

**Minutes**  
**Transylvania County Board of Education**  
**October 2, 2023**

INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME

BUSINESS ITEMS (including amendments and rescissions):

1. Approval of Agenda
2. Public Comment (General Matters)
3. Public Comment (Parents' Bill of Rights Policies)
4. Good News Report
5. Former Students in the Military
6. Consent Agenda:
  - A. Minutes
  - B. Personnel Report
  - C. Designation of School Treasurer
  - D. Applications for Local Board Training Credit
7. Policy:
  - A. Spring 2023 PLS Updates
  - B. S.L. 2023-106 Special Updates
8. Facilities Update
9. Update on Capital Reserve Study
10. Important Dates
11. Other Items

The Transylvania County Board of Education met in regular session on October 2, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. at the Morris Education Center. Kimsey Jackson led in a moment of silence and Bryan O'Neill led the Pledge of Allegiance. Chairman McCoy called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. In addition to approximately 43 guests, the individuals listed below were in attendance.

**BOARD MEMBERS:**

Tawny McCoy, Chair  
Kimsey Jackson, Vice Chair  
Tanya Dalton  
Bryan O'Neill  
Chris Wiener

**STAFF:**

Dr. Lisa Fletcher, Superintendent  
Jenny Hunter, Administrative Assistant  
Dr. Brian Weaver, Assistant Superintendent/HR  
Missy Ellenberger, Director, 9-12 Education  
Kerry Putnam, Director, CTE & Facilities  
Chris Whitlock, Director, Technology Services  
Mark Russell, School Resource Officer

**BOARD ATTORNEY:**

Chris Campbell, Campbell Shatley

**MEDIA:**

Nick Haseloff, Transylvania Times  
Dan DeWitt, Brevard NewsBeat

**1. Approval of Agenda**

CHAIRMAN MCCOY MADE A MOTION to remove Item 12, Closed Session, from the agenda. MR. WIENER SECONDED and the motion passed unanimously. ON A MOTION BY MR. JACKSON, SECONDED BY MRS. DALTON, the meeting agenda for October 2, 2023 was approved as modified.

## 2. **Public Comment (General Matters)**

Chairman McCoy reviewed the guidelines for public comment.

**Alice Wellborn** – As I reported at the last meeting, over 100 years of research have showed grade retention to be an ineffective strategy for improving achievement and a powerful predictor for which students may drop out of school. A board member appeared to Google “grade retention” during the meeting and then announced at the end of the meeting that an article from Harvard refuted my reported research findings. He found a good article with interesting information, but one article written for a general audience, with little information about the study’s procedures or the student population studied, does not refute 100 years of research. The article actually supports most of my assertions. First, retention has large positive effects on reading and retention in the short term. These initial benefits fade over time. Second, additional steps may be needed to ensure that retained students’ stronger preparation translate to better results in high school. And third, the research does not find that students were clearly better off. One finding that was different was that retention did not appear to affect high school graduation. Retention is a very expensive intervention. Taxpayers pay for an extra year of school for every retained child. But this research does not find that students were clearly better off as a result of retention. Isn’t that the very definition of an ineffective strategy? I find it interesting that these third grade retention policies fund remediation only after the struggling students have failed a grade. One would think that the state would use the money that it takes to retain a child and use it instead to provide remediation services in the years leading up to third grade.

**Lisa Presnell** – I have two kids in high school. It is falling apart. Please, please fix our schools. There are leaky roofs, moldy ceilings, black mold, etc. Teachers are running around with trash cans catching rain leaks. My son spent 10 months eating outside due to fears that the ceiling would fall in. It is not our teachers’ job to clean up a crappy building. The inaction of fixing our schools is unforgiveable. Kids belong in a safe school where they can focus on learning.

**Harvey Sankey** – You board members have a tough job ahead of you. Parents across North Carolina woke up to the immense power that local school boards wield in our communities during the COVID pandemic. To their great frustration, parents discovered that many school boards were controlled by radical leftists who cared more about woke social agendas than educating their kids. This sparked a tremendous groundswell of grassroots activism by parents determined to take back control of their children’s education. The Parents’ Bill of Rights is about teaching kids traditional American values. But we’ve learned that winning at the ballot box is no guarantee without achieving lasting change in public policy. The new conservative school board members are facing a daunting set of challenges from the education industrial complex. Their focus on academic excellence is challenged daily by an entrenched system of professional bureaucratic administrators who are fiercely opposed to implementing the student-focused policies that the new board members ran and got elected on. During the pandemic, parents were frustrated that Governor Cooper kowtowed to the teachers’ unions and liberal school board members to keep the schools closed, relying on inferior remote learning methods that stunted the academic growth and social development of more than 1.4 million public school students in North Carolina. Parents were further outraged once school reopened. Parents were not allowed back in many school buildings in North Carolina counties. And on the first day of classroom instruction their children were asked to identify themselves as vaccinated or unvaccinated. With a Marxist concept of privilege and oppression, teaching kids that our nation was irredeemably flawed and that white supremacy is at the heart of every American institution. Parents see school boards defending preferred pronouns while our children fall further and further behind. All this, and parents are smeared as domestic terrorists by the radical left and the teachers’ unions for sharing their outrage at school board meetings.

**Jayne Mallur** – Thank you all for standing in the gap and protecting the innocence and morality of our children. Many parents can’t be here because they are busy and they are tired. We appreciate you for being their voice. It is amazing there are people in our community who are intent on sexualizing our children. Continue to do what you do.

### 3. Public Comment (Parents' Bill of Rights Policies)

The board provide an opportunity for public comment on the Parents' Bill of Rights policies.

**Katie Crawford** – I have two kids in our schools. I am concerned about the controversy surrounding children's preferred names and pronouns. This should not be taking up important class time. If my daughter wants to be called by her nickname, please don't call me. My children need autonomy. I am not scared by pronouns. Think about an opt-out form for parents. Second, try to remember what it is like to be a teenager in high school where you are seen and heard. Schools should continue to be those kinds of places. Don't take books away from my child. If you don't like a book, don't let your kid read it. Talk with your kids. Most of the banned books are written by people of color. Trust our teachers. Books should represent the world they actually live in. Self-selection is vitally important. Where does it end? Over history, the people who ban books have never been the good guys.

**Lisa Presnell** – I would like to remind the board that you represent everyone in our community, all of our children. Provide them all with an education, regardless of race, gender, or sexuality in a safe way that gives them a love for learning. Give them an education they can move forward with. Treat my children with dignity and respect. I don't need teachers taking time out of their day to call me or email me regarding the names they choose. My child is an autonomous, independent, worthy human who gets to decide what she is called. She gets to figure it out. Please treat her that way. If we have to do this pronoun thing, give me an opt-out form. Treat them with the dignity and respect they deserve as human beings.

**Alice Wellborn** – The Parents' Bill of Rights is a rehash of rights that parents have had for years. It is a mostly cookie-cutter bill about punitive measures. All parents have the right to direct their children's education. All children have the right to be comfortable in school. All families deserve to be treated with respect. We have a scenario regarding a board member whose shirt could be said to groom children for gun violence. My suggestions would be to 1) put limits on the number of complaints that one parent or organization can make; 2) publish all the issues and concerns raised by parents on the school's homepage. A few parents should not be able to impose their beliefs on all children; and 3) resolving the complaint does not mean that the parent must be satisfied with the outcome.

**Susan Lefler** – My husband and I moved to Transylvania County in 1976. Our four children attended Transylvania County public schools. We knew that the teachers were professional educators, most of whom were educated in our nationally recognized public university system. If we had any concerns, we met with the teachers. Community-wide parental involvement and support took the form of volunteering for the local PTA. The professional educators in Transylvania county provided our children with an outstanding education and they went on to do well at university and graduate school, as did our grandchildren. We were constantly involved with our four children, reading out loud (when they were younger), encouraging them to read, ask questions, engage with information in classroom discussions, and research papers. Our children's spiritual formation was our responsibility along with our church community, not the responsibility of the public schools. We would have been shocked if other parents with no background or experience in education had been able to direct or restrict what our children or grandchildren were permitted to read, learn, or discuss. The "Parental Rights" legislation does not specify the viewpoints of the parents deemed to have these rights. Therefore, I assume that every parent is assured of their constitutional rights as parents of children in our public schools. The remaining questions follow from that assumption:

- What is the school board policy if the parent of one family demands something (perhaps the removal of a book title from the shelves in a classroom) and another parent objects to that removal and believes that their student has a constitutional right to read that book, discuss it, and write about it?
- Will teachers be free to inform the parents of students in their class that a book or topic has been removed or forbidden because of the request of a parent? Will the school

board set a policy to cover the procedure for parents (for instance of students in an AP class) to appeal for a book title to be reinstated for their individual students?

- How will the school board set policy to protect our teachers, principals, and school administration from being harassed by the legislative requirement for responses to parental complaints within a short time?
- How does the school board plan to protect vulnerable children who may, or may not, have supportive families?

The most troubling aspect in all this turmoil in our educational policy is how heavily funded national groups have managed to create this level of distrust for our local teachers and administrators, most of whom are also parents who attend church and local events with us, people we have known and trusted our whole lives who are and always have been advocates for the well-being of their students who are our children and grandchildren. In this country, every person has the constitutional right to free speech which applies equally to the right to read. Public education, free access to books and art, and free public libraries are as central to a healthy democracy as is a free press, freedom to worship, and the freedom to vote.

**David Borman** – Thank you for being transparent. There are many portions of this law that I do not agree with, especially the way it marginalizes LGBTQ+ students. Now it is state law. I have reservations about the proposed changes to the policies. I take the right of objection seriously. As written, the policy says any objection at any time must be considered whether frivolous or not. The first criteria should be to see if the material meets state standards. If so, the complaint should be dismissed immediately. We have a chance to change how our county addresses rights. Politicians in Raleigh wanted to put on a show by fighting “activist” teachers who don’t really exist. If you respect educators, clearly state that standards are the first and most important criteria. Keep your focus on keeping kids successful and safe in the classroom.

**Dan Carter** – I am an educator. My family members are teachers. I am tired of the attack on teachers. It is a damnable lie and the kind of propaganda that led to the passage of this law. Do we really want our teachers to be used as political fodder? Fewer teachers are entering education programs. We are making them pinatas for politicians. They are afraid that children will feel awful if we talk about true history. Students should learn the truth about the good and the bad. Black children had to read tattered school books portraying “happy darkies” while the Ku Klux Klan was being glorified. No one cared about how those children felt. This supposed concern is about racism.

**Jami Reese** – I am passionate about the Parents’ Bill of Rights. I and my fellow “Moms for Liberty” are not attacking teachers. It is an attack on governmental overreach. Governor Cooper could not veto it. There are copious amounts of literature about the benefits of parent involvement. Transylvania County Schools does much right. I am available any time they call. We are there to meet the needs. It is of the utmost importance to build strong relationships with parents. The culture has shifted over the years from a strong relationship to a bully atmosphere. There is an air of arrogance. These are the opinions of many parents in the community. If it weren’t for the parents allowing our kids to attend, there would be no public schools. Representative Clampett is an advocate for the Parents’ Bill of Rights. I will email you with my suggestions for changes. Politics has no place in the classroom.

**Lew Niver** – I am a former educator, a grandparent, and a great grandparent. I have noticed the angst we have on both sides. This is political and being driven by political interest. Politicians don’t give a hoot about what they are talking about. They just want to fire people up by pitting one side against the other so they can get elected. Think about what is being said and done. It’s politics. We here all have one common goal--what is best for our kids. When I was a teacher and we had problems with parents, it got resolved without being political. My mom voted democratic and my dad voted republican. It didn’t matter. Look at the interests behind what is going on. This is a hastily written bill.

**Cora Niver** – I was a reporter and in my long career I covered many school boards. The school boards that invited the students in for their input did the best because they were so open. My husband taught for 30 years. He was great at dealing with parents. He would sit down and hear them out, then try to reach a compromise in the children's best interests. I ditto a lot of what has been said about respecting the children's needs and not the parents' wants. If we are stressed as parents and teachers, what does that do to the students? They need direction and support of their opinions and choices. The kids work through it themselves. We can't choose everything they read and ban things.

**Meredith Licht** – I have been an educator here for 23 years. I have seen parents and educators have the same goal--the development and well-being of the children whose care we are in charge of. Speaking of our educators, they are an outstanding group. Ninety percent are very experienced. They have advanced degrees. They have been trained to do what is in the best interests of children. This law was well-intentioned, but had some unintended consequences. Calling a child by a nickname, for example. Many provisions of the law were unnecessary. We encourage parental involvement. But some things in the law are things that are already in place. As one example, our school has Champions. Champions connects a student with an adult at the school to help support them. We can't do that under this law. Let's work together to make the best future for our students.

**Betsy Burrows** – As a retired teacher with over 30 years of experience and current Director of Teacher Education at Brevard College, I know that we face a teacher shortage. The Parents' Bill of Rights perpetuates that problem due to sowing misinformation and distrust. Teachers feel they may somehow violate the legislation by simply asking "how are you." It's about relationships and rigor. We must know who we are teaching as well as what we are teaching. Books in the classrooms are important tools to build skills. Now teachers are afraid the books may be found on a conspiracy theory website. Some of my students have turned away from teaching as a career. The legislation provides avenues for misinformed parents to tie up schools with frivolous requests for things that they already had the right to see and discuss. I am concerned that many of our best teachers will leave the profession.

#### 4. **Good News Report**

Dr. Lisa Fletcher recognized the student artwork from Brevard Elementary School that was on display in the board room and thanked Officer Mark Russell for securing the meeting. She shared the following good news:

##### ***TCS Shows Academic Improvement***

In a recent report presented by the State Board of Education, Transylvania County Schools demonstrated remarkable progress in their academic performance, with 88% of schools achieving School Performance Grades of A, B, or C. Brevard High, Brevard Middle, Pisgah Forest, Rosman High and Rosman Middle all exceeded their Academic Growth goals. Brevard Elementary, Rosman Elementary, and T. C. Henderson met their Academic Growth goals. Davidson River received the highest rating for the alternative school accountability model. Brevard High and Rosman High both achieved a 94% graduation rate. Furthermore, 78% of schools demonstrated improved academic proficiency, with the most notable being K-2 reading proficiency, which increased from 60% in the 2021-2022 school year to 67% in the 2022-2023 school year. Student achievement for the 2022-2023 school year is based on all end-of-grade (EOG) and end-of-course (EOC) tests in reading, math and science.

##### ***October is National Principals' Month***

October is National School Principals' Month. Please join us in showing appreciation to our dedicated school principals for all they do to support schools, students, and staff:

Mike Kirst, BES  
Amanda Lewis, PFES  
Bob Dinsdale, RES  
Patrick Chapman, TCH  
Barbara Grimm, DRS

Tammy Deaver, BMS  
Julie Queen, RMS  
Mick Galloway, BHS  
Jason Ormsby, RHS

***National Custodial Workers' Recognition Day Oct. 2***

October 2, 2023 is National Custodian Recognition Day. Many thanks to our hardworking custodians who keep our schools clean and safe for students, staff, and visitors. They deserve to be celebrated every day.

***National School Lunch Week Oct. 9-13***

National School Lunch Week is October 9-13, 2023 with the theme, "Level Up with School Lunch." Thanks to the School Nutrition staff who work hard to prepare tasty, good quality, and nutritious meals to students five days a week. Our school lunch participation rate is up 23% district-wide.

***NC Crunch Day is October 18***

Join the state of North Carolina in celebrating Farm to School and Early Care and Education Month by crunching into a locally grown fruit or vegetable on NC Crunch Day on October 18. NC Crunch Day is also a great opportunity to thank everyone involved in feeding our communities and celebrating NC agriculture.

***National School Bus Safety Week Oct. 16-20***

The week of October 16-20, 2023 is National School Bus Safety Week. School buses are the safest way for children to get to school. Their design is meant to be safer than any passenger vehicle in avoiding crashes and preventing injuries. Teaching children to follow safety rules on the bus is as important as informing drivers about the laws regarding school buses.

***National Bullying Prevention Month***

October is National Bullying Prevention Month and a good opportunity to promote kindness, acceptance, and inclusion. Historically, bullying was viewed as a childhood rite of passage that "made kids tougher," but the reality is that bullying can have serious, long-term impacts such as loss of self-esteem, anxiety, and depression for those involved. Research shows the best way to combat bullying is to create respectful and inclusive school environments through comprehensive intervention and prevention strategies that bring together students, educators, families and community members. Students who are being bullied must tell an adult or someone they trust what is going on.

***National Red Ribbon Week Oct. 23-31***

October 23-31, 2023 is National Red Ribbon Week. Drugs can alter brain development and hinder growth. They can block our brains from naturally experiencing happiness by suppressing neurotransmitters such as dopamine, oxytocin, serotonin, and endorphins. This year's theme, "Be Kind to Your Mind. Live Drug Free," is about making positive choices to be happy and healthy by staying drug-free.

***Safe Schools***

School Mental Health Training for the 2023-2024 school year will focus on awareness and prevention in the areas of teen dating violence, suicide, substance abuse, and sex trafficking.

***Athletics***

- RHS Varsity, BHS Varsity, and JV Volleyball teams are currently undefeated and 1<sup>st</sup> in their conferences. The RHS JV team also has a winning record.
- BHS Varsity football is in position to battle for 1<sup>st</sup> place in the conference and the JV team is currently undefeated. RHS is gaining momentum as they head further into conference play. The Homecoming crowd was the largest seen in recent years. The BMS team is currently undefeated. The BHS Varsity and JV teams both have winning records and Varsity is currently undefeated.
- The BHS women's and men's cross-country teams are both 1<sup>st</sup> in the conference.
- Tennis and golf seasons are just getting underway.
- Congratulations to the athletic directors, coaches and athletes!

***CTE***

- RHS Health Science students will host a blood drive on October 11.
- Rosman High School's Business Department has been working hard on the BOB (Big Orange Boutique) for students to purchase all their school spirit needs. The grand opening will take place on Fall Arts Night on October 24 from 5-7pm.
- Transylvania Economic Development is coordinating a field trip for students to explore local manufacturing facilities. The tentative date is October 18.
- BHS FFA will compete in the Western Region Forestry Career Development Event at DuPont State Forest on October 3.
- Bootcamps will be provided to help senior CTE Concentrators prepare for the ACT WorkKeys assessment.
- Be Pro, Be Proud will provide virtual reality career exploration for high school students the week of October 9. Fifth graders will participate in the Careers on Wheels event on October 16, where they can explore over 50 local businesses and careers available in Western NC.
- 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Career Day at Blue Ridge Community College will take place on October 17. Students will have the opportunity to rotate through with career professionals who will present hands-on activities to encourage career exploration.

***Burlingame Donation to T. C. Henderson***

The Burlingame Country Club Friends of T. C. Henderson raised \$25,000 for T.C. Henderson School of Science and Technology during their 2023 fundraiser event. The funds are targeted for Accelerated Reader and other literacy enhancing programs, additional books to support literacy and STEM, programmable coding robots, Design and Build kits, and standard STEM supplies for the science lab. These materials enhance hands-on learning while keeping students engaged in problem-solving and higher order thinking skills. Our thanks to Linda Crowther, Chairperson of the Burlingame Fundraiser Committee, and the members of the Burlingame community for their generosity and ongoing support of T.C. Henderson.

***Donation to Davidson River School Arts***

Our thanks to Marci Barby, chair of Art @ Atagahi, and Judy Baghose, co-chair of Davidson River Strong, who recently presented Principal Barbara Grimm with a \$1,300 check to promote art at Davidson River School.

***Creative Classroom Grant Applications Now Available***

Transylvania County Schools Education Foundation (TCSEF) has announced that applications for the 2024-2025 Creative Classroom Grants are now open. Creative Classroom Grants are a supplement to the resources available to Transylvania County

Schools for the purpose of preserving, maintaining, advancing and enriching public education in Transylvania County. Please visit TCSEF.org to submit an application. The grants will be awarded in early 2024.

**5. Former Students in the Military**

The board recognized 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.

Mr. Jackson announced that he had attended a forum on Human Trafficking at the First Baptist Church in Brevard on Saturday. Dr. Lisa Fletcher was a presenter on the forum.

**6. Consent Agenda**

ON A MOTION BY MR. O'NEILL, SECONDED BY MR. JACKSON, the consent agenda consisting of the minutes of the September 12 and September 18, 2023 meetings; the personnel report for September 18, 2023 (see attached); the appointment of Tabitha Galloway as school treasurer at Rosman Elementary School effective September 25, 2023; and four applications for CEU credit for the "School Board Member Rights and Responsibilities" local training session on September 12 were unanimously approved.

**7. Policy: Spring 2023 PLS Custom Updates**

On September 18, the board accepted as first-read information seven policies with minor changes from the NCSBA Spring 2023 PLS Custom Updates. Mr. Wiener asked if board members are deemed employees of the school system. Dr. Brian Weaver reported that board members are not considered employees. ON A MOTION BY MR. WIENER, SECONDED BY MR. JACKSON, the seven policies listed below were unanimously approved as presented.

- **1610/7800, Professional and Staff Development.** References a new state law G.S. 115C-81.57 effective beginning with the 2023-2024 school year that requires local boards to provide professional development to carry out state law provisions regarding education in middle and high schools on the Holocaust and genocide.
- **4155, Assignment to Classes.** Updates a legal reference.
- **4334/5035/7345, Use of Unmanned Aircraft (Drones).** Updates the legal references.
- **5028/6130/7267, Automated External Defibrillator.** Updates the hyperlinks in Other Resources.
- **6410, Organization of the Purchasing Function.** Updates a hyperlink in the legal references.
- **7340, Employee Dress and Appearance.** Updates the legal references.
- **7650, Employee Travel and Other Expense Reimbursement.** Updates a hyperlink in the Other Resources.

**Policy: S.L. 2023-106 Special Updates**

On September 18, the board accepted as first-read information seven revised policies from a Special Custom PLS Update to comply with Session Law 2023-106 (SB 49), which creates a new Chapter 114A of the General Statutes titled "Parents' Bill of Rights" and also amends Chapter 115C of the General Statutes to add new requirements for schools regarding parental guides and notifications. The new requirements apply with the 2023-2024 school year; however, the General Assembly has extended policy deadlines to the first day of school after January 1, 2024. At the September 18 meeting,



the board had suggested potential revisions to some of the policies. Chairman McCoy opened the floor for additional discussion.

- **1310/4002, Parental Involvement.** Substantially revises the policy to address the new requirements of the Parents' Bill of Rights.
- **3210, Parental Inspection of and Objection to Instructional Materials.** The school system must have a written process for parents to inspect and review all textbooks and supplementary instructional materials that will be used in their child's classrooms.
- **3540, Comprehensive Health Education Program.** Adds a provision prohibiting instruction on gender identity, sexual activity, or sexuality in grades K-4.
- **4335, Criminal Behavior.** Changes the requirement for reporting to parents when their child is suspected to be the victim of a crime.
- **4720, Surveys of Students.** Changes parental notification and consent requirements based on new state law requirements. Adds a new section about well-being questionnaires and health screening forms.
- **6120, Student Health Services.** The new G.S. 90-211.10B contains language that prohibits health care practitioners, which includes school employees authorized under state law to perform health care services as part of their job, from providing, soliciting, or arranging medical procedures or treatments for a minor without first obtaining written or documented consent from the parent. This law goes into effect on December 1, 2023.
- **7300, Staff Responsibilities.** Adds an employee responsibility to support parental involvement and never encourage a student to withhold information from their parents.

Mr. Jackson stated that he is all for parent involvement in the schools, but is not happy with all of the requirements in the new bill. He feels the revisions to policy 1310-4002 could create significant additional work for staff. He related a story about learning to love books while a student at BHS, and recalled that Playboy magazine came out while he was a student at NC State. Even though there are more explicit materials now, he does not think that banning books is the way to go. He believes it is the parents' responsibility to make sure their children are reading the right things. He thinks having to get permission to use students' nicknames is silly. He supports having standards for what is taught, what students are asked to read, and how they are treated in school because the schools are training the future citizens of this county.

Mr. O'Neill expressed concern about the burden that could fall on the administrative staff as a result of frivolous complaints and requests, and feels that the bill provides no way for the school system to protect itself from that. He predicted there could be enormous costs for legal advice incurred from potential appeals, and that would take money that could be put to better use away from the schools. He believes that if a parent has the right to challenge specific materials, then other parents in that classroom have the right to be informed of that challenge. The law advocates for parents to be involved in their child's education. He feels that if more parents would spend time working with their children there would be no need for this legislation. He would like to see more clarifying language added to the policies.

Mr. Wiener stated that he wholeheartedly appreciates the comments made earlier and believes there was not a single person present who is not interested in the well-being of our children. He stated that parents are the primary caregivers from the day a child is

born. Schools help nurture children, but cannot replace the love and guidance that parents can offer. Not all parents live up to that high standard, however, and we should encourage parents to do so. Parents are in best position to advocate for their children and provide feedback. Parental involvement is directly linked to student success, higher self-esteem and achievement. Schools should partner with parents. He feels that cooperation between schools and parents is important to a well-rounded student, but thinks it is essential to dispel the myth that schools have a greater responsibility than parents. He stated that *in loco parentis* ("in the place of a parent") is being challenged. Schools have a responsibility to teach, and parents have responsibility for instilling values and morals. He feels there is room for improvement on the policies and looks forward to hearing from stakeholders. Regarding nicknames, he noted that parents can check a box on the enrollment form and they won't get a phone call.

Chairman McCoy confirmed that it is the board's intent to offer additional changes to the policies and to continue discussion at the October 16 work session. Attorney Chris Campbell reported that 95% of the policy changes come directly from the statute; therefore, most of the proposed language should be adopted in order to be in compliance with the law. Dr. Brian Weaver asked board members to send any new suggestions to him by October 23.

#### **8. Facilities Update**

Facilities Director Kerry Putnam requested approval to issue an RFQ for "on-call" services related to small renovation and construction projects (less than \$750,000). The on-call agreements could be utilized on an as-needed basis for a 3-5 year period in the following disciplines: architectural; civil engineering/landscape design; mechanical, electrical and plumbing (MEP) engineering; materials testing/geotechnical engineering; and surveying. Mr. Putnam expects this could expedite projects by reducing the time needed to find service providers. Several of our neighboring counties use similar on-call systems. Board members were in favor of the request. Mr. Wiener recommended maintaining a minimum of two service providers for each category, having a bill of rights as part of the offer, and for providers to be able to predict their pricing over time.

Mr. Putnam reported that his next goal will be to implement a 10-year plan for HVAC service. He noted that the piping project at PFES is not a new HVAC system; it is just a replacement of faulty pipes. The majority of our district's current HVAC equipment is very old. The 10-year plan could provide a structured cost schedule to get equipment up to date with an eventual goal of having all HVAC equipment no older than 15 years. Attorney Campbell indicated that he would work with Mr. Putnam to ensure that on-call agreements are in compliance with general statutes and board policies. ON A MOTION BY MR. WIENER, SECONDED BY MRS. DALTON, the board unanimously approved the proposal to issue an RFQ for on-call engineering and other services.

Mr. Wiener asked about new fencing at BHS. Mr. Putnam reported that the fence was approved by the board last November/December to help improve campus security. The fence is still not completely finished and he has some concerns about the quality. Mr. Putnam also gave an update on the RHS metal athletic building. They are waiting on the slab.

#### **9. Update on Capital Reserve Study**

Dr. Lisa Fletcher reported that representatives from Axias presented a draft summary of the capital reserve study to the ad hoc capital study work group on September 27. More findings will be presented at the next meeting on October 12. Axias reported that the

most critical issue they found was roofs. Dr. Fletcher expressed concern that the company did not look at security and safety. They also did not look at the football field with engineering eyes. It seems their role is to present options regarding needed repairs. Mr. O'Neill questioned how qualified the people were that inspected the buildings/facilities.

The board discussed that this the county's RFQ had specified a capital reserve study AND a maintenance reserve study. Attorney Campbell clarified that this was something the county commissioners wanted in order to find out what it would cost to fix critical needs. The board of education was not a part of that decision. No scope of work has been provided to the board. It was originally agreed that the ad hoc group would come up with options and present to both boards at a joint meeting. Mr. O'Neill stated that he fears all the board will wind up with is a maintenance reserve study and nothing to move the bond forward. Mr. Campbell gave a reminder that the bonds have to be issued by November 2025. That date can be extended three years if a request is made to the Local Government Commission. Mr. Jackson noted that some of the findings so far are the same things that were included in the Clark Nexsen study for the bond. Chairman McCoy expressed hope that this can be the start of moving forward.

**10. Important Dates**

Dr. Fletcher reviewed important dates and gave a reminder of the meeting scheduling changes effective October 2023:

- Regular meeting on the first Monday of the month
- Work session on the third Monday of the month (no action)
- Start time changed to 6:00 p.m.
- Public comment at work session and regular meeting
- Attorney present at both meetings (for now)

Oct. 6	Students dismissed at noon		
Oct. 11-13	NCSBA Fall Law Conference	3 days	Asheville, NC
Oct. 16	WORK SESSION	6:00 p.m.	MEC
Oct. 27	Students dismissed at noon		
Oct. 30, 31	Teacher workdays		
Nov. 6	REGULAR MEETING	6:00 p.m.	MEC
Nov. 10	Veterans Day holiday		
Nov. 13-15	NCSBA Annual Conference for Board Member Development	3 days	Greensboro, NC
Nov. 20	WORK SESSION	6:00 p.m.	MEC
Nov. 22-24	Thanksgiving break		
Dec. 4	REGULAR MEETING	6:00 p.m.	MEC
Dec. 14-15	NCSBA Core Training for New Board Members	2 days	Raleigh, NC
Dec. 18	WORK SESSION	6:00 p.m.	MEC

**11. Other Items**

None

There was no further business, and ON A MOTION BY MR. JACKSON, SECONDED BY MR. O'NEILL, the meeting was adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Chairman

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Secretary

**PERSONNEL REPORT**  
**October 2, 2023**

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

Licensed Personnel

None

Classified Personnel

Lisa Osteen, Office Support, MEC, effective January 31, 2024

Kiana Pittman, Teacher Assistant, TCHES, effective October 18, 2023

Julie Roberts, Office Support, MEC, effective January 31, 2024

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

Licensed Personnel

Heather Layton, Teacher, BES, effective October 2, 2023

Ryan Lee, Teacher, PFES, effective October 2, 2023

Classified Personnel

Sandra O'Rourke, Teacher Assistant, RHS, effective September 25, 2023

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

Licensed Personnel

None

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

Tiffany Akridge

Daniel George

Angela Hernandez

Walker Spivey

Substitute School Nutrition Workers

Bailey Vasseau