HIGHLAND COUNTY SCHOOL BOARD

SCHOOL BOARD MEETING

SEPTEMBER 9, 2026 ~ 7:00 P.M.

HHS LIBRARY - 244 MYERS MOON ROAD, MONTEREY, VA 24465

Board Members Present: Sherry Sullenberger, Jason Wilfong, and Kenny Hodges
Administrative Staff Present: Superintendent: James "Nick" Nycum, High School Principal: Richard Miller, Elementary School Principal Designee: Alicia Williams, Technology Director: Gary Lane

AGENDA ITEM # 1 CALL TO ORDER

A. Call to Order
   Mrs. Sullenberger called the meeting to order at 6:05pm.
B. Announcement and vote to enter closed session
   Mrs. Sullenberger made a motion that the Highland County School Board go into closed session pursuant to § 2.2-3711(A)(1) of the Code of Virginia for the discussion and consideration of specific personnel matters, including the appointment and hiring of personnel, including substitute personnel; the assignment of specific employees and administrators; and the compensation and contract terms of the Superintendent.
   Mr. Hodges seconded the motion, and the motion passed by the following vote: YES: Sullenberger, Wilfong, Hodges. Motion passed by a 3:0 vote.

AGENDA ITEM # 2 CLOSED SESSION

Under the Code of Virginia § 2.2-3711, public bodies may hold closed sessions to discuss, consider, or interview of prospective candidates for employment; to discuss or consider admission or disciplinary matters; discuss or consider the acquisition or disposition of publicly held real property; protect the privacy of individuals in personal matters; or consultation with legal counsel.

AGENDA ITEM # 3 OPENING

A. Reconvene from Closed Session
   Mrs. Sullenberger made a motion to return to regular session at 7:15pm and certify by recorded vote, that to the best of each member's knowledge only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements were discussed by the Highland County School Board and such public business matters as were identified in the motion by which the closed meeting was convened.
   Mr. Hodges seconded the motion, and the motion passed by the following vote: YES: Sullenberger, Wilfong, Hodges. Motion passed by a 3:0 vote.
B. Moment of Silence
C. Pledge of Allegiance
D. Approval of Agenda
   Mr. Hodges made a motion to approve the September 9, 2026 agenda. Mr. Wilfong seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM # 4 SPECIAL RECONGNITON AND/OR PRESENTATIONS

None

AGENDA ITEM # 5 PUBLIC COMMENT

Mrs. Arbaugh noted that it was a great start to the school year and both principals have been very responsive.

AGENDA ITEM # 6 ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

A. High School Update
Mr. Miller thanked students, families, and staff for a successful start to the school year, noting the transition from baseline testing to regular instruction and improvements to the afternoon dismissal process. New initiatives include the Highland County Student Activity Fund, providing PreK–12 students free admission to regular-season home activities, and attendance incentives in partnership with the Highland County Fair Association. He is also meeting individually with students to discuss schedules, classes, and overall well-being.

B. Elementary School Update
Mrs. Williams reported a strong start to the school year, with good attendance and initial state assessments underway. Required safety drills continue as scheduled. Upcoming activities include a gifted field trip to Hayfields State Park on September 30, a Junior Hunter Safety Course in late October, and the return of the "All Hands on Deck" anti-bullying program.

C. Superintendent Update
Dr. Nycum reported a successful start to the school year, noting positive student and staff engagement during the first 11 days. He also praised the Highland County Fair and the strong participation and community support. Upcoming meetings and events include the State Superintendent dinner meeting, Region V Superintendents Meeting, NHS Induction, VSBA Legislative Advocacy Conference, WVPEC Meeting, Region 8 Superintendents Conference, UVA K–12 Advisory Council Meeting, and the next School Board meeting on October 7.

AGENDA ITEM # 7 CONSENT AGENDA*

A. Payment of September 9, 2026 – Vendor Bills
Mr. Hodges made a motion to approve the September 9, 2026 vendor bills. Mr. Wilfong seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

B. Approval of the August 12, 2026 School Board Meeting Minutes
Mr. Hodges made a motion to table the August 12, 2026 School Board Meeting Minutes pending adjustments. Mr. Wilfong seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

C. Personnel Report
Mr. Hodges made a motion to approve the personnel report except for B1, B2, and B5. Mr. Wilfong second the motion and it passed unanimously.

- Resignation of Special Education Instructional Aide, Haley Terry
- Appointment of Substitute, Tracey Hodge
- Appointment of Substitute, Hilary Lockridge
- Appointment of Substitute Bus Driver, Miranda Terry
- Appointment of Volunteer Assistant Volleyball Coach, Sabrina Conner
- Appointment of Mentor Teacher, Billy Coombe
- Appointment of Mentor Teacher, Evelyn Beers
- Appointment of Mentor Teacher, Lynn Leardi
- Appointment of Mentor Teacher, Montana Hise
- Appointment of Mentor Teacher, Melody Moats
- Appointment of Annual Substitute, Yvonne "Missy" Lockridge
- Appointment of Reading Teacher, Ashleigh Hinson

ACTION ITEMS # 8 INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

A. HCEA Update

Mrs. Hupman provided the HCEA and staff update. She reported that HCEA held an election and new member interest meeting, selected representatives for the year, and gained two new members. She also shared updates from staff regarding professional development, student field trips and classroom activities, gifted education opportunities, government and mathematics coursework, new teacher orientation and student benchmark data, National Honor Society induction, band program development, and AP course offerings.

B. PTO Update

Mrs. Simmons noted that the community survey received 53 responses and included valuable feedback. She expressed appreciation for the attendance at the most recent meeting, encouraged additional families to participate in future meetings, and provided an update regarding the EIN number.

C. Proposed Policy Updates

- Student Cell Phones and Personal Devices GAB-001-IIBE-001
- Bullying GBA-F-JFHA-F
- Cyberbullying GBA-F-JFHA-F-A
- Mental Health Awareness JHH-A
- Internet Safety and Digital Citizenship VAB-001-IIBE-002

Mrs. Williams spoke about these proposed policy changes. These policies will be on the website for public comment for 30 days. If there are no major changes proposed, the policies will be brought to the next School Board Meeting for approval.

- Parent Course Registration Notifications IGBC-A

The item was not discussed and will be presented at a later date.

- Firearm Safety Notification JFCD-A
- Prescription Medication Safety Notification JHCE-A

At least one copy of the proposed agenda and all agenda packets and, unless exempt, all materials furnished to members of a public body for a meeting shall be made available for public inspection at the same time such documents are

furnished to the members of the public body. No final action may be taken on items added to the agenda after the meeting commences unless they are time-sensitive or are the subject of a closed meeting properly identified in a motion in accordance with § 2.2-3711.

Mr. Hodges that the Highland County School Board grant temporary approval to the proposed policy implementing Virginia Code § 22.1-79.3 regarding annual parental notification concerning the safe storage of prescription drugs and firearms, effective immediately, in order to meet the statutory notification deadline, with the policy to return to the Board for final adoption in accordance with Policy BFC. Mr. Wilfong second the motion and it passed unanimously.

D. Progress Reports – Friday, September 18th
E. Staff Workday – Friday, October 2nd
F. Next School Board Meeting – Wednesday, October 7th – HHS Library at 7:00PM

ACTION ITEMS* # 9

A. 2026-2027 Substitute Rates
B. 2026-2027 Stipend List – Revised

Mr. Hodges made a motion to approve the 2026–2027 substitute rates and the revised 2026–2027 stipend list. Mr. Wilfong seconded the motion. The motion passed 2–1, with Mrs. Sullenberger abstaining.

C. Amendment to the existing Superintendent contract

Mr. Hodges made a motion to approve the amendment to the existing Superintendent contract. Mr. Wilfong seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

D. Employee Leave Policy GCBDA

Mr. Hodges made a motion to approve Employee Leave Policy GCBDA. Mr. Wilfong seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

A. Grading Requirements Policy IKA

Mr. Hodges made a motion to approve Grading Requirements Policy IKA. Mr. Wilfong seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

A. Surplus List

Mr. Hodges made a motion to approve the surplus list. Mr. Wilfong seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

B. Fuel Vendor Selection

Mr. Hodges made a motion to select The Home Oil Company as the division's fuel and oil vendor. Mr. Wilfong seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

AGENDA ITEM # 10 BOARD COMMENT

An opportunity for members of the board to make individual comments, share updates, or express viewpoints related to board matters. Comments are limited to board members only.

Mr. Hodges commented on a great opening to the school year, and Mrs. Sullenberger discussed school safety.

AGENDA ITEM # 11 CLOSED SESSION (IF NEEDED)

N/A

AGENDA ITEM # 12 ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Hodges made a motion that the meeting adjourn at 8:50pm.
Mr. Wilfong seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.