

**Minutes
Transylvania County Board of Education
October 19, 2020**

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. Beginning Teacher Support Program
7. Bond Projects Update
8. Superintendent's Update
9. Reports from Training Events (*moved to no. 6*)
10. Important Dates
11. Other Items

The Transylvania County Board of Education met in regular session at 6:30 p.m. on October 19, 2020 at the Morris Education Center. In accordance with the remote meetings statute from the General Assembly and the Governor's guidelines, the meeting was conducted remotely and public access was not permitted. The public was invited to view the meeting livestream at <https://youtube.com/tcsnc>. Persons wishing to make public comment were invited to email their comments by 1:00 p.m. in order to have them read aloud as appropriate within board guidelines. Marty Griffin led in a moment of silence and Ron Kiviniemi 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
Alice Wellborn

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
Blake Tesnow, Technology Specialist
Kelly Cook, School Resource Officer

1. **Approval of Agenda**
Mr. Griffin requested that Item 9, Reports from Training Events, be moved up to Item 6. There were no objections, and ON A MOTION BY MR. KIVINIEMI, SECONDED BY MR. GRIFFIN, the meeting agenda for October 19, 2020 was unanimously approved as modified.
2. **Public Comment**
None

3. **Good News Report**

Dr. McDaris recognized the student artwork from Brevard Elementary School that was on display in the board room and thanked Attorney Campbell and Officer Cook for attending the meeting. He reported the following items:

OCTOBER IS NATIONAL PRINCIPALS' MONTH

The National Association of Secondary Principals (NASSP) and the National Association of Elementary Principals (NAESP) have declared October 2020 as National Principals' Month. The North Carolina Principals & Assistant Principals Association (NCPAPA) supports this effort and recognizes all NC principals for the essential role they play in leading schools in our state. Principals are among the hardest working, yet often least recognized individuals in education. They set the academic tone for their schools, and it is their vision, dedication, and determination that provide the mobilizing force for achieving student success. This year is unique and challenging as school leaders strive to return some sense of normalcy for students and educators amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Our gratitude to the Transylvania County Schools principals for all they do:

Mike Kirst, BES	Bob Dinsdale, RES
Bryan Abernethy, BHS	Jason Ormsby, RHS
Jeff Bailey, BMS	Scott Strickler, RMS
Barbara Grimm, DRS	Patrick Chapman, TCH
Tonya Treadway, PFES	

BRIGHT IDEAS GRANTS

Congratulations to teachers Laura Sullivan (RES/TCH) and Justin Ausburn (BMS) for being awarded Bright Ideas Grants from Haywood EMC. Haywood EMC is one of North Carolina's 27 electric cooperatives that sponsor the Bright Ideas grant program. The program strives to improve education in North Carolina classrooms by awarding grants to teachers for innovative, classroom-based projects in grades K-12 that would not otherwise be funded. Mr. Ausburn will purchase a CNC router worth about \$1600 for the CTE workshop, and Mrs. Sullivan will continue an important subscription to 'Quaver Music' with a grant for \$1680. Congratulations to all our forward-thinking teachers, and thank you to Haywood EMC and the Bright Ideas Grant program.

WLOS THANKS TO TEACHERS

Congratulations to Jeanne DeJong, 5th grade teacher at Brevard Elementary School, who was featured in a "Thanks to Teachers" segment on WLOS in September. DeJong, who has taught at BES for 20 years, chose to teach virtually this year because she has a new grandbaby and wanted to be as socially distanced as possible. She says finding the right mix of structure and creativity is key to making virtual learning work and keeping her students engaged and learning. She's enjoying getting to know her students online, and her students are looking forward to one day being able to greet her in person.

OUTDOOR SEATING DONATED TO ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

The Wild Child Workshop in Durham, NC has recently donated 60 outdoor seats to our four elementary schools. The Wild Child Workshop creates wood products for outdoor learning environments, playgrounds, nature play areas, museums, child care centers, and parks. The donated seats are cut from locust wood, which naturally repels insects and rot, making it the perfect material for harsh outdoor conditions. Our thanks to the Wild Child Workshop for their generous donation.

TOBACCO TREATMENT SPECIALIST

The C.A.R.E. Coalition and Healthy Communities, both part of Transylvania Public Health, have partnered with Blue Ridge Community College to provide a tobacco treatment specialist in Transylvania County Schools. Ms. Bailey Varley, also the BRCC Career Coach, has been trained to support students on their journey to quit nicotine—cigarettes, chewing tobacco, or vaping devices. Our thanks to the C.A.R.E. Coalition, Healthy Communities, Transylvania Public Health, and Blue Ridge Community College for providing this important service for our students.

NATIONAL CUSTODIAL WORKER'S RECOGNITION DAY

On October 2, National Custodial Worker's Recognition Day encourages appreciation to the hard-working men and women who keep our schools and workplaces clean, well maintained, and running smoothly. They often operate behind the scenes, but their efforts contribute to critical first impressions and a safer, healthier work and learning environment—which is more important than ever before due to the COVID-19 pandemic. If you know a custodial worker, THANK THEM TODAY.

NATIONAL SCHOOL LUNCH WEEK

National School Lunch Week, October 12-16, 2020, is an annual celebration of the importance of a healthy school lunch in a child's life and the impact it has inside and outside of the classroom. The COVID-19 pandemic has without a doubt shown just how incredibly important school meals are for children and their families. The National School Lunch Program serves nearly 30 million children every school day. Please join us in celebrating the hard-working School Nutrition staff for all they do to feed the students of Transylvania County Schools.

NATIONAL SCHOOL BUS SAFETY WEEK

School districts throughout the country will observe National School Bus Safety Week during October 19-23, 2020. This year's theme is "Red Lights Mean STOP!" Although school buses are considered to be the safest motor vehicles on the road, accidents do happen, and most accidents occur when a vehicle illegally passes a stopped school bus. School Bus Safety Week spreads awareness and offers a reminder to parents, students, and motorists to adhere to all safety procedures and bus-stopping laws.

NATIONAL BULLYING PREVENTION MONTH

Every October, schools and organizations across the country observe National Bullying Prevention Month. The goal is to encourage schools, communities and organizations to work together to stop bullying and cyberbullying and put an end to hatred and racism by increasing awareness of the prevalence and impact of all forms of bullying on children of all ages. Activities throughout the month will be designed around various themes. The week of October 5th is "Make Friends with Someone You Don't Know at School" and "Challenge Others to Be Kind." The week of October 12th is "Stand Up for Others Week." The week of October 19th is "Week of Inclusion," and the week of October 26th is "Start Conversations Among Your Peers."

NATIONAL RED RIBBON WEEK

The National Red Ribbon Campaign has a new theme for 2020, "Be Happy. Be Brave. Be Drug Free." This theme will be highlighted during Red Ribbon Week, the nation's oldest and largest drug-abuse prevention campaign, which takes place annually from October 23-31. Red Ribbon Week activities encourage children, families, and communities to live healthy, happy, and drug-free lives and serves as a reminder that we are all empowered with shaping the communities around us through positivity, bravery, and strength.

AMERICAN EDUCATION WEEK

November 16-20, 2020 is American Education Week, a time to celebrate public education and the individuals who are making a difference in ensuring that every student receives a quality education. Each year the board recognizes the observance by adopting a proclamation designating American Education Week in Transylvania County. In addition, all current and retired school system employees are invited to a free Thanksgiving lunch as guests of the board on a designated day in November. This year's Thanksgiving lunch is planned for Thursday, November 19. Chairman McCoy read the proclamation, and ON A MOTION BY MR. GRIFFIN, SECONDED BY MRS. WELLBORN, the week of November 16-20, 2020 was unanimously designated as American Education Week in Transylvania County (see attached).

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.

The meeting was paused at 6:49 p.m. to address audio problems. The meeting resumed at 6:50 p.m.

5. Consent Agenda

ON A MOTION BY MRS. WELLBORN, SECONDED BY MRS. DOMOKUR, the minutes of the September 14, September 21, and October 5, 2020 meetings and the personnel report for October 19, 2020 (attached) were unanimously approved.

6. Reports from Training Sessions

Dr. McDaris reported that North Carolina statute requires board members to receive a minimum of 12 hours of professional development training every two years. Members who attend a professional development activity will provide a report of the event to other board members. On September 10, Mrs. Domokur, Mrs. Wellborn, and Mrs. McCoy attended the NCSBA District 8 Virtual Fall Meeting. On October 7-9, Mrs. Domokur, Mr. Griffin, and Mr. Kiviniemi attended the NCSBA Virtual Fall Law Conference.

Mr. Griffin stated that he had some questions from the law conference sessions and wanted clarification. He asked Attorney Campbell how the state determines attendance during remote learning. Mr. Campbell reported that attendance is recorded by students logging in to virtual lessons and turning in assignments. Dr. McDaris reported that home visits are conducted to check on students in the online learning path who do not log in consistently. Mr. Griffin asked what happens if a student does not turn in work. Will the student be held back? Dr. McDaris reported that the parent/guardian is called if a student is not turning in assignments. He added that research does not support holding students back, especially at the elementary level. He believes it is better for schools to work with parents to ensure the student stays on track.

Mr. Griffin asked if schools will be required to provide mental health care to students. Mr. Campbell explained that North Carolina is experiencing a mental health crisis, one that is being exacerbated by the pandemic. Legislators want to make schools the point of delivery for mental health services. Senate Bill 476 requires school districts to adopt and implement a plan that includes a mental health training program for staff. The law has no funding attached. Systems may invite mental health providers into the schools to help facilitate referrals and provide services.

Mr. Kiviniemi stated that he has been asked how the public is being informed when there is a positive case of COVID-19 in the schools. He reported that the school system follows the protocols established by the local health department. In the event of a positive test result, Transylvania Public Health notifies the staff, students, and parents of their possible exposure but maintains confidentiality as required by ADA.

Mrs. Wellborn reported that she has been attending sessions on racial equity in schools, wealth and health disparities, and other related topics from the 2020 “Color of Education” virtual conference presented by the Public School Forum of NC and Duke University. Chairman McCoy thanked members for attending the training events and keeping everyone informed.

7. Beginning Teacher Support Program

Dr. Brian Weaver reported that the Transylvania County Schools Beginning Teacher Support Program (BTSP) has been revised to comply with a recent legislative change. The revision requires the completion of a graduate survey by the beginning teacher (BT) and the completion of an employer survey by the school principal during the BT’s first year of teaching. The surveys must be completed at the end of the first year of teaching. This is a part of the requirements to measure the effectiveness of Educator Performance Programs (EPPs) as provided in G.S. 115C-269.35.

Board members asked questions about the mentoring component. Dr. Weaver reported that experienced teachers who want to serve as mentors receive mentor training. Mentors meet once a week with their beginning teachers and cover a prescribed list of topics to make sure expectations are being met. Mentors who work with year 1 or year 2 teachers receive a \$500 stipend paid from Title II funds. On behalf of the board, Mr. Kiviniemi thanked the mentor teachers for the work they are doing. ON A MOTION BY MR. KIVINIEMI, SECONDED BY MRS. WELLBORN, the Beginning Teacher Support Program was unanimously approved as revised.

8. Bond Projects Update

Norris Barger presented the latest budget and actual expenditures for the bond projects and reviewed the most recent status report to the School Bond Construction Committee. Teams have been working to finalize room layouts, equipment placement, utility requirements, etc., at both sites. Teacher input has been great so far, especially CTE. Work on construction documents has begun and will run through March. Weekly virtual meetings are taking place between administrators, Vannoy, and Clark Nexsen as they prepare for the next round of cost estimates and move closer to an initial GMP.

Mr. Kiviniemi asked when the board would see the new cost estimates. Mr. Barger predicted possibly having them at the second meeting in November. Mrs. Wellborn asked when the board would begin holding community meetings to share plans and models with the public. Chairman McCoy gave a reminder that state restrictions on indoor gatherings are still in place. The public meetings will be scheduled as soon as restrictions are eased and it is safe to hold large gatherings.

9. Superintendent’s Update

Dr. McDaris shared information from the White Paper published by the Public School Forum of NC, titled *Broadband Internet: A Foundation For a Sound Basic Education*.

A. Broadband internet, defined as a download speed of 25mbps (megabits per second) or higher, is a foundational resource for work, school, and life in North Carolina, and

especially now as families and educators rely on remote learning in order to help mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

- B. Physical broadband infrastructure problems are a challenge not only for rural parts of the state but also for urban areas. In addition to the challenges of accessing infrastructure, North Carolinians grapple with barriers such as affordability, the perception of high-speed internet's relevance to the lives of some, and digital literacy gaps. Together, these barriers all contribute to North Carolina's relatively low broadband adoption rate of just 59.4 percent.
- C. In North Carolina, nearly half of all children live in households that are classified as poor or low-income, making it nearly impossible for a household to choose internet service and devices over putting food on the table.

Mrs. Wellborn asked if there is any type of local coalition that is working to address this need in our county. Dr. McDaris reported that several different groups have this on their radar. Comporium has recently applied for a grant. Dogwood Health Trust is a strong advocate as well.

Dr. McDaris reported that central office staff delivered baskets of goodies last week to teachers and staff at each school to say "thank you" for the successful completion of the first nine weeks. Dr. McDaris expressed thanks to the staffers who assembled the baskets and to everyone for their hard work.

Dr. McDaris gave an update on new NCHSAA rules under COVID-19 regarding the number of fans/spectators that may attend high school sports events this year. Until further notice, the limit will be 100 spectators at outdoor facilities and 25 spectators at indoor facilities. This is a blanket rule for all NC school systems regardless of size. Alan Justice and TCS athletic directors are working to develop local guidelines. Board members discussed the likely negative impact of this ruling on fan reactions and gate receipts.

10. Important Dates

Oct. 19, 20	Remote learning days
Nov. 2	WORK SESSION, 6:30 p.m., MEC
Nov. 11	Veterans' Day holiday
Nov. 16	REGULAR MEETING, 6:30 p.m., MEC
Nov. 25	Annual leave day (no students)
Nov. 26-27	Thanksgiving holidays
Dec. 7	WORK SESSION, 6:30 p.m., MEC
Dec. 21	REGULAR MEETING, 6:30 p.m., MEC
Dec. 22	End of first semester: students dismissed at noon
Dec. 23-Jan. 4	Christmas break
Jan. 5-6	Teacher workdays
Jan. 7	Beginning of second semester
Jan. 18	Martin Luther King Day; annual leave day
Jan. 19	REGULAR MEETING, 6:30 p.m., MEC

11. **Other Items**

Mr. Kiviniemi reported that a presenter at the law conference had mentioned the availability of grants to provide supplemental services for special needs students who are at risk of falling behind. He asked if Transylvania County has applied for any of these grants and if so, requested an update at a future meeting.

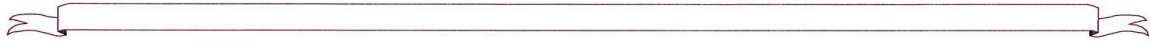
Mrs. McCoy expressed thanks to the IT team for keeping the virtual board meetings running.

There was no further business, and ON A MOTION BY MR. GRIFFIN, SECONDED BY MRS. WELLBORN, the meeting was adjourned at 7:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chairman

Secretary



American Education Week

Proclamation

WHEREAS, public schools are the backbone of our democracy, providing young people with the tools they will need to maintain our nation’s precious values of freedom, civility, and equality; and

WHEREAS, by equipping young Americans with both practical skills and broader intellectual abilities, schools give them hope for, and access to, a productive future; and

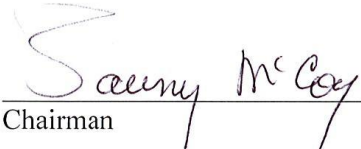
WHEREAS, education employees in every role work tirelessly to serve our children and communities with care and professionalism; and

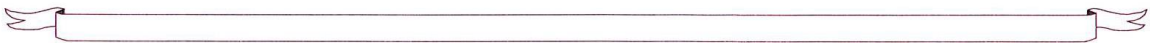
WHEREAS, schools are community linchpins, bringing together adults and children, educators and volunteers, business leaders and elected officials in a common enterprise;

NOW, THEREFORE,

I, Tawny McCoy, serving as Chairman of the Transylvania County Board of Education, do hereby proclaim November 16-20, 2020 as **AMERICAN EDUCATION WEEK** in Transylvania County.

Signed this 19st day of October 2020.


Chairman



**PERSONNEL REPORT
October 19, 2020**

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

Licensed Personnel

Logan Sales, Teacher, BMS, effective October 29, 2020

Classified Personnel

Deana Dixon, Office Support, Bus Garage, effective December 31, 2020

Bonnie Furlong, Teacher Assistant, BES, effective October 29, 2020

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

Licensed Personnel

Tessa Brown, Teacher, BHS, effective January 5, 2021

Devin Wilson, Teacher, BHS, effective January 5, 2021

Classified Personnel

Teresa Kinsey, Bus Driver, TCS, effective September 28, 2020

Sherwood Mackey, Bus Driver, PFES, effective October 19, 2020

Sherrylynn Starling, Teacher Assistant, BHS, effective September 28, 2020

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

Ann Stone, Teacher, BMS, Discretionary Leave of Absence Without Pay (BOE Policy 7510) effective October 17, 2020 through June 4, 2021

Classified Personnel

None

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

Substitute Teachers

None

Substitute School Nutrition Workers

None