

DICKENSON COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD
Regular School Board Meeting
September 28, 2016
5 p.m. – School Board Office

PRESENT: Rocky Barton, Chairman; Susan Mullins, 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, ROCKY BARTON:

Chairman, Rocky Barton— Good evening everybody. I would like to welcome all of you to our September School Board Meeting. We are having beautiful weather with cooler nights. It makes everybody feel a little better except for me because I have a virus or something this evening. If I have to get up and run, don't think I'm gone because I will be back. I guess we will start with the Pledge. Thank you. We will go ahead and get our meeting started. All of our Board Members are present except for Susan who is on her way I think. The Superintendent and Clerk are also present. Do we have any changes to the Agenda?

Superintendent Robinson—No, Mr. Barton, there are no changes to the Agenda.

Chairman, Rocky Barton—We will need a motion to adopt the Agenda.

Dr. Lurton Lyle—made the motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Shanghai Nickles seconded. All votes aye.

Superintendent Robinson—Mr. Barton, before we continue I would just like to welcome a special guest who is with us today, Elizabeth Ewing. She is in the back with Mr. Scott Mullins. Elizabeth is the Director of Legal and Policy Services with the VSBA. Elizabeth, it is great to have you with us. Welcome to Dickenson County, and we are delighted to have you with us. Thank you, Sir.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Chairman, Rocky Barton—We will go ahead with our Public Comment. Mr. Nickles, would you read the Guidelines. (So Read) Thank you. First on Public Comment is Ms. Kathy Musick, VPE.

Ms. Kathy Musick—Thank you Mr. Chairman, Mrs. Robinson and Members of the Board, teachers and community members. My name is Kathy Musick the Regional Representative of Virginia Professional Educators. First I would like to congratulate the Dickenson County Schools which is one of the 53 school divisions in the Commonwealth with all of their schools accredited. Thanks to all of the teachers, parents, administrators and students for their hard work in achieving this. That is awesome! Also, I wanted to remind everybody that the Virginia Professional Educators offers grants and scholarships for teachers. The admission deadline for the fall is November 15th. The grants are very easy to write and don't require a whole lot. They do require a resume that you would send in and write two or three

paragraphs describing your project and how you will use the money and how it would benefit students. If you are interested, I have some information about that. If you are going back to school, and you need some money to help fund that, I also have some information about that. Thank you all and congratulations again.

Chairman, Rocky Barton—Thank you. Allison Mullins, DEA:

Ms. Allison Mullins—Thank you. It is good to see you all, Mrs. Robinson and the School Board. Regarding the DEA I would first like to talk about our get together. I am extremely excited that “No Child Left Behind” has been repealed and replaced by “Every Student Shall Succeed”. The DEA is in the process of forming an ESSSA team so that Dickenson County will have a voice with the VEA on what our state should look like in implementing the ESSSA. I don’t know how familiar you all are with the ESSSA, but I have a printout here. It is in formation stage, but the DEA is working hard on having a voice. That is one thing that we are doing. We also have a pre-legislative meeting coming up on October 24th in Abingdon with the higher education committee. We also have a team that is going to be attending that to hopefully look at what is coming up with laws that would affect us. We hope to have a voice in those, and we are certainly looking for input from everybody on that. On October 1st there is going to be a rally in Lebanon sponsored by the Russell County Education Association focusing on state budget cuts in education, and some of us are going to be marching with them. What time does that start?

Audience Member—At 10 o’clock we will start organizing so it will start about 10:45, and it is exactly a mile from the school board headquarters to the government center.

Ms. Allison Mullins—Some of us are going to be there, and we invite any of you who want to participate.

Audience Member—The speakers are Todd Killian and Ben Chaffin.

Ms. Allison Mullins—The DEA is also in the process of organizing a Christmas Banquet. We are planning on inviting the VEA President, Jim Livingston, to that. Also, as we did last year, we would like to invite the School Board Members to attend. Phyllis Mullins and April Hay have been very active this summer in getting not only grant money but also donations from businesses in showing our teachers appreciation for what they do. We are giving them small gifts and door prizes and t-shirts and different things. Every little bit helps when you are facing the stress of teaching and any other job. So we are trying to do that, and we are very excited about open communication with the School Board, Mrs. Robinson and the Central Office. We look forward to continuing that. In the meeting coming up we can discuss teachers’ concerns. Everybody can work together on the same page trying to do the best for our schools, children and our community. I feel like we have had a great start to this school year. I am very encouraged. I think the morale is really good, and I think the good scores are part of that. So I echo what Kathy said. We are very proud of our students and thankful that we were able to achieve. That is all that I have. Thank you all. Other than the printout you can get tons of information on the web site. More than you want, I’m sure.

Chairman, Rocky Barton—Next we have Kathy Harrison.

Ms. Kathy Harrison—Mr. Chair and Board Members and Superintendent, I would like to speak tonight about the elementary school and the location. The previous boards, not just the School Board, have to meet and pass the resolution along with the Corps of Engineers that would leave each community with its own elementary school. I think it is very important that each community has its own elementary school. We don't need the kids on the road that long. I have a four-year-old and a five-year-old, and while we just live across the mountain from Ridgeview that is neither here nor there. If they lived all the way up Bee, I wouldn't want them on the bus that long. It is also very important for the identity of each community. We have already noticed the Ervinton area when the high school closed. We have all lost our identities when our high schools closed along with our towns and our little pockets. We need a place to go to so that we feel like this is home. Ridgeview is going to become home, but we still need our small kids to feel like they are a part of something special not a bunch of kids all together. They are special here, and they are special in Ervinton, and they are special in Clintwood because they have their own schools. So I am just asking that you do remember what the original intention was. If you weren't on the Board when these decisions were talked about, go back and read the minutes so that you can become familiar with what the discussion was during that time. The original intention was for each community to have its own elementary school. So I would still like to have the new elementary school that replaces Sandlick put in Haysi. Thank you.

Chairman, Rocky Barton—Next is Hayes O'Quin:

Mr. Hayes O'Quin—Good evening everyone. That is kind of what I was going to talk about. Rumors sometime become fact. The rumor is that the new elementary school may not be in Haysi. Can you, Rocky, or anyone on the Board just give me an update or report on the new school? Have we bought the property? Are we building? What's going on? Tell us.

Chairman, Rocky Barton—We have bought one piece of property at Haysi for the elementary school. Haysi is still the site.

Mr. Hayes O'Quin—Thank you. That is the main thing I wanted to know. So you haven't hired the contractors or anything like that? We have the money.

Chairman, Rocky Barton—We haven't hired the contractor, but we have the money.

Mr. Hayes O'Quin—That's all I wanted to know. Thank you.

Chairman, Rocky Barton—Next is Daniel Osborne:

Mr. Daniel Osborne—Good evening Superintendent and the Members of the Dickenson County School Board. Thank you for allotting this time to hear from folks like myself. Thank you for the work that you do to benefit the lives of the youth of this county. I, as Executive Director of Camp Jacob, also share a concern for the youth of this county. I also know that you, like me, have had the occasional misstep in the attempts to serve the good of

our communities. I am not here to condemn you for those missteps, but I only wish to help assure that we recognize them and work to prevent them in the future. Specifically, I wish to address the allowance of school functions for students on Sundays such as last year's high school graduation and volleyball practice. I hope that I do not have to convince the members of this Board of the value of honoring what we call "the Lord's Day". But just in case, here are a few non-religious tidbits: The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University did a two-year study and made the following discoveries:

1. Teens who do not consider beliefs important are almost three times more likely to drink, binge drink and smoke. Almost four times more likely to use marijuana and seven times more likely to use illicit drugs than teens who believe that religion is important.
2. Teens who never attend religious services are twice more likely to drink. They are more than twice as likely to smoke, and more than three times as likely to use marijuana and binge drink, and almost four times more likely to use illicit drugs than teens who attend religious services at least weekly.

Beyond this study families need to be able to spend time together without having to compete with the school system for the opportunity to shape their children. In hopes that this Board recognizes this slight misstep, I implore you to help those who might follow you in these positions of leadership that you help clear the path for them in order to avoid possible future pitfalls. I respectfully request that this Board adopt policy that prohibits scheduling school functions for students on Sunday with the exception of the traditional Baccalaureate Service, and I have prepared copies of this speech along with the combination of the online and handwritten signatures of 394 individuals who agree with this request. I would like to hear back from you as to the action taken in response to this request, and again, I thank you for your time and all that you do. May God Bless. (Applause!)

Chairman, Rocky Barton—Thank you. Caryn Edwards:

Ms. Caryn Edwards—Good evening Mr. Barton, Mrs. Robinson and School Board Members. First of all, as many of you know, my father is Mr. Carroll Edwards. He has asked me to attend this meeting on his behalf because he is out of town and couldn't be here. He asked me to read this letter that he has written to you, the School Board Members. It is about the Sandlick Elementary School.

Dear School Board Members:

I would like to start off by congratulating you and the superintendent for a job well done for making the plan to consolidate the high school and carrying it through to completion. I am hearing rumors that you are considering changing the plan and consolidating the three elementary schools and putting them also at Ridgeview. That would be a total breach of contract and dead wrong. If that should happen, it would be very detrimental to the kids and to the school system as a whole. I can't put a number on how many kids you would lose from all of the outlying regions, but at \$7,000 per child, and I think that amount is probably higher, it would be a substantial loss.

A number of years back the whole county covering all three regions worked very hard to gain a certificate of need for a county hospital to be located near Fremont. The certificate was obtained and the people empowered the location across two hills on the other side of Clintwood thereby making it a long and hazardous drive for a great part of our county. Consequently, the result has not been very positive at all. So I am asking you to do what is right for the kids in the county to not change plans and build the Sandlick School in the Haysi area as originally put forth to the people as it is needed for an emergency shelter and a community school.

Sincerely

Carroll Edwards

I will give each of you a copy of this if you would like. I did write a few of my own comments, and if you would oblige me, I will read them now. I think you all would agree that the School Board as a whole (I'm sorry. I'm very nervous so look over me) is in place for many important reasons, but the main reason is to assure that the children who go to school in this county are able to obtain an education and attend our schools in a nurturing environment. In fact, these are a few of the words that are in the mission statement of the Dickenson County School System. The School Board has always stated that their actions and decisions are in the best interest of the children.

Each member of the School Board has also accepted the responsibility to represent the communities by which they were elected into office and also to listen to and take into consideration the concerns and needs of the citizens of the community as a whole. So having said all of that, it brings me to this point: if what you want is always for the best interest of the children and you want to make decisions that are in the best interest of the community, then please don't change the plans that have already been made and please keep Sandlick Elementary School in the Haysi area.

Wouldn't moving the location to Ridgeview be going against the contract between the Dickenson County School Board System and the Corps of Engineers? What would be the legal ramifications of doing this? Not to mention that our young children from Pre-K on up would have to be bused across the county. Some would be riding the bus for 45 minutes or more. Is this in the best interest of our children? Does this even remotely go along with the mission statement of our county school system? I respectfully say to you that no, it does not. This would essentially be the final blow of wiping Haysi off the map. It would take the last bit of revenue that we have, and it would go other places. Is that in the best interest of the Haysi community?

So my plea to each of you is to please do the right thing for the children of our community. Please leave the location of Sandlick Elementary School in the Haysi community as you originally planned. Thank you. (Applause!)

Chairman, Rocky Barton—Katy Jo Powers:

Mrs. Katy Jo Powers—I am probably going to say some of the same things that she did. I am sorry that I have allergies and may not be able to speak very well. I am a retired teacher at Haysi High School for 35 years. My parents were teachers in the first school that we had at Haysi which was a little two-room school where the Haysi Drug Store is now. My daughter is a teacher. You may not want to hear about all of these teachers. She taught at Vansant School, and as you know, it was consolidated into Riverview. She said “mother, whatever you do, do not let them consolidate the schools in Dickenson County.” She taught Pre-School and 1st Grade. She said that the worst thing you ever did for a child that age was to send them on a long bus ride to a school that was a long way from their community. She said that her children would fall asleep, and they couldn’t hold their heads up when they got to school. It was very, very hard to get them interested in anything because of their long ride and the distance. She said please don’t let any other schools consolidate. She taught at Vansant for 12-14 years, and she went to Riverview and put up with it for about five years. She couldn’t take it any longer because she had so much sympathy for those small children who had such a hard time. Our children would have to go from Lick Creek, Bee and all of these places that are so far away over such bad roads to Ridgeview. If they had to go to Ridgeview, it would just be tragic.

The second thing that I know is going to happen is that we will lose an extremely lot of students because the ones in Bee and Lick Creek will send theirs to Council. The ones in Prater and Breaks will send theirs to Grundy. In other words, they will be sending them to schools that are closer, and I can’t blame them. So you will lose a lot of students by sending them these long distances. I know that some of the people will keep their children at home rather than sending them that far and that early. I think the loss of a lot of students would be very bad for our new school. Some of the parents who will teach their children at home do a good job, but some of them don’t do a very good job.

The third thing is the school is the heart of the community, and we have had a terrific loss from our high school. I finished school at Haysi for 12 years, and I taught for 35 years. So this is very near and dear to me. Although I don’t have any Pre-K or 1st Grade children I do have a lot of sympathy for those who do.

Lastly, it will be such a blow to the community because it broke their hearts when the high school was taken. If we lose our elementary school, it will just take the whole heart out of the community. Please do not consolidate in Ridgeview. Thank you very much. (Applause!)

Chairman, Rocky Barton—Thank you, Katy Jo. Ron Peters:

Mr. Ron Peters—I am Ron Peters, Sandlick District Supervisor on the Board of Supervisors. This is pretty much going to be a mirror of what you guys have already heard tonight. But I still wanted to come forward and say my peace. I’ve had a long day. I started out at Clintwood Elementary School this morning and had a wonderful time with the children during their Flag Ceremony honoring the veterans. It was the second year in a row, and I am grateful for that. I think some of you remember, especially the older Board Members, the night that Ervinton was discussed. I supported that because it made sense with the data that

you guys put out there. Looking at the shape of the schools it was needed. I'm not sure it is the right way to go with the younger children. The long bus ride that has already been mentioned would be taxing on them. I also believe that active daily membership will go down if we consolidate the elementary schools. That is the key factor used by the state to calculate the funding from the state. If I am wrong in that, please speak up. That is what I see in that chart. I can tell you that my community will be torn if the elementary school is stripped away from Haysi. They will feel wronged and feel that the School Board let them down. There have been promises made and that is where we stand. I wish Mr. Osborne had stuck around because I wanted to add something that I heard him say about the "Lord's Day" and having school events. I thought it was interesting how he pointed out that homes that are spiritually based have less drug problems. It is also interesting that any kind of program out there for addiction, drug abuse and other addictions the recovery program revolves around a spiritual base, Christian values and getting them back on the right track to recover from their own addictions. I think this is a valid point. I left the military a little disgusted because we couldn't call our annual Christmas party Christmas anymore. They started coming up with other derivations of prayer because we didn't want to offend someone. That is one of the things that I love about this community is that there is a prayer before every meeting. In a lot of places that is not happening. Thank you. (Applause!)

GOOD NEWS FROM OUR SCHOOLS:

Chairman, Rocky Barton—At this time we will have Good News from Our Schools. Mrs. Robinson:

Superintendent Robinson—At this time, except for the great beginning that we have had, there are no specific Good News From Our Schools.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Chairman, Rocky Barton—We will get on with our Consent Agenda. Has everyone had a chance to look over the minutes? We have two sets of minutes?

Superintendent Robinson—Yes, Sir. September 21st and August 24th.

Chairman, Rocky Barton—If you have had a chance to look over the minutes, I will entertain a motion.

Mr. Shanghai Nickles—made the motion to approve the minutes. Dr. Lurton Lyle seconded. All votes aye.

APPROVAL OF BILLS:

Chairman, Rocky Barton—Next we have Approval of Monthly Bills. Are there any questions about the bills?

Superintendent Robinson—Mr. Chair and Board Members you should have received a new Vender Payments check. The added bills are in pink, and they are also listed on the bottom of the second page. Since the packets are ready on Friday we receive bills on Monday and Tuesday and sometimes Wednesday, and we would like, of course, to look at those and give

the Board an opportunity to approve those. We recommend the Board Approve these bills at this time. If there are any questions, Mr. Barton is here, and he will be able to assist you.

Mr. Shanghai Nickles—I have been asked by a couple of people if the work that they are doing up there at the turnaround is costing us any money.

Superintendent Robinson—No, Sir, it is costing us nothing. It is paid for by VDOT. I am glad that you brought that up. Several people have asked if that has to be done. In speaking with Leman Kendrick, VDOT requires the foliage in those roundabouts. It is not a cost to the school division at all, and it is required by VDOT. It is beautiful, and it is a part of the VDOT project.

Chairman, Rocky Barton—Are there any more questions on the bills? Is there a motion?

Dr. Lurton Lyle—*made the motion to approve the bills. Mr. Rick Mullins seconded. All votes aye.*

School Operating Fund – September 28, 2016 – Bills

Check Nos. 876471 through 876595 ----- \$316,016.84

School Operating Fund – September 30, 2016 – Payroll

Check Nos. 387491 through 387619 ----- \$1,684,362.04

SCHOOL ACTIVITY FUND:

Chairman, Rocky Barton—The School Activity Fund is an informational item in your packet. Has everybody had a chance to look over this fund? Are there any comments or questions?

Superintendent Robinson—We have also included, as we have for the last several months, a summary report and an expenditure summary report for the Board. Mr. Barton, is there anything that you wanted to add?

Mr. Larry Barton—There is nothing out of the ordinary on it, but if you have any questions, I will be glad to answer them.

Mr. Shanghai Nickles—Are we still receiving the monies from the Score Board.

Mr. Larry Barton—Yes, it has come in pretty well on time. Last month we received \$5,500. Everything is on schedule with the School Activity.

Superintendent Robinson—Michelle was very kind and sent us a report on that, and as Mr. Barton said, we are on schedule.

Mr. Shanghai Nickles—OK, thank you. Just tell me if someone is not so that I can prod them a little bit.

Superintendent Robinson—Also in respect to EnerVest who bought Range Resources has taken over that contract, and we are very thankful for that. Now EnerVest has replaced Range and have honored that commitment.

Mr. Shanghai Nickles—Great. Thanks Larry.

APPROVAL OF FIELD TRIPS:

Chairman, Rocky Barton—We are now ready for the Approval of Field Trips.

Superintendent Robinson—We have also sent you an undated list yesterday to Johnson City. Also included is the Senior Trip to Orlando, Florida.

Mr. Shanghai Nickles—Do you remember how many students did not go on the Senior Trip last year? Was it a financial thing? I know we didn't receive anything from the Columbus Phipps Foundation because stocks didn't pay back as much as they usually do.

Superintendent Robinson—I would say that about 40 students did go. It was a very large class of 180 seniors. There is a lot of fund raising that goes with that. But I think in our community Mr. Compton and I were talking about that this morning. I think we are going to have to review the Senior Trip. I think it is a great experience. He and I talked about how we were on pins and needles the whole time that they are gone. It is a great experience for our children, and sometimes one that a lot of our students don't get to have. We may have to revisit the Senior Trip and where we are going and how expensive it is. Even with the fund raising that does assist greatly, but there is a lot of fund raising within our community. This year we are recommending the approval of the Orlando trip and hopefully we will have more students participate. I do think we need to look at it again for the following school year.

Mr. Shanghai Nickles—I hate that some of them are not going because of finances. There is no way in the world that I could have come up with \$600 when I was in school. It is a great trip.

Superintendent Robinson—This is a great trip, and they have gone to New York. We still may need to look at that considering the economic situation. But for this year we are recommending this and have further discussion later. There are two out of state trips, and they are both in red. One is the Senior Trip and one is to ETSU.

Chairman, Rocky Barton—We need a motion.

Mr. Shanghai Nickles—*I make a motion that we approve the Senior Trip and the other trips also. Dr. Lurton Lyle seconded the motion. All votes aye.*

Approved:

❖ Ridgeview High School

September 3rd – Devils Fork Loop Trail – Fort Blackmore – 8th – 12th Grade

September 15th – CES, EES, SES – Homecoming Pep-Rally's – 9th – 12th Grade

September 16th – Behavioral Health/The Attic – Clintwood – 9th – PG
 September 17th – Creation Kingdom Zoo – Gate City – 9th – 12th Grade
 September 17th – Mountain Archery Range – Clintwood – 9th – 12th Grade
 September 23rd – Breaks Interstate Park – Breaks – 9th – 12th Grade
 October 13th – Lee County – FFA – 10th – 12th Grade
 October 13 – Barter Theatre – Abingdon – 8th – 12th Grade
 October 22nd – ETSU – Johnson City – 8th – 12th Grade
 November 3rd – 4th – Blackfriar’s Playhouse – Staunton, VA – 9th – 12th Grade
 April 11th – 16th – Orlando, FL – Senior Trip

❖ Ridgeview Middle School

September 15th – Lonesome Pine Airport – Wise – 8th Grade

❖ Clintwood Elementary School

September 15th – Lonesome Pine Airport – Wise – 3rd Grade

❖ Ervinton Elementary School

September 1st – 4-H Center – Red Onion Mountain – 4th Grade

September 16th – Lonesome Pine Airport – Wise – 1st – 3rd Grade

❖ Sandlick Elementary School

September 15th – Lonesome Pine Airport – Wise – 3rd Grade

September 23rd – Council Park – Council – Kindergarten

September 30th – Kim’s Krazy Korn Maze – Castlewood – 1st Grade

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS FOR THE BOARD:

Chairman, Rocky Barton—The next Item is Information for the Board, Mrs. Robinson:

Superintendent Robinson—I am going to ask Mr. Setser to come to the front and talk about student enrollment for August 2016.

Mr. Mike Setser— Thank you Mrs. Robinson, Mr. Chairman and Members of the Board. In your packet as you can see we ended the month of August with 2,101 students. To put that number into perspective, in comparison to last year it is a decrease of 57 students. If you go back to the beginning of last year, it is a decrease of approximately 113 students. On Page 2 in your packet is a comparison of the attendance rates the last few years and the attendance rates that we have currently. Next month we will start tracking the transfers out of the system and where they go. I will bring that to you next month. I would like to take a brief second to relate the monthly attendance winner with an attendance rate of 96.76% for the month of August. Clintwood Elementary School is picking up where they left off last year. I think Ms. Muncy is here. I didn’t see Mrs. Vanover. (Applause!) You can take the banner with you before you leave. (Ha, Ha!) Mr. Chair, if there are no questions that is it for me.

Chairman, Rocky Barton—Are there any questions?

Superintendent Robinson—Clintwood Elementary School had the highest student attendance, but Sandlick came in second with a 96.40% which was very close.

Our next item for Information for the Board is that the Dickenson County Public Schools has received a School Security Equipment Grant for \$98,332 for Ervinton Elementary School, Clintwood Elementary School and Sandlick Elementary School. I would like to recognize Mr. Mike Setser and Mr. Burl Mooney who were instrumental in writing the grants and buying the equipment to keep our schools safe. I would like to recognize them to the Board. Since this is the 4th year that Dickenson County Public Schools has received the grant, we have received over \$400,000 in grants. It is not everything, but when you have that security in our elementary schools and of course now at Ridgeview, it makes us feel that we are a little safer. At least we pray so. Again, congratulations to these two gentlemen, and I wanted to share that with the Board. As you look through, we were one of the largest appropriations. Again, thank you for a job well done.

Our third item is the Economic Summit. I think Ms. Allison Mullins alluded to this, but on Thursday, October 13, several school divisions in the coal fields are getting together and looking at budgets. As Mr. Setser said, since the beginning of last year we have lost 113 students. In the data that we are collecting since March 31, 2016, the coal field counties have lost over 600 students. That includes Buchanan County, Dickenson County, Wise County, Lee County, Scott County, Tazewell County and Norton City Schools. I may have left out one county, but this summit came from the Least Composite Index. We presented that as you know, to Senator Chaffin. He asked us during the summer, the School Board, the Board of Supervisors and the IDA members present to form a coalition of counties that would take this. That is what we have. This is the result of this coalition. There has been one other meeting that we held here at the Dickenson County Education and Research Center. We invited several of our counties, administrators, Board of Supervisors and school administrators to come. This meeting on October 13th at UVA Wise is a result of that. As I shared with you in an email, I would like for you to please keep that date in mind. I would like to ask the DEA to also attend. We have invited all of our local and state officials to attend because I think the coal field counties are facing much different budget issues. Mr. Setser has clarified that we have lost 57 students between now and the end of last year. Historically between now and March 31st we lose 40 more students. So that kind of goes with the 113. So we are very concerned. Everyone remembers the cut that we had to absorb last year from the state budget. We are looking at that again. We are very, very concerned because there is just nowhere else to cut, when 85% of your budget is payroll and payroll benefits, except for staff. We have gone through that with the elimination of 42 people in June. I urge you to come. We are preparing a PowerPoint presentation. Several of our people are going to be involved in this, and we would just like to have our legislators, as Ms. Mullins has said, to have an idea of what the coal fields are facing because it is dramatic. Again, that will be October 13th a Thursday at 6 p.m. I will let you know more information on that. We are meeting again tomorrow to again plan. We have met about four times on that. Thank you. Mr. Chair, unless you have a question, that does complete our Informational Items for the Board.

OLD BUSINESS:

DISCUSSION OF COMMUNITY CENTER AT THE FORMER DICKENSON COUNTY CAREER CENTER:

Superintendent Robinson—Old Business is the Discussion of the Community Center at the Former Dickenson County Career Center. If I recall from our last meeting Mr. Mullins was requested to call the Clinchco Town Council and their attorney. Mr. Mullins, is there something that you would like to report Sir?

Mr. Scott Mullins—Yes, Mr. Chair, basically I have sent the information to the Town Council’s attorney and shared with him our concerns and wanted to talk to him about a lease. I am waiting to get some information back. Maybe by the next meeting I will be able to bring back a draft for your consideration.

Chairman, Rocky Barton—I don’t think there is anyone here from the Lions Club or the Clinchco Town Council.

NEW BUSINESS:

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION 2016-2017 ACCREDITATION REPORT:

Superintendent Robinson—Mr. Chair and Board Members I would just like to report to the Board the Department of Education 2016-2017 Accreditation Report. We are very proud of this information. We are proud of our staff, our students and everyone for this accomplishment. It is their accomplishment, Mr. Mullins:

Mr. Mark Mullins—It is definitely their accomplishment. Thank you. Mrs. Robinson and Board Members, I don’t know if you remember but back in June we first shared the preliminary SOL scores, and we stressed the word “preliminary”. There is a reason that we do that because the official report just came out now from the Virginia Department of Education. It came out this month. At that time we shared with the Board the preliminary scores that we anticipated having four schools accredited, that we would have one school partially accredited. Our scores were good as we have acknowledged again here tonight. But we are pleased to report that we have all five schools fully accredited as the official report just came out. Just to remind the Board, accreditation is the accountability system for the Virginia Department of Education. In order to be fully accredited schools must reach certain pass rates on the SOL tests. It depends on student achievement. Just as a reminder full accreditation means we have to have 75% pass rate on our English SOLs which is reading and writing, 70% pass rate on all of the other tests which are the math, science and history tests. Our high school has to also reach the graduation benchmark. We know that, but I just wanted to remind the Board how we became fully accredited. As we know, Clintwood Elementary School, Ervinton Elementary School, Ridgeview Middle School, Ridgeview High School met all of those benchmarks. Those were the ones that we anticipated. Sandlick Elementary School met three of the four benchmarks. At least that is what we thought. Sandlick Elementary School has benefited from a recently passed legislation from the 2016 General Assembly that basically said that any school that was fully accredited for three years in a row would be awarded full accreditation for the next three years. Basically this is the Department of Education terminology but this is the way I explained it or the way I see it. It is kind of like a safety net if the school has difficulty one year or it could be an award for prior achievement. So Sandlick Elementary School as we looked back on the data was one of the 39 schools in the State of Virginia that benefited from this new piece of legislation. Sandlick

Elementary School had been fully accredited for the previous 11 years in a row until what we thought would be this year. That goes back to 2005-2006. So by them meeting this new piece of legislation, we now have all five of our schools fully accredited. There are 81% of the public schools in the State of Virginia fully accredited. The Department of Education says that there 1,825 public schools, and as Ms. Musick mentioned earlier there are 53 schools in the State of Virginia that have all of their schools fully accredited. There are 132 school divisions in Virginia. So we are very pleased to be a part of those 53. That is quite an accomplishment. This is the first time that we have had all of our schools fully accredited since the year 2012-2013. Again, we want to congratulate our students, teachers and school staff for a job well done. This is a huge accomplishment, and I am sure if you ask the teachers who are here, they will tell you that they are already hard at work trying to meet this accomplishment in the coming year. We are very proud of them and their hard work coming from where we were last year.

Mr. Shanghai Nickles—I think attendance has had a lot to do with that too. We need to thank the parents and the grandparents because there are so many who don't have that next step at home.

Mr. Mark Mullins—They have to have the support from school and home. Thank you.

Superintendent Robinson—Also, some additional information. I know that all of you know that we have been very actively involved in the CIP, the Comprehensive Instructional Program. If you will look probably on the last page of your packet or your handout, Region VII did really well as far as school accreditation. You will see that last year it was 88.89% of the schools were accredited, and this year it is 94.44%. Region VII was the second highest last year and third in overall improvement. It has the highest percentage of schools this year to be accredited. We are proud to be a part of that process and again what Mr. Mullins said about our staff, teachers and students. This is a job well done, and as many of you know last year brought its own challenges as we restructured our elementary schools and as we opened up Ridgeview. To accomplish that is I think just phenomenal and shows the heart and character of our staff and students in our schools.

UPDATE ON DEMOLITION PROJECTS:

Superintendent Robinson—Item D. is the Update on our Demolition Projects. Mr. Burge could not be with us this evening so I will be Mr. Burge.

He has prepared a report for us, and I would like to share that with you. Just for our audience I will kind of go over the SKANSKA reports.

Demolition Projects Update:

Haysi High School: Outbuildings, pedestrian bridge, all demolition activity which included several outbuildings and the pedestrian bridge is complete, and grass is starting to grow on site. I think that Mr. Barton and I can attest to that.

Ervinton High School: The demolition contractor Elude Green has completed the abatement of the flooring in the main building as well as the vocational building. On the second page I think you have a picture of that. The windows on the third floor have been removed. There is some piping insulation remaining to be removed as of this week. The abatement at Ervinton will be complete by the end of September.

Clinchco Elementary School: Demolition at Clinchco Elementary School continues with the gym area only remaining. The gym area should be demolished again by the end of September as materials continue to be separated and hauled off.

The contractual agreement date is February 4, 2017. However, with talking to Mr. Burge this morning, Mr. Elswick reported to us that the project is making good progress and should be completed ahead of schedule. There are pictures there of Clinchco Elementary School being demolished, the Ervinton High School abatement and the site of the Haysi High School out-buildings.

We are very pleased with that project. We are very pleased with our SKANSKA folks who have helped us through this process and also with Elude Green. Any questions or comments regarding that? I know I didn't do as good a job as Mr. Burge, but he will be back with us. Mr. Barton, if there are no questions, we will move on to the next item.

2016-2017 APPROVAL OF DCPS POLICY:

Superintendent Robinson—This is the 2016-2017 Approval of the Dickenson County Public Schools Policy, the GBO: Virginia Retirement System and Retirement Incentive. I have added this information for your approval. We are recommending the approval of this policy for the 2016-2017 school year as it is presented. Are there any questions or discussion?

Chairman, Rocky Barton—If there are no questions, we need a motion.

Mr. Shanghai Nickles—made the motion to approve the retirement incentive for 2016-17. Mr. Rick Mullins seconded. All vote aye.

DISCUSSION OF THE DCPS'S COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

Superintendent Robinson—Our last item in Open Session is the Discussion of the Dickenson County Public School's Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Tony Robinson has graciously volunteered to facilitate this plan. Again, if you have any comments as you look through that or any questions or anything that the Board would like to add or omit or revise, please contact myself or Mr. Robinson. Mr. Robinson, do you have any questions?

Mr. Tony Robinson—There are just a couple of things in there that need to be edited. It is not a lot and is pretty much the same.

Superintendent Robinson—Please continue to look at this Comprehensive Plan, and we hope to have the Board’s approval by November. Again, I want to thank Mr. Robinson for volunteering.

Mr. Barton that ends our Open Session.

BOARD COMMENT:

Chairman, Mr. Rocky Barton—That brings us to Board Comment. Dr. Lyle, you are always first:

Dr. Lurton Lyle—I think we are making progress in several areas, but we still have work to do so we will keep at it.

Mr. Rick Mullins—I am still talking about the SOL scores and what we have been able to obtain. It has been a real success. I am proud of all of the administrators in the system.

Chairman, Mr. Rocky Barton—I will just echo that. I am so proud of our staff and everybody. It is just unreal compared to where we were last year and where we are now. It is just unbelievable. I would like to thank Ms. Ewing for coming by today. I have heard her name several times, but I have never had the chance to meet her. It is always good to put a face with a name, so it is nice to meet you.

Mr. Shanghai Nickles—It is good to see Katy Jo here. She was part of the backbone of the education system. I want you to know that when you were saying Ridgeview, there was a gentlemen who flew a jet in from Blacksburg so our kids could look at his jet. I told him 20 times that it was Ridgeview, and he kept calling it Ridgeblue. He said that Ridgeblue bunch was really something. So don’t let that worry you. It is good to hear people speak. It is good to have Mr. Peters here not only as a citizen of our county but also as a representative of our Board of Supervisors. It is neat to see these types of things. I appreciate Mike and Burl on the job they did on that grant. Safety is a biggy and the name of the game.

CLOSED SESSION:

Chairman Rocky Barton—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 release from mandatory attendance and request for early graduation. 2.) Employment issues relating resignation, FMLA request, consideration of employing a Pre K – 6 teacher, middle school teacher, substitutes and superintendent evaluation. 3.) Discussion of evaluation of real property 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) (7). Dr. Lurton Lyle seconded the motion. All votes aye.

OUT OF CLOSED SESSION:

Chairman Rocky Barton—I now entertain a motion to go out of Closed Session. Mr. Shanghai Nickles made the motion and Mr. Rick Mullins 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, Mrs. Susan Mullins, Mr. Shanghai Nickles and Chairman Rocky Barton; all certified true.

BOARD ACTIONS:

Mrs. Susan Mullins—I make the motion we approve the release from mandatory attendance Student #0360 due to completion of ISAEP program. Dr. Lurton Lyle seconded the motion. All votes aye.

Mrs. Susan Mullins—I make the motion we approve early graduation request for Student #0459 as presented. Dr. Lurton Lyle seconded the motion. All votes aye.

Mrs. Susan Mullins—I make the motion we approve FMLA for Evan McCowan, Teacher at Ridgeview High School, as presented. Mr. Shanghai Nickles seconded the motion. All votes aye.

Mrs. Susan Mullins—I make the motion we accept the resignations as requested. Mr. Shanghai Nickles seconded the motion. All votes aye.

Approved:

- Briana Moore, Part-time Aide – Ridgeview Middle School
- Charlotte Yates, Teacher, Ridgeview Middle School

Mrs. Susan Mullins—I make the motion we approve the employment recommendations as presented. Dr. Lurton Lyle seconded the motion. All votes aye.

Approved:

- Brandon Mullins, Teacher, Ridgeview Middle School
- Heather Mullins, Teacher, Clintwood Elementary School

Mrs. Susan Mullins—I make the motion we approve the substitutes as requested contingent upon completion of background checks and all necessary paperwork. Mr. Shanghai Nickles seconded the motion. All votes aye.

Approved:

- Thomas Bise
- Michelle Edwards
- Keith Fleming
- Jama Harris
- Ashley Page
- Sarah Sluss
- Andrea Schmidt
- Samantha Stanley

Mr. Rick Mullins—I make the motion we authorize the Division Superintendent to move forward and gather such information that she believes is necessary and appropriate, to fairly evaluate the mineral interest underneath the EHS surface property, and retaining any professional expertise that may be required to acquire such information. Dr. Lurton Lyle seconded the motion. All votes aye.

ADJOURNMENT:

Mrs. Susan Mullins—I make a motion we adjourn. Dr. Lurton Lyle seconded the motion. All votes aye.

Adjourned: 9:00 p.m.

Rocky Barton

CHAIRMAN

Approved: October 24, 2016

Reba McCowan

CLERK