carolina Governor's School.

- 86 percent of juniors met the college readiness benchmark, which was a significant increase from the previous year.

### **Career and Technical Education (CTE)**

- Students earned 218 credentials during the 2023-24 school year
  - 17 in Family and Consumer Sciences
  - 32 in Medical Science and Healthcare
  - 99 in Business, Marketing, and Entrepreneurship
  - 47 in Engineering and Construction Technology
  - 23 College and Career Ready Students earning certifications through our partnership with Vance Granville Community College
    - 10 in Cosmetology
    - 9 Certified Nursing Assistants
    - 4 in Construction and Carpentry

### **Athletics**

#### **WCHS**

- WCHS Women's track team was the Conference Champs and advanced to the state track meet.
- WCHS Men's Track team finished as Runner-up in the conference and also advanced to the state track meet.
- WCHS Softball Team was the Conference Champions (4th year in a row)
- WCHS Baseball team finished 2nd Place in the Conference.
- WCHS football team and men's basketball teams made it to the state playoffs
- WCHS Cross Country team won the conference championship

#### **WCMS**

- WCMS Football team won their regular season conference championship
- WCMS Girls basketball went undefeated and won the conference and tournament championships

This concludes my comments.”

## **4.0 Approval of the Agenda**

### **4.1 Motion to Approve the July 16, 2024 Regular Board Meeting Agenda**

Ms. Lehman called for a motion to approve the July 16, 2024 Regular Board Meeting

**Motion:** A motion was made by Ms. Talley Brame and seconded by Ms. Sims to approve the July 16, 2024 Regular Board Meeting agenda.

**Result:** Motion passed, 5-0

## **5.0 Public Comments**

### **5.1 Call for Public Comments**

Ms. Lehman called for public comments. There were none.

## **6.0 Information Items**

### **6.1 Summer Retreat 2024**

Mr. Sutton presented to the board information on the 2024 Summer Retreat. This was for informational purposes only.

## **7.0 Action Items**

### **7.1 Approval of Contract for Facility Assessment, Strategic Planning and Project Management Services**

Mr. Sutton presented to the board for approval a contract for NEMA Management for facility assessment, strategic planning and project management services.

**Motion:** After further discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Sims and seconded by Ms. Talley-Brame to proceed with the contract as long as it will be discussed in the facilities meeting and provide the invoices with the scope of work that has been completed.

**Result:** Motion passed, 4-0 (Long voting no)

### **7.2 North Carolina enVision High School Math Program**

Mr. Marcus Jones, Director of Secondary Education & Innovation presented to the board for approval information on the North Carolina envision High School Math Program. It was stated, “The Academic department requests board approval to purchase the North Carolina enVision High School Math Curriculum for the 2024-2025 school year. All curriculum and instructional resources are aligned to the standard course of study for Math 1-4 courses. The enVision products and services include the following: enVision Mathematics \* Teacher Edition Package \* Student Companion \* Digital Courseware, My Math Lab, & Professional Development”

**Motion:** After further discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Long and seconded by Ms. Talley Brame to approve the purchase of the envision High School Math Program.

**Result:** Motion passed, 5-0

### **7.3 School Resource Officers Contract / MOU**

Dr. Carrington presented information to the board for approval the School Resource Officers Contract / MOU It was stated, “Good evening Board members, staff is seeking approval for the School Resource Officers contract for the 2024-2025 academic year, which will provide Warren County Schools three school resource officers.”

**Motion:** After further discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Talley Brame and seconded by Ms. Byrd to approve the School Resource Officers Contract / MOU as presented.

**Result:** Motion passed, 5-0

### **7.4 Landscaping Contract**

Dr. Carrington presented to the board for approval information on the 2024-2025 academic year Landscaping Contract. It was stated, “Staff is seeking approval for the Landscaping Contract with Quality Landscaping for the 2024-2025 academic year. The landscaping services will be provided for the following locations: Central Services, Mariam Boyd Elementary, Vaughan Elementary, the former Warren New Tech site,

Warren County Middle School and Warren County High School.”

**Motion:** After further discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Long and seconded by Ms. Sims to approve the 2024-2025 Landscaping Contract as presented.

**Result:** Motion passed, 5-0

### **7.5 OpenGate Weapons Detection System**

Dr. Carrington presented to the board for approval information on the OpenGate Weapons Detection System. It was stated, “Staff is seeking approval of the OpenGate weapons detection system. OpenGate is a system that provides security and weapons detection of people with backpacks, purses, and bags. The system provides for extreme transit flow or throughput, with near zero nuisance alarms, and is quick to setup and install. Weapons detection systems are advanced security technologies designed to spot the presence of weapons in a monitored environment. They mix artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning to examine real-time data to identify potential threats quickly and accurately.”

**Motion:** After further discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Talley Brame and seconded by Ms. Sims to approve the purchase of the OpenGate Weapons Detection System with the amendment to purchase 4 units, with the total not to exceed \$88,300.

**Result:** Motion passed, 4-0 (Long voting no)

### **7.6 Renewal of Speech Master’s Contract for the School Year 2024-2025.**

Mrs. Blythem De Sare, Director of the Exceptional Children Department presented to the board for approval the renewal of the Speech Master’s Contract for the School Year 2024-2025. It was stated, “The speech increase in overall contract amount is due to a slight increase in hourly rate. Rates has not increased in 5 years.”

**Motion:** A motion was made by Ms. Sims and seconded by Ms. Talley Brame to approve the 2024-2025 Speech Master’s Contract Renewal as presented.

**Result:** Motion passed, 5-0

## **8.0 Convene in Closed Session**

### **8.1 Motion to Convene in Closed Session**

At 8:04 p.m., Ms. Lehman called for a motion to convene in closed session.

**Motion:** A motion was made by Ms. Talley Brame and seconded by Ms. Sims to convene in closed session pursuant to N.C. General Statutes 14-318.11(a)(1), (a)(5), and (a)(6), to consider a confidential student matter, subject to 14-318.11(a)(1) and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act; to prevent the disclosure of confidential personnel information pursuant to G.S. 115C-321, to consult with the Board attorney and preserve the attorney-client privilege, pursuant to 143-318.11(a)(3), and personnel information subject to G.S. 115c-319.

**Result:** Motion passed, 5-0

**9.0 Reconvene in Open Session**

**9.1 Announcement that Board is in Open Session**

Ms. Lehman announced that the Board was back in open session.

**10.0 Action on Closed Session Item**

**10.1 Approval Personnel Report**

There was no action taken to approve this report at this time.

**11.0 Adjournment**

**11.1 Motion to Adjourn Meeting**

As there was no further business, at 11:08p.m., Ms. Lehman called for a motion to recess the July 16, 2024 Regular Board Meeting until Thursday, July 18, 2024 at 5:00pm at the WCMS..

**Motion:** A motion was made by Ms. Sims and seconded by Ms. Talley Brame to recess the July 16, 2024 Regular Board Meeting until Thursday, July 18, 2024 at 5:00pm at the WCMS..

**Result:** Motion passed, 5-0

Approved on:

SEAL

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Board Chair

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Secretary