

**Minutes
Transylvania County Board of Education
January 30, 2023**

INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME

BUSINESS ITEMS (including amendments and rescissions):

1. Approval of Agenda
2. Finalize Application and Advertisement for Superintendent Search
3. Discuss and Finalize Survey
4. Schedule Faculty and Community Listening Sessions

ADJOURN

The Transylvania County Board of Education met in special session on January 30, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. at the Morris Education Center. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss and finalize steps in the search for a new superintendent. Kimsey Jackson led in a moment of silence and Ron Kiviniemi led the Pledge of Allegiance. Chairman McCoy called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. In addition to approximately eight guests, the individuals listed below were in attendance.

BOARD MEMBERS:

Tawny McCoy, Chair
Kimsey Jackson, Vice Chair
Tanya Dalton
Ron Kiviniemi
Chris Wiener

STAFF:

Dr. Jeff McDaris, Superintendent
Jenny Hunter, Administrative Assistant
Dr. Brian Weaver, Assistant Superintendent
Chris Whitlock, Director, Technology Services
Greg Stroup, School Resource Officer

BOARD ATTORNEY:

Chris Campbell, Campbell Shatley
Paula Lovitt, Paralegal

1. Approval of Agenda

Mr. Wiener requested the addition of an agenda item for public comment. Mr. Kiviniemi reported that the board does not typically provide public comment during work session meetings. MR. WIENER MOVED that a public comment item be added after agenda item no. 1. There was no second and the motion failed. ON A MOTION BY MR. JACKSON, SECONDED BY MR. KIVINIEMI, the meeting agenda for January 30, 2023 was approved 4:1 as presented (FOR: Dalton, Jackson, McCoy, Kiviniemi; AGAINST: Wiener).

2. Finalize Application and Advertisement for Superintendent Search

Chairman McCoy reviewed changes to the application instrument and vacancy advertisement that were previously submitted to the chair and vice chair. Mr. Wiener noted that he had submitted 16 additional questions for the application, most of which were not included. He stated that the questions pertained to parental rights and related issues. Chairman McCoy reported that she and Mr. Jackson had included two of Mr. Wiener's suggestions and felt that the rest of his questions would be more appropriate as interview questions. The board also discussed including data on district performance and county demographics. It was noted that much of that information is readily available from other sources for candidates to research.

Attorney Campbell reviewed the four new questions, a request for a writing sample and other changes that were made since the last meeting. ON A MOTION BY MR. KIVINIEMI, SECONDED BY MR. JACKSON, the application instrument was approved as presented on a vote of 4:1 (FOR: Dalton, Jackson, McCoy, Kiviniemi; AGAINST: Wiener). Mr. Campbell reviewed recent changes to the vacancy announcement. MR. KIVINIEMI MADE A MOTION to approve the advertisement as presented with the addition of performance scores and additional information about the school system. MR. JACKSON SECONDED. During discussion, board members made other suggestions for revisions. MR. WIENER MOVED TO AMEND THE MOTION to 1) add that the county has a number of seasonal residents and other demographics; 2) include prior classroom teaching as a requirement; 3) insert the school system website on the announcement; and 4) include other information about the schools that are not just numbers. Mr. Kiviniemi and Mr. Jackson accepted the amendment and the motion as amended passed unanimously.

3. Discuss and Finalize Survey

Attorney Campbell reviewed proposed changes to the online survey for staff and community input. He reported that the survey can be designed to allow different paths of responses from staff, parents, etc. He reported that Survey Monkey does not offer translation services. The board would need to find an interpreter to translate and interpret open-ended responses from multi-language participants. It was suggested that paper copies of the survey be made available in addition to the online version. Mr. Wiener offered several suggestions for designing questions to allow appropriate data flow. Board members felt they needed more time to review the survey and agreed by consensus to bring the survey back to be finalized at the February 6 meeting.

Mr. Whitlock informed the board the meeting livestream had failed; however, the audio recording was still working.

4. Schedule Faculty and Community Listening Sessions

Board members discussed at length how best to schedule listening sessions for input on the characteristics and traits that staff and the community would like to see in the next superintendent. Mr. Campbell suggested that the board maximize the number of sites possible by having no more than two members attend per session and take notes or audio record for the other members. Mr. Wiener suggested a model for the faculty sessions by grouping the schools geographically (DRS/PFE, RHS/RMS/RES, and BES/BHS/ BMS). Mr. Jackson stated that he would strongly prefer to hold sessions at all nine schools. Mr. Campbell suggested that any staff member who did not want to speak publicly could email their comments to the board. It was recommended that the board hold the faculty input sessions on the teacher workday of February 20. MR. KIVINIEMI MOVED that the board follow the suggested model of three geographically grouped school meetings for faculty and staff to provide input with the sessions open to all staff to attend as “off the clock” opportunities and with options to submit comments by email. MR. WIENER SECONDED and the motion passed 4:1 (FOR: Dalton, McCoy, Kiviniemi, Wiener; AGAINST: Jackson).

Board members discussed potential dates and locations for the community input meetings. The Balsam Grove, Little River, Dunn’s Rock, and Mary C. Jenkins Community Centers and Rosman High, Brevard High and T. C. Henderson were recommended as sites. MR. WIENER MOVED that the board schedule community listening sessions at the locations listed above with the BHS session to be combined with the school board meeting on February 20, and that faculty listening sessions be scheduled on February 20 with each session be attended by no more than two board

members. MRS. DALTON SECONDED. During discussion, Chairman McCoy expressed concern about asking teachers to drive the centralized locations on February 20, noting that elementary teachers have professional development training already scheduled on the workday. The vote was called and the motion failed 2:3 (FOR: Kiviniemi, Wiener; AGAINST: Dalton, Jackson, McCoy).

Mrs. Dalton suggested a 2/2/1 coverage of the elementary schools on the morning of the 20th and visits to the other schools in the afternoon. MR. WIENER MADE A MOTION that the board visit all four elementary schools on the morning of February 20 with no more than 1-2 members per site and visit BMS/BHS, RHS/RMS, and DRS on the afternoon of February 20, and hold the Brevard community input session in conjunction with the February 20 business meeting at Brevard High School. MR. KIVINIEMI SECONDED and the motion passed 4:1 (FOR: Dalton, McCoy, Kiviniemi, Wiener; AGAINST: Jackson).

It was agreed to have the superintendent contact the community centers and develop a schedule including board member assignments based on availability. Chairman McCoy discussed the format for the community sessions. Mr. Campbell offered to provide a script for board members and recommended allowing five minutes per speaker. Mr. Wiener recommended having the survey link and hardcopies available at the meetings.

There was no further business, and ON A MOTION BY MR. KIVINIEMI, SECONDED BY MRS. DALTON, the meeting was adjourned at 8:23 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chairman

Secretary