

DICKENSON COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD
Regular School Board Meeting
February 22, 2017
5 p.m. – School Board Office

PRESENT: Susan Mullins, Chairman; Rocky Barton, Vice-Chairman; Dr. Lurton Lyle; Rick Mullins; Reba McCowan, Clerk; and Haydee Robinson, Superintendent.

ABSENT: Shanghai Nickles

ROLL CALL AND MEETING CALLED TO ORDER BY CHAIRMAN, SUSAN MULLINS:

Chairman, Susan Mullins: I would like to call this meeting to order and note for the record that all Board Members are present with the exception of Shanghai Nickles. Both, our Superintendent, Mrs. Haydee Robinson and Board Clerk, Reba McCowan are present. We will now stand for the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence. Thank you.

We have an agenda before us, is there in additions or corrections?

Superintendent Robinson: We are requesting to add item L. Local Option Health Insurance Plan – Preliminary Rates Senate Bill 364-COVA Local. We just received this information yesterday and we need to have a non-binding decision to inform them by March 15th. We apologize for the lateness of this agenda item but we will have explanation as the meeting goes on.

Chairman, Susan Mullins: With that addition do I have a motion to approve the agenda?

Mr. Rocky Barton: *I make a motion that we approve the Agenda. Dr. Lurton Lyle seconded the motion. All votes aye.*

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Chairman, Susan Mullins: That brings us to Public Comment. (Chairman Mullins read the guidelines for public comment.) Our first speaker is Allison Mullins and it looks like Mrs. Mullins is going to speak on her behalf.

Mrs. Phyllis Mullins: I am. Mrs. Mullins has had a death in her family and couldn't be here.

I just wanted to let you know that we are being very proactive where legislation is concerned: charter schools and trying to get money and things. The VEA has legislated for and against things like that. We have been talking to Mrs. Robinson about the budget and we hope to be part of the budget meetings and everything.

We want to have a membership drive. We would like to have Ms. Boitnutt to come into the schools and spend the day. Teachers could come by during their planning time and she can

answer questions that I can't answer about membership. We want to request permission for that.

Superintendent Robinson: I don't think that would be any problem. Ms. Boitnutt, if you would just contact the schools with days you would like to visit. I think they can arrange to accommodate that request. Thank you.

Mrs. Phyllis Mullins: We want to work closely with the Board especially during these dire economic times. We want to try and get the best we can for our schools, our teachers and all our staff. Thank you.

Chairman, Susan Mullins: The next person would be Kathy Harrison.

Mrs. Kathy Harrison: Board Members, Chairman, Superintendent, I'm going to give the school a rest tonight and I'm going to talk about the budget and the fact that we have some part-time teachers. I know at least at Ridgeview High that they could really benefit our children if they were full-time. One in particular that I'm talking about is our FFA teacher and I know that we at least have one more part-time teacher. The thing is that with the FFA, they go to competitions. They go local, district, regional and they can go to state, but when you are part-time, the teacher doesn't have time to take the students to these competitions that they need to go to in order to advance. My niece has found a niche here and she is being held back because the budget did not allow, for whatever reason, this teacher to be full time. I would not know the FFA teacher if she walked in the door, but I have heard glowing reviews of her. Not just that she is good at what she teaches, but she is one of our teachers that goes above and beyond. So, we DON'T want to lose her. If we keep her part-time, that is what might happen. You may lose her!

Superintendent Robinson: Mrs. Harrison if you're talking about Susan Wilder, Mrs. Wilder is full-time.

Mrs. Kathy Harrison: Is she full-time? Why then doesn't she have time to go to all the competitions? I'm just going on what my niece has told me.

Superintendent Robinson: That might be a discussion that we have with Mrs. Edwards, who is the Career Technical Director. Mrs. Wilder is full-time working at the high school teaching a full load classes and she is also teaching middle school; that maybe the reason she is thought to be part-time.

Mrs. Kathy Harrison: That may be what Mary Katherine doesn't understand.

Superintendent Robinson: Yes, she does have classes because we are able to offer Career Technical classes for our middle school students, especially in the 8th grade. So that maybe something we can sit down and talk about with Mrs. Edwards. It could be that she is not full-time at the high school.

Mrs. Kathy Harrison: That may be it and my niece; Mary Katherine says that she can't get to all the competitions in order to advance. I don't know. If she's full-time then she's part-time at the high school if she's also teaching middle school. It works out somehow like that. So, that would be great.

The other thing is I know you are going to be talking about the audience asking questions during the new business part. I would just like to say that when I starting coming to the meetings, which has been four plus years, I sat back there like a knot on a log because I didn't realize that if I raised my hand I could get something answered. I asked one of the Board Members and I was told, yes you can ask questions at that time. So everyone I've been to; it has been orderly. It may make the meeting a little longer but I'm sorry guys, but that's sort of what you signed up for. I think as long as it stays orderly and the Chairman is keeping everything flowing and if someone does get too long.....the Chairman can say we've finished discussing this and police us right down the road. The Board of Supervisors has them at their meetings every time in case they get unruly. I really hope that you don't, take that out because there have been a lot of good exchanges, a good exchange of ideas between the Board Members and the audience during that time frame. Thank you for your time.

Chairman, Susan Mullins: The next person would be Kim Elswick.

Mrs. Kim Elswick: Good evening, my name is Kim Elswick. I am a school bus driver for our county. My first concern I would like to address is the inclement weather and the article that was in the Dickenson Star about having common sense; all I can say is God Bless Mr. Mooney for having to make the call to the superintendent for school, school delay or no school, because he is danged if he does and danged if he doesn't (Sorry for the lack of better words). There is no right answer for the public, staff, faculty and I wish that we would quit trying to please everyone when it is so evident that we can't and think of the safety of the drivers, students and other pedestrians on the road.

With that being said, I heard through the grapevine that there might be a possibility of the School Board is considering going back to a 2 hour delay instead of continuing the current 3 hour delay. If you take into consideration the weather on February 15, we had ice that morning. If we had gone on a 2 hour delay, we probably would have been canceled. The 3 hour delay gives us this extra time for the morning to warm up so there are not unnecessary days missed.

To the public: we don't have to have common sense or book sense to tell us to look at a weather map and see that it might or might not be bad out. As a bus driver, it may not be bad in the part of the county I live in but could be bad at the other end...just because you are not seeing anything doesn't mean that snow isn't already there or impending. So, let our transportation department and bus drivers do their job. My opinion: If the public thinks they can make a better call then by all means give it a try. I used to think I could until I took a position driving a bus and was driving in all parts of the county and discovered why Mr. Mooney is so cautious.

Everyday School Bus Driver Job/s:

One might think the only responsibility or duties a school bus driver have are to drive a bus, but I'm here to give a bus drivers prospective of their job.

We are:

A mother/father figure to our students

A nurse (bloody noses, pulled teeth, seizures, injuries)

A mentor (someone the student feels safe to talk to)

A referee (arguments, fighting)

A teacher (because sometimes we teach manners, responsibilities, rules, how to clean, etc.)

A sitter (when parents are late or have forgotten it is their turn to pick their child up)

A janitor (we keep our buses clean inside and out)

We are responsible for delivering our students safely to and from school and their homes.

When talking about being a teacher: the maximum students in a classroom are 22/23 something like that.

We have several different size buses:

16 passenger

34 passenger equal 1 classroom plus 11 students

65 passenger equal 2 classrooms plus 19 students

77 passenger equal 3 classrooms plus 8 students

So, we the bus drivers are the only adult on these buses with students on some buses the equivalent of 1, 2 and 3 classrooms.

With all these responsibilities, I am disappointed that our school system cannot provide BENEFITS to existing bus drivers that do not currently have benefits and provide pay increases to our substitutes. Can we not afford to give all permanent drivers benefits as we did before, even the ones that are retired teachers that are still driving? These people have the same responsibilities and jobs that current bus drivers have and because there are no PERKS to a bus driver positions or substituting we are having a difficult time recruiting people. AND PERKS is an understatement when dealing with the amount and sometimes extreme number of students we deal with every day. I understand that we have to cut budget but asking a DRIVER to take the lives of these students in their hands without anything to give them some kind of benefit is outlandish.

The reason I know we are having a difficult time is; 1. I am the bus driver instructor and we haven't had a class in almost a year and 2nd because on December 31st my Uncle from White Post, Virginia had a massive heart attack. He lost his battle to cancer. I called Mr. Mooney on Sunday to try and figure a way for me to be able to attend his funeral services, which was set for Wednesday evening, the 4th at 5:00 p.m. and burial on the 5th at 1:00 p.m. We accomplished coverage for all except Wednesday AM run. Mr. Mooney said that he would have another driver double up and pick my students up but they would be late for school. I told him No; because that wouldn't be fair to my students and the driver that would cover for me.

So I drove 7 hours to do my AM run and left directly after. Yes, I made it in time for services.....No I wasn't asked to do this but MY JOB is MY responsibility. I am DEDICATED to my job.

OUR department is the only department that the employee has to find a SUBSTITUTE to cover for our daily shift. Haysi and Ervinton are in the same boat as the Clintwood area.....No subs.

Sub current pay is \$47.75 per day.....and we ask these drivers to do the same job as a full time driver? Thank you.

Chairman, Susan Mullins: The next is Cheri Taylor.

Mrs. Cheri Taylor: My name is Cheri Taylor and I'm also a bus driver. I'm not going to repeat what she said but just elaborate on it. This evening for example we had a driver that had to be off. We have lives. I have a daughter that is getting ready to have my fifth grandchild any minute and I actually feel guilty over missing to be with my daughter when she has that baby because I know we don't have any substitutes. My kids are going to have to sit at the school until somebody comes and gets them on a second run. We just don't have substitutes and the reason is they don't have any hope of ever getting a job with benefits. \$80 a day is what they make and that's not enough for our job. We should get what I consider to be hazardous duty pay. There is not another job in this system that takes the risk that we do with children's lives. If we dwelled on what could happen we would be paralyzed by fear. We wouldn't be able to do our job. I love my job and people can't do this job unless they do. This is not a job you can do just for the money. But these people need to be compensated and until you do you are not going to get any substitutes. I was told by a very smart person one time, if you find yourself in a hole. Stop digging! Until you give back the benefits to the new hires we are going to lose substitutes. We've got two maintenance people that I know of who are driving full-time. We've got two substitutes that have been driving full-time but they haven't been hired full-time. They just get paid a substitute's pay which is \$45 a day. You know what that is today; that's nothing. People are going to retire, people are going to get sick, people are going to get disabled, people need off for deaths, for births or whatever and we have nobody to cover our jobs. One of our substitutes who got hired after benefits were taken, she makes \$80 a day but she brought up something at our last bus drivers meeting that when she's off the school actually makes money because they don't have to pay a substitute but \$45 a day. That just doesn't seem quite right to me. I wish you would consider giving the benefits back, because if you don't we are just going to be in more dire situation with buses as far as the drivers go. Thank you.

Chairman, Susan Mullins: The last person I have is Beth Boyd.

Mrs. Beth Boyd: My name is Beth Boyd and I'm a bus driver at Ervinton. I support what the other drivers have said. I just want to mention that a lot of the regular bus drivers are being pulled from their run to substitute on another run. We have one driver that was doing this for the County and he's now off under investigation. If he had been on his regular run he would not have been in this position. This person is a good person and if anybody knows

him they know that he is not capable of being mean to a child. He worked through his church and filled food baskets for children on the weekend. So somebody who is going to do that is not going to be harmful to a child. Not to mention, how humiliating this is for this person. Asking regular bus drivers to take that type of risk on top of what they already do it's just not right. If you are hired for a run, you should be on that run. You shouldn't have to go here and go there because we don't have the drivers. It's just too much to ask. You are risking your livelihood, your job, your everything! It's not fair. It's just not fair.

I support that we've got to give these benefits and insurance and days because given the nature of the job it is high risk. You have a lot of responsibilities and nobody is going to do it for that type of pay. Like Cheri said, when you're digging yourself in a hole; stop digging. Start doing something to make it right, to change. That's what is going to have to happen because there are going to be driver retiring or quitting to get a better job. What are we going to do then? We already don't have any drivers. How many regular drivers can you take from their regular run and substitute all over the County? That's just not an answer to the problem. I thank you.

Chairman, Susan Mullins: That's the last name I have on Public Comment. The next item is Good News from Our Schools, Mrs. Robinson.

GOOD NEWS FROM OUR SCHOOLS:

Superintendent Robinson: February is School Board Appreciation Month and at your desk you have a small gift on behalf the Dickenson Public Schools for all your work. We would like to recognize our excellent School Board Members for the job that they do and their support. We have a Certificate of Recognition for each of you and if you would stand as your name is called and remain standing until we get everyone.

Mrs. Robinson read and presented the following for each Board Member: Dr. Lurton Lyle - 20 + years, Rick Mullins - 1 year, Rocky Barton - 9 years, Susan Mullins – 9 years and Shanghai Nickles – 5 years

Certificate of Recognition

– In appreciation of your dedication and service to excellence in education on behalf of the students of the Commonwealth of Virginia –

School Board Appreciation Month February 2017

Superintendent Robinson: Second item is Mr. Eric Price and he has a presentation.

Mr. Eric Price: Madame Chairman and Board, representing Thompson and Litton, we've had some involvement with the Ridgeview School project and also the road to the school. We are very proud of that and just wanted to make a presentation to the School Board, something we're proud of and something that you are proud of and might be able to hang somewhere.

Mr. Price presented a beautiful framed picture of the Ridgeview High/Middle School Campus.

Since this was a joint effort for all agencies in the County, IDA, Board of Supervisors and School Board, this is one of three that we have presented to hang up in the various offices.

Superintendent Robinson: That is beautiful. Thank you so much. Beautiful, really pretty.

Mr. Eric Price: Beautiful school, beautiful area. Go Ridgeview!

Chairman, Susan Mullins: That was very nice. Item IV is our consent agenda.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Chairman, Susan Mullins: We have minutes to approve from our last meeting; January 25, 2017 and reconvened January 31, 2017. I will now entertain a motion to approve the minutes.

Dr. Lurton Lyle: Made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Mr. Rocky Barton seconded the motion. All votes aye.

APPROVAL OF BILLS:

Chairman, Susan Mullins: Next we have Approval of Monthly Bills. Are there any questions or discussion on the monthly bills?

Superintendent Robinson: Mrs. Mullins, there are four at the end of your packet that have been added. They are highlighted in green.

Mr. Rocky Barton: Made the motion to approve the monthly bills as presented. Mr. Rick Mullins seconded the motion. All votes aye.

School Operating Fund – February 23, 2017 – Bills

Check Nos. 876984 through 877089 ----- \$320,429.03

School Operating Fund – February 28, 2017 – Payroll

Check Nos. 388065 through 388096 ----- \$1,661,027.37

SCHOOL ACTIVITY FUND:

Chairman, Susan Mullins—The School Activity Fund is an informational item. Are there any questions about the school activity funds? If not we will thank Mr. Barton for providing us with that information.

APPROVAL OF FIELD TRIPS:

Chairman, Susan Mullins: Next are field trips if you will briefly go over that Mrs. Robinson.

Superintendent Robinson: There are no out of State trips and we ask Board approval for those listed.

Dr. Lurton Lyle: *Made a motion that to approve the Field Trips as presented. Mr. Rick Mullins seconded the motion. All votes aye.*

Approved:

❖ Ridgeview High School

November 10th – MECC – Big Stone Gap, VA – 8th – 12th Grade

January 28th – SWVCC – Richlands, VA – 9th – 12th Grade

February 15th – The Attic – Clintwood, VA – 9th – PG

February 24th – James River High School – Buchanan, VA – 9th – 12th Grade

February 24th & 25th – Robotics Competition – Lynchburg, VA – 9th – 12th Grade

February 28th – SWVCC – Richlands, VA – 9th – 12th Grade

March 2nd – DECA Leadership Conference – Virginia Beach, VA – 9th – 12th Grade

March 3rd – Russell Co. Tech. School – Lebanon, VA – 9th – 12th Grade

March 16th – 4H Southwest Ed Center – Abingdon, VA – 10th – 12th Grade

March 24th – Coalfield Ag Center – Clintwood, VA – 9th – 12th Grade

March 24th & 25th – Meadow Event Center – Doswell, VA – 9th – 12th Grade

Chairman, Susan Mullins: Next item is information for the Board; Mrs. Robinson.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS FOR THE BOARD:

Superintendent Robinson: The first is just a reminder of the VSBA 2017 Hot Topic Conference scheduled for March 15th in Wytheville. Most of the Board has registered to attend and we will send an email as a reminder. If you have any questions please contact Reba.

I would like to ask Mr. Setser to come to the front and present our percentages.

Mr. Mike Setser: Mrs. Robinson and Members of the Board the division as of January 31, 2017 had 2,083 students; that is down 14 from the number I gave you in December. We lost 11 in December. If you look on the second page it will show how we've been trending this year. As of January 31st, we are down 20 students from the beginning of the year. If you look at the last page you will see the names and exactly where they went. As you can see we have students moving to all different areas around the Country. I want to share some concerning data that involves February to make you aware. As of today, we are down to 2,060 students. That's a net drop of 23 students since the end of January which is quite concerning. Of those 23 students, 21 have moved somewhere in the State. I wanted to make the Board aware of that and the numbers are not looking good for February at all.

The monthly attendance percentage winner for the second time in a roll is Ervinton Elementary with an attendance percentage of 93.49%. I want to commend all our schools but especially Clintwood Elementary came in second .08% behind Ervinton Elementary. Clintwood Elementary ended the month at 93.41%. Congratulations to Ervinton and Clintwood Elementary Schools.

Chairman, Susan Mullins: Item E would be the change of protocol; Mr. Mullins.

CHANGE OF PROTOCOL AND PROCEDURES:

Mr. Scott Mullins: Since this is going to be a decision on how we are going to conduct ourselves I think it would be appropriate to wait until we have a full board.

Chairman, Susan Mullins: We'll wait one more month. Since everyone is in agreement we will table it until next month.

We will move on to item F. Update on Demolition Projects; Mrs. Robinson.

UPDATE ON DEMOLITION PROJECTS:

Superintendent Robinson: Thank you. Skanska has provided us an update on the demolition.

Haysi High School Outbuildings and Pedestrian Bridge:

Demolition work is complete except for removal of a sidewalk required to be removed by the Army Corps of Engineers.

Clinchco Elementary School:

Demolition work is complete, waiting on grass to grow so permits can be closed. Grass is growing well.

Ervinton High School:

Demolition has been completed but the site is too wet to complete final grading and hydro-seeding. E. Luke Greene is monitoring the site to see when it will be dry enough to complete their work.

The Army Corps of Engineers have visited the demolition sites and confirmed that curb and asphalt at Clinchco Elementary is not required to be removed. A formal response from the Corps is pending. However, the Corps is requiring some additional fencing be moved at Ervinton High School. A change order in the amount of \$2,350 has been issued to E. Luke Greene for this work.

Schedule Update:

The contractual Substantial Completion date has been changed due to wet soil at Ervinton High School. A no cost change order for time extension to E. Luke Greene's contract has changed the Substantial Completion date to March 31, 2017.

So, again the budget and procurement update remain the same at \$775,000 for the demolition of those three areas. Questions or comments?

Chairman, Susan Mullins: I have a question. How big is the property at Ervinton High School? I drove by there and it just looked so small. How many acres are down there?

Mr. Scott Mullins: I want to say there is a total 17 acres. A lot of the acreage is behind the football field and on the hillside.

Chairman, Susan Mullins: I always thought that Ervinton was a pretty good size school, but I go and look and WOW. I drove past and turned around and came back.

Mr. Scott Mullins: I think the perception of what a school ground looks like has changed since we got that. When I reflect back to the criticism this Board took on not putting Ridgeview on a surface mine, an abandon surface mine. You see that it would have been very hard to fit the facilities on an abandoned surface mine. I think our whole perspective of what a school campus looks like has changed.

Chairman, Susan Mullins: I think so. That was the only comment I had.

Superintendent Robinson: If you look at the time Ervinton High School was built, students didn't have cars. They had a very small parking area. So did Clintwood High School and so did Haysi High School. Just that has changed over the years and certainly made a difference in the footprint.

Mr. Rocky Barton: I doubt if Haysi High School and parking was even an acre. Of course, it had four floors.

Chairman, Susan Mullins: That's the thing about Ervinton; they built it up and not out.

UPDATE ON 2016-2017 BUDGET; PROPOSED FY 2018 AND PROPOSED LOCAL APPROPRIATIONS FROM THE BOS:

Superintendent Robinson: I've asked Mr. Barton to prepare some information for you.

Mr. Larry Barton: Looking at the current year that we're in; 2016 – 2017. In December we received an adjustment from the State, mid-year adjustment that strictly deals with enrollment. When we prepared our original budget was for 2,123.45 students. The State entitlement sheets had 30 more students on there and we reduced it by 30 to be more proactive and avoid a significant mid-year adjustment like we had last year. As you know, during the summer we lost 55 and were caught off guard. We have just not had a good run this year.

In December they had our enrollment at 2,084.05; a decrease of 39.4 students. On the original State entitlement sheets we based our 2016-17 budget on \$15,164,981 and that changed in December to \$14,779,309; a difference of \$385,672. What we have to look at is that we compare apples with apples. Our original budget had a 2% compensation supplement and as we know the State took that away because revenues did not come in as anticipated; less \$119,144. Our local match as well as the portion for the non-SOQ positions was less an additional \$63,965. That brought us down to \$14,981,872; a difference of \$202,563, so that is our actual figure that we are dealing with as far as our mid-year adjustment.

As I've shared, some savings that we have is our unemployment is coming in less than what we budgeted for. Fortunately, a lot of those individuals found other jobs. Some came back with us; some went to neighboring counties and what I'm anticipating paying this year is \$60,000 less than we budgeted. We also have some savings on the staff changes of \$12,391

bringing us down to \$130,172 difference. When I worked this up, that is where we need to be to close the gap to get through the year that we are in. We are reviewing and projecting all revenues and expenditures and have some suggestions on how to get through this year. Some activities that are going on in the State right now are going to help us with that with some proposals that are out there.

Back to the \$12,391, this is to clarify some things. I don't know if Board Members have heard this but I've had people in the community come up to me and say to me: You all started out with 42 people less and you've hired them all back; that was all show. You really didn't lose that. We unfortunately started the year with 42 less full-time and part-time employees.

Mr. Larry Barton provided and reviewed the following information on current budget, projected revenues and budget issues for FY 18: (See Attachment #1)

Attachment #1:

Dec 16, 2016 State Budget Adjustment, Enrollment FY-2017, Recommended Amendments to 2016-17 Budget, Anticipated Budget Issues for FY-2018 and Conference Report

Superintendent Robinson: Mr. Barton and I had the opportunity to meet with Mr. Moore, County Administrator, regarding the current and proposed FY 18 Budget. We also discussed the local appropriations request. We shared with him all the information you've seen.

The Board of Supervisors will meet again on Tuesday, February 28th. I would just like to ask, and I know our bus drivers are here, if they would like to go to the Board of Supervisors meeting and present their case. I will be glad to join them and support that.

You see what we are facing as a School Board and we understand the situation we have with substitute bus drivers. All the things that have been done to try to keep the school system going forward; the concerns are certainly legitimate. I would ask them to consider traveling to the Board of Supervisors meeting and joining us when we go talking about local appropriations and what the school division is going to need so that we can meet some of these needs.

Questions or comments?

We were hoping for better news on enrollment but as you have seen it's not homeschool but families leaving. This has been a surprise after Christmas. We didn't think we would see this. We are hoping we will stabilize quickly but right now we are on a downward turn with enrollment.

Mr. Rocky Barton: On our end we are beginning to see people go back to work. I know some who have started back to work in Buchanan County. Maybe we will start seeing it in our County.

Superintendent Robinson: We don't know but we certainly hope so. We are hoping our enrollment loss will stabilize. February may be the hardest month we've had.

REVISION OF 2016-2017 SCHOOL CALENDAR & PROPOSED 2017 RHS GRADUATION DATE:

Chairman, Susan Mullins: On to my favorite topic.....school calendar.

Superintendent Robinson: Mr. Mullins is going to come and we have a revision to the 2016-17 School Calendar and proposed graduation dates.

Mr. Mark Mullins: This is Mrs. Mullins favorite topic but afraid the one you really enjoy might be next months; planning of the next year calendar.

Let me share with you before we get started this is our weather chart that I've given to the Board in previous years. A brief update on the 2016-2017 Calendar, of course we've had a mild winter and because of that we've only missed 5 days of school. We realize that can change. We've attended school on 3 three-hour delays and dismissed school early one time this year. The reason I give you the weather chart is it gives you the historical data of days we've missed going back to 1964-65. As you can see 5 days of school, historically is one of the best we've ever had. It's not the best but it is really close. In 2011-2012 we only missed 4 days of school.

Upcoming dates that is important to the 2016-2017:

- Tuesday February 21st we ended the 4th Six Weeks grading period.
- Friday, March 10th and Monday, March 13th – Spring Break
- Thursday, March 16th – End of 3rd Nine Weeks grading period
- Thursday, April 6th – End of 5th Six Weeks Grading Period
- Friday, April 14th & Monday, April 17th – Easter Break
- Monday, May 22nd – Last Day of School (Day 180)

If we miss more days of school we will certainly make adjustments but it does appear that we are on track right now. The second part of this is the planning of our high school graduation. We had talked with Mr. Rodney Compton, Principal at Ridgeview High School and he said it was important to get graduation set as early as possible. The reason for this is our seniors to order their graduation announcements, diplomas and those kinds of things. He shared with me that last year we were a little close on getting those in and shared that last year we got the diplomas on the day of graduation. A gentleman from Roanoke brought them down that day and I didn't realize that but he shared that. With that in mind what we are looking at with the last day of school being May 22nd, if that stays true, Ridgeview High School would propose to graduate on Friday, May 19th.

If addition days of school are missed:

- If 3 or fewer days are missed, graduation would still be on Friday, May 19th
- If 4 or more days are missed, graduation would be on Friday, May 26th. This is the Friday of Memorial Day weekend.

I've also shared some other dates that always seem to conflict with graduation, at least some years and years past. Those dates are in your packet but include: conference track meet, regional track meet, conference tournaments for baseball, softball, tennis, soccer and the State track meet which is always the first Friday and Saturday in June.

We are asking that you consider approving the graduation dates that we've presented with those stipulations of the number of days we might miss. I'll try to answer in questions you may have.

Chairman, Susan Mullins: I think it's a great plan.

Mr. Rocky Barton: I do too. I like the idea of everyone getting a longer summer.

Chairman, Susan Mullins: I think we need a motion to approve the revisions to the school calendar.

Superintendent Robinson: And also Mrs. Mullins to authorize the Division Superintendent that by March 14th if all criteria are in place, and we've not missed any days that graduation will be on Friday, May 19th.

Mr. Rocky Barton: *Made the motion to approve the revisions to the 2016-2017 School Calendar as presented and set graduation date as presented. Dr. Lurton Lyle seconded the motion. All votes aye.*

DISCUSSION OF INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY:

Chairman, Susan Mullins: Next is item I. Discussion of Inclement Weather Policy.

Superintendent Robinson: At the last School Board meeting, it was requested that a discussion of DCPS File EBCD, School Closing and Inclement Weather Regulations, DCPS EBDC-R be placed on the agenda for February. We've attached the proposed changes to the Inclement Weather Regulation in your packet.

Changes:

- 2. Will contact the division superintendent, Alert Now; we no longer use Alert Now we use A Blackboard Connect 5. We are recommending a three hour delay and that recommendation comes on discussion and feedbacks with Principals, Administrators, and Director of Transportation/Maintenance. We had a lot of input and feedback on that.
- 3. a. Three hour delay. Buses will not begin their run until 9:00 a.m., and school will begin at 11:15 a.m. A decision will be made as soon as possible but no later than 8:45 a.m.
- 4. Anytime the National Weather Service forecasts a wind chill factor of 0 degrees, a three-hour delay will be called.

- 5. Local radio stations and TV stations will be notified of the decision to dismiss. A Blackboard Connect 5 message will be made from the School division advising students and parents of the change in school schedule due to inclement weather. This information will also be posted on the DCPS website and on the DCPS Facebook page.

One thing that is in our favor is that all students are at Ridgeview and there is not a delay in getting students back from the Career Center.

These are our inclement weather recommendations that you see before you and we've had several meetings with our Principals, Maintenance/Transportation Director and our Leadership Team. This is our recommendation to the School Board.

Chairman, Susan Mullins: Is there any discussion on the changes? I'll start; can we do it at 8:30 a.m. instead of 8:45 a.m.? What's the purpose of the 15 minutes?

Superintendent Robinson: With school beginning at 11:15 a.m. we are getting calls from parents; this road needs to be worked on or whatever that way. That allows Mr. Mooney time to call VDOT to get someone up there to work on the road before we actually put them out on the road. We anticipate we are going to try as much as we can to make a decision at 8:30 a.m. and then by the phone calls go out sometimes it is 8:45 a.m. If we make the decision at 8:30 a.m. then we have to make the decision by 8:00 or 8:15 and sometimes VDOT has not had an opportunity to do that.

Chairman, Susan Mullins: I guess I misunderstood. As long as you make the call by 8:30 a.m. so parents are notified I'm fine with that.

Superintendent Robinson: That's what we want to make clear and what happened to us last time. The decision was made and the phone calls for whatever reason didn't get out until about 9:00, and so that's kind of the issue there. We just need that amount of time, if we get calls from parents and make sure that VDOT has a chance. VDOT has been wonderful. They will go ahead of our buses and clear the roads. So, that just takes a little bit of time.

Chairman, Susan Mullins: I think that if we know by 8:30 a.m. and parents can look on the TV and that should be immediate. That shouldn't take long.

Superintendent Robinson: That is going to be our plan and that's why we give the 8:30 – 8:45 just in case.

Chairman, Susan Mullins: Do I have a motion?

Mr. Rick Mullins: *Made the motion to approve the Inclement Weather Regulations as presented. Dr. Lurton Lyle seconded the motion. All votes aye.*

Superintendent Robinson: Mr. Mooney did you have anything to add.

Mr. Burl Mooney: No you covered pretty well. VDOT works with us very close and wherever we need them they will go.

Chairman, Susan Mullins: I think it's a tough decision and I too appreciate all you do. I think if we can give parents some kind of idea that by 8:30 we are going to decide. It may take us 15 minutes to notify you, as long as the parents know what to expect.

Mr. Burl Mooney: There is some lag time from making the decision and getting the announcements out. We have great drivers.

Chairman, Susan Mullins: Put it on Facebook and it will spread like wildfire.

Superintendent Robinson: We do and Mr. Roberson takes care of that. We put it on our website and it just takes a little time to do all that. Thank you Mr. Mooney for all you do there.

2016 FINANCIAL AUDIT SUMMARIES FOR THE DICKENSON COUNTY SCHOOLS:

Superintendent Robinson: Our next item is our 2016 Financial Audit Summaries for the Dickenson County Schools and I'm going to ask Mr. Barton to come and present our audit reports.

Mr. Larry Barton: Madame Chair, Board Members, we've provided you a copy of the independent auditor's report and the financial statements of the School Activity Funds for the year ended June 30, 2016. This report was prepared by Michael T. Porter, CPA as required under policy DGC: "School Activity Funds".

In his audit report, Mr. Porter states that in his opinion, the financial statements referred to presents fairly, in all material respects, the cash receipts, disbursements and balances arising from cash transactions of the County of Dickenson, Virginia School Activity Funds for the year ended June 30, 2016.

In the Report on Internal Control over Financial Reporting and on Compliance and Other Matters, Mr. Porter states that he did not identify any deficiencies in internal control over financial reporting that I consider to be material weaknesses, as defined above. He also states that his tests disclosed no instances of non-compliance or other matters that are required to be reported under Government Auditing Standards.

Mr. Porter recommended in his Findings and Recommendations that in order to ensure that all collections are deposited and errors or irregularities are detected promptly, no employee should have control over a complete transaction. We have already taken steps to remedy this situation. Last month, we met with principals at each school and instituted a procedure for a separate person, other than the secretary making the deposit, to deliver the deposit to the bank in a locked bank bag. Locking bank bags have been secured for each school and this practice has already been implemented.

Do you have any questions?

Chairman, Susan Mullins: I think this is the best audit since I've been on the Board.

Okay, next item is K. 2017 March Budget Workshop Meetings and Dates.

2017 MARCH BUDGET WORKSHOP MEETINGS AND DATES:

Superintendent Robinson: This is just an informational item for the Board and as you see we have three meetings in March:

- The 2017 Budget Workshop is scheduled on Wednesday, March 8th at 5:00 p.m.
- The Public Hearing for the Budget is scheduled for Tuesday, March 14th at 5:00 p.m.
- The March School Board Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 22nd at 5:00 p.m.

I just wanted to make the Board aware of those dates and we will send you reminders. We know your schedules are very hectic.

BOARD COMMENT:

Chairman, Susan Mullins: That brings us to Board Comment.

Dr. Lurton Lyle: I think we've made some progress since our last Board meeting and I hope we continue to make progress.

Superintendent Robinson: Excuse me, if I may but we added item L.

Chairman, Susan Mullins: Sorry, about that. We will go on with Board Comment.

(Copies were being made for item L.)

Mr. Rick Mullins: It's good to see the audit turn out as it did.....good news. I would like to see a little more employment and get those numbers back up.

Mr. Rocky Barton: I thank the bus drivers. That's been a closed session topic and we are not supposed to talk about it but we've talked about it to about 4 straight months. We hear and we know exactly what you're saying. I will go back to what Mrs. Robinson said, a couple of those meetings I was at, the Board of Supervisors not one teacher, not one bus driver spoke. Nobody spoke to plead your case but Mrs. Robinson. Nobody and she stood there and begged for 4 straight months. When you get \$800,000 cut.....I hear that their revenue for the first part of the year, some people are saying it's the highest it's ever been. I don't know how that is, but I know it's high, high, and higher than it was last year. We need to get our hand out quick.

My second is I'd like to comment on the Wolfpack. Our girls, who would have thought after the loss at graduation last year of 2 premier players who are both playing on college teams, that we would be back again where we are right now. We are headed to the State playoffs

again! Our JV girls won the conference. Our 6th & 7th grade girls are undefeated. I hear all these comments about the little league girls and how good they are.....our girls programs are looking pretty good.

Superintendent Robinson: And Mr. Barton may I add that last night at Virginia High there were more fans from our area that drove 2 hours than from Virginia High.

Mr. Rocky Barton: That says something about our area.

Chairman, Susan Mullins: I would like to thank someone for the gifts and the cup. I guess that is you Mrs. Robinson.

Superintendent Robinson: That is from our school division.

Chairman, Susan Mullins: Now we will go back to item L.

COMPARING OUR PLAN WITH COVA LOCAL SB 364:

Superintendent Robinson: Again, we received this information yesterday.

The letter requests that the School Board make a non-binding decision and to inform the Department of Human Resource Management of our interest to participate in the program by March 15, 2017. The final rates for the COVA Local plan will be published in the fall of 2017. At the end of the 2017, the school division will be requested to make a binding decision to participate in the COVA Local. The COVA Local will go live on July 1, 2018.

Mr. Barton has compared the preliminary rates for COVA Local with our plan KeyCare 300. While our plan, the KeyCare 300 appears to be more cost effective than the COVA Local, we are recommending that the School Board approve the division's participation on March 15, 2017 with the non-binding decision until the end of 2017.

At the end of 2017, we will return to the School Board with the final COVA Local rates, the comparison with KeyCare 300 and a recommendation on whether to remain with KeyCare 300 or move to COVA Local.

In some counties where rates are up 30% or 40% this may look very attractive but for us right now; it does not. Mr. Barton if you could come to the front.

Chairman, Susan Mullins: Have you projected any kind of increase for us at all?

Mr. Larry Barton: This is with our rates staying flat right now. This is using our current rates and I do anticipate an increase of 2% to 3%. Looking at the state plan you can see a rate increase of 31.86% to 52.23% over our current plan. Coverage is very similar; out of pockets and some of the inpatient stuff is better but you just can't justify it if these premiums remain the same.

Superintendent Robinson: Mr. Barton do you mind reviewing for our audience our plan premiums verses the state plan rates.

Mr. Barton: The premium rates for each plan are:

<u>KeyCare 300 (Our Plan)</u>	<u>COVA Local (State Plan)</u>	<u>% of Increase</u>
Employee Only Total Cost - \$603 Employee Cost - \$50	\$794	31.67%
Employee + 1 Child Total Cost - \$965 Employee Cost - \$60	\$1,469	52.23%
Family Total Cost - \$1,626 Employee Cost - \$100	\$2,144	31.86%

Chairman, Susan Mullins: So we need to hold open our option?

Mr. Larry Barton: We don't want to close the door right now. If we close the door now you can't get in for three years.

Superintendent Robinson: We are just asking the Board to allow us to make a non-binding decision to remain in the process. We will bring everything back to the Board at the end of 2017.

Chairman, Susan Mullins: I need a motion for the Board to make a non-binding decision to remain in the process.

Dr. Lurton Lyle: Made the motion to approve the non-binding decision to remain in the process as requested. Mr. Rick Mullins seconded the motion. All votes aye.

CLOSED SESSION:

Chairman, Susan Mullins: That brings us to item III. Pursuant to Section 2.2-3711 A of the Code of Virginia, I move that the board convene a closed session for the purpose of discussing: 1.) Student request for release from mandatory attendance. 2.) Employment issues relating to salary, resignations, FMLA request, consideration of employing coaches and substitutes. 3.) and to consult with legal counsel on these issues pursuant to Virginia Code section 2.23711 A (1) (2) and (7). Mr. Rocky Barton seconded the motion. All votes aye.

OUT OF CLOSED SESSION:

Chairman, Susan Mullins: I now entertain a motion to go out of Closed Session. Mr. Rocky Barton made the motion and Dr. Lurton Lyle seconded. All votes aye. Chairman Susan Mullins stated; we have been in closed session pursuant to Section 2.2-3711 A, Section (1) to discuss potential contracts and proprietary information. Pursuant to Section 2.2-3712(d) of the Code of Virginia, he moved to certify that during the closed meeting just concluded the Dickenson County School Board discussed only matters lawfully exempt from the

open meeting requirements under section 2.2-3711 of the Code of Virginia. Dr. Lurton Lyle, Mr. Rick Mullins, Mr. Rocky Barton and Chairman Susan Mullins; all certified true.

BOARD ACTIONS:

Chairman Susan Mullins: I make the motion we approve long term substitute bus driver pay for Cody Hall and Dwight Davis as recommended. Dr. Lurton Lyle seconded the motion. All votes aye.

Chairman Susan Mullins: I make the motion we approve the release from mandatory attendance for Student # 2083 as requested. Mr. Rocky Barton seconded the motion. All votes aye.

Chairman Susan Mullins: I make the motion we approve the coaching recommendations as presented. Dr. Lurton Lyle seconded the motion. All votes aye.

Approved:

- Jason Edwards, Baseball Assistant
- Jason Mullins, Baseball Assistant
- James Counts, Baseball Volunteer
- Dylan Slempp, Baseball Volunteer
- Jalen Sykes, Baseball Volunteer
- Donnie Frazier, Softball Assistant
- Deb Barnett, Tennis Volunteer
- Tom Baker, Tennis Volunteer
- Tracey Mullins, Tennis Volunteer
- Gary Rose, Soccer Volunteer
- Denny Bise, Soccer Volunteer

Chairman Susan Mullins: I make the motion we approve the FMLA request for Renida Bowman as presented. Dr. Lurton Lyle seconded the motion. All votes aye.

Chairman Susan Mullins: I make the motion to accept the resignation of Greta Bolling, part-time and Lydia Owens, teacher at Ridgeview High School as requested. Dr. Lurton Lyle seconded the motion. All votes aye.

Chairman Susan Mullins: I make the motion to approve the substitute list as requested contingent upon completion of background checks and all necessary paperwork. Mr. Rocky Barton seconded the motion. All votes aye.

Approved:

- Childress, Melissa – Nurse
- Lucas, Donna – Teacher
- Shields, Michael – Cook/Janitor/Teacher
- Stanley, Carroll – Teacher
- Thomas, Michael – Cook/Janitor/Teacher

- Wheatley, William - Teacher

ADJOURNMENT:

Mrs. Susan Mullins: I make the motion we adjourn this meeting. Dr. Lurton Lyle seconded the motion. All votes aye.

Adjourned: 10:15 p.m.

Susan Mullins

CHAIRMAN

Approved: March 22, 2017

Reba McCowan

CLERK