

Regular Meeting of County Commissioners
Wednesday, April 10, 2019

The regularly scheduled meeting of the County Commissioners was convened at 9:07 a.m. with the following persons in attendance:

Reuben B. Collins II, Esq., President, County Commissioner
Bobby Rucci, Vice President, County Commissioner
Thomasina O. Coates, M.S., County Commissioner
Amanda M. Stewart, M.Ed., County Commissioner
Mark Belton, County Administrator
Danielle Mitchell, Acting County Attorney
Carol A. DeSoto, Acting Clerk to the Commissioners

** Gilbert O. Bowling, III, County Commissioner, absent*

Open Session

Commissioner Collins called the meeting to order and led the pledge of allegiance

Briefing and Discussion: Board of Education Proposed Fresh Start Program

The Commissioners hosted a briefing and discussion on the Board of Education's proposed Fresh Start Program. Members of the Charles County State Delegation, Delegate Edith Patterson, Delegate C.T. Wilson, Delegate Susie Proctor, and Delegate Debra Davis joined the Commissioners. In addition, Dr. Kimberly Hill, Superintendent, Ms. Amy Hollstein, Deputy Superintendent, and Mr. Michael Heim, Assistant Superintendent of Supporting Services, Charles County Board of Education, along with members of the Board of Education, Ms. Virginia McGraw, Ms. Latina Wilson, Ms. Jennifer Abell, Ms. Tajala Battle-Lockhart, Ms. Elizabeth Brown, Mr. David Hancock were present as well.

Ms. Hollstein described the purpose of the Fresh Start Academy as an early intervention, structured program. She explained that the goal is to provide proactive early intervention to the youngest students to address behavior concerns for successful reintegration into the school setting. It is also to help build professional capacity of staff and a collaborative partnership with parents. She went on to outline the referral process for the academy along with components of the program. Each of the delegates asked questions about this program and expressed their areas of concerns.

Commissioner Stewart's questions and concerns related to a playground and appropriate bathroom for these young students; the use of Stetham and the stigma; the type of wrap around service that will be provided; before and after school transportation; having buy-in from parents; the counseling ratio in the public schools; and the potential need of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) process. Commissioner Coates' added concerns about the soft behavior issues as a gateway to profiling the child; if parents have a choice to not participate; and the need for positive reinforcement like "Granny Love."

**At 10:52 a.m. Commissioner Rucci left session.*

Dr. Hill concluded the discussion reassuring that the concerns and questions were heard and that what was said matters. Ms. Hollstein reiterated that this was a pilot program that will be closely monitored and that if it does not work it will be discontinued.

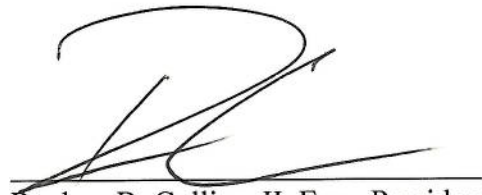
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Commissioner Collins suggested that the Board of Education hold a meeting for parents to attend to hear about this program and voice their comments. He also asked if the Board of Education would share the studies from other jurisdictions.

At 11:03 a.m. a motion was made by Commissioner Coates, seconded by Commissioner Stewart and passed, with Commissioners Coates, Stewart and Collins voting in favor to adjourn. *Commissioners Bowling and Rucci were not present for the vote.*



Carol A. DeSoto, Acting Clerk



Reuben B. Collins, II, Esq., President