

Date .....November 16, 2015.....

.....Regular.....	.....Superintendent's Office.....	.....Michael D. Blair, President.....
Kind of Meeting	Where Held	Presiding Officer

## STATE OF WEST VIRGINIA

### COUNTY OF WETZEL, to-wit:

The Wetzel County Board of Education met in Regular Session on Monday, November 16, 2015, at the Office of the Superintendent of Schools, in New Martinsville, WV, at 6:30 p.m. The following members were present:

Josh Balcerek	Linda T. Kirk
Michael D. Blair	Leatha Williams, Secretary
Carolyn R. Gatian	

Member absent: Robert E. Patterson

### OPENING, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE, AND INVOCATION:

This Regular Session of the Wetzel County Board of Education was called to order by the President of the Board, Mr. Michael D. Blair. Mrs. Gatian led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag and Mr. Blair gave the opening Invocation.

### PRESENTATION:

#### American Education Week Proclamation - Leatha Williams

Mrs. Williams stated that American Education Week is being observed this week, November 16-20. This year's theme is "Great Public Schools". She commemorated this celebration with reading the history of this special event in our country, which began in 1921 to raise public awareness of the importance and accomplishments of education. Mrs. Williams thanked every employee in the county for all their hard work they do for the students. She presented a proclamation for the Board members to sign and distribute to all Wetzel County Schools' employees as an expression of gratitude.

#### ~~Standard Alignment - Leatha Williams~~

Postponed to a future meeting.

### SUPERINTENDENT'S RECOMMENDATIONS:

#### Approval of Minutes: Regular Meeting - November 2, 2015

Acting on the Superintendent's recommendation, Mr. Balcerek made the motion to approve the minutes for Regular Meeting, November 2, 2015. Second to the motion was made by Mrs. Gatian and the motion was approved unanimously by the members of the Board.

Mr. Blair informed the Board to strike Jacqueline A. Clegg on page 2 of the Agenda under Extracurricular.

### Personnel Matters:

#### Employment and/or Changes in Employment:

#### Retirements and/or Resignations:

#### Retirements:

Sheldon R. Ruckman Acceptance of retirement from position as Science Teacher at Paden City High School, effective January 29, 2016.

Date .....November 16, 2015.....

.....Regular.....Superintendent’s Office.....Michael D. Blair, President  
Kind of Meeting Where Held Presiding Officer

**Resignations:**

Lisa K. Toman Acceptance of resignation from position as 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade Teacher at New Martinsville School, effective December 31, 2015.

**Professional Personnel:**

Alexis J. Emch Approval for employment as Countywide Substitute Teacher, effective November 17, 2015. Non-certified.

Christy L. Glover Approval for employment as Countywide Substitute School Nurse, effective November 17, 2015.

Melissa F. Hayes Approval for change in assignment from half-time Music Teacher at Paden City Elementary and half-time Countywide Substitute Teacher, to General Music Teacher/Choral Director at Long Drain School and Hundred High School, effective December 9, 2015.

**Service Personnel:**

John R. Cain Approval for change in assignment from Evening Custodian III at New Martinsville School, 683/C, 228-day contract, to Evening Custodian III at Paden City Elementary School, 683/C, 228-day contract, effective November 17, 2015.

**Extracurricular:**

~~Jacqueline A. Clegg Approval for employment as 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> grade Cheerleader Coach at New Martinsville School, effective the beginning of the 2015-2016 WVSSAC Season.~~

Kathi D. Schmalz Approval for contracted services position as Mentor Principal - Valley High School, effective November 17, 2015.

**Leave of Absence:**

Approval of request from Mary J. Kovalcik for an unpaid ‘medical leave of absence’ from her position as English/Language Arts Teacher at New Martinsville School beginning November 9, 2015 through January 14, 2016.

Approval of request from Shayla M. Brown for an unpaid ‘maternity leave of absence’ from her position as Kindergarten Teacher at Paden City Elementary School beginning upon depletion of her personal leave and permissive personal leave days, from January 15, 2016 through April 15, 2016.

**MOTION FOR APPROVAL OF SUPERINTENDENT’S RECOMMENDATIONS AS OUTLINED UNDER PERSONNEL MATTERS:**

Mrs. Gatian made the motion for approval of the Superintendent’s recommendations as outlined under Personnel Matters. Second to the motion was made by Mr. Balcerek and the motion was approved by a 3 to 1 vote:

Mr. Balcerek aye  
Mr. Blair aye  
Mrs. Gatian aye  
Mrs. Kirk nay

Date .....November 16, 2015.....

.....Regular.....Superintendent’s Office.....Michael D. Blair, President...  
Kind of MeetingWhere HeldPresiding Officer

**Routine Matters:**

**Out of State Trips:**

Approval of request from Donald Taylor, Band Director, to take students from the Valley High School Band to perform with the Virginia Tech Honor Band in Virginia, on January 22-24, 2016. Funded through student fees.

**Approval of the following Chaperones/Volunteers for the 2015-2016 School Year:**

**New Martinsville School:**

Candace Johnson

**Short Line School:**

Cory Ice  
Mandy Ice  
Jennifer Barker  
Bill Barker  
Kenny Ice  
Charlene Ice

**MOTION FOR APPROVAL OF SUPERINTENDENT’S RECOMMENDATIONS AS OUTLINED UNDER ROUTINE MATTERS:**

Mr. Balcerek made the motion for approval of the Superintendent’s recommendations as outlined under Routine Matters. Motion failed, due to the lack of a ‘second’.

**TREASURER’S REPORT:**

**Approval for Payment of Bills for the Month of October, 2015 (invoices approved at this meeting are available for review at the Wetzel County Schools’ Financial Office); and Transfers and Increases in the Budget:**

Mrs. Gatian made the motion for approval for Payment of Bills for the Month of October, 2015. Second to the motion was made by Mr. Balcerek and the motion was approved unanimously by the members of the Board. There were no Transfers and Increases in the Budget.

**FIRST/SECOND READING OF NEW/REVISED WETZEL COUNTY POLICY(S):**

FIRST READING	SECOND READING	NEW POLICY	REVISED POLICY	DELETE POLICY	NAME OF POLICY	ORIGINATOR
X			X		IKA: Assessment/Reporting Systems Policy	Leatha Williams

**Approval on First Reading of Wetzel County Policy IKA, Assessment/Report Systems Policy:**

Mrs. Gatian made the motion for approval of First Reading of Wetzel County Policy IKA, Assessment/Reporting Systems Policy. Second to the motion was made by Mr. Balcerek and the motion was approved unanimously by the members of the Board.

Date .....November 16, 2015.....

.....Regular.....	.....Superintendent’s Office.....	.....Michael D. Blair, President
Kind of Meeting	Where Held	Presiding Officer

**OTHER ITEMS:**

Mr. Todd Barcus provided the Board with a copy of the Memorandum of Understanding with the Regional Youth Center, which is an agency located in Paden City, and is affiliated with the Wheeling Youth Services. The agency provides therapy for substance abuse, as well as mental health issues for ages 12-24. A second service the agency offers is educational groups. These groups are held in the schools and the idea is to start conversations with the students and to have peer interaction with topics that include proper expression with feelings and emotions, risks and behaviors of substance abuse, respect for authority and property, knowledge of healthy relationships, and proper use of social media.

Mrs. Williams stated she received a request today from the Hundred Young Life leader for a bus and bus operator to transport approximately 15 teens and 2 adults to and from Jackson’s Mill, WV for a Fall Weekend event this Friday, November 20<sup>th</sup>, and Sunday, November 22<sup>nd</sup>. This will be funded through the Hundred Young Life. The Board members were in verbal approval of the request, and asked for it to be placed on the next agenda.

**ADDRESS THE BOARD:**

**Johnna Harter:**

Ms. Harter spoke to the Board to address her concerns regarding an incident that occurred after the Board meeting on November 2<sup>nd</sup> where her son was approached inappropriately by a Board member. She stated she was told by Board members, the State Board, and the West Virginia Department of Education that nothing could be done. She has filed a claim with the West Virginia Board of Ethics, and said she will be circulating a petition to registered voters calling for removal of the board member from office. Mrs. Harter read four of the ‘Code of Ethics’ for school board members, which she felt pertained to her situation. Mrs. Harter also discussed nepotism in the county’s educational system, and the recent concern that newly hired employees are not the most qualified. She stated it is a problem and the county needs a policy, as the students deserve to have the most highly qualified. Mrs. Harter read some of the points from the nepotism section from the West Virginia Ethics Act. She also read policies from Harrison, Putnam, and Kanawha counties regarding nepotism. She urged the school board to look at the problem and adopt a policy regarding it.

**ADDRESS THE BOARD:**

Terry Glover, retired educator for Wetzel County Schools, thanked the Board for allowing her to speak. She began by stating that after attending the November 2<sup>nd</sup> Board meeting, she left with mixed feelings. Mrs. Glover said the first part of the meeting was very refreshing hearing the reports from the LSIC’s from New Martinsville School and Magnolia High School, and said the teachers, principals, and students did an excellent job presenting their plans, their successes, and their needs. She further stated the second part of the meeting left her discouraged and uncertain about the future of Wetzel County Schools. She said that in her 34 years of teaching and counseling, she never witnessed so much dissatisfaction and low morale facing teachers, principals, parents, and students. Mrs. Glover further stated the county has outstanding and dedicated employees giving students the best well rounded education possible, and their efforts should be encouraged and acknowledged, not ignored and changed. She noted the state has implemented many initiatives over the last 49 years and none have been followed through to completion, and said the students suffer during all the transitions in new academic standards.

Mrs. Glover went on to say she was appalled to hear outstanding and highly respected teachers feel defeated and disrespected, and stated the three ‘R’s’ should be replaced with respect, restore, and reunite. Educators have a code of ethics that must be followed. She said respect must be shown to students, teachers, administrators, and parents, and that respect is earned by actions.

Date .....November 16, 2015.....

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Mrs. Glover said that while the Board of Education goals are for curriculum development and raising test scores, she encouraged them to look at the current strategies that are working and work together as a county. Mrs. Glover discussed the number of times teachers are taken out of the classroom for trainings, and requested they be left in their classrooms to teach. She also talked about the traditional math system and pointed out some facts regarding math scores for students taught under the traditional math program versus the new. She said it has been proven that high school grades are a better indicator of college success than test scores, and that not one test can measure a students motivation and desire to learn.

Mrs. Glover went on to discuss the exam policy in the student handbooks, which states they will be exempted from taking exams based upon attendance, grades, and test scores. She questioned why the policy is still being printed in the current handbooks when it was changed in 2012, and now up for first reading for a revised policy. She said we must give incentives to students who perform well, and she feels with the revised exam policy, the attendance and graduation rate will suffer. Mrs. Glover also requested honor roll listings be published in the local newspaper in a timely fashion. She concluded by saying that she believes Wetzel County can succeed if we show respect, restore ideas and activities that work, and reunite and work together so that everyone feels ownership. She requested the remainder of the school year be focused on letting teachers teach, using their own teaching strategies, emphasizing basic skills, and utilizing traditional math curriculum.

Shauna Heil appeared before the Board to address her concerns as a parent and educator. She began by discussing what a focus school is, and stated the designation of a focus school is given when an achievement gap exists between population and subgroups within the school, not because teachers or students are failing, or that test scores are the lowest in the state. She noted the digital divide also adds to the achievement gap in Wetzel County. This exists because many of the students do not have access to computers or internet in their homes. Mrs. Heil also said that computers and lab time is limited in the schools because of the county and state mandated testings. She said that another reason for the achievement gap is that many of the students are taught the common core state standards on their instructional level using differentiated teaching methods, but the same students are then tested beyond their instructional level on the end of the year assessments. She noted the teachers are aware the achievement gap exists and they discuss it every day for solutions. She said while the average students are making gains on the test scores, it adds to the widening of the achievement gap.

Mrs. Heil also discussed testing and the constant changing of the standards and end of year assessments. She said that while the teachers do not have a problem with this, they do have a difficult time with the amount of testing with the addition of the county mandated ICA testing. She also noted that with the number of students at New Martinsville School, it takes a considerably longer amount of time to complete the tests, and the students are missing out on quality instructional class time with their teachers, as well as computer lab time. This type of testing gives zero feedback to the teachers, students, and parents. This only provides a number, and does not provide item analysis or a listing of objectives mastered. She said numbers cannot guide a teacher’s or a student’s learning goals. She briefly discussed some of the tests they used to give students, including the Star, which assesses student progress in math and reading. She respectfully requested the repeal of the mandate for ICA’s.

Mrs. Heil’s final point to the Board was in regards to the Literacy Scope and Sequence Training she attended early in the fall. During the training they worked in grade level teams to plan reading units for the year, working from the end of the year to the beginning, which is typical when the teachers plan. Her concern was that they were redirected by the county literacy coaches to plan their units from March, as opposed to May. The literacy coaches were instructed by Mrs. Williams that April and May were to be set aside for testing. As a parent and a teacher, she does not want this for her children or her students.

Date .....November 16, 2015.....

.....Regular.....	.....Superintendent’s Office.....	.....Michael D. Blair, President
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As part of American Education Week, and on behalf of the WVEA and WCEA, Mr. Elliott Kendle thanked the dedicated and hard working employees of Wetzel County Schools. He emphasized one point on the history in that the conventions of both the NEA and the American Legion adopted resolutions to support a national effort to raise public awareness of the importance of education. Mr. Kendle stated that while he feels they do have public support, he sometimes does not feel the support from elected officials.

**POSSIBLE EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

Mr. Blair moved and Mrs. Gatian seconded the motion for unanimous approval to retire into Executive Session, per WV Code §6-9A-4(b-2-A), for the discussion of personnel matters... The Board retired in Executive Session at 7:25 p.m. Following the Executive Session, the Board reconvened in open session at 8:11 p.m., with the following action:

**RETURN TO ROUTINE MATTERS, ITEMS ‘A’ AND ‘B’ FROM THE AGENDA:**

Mrs. Gatian moved and Mrs. Kirk seconded the motion for unanimous approval of the Superintendent’s recommendations as outlined under Routine Matters, with the stipulation that additional chaperones be placed on the Out of State Trip.

**DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING:**

December 7, 2015     - Regular Meeting - County Office - 6:30 p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Having set the time and date of the next meeting of the Wetzel County Board of Education, Mr. Blair made the motion to adjourn this Regular Meeting. Mrs. Gatian seconded the motion for unanimous approval to adjourn. Meeting was adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

_____	President
_____	Secretary