

DRAFT Minutes
Transylvania County Board of Education
January 11, 2010

INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME

BUSINESS ITEMS

1. Approval of Agenda
2. Public Comment
3. Good News Report
4. Resolution of Recognition
---Reception for NBPTS Teachers---
5. Former Students in the Military
6. Consent Agenda:
 - A. Minutes
 - B. Personnel Report
7. Policy:
 - A. GBA "Professional Standards of Conduct and Performance for Teachers"
8. Facilities Master Plan
9. Topics for Retreat
10. Important Dates
11. Other Items
12. Public Comment

The Transylvania County Board of Education met in regular session at 6:30 p.m. on January 11, 2010 in the Brevard Elementary School media center. Present were Chris Whitmire, Chairman; Tawny McCoy, Vice Chairman; Shelia Norman; Cindy Petit; and Sue Fox. Also present were Dr. Jeff McDaris, Superintendent; Jenny Hunter, Administrative Assistant; and approximately 20 staff members, guests, and media. Audrey Estep, Brevard High School, was the student representative. Chairman Whitmire gave the invocation and Vice Chairman McCoy led the Pledge of Allegiance. Chairman Whitmire welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order.

1. Approval of Agenda

ON A MOTION BY MRS. PETIT, SECONDED BY MRS. FOX, the meeting agenda for January 11, 2010 was approved as presented.

2. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

3. Good News Report

Dr. Jeff McDaris introduced Audrey Estep, BHS student representative, to the Board. He reported the following items:

- *WCU Partners with BMS Television Production Class* - Western Carolina University SUTEP is partnering with Brevard Middle School on its television production class. The university will help fund a class field trip. The WCU College of Education and Allied Professions SUTEP is recognized nationally for exemplary partnerships with WNC public schools. Thanks to Dr. Kim Elliott for facilitating this partnership.

- *Homebuyer Education Seminar* - Transylvania County Schools has partnered with other county employers to make a Homebuyer Education seminar available to all TCS employees at the cost of \$35 per household. Participants in the seminar will receive information on first-time homebuyer credits, credit score analysis, budgeting, and mortgage options. Participants who complete the seminar will receive a certificate qualifying them for an \$8,000 homebuyer credit and inclusion in the new Wesley Home project in Transylvania County. Classes will be held from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on January 30, February 6, and March 13, 2010 in the Rogow Room of the Transylvania County Public Library.
- *February is CTE Month* - The month of February has been designated as National Career/Technical Education Month. CTE Month will kick off with National Job Shadow Day on February 2. On this day, students across America will "shadow" workplace mentors as they go through a normal day on the job. Transylvania County Schools typically holds its shadowing program later in the spring. The job shadow program allows students to see firsthand how the skills learned in school relate to the workplace.
- *BHS Adopt-a-Family* - Brevard High School reported that 37 children and 10 elderly persons were helped during their 2009 Adopt-a-Family project. Donations from the school totaled \$1977.
- *Coat Drive* - Dr. McDaris commended Carolyn Gordon and the Child Nutrition staff for their work collecting for and coordinating the 2009 coat drive.
- *Morehead Scholarship* - Brevard High School students Glen Palmer and John Burrows have been selected to interview for the Morehead Scholarship.

4. Resolution of Recognition

ON A MOTION BY MRS. FOX, SECONDED BY MRS. NORMAN, the Board adopted the following resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED by the Transylvania County Board of Education that commendations, thanks, congratulations and appreciation be expressed to the following teachers for earning / renewing National Board Professional Teaching Standards certification during the 2009-2010 year:

New

Carrie Chapman, RHS
Cindy Koerber, BES
Deborah Masengill, RES
Jennifer Sensabaugh, RMS
Carolyn Smith, RMS / RHS
Sarah Wilson, BES
Deanna Woodin, BES

Renewal

Lynda Jayne, Brevard Middle
Renee Pagano, Brevard Middle

Thanks were also expressed to the principals, assistant principals, and mentors who have supported these outstanding educators during the NBPTS certification process. The Board recessed for a short reception in honor of the NBPTS recipients. Dr. McDaris thanked Cindy Nicholson, Davidson River School Cafeteria Manager, for catering.

Following the reception, the Board offered Miss Estep an opportunity to share any comments or concerns. Miss Estep reported that BHS was proud of the number of families it was able to help during the holidays. She also observed that first semester

senior projects had gone well. Mrs. Fox commended Miss Estep for her performance in the BHS Madrigal dinners and the Teaching Fellow interviews.

5. **Former Students in the Military**

The Board of Education reviewed the list of former students from Brevard High School, Rosman High School, and Davidson River School who are currently serving or have previously served in the U.S. Military. Four new names were added to the list: Jon Andrew Duvall, Ian Greene, D. J. Hemphill and Kenny Howard. Dr. McDaris expressed congratulations to Mr. Howard for his achievement in graduating high school and extended best wishes to all those named.

6. **Consent Agenda**

ON A MOTION BY MRS. MCCOY, SECONDED BY MRS. FOX, the minutes of the December 21, 2009 meeting and the revised personnel report for January 11, 2010 (attached) were approved.

7. **Policy**

Dr. Bo Williams presented draft Policy GBA "Professional Standards of Conduct and Performance for Teachers" for third read and action. First and second reads took place on November 16 and December 21, 2009. Dr. Williams reported that he had received no comments, questions, or concerns about the policy since the last board meeting.

Chairman Whitmire reported receiving three concerns earlier that day. He said that the common theme of the concerns seemed to be fear that the policy could prevent teachers from obtaining tenure. He requested re-writes of Items 3, 4, 12, and the inclusion of a warning system in lines 38-40. As there is no need for immediate adoption of the policy, Mr. Whitmire requested that a fourth reading be scheduled for the next regular meeting.

Dr. Williams agreed that there is no urgency to adopt the policy at this time. He stated that GBA is not intended as a "gotcha" policy to get rid of teachers, but as a tool for administrators whose duty and responsibility it is to help turn around those teachers who are struggling. He stated that the assumption and expectation is for administrators to apply common sense in personnel matters, and that the element of trust necessary for this cannot be legislated by policy. He remarked that the purpose of having performance standards is to inform employees whenever there are problems that need to be corrected. He further stated that although he does not believe it is possible to write a policy that would please everyone, he would return whatever changes the Board recommends to the policy committee for further review.

Chairman Whitmire stated that his confidence in the current leadership could not be higher; however, he would like to perfect the policy as much as possible in order for the policy to stand the test of time. He expressed the following concerns regarding Items 3, 4, 12, and lines 38-40:

No. 3: Direct all complaints regarding the work environment to the appropriate supervisors and/or file grievances instead of acting to undermine or diminish the authority of co-workers and supervisors. Mr. Whitmire objected to the words "undermine or diminish" and suggested changes to remove ambiguity. Mrs. Norman stated that she has been made aware of instances in which coworkers have undermined each other. Mrs. Fox suggested changing the word "instead"; otherwise, she is fine with the language as is. Dr. McDaris suggested making the last part of the sentence into a new No. 4.

No. 4: Avoid confrontations with co-workers, including but not limited to, engaging in actions or conversations which the teacher knows or should know will result in an actual disruption. Mr. Whitmire questioned what constitutes a disruption. Dr. Williams remarked that it is “like the Supreme Court—I can’t define it, but I know it when I see it.”

No. 12: Arrive at school each day at an appropriate time designated by the principal ready and prepared to complete all assigned duties. Mrs. Fox stated that she personally has no problem with requiring teachers to be on time or the rest of the policy because, as a former teacher, she understands the need for and importance of professional standards for oneself and others.

Lines 38-40: The failure or unwillingness of a teacher to comply with the professional standards of conduct and performance listed herein may result in contract non-renewal or disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from employment. Mr. Whitmire stated that the word “failure” is open to interpretation and suggested replacing “contract non-renewal or disciplinary action” with “corrective action.” Mrs. McCoy recommended viewing the policy from an administrator’s point of view. She pointed out that watering down the policy too much would hamper an administrator’s ability to correct inappropriate behavior. She stated that that the policy needs to have some teeth in order to be effective. Speaking from an employer’s standpoint, Mrs. Petit noted there is usually a warning system in place to prevent any surprises on the part of an employee. Dr. Williams and Dr. McDaris reported there are indeed a number of state laws and policies that require specific documentation and warnings to be administered before any action to terminate employment can occur.

Mr. Whitmire stated that he would be fine with keeping No. 4 and No. 12 provided that lines 38-40 are softened. He reiterated that he believes the school district has improved drastically in leadership and human relations. His concern was that the policy not be taken out of context and that TCS not become a one-mistake school system.

Principal Tammy Bellefeuil stated that termination is never the first choice; many avenues to correct behavior are tried before termination becomes necessary. Assistant Principal James Holmes agreed, saying that making the policy too soft would be a mistake. Lead Teacher Alana Marshall also spoke in favor of the policy, stating that an ineffectual policy can back one into a corner when dealing with a sub-par teacher. Regarding lines 38-40, Technology Coordinator Donyis Merrill emphasized that it is important to be specific because people need to know the possible consequences.

The Board agreed to return Policy GBA to the policy committee for further review and revision. Policy GBA will be presented for a fourth read at the next regular meeting on February 15.

8. Facilities Master Plan

The Board continued its review of the Transylvania County Schools Master Facilities Plan. Norris Barger discussed the latest changes and answered questions from the Board. Mr. Barger has met with all school staffs except for DRS and RHS and will soon begin group meetings to prioritize lists.

Chairman Whitmire emphasized the need to keep the plan current and detailed for better transparency with stakeholders and the county commissioners.

Vice Chairman McCoy noted that enclosing the remaining BES classrooms is not included on the master plan. Mr. Barger reported that the teachers had indicated they did not want their classrooms to be enclosed. Board members discussed this with Ms. Bellefeuil.

There was discussion as to whether school priority lists would be ready in time for the Board's facilities tours. Mr. Barger indicated that he may be able to provide some preliminary lists. Mr. Whitmire asked that the types of needs (safety, educational, etc.) be included on the lists and also encouraged photos. Mrs. Norman asked whether any new schools would be built in the foreseeable future. Mr. Barger stated there are two main reasons for new school construction: 1) poor building maintenance; or 2) increasing enrollment. Transylvania has declining enrollment, and although there are some aged buildings, there is nothing at this time that would justify the need for a new school.

Mrs. Norman asked about the increase in square footage for the CTE building. Dr. McDaris explained that the plans had increased based on program needs. The original proposal was based on QSCB requirements. The final number may change again based on the bidding climate. Mr. Whitmire noted that the Board had been criticized for not asking for the CTE building before now. He pointed out that the Board has been asking for a new Education Center for years, and that each year the answer has been, "Ask again next year." He recommended that from now on, the Board include in its capital outlay plan any and all needs, no matter how large, implausible or how far off into the future. Mr. Whitmire would like to make sure that the plan represents the big picture, with details and explanations for all big ticket items in order to keep all parties as informed as possible. Along that line, Dr. McDaris recommended that the plan include options for the repair or re-turf of the BHS football field. He stated that although this project would be a shared responsibility of multiple organizations (i.e., Transylvania County, Brevard College, and TCS), it should be listed because it is a school system need. Mr. Whitmire added the Rosman track/sports complex, and Mrs. Norman suggested including options for an Education Center as well.

9. Topics for Retreat

The Board will hold its annual planning retreat on Monday, February 1, 2010 at 5:30 p.m. (location to be determined). Dr. McDaris reported that the following topics have been submitted by board members as possible agenda items:

- Volleyball uniforms
- Special education services
- Academic coaching programs
- Parent education coordinator
- Discussion of problems and concerns
- FY11 budget
- Taxing authority; Leandro concerns; synopsis of taxes and millage rates; history of budgeting in Transylvania County (*board attorney*)
- Formal/informal bidding process; thresholds; ways for local providers to compete for bids
- Staff dress code
- Services for students with serious home situations
- Sex education curriculum

Partnerships with non-profit organizations and after-school programs

Each member indicated the topics they felt to be most important for discussion. Dr. McDaris suggested that although all of the topics are relevant, due to time constraints the list should be pared down to 4-5 topics. Items that are not discussed at retreat could be scheduled for future board meetings. All were in agreement with this suggestion, and the superintendent was directed to draft the retreat agenda as appropriate. Dr. McDaris added two topics to the list:

District data notebook update
SACS/CASI district accreditation visit

Chairman Whitmire asked whether there were any procedures in place to help students who come to school without warm winter coats. Principal Tammy Bellefeuille reported that the elementary schools typically maintain supplies of emergency clothing, including coats, for any students in need.

10. Important Dates

Jan. 14	H1N1 Flu Shot Clinic, 2-6 p.m., First Baptist Church
Jan. 14-15	NCSBA "School Board 101", Raleigh
Jan. 18	Teacher Workday
Jan. 19	Student Day
Jan. 25	Teacher Workday
Jan. 26-28	Math/Science Fair, Rogow Room
Jan. 28	Math/Science Fair Awards Ceremony, 6:00 p.m., BHS
Feb. 1	PLANNING RETREAT, 5:30 p.m., TBA
TBD	School Facilities Tour - BES, BHS, BMS, DRS, PFES
TBD	School Facilities Tour - RES, RHS, RMS, TCH
Feb. 15	Student Day
Feb. 15	REGULAR MEETING, 6:30 p.m., MEC
Feb. 17	NCSBA "Understanding the Role of the School Board Chair", Raleigh
Feb. 18-19	NCSBA "Special Issues Law Seminar", Raleigh
Feb. 24	Parent Advisory Council, 7:30 a.m., MEC
Feb. 25	Superintendent's Communication Council, 3:45 p.m., MEC
Feb. 26	Student Advisory Council, 7:30 a.m., MEC

The Board selected February 2 and 4, 2010 as tentative dates for the school facility tours. Day 1 will cover the Brevard and Pisgah Forest schools and Day 2 will cover the Rosman and Lake Toxaway schools.

Mr. Whitmire requested information and agendas for the February NCSBA board training events to be sent to all board members. He also encouraged attendance at the Board of Commissioners' meeting on January 25, 2010.

11. Other Items

Dr. Williams reported that first semester testing has been moved back one week due to missed snow days. He distributed copies of the revised school calendar. He reported that school personnel have requested that the Board consider a 1:00 p.m. student dismissal on Friday, January 22 in order to facilitate remediation and re-testing. He gave a reminder that there was no early dismissal before Christmas due to snow and reported that high school principals would be in favor of an early dismissal. ON A MOTION BY MRS. FOX, SECONDED BY MRS. PETIT, the Board unanimously approved a 1:00 p.m.

student dismissal on January 22, 2010, with the understanding that that the dismissal time would be changed to 1:30 p.m. in the event of a two-hour delay on January 22.

Dr. McDaris gave an update on free/reduced meals. The number of students receiving free/reduced meals is at an all time high, with every elementary and middle school in the county reporting rates of 50% or higher. For the first time, T.C. Henderson has surpassed RES as the elementary school with the highest rate of free/reduced meals. Dr. Williams noted that rates for high schools are typically not as high due to the reluctance of eligible high school students to sign up for free/reduced meals. The Board discussed fruit baskets and backpack buddies programs. Vice Chairman McCoy announced that the food pantry sponsored by Anchor Baptist Church offers quality surplus food for 60 cents per pound. The pantry is open to everyone and is not based on income or need. Dr. Williams reported there are 78 students currently classified as homeless in Transylvania County. Assistant Principal Holmes commended the TCS student advocates for their work providing assistance and services to homeless students and their families.

Dr. McDaris gave an update on the ProActive notification system. Problems with the system have resulted in a number of parents not receiving notifications of early dismissals. Dr. McDaris reported that the CEO of ProActive has expressed apologies for the malfunction, and has promised to address the problem. In the meantime, the TCS technology team is looking at other manufacturers to see if another product might better serve our needs. Dr. McDaris stated that parents have come to rely upon the automated notification system for school closings and other important announcements; therefore it is critical that the system function properly each and every time.

12. **Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

There was no further business, and ON A MOTION BY MRS. MCCOY, SECONDED BY MRS. FOX, the meeting was adjourned at 10:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chairman

Secretary

**PERSONNEL REPORT
January 11, 2010**

- I. ACCEPT THE REPORT OF RESIGNATIONS/TERMINATIONS ACCEPTED/INITIATED BY THE SUPERINTENDENT FROM/FOR THE FOLLOWING PERSONS:

Licensed Personnel

Sarah Reid, Teacher, RMS, effective November 28, 2009

Classified Personnel

Suzette Morgan, Teacher Assistant, PFES, effective January 12, 2010

- II. APPROVE THE EMPLOYMENT RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY THE SUPERINTENDENT FOR THE FOLLOWING PERSONS:

Licensed Personnel

Rick Ricketts, Interim Teacher, DRS, effective January 18, 2010

Irvin Walsler, Interim Part-Time School Psychologist, effective January 18, 2010

Classified Personnel

Penny Creasman, Interim Teacher Assistant, PFES, effective January 13, 2010 through the end of the school year

Michael Passmore, Bus Driver, effective January 12, 2010

- III. ACCEPT THE REPORT OF TRANSFER OF ASSIGNMENT MADE BY THE SUPERINTENDENT FOR THE FOLLOWING PERSONS:

Licensed Personnel

Carolyn Benton, from Teacher, RHS, to 50% Teacher, RHS, and 50% Teacher, RMS, effective January 20, 2010

Tammy Westover, from Teacher, RMS, to Teacher, BHS, effective January 20, 2010

Classified Personnel

None

- IV. APPROVE THE LEAVES OF ABSENCE RECOMMENDED BY THE SUPERINTENDENT FOR THE FOLLOWING PERSONS:

Licensed Personnel

None

Classified Personnel

None

- V. APPROVE THE SUPERINTENDENT'S RECOMMENDATION FOR THE FOLLOWING SUBSTITUTE EMPLOYEES:

Substitute Teachers

Christine Enderlin

Robert Works