

DICKENSON COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD
Regular School Board Meeting
January 25, 2016 recessed and reconvened January 31, 2017
5 p.m. – School Board Office

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

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, as well as our Superintendent, Mrs. Haydee Robinson and Board Clerk, Reba McCowan. We would like to start the meeting with 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: There is a change for item I. Instead of Discussion of 2016 Financial Audits of the Dickenson County Public Schools, it is the agenda item regarding e-rate.

Chairman, Susan Mullins: Those are changed. 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. Mr. Nickles would you please read the rules of public comment. (So Read)

Ms. Kathy Musick: Good evening Chairman Mullins, Mrs. Robinson, members of the Board and citizens of Dickenson County. My name is Kathy Musick of the Virginia Public Educators, and I just want to update you on a couple of things we've changed. We have hired a new person who is going to be a lobbyist for us; his name is Col. Van Peters. He was a graduate of the US Military at West Point, spent 20 years in the Army and 21 years teaching Army ROTC. We already have one lobbyist, John, and he will be joining him. John has already spoken in Richmond about House Bill 1414 which a bill that would give partial credit for at least on correct answer on multiple part questions. They are also working diligently supporting the coalfield resolution that was made at the Coalfield Summit. They are working tirelessly on that. They are also working on a bill that will give Counties the same rights as City Councils whereas a County can pass a meal tax to support County Schools; Cities can already do that. They are also working on the VRS rollback, which is a part of the coalfield initiative, so that school systems can catch their breath to pay that back. I just want you to know that we know how much you want to do and how hard it is with the budget, but we

support you. We are there in Richmond trying to get some help to come your way. We do have another person hired to help serve you. Thank you.

Chairman, Susan Mullins: The next person will be Ms. Allison Mullins, DEA.

Ms. Allison Mullins: Good to see you all. I'm going to, if I can, just go real quickly through two things and then Phyllis Mullins, our President elect, was at lobby day last week so the rest of time, if okay, I'd like to let her update you.

What we are working on right now in the VEA of immediate interest is the VEA Convention. It's coming up in Roanoke March 30th through April 1st. The DEA is allowed 5 delegates to that Convention and we are going to be requesting Professional Leave for our full delegation to be able to attend. This year we have more people who want to be delegates than we have slots for so we are having an election, which is always a nice thing. Usually, you have to try to get enough.

I also want to mention real quick about this Senate Bill 364. I hope the School Board is all familiar with that Bill, it was introduced by Bill Chaffin and it has to do with a local option health insurance plan. It basically would allow school employees to opt into State insurance. Our County was supposed to have indicated an interest, at least of looking into that by September. According to Delegate Kilgore our County hasn't done that and we are one of the few in the region that hasn't. We won't know the full details about this potential option until later this month or February. But, we would ask the School Board to consider looking into this. It's not mandatory for employees to participate in but the more school divisions and local governments that participate in the pool; the better odds are of leveling out. We might be able to get a cheaper plan. There will be another availability opportunity in February and final rates are going to be available in October 2017. Between October and December binding commitments for a 3 year period will be formed and open enrollment will become available in May 2018. Our members in the DEA, several have expressed interest in this. We just want the best insurance available for the least amount of money for teachers. We shouldn't be just committed to one option. We ask the School Board to consider this option also. So that's all that I have. Thank you very much.

Mr. Shanghai Nickles: Ms. Mullins, I heard about that; now they don't have to be tenured teachers. Do they?

Ms. Allison Mullins: Right.

Mr. Shanghai Nickles: Because that was brought up in another County somewhere; trying to make it tenured teachers but we don't have that.

Ms. Allison Mullins: Terry Kilgore just said last week and Phyllis can tell you more about this. Dickenson County is one of the very few in the region that has not expressed interest in this.

Mr. Larry Barton: Madame Chairman?

Chairman, Susan Mullins: Yes.

Mr. Larry Barton: To address the Board and Allison, we have worked on House Bill 364. There is a lot of paperwork and information required. We have spent countless hours, but we have given them the information that they need. We've provided everything required. I've been working with the Actuaries on that and we have it. I don't know about the County but the School Division has expressed interest. We are signed up for that.

Ms. Allison Mullins: That's great!

Mr. Larry Barton: We won't know the details until the plan are actually rolled out and it's a non-binding commitment. But, if we had not expressed interest of getting in then there would be a 2 year waiting period before we could in after the plan rolls out.

Superintendent Robinson: The School Division has expressed interest from the very beginning.

Ms. Allison Mullins: We didn't know that.

Superintendent Robinson: It may be another entity, but the School Division has absolutely expressed interest.

Ms. Allison Mullins: Well great, great.

Mrs. Phyllis Mullins: To follow up on that, I am amazed at the number of participants for the pool. I think they only needed 5,000 but they got up into the 100,000's. So, the more people that participates the cheaper the rates are going to be.

I am so excited and Lobby Day was awesome. Lobby Day was absolutely awesome! They may not want me to come back because as you know, I'm just pretty blunt. I told them we are right down desperate back here. We had to have some help now! That things for the future was great, but we needed help now. They said they were looking into some things. They wouldn't really go into a lot of detail but I do know that they are looking into the number of students we have leaving, reimbursing or getting some refund for some of that. They are looking at some other things to maybe give us some help right now. They're fully in support of the Coalfield Summit. We had over 300 teachers up there on Lobby Day. We had a rally. Our VEA President, I made the news guys! In Richmond! Our VEA President was authorized by our Board of Directors to hand deliver a very scathing letter to our Delegates, because they want not to give teachers a 3% raise, but they want to give other State employees. So, we demanded that we be considered in that too. I can give you a copy of that letter. It's being hand delivered. It was hand delivered by our President. We have people in lobby all the time; all the time. We fix our agenda and we lobby constantly. Then on Lobby Day, this place was packed out! But, it was awesome. We did get to go around and talk to everybody and it was very hopeful. I felt very hopeful that we could get some kind of help. Hopefully,

immediate help, as well as future economic development help. I appreciate the Professional Leave. I feel it was well worth it. Thank you.

Mr. Stuart Mullins: I want to tell you how truly appreciative I am of your public service, especially in these profound tough economic times in this County. I don't envy any one of you. I don't know why anyone would want to serve on the School Board, but I thank the Lord that five of you want to, and are doing a good job at it. That being said, I am here to whine a little bit tonight and so I apologize in advance. My grandmother, Tona Mullins, is behind me right now whispering in my ear to be courteous and I'm going to be, but I am going to whine a little bit.

There was a decision at the end of the first six weeks at Clintwood Elementary School that in my opinion had nothing to do with economics. It affected the first graders down there in a deeply negative manner. On October 7, 2016 I sent each of you and Mrs. Robinson an email expressing my concerns, due to a personnel issue, each of the other first grade classes would grow. There would be even more children in each of those classes. A few days later I receive a response back from Mrs. Robinson saying that the decision was made in the best interest of the children. The teachers indicate that things are going well and the children were adjusting. There was no alternative solution.

I am here to tell you now that the children are not adjusting well whatsoever. It's been a disaster. Since this change was made the children, plural, at Clintwood Elementary School are struggling. Not only are they struggling academically but are no longer enthused about going to school, and they've stopped giving their parents positive feedback about their day. My son without a doubt has a learning disability, it's not diagnosed yet but it's going to be very, very soon. We meet Friday about that and that's nobody's fault; nobody can help that. However, in the first six weeks of this year his teacher, Janice Hill is wonderful by the way; she was so innovative that she was finally seeing some progress. Unfortunately, he is not progressing anymore since his classroom grew. He is regressing quite a bit. During the first six weeks he jumped out of bed every morning. Dad I can't wait to go to school today. He came home; how was your day? It was great! Now, he gives me a "thumbs down". You ask him to come up with something positive about his day and nope he cannot come up with anything.

If I thought this was an isolated case it was my son or something we were doing at home; I wouldn't be standing before you right now. However, it is not. I have interviewed numerous parents representing all the first grades down there and 100% of them have a child who began to experience problems after the first six weeks. Of course, I haven't interviewed every parent but I have a great number of them. Some things I've been told is there has been anxiety, a decline in math, a decline in spelling, a decline in reading, classroom management issues, sudden decrease in communication from the teacher, children's love for school abruptly ended and things in my mind no doubt directly attributable to abrupt increase in class sizes. It took the teacher's time away from the individual instruction.

In the Superintendent's email, she also told me that even after the move the class size was still in compliance with State's standards. I understand that, but whoever developed these

State standards was a bureaucrat and not an educator. If they had been an educator, they would have reviewed the literature and found the overwhelming number of articles that a maximum of about 18 students per teacher in grades K through 3 is required to produce maximum benefit. Not only that but when this 18 to 1 ratio is used through grade K through 3 those children do better throughout their school careers, not just in those 3 years.

I'm asking for a solution. I understand that you cannot hire another teacher for many, many reasons, economic and otherwise, plus I wouldn't want that. That would discombobulate the students who were moved even more so than they already have been and possibly cause more problems. I am asking for some sort of solution, were it be Para-professionals being hired to share between the times of first grade teachers to give one on one time with the children or something of that matter. I want everyone to know especially Mrs. Robinson, who has been a friend of my family for many years, this is not a mistake borne out of malicious I know no one was trying to be mean to the kids at Clintwood Elementary School, to the teacher, to me, or anybody else. A decision had to be made and someone made it thinking it was a good solution but unfortunately has not worked. It's had a very negative affect. Fortunately, I think it's a mistake that someone at some level, wither it was at the Board level, the Central Office level or the School level can fix in some way or another. Again, I appreciate your time and your efforts and thank you for listening to me tonight. God bless.

Chairman, Susan Mullins: Can I ask one question? How kids were added to the classrooms?

Mr. Stuart Mullins: Five, which is a lot. I taught middle school for many years and it's a lot for middle school much less first graders who are trying to learn to read, write, add and subtract and need individual attention from the teacher.

Chairman, Susan Mullins: So that's 23?

Superintendent Robinson: We can get those for you.

Ms. Betty Newton: I can answer that for you; two of the classrooms have 21 and one has 22. Our first grade numbers have gone down.

Mr. Stuart Mullins: I would encourage you to interview or survey the other first grade parents as well as the teachers. You will get some interesting information from that.

Mr. Rocky Barton: One thing too Stuart, it's not isolated. It's not Clintwood but we started the year without a Kindergarten teacher at Sandlick and I think the average was 23; 22 and 23 and you know the budget.

Mr. Stuart Mullins: I understand that, but our children are suffering. I completely understand the economic situation. Thank you.

Mrs. Sheila Bailey: Madame Chair and Members of the Board, we've been coming here for months because we think that our elementary school in the Haysi area is going to be taken away from us. Because of this, I would like to ask three questions:

1. Why would some members of this board be will to risk the emotional, physical and educational wellbeing of our small kids?
2. Why would you risk more economic suffering in our town and County?
3. Why would you risk the loss of students from the perimeter of the County, therefore risking the large amounts of funding per student that the School Board receives?

Please think about this and ask yourselves why would I do this? Had it not been for the flooding at Sandlick Elementary School we would have not received the funding for the Ridgeview Complex. At the same time the money was also provided for building and replacing Sandlick Elementary in the Haysi area. I am speaking as a parent, a grandparent and a former teacher. Thank you.

Mr. James Boyd: Good afternoon Madame Chair, Mrs. Robinson, Board Members, I live in the McClure area. I've been getting rumors that have been going on for the last 2 years on the closing of Ervinton Elementary. I want you to know that would devastate our area and the Ervinton District. I'm asking if you could, and you know the change when Ervinton High School was closed, a lot of the Sandy Ridge kids and even the grade school kids packed up and went to Eastside. Wise County has a school bus that comes as far as Ralph Stanley's to pick up our kids in Dickenson County. Did you all know that? Where you aware of that? I don't understand why they would be allowed to come into Dickenson County.

Chairman, Susan Mullins: Are they doing that?

Mr. Shanghai Nickles: There's a bus driver who lives beside of Mr. Stanley that parks there.

Superintendent Robinson: They might be turning there, I'm not sure but Mr. Mooney will be here shortly.

Mr. James Boyd: I have met them coming out of Wise County into Dickenson past the fire department toward Ralph Stanley. I ask that you reconsider if you do consider closing Ervinton Elementary. It broke my heart when I had to see Ervinton High School being demolished. I went and took pictures of it myself. I graduated there. There were three generations of us that graduated there. I love being in Dickenson County but I have one daughter in Middle School and one getting ready to start elementary school she's 2 years old. I wouldn't take love nor money for either one of them. I had 2 sons that graduated from Ervinton High School and I've got 3 grandsons and 2 granddaughters and 2 on the way. I ask that the Board Members to consider not closing Ervinton Elementary. That would devastate our area and I'm sure the people on Hazel Mountain would likewise with the Sandy Ridge crew, they would send theirs to Castlewood. It would be an awful long drive to go to Sandlick or Clintwood, or even as far as Ridgeview. Some of the kids from the high school and middle

school are not getting home until 5:00 p.m. in the evening. That's very late and even later for elementary kids to be getting home. Thank you very much and I appreciate your time.

Mrs. Wanda Perry: Good afternoon Madame Chairman, Board Members and Mrs. Robinson. I wanted to come and thank you all for your service and what you do but I'm here to speak for the children. I know its budget time. I know budgets are tight and have been for quite some time but I am an advocate of the children that are not receiving services from Art and Music. You know we had to close that several years ago, but I would like to see that reinstated somehow. I want you to find some money in the budget and I know budgets are tight. When I graduated from high school our motto was: "Let us be part of the solution and not part of the problem." So, I think that's a problem that we have in our County.

Everyone that I've spoken with, parents, children, and teachers say we need it. Our kids need it. I would urge you to look at that very closely and see if that somehow it can be reinstated in our schools for our children. I did a little study on that one time and Mark Mullins helped me with that and I tracked it for several years when I was at Sandlick. Our SOL's scores increased consistently for 5 years consecutively when we had Art and Music. How they have progressed since we no longer have that I don't know. What music does for children and people is it allows your mind to look at it, receive it and output it all at the same time. All this does is prep your mind for learning. What Art does for children's minds; it helps them to think outside the box and to be a problem solver with things of every facet. If you can't be a problem solver with whatever problem you have facing you, it creates more problems with kids. That's the underlining benefits that Art and Music provides for our children; that we actually don't see that but it's obvious. I've been there, I know. Please consider that and thank you so much for your time.

Mr. Carroll Edwards: I'll be very, very brief. I read in the paper onetime where your Superintendent said; we only get one time to get this right and she is absolutely right. What we need to do is do what we promised the people at Sandlick. We build them a new elementary school in that area, out of the flood plain. We need to go with that plan and we need to keep Erinton Elementary School intact, because, you guys know all the reasons. We all say we are in this for the kids, well I'm sure the kids and parents at Sandlick Elementary would say to you; leave our school where it's at. We're happy. I know you can do that because you already have money to replace it. I'm sure they would be happy to say leave it right here, we're happy. They didn't ask to be moved. They didn't ask for a new school. But through the process of obtaining money to do Ridgeview, which I was for, they were supposed to get a new school out of the flood plain. I urge you to look in your heart what you are doing to the school system as a whole and what you are doing to the kids if you don't build Sandlick where it's supposed to be built. Thank you.

Mr. Josh Evans: Madame Chair, Members of the Board, Madame Superintendent, how are you all doing? Stuart said he was here to whine a little bit, I'm here to gripe a little bit I guess. On January 10th of this year there was a school closure through inclement weather. The previous day, January 9th was closed. However, on the evening of January 9th a decision was made, I guess by Mr. Mooney in conjunction with Mrs. Robinson, to do a three hour delay. Weather was clear that night. I got up at 5:30 a.m. that morning and went to the gym

like I always do and the weather was clear. My wife and I work, both of us, I'm a business owner here in Clintwood. She works in Wise. The grandparents of our daughter work. We have a 4 year old daughter in Pre K at Clintwood Elementary. We had made our plans for our daughter to be kept until school started around 11:00 a.m. I am in the courtroom literally getting ready to argue a case before a Judge at 8:55 a.m.; my wife is in Pound, VA on her way to Wise to work and we get the call that school is cancelled. We had made arrangements for our 4 year old daughter to be taken to school by someone who could not keep her for the entire day. I would ask you to examine your inclement weather policies. Hopefully, you can amend those so a decision is made, in my opinion, by 7:30 a.m. to allow working families like myself and my wife the opportunity to make plans. In our case, for a 4 year old; a very young child, it's not easy to just call somebody and say; can you keep my 4 year old all day? In my opinion that was inexcusable on a commonsense level not just a bureaucratic or any other level. That at 8:55 the working world begins at 9:00 a.m. especially the Judicial System. There are arraignments and cases at 8:30. It's not just like you can leave court and tell the Judge I've gotta go. In my case, or in my wife's case, she's 30 minutes away. So, I would ask you to examine those policies that you have; perhaps adopt some sort of clear route schedule, if nothing else adopt a policy that is commonsense for a working family in Dickenson County to where that decision is at least made by 7:30 a.m. and working families like myself and my wife don't get the call at 8:55 when the working world begins. The majority of the working world begins at 9:00 a.m. Again, you got a lot on your table here tonight, this is probably on the lower level of that, but I do ask you to consider the day to day lives that are affected by these decisions. It was obviously and that is what it is and being a parent there are going to be inconveniences, however I think this is one that could be mitigated if a proper policy was adopted. I think just commonsense 7:30 a.m. to allow working families to make plans for their children. Thank you.

Mr. Rocky Barton: One thing that I would add to that Josh and I think we can. We will do whatever we can. What if it had been the same situation that you dropped her off to school and we had a major emergency and had to turn school out? Would you have had someone to pick her up? Would you have had to leave the courtroom then?

Mr. Josh Evans: Yes, but in my opinion Mr. Barton commonsense is 7:30 a.m. I think that's a little farfetched scenario that you're proposing.

Mr. Rocky Barton: But, on the same hand it's similar.

Mr. Josh Evans: Not necessarily. I think in an inclement weather policy a decision can be made by 7:30. It's commonsense. Now, that's an emergency situation. Adopting a policy of having a decision made by 7:30 is commonsense.

Superintendent Robinson: Mrs. Mullins, if I may. I've spoken with Mr. Evans, he called that morning. That was a very rare morning but often times we are in that kind of predicament. We are on a 3 hour delay, which means that we start school at 11:30 and the Board adopted that policy with certain steps. In our County by many times we can't go to school and we would have to cancel at 7:30 where at 9:00 the sun is out and it's melting, and we've been caught in that and that goes both ways. That particular morning at 7:30 the weather

looked great. What happens when we call a 3 hour delay, we have until 9:00 to kind of see what it is. That particular morning and Mr. Mooney is here, VDOT who comes in at 8:00 was telling us; I think the secondary roads are okay. All of the secondary roads are okay but we were getting reports from parents, we were getting reports from bus drivers who have to turn that there was some ice and it was. It was just an iffy morning. So, we called school at that time. As the Board has directed me and instructed me, the number one priority is the safety of those children on the bus. If there is any question that I have, that I do not want to put my own child on a bus then we cancel. I apologized to Mr. Evans that day. There is a procedure that we go by and Mr. Mooney and I are on the phone from 6:30 on trying measure all of that. That often occurs. If the Board would like to go back and cancel school at 7:30 then I suggest we take away 3 hour delay and just go 2 hour delay. Russell County does that and on that particular morning as I was explaining to Mr. Evans, Russell County had to cancel school that morning. They were on a 2 hour delay and they cancelled school by 8:00. So this is, as many of you know, calling school, cancelling school is a no win situation and after several years of doing that. I realize that. If you call school off the sun will start shining. If you wait too long then you've waited too long. There is always if's. People say they wouldn't want to make the decision but they are quick to criticize it. I think the only thing I can share with you is this, Mr. Mooney and I converse often and we are not going to make a decision that is going to endanger the life of any child. If a decision is at 8:00 or 9:00 and if the best decision is that we don't want to put those children on the bus, then ladies and gentlemen, unless you tell me differently, we are not going to put those children on the bus.

Chairman, Susan Mullins: Well, I've been on both sides. I got to call work to determine if it's safe and I've also been in that situation and at that time it was Longs Fork Elementary. School would be on a 3 hour delay and I'd wait around, I worked at Norton at that time, I'd wait around and take my kids to school to find a sign on the cone outside to say: School Closed. It is very frustrating and I do think me personally, to see us put it back on the agenda and re-visit to see if we can come up with a good solution.

Superintendent Robinson: Probably a 2 hour delay would be what I would recommend. The reason we went to a 3 hour delay was because of the number of days we were missing. Often times we can go to school on a 3 hour delay where we can't on a 2 hour delay.

Chairman, Susan Mullins: It may be a 2 hour delay, but I don't think we need to make this decision now.

Superintendent Robinson: No, but certainly there are procedures that we would be happy to go over with the Board of what Mr. Mooney and I, and our bus drivers and everyone does as I've shared with Josh. We don't make the decision; our last thought is can we make it hard on parents; that's not the decision. The decision is all of our roads are secondary and what is the best decision? If the Board would like to visit that and the reason we went to a 3 hour delay was that we got in more days of academic instruction. That way we didn't have to make up so many days and go so long in the summer. But if the Board wants to re-visit that and we go a 2 hour delay and by the way on a 2 hour delay we would have to cancel school by when?

Mr. Burl Mooney: Our buses leave even if we are on a 3 hour delay our buses are on the road by 9:00 in the morning; 6:00 on a regular schedule.

Superintendent Robinson: So the Board can certainly re-visit that and what we'll do is we can go back to a 2 hour delay with the stipulation that we will have to cancel school no later than 6:00 p.m.

Chairman, Susan Mullins: I think it's something we need to re-visit but we may end up leaving it just as is. We need to look at the pros and the cons and think it through for a possible better solution. I don't think we need to do it now.

Mr. Josh Evans: Never did I doubt that the best interest of the children was on your hearts and mind. To me a commonsense plan, especially for working families, would be to call school by 7:30 whether a 3 hour delay or 2 hour delay. Just commonsense, it was never coming from a place where I had any doubt that you did not have the safety of the children.

Superintendent Robinson: I know that Josh, but the weather doesn't always work in a commonsense.

Mr. Josh Evans: Yes, but in this particular scenario the decision was made for a 3 hour delay, so in my mind, why weren't the roads in questioned examined when that decision was made? Because if anything, the weather was warmer that morning than on the night before; it was 10 degrees warmer that morning than when the decision was made. So, it didn't make much sense. I thank you and I hope you do re-visit it. I know you got much bigger things on your agenda.

Mr. Burl Mooney: When that decision was made the, one section of road that had ice in our County, happened that morning. We either go to all houses or we go to none.

Chairman, Susan Mullins: It's a tough call.

Mr. Josh Evans: You ought to be able to make a decision by 7:30, that's just my opinion with the conditions and forecasts. Working families by 7:30; we got to know something. We just do.

Chairman, Susan Mullins: So, we are going to add that to the agenda for our next Board meeting.

Mr. Shanghai Nickels: I know where you are coming from. My son grew up at Fielder's Choice in the morning, after that it was the His and Her Shop, then to Coeburn at Morgan-McClure. This was when he was in the 1st and 2nd grade because I didn't have a place to put him at the time. I will say this; I talk to Mr. Mooney way too early sometimes. Matter of fact, he calls me sometimes and I haven't even turned over in bed; about 4 o'clock. We start discussing it and I get up and go to the station. As we all know, the weather doesn't cooperate. I know where you are coming from, I've been there. We need to do something about that.

Mr. Carl Mullins: I'm Carl Mullins and I'll give you some information that you may already know and I'll give you some that you don't know. If you pull a school out of a small community like Haysi; that's devastating enough but it's going to cost you tax dollars and property values are going to go down. I run a little business in Haysi and a lot of my customers come in talking about their kids. If that school does not go back in Haysi they are going to pull their kids out. They will take their brothers and sisters who are in high school and go to another County. There's got to be a better way of doing things than losing your kids. Think about that and think about the community that you will really devastate. It will have a far reaching effect all over the County; not just Haysi. Thank you.

Mrs. April Collins: I will be brief as well and we are all here for the same intent. We know budgets are coming forward. I have a few points that I would like to make as a parent from the Ervinton Elementary area. We want to make sure that we are included in those thoughts; in the planning. Mr. Boyd spoke about how it would affect our community and I would like to reiterate those thoughts. As a parent, Mr. Mullins mentioned the class size that's changed at Clintwood, our students at Ervinton has suffered this year because of those cuts as well and we hope to not suffer further. We went from 4 classes between the 4th and 5th grades to one teacher for 4th grade and one teacher for 5th grade. In class sizes much larger than our kids are used to and that's been difficult for our children. We would hope that would not get larger. We would also be concerned with the closure of Ervinton Elementary. We would lose additional students to outside the County. I don't think that would be in our County's best interest. Also from a business perspective, my mom runs a business in McClure and her business would suffer. All of the community would suffer from losing another fundamental piece of our community. Communities are important in small towns. I believe we have made a new community of Wolfpack, but I think we've lost a portion of identity that I don't want to see us lose more of. Please keep our kids in mind, I know you always do, but it's important as citizens we remind you of that. I appreciate your time and have a good evening.

Superintendent Robinson: As Mr. Owens is coming, I would like to recognize that Mrs. Shelby Willis, Chairman of the Board of Supervisors is with us and I would like to welcome her. I hope Mrs. Willis and I know you have heard these things from me over and over about budget. It's a pleasure to have you with us. I know that the Board of Supervisors is often in a difficult place. I know you are tired of hearing me say what these people here are saying, but if you would please take this message back to the rest of the Board of Supervisors. We certainly would appreciate it. Thank you.

Mr. Matt Owens: Madame Chair, Superintendent Robinson, thank you for having public comment. I know it takes a lot of time but we appreciate the opportunity. I just wanted to come here tonight, please don't shoot the messenger; unfortunately I've been prodded to come up here and talk about this. In the communities right now, as the President of the non-profit Haysi Partners, I've been getting a lot of information about this. Some have been rumors, some are possible facts, and some are definite facts. Some of the parents came to me and expressed their concern and there has been a movement that they have started petitions and started looking into Charter Schools and looking into Vouchers and looking into K12.org opportunities. Where they can take their children out of the school and homeschooling them

with videos, conferencing capabilities at no cost to the parents. So, I just wanted to make you aware of that. I don't want that to be threatening but to make you aware there are Facebook pages going on right now. People making public comments asking for the children's best interest to be a consideration, asking for solutions for the economic issues, which I see the young ladies have went to the legislation for that and Shelby and the Board of Supervisors are looking into finances and all that and it's a wish and a hope and I applaud all of that. I would just hate to see some kind of movement where there would be a mass exodus of children and a mass exodus of finances. I'm not sure that the quality of education would be there because of the consistency of teaching a child at home is not as good as having a professional educating our children. I would just like for you guys to be aware of that and take that into consideration as you work with communities and decide if you would place a school in Haysi and keep it there. Also, look at keeping Ervinton and Clintwood open and making some improvements. Thank you.

Chairman, Susan Mullins: That concludes public comment and we will move on to Good News from Our Schools.

GOOD NEWS FROM OUR SCHOOLS:

Superintendent Robinson: Board Members today we are privileged to honor one of our retirees and Mrs. Janie Vanover would you please come to the front. This is what retirement looks like. It's my pleasure to recognize Janie H. Vanover in appreciation of 35 years and 3 months of service to the Dickenson County Public Schools. *(Applause)*

I asked Mrs. Vanover how many children she had served over the years and her response was; bunches. Mrs. Vanover, we appreciate you and we miss you.

Mrs. Janie Vanover: I don't have a speech and people who know me know I'm not a speech giver. I will say that I've been retired since December 1st and I'm adjusting really well. *(Ha, ha, ha)* I began teaching at Longs Fork Elementary 35 years ago. I started teaching because I thought I wanted to work with children. I was just a young girl. I continued teaching because it became my calling. But now, my calling's different. It's like I told my teachers when I went to Clintwood Elementary, my calling now is to my husband and children, and my grandchildren; and I know that. Having said that, I will always be an advocate for children. I will always be advocate for the teachers of this County through my prayers or whatever God brings my way. I'm keeping my thoughts open; my prayers open to what comes next. I appreciate your recognition. I miss the children. I miss the teachers I worked with but there are certain parts of the job I do not miss. Thank you.

Superintendent Robinson: Our next is Brenda Reynolds. I don't see Mrs. Reynolds here, but she is one of our full time aides and she has worked with us 27 years and 3 months, most of those years in Pre K. That is a total between Mrs. Reynolds and Mrs. Vanover of 62 years of service to children. I can tell you from knowing both of these ladies; it's been a positive impact on them. Thank you both.

Chairman, Susan Mullins: That moves us on to the consent agenda.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Chairman, Susan Mullins: We have three sets of minutes to approve: December 14th, regular Meeting; January 18th, Reorganization & Special Called Meeting and January 18th, Joint Meeting with the Board of Supervisors and IDA. I entertain a motion to adopt or approve or make changes to any of the three.

Mr. Rocky Barton: *I make the motion to approve the minutes as presented. Dr. Lurton Lyle 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? I see Mr. Barton is here.

If not I would entertain a motion to approve the bills as presented.

Mr. Larry Barton: If you notice on the first 5 bills, they were paid on January 16th and 17th. Those were paid a little early and are for our utility bills, for our water, electric and phone. We have an authorization from 2013 for paying of recurring bills and I wanted to let you know those were early to avoid any late fees on those.

Dr. Lurton Lyle: *Made the motion to approve the Monthly Bills as presented. Mr. Rocky Barton seconded the motion. All votes aye.*

School Operating Fund – January 17, 2017 – Bills
 Check Nos. 876890 through 876983 ----- \$202,223.76

School Operating Fund – January 25, 2017 – Payroll
 Check Nos. 388025 through 388064 ----- \$1,659,036.85

SCHOOL ACTIVITY FUND:

Chairman, Susan Mullins—The School Activity Fund is an informational item in your packet.

Superintendent Robinson: Madame Chair, I would like to call your attention the Expenditure Summary Report and the Revenue Summary Report we prepare each month now for the Board, if there are any questions?

APPROVAL OF FIELD TRIPS:

Chairman, Susan Mullins: I noticed that we have some additions to the field trips.

Mr. Shanghai Nickles: *I make a motion that we approve the Field Trips as presented. Dr. Lurton Lyle seconded the motion. All votes aye.*

Approved:

- ❖ Ridgeview High School
 January 27th – Southwest VA Community College – 8th Grade
 February 16th – 17th – Morehead State University – Morehead, KY – 9th Grade

❖ Ridgeview Middle School

October 26th – Bays Mountain – Kingsport, TN – 8th Grade

November 18th – DCER – Clintwood, VA – 6th – 7th Grade

December 20th - Heritage Hall – Clintwood, VA – 2nd Grade

Chairman, Susan Mullins: That brings us to Information for the Board.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS FOR THE BOARD:

Superintendent Robinson: The student enrollment and attendance percentages for December 2016 are in your packet. I would like to ask Mr. Setser to come to the front and present our percentages.

Mr. Mike Setser: Thank you. Mrs. Robinson and Members of the Board for December we ended the month with 2,100 students. That's down 8 from November and fortunately net 6 of those were graduates. We are still down for the month of December. As always, I've included a comparison of attendance rates on the second page you can see where students go.

The monthly attendance percentage winner for the first time this year, as you can see Clintwood has been knocked off the throne; I would like to congratulate Ervinton Elementary with an attendance percentage of 93.32%. I expect Ms. Newton and her crew to come back with a fierce attitude and take it back. (*Ha, ha, ha*)

Congratulations to all our schools.

Superintendent Robinson: Item 2 is just VSBA 2017 schedule of meeting and conferences. The Hot Topic Conference is in Wytheville on March 15, 2017 and as you know we moved our meeting to Tuesday because Board Members had expressed interest in attending.

Along with Mrs. Mullins, we have also been in Richmond Monday and Tuesday of this week. We've met with key legislators and Senate Finance Committee. Just a fantastic trip and this is the three things that I would like to share with the Board. Senator Bill Carico proposed a budget amendment that applies the same cost of competing adjustment currently provided for District VIII to the 19 regions in Region VII, which borders North Carolina, Tennessee, West Virginia and Kentucky. This may cost in the cycle of \$26 million for 16-17 and then \$26,914,000 in 17-18 and so this for us a planning adjustment, a cost of competing adjustment just to maintain and operate our buildings. He's also proposed a measure that would provide additional State funds each year based on the division's composite index and enrollment loss. As you all know, those who have been with us since the Lee's composite index, and Ms. Willis I was thinking of the meeting we had with Senator Carico last July and where we are now. You and others would be proud of where that movement has gone. So, he has also proposed that and reinstates a partial enrollment loss. So if a school division loses a certain amount of students, like we have, then there will be partial reimbursement. Just since that discussion from March 31st to the beginning of school in August, our 8 divisions in the coalfields have lost 644 students which is a significant number. Also, Delegate Kilgore proposed the decrease in Virginia Retirement System contribution rates for teachers. This increase for VRS for Dickenson County Public Schools would be close to \$200,000 and what

we're asking the General Assembly to do is deescalate the rise. Yes, we'll get there but get there slower. For us, \$200,000 in addition to our budget issues would be approximately three teachers. As I've shared with you, I feel very positive; we've met; they are listening and we all have the same message. I was like Phyllis, very hopeful, very positive and I think they understand where we are and what we need. We are not here to whine and complain and say what can you do for us? We are going to be fine in Southwest Virginia. We just need to get our feet on the ground but we need help during the transition. We want the same thing for our children as Loudoun County has. The same thing that Billy in Loudoun County has; we want the same for Billy in Southwest Virginia. I thank the Board for allowing me the opportunity to go. It's been two busy days but two busy productive days. Thank you very much on that.

Tonight we have the pleasure of having our Principals with us and I've invited them to come. Last year we started this and they came in January and shared with the Board the good things that were happening in their schools. The things they were proud of and their goals for the year. I asked them again for a particular reason and I'll share that with you at the end of their presentation.

Mr. Brian Baker, Principal - Ervinton Elementary: Greetings. I would like to share some information. One thing is: It's nice to have representatives of the County to come and express their concerns, their interests. That says a whole lot for our County.

I broke mine down into areas and the first thing I have is instruction. We have a great bunch of students. They are just great kids and we have great, outstanding teachers. I asked the teachers if they would like to share something and so:

Pre K: They are making progress, 4 year olds, through the school community. They are learning about the school community both the student and the parent. That's a big step.

Kindergarten: The PALS testing, they are showing progress and improvement. That is a big step there.

1st Grade: The reading levels are high. We had the 100th day and had a big celebration. They read 100 books in one day, had Dr. Seuss activities. They did counting and brought food in. Kids came in with shirts that had things on them: buttons, clips. One student came with a t-shirt that had Band-Aids and it said: I survived 100 days.

2nd & 3rd Grade: Reading, we're improving and showing progress in reading. In some cases, they have increased 2 reading levels. That's a big step.

In Science and Social Studies, there is a lot of teaching and re-teaching so that students can master the concepts. We don't just give a test and say this is what they made. We want to be able to know that they have mastered the concepts.

In Math, the teachers are using a daily spiral review in the class. Comments from the parents are that the students understand the concepts better. Homework is being done quicker, easier and more accurate. The students are showing more confidence.

4th & 5th Grade: Good communication with parents, they are using a Facebook page that is designated for homework and it's been real effective. It's a good communication tool and the students are doing better with that.

School Activities: We are doing the food backpacks and we have 40 students that are served and their families. They get that each week.

We have the Smile dentist. They were with us in October and they served 31 students. They come in and they do everything and they're coming back February 27th. They have a way of calculating how many days students would be out of school from the services they provide if they had to go to a dentist's office. Of those 31 students, 65.1 days were saved from being out of school.

We are having dress up days, fire safety, flu shots, school lunch week, grandparents for breakfast, pumpkin decorating, school bus appreciation week, breast cancer awareness, all student attended the Barter's performance of Frosty, Christmas program for all grades, 4H talent show, attendance reward recognition in the paper, honor roll in the paper, 100 day activities, book fair and that's just some of the school activities.

Parent Community Support: We have a strong PTO at Ervinton Elementary. The conducted the Fall Festival, an on-line auction which was very successful. They did a Christmas workshop, health snacks, school dances and the money they raise for field trips. As you know when we go on a field trip we have to pay a bus driver and the fuel. It can get real expensive.

Also the individuals, churches and community organizations have provided us with money, clothes, school supplies, equipment and food. They just want to help and it's so rewarding. It's heartwarming the connection they have with the school and students.

Rapoca provided money for Christmas. Local churches and organizations in the Ervinton area provided every student with a Christmas gift.

The community has been very supportive collecting aluminum pull tabs. You may not think that's a big thing but that goes to the Ronald McDonald House and we've collected over 60 lbs. That's just tremendous. That's a lot of aluminum.

Staff Development: We've done 45 hours of professional development through our Master Teacher series and a book reading concerning a leadership for teachers. Our teachers can use these professional development hours for teacher recertification.

On the health side, there has been a Weight Watchers challenge that they've done. A step walking challenge and we also had several meals for the teachers and staff.

Finally, talking about our staff, we have a great group, a great secretary, custodians, cooks, our aides and our bus drivers. They do an outstanding job and all those people work together as a team. Ervinton is a real good school and we're very proud of it. We appreciate you all being on the Board.

Mr. Shanghai Nickles: To tell you how important those tabs are to the Ronald McDonald House, last year we did a golf tournament and Coach Colley was a part of that, we raised right around \$62,000 that day. Yet that is not their biggest fundraiser. It's the tabs from the elementary schools. It's amazing how much those tabs mean to that program. Dickenson County is the third largest user of the home now. Wise County is number one. We appreciate you.

Ms. Betty Newton, Principal – Clintwood Elementary: A couple of positives. We had our perfect attendance luncheon on Friday, January 13th in the Library. We had approximately 68 students from Pre K – 5 who had perfect attendance for the first semester and they had a delicious luncheon of pizza, chips, cookies, juice and water. The cookies were donated by our staff, PTO the pizza, and the office chipped in with the rest of it. A good time was had by all. We do this every year to reward the students who do plug along and don't miss any school. We are real proud of all of them. That was coordinated by Mrs. Muncy and we appreciate all her help with that too.

Last Thursday, January 19th we had back to school night at Clintwood Elementary. Teachers were asked to prepare engaging activities; something active that parents could do. As I walked around I had mass scavenger hunts going on, games of sparkles, cahoots on the smart board, 100 day craft activities, site word bingo and a lot of other smart board games. Parents and students were actively engaged. I staggered the schedule so parents could attend more than one grade level if they had children in different grade levels. Our PTO provided snacks that participants could take along with them to the classroom if they were late getting to the cafeteria. At the beginning we had refreshments around 4:45 to 5:20 and at one time the cafeteria was completely full. We allowed about 30 to 40 minutes for each classroom activity. For parents of students grades 3 through 5 you could change classes and that was a real treat. 3rd grade and 4th grade classrooms would be full and you would have about 20 waiting to change classes. I told the parents I bet you've not done that since high school and they said no I haven't. Like I say, they were all enjoying it. I would like to say that parents who don't normally come in came that night and they were participating with their children. That just thrilled my heart. As they were leaving and on subsequent days I've had a lot of positive feedback; I hope this is something we can continue in the future.

A positive story: A lot of times we struggle with attendance. It's a battle we try to fight but it's hard to win. You have to get the parents to buy in and be with you. There was a child a few years ago in Kindergarten, we don't place Kindergarteners on attendance plans, but we knew the foundation wasn't there and it was a struggle. The child went to 1st and the problems continued and the child ended up being retained. Then over the next two or three years things have kind of changed, home situation, lots of things have changed. That child made Honor Roll the last time and I know a lot of times Mike doesn't get the positives. He gets the negatives and that's one thing that he worked with me early on. Sometimes you just have to

be patient, it may not happen immediately but three or four years down the road it may happen. I am real proud of that child.

Goals: Mrs. Muncy and I have a hope and a goal that we will be able to start a Jr. BETA club at Clintwood Elementary for 4th and 5th graders. Mrs. Muncy has the preliminary plans together. Later this semester teachers, Mrs. Muncy, Ms. Davis and probably myself will work on membership, induction plans and then plans to do an officer election from our 4th grade room so we can have everything in place for our 5th grade students next year.

A lot of things going on and it's an exciting place to be. I am just thankful.

Mr. Dennis Deel, Principal – Sandlick Elementary School: Thank you for letting me speak tonight and share with you what is going on at Sandlick Elementary School. There are a lot of good things. Come by and visit with us. You will see lots of good things taking place. I did happen to visit one of my Special Ed. classrooms of autistic kids. They were in the room and it was Author's Day. I had no idea and I wandered in for the presentation. These kids had drawn pictures and they were pretending that they were the bus drivers. They would take turns to go up and tell about buses, drivers and what their role was. There were not a lot of words used, but as they went through it you could tell they were so excited because they didn't want to sit down. I thought that would be a good thing to share with what they had done.

Positive things going on at my school: You've probably heard of the United Way backpack program and we are presently feeding 27 students. We did receive the RAPOCA money as well. We provided clothing for approximately 80 students.

My 4th and 5th grade students were able to participate in the writing program and whoever won the contest was able to judge the parade in the town of Haysi. I thought that was a good thing.

We have received 30 Chrome notebooks, which is a big deal for us to use in the classroom for testing.

Back at Christmas time some folks from New York City came by. They actually own Superior Fabrication at Haysi and Julia Manners has been talking with me all year. What can we do? They actually brought toys last year and I told her they could do something similar would be fine. They gave one gift for every child in my building, and then on top of that they also bought clothing for several children. While they were there they contacted another individual and they provided us with \$25,000. To me that was just unbelievable. What we've done with the money so far. At Christmas time we picked out 25 families, E & S Grocery was so helpful, they put together food boxes of about \$125 and we gave it to those folks. We are going to be doing something like that once a month for them to take home.

Also during the snow days I have to brag on my janitors, I came in that morning and they had already started buffing all the floors and cleaning areas that they can't very often. So I have

to brag on them. The staff at Haysi; they are just amazing. Just like the staff at other schools they all work really hard. I can't say anything negative about any of them.

Goals: Things I plan on working on through the school year is the end product of the SOL tests. Try to use the CIP material, looking at our benchmark scores, sharing that information with our teachers so they can share it with their students. Hopefully this year our language scores will be up. They were lower than they should have been last year. We are trying to address that by looking at Anita Archer videos using explicit instruction. We are actually starting that tomorrow. We are also going to participate in Read across America. I would like to invite you guys over to read to us the second week of March. I think if kids can see we are interested in them they are going to do a little better for us. I think it's all about caring for them and letting them know we are there. So come on down. We'd love to have you and we'll give you a book.

I'd like to thank Mr. Barton, I think he came by several time in the Fall. I'm proud to say he's my Board member. Thank you.

Mr. Rocky Barton: I noticed for the 3rd straight month that Sandlick enrollment is up. Is that children that you're seeing coming back or?

Mr. Dennis Deel: Some came from Clintwood and some have left the County due to work and then have come back.

Mr. Rocky Barton: I've talked to different folks who are planning on coming back because their promise of a job is back now.

Mr. Dennis Deel: I'm hoping that's a positive trend for us. We still have to work on our attendance and that's a weak spot for us. We are trying to figure out how to do it and I really liked some of the ideas I heard Ms. Newton talk about.

Mr. John Whitner, Principal – Ridgeview Middle School: Thank you for letting us sharing and I'm very excited about what's going on at Ridgeview Middle School. If you've been up there you all know that I have great teachers. They are so good from what I saw last year we started off the year providing our own professional development. I asked three of the teachers that co-teacher together and another teacher that taught a different class to do a presentation of what they do in the classroom. The other teachers were able to watch them in progress. One does the Anita Archer, which is thumbs up thumbs down everybody gives a response. They do a lot of good team teaching. I've got that going across the school and I thought that was a very effective way to start the school off. Teachers teaching teachers has been an excellent opportunity for our personnel.

Also, our math department has gotten together and we've got some great information from David Mullins, Assistant Principal at LF Addington. He wrote this program and his school has consistently had the top 8th Grade SOL scores in the State. Obviously if he's doing something we want to do it too. He came over and spent some time with us and we were able to buy into his program. We want to do well in all areas but math is we're we focus in

on because it was the greatest need. We've put a lot of effort and resources into that area. We are off to a great start.

Positive things are happening and I'm excited about our Robotics and Mrs. Fields has been working with them but she's also been able to get the high school teacher, Mr. Owens and Ms. Mullins too. They've been great to come over and help our students. They have their first competition this Saturday.

St. Jude's, Ms. Hay and several of the teachers and students helped raising over \$1,000 in Pennies for Patients campaign. It's a wonderful work that they take on and do.

I need to brag on my 6th and 7th grade basketball girls. They are undefeated right now. So hopefully they will continue that as we go.

Clubs are something that I'm excited about and hope to continue to provide. We have about 20 or so. It's interesting that our smallest, the Chess Club, which is only about 2 or 3 and then the Bible Club which is about 80 members. The Bible Club was able to take students to the Nursing Home for Christmas and provide treats for them. Drama Club, we don't have a class but we have a club and the teachers from the high school worked with these students. They put on a performance at Sandlick, Ervinton and Clintwood Elementary Schools. BETA Club, I've been concerned because we lost our sponsor for the Hearts of the House. BETA Club is going to step up and sponsor Hearts for the House for Ronald McDonald House. 4H put on a share the fun talent show last Friday. There are a lot of things that students get the opportunity once a month to be involved in of other interest. I haven't checked attendance on that Friday but I do have students asking do we have club today? There is a lot of excitement in terms of what goes on there.

Goals: Math scores and I'm excited, Isaac Johnson has been a wonderful addition to our staff. We focused in what we're calling double math. It gives us an opportunity to pull students out an extra 20 to 30 minutes and give them that extra instruction. Mr. Johnson is just outstanding at what he does. He works very closely with all the math teachers so he can reinforce that. Our 7th grade is our number one focus because that is where we identified the most weaknesses. He is helping to get anywhere from 20 to 24 students each day an extra 30 minutes of instruction in addition to the intervention.

Climate: I've read studies that Middle School is the worst time of students' life. It's boring or whatever. We are working very hard to make Ridgeview Middle School a place where kids want to come and enjoy themselves. We want this to be a safe place, an enjoyable place, a place they can enjoy. We are thankful for Mrs. Stanley who has worked with some of the parents and started a booster organization. They are coming, helping and providing additional assistance plus help sponsor some things. We were able to give out 20 food boxes with the assistance of DDS and Behavioral Health. We appreciate their help. Students are aware and that there is help.

I want to share three stories from my school. The first one is if you get at my school say at 7:45 a.m. you walk into our lobby and we have breakfast going there (we feed about 80

there) and the majority of our students go to our gym. At approximately 7:55 a.m. those students leave the gym and go to their classroom. One of the teachers came chuckling to me and said I just about got ran over by one of our students. She asked why are you running? Because they were running to the gym and students were getting ready to leave the gym. The student said I got to get in there and pray. I got to get in there and pray! It turns out that the students on their own; I think its one day a week organized a prayer group. They meet once a week, student lead on their own, to pray. This boy had to get there to pray. That is good news.

The second thing is Ms. Allison Mullins, Civics Teacher, is having a mock trial. She's working with them. You've got the defense. You've got prosecution. But I was really interested in the topic because the prosecution is going to have Jack and the Beanstalk on trial for theft, damages and property. There are several things they are going to try to prosecute this young man for. Of course the defense is going to try to defend Jack. I've heard stuff like; Jack just FOUND that golden egg! (*laughter*) That's what teachers are doing to make things interesting to students.

Mrs. Phyllis Mullins: I usually use the story of "The Big Bad Wolf" and the "Three Little Pigs".

Mr. John Whitner: So we've got some serious business going on at Ridgeview Middle School.

The last story is this: I was observing a teacher and this is an 8th grade student and I've known this student very well last year, he was in my office a lot. I got to know quite a few of them and you know he didn't want to do his work. Well, I walked in and this was one of those co-teaching classes and I was interested and at that particular time we had one teacher with 5 students in this area and another teacher is this area and what they've done they've been able to incorporate a lot of David Mullins' styles as far as homework, spiraling and so the main teacher was sitting here and what impressed me with this he was working. He was working hard! Wow! So I asked the teacher about him and he said; yeah, he's been working hard. Instead of the traditional taking homework home and bringing it back the next day homework is done over a week period in material covered the week prior known as spiraling. What the teacher told me yesterday is the students have made a competition out of it. They'll work 5 problems and the teachers will check it and then they'll go to the five next and if they miss it they get to redo the work and they get partial credit for it. So it's an easy grade and you've got a week to get your homework in instead of a night. I was impressed because this young man spent a lot of time in my office. Well, this afternoon the teacher came out chuckling because he came in and wanted to finish his homework. Came in at intervention time and did that. Then the English teacher was gone so he asked instead of going to English class can I start on next week's homework? Now how many kids do you know want to do extra math? But he has got to a success level and gained confidence that he has taken off! We are going to have a model citizen for high school next year. My teachers are doing awesome and like the other Principals have said; just come and see us. Thank you for what you do.

Mr. Rodney Compton, Principal – Ridgeview High School: Not only do I want to speak tonight but I have Mr. Owens and a student here that I want them to speak to you also.

At Ridgeview High School it's a place that is very, very, very busy. There is a lot of stuff going on and there is a lot of moving parts. We had a ballgame last night. We have a ballgame tomorrow night, ballgame Friday night and come Saturday the Forensic Team will be going to Union and the Robotics Team will be going to Southwest Virginia Community College. When I was here before and I spoke about the different things going on coordinating the athletics and those things that you see is kind of the front porch. That's what everyone sees. When you think of Tennessee you think of the girls' basketball team. That's what you read in the paper and that's what you see. But there are also a lot of things going on inside of the walls and that's what I want to share with you. What's going on inside the walls at Ridgeview. The thing that I think is really important is I want them to be well rounded, but I want them to be good citizens. I'm going to summarize some of these things our students have been involved in with the support of their parents. I want to share a few things:

Already this year we've had 2 blood drives. We've collected 105 units of blood and we'll have another one this Spring. Ridgeview is probably one of the top schools in the area for getting blood donations.

Our students purchased 500 pencils, crayons, soap, washcloths for the Shoe Box program. Our students were very much involved in the Christmas Angel program. They adopted around 50 to 60 children. We've adopted 3 children from the Kids Central program and provided them with gifts. They also adopted 10 elder angels, older citizens who were recommended by some of our local agencies. They stuffed 31 stockings for the Adult Services program, helped with a Radio Auction for Adult Services. Students made holiday cards for all the residents at Heritage Hall. Those are the things I think are important. We are losing a lot of this stuff and we want to be those kinds of people who help other people. They help to stock the pantry for Ridgeview High School. If anyone is in need, a pantry is stocked and items provided to them discreetly. Our students also provided 700 lbs. of new and slightly used clothes, shoes, toys, toiletries etc. to the victims of the Louisiana floods. I have a lot more but that is just a summary of what our students have done. They are constantly out there helping other people and I think that is a very important thing. Yes we are also concerned about test scores and SOL's but I think this is a tribute not only to our students but to our parents, and our teachers that encourage that type of thing.

The other thing I want to speak briefly on is I know we are at halftime with the SOL's. Last year we knew that we were on a standalone year by ourselves. Whatever we scored that year was where we were going to be. If we didn't make the 70 mark we were going to be in warning or going to have to write all the plans and that's all been documented. This year we're not where we want to be as a school, but we are a lot closer this year than we were last year. There are still things we are working on, but I've noticed this year that our teachers are doing that. We've got teachers from three different schools in the County. Last year we brought all that together and it went well. You can tell this year that we know each other better as a staff. We trust each other and we talk to each other and as a result it helps the entire program. We had our testing this fall and I'm saying again this is halftime but as a coach I'd

rather be ahead at halftime than to use the whole second half trying to catch up. But this is where we're at: English/Reading – 94 to 95%, Math – 96%, Science – 92%, History – 93%; everything in the 90's. Now, that's pretty impressive but it gets better. Of all those students that tested, we have special needs and special ed. and all types of students. Of that population that tested 71% passed that test. There are divisions in this State that would die to have their general population make 71%; our special ed. made 71% this Fall. Also we're dealing with diplomas; a special ed. child sometimes if they did not make the 400 and some of the classes they can make a 375 and get a local verified credit. All of the special ed. students that took the test 86% scored high enough to get the local verified credit. That translates into diplomas. So I am very, very pleased not only with our teachers and their hard work but also our students. It takes some time and effort for them to pass those tests. When the tests scores start coming in in the Spring it's like election time. It's a very exciting time for students and teachers.

That's all the time I'm going to take and I'm going to let Mr. Owens and one of the students come. They are going to be competing Saturday. These kids and Mr. Owens work on these Robots in the evenings, breaks, when we have snow and even during the Christmas break. These kids are working on Robots. I want them to kind of share with you what they are going to be up against on Saturday.

Mr. Chris Owens: Earlier in the summer Mrs. Robinson asked me if I would go and get my license to do some CTE courses, engineering, robotics, and so I did. I have robotics classes and it's great because I get students like Trenton and we can work on our robots every day. We've built one this year and we've got a competition Saturday and it starts at 11:00 a.m. if you want to come over to Southwest. We are going to stream it live on our Facebook page. We're going to give a shot. We've had a couple of scrimmages with Richlands. We just about scored a world record; 20 points away with ours and Richlands combined scores. Jacob Dotson and some of those guys are right now up there programing it and trying to get it ready for Saturday to see if we can break a world record. We are going to give it a shot. It's been great! It's been a good experience. Next year we are hoping to do a bigger robot FRC. We are going to combine with the team out of Richlands. Those robots are bigger at about 125 lbs. and you can use pneumatics, gas powered engines and things that we can't use. Everything we do is electric. So I'm looking forward to it and invite you to come. I invite you to watch it on Facebook. I think the cheerleaders are going to load up and go with us so it should be a lot of fun and a good experience. I'll let Trenton talk about what we did in class.

Trenton Deel: Jumping back to the class really quick, that opportunity, the addition of that class really gave the entire student body a great chance to get involved in STEM courses. You have students that play football, basketball and things like that and students like Jacob Dotson who wanted to be part of the team who couldn't because of football practice. I just want to thank you all for adding that class. We are learning about engineering processes, designing and then we've broke up into small groups. Some students are more interested in the software component of the robotics and they can learn programing in C plus, Java, whatever. Jacob had a broad knowledge of everything. We had another opportunity, a little smaller one, but the BETA Club this year at the State Convention is going to have robotics competition. There are no really set rules for this other than you can't use certain parts and there is a

certain length and height on it, but you can sort of do whatever. We have had a chance to design what we want to do. Jacob and I were sitting and brainstorming and what we've come up with is he's going to design a program where multiple people can log into a text based chat and input commands and the robot will do them in real time. The hardware is going to consist of a raspberry pie and several components like that so it's basically just a small computer bolted on; saves a lot more space, saves a lot more money compared the parts that come with FTC. That's the plan and the convention is in two weeks: February 9th – 11th. If I can live stream it I will but I don't know how that would work because it's going to be really busy. That's all I have. Thank you.

Mr. Chris Owens: We have a student who was able to program our robot's eyes to blink and an engineer who works with Washington County's teams couldn't figure out how we were doing it. It's unbelievable what some of these kids can do! You wouldn't believe what they're capable of and I'm just there; yeah it's good. (*Ha, ha, ha*)

Superintendent Robinson: I would like to ask our Principals to come to the front please. Ladies and Gentlemen in December when I asked them to do this I know they wondered why. There was a plan behind the plan and so I would like to recognize that this is Virginia School Principals Appreciation Week. I would like to read this resolution.

WHEREAS, school principals work cooperatively to direct, develop, and inspire all members of the school staff and student body, and to communicate effectively with parents to engage them in the learning process; and

WHEREAS, principals serve as educational leaders, responsible for managing the policies, regulations, and procedures necessary to ensure a safe and effective learning environment for all students in Virginia's public and private schools; and

WHEREAS, principals and teachers are entrusted with the opportunity and the responsibility of guiding, directing, nurturing, mentoring, and imparting knowledge to our children while they are at school; and

WHEREAS, principals must work collaboratively with teachers, staff, students, parents, and the community-at-large to proactively prepare students to be self-reliant and productive citizens; and

WHEREAS, Virginia School Principals Appreciation Week is an opportunity to recognize the hard work of Virginia school principals and to recognize the importance of principals in ensuring that every child has access to a quality education:

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Terence R. McAuliffe, do hereby recognize January 22-28, 2017, as **VIRGINIA SCHOOL PRINCIPALS APPRECIATION WEEK** in our **COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA**, and I call this observance to the attention of all our citizens.

Congratulations. (*Applause*)

Chairman, Susan Mullins: We are down to item E, Mrs. Robinson.

UPDATE ON BUDGET: FY 2017 AND PROPOSED FY 2018:

Superintendent Robinson: I'm going to ask Mr. Barton to come to the front and you have this information.

Mr. Larry Barton: Madame Chair, Mrs. Robinson, Members of the Board. As Mrs. Robinson said you have this is your packet and I will review it for you.

On December 16, 2016, the Dickenson County Public Schools received the Governor's Introduced Amendments to the 2017-2018 Biennial Budget and the Caboose bill for the Project FY 2017 payments. The mid-year adjustment includes a significant decrease in the current budget. The new projected funds that we will receive for this current year, is \$14,779,309, a decrease in this year's budget of \$385,672. This is due to two things mainly; loss of student enrollment and the Governor removing the 2% salary increase from the State budget. The effect that this will have on the Division: I'm still going through the budget and looking at everything closely. Two things that I want to point out in particular. We did not give the raise this year that we budgeted because the State took the funding and that's going to save us \$183,109. Next our unemployment expense; we are looking at a potential savings of \$60,000. This is fortunate for those who were caught up in the layoffs in the summer were able to find jobs. That's a total of \$243,109 worth of savings but it's still going to leave about \$142,000 short fall in the current budget year. The budget we're working in now. We are consistently monitoring all the expenditures, checking revenues and we're working diligently to adjust where we can to meet those needs. Does anyone have any questions?

Superintendent Robinson: The enrollment loss could be greater on March 31st if we have more students to leave us.

Mr. Larry Barton: As Mrs. Robinson shared, March 31st will be the final number the State uses for the average daily membership. What they have done in the original budget is to take 2,123 and now the Governor is saying they are projecting 2,084 for our division. This is going to be the average from when school started in August to March 31st. As Mike shared, we are running at 2,100 right now and we're hoping we can stay there and eat up some of this \$142,000. Again that's just a projection and we will have a definite number on March 31st.

Superintendent Robinson: We continue to have a freeze on purchases.

Mr. Larry Barton: We continue to monitor all purchases and what's spent. Most of the things being spent come across my desk and we try to determine is this something we need or something we have to have. I will myself actually price check and I'm ordering and doing a lot of things that wasn't done in the past. The buses; we are really trying to work with what we've got. Fix what we can, use parts off the buses that are out of service and again trying to be a conservative as possible. The whole division is. Thank you.

Mr. Brian Baker: Madame Chair, may I? When I was talking about my staff I failed to mention my nurse and I want to say that our nurse does a tremendous amount and I truly appreciate her.

CHANGE OF PROTOCOL AND PROCEDURES:

Chairman, Susan Mullins: Mr. Mullins would you like to talk about item F?

Mr. Scott Mullins: We learn in the legal system as we go along and if you're luck you learn from other people's mistakes and not your own. This is a situation where we get to learn from Franklin County. Franklin County had a policy that was much like our policy and many others' policy which said you cannot make personal attacks on school employees. When someone had complaints on school employees they would ask them to come to closed session. Someone asked an Attorney General's opinion on whether that was constitutional, because one of our sacred rights is to complain about our government. The Virginia Attorney General's office dealt with this and this opinion is why we need to tweak our policy that Mr. Nickles reads for us. I'll start out by saying that I think this is where you draw the lines. The constitution is an interesting creature because courts rule on this, on where those lines are. We all believe that we have the absolute right to come here and be critical of the school board. We believe we have the right to be critical of the division superintendent and directors and that seems intuitively right. Then we talk about our principals and that seems right and then you start walking down to teachers. How do you feel about people coming in and making personal attacks on your teachers in public comment? Then you go down to your teacher's aides, janitors. Where do you draw the line on personal attacks on your employees? Then what about students? What if the public wants to come here and criticize the quarterback for Friday night or the special ed. kid? Where do you draw the line and say we are not going to let you talk about that in public comment. The Attorney General's opinion says basically that we cannot prohibit personal attacks against employees. That goes from the superintendent all the way down to your support staff. That is a right that people have to come to the Board and complain and identify them. With that right to stand at that podium and complain and say things that are negative about people and your employees, with that comes the responsibility to be liable for the slander suit that may follow. But we cannot control that as a governmental entity. We open up the door and we have the right to impose reasonable restraint like time and things like that but we cannot keep people from making personal attacks on employees. We've never really stopped that but fortunately and I'm proud to say this, I think most of our public has always known where to draw the line. We now know where the lines are by the Attorney General's opinion. I think when it comes to students we still have to draw the line. That is a bit more of a gray area but I would encourage you to stand firm on the idea that if anyone comes to say anything critical about a student that we are not going to allow that in public comment. That's something that should be closed session and dealt with there. I think there is a boundary there that we shouldn't step across. That is one change of protocol and it's not a discretionary thing. It's something that the School Board Association has said is the law and we've got to follow it. Any comments or questions about what I've said so far?

Second thing and this part is discretionary, and deals with how you want to conduct your meetings. At the reorganization meeting in January we usually adopt Robert's Rules of Or-

der. This School Board has treated people with respect and allowed them to air out even when we differ. We allow everybody to air out their position. This issue deals with public participation after you start the meeting. We do public comment historically at the beginning and as you go into more areas of public concern this is inevitably what happens. You have something come up and you will have someone who will very nicely raise their hand and this during your normal agenda. I'm not talking about public comment. The belief is that if you let one person speak you ought to let everybody speak and we don't gauge people on whether we like their message or we don't like it. We don't even have a practice or protocol. We have 5 minutes on public comment. Sometimes during our normal agenda we'll have someone raise their hand and then they will talk for 15 minutes. We don't really have a rule against that and we sort of let it flow. Then when one talks others talk and really just can't shut the barn door at that time. We've opened it up and then there you are. I bring this point up with some hesitation because we've had good discussions with the public here. But you can also end up in situations where you will never get out of here depending on the topic or what you're dealing with. That process and what we've been doing is inconsistent with Robert's Rule of Order. It may be inconsistent with time management and practices if you have really controversial issues and where everyone feels like they have something that needs to be said. The only thing I will say is if you open it up for one, then you should open it up for everyone. If we have a policy then we really should try to follow it. If the folks on this side of the bench would understand that it's hard for you all. Because you want to open up and try to communicate with your constituents and at the same time you could have meeting that you would never get out. Again we are trying to draw the line and this is a discretionary line. I've put a proposed policy out there for you to look at but this your school board. This is your procedure. I will try to draft whatever is the pleasure of the board as far as protocols. Questions or concerns?

Mr. Rocky Barton: Does any Board have public comment at the end of their agenda? That's what a lot of people come to talk about it is something on the agenda but they speak before they hear it.

Ms. Vickie Musick: Russell County does. I go to that meeting as well.

Mr. Scott Mullins: One thing that I suggested in an email is if we have issues that are of a particularly concern to the public, you could have it at the end. But most people don't want to stay until the end of our meeting because some of our meetings go on until 10:30 or 11 o'clock. The other option is you have two public comments one at the beginning and one at the end. You're right Rocky a lot of people want to hear it and then comment on it. The way the law looks at and if you adopt Robert's Rules of Order that should have some significance on it. Robert's Rules of Order really doesn't allow for a round table discussion. The way you can deal with it is public comment at the end or things of real concern to have a public hearing. That's what public hearings are all about. If you have discussions all over then if you let one person talk you will have to let everyone talk and that could really bog you down on hot button issues. It's your call. It's your board and I will try to do whatever you tell me you want to do.

Chairman, Susan Mullins: Dr. Lyle what's your feelings?

Dr. Lurton Lyle: I would like to take a little more time to think about it myself. I realize that public comment could get out of hand, not public comment but public interaction with the board. We've had very few episodes that I recall but we have had some.

Superintendent Robinson: Dr. Lyle, we could let the board think about this this month and place it on the agenda in February.

Chairman, Susan Mullins: Is that okay?

Mr. Rick Mullins: Yes, I'd like to think about it too.

Mr. Rocky Barton: Like Dr. Lyle said and with his years on the board he's been through more than the rest of us. But me and Susan have been on the board nine years and we've come through some very difficult meetings with the closing of schools. What we've done has seemed to have worked out pretty good. So the way we have conducted meetings has worked pretty good.

Chairman, Susan Mullins: So are we going to table it?

Superintendent Robinson: That seems to be the consensus of the Board.

Chairman, Susan Mullins: We will move on.

UPDATE ON THE NEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDY:

Superintendent Robinson: Our next item is the Update on the New Elementary School Study. This is an informational item for the Board.

On November 30, 2016, the Dickenson County School Board requested that a study for the potential site of the new elementary school be completed. The School Board requested that the potential site study for the new elementary school provide the following information; with the understanding that further information would be requested needed as the process and study evolved.

1st - the Board requested was projected student enrollment trends for 5, 10, and 15 years.

2nd - was determining where do students live?

- Determine residence locations of students by utilizing the GIS Software by downloading students' addresses to the GIS software. This information will provide a visual map of where our all students live throughout the County.
- This visual information will help to determine the number of number of students who live in the boundary areas of the county. This information will help to project the number of students who may transfer to a school division in closer proximity to their place of residence as loss of enrollment is projected.

3rd - was conduct a financial analysis and financial impact. We were asked to complete a financial analysis of three scenarios and determine the potential funding.

- Keep an elementary school in all three communities: Provide budget costs for staffing, utilities, bus transportation, etc. Include the cost of projected capital projects at CES and EES: i.e. new roof at CES, repairs at EES, etc.
- Keep two elementary schools in the County: One in the Haysi location and one in the Clintwood location.
- Consolidate all three elementary into one school in a central location.

4th – was finalizing the budget for the new elementary school to include:

- Projected cost of site.
- Projected cost of site prep.
- Projected land surface costs.
- Projected mineral rights costs.
- Projected cost for required NEPA and Environmental costs.
- Cost per square footage.
- Other components.

5th – was identify all potential sites for the new elementary school.

6th – School Board’s determination of the site for the elementary school:

- Elementary, Ridgeview for a consolidated elementary school.
- Clinchco Elementary School for EES and SES.

To update the Board on the status of the study is as follows:

1. The projected student enrollment from Weldon Cooper or 5, 10 and 15 years is completed.
2. Determining the location of where students live with GIS software began in January with the assistance of the UVA Wise. This will be a 4 – 6 week project to complete.
3. Determining the financial analysis of the scenarios identified has begun in December as with Mr. Barton works on the developing the Estimated FY 2018 budget. The process for identifying capital projects and projected costs of capital projects for CES and EES has begun.
4. Budget meetings with Skanska are scheduled in February to determine the budget for the elementary school and to identify location sites. The three sites most mentioned for the new elementary school are: Haysi for Sandlick Elementary, Ridgeview for a consolidated elementary school and Clinchco for consolidated school for EES and SES.

We will continue to update the School Board each month, and present the entire study in May 2017, perhaps in a special called meeting.

Chairman, Susan Mullins: So that will be on our agenda for another date and that brings us to item H.

UPDATE ON DEMOLITION PROJECTS:

Superintendent Robinson: We just received this today from Skanska and you will see the demolition progress update.

Haysi High School outbuilding 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 and waiting on grass to grow so permits can be closed.

Ervinton High School demolition is nearing completion. Storage building, Ag building and mobile home are completely demolished. The high school building has been demolished along with footers and slabs except for slabs and footers at gym and retaining wall at boiler room. Demolition work is anticipated to be completed early February 2017. Weather in early January has caused some issue with removal of debris and mud on roads, however, the demolition contractor is bringing in additional equipment to allow them to progress the work.

Letters have been sent to the Corps to confirm whether or not curb and gutter have to be removed under the terms of the contact with the County. A formal response from the Corps is pending.

You also have pictures of the Ervinton demolition site. Questions or comments?

APPROVAL OF ERATE BID FOR INTERNET SERVICE:

Superintendent Robinson: The next item is approval of the e-rate bid for internet service and I'm going to ask Mr. Barton to come to the front.

Mr. Larry Barton: Mr. Deel couldn't be here tonight so I'm going to do this for him. This information is in your Board Packet and gives information on how this e-rate process works. It is a four step process and we are in phase one right now. The first phase is to file a form with the School and Library Division of Universal Services and we got two bids for services. However, only one could provide all service areas and that was BVU. BVU is who we currently have services with and have had services for the last several years. Currently they provide service at a cost of \$11,650 per month and \$139,800 per year. As one of Principals mentioned they had received 30 Chrome books. This year we've used a lot of our Technology money to put Chrome books in each of the schools and charging carts. We've probably added 100 to 150 Chrome books which help with testing, and as things progress it takes more and more bandwidth to operate all these devices. We need to increase our LAN services at all locations. The bid is \$13,300 per month and \$159,600 per year. We anticipate that the Division will receive reimbursement for 85% of this cost through the e-rate program; our part will be going up \$1,650 per month but we would only be paying \$330 per month looking at that way. This is what Mr. Deel gave me and I've been working with him on this. This is for a two year agreement.

Chairman, Susan Mullins: So, we will need a motion?

Superintendent Robinson: We are recommending to the Board this proposal on e-rate.

Dr. Lurton Lyle: I make the motion we accept the bid. Mr. Rick Mullins seconded the motion. All votes aye.

BOARD COMMENT:

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

Mr. Shanghai Nickles: First of all, thank everyone for being here tonight, some very interesting things. Great things in these schools, great kids, outstanding teachers, leadership of our schools is unparalleled. We're very fortunate to have the principals and assistant principals and the people that drive buses and work in cafeterias, very fortunate, very privileged and also people that work here in this main office.

I've got something on my heart that I want to mention and it's been something that's been coming for a couple of years now. As a school board member, I feel I have failed to represent a group of young ladies and young men. I'm going to explain that. When the new school was being planned for the children of our County, I was lead to believe by the architect, and so were some of the coaches of baseball and softball, when I ask about batting and throwing facilities outside of the ball fields at Ridgeview High School. I was told by the architect that there would be no need for an outside batting, building or throwing type of facility. I asked him why? This would be put inside the Middle School is what I was told. Here we have a \$70 million plus facility and nothing for the girls and boys of softball and baseball. Is it fair or safe for us to continue to send our kids to the Haysi Kiwanis Park or to the Haysi Dam after school in the Spring? Time changes at dark. If a bus is being used for the kids to travel to these two places, the team that takes the kids assumes the responsibility of the bus driver and fuel bill. By the way those two sports make very little money during their season. We are having children leaving baseball for soccer and I don't blame them for that. If I were a parent I'd want all my kids at one place too. You can't be two places at one time. These two sports are the only two sports that you have to have an inside facility and outside facility. Softball and Baseball starts in the middle of February. The coaches of softball and baseball are not jealous of any of the other coaches up there that have 3 football fields and 3 basketball gymnasiums, six tennis courts, an eight lane track. They're not jealous. They're happy for them. But last year our girls practiced three times before they had a game and we expect these kids to compete? It's too hard to do that. The other thing that bothers me is that fact, and I'm not sure how many times the boys practiced, I understand that they tried to practice inside with a Nerf type ball and you really can't do something with that. If you are playing fast pitch softball or baseball you have to be acclimated to that sport. I felt sorry for some of you young kids that I helped coach doing this: dodging softballs five feet away from them. Why? They were not used to it.

I don't think I can raise \$35,000 this time. I think I've raised my share of the money for this Dickenson County School System. I'm not patting me on the back, but as a Board member I feel like I've failed these children. I think as a Board, and as a citizen of Dickenson County, we are going to be the laughing stock of this region because whenever you ask anybody or they come to your school like they did last night. We showed them the football field, we

showed them the soccer field, we showed them the baseball field, we showed them the soft-ball field and then they said where you do guys hit at inside? I said we don't do that. One guy said he thought it was ridiculous. I think it's ridiculous. We've not stepped up and came up with the money. I talked to Mr. Barton and we know what the prices are. This is \$35,000 to enclose something like that. I know this Board would build it tomorrow if we had the money. But I was under the impression when we built that school up there that was going to be taken care of in the building budget. I've talked to Mr. Mullins back there. We thought nets were going to go into the Middle School gym. I went to the schools that have that. I've seen no damage to no walls or no floors. I think it's an absolute shame that we've got kids that's not being treated fairly at our school while other kids have the best of the best. They have nothing.

Mr. Rocky Barton: I guess I will thank Principals first, sounds like a whole lot of good stuff is going on at our schools. I want to thank the Superintendent and Phyllis, Kathy and all those that went to bat for us at Richmond.

I want to use this time to mention one thing about the folks here with the elementary that I don't think that people truly understand. Maybe I can give you a scenario that you might understand it. The town of Haysi on the east side is 3 miles away from the Buchanan line. If you straightened it, it would be a mile. I'm going to guess and there's no way to find out and I'm sure the Weldon Cooper Center can't tell us how many kids we get from Buchanan County. It may give a pretty good idea when numbers come back and we have 300 or 320 on their study. Then we are going to know where the rest of them are coming from: the Greenbrier area, the Breaks area, the back side of Laurel Branch. We get a lot of students from that area. Saturday I went to Wal-Mart with my mother. We were at the funeral home. We don't go to Wise. You go to Grundy. You can be there from the funeral home, I went across Poplar Gap, and I was there in 17 minutes. That's how close we are to Grundy. People go there to the DMV. They go to Vansant to Food City. If we think for a minute that they won't move their kid; then we're wrong. I talked three nights ago to Marlene Hackney. She grew up in Greenbrier and attended Sandlick School. Now she's married and lives on Owens Branch which is in Dickenson County. She has a kindergartener and 4th grader at Sandlick and she asked me about the school and what's going to happen. I told her that the last vote was for it to be where it's supposed to be; at Haysi. She said my kids go to Grundy to the doctor. They go to Grundy to the eye doctor and go to Grundy to the dentist. She said there's no way if the schools moved out of Haysi that I'll send my kids. She said I can't go to Clinchco to a school and then go back to Grundy for everything I do. I don't think folks are really looking at how close we are, especially after the road work over there and they sent people across Poplar Gap and everybody figured out that's the closest way to go. I can leave the funeral home and be to Riverview Elementary before I can be to Ridgeview. I've done the mileage. People are going to send their children, if they don't homeschool them we'll lose enrollment on the outer boundaries of the Ervinton District. We might lose a few here. But it's nothing to what it's going to be at Haysi. People have been telling me. I know it. I've been hearing it. If we make the wrong move then we better be ready for it. That's all I got to say.

Mr. Rick Mullins: It was a very bright night tonight to see all the Principals come out tonight; all the positive things that was said and done. It was good to see Mr. Compton inform us on the SOL scores and that we continue to head in the right direction. I'm glad to hear that the administration is acquiring information for the new elementary school. That is going to be so important in the decision we make. I think that no matter what that decision is, I think we will be united. We just have to make the right decision. I would like to thank every one of you from the Haysi area, the Ervinton area; James for coming over tonight because I think this is how a democracy conducts itself. I feel very blessed to be here. Thank you.

Dr. Lurton Lyle: I would like to commend everyone that spoke in public comment. There is a lot of concern about elementary schools. I would suggest that all that have concerns about an elementary school being closed need to attend the Board of Supervisors meetings, especially regarding budget. In my opinion the fate of Ervinton Elementary School depends on funding. The School Board cannot spend money that is not appropriated. If we face another \$800,000 loss like we did last year; I don't know what we can do. But again, I commend those who came and spoke. I was also glad to see the Principals here. I want to congratulate Mrs. Vanover for her 35 years and 3 months.

Chairman, Susan Mullins: If nothing further, I will take us into closed session.

CLOSED SESSION:

Chairman, Susan Mullins: Pursuant to Section 2.2-3712 A of the Code of Virginia, I move that the board convene a closed session for the purpose of discussing: 1.) Student request for early graduation. 2.) Employment issues relating to FMLA request, consideration of employing coaches, substitutes. 3.) Discussion of acquisition and disposition of real property for mitigation pursuant to VA Code 2.23711 A (1) (3) and to consult with legal counsel on these issues pursuant to Virginia Code section 2.23711 A (6) (6). Dr. Lurton Lyle 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 Rocky Barton stated; we have been in closed session pursuant to Section 2.2-3712(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, Mr. Shanghai Nickles and Chairman Susan Mullins; all certified true.

BOARD ACTIONS:

Chairman Susan Mullins: I make the motion we approve early graduation as requested for Student #0453. Dr. Lurton Lyle seconded the motion. All votes aye.

Chairman Susan Mullins: I make the motion we approve the soccer coaches as recommended. Mr. Shanghai Nickles seconded the motion. All votes aye.

Approved:

- Sheryl Bise – Girls Soccer Coach
- Kevin Rose – Assistant Girls Soccer

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

Chairman Susan Mullins: I make the motion to accept the resignation of Melissa Bryant and Tammy Beavers, part-time aides at Clintwood Elementary, 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. Shanghai Nickles seconded the motion. All votes aye.

Approved:

- Laurie A. Church
- Roxanne Hillman
- Tina Stanley

RECESS:

Mrs. Susan Mullins: I make the motion we recess this meeting until Tuesday, January 31, 2017 at 9:15 a.m. Dr. Lurton Lyle seconded the motion. All votes aye.

MEETING RECONVENED - TUESDAY, JANUARY 31, 2017:

Chairman, Susan Mullins: I would like to reconvene the closed session portion of our January 25, 2017 meeting. I note for the record that board member Rick Mullins is not physically present today. Mr. Mullins notified us during the last meeting that personal business related to out of state property would not allow him to be here today. Mr. Mullins asked to be allowed to participate by cell phone. With that said, I move:

1. That we reconvene our closed session meeting pursuant to Virginia Code Section 2.2-311 (A) (3) for the purpose of discussion or consideration of the acquisition of real property for wetlands remediation where discussion in an open meeting would adversely affect the bargaining position or negotiating strategy of the School System and for consultation with our attorney, Elsey Harris pursuant to Virginia Code section 2.2-311 (A) (6) regarding this issue.
2. That Rick Mullins be allowed to participate in this meeting electronically by speaker phone pursuant to Virginia Code section 2.2-3708.1

Dr. Lurton Lyle seconded the motion. All votes aye.

Note: Board member, Mr. Rocky Barton, due to an appointment, had to leave the meeting during closed session and did not participate in the following votes.

Chairman, Susan Mullins: I now entertain a motion to go out of closed session. Dr. Lurton Lyle made the motion to go out of closed session. Mr. Shanghai Nickles seconded the mo-

tion. All votes aye. Pursuant to Section 2.2-3711 (A) of the Code of Virginia, I move 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 2.23711 of the Code and identified in the motion convening the closed meeting. Dr. Lurton Lyle seconded. Mr. Rick Mullins, Dr. Lurton Lyle, Mr. Shanghai Nickles and Chairman Susan Mullins; all certified true.

Chairman, Susan Mullins: I move to give Division Superintendent, Haydee Robinson, authority to accept Contura’s offer to remediate the wetlands at the Spring Fork Site, provided that Contura will agree to release the necessary coal rights at either the Ridgeview or Clinchco sites for construction in the event that either site is selected for the location of the elementary school within one year. They also will agree to assert their best efforts to persuade the coal owner to do the same at either site. Contura’s response must be received by the Board on or before February 10, 2017. We hereby authorize the division superintendent to sign any and all documents required to give effect to this motion. Dr. Lurton Lyle seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved by the following roll call vote:

| <u>Member</u> | <u>Vote</u> |
|-------------------------|-------------|
| Mr. Rick Mullins | Aye |
| Dr. Lurton Lyle | Aye |
| Mr. Shanghai Nickles | Aye |
| Chairman, Susan Mullins | Aye |

ADJOURNMENT:

Chairman, Susan Mullins: Do I have a motion to adjourn?

Dr. Lurton Lyle made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Shanghai Nickles seconded the motion. All votes aye.

Adjourned: 11:10 a.m.

Susan Mullins

CHAIRMAN

Approved: February 23, 2017

Reba McCowan

CLERK