

# BOARDNOTES

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE CAROLINE COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING

December 2018



CAROLINE COUNTY  
BOARD OF EDUCATION

- Louise M. Cheek, President
- Kathy S. Dill, Vice President
- George Abner, Member
- James A. Newcomb, Jr., Member
- C. Tolbert Rowe, Member

Patricia W. Saelens,  
Superintendent of Schools

## Pledge of Allegiance: DENTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

The Board meeting began with the Denton Elementary School *Fuel Up to Play 60* Club students leading the Pledge of Allegiance. They were joined by Principal Leslie Tolley, Acting Assistant Principal Sara Krebs, and teachers Amy Amalfitano, Eric Pittsinger, and Debbie White.

Board member James A. Newcomb, elected to a second term on the board in November, was sworn in by Caroline County Clerk of the Court Terry Lord.

In the annual Board reorganization, Louise Cheek was elected to a second term as president, and Kathy Dill elected vice-president. William McAllister was again elected board attorney.



(All meeting photos are available on [Caroline County Public Schools Flickr page](#).)

Caroline County  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

GROWING THE ESSENTIALS FOR LEARNING



## BOARD MEMBER & SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

In the interest of time, board members and Dr. Saelens opted to forego providing highlights of the [monthly report](#) of activities. Mr. Newcomb mentioned he was pleased with the first meeting of the Strategic Planning Committee, and looked forward to working with the group.

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## SNAPSHOTS

Staff provided the Board [updates](#) in the areas of professional development, instruction, facilities, transportation, food services, community partnerships and initiatives, and communication.

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## STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS

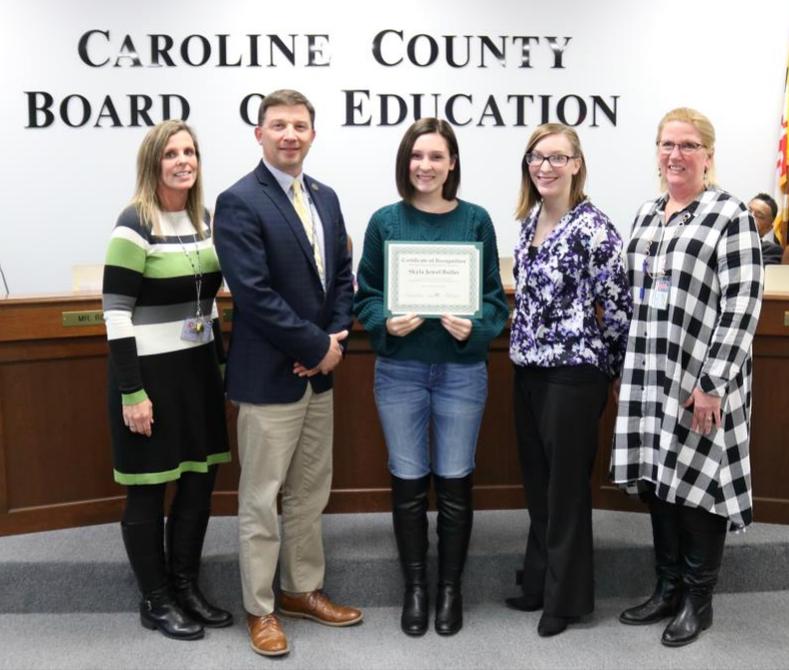
Davonte Douglas, representative from Colonel Richardson High School (CRHS), highlighted the following news in his [report](#):

- Preston Elementary School had an upcoming “Reptile World” assembly with a presenter that has been featured in National Geographic.
- Federalsburg Elementary School had a successful Book Fair which raised approximately \$2,000 for the school.
- Colonel Richardson Middle School (CRMS) staff will be serving meals at “The Gathering,” a monthly community meal at the Federalsburg VFW. This is a part of a community outreach program organized by CRMS.
- CRHS students will have the opportunity to enjoy a winter concert and cheer on classmates who are participating in a variety of holiday activities in our Winter Pep Rally.

Rebecca Gibbons, representative from North Caroline High School (NCHS), highlighted the following news in her [report](#):

- NCHS hosted a Veterans Day appreciation ceremony with NJROTC, band and chorus performing.
- NCHS inducted 31 students into National Honor Society.
- Caroline Career & Technology Center [Homeland Security students](#) visited the 911 Center.
- Lockerman Middle School staff, along with NCHS and DES, and with the assistance of the Transportation Department, will be caroling throughout north county neighborhoods on Dec. 18.
- Ridgely Elementary School students had two spirit days in November, a pajama day and a dress your best day.
- Denton Elementary School had a successful Harvest Festival, raising over \$8,000.
- Greensboro Elementary School’s cafeteria manager Faye Harris once again provided a turkey dinner with all the trimmings for students, staff, and families.

# RECOGNITIONS



## 2018 HOLIDAY CARD ARTWORK WINNER

Skylar Butler, 11<sup>th</sup> grader at Colonel Richardson High School was recognized for her design being selected for the 2018 CCPS holiday greeting card.

*Photo L-R: Dr. Saelens, Jim Newcomb, Skyla Butler, CRHS art teacher Victoria Donovan, Supervisor of Instruction Robin Daubach*

## FIRST LADY YUMI HOGAN MARYLAND STUDENTS ARTWORK EXHIBITION

Matthew Wilkison and Jase Woodland, both Colonel Richardson High School students, were recognized for having their artwork selected to be on display at First Lady Yumi Hogan Maryland Students Artwork Exhibition at the House of Delegates Gallery.



*Photo L-R: Dr. Saelens, CRHS art teacher Victoria Donovan, Matthew Wilkison, CRHS art teacher Marjorie Scott, Jim Newcomb*

# PUBLIC COMMENT

Fourteen speakers addressed the Board during the Public Comment portion of the meeting.

Charles Dean, III, Ridgely - Topic: LSI

Mr. Dean stated that he had contacted CCPS about employment and/or volunteering but had not received a response.

He expressed concerns with CCPS including:

- CCPS involvement and the cost of doing business with Learning Sciences International (LSI)
- Students being prepared for blue- and white-collar positions in the workforce
- Students receiving citizenship education
- The possibility of losing veteran teachers
- Good students worried about getting into college

Ben Cahall, Ridgely - Topic: LSI/Policy

Mr. Cahall congratulated the Board for a positive article about the Essentials for Learning in the Star Democrat but felt there were still challenges that need to be addressed. He apologized for inaccuracies on social media. He expressed concern regarding CCPS involvement with LSI. He understood the Board had held community meetings previously that were poorly attended, and hoped they would hold more in the future that would include a question and answer session. He also questioned:

- Reading and writing instruction
- Data showing the impact of LSI strategies on students
- Teacher morale throughout the county
- Health problems with students and staff
- Policies regarding chaperones, recess, lunch room issues, and disciplinary action for students

John Conneely, Denton - Parent - Topic: Parent Week Policy and DES

Mr. Conneely was concerned about differing Parent Visitation Day schedules among CCPS elementary schools, and felt that Denton's was more restrictive than others. He stated the lines to enter the school were very long, causing him to miss his son's performance, and he felt parents should feel welcome in the school. He asked the Board to be transparent with its policies and procedures, and have parent visitation policies be uniform across the county.

Rachel Fazenbaker, Denton - Parent - Topic: LSI and recess at DES

Ms. Fazenbaker shared her concerns about LSI which include:

- concern that teachers will leave due to frustration and inability to speak up
- administration not listening to students and staff concerns
- students not participating equally or fairly in teams
- a resulting negative change in her children's attitudes about their grades and teachers

She also expressed concern about a lack of sports and activities during recess at DES.

Mark Peach, Denton - Parent - Topic: LSI and respect for teachers

Mr. Peach stated he has been pleased with CCPS up until two years ago, and is now concerned with how the system is being handled. He stated he has heard from students, parents, and teachers about being mistreated, that the administration disrespects teachers, and teachers are afraid to speak up for fear of disciplinary action by administrators. He stated he is depending on the Board and administration to make changes.

Abigail Lorenc, Denton - LMS student - Topic: Assessing LSI & student learning experience

Ms. Lorenc expressed the following concerns about LSI:

- A negative impact on students and teachers
- Group work that relies on the whole team when not everyone wishes to do the work which impacts her grades
- Negative consequences for doing the work of the whole group
- LSI limiting what teachers should be doing

Jackie Lorenc, Denton - Parent - Topic: Respect for teachers and education

Ms. Lorenc shared her concerns about LSI, her children's grades dropping from As to Ds and Es, and her children doing work for the group on weekends. She also had concerns about the teaching staff which included staff feeling they could not speak up for fear of losing their jobs, teachers being bullied, and teachers feeling their hands are tied. She is worried that CCPS will start losing good teachers because of these issues.

Amanda Stafford, Greensboro - Parent - Topic: LSI

Ms. Stafford said that her two children are extremely angry and frustrated with the LSI teamwork strategy because other students do not complete assignments and they cannot concentrate. She said her children are also upset with teachers who say "keep trying" rather than helping. She is concerned with the money spent on LSI and would like to see a forum or work session to discuss these issues.

Harry Helwig, Goldsboro - Topic: Hazardous road area near NCHS

Mr. Helwig stated he was concerned for teachers, students, and school buses because of the washed-out road conditions on River Road near North Caroline High School. He said he has contacted Caroline County Public Works but the issue is on their back burner. He encouraged the Board to apply pressure on the county to repair the road.

Kennedy Thomason, Dent - Student - Topic: LSI

Ms. Thomason said that LSI/Essentials for Learning was the worst decision ever made by CCPS. She stated that teamwork-based learning rather than lecture-based learning means students are being taught by their peers rather than their teachers, which she feels is good in theory but doesn't work with students of unequal performance levels. Ms. Thomason stated that her class had been subjected to many changes in curriculum and testing, and students preparing for the future do not have time for administration to "work out the kinks." She stated she feels students' entire lives could be altered by the LSI decision because CCPS abandoned students in pursuit of their own personal gain, and that students feel betrayed, cheated, and disrespected.

Robert Thompson, Federalsburg - Substitute Teacher - Topic: LSI

Mr. Thompson stated he was a CRHS graduate, and would like to be a teacher. He said that teachers are afraid of losing their jobs due to LSI.

Layla Thompson, Federalsburg - Student - Topic: LSI

Layla stated she is having similar problems that other students had shared, including a failing grade because her team members did not complete their assignments. She said that she has seen a negative change in her teachers. Ms. Thompson also stated she knows she is responsible for her own grades but it has been made more difficult when homework isn't given.

Mary Hawkins, Federalsburg - Parent - Topic: Revisit volunteer policy

Ms. Hawkins stated that she had a difficult time with paperwork and requirements to become a volunteer at Denton Elementary, and felt there needed to be clarification and smoother, more timely process put into place.

## REPORTS & PRESENTATIONS



### Future Farmers of America (FFA) National Conference

Jodi Callahan, teacher at Caroline Career & Technology Center (CCTC) and Future Farmers of America (FFA) advisor, along with FFA members and students, provided a [report](#) on the group's recent trip to the 2018 FFA National Convention.

### Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Update

Lindsey McCormick, Supervisor of Accountability, provided an [update on ESSA](#) and the Maryland State Department of Education's recently released [report card](#). Ms. McCormick reported that in the new system, all nine Caroline County schools earned [four out of five stars](#).

### Next Generation Scholars

Morgan Cox, Next Generation Scholars Program Coordinator with the Maryland Business Roundtable for Education, provided the Board an [update](#) on the program's work with Caroline County students.

### Legislative Report

Mr. Nagel provided a report on the upcoming [Legislative Session](#) and an update on the work of the [Kirwan Commission](#).

## CONSENT AGENDA

The Board approved all personnel items, as presented by Deborah Siachos, Supervisor of Human Resources.

## INDIVIDUAL ACTION ITEMS

The Board unanimously approved the appointment of Sarah Crebs as Acting Assistant Principal at Denton Elementary School.

## DISCUSSION OF ITEMS FOR FUTURE BOARD ACTION

Dr. Derek Simmons, Director of Student Services, reviewed the [plan for use of inclement weather days](#) during the current school year.

## FINANCE REPORT

Mr. Nagel shared the monthly [finance report](#) with the Board.