

MINUTES OF THE BUNCOMBE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS'
SPECIALLY CALLED MEETING ON AUGUST 22, 2024.

BE IT REMEMBERED: That the Board of Commissioners held a Special Meeting on August 22, 2024, at the Harrah's Cherokee Center in downtown Asheville, North Carolina at 9:00 a.m. where and when the following business was transacted. The Specially Called meeting had two parts, the first was a joint meeting with the Asheville City School and Buncombe County Board School Board Members and the second was a Strategic Plan Retreat.

Present: Chairman Brownie Newman; Vice-Chair Parker Sloan; Commissioner Terri Wells, Commissioner Al Whitesides; Commissioner Amanda Edwards; Commissioner Martin Moore by phone.

Absent: Commissioner Jasmine Beach-Ferrara

Chairman Newman, Ann Franklin, Chair of the Buncombe County School Board and George Sieburg, Chair of the Asheville City School Board welcomed board members and called the meeting to order. The three Boards discussed their shared purpose; specifically, why is success in the local educational system important to you and the community? The following was identified and agreed upon by the Board members:

- Each child to have opportunities
- Traditional public schools to be THE choice
- Successful school systems have impact on quality of life in BC
- To have an environment where all types of diversity come together to learn, model behavior, and grow together
- Grow economy, grow generations
- To see kids walk across the stage at graduation
- Strong economy, high cost of failure
- To provide high quality education with high stakes due to funding
- To create a just/equitable environment
- Figure out the math, values, and transparency problem
- Strong community
- Generational success
- Strong social determinants of health
- Grow next generation, strong students with skills necessary to thrive
- Economic development
- Change to lift folks out of poverty
- Confidence – students to discover who they are
- Believe in community where everyone can thrive, especially marginalized communities
- Strong school system for kids
- Future depends on an educated community
- Providing critical social services that help the community thrive

Following that discussion, the Board members went on to discuss future strategic priorities; specifically, what do you want to achieve for our local educational system for the next 5 years? The following priorities were identified and agreed on by the Board members:

- More strategic budgeting, more conversations, discussions around priorities
- Multiyear budgeting
- Have more conversations – identifying needs throughout the year
- Pressure on State Legislature, hold the state accountable
- Do a better job planning
- Focus on teacher recruitment and retention
- Raise wages
- Place education into all priorities/conversation, making sure its part of all initiatives
- Focus on marketing and advertising our local education system
- Educate the community on budget process, budget shortfalls, and let the community see how the state legislature is reducing funding
- Maintain healthy relationships
- Pre-school for all kids

To close out the joint meeting, the three Boards identified and agreed upon the following next steps

- Regroup in January to review the consolidation feasibility study and begin budget conversations
- Majority agreed the retreat was helpful and would like to do it again.

The joint School Board meeting adjourned at 11:56 a.m.

Following a lunch break, the Board of Commissioners reconvened the Banquet Hall for the Strategic Plan Retreat. Strategy and Innovation staff provided background on the strategic plan to date, and informed that today's objective is to finalize goals and targets. The Commissioners reviewed the proposed objectives, goals, and targets for each of the Foundational Focus Areas, which are: Growth & Development; Economic Development; Education; Community Health; Public Safety; Energy & Environment; and Foundational. Following discussion of each goal, Strategy and Innovation staff explained next steps which is to continue gathering community and employee feedback through meetings and events and that the Commissioner's would review the compiled information again in October.

The Strategic Plan Retreat adjourned at 3:50 p.m.