

**Minutes
Transylvania County Board of Education
January 19, 2021**

INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME

BUSINESS ITEMS:

1. Approval of Agenda
2. Public Comment
3. Good News Report
4. Former Students in the Military
5. Consent Agenda:
 - A. Minutes
 - B. Personnel Report
6. Policy: Fall 2020 Custom Updates
7. Bond Projects Update
8. Reports from Training Activities
9. Superintendent's Update
10. Important Dates
11. Other Items

The Transylvania County Board of Education met in regular session at 6:30 p.m. on January 19, 2021 at the Morris Education Center. In accordance with the remote meetings statute from the General Assembly and the Governor's guidelines, public access was not permitted and the meeting was livestreamed at <https://youtube.com/tcsnc>. Marty Griffin led in a moment of silence and Courtney Domokur led the Pledge of Allegiance. Chairman McCoy welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order. The following individuals were in attendance (* indicates remote attendance). Social distancing was observed for in-person attendees.

BOARD MEMBERS:

Tawny McCoy, Chair
Ron Kiviniemi, Vice Chair
Courtney Domokur
Marty Griffin
Kimsey Jackson

BOARD ATTORNEY:

Chris Campbell

MEDIA:

John Lanier, Transylvania Times*

STAFF:

Dr. Jeff McDaris, Superintendent
Jenny Hunter, Administrative Assistant
Dr. Brian Weaver, Assistant Superintendent*
Norris Barger, Director, Business Services*
Missy Ellenberger, Director, 9-12 Curriculum/Instruction*
Carrie Norris, Director, K-8 Curriculum & Instruction*
Kevin Smith, School-Community Relations Coordinator*
Chris Whitlock, Director, Technology Services
Chris Lambert, Technology Specialist
Jayson Rogers, School Resource Officer

PRESENTER:

Chad Roberson, Clark Nexsen Architects*

1. **Approval of Agenda**
ON A MOTION BY MR. GRIFFIN, SECONDED BY MRS. DOMOKUR, the meeting agenda for January 19, 2021 was unanimously approved as presented.
2. **Public Comment**
None

3. Good News Report

Dr. McDaris recognized the student artwork from Rosman Elementary School that was on display in the board room and thanked Attorney Campbell and Officer Rogers for attending. He shared the following good news items:

VFW VOICE OF DEMOCRACY AND TEACHER OF YEAR AWARDEES

In December, the Transylvania VFW Post selected the winners of their 2020 Voice of Democracy Essay Contest and Teacher of the Year Awards. Congratulations to the following individuals:

Voice of Democracy Essay - Emma L. Coyle, BHS

Teacher of the Year (Elementary Class) - Tammy Buckner, RES

Teacher of the Year (High School Class) - Colonel Benjamin Blankenship, BHS

EQUITY AND EXCELLENCE PROJECT

The North Carolina Department of Instruction, Division of Advanced Learning and Gifted Education, has recognized Heidi Bullock and the Transylvania County Schools 2019-2022 local AIG Plan by including the TCS strategies for collection and use of data as a “promising practice” to be included in the state’s *Equity and Excellence Critical Action* brief. According to Crissy Brown at DPI, “While there are many things we could spotlight about your local AIG plan, one of our parameters was to select only one promising practice from each region. There will be another opportunity to highlight the other wonderful things that are happening in your district as part of your equity and excellence journey.”

JANUARY IS SCHOOL BOARD APPRECIATION MONTH

January is School Board Appreciation Month and a time to recognize the important contributions that school board members make to their communities. Our schools benefit every day from the dedicated energies and countless hours devoted by these hard-working individuals. Their contribution of time and talents toward the advancement of public education should be recognized and celebrated year-round.

MLK DAY, NATIONAL DAY OF SERVICE

Martin Luther King Jr. Day celebrates the famed civil rights leader’s life and legacy. Observed each year on the third Monday in January as “a day on, not a day off,” MLK Day is the only federal holiday designated as a national day of service to encourage all Americans to volunteer. We would like to thank our students, staff, family, friends and neighbors who joined together on January 18 to improve their communities and commemorate Dr. King’s legacy of service.

4. Former Students in the Military

The board 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. There were no new names on the list.

5. Consent Agenda

ON A MOTION BY MR. KIVINIEMI, SECONDED BY MR. JACKSON, the minutes of the December 7, 2020 meeting and the personnel report for January 19, 2021 (see attached) were unanimously approved.

6. Policy: Fall 2020 Custom Updates

Dr. McDaris reported that revisions to 43 policies were received in the NCSBA Fall 2020 Custom Policy Updates. A number of the revisions include temporary additions necessitated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Several other changes are the result of recent

revisions to policies on discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, and bullying. In addition to the 43 updates from NCSBA, one local revision (policy 6330) has been made based on a recommendation by the board attorneys.

Policy revisions related to the COVID-19 response include:

- 1510/4200/7270, School Safety
- 3300, School Calendar and Time for Learning
- 4400, Attendance
- 5020, Visitors to the Schools
- 5030, Community Use of Facilities
- 6305, Safety and Student Transportation Services

Changes resulting from recent revisions to policies on discrimination, harassment, sexual harassment, and bullying include:

- 1740/4010, Student and Parent Grievance Procedure
- 1742/5060, Responding to Complaints
- 1750/7220 Grievance Procedure for Employees
- 1760/7280, Prohibition Against Retaliation
- 4001, Equal Educational Opportunities

Other revisions include:

- **1710/4020/7230, Discrimination and Harassment Prohibited by Federal Law, and 7232, Discrimination and Harassment in the Workplace:** These policies were recently released as part of a special update related to the new federal Title IX regulations. This update slightly modifies the language pertaining to retaliation, based on feedback from OCR provided to a member LEA.
- **2121, Board Member Conflict of Interest:** Adds a provision prohibiting board members from participating in any matter before the board pertaining to the employment of the board members' spouse. A conforming change was made to policy 2120, **Code of Ethics for School Board Members.**
- **3102, Online Instruction:** Adds a new provision to authorize remote instruction for all or part of a school year when necessary due to exigent circumstances and consistent with law, and to reserve the right of the board to deviate from board policies during periods of remote instruction when necessary and consistent with law.
- **4040/7310, Staff-Student Relations:** Modified to allow one-on-one communications with students on video conferencing platforms such as Zoom or Google Meet under certain circumstances. A conforming change was made to policy 7335, **Employee Use of Social Media.**
- **4600, Student Fees:** Reflects a change to state law that requires the schedule of student fees, charges, and solicitations to be posted annually on the board's website by October 15 and to be updated thereafter within 30 days of any change.
- **6330, Insurance for Student Transportation Services:** Addresses use of passenger vans for student transport.

Dr. Brian Weaver reviewed changes, noting that most of the revisions are minor in nature. He addressed questions from board members. ON A MOTION BY MR. GRIFFIN, SECONDED BY MR. KIVINIEMI, the 44 policies listed below were unanimously accepted as first-read information. Approval of the policies will be requested at the next regular meeting.

Fall 2020 Custom Updates (first-read information)	
1300	Governing Principle - Parental Involvement
1310/4002	Parental Involvement
1500	Governing Principle - Safe, Orderly, and Inviting Environment
1510/4200/7270	School Safety
1600	Governing Principle - Professional Development
1700	Governing Principle - Removal of Barriers
1710/4020/7230	Discrimination and Harassment Prohibited by Federal Law
1725/4035/7236	Title IX Sexual Harassment - Prohibited Conduct and Reporting Process
1726/4036/7237	Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Process
1740/4010	Student and Parent Grievance Procedure
1742/5060	Responding to Complaints
1750/7220	Grievance Procedure for Employees
1760/7280	Prohibition Against Retaliation
2120	Code of Ethics for School Board Members
2121	Board Member Conflict of Interest
2500	Hearings Before the Board
3000	Goals and Objectives of the Educational Program
3102	Online Instruction
3300	School Calendar and Time for Learning
3410	Testing and Assessment Program
3460	Graduation Requirements
3620	Extracurricular Activities and Student Organizations
4001	Equal Educational Opportunities
4023	Education for Pregnant and Parenting Students
4040/7310	Staff-Student Relations
4202/5029/7272	Service Animals in Schools
4328	Gang-Related Activity
4333	Weapons, Bomb Threats, Terrorist Threats, and Clear Threats to Safety
4335	Criminal Behavior
4345	Student Discipline Records
4353	Long-Term Suspension, 365-Day Suspension, Expulsion
4400	Attendance
4600	Student Fees
5020	Visitors to the Schools
5030	Community Use of Facilities
5070/7350	Public Records - Retention, Release, and Disposition
6305	Safety and Student Transportation Services
6330	Insurance for Student Transportation Services
7130	Licensure
7232	Discrimination and Harassment in the Workplace
7335	Employee Use of Social Media
7503	Teleworking
7820	Personnel Files
8510	School Finance Officer

7. **Bond Projects Update**

Norris Barger provided the bond expenditure report showing budget and actual costs to date. Architect Chad Roberson gave a detailed progress report for each high school including construction phases, projected completion dates, goals and challenges, scope of work, and schedules. He reported that construction documents are being readied for submission to the Department of Insurance (DOI) in March. The DOI review period has changed from 30 days to 60-80 days. To mitigate that delay, they will pre-submit documents to the CMAR so they can begin their work. Once the DOI and DPI reviews are done and approval is given, the bid process may begin. The bidding period is scheduled to be complete in June. The CMAR will prepare the GMP for mid-July, and notice to proceed is set for August 2021. Mr. Roberson noted they are beginning to see very long lead times on certain construction items such as flush valves. These delays are related to factory construction and COVID-19. It may be necessary to purchase some items in advance to mitigate delays.

Mr. Roberson reported that modular units will not be needed at BHS or RHS thanks to implementation of college-style scheduling during the construction phases. Rosman High School phasing is more complicated due to more moving parts and they will have a mixture of college-style scheduling and regular scheduling. The college-style scheduling will be temporary. Without this adaptation, RHS would need to have at least three modular units. No modulars means significant cost savings. The CMAR is working on logistics for both campuses that will identify temporary parking for each phase, plus alternate bus and car routes that can be distributed to parents and others ahead of construction. The board requested copies of Mr. Roberson's presentation and the bond issuance timeline from the county.

Chairman McCoy requested an update on contingencies. Mr. Barger reported there is a 3% owner contingency built in (roughly \$1.8 million for everything), and the CMAR has a \$1.7 million construction contingency on top of that. There is a design contingency in case the DOI requires changes and there are contingencies for soil conditions, special inspections, permits, possible price increases, etc. Mr. Roberson confirmed that the board is well-positioned in terms of contingencies.

Chairman McCoy asked Mr. Roberson to review the CMAR system for viewers and explain why it is important. Mr. Roberson explained that the CMAR (construction manager at risk) process allows owners to do as much pre-construction analysis ahead of time as possible in order to prevent expensive change orders down the line. It increases cost effectiveness, cuts down on surprises at bid time and saves significant time and money. Mr. Roberson stated that the complexities of this project warrant this type of system.

Chairman McCoy stated that the public does not get to see the massive work going on behind the scenes and may feel impatient with the pace of the projects. She stated that until the board can safely hold large meetings again, they need to find more ways to keep the public informed on progress. Online reports and more timely updates to the website were discussed. "Coming Soon" signs showing concept drawings and dates were also suggested. Mrs. McCoy gave a reminder that some designs and floor plans may not be shared publicly for safety reasons. She added that a new timeline appears to be working well for getting the bonds issued in a timely manner. Mr. Kiviniemi commended the recent school bond construction meeting with commissioners and staff. Mr. Barger emphasized that the board will spend the \$68 million that the voters approved and will build what was promised at each campus.

8. **Reports from Training Activities**

North Carolina statute requires board of education members to receive a minimum of 12 hours of professional development training every two years. Local board policy states that members who attend a professional development activity will provide a report of the event to other board members. On November 5-7, 2020, Mr. Griffin, Mr. Kiviniemi, and Mrs. McCoy attended the NCSBA Virtual Annual Conference for Board Member Development. On November 30, 2020, Mr. Jackson attended the NCSBA Virtual Core Training for New Board Members. Attendees gave summaries of the topics and presentations from each event.

9. **Superintendent's Update**

Dr. McDaris reported that March 14, 2021 will be the one-year anniversary of the school closures and disruptions that occurred in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. We all hope for a return to normalcy sometime during the 2021-2022 school year, but what will normalcy look like? One thing we know is online learning is here to stay. Being able to navigate and participate in virtual learning is now an expectation for students furthering their education. Although technology cannot replace the art and craft of teaching, it does equip teachers with the tools needed to enhance that art and craft. It will get better, broadband will get better, and the interaction will become more robust. The unwelcome, yet unlikely proponent of online learning has been COVID-19. In March 2020 it caused school closures and educational disruption in over 120 countries. But for blended, virtual, online learning, it also accelerated what was coming regardless.

10. **Important Dates**

Dr. McDaris requested that the school board meeting scheduled for Monday, March 15, 2021 be moved to Tuesday, March 16, 2021 due to a scheduling conflict. There were no objections, and ON A MOTION BY MR. GRIFFIN, SECONDED BY MR. KIVINIEMI, the board meeting for March 15, 2021 was unanimously changed to March 16, 2021.

Feb. 1	WORK SESSION, 6:30 p.m., MEC
Feb. 12	Students dismissed at noon
Feb. 15	Remote learning day #3
Feb. 15	REGULAR MEETING, 6:30 p.m., MEC
Mar. 1	REGULAR MEETING or WORK SESSION, 6:30 p.m., MEC
Mar. 12	Students dismissed at noon
Mar. 15	Teacher workday
Mar. 16	Remote learning day #4
Mar. 16	REGULAR MEETING, 6:30 p.m., MEC
Apr. 2	Students dismissed at noon
Apr. 5-9	Spring break
Apr. 19	REGULAR MEETING, 6:30 p.m., MEC

11. **Other Items**

Mr. Jackson stated that he would like to schedule a meeting with Mr. Barger, Dr. McDaris and if possible Mr. Roberson in order to become more informed about the bond projects.

There was no further business, and ON A MOTION BY MR. GRIFFIN, SECONDED BY MRS. DOMOKUR, the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

January 19, 2021

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Respectfully submitted,

Chairman

Secretary

PERSONNEL REPORT
January 19, 2021

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

Licensed Personnel

Allison Morgan, Social-Emotional Therapist, BES, effective February 5, 2021

Classified Personnel

Sophia Prantera, Teacher Assistant, BHS, effective December 22, 2020

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

Licensed Personnel

Lori Holbert, Teacher, BES, effective January 5, 2021

Classified Personnel

Carly Godfrey, Teacher Assistant, BES, effective January 7, 2021

Tamika Hunter, College & Career Coach/Student Advocate, DRS, effective January 18, 2021

Alesci McJunkin, Teacher Assistant, BHS, effective January 27, 2021

Virginia Watkins, Teacher Assistant, BES, effective January 7, 2021

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

Licensed Personnel

None

Classified Personnel

Diana Collins, from Teacher Assistant, BES, to Office Support, BES, effective January 5, 2021

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

Licensed Personnel

None

Classified Personnel

Brendan Ellsworth, Teacher Assistant, BMS, Short-Term Disability Leave, effective February 2, 2021 through February 1, 2022

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

Substitute Teachers

Krista Brehm

William Hinchliffe

Substitute School Nutrition Workers

None