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Aiken SC 29840

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*Ashley Pitts*  
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**HCA Board Meeting – 11.18.2020 6pm HCA Commons**

Kevin Murray, Chair - present

Michele Bulmer, Vice Chair- present

Ashley Pitts, Secretary-  
present

Jennifer Heverly, Treasurer-  
present

Susan Groseclose, Member- Present  
Jennifer Abraham, Member- Present

Dustin Ennis, Member- present

Pete Frommer, Member- present

Brittney Jackson, Member-Present

**Meeting called to order** - 6:00 PM (K. Murray) **Called to order at 6:00pm**

- Dr. Ann Marie Taylor (Invocation)
- Pledge of Allegiance
- Ashley Pitts (Mission Statement): "Our mission is to create an innovative and challenging learning environment that teaches the whole learner through the pillars of connection, flexibility, and service".

0601: \*Motion to amend agenda by Dustin Ennis, seconded by Ashley Pitts motioned passed- Move 4 Day School Week up to now. Presentation by Dr. Taylor, open session (parents speeches) and voting\*

\*Motion made by Michele Bulmer to remove Fiscal Policies from Agenda- seconded by Jennifer Heverly\*

\*Dr. Taylor introduced the 4 Day a Week school program- Cassandra Lutrull and Sarah Morris regarding presentation- Dr. Taylor closed presentation- Voting yes would be pending regulatory change that Dr. Taylor is working on. Change would be made for 2022-2023 school year. Cassandra and Sarah went over survey results: 37/44 staff members are on board with the 4 day school week. Parent Survey results given to Kevin Murray- 174/347 parents are on board for 4 day school week. (63% interested, 27% not interested and 10% in the middle). Dr. Taylor addressed financial strain for families that can't afford Quest Zone. Offered scholarships and Title 1 funds.\*

-Briana Hayes: Passed due to issues being found

-Abbie Puckett: Letter read by Michele Bulmer- Supportive of the change. Sundays are work days.

-Emily Velie: Letter read by Ashley Pitts

-Jason Lohnes- Concerns: Analytics- What was the data used? Review of the Evidence of the 4 School Week, read quotes. Are we taking the time to actually look at everything? Potential increased in juvenile crime rates. Urged board to do more research. What geographically matters?

-Sarah Lohnes- Not convinced- Undue pressure to find something for Fridays. Not enough information about what Quest Zone would look like. Main concern is financial pressure on families. Would the cost be less per week for our students? What the times on Fridays be like? What about parents that use Quest Zone afterschool? Would it be available as early as 7am and as late as 6am? No Quest Zone on half days? Would Quest Zone amend schedule for Holidays and half days? Amended hours, which just this year was cut, we are already losing 2.5 hours of instructional time, how much instructional are we going to take away from our students? Longer days making younger students more tired? Students need be in the classroom.

-Keith Belcher- Loves HCA. Everybody's concerns need to be heard and taken into account. What about the 47% that are against it? Children with learning disabilities such as ADHD and or on the spectrum, it makes them harder on them to stay focused and pay attention. Some children need the extra time. Main concern is putting extra stress on students that have ADHD. Longer school days give less time to do homework, supper and spend time with families during the week. If ACPS do this same schedule, parents won't be able to find appointments on Fridays. How is absentees going to change if we are doing the 4 day school week? Financial burden on families.

-Nicole Lane- Loves HCA. Asked to postpone decision. Doesn't think this is the right time to make a decision because of the pandemic. Too high of stressful situation to make this decision at this time. Push back one year to relieve stress? Families that are in the middle ground are most vulnerable in this situation. Interested does not mean want- it just says who is interested in a 4 day school week. Interested is different than want.



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-Deborah Perry-Not interested at all. Not a good time to make this decision. Reducing the school hours over a 4 day school week is taking us down to State minimums. Quest Zone? Financial stress? As working parents quality time is important. With working parents they are actually losing quality time. A very stressful and upsetting decision to parents that have to work.

-Eddie Fulgham- Concerned about the length of the school days and the affects it has on the students. Very limited discussion on cons. Asked to postpone vote to have a fair and healthy discussion and debate.

-Tammy Palmer- Excited at first. More family time. Time for rejuvenation. Guardian of child that has several doctor's appointments. Due to several doctor's appointments Fridays off would be beneficial. Would benefit families of children with high doctor's appointments.

-Angela Moore- Longer school day would allow for more flexibility for intervention times. Mom of special needs child. Concern about longer day is the affect that it will have on children. Children would be tired at the end of the day. Day to day structure to allow for extra down time during the school day. Emotionally having Fridays off would allow children to pursue their passion which in turn benefit children's mental health.

-Brandie Goodwin- Child would be happier due to having the 3 day weekend. Have an ADHD child, 4 day week would help him with rejuvenate and recharge with the 3 day weekend. Increased teacher morale. Teachers will be allowed to have less stress with the extra day of planning. HCA is about flexibility.

-Katie Massotti- HCA would make the decision that is best for our children. Please delay the decision and hear/learn more about it. ADHD student and autistic child that needs extra help. Huge support of delaying the decision. Do more research and make a more informed decision.

\*Michele Bulhmer made motion to pass the 4 day school week pending regulatory approval. Dustin Ennis seconded. Dr. Taylor clarified that no change can be made without lobbying for a 4 day school week due to regulatory issues. 5 day calendar would still have to be next year pending regulatory issues.\*

\*Michele Bulhmer motioned to table to pass the 4 day school week- Dustin Ennis seconded\*

\*Michele Bulhmer motioned to allow the administration to continue to lobby for the regulatory issue to be resolved to allow the 4 day school week. Dustin Ennis agreed with table the motion for the 4 day school week. Susan Groseclose asked for timeline. Dr. Taylor didn't have a specific timeline. Would create a calendar for next year for 5 day school week. IF able to lobby and gets approved then it would voted on at that time. 4 day school week would be for school year 2022-2023. Dr. Taylor would answer questions from parents that were brought up during the speeches. Allowing extra time to do research. Susan Groseclose- Questioned difference between ACPS vs HCA with flexibility with early care and after care? Dr. Taylor-Less cost for less time for after care. After care and early care is school by school decision. Already in a state of flexibility why not change it? Brittany Jackson- Little to no research available in correlation with student academics. Needs more research presented before making a decision. Michele Bulhmer- Where do you get research? You have to start somewhere. Brittany Jackson- Rural schools and other geographic areas show little to no research. Dr. Taylor and Michele Bulhmer stating about how we would pave the way and be innovated. Jennifer Abraham- Order of events was off. Presentation sent parents into panic mode. Interested but unsure. Kevin Murray and Michele Bulhmer this is the third time that the board has been presented with. Kevin Murray called for a vote- Michele Bulhmer reiterated the motion to allow Dr. Taylor to lobby for the 4 day school week.

\*Vote passed to allow Dr. Taylor to lobby for the 4 day school week.\*

#### **Vice Chair's Report:**

- Board Training Retreat- Pete Frommer 12/5: A place at Sage Valley- Michele Bulhmer to email out time and details. Mandatory. Patty will be doing the training.
- Fiscal Policies- Voting Item – motioned by Michele Bulhmer to remove from agenda to a later date
- Move to Digital Filing via Microsoft OneDrive- Michele Bulhmer, go paperless and use Microsoft OneDrive. Dr. Taylor- Will need training. Create mini training at retreat to be able to train.

#### **Committee Reports:**



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- Non-Profit Committee- Michele Bulhmer- Had meeting with Susan Groseclose, Brittany Jackson and Kyle Bluhm. Susan Groseclose had started heading up the Donor Wall. Competition between classrooms and getting students involved with getting donations for the donor wall. Discussed Fall Fundraiser, Low Country Boil/Parent Social Event. Spring Crime Mystery Dinner.
- Growth Committee (Draft Plan)- Dr. Ann Marie Taylor- Big Update: Carol and Dr. Taylor on call with Naveen who is bond holder for current building, interested in adding bond to current plate for the addition. Dr. Taylor and Carol on call at 230 to sell school. Meeting with legal team and bond holder and if they don't pick up bond then we would have to go to more traditional means of loans. Soil test has been completed. All Engineers has been on site and report sent to Dr. Taylor today- will read as soon as she can. Presented pictures and floor plan. If bond approved groundbreaking would start immediately in Jan 2021 to have building 1 ready for Aug 2021. Excited about giving the career center experinces.

**Secretary's Report:**

- October 28, 2020 Minute Approval- Voting Item- Made motion to approve minutes from last month. Michele Bulhmer seconded motion. Motion approved.

**Treasurer's Report:**

- Fiscal Updates- Jennifer Heverly- expected to receive 72K but received 100K and will use on new smart boards for new classrooms.
- Fiscal Audit Review- Carol Gresling and Dr. Taylor- Called Marcus from Elliott and Davis. Board read audit in the email. Any questions about audit- board has no questions. We don't have a lot of free cash. Once bond repays us the liquid assets would look a lot better.
- Salary Scales for 2021-2022- Voting Item- Dr. Taylor- Presented salary scales in board members. Aiken has some of the highest starting salaries around. Traditionally HCA has not paid comparative to ACPS. We can't keep the best and brightest or recruit the best and brightest if we have a cap. It doesn't matter how good of a show we put on, if we don't have great teachers in the classroom it doesn't matter. We have to remove the cap to where they are comparable to ACPS. Took cap off of certified teacher pay. Left cap on uncertified staff members. Increased administrative pay. Dustin Ennis asked if it is financially possible to accommodate the higher salary. Motion made by Michele Bulhmer to approve the salary scale, second made by Pete Frommer and Dustin Ennis. Vote made to approve the salary scale.

**Executive Director's Report:**

- General Updates (Erskine Updates)- Dr. Ann Marie Taylor- Someone from Erskine coming to watch MCSS data. Mr. V is coming to spend the day with us. Paula present from Erskine.
- 4 Day School Week- Voting Item- Motioned to move up on agenda by Dustin Ennis

**Questions/Comments from Board Members:** none

**Executive Session:** none

**Open Session:** none

0753 Dustin Ennis made motion to close meeting, Brittany Jackson seconded motion. Pete Frommer gave directions to cabin for retreat. Michele Bulhmer to email details. Voted to end meeting.

0756 Meeting ended.

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