

**Minutes
Transylvania County Board of Education
December 15, 2014**

OATH OF OFFICE

INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME

BUSINESS ITEMS

1. Election of Officers
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Public Comment
4. Presentation from Farm Bureau
5. Good News Report
6. Former Students in the Military
7. Consent Agenda:
 - A. Minutes
 - B. Personnel Report
8. Alternative Accountability Model for Davidson River School
9. School Improvement Plans 2014-2016
10. Differentiated Pay Plan
11. Policy:
 - A. GBK/KGC, "Tobacco-Free Schools"
 - B. GCJA. "Employee Time Schedules During Inclement Weather, Emergency Closings, Delays or Early Dismissals"
 - C. IIC, "School Volunteers"
 - D. KK, "Visitors to the Schools"
12. Community Land Trust Appointment
13. Topics for Retreat
14. Superintendent's Update
15. Important Dates
16. Public Comment
17. Other Items

The Transylvania County Board of Education met in regular session at 6:30 p.m. on December 15, 2014 at the Morris Education Center. Transylvania County Clerk of Superior Court Rita Ashe administered the oath of office to new Board of Education members Marty Griffin and Betty Scruggs. Ron Kiviniemi led in a moment of silence and Cindy Petit led the Pledge of Allegiance. Chairman McCoy welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order. In addition to approximately six guests, the following board members, staff, and media representatives were in attendance:

BOARD MEMBERS: Tawny McCoy, Chair; Cindy Petit, Vice Chair; Marty Griffin; Ron Kiviniemi; and Betty Scruggs

STAFF: Dr. Jeff McDaris, Superintendent; Jeremy Gibbs, Director of Human Resources; Brian Weaver, Director of 6-12 Curriculum & Instruction; Audrey Reneau, Director of K-5 Curriculum & Instruction; Arleca Chapman; Director of Career/Technical Education; Kevin Smith, School-Community Relations Coordinator; Meredith Licht, TCAE President; and Scott Thomas, School Resource Officer

MEDIA: Park Baker, *Transylvania Times*

1. **Election of Officers**
ON A NOMINATION BY MR. KIVINIEMI, SECONDED BY MR. GRIFFIN, Tawny McCoy was unanimously elected as Board Chair for the 2015 year. ON A NOMINATION BY

MRS. SCRUGGS, SECONDED BY MR. GRIFFIN, Cindy Petit was unanimously elected as Board Vice Chair for the 2015 year.

2. Approval of Agenda

ON A MOTION BY MR. KIVINIEMI, SECONDED BY MRS. PETIT, the meeting agenda for December 15, 2014 was approved as presented.

3. Public Comment

Meredith Licht encouraged the Board to support the district's proposed response to the state's request for each LEA to develop a differentiated pay plan for teachers, pointing out that 1) research does not support the efficacy of pay-for-performance plans; 2) every employee in TCS is valuable and vital to a quality educational experience; 3) currently no tools exist to fairly compare what each employee does; 4) the legislation excludes certain some categories of educators that are very important; and 5) all employees should be treated fairly and equitably.

4. Presentation from Farm Bureau

Mrs. Jackie Whitmire, President of the Transylvania County Farm Bureau, presented a set of books for each of the elementary schools and spoke about the importance of teaching children where food comes from and the vital role of agriculture in our lives. The Board thanked Mrs. Whitmire for the good works of the Farm Bureau and the generous donation of books.

5. Good News Report

Dr. McDaris reported the following items:

Brevard High School students competed at the Western Regional FBLA Conference on December 2. Congratulations to the following students on their success:

Andy McCall, 2nd place, Business Calculations
 Aly Henneberry, 2nd place, Public Speaking
 Olin Williams, 2nd place, Business Procedures
 Bailey Merrill, 1st place, Business Communications
 Amy Borhaug, elected candidate for the Western Region Vice President

On November 20, The Transylvania Soil and Water Conservation District held its 2014-2015 poster contest for students in grades 3-6. Congratulations to the following winners:

3rd Grade Poster

Christina McDonald, TCH, 1st place
 Abigail Malmin, BES, 2nd place
 Baker Buchanan, BES, 3rd place
 Niema Collington, BES, honorable mention
 Chloe Miller, BES, honorable mention

4th Grade Poster

Kyleigh Heath, BES, 1st place
 Esperanza Hernandez, RES, 2nd place
 Drew DeGarmo, BES, 3rd place
 Madison Aiken, TCH, honorable mention
 Lexi Bailey, PFES, honorable mention
 Tucker Whitmire, RES, honorable mention

5th Grade Poster

Laiken Buchanan, RES, 1st place
 Ashlyn Kerber, RES, 2nd place
 Andrew Stamey, RES, 3rd place
 Andrew Ammons, RES, honorable mention
 Bradley Rising, PFES, honorable mention
 Emmanuel Villa-Tejeda, BES, honorable mention

6th Grade Poster

Kylie Worley, BMS, 1st place
 Clare F. Kennerly, BMS, 2nd place
 Jennifer Miranda, BMS, 3rd place
 Maddie, RMS, honorable mention
 Rebecca Wilson, BMS, honorable mention

Chairman McCoy commended the “Cops 4 Kids” program in which law enforcement officers assist local families by volunteering to take children Christmas shopping for their parents.

Dr. McDaris recognized the student artwork from Pisgah Forest Elementary School that was on display in the board room and thanked SRO Thomas for being in attendance.

6. 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. One new name, Brian Gilbert, has been added to the list.

7. Consent Agenda

ON A MOTION BY MRS. PETIT, SECONDED BY MR. KIVINIEMI, the minutes of the November 24, 2014 meeting and the personnel report for December 15, 2014 (see attached) were unanimously approved.

8. Alternative Accountability Model for DRS

Brian Weaver reported that the Department of Public Instruction has just released four new options for alternative schools’ participation in the state’s accountability model. Local boards must select one of the following options by February 2, 2015:

1. Option A. Alternative schools can participate in School Performance Grades as defined by G.S. §115C-83.15 (*compete with traditional high schools*), or
2. Option B. Alternative schools can return data/results back to students’ home schools and receive no designations, or
3. Option C. Alternative schools can participate in the Alternative Schools’ Progress Model (*overall school score comprised of 20% student persistence; 20% school achievement, and 60% growth*), or
4. Option D. The alternative school may propose its own accountability model for approval by the State Board of Education.

Mr. Weaver reported that although none of the options are perfect, Option C seems to be the best choice for Davidson River School. Dr. McDaris noted that the new model contains some flaws that the state has not considered in that a student who leaves DRS and enrolls in another school could be counted against DRS as a dropout even though the student is attending school elsewhere. Mr. Weaver addressed questions from the Board. He reported that Principal Donna Wilde and the DRS staff have reviewed the

options and would prefer Option C. Approval of an option for Davidson River School will be requested at the next regular meeting.

9. School Improvement Plans 2014-2016

Jeremy Gibbs presented the school improvement plans for 2014-2016. He discussed how the plans were developed, changes based on stakeholder survey data, and alignment with the district goals. Each plan includes an analysis of the school's strengths, opportunities for improvement, procedures to gather any data needed to make the improvements, and a ranking of the improvement priorities. Discussion centered on resources for staff development, measurable goals, and a desire from the Board to see more parent and student involvement on the school improvement teams. Mr. Gibbs noted that the plans are living documents and welcomed any feedback. Board members requested that approval of the plans be postponed until the January meeting in order to give more time for review.

10. Differentiated Pay Plan

Jeremy Gibbs reported that at the direction of the North Carolina General Assembly in the most recent state budget, local school districts have been directed to develop and submit differentiated pay plans for teachers to the Joint Legislative Oversight Committee by January 15, 2015. Mr. Gibbs presented details of the state's directive, research findings regarding pay-for-performance plans, and a draft response prepared by staff for the Board's consideration and approval.

Mr. Gibbs reported that the administration has grave concerns about the ability to develop such a controversial and complex plan in the short timeframe provided, particularly without an opportunity for meaningful stakeholder input. He reported that other personnel directors in the western region have similar concerns about the directive and have agreed to work together with board attorneys to draft a response that addresses not advocacy, but the appropriateness and legal compliance of such a measure. He reported that research does not support business-model-driven pay-for-performance plans in educational settings due to built-in assumptions about what schooling should be and the tendency to oversimplify when applied to schools. Educators believe that bonuses should be based on school systems' needs and programs, not a state-driven formula. It is also believed that all employees, not just classroom teachers, deserve a raise.

Mr. Kiviniemi asked whether the legislature had earmarked any funds for the differentiated pay plans. Dr. McDaris stated that he was not aware of any appropriations. MR. KIVINIEMI MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MRS. SCRUGGS, to adopt the differentiated pay plan response as written. During discussion, Chairman McCoy stated that the quality of teaching cannot be measured solely by numbers, dollars or cents. Mr. Gibbs pointed out that if the state is going to insist on a plan like this, it would be better to allocate funds for leadership bonuses, stipends for extra duties, and other consistent and measurable categories. Mr. Griffin stated that this seems to be just a disguised name for merit pay. Mr. Gibbs agreed, recalling the recent 25% plan that was roundly criticized and from which the state ultimately backed away. CHAIRMAN MCCOY CALLED THE VOTE and the differentiated pay plan response was unanimously approved as presented (see attached).

11. Policy

The policies listed below were presented for first-read information at the November 24 meeting. Jeremy Gibbs reported that no new changes have been made to the policies since then. Chairman McCoy noted that principals and supervisors will continue to work

with individual staff regarding schedules and makeup time during winter weather. ON A MOTION BY MR. KIVINIEMI, SECONDED BY MR. GRIFFIN, the revised policies listed below were unanimously approved as presented:

- Policy GBK/KGC, "Tobacco Free Schools"
- Policy GCJA, "Employee Time Schedules During Inclement Weather, Emergency Closings, Delays, or Early Dismissals"
- Policy IICC, "School Volunteers"
- Policy KK, "Visitors to the Schools"

12. Community Land Trust Appointment

Dr. McDaris reported that the Transylvania County Community Land Trust (CLT) board of directors includes two members of the Transylvania County Board of Education. With the departure of Mike Rogers from the school board, there is a vacant seat on the CLT board. Mr. Kiviniemi stated that affordable housing for teachers is an issue near and dear to his heart. ON A MOTION BY MRS. PETIT, SECONDED BY MR. GRIFFIN, the Board unanimously appointed Ron Kiviniemi to fill the vacancy on the Community Land Trust Board. Chairman McCoy reported that the next CLT meeting will be held in January.

13. Topics for Retreat

Dr. McDaris reported that the Board of Education's annual planning retreat is scheduled for February 2, 2015 at the Morris Education Center (5:00 or 5:30 p.m.). He reported that instead of having the usual lengthy meeting with multiple presenters, this year members would like to have a series of work sessions that would focus on one or two topics per session. All were in favor of this arrangement and Chairman McCoy asked that Ms. Hunter begin looking at scheduling options after the Christmas break. The following topics were suggested for the work sessions:

- FY16 budget
- Master facilities plan
- Buncombe County model for capital outlay (board attorney to present)
- Bond referendum
- NCSBA district 8 meeting (Transylvania County to host in September 2015)
- District reaccreditation review
- Magnet schools

14. Superintendent's Update

Dr. McDaris encouraged Board members to review the issue briefs from NCSBA relating to fines and forfeitures and how much school systems should have been receiving over time and categories of fiscal independence for school boards. He encouraged everyone to keep an eye on future developments from the State Standards Committee, SBE Assessment Committee and the committee on teacher quality that is being led by Ann Goodnight (SAS Corporation). He reported that the Western region superintendents are leading a push for the reinstatement of the state re-testing option for students.

15. Important Dates

Dec. 22-Jan. 2	Christmas break
Jan. 5	Students return
Jan. 12-15	TCS Science Fair
Jan. 15	TCS Science Fair Awards Ceremony, 6:00 p.m., Rogow Room
Jan. 19-20	Teacher workdays
Jan. 20	REGULAR MEETING, 6:30 p.m., MEC

- Jan. 21 Second semester begins
- Feb. 2 PLANNING RETREAT, 5:30 p.m., MEC
- Feb. 11 Students dismissed at noon
- Feb. 16 Teacher workday
- Feb. 16 REGULAR MEETING, 6:30 p.m., MEC
- Apr. 27-29 AdvancED District Accreditation External Review
- Apr. 29 SPECIAL MEETING to receive exit report, 3:30 p.m., MEC

Dr. McDaris reminded everyone that the January board meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 20 due to the Martin Luther King holiday on Monday, January 19.

16. Public Comment

Jackie Whitmire reported that the Farm Bureau offers a \$500 scholarship for educators interested in teaching Agriculture in the classroom. Dr. McDaris reported that the Connetsee Falls Property Owners Association recently gave the school system a \$17,000 check for student scholarships.

17. Other Items

Chairman McCoy welcomed new members Betty Scruggs and Marty Griffin to the Board and stated that she is looking forward to working with them. Mr. Kiviniemi gave a reminder that Kevin Smith would be taking new Board photos after the meeting.

There was no further business, and ON A MOTION BY MR. GRIFFIN, SECONDED BY MRS. PETIT, the meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chairman

Secretary

**PERSONNEL REPORT
December 15, 2014**

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

Licensed Personnel

None

Classified Personnel

Mary Baynard, Teacher Assistant and Afterschool Worker, RES, effective January 1, 2015

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

Licensed Personnel

Cathy Credle, Interim Principal, BES, effective January 5, 2015 through June 12, 2015 (74% employed or 29.6 hours/week)

Cathy Nutt, Interim Teacher, TCH, effective November 24, 2014 through June 12, 2015

Anthony "Chris" Owen, Teacher, RMS and RHS, effective December 15, 2014 through June 12, 2015

Thad Sanders, Teacher, BHS, effective January 5, 2015 through June 12, 2015

Jessica Whitmire, Teacher, BHS, effective January 5, 2015

Classified Personnel

None

- 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

Nichole Cash, Teacher, TCH, GCBDB family leave effective November 24, 2014 through June 12, 2015

Classified Personnel

None

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

Substitute Teachers

Jessica Owen

Donna Raspa (effective January 5, 2015)

Substitute Child Nutrition Workers

None

DIFFERENTIATED PAY PLAN RESPONSE

Pursuant to N.C. Session Law 2014-100, § 8.41(b), we, the Transylvania County Board of Education (“Board”) hereby presents to the N.C. Senate Appropriations/Base Budget Committee, the N.C. House Committee on Appropriations and the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee the following Differentiated Pay Plan Response.

I. Differentiated Bonuses for Classroom Teachers

The Board believes that all classroom teachers are valuable employees and should be entitled to additional financial compensation. With that said, the following classroom teachers, in order of most emphasis, should be entitled to some form of differentiated bonus:

1. Teachers who take on additional leadership roles within the school district (e.g., School Improvement Team Chair, Department Chair, Curriculum Chair, etc.)
2. Teachers who provide professional development within the school district
3. Hard to Staff Subject Area Teachers (as defined by our school system’s needs, programming, and challenges)

The Board believes that any bonus system should be financially meaningful, recurring, properly executed, and fully funded in the bi-annual budget. A recurring bonus system would help to create stability and a better applicant pool as we seek to fill teacher vacancies and to create opportunities for teacher leadership within our school system.

II. Performance-Based Salary Increases

Based on the reasons set-out in full below, the Board does not feel that it can, at this time, properly develop or suggest a meaningful plan for performance-based salary increases. The Board strongly believes that all school employees, not simply classroom teachers, deserve salary increases in an equitable and fair manner.

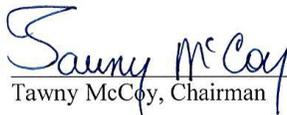
The Board respectfully declines to respond to the section for the following reasons:

1. A summary of multiple research studies, incorporated herein and attached hereto, indicate differentiated pay is ineffective in terms of student achievement.
2. In order to develop an equitable and fair plan, the Board would need more time, perhaps a full academic year, to develop a plan that best meet the needs of the school system.

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3. The legislative criteria require a plan for those classroom teachers rated highly effective on the North Carolina Teacher Evaluation instrument (largely Standard 6). In looking at all classroom teachers across the system, it is difficult to distinguish between the types of assessments used for Standard 6. This creates an analysis that is based on unequal and, in some cases, unfair comparisons.
4. Without more objective criteria, it is difficult to evaluate teachers across the different schools in the district and across their peer cohorts in the state. Even with more objective criteria and valid and equitable data, school systems across the state are vastly different with very different needs. A uniform, state plan might be beneficial to Cherokee County Schools but may not serve the best interest for Dare County Schools.
5. The concept of performance-based salaries is an industry-based, corporate response to a human situation. Classroom teachers do the best they can with the resources they have and the students they teach. When dealing with the human element of teaching and interacting with students (who come to school each day at varying ability levels with their own emotional situations), a more subjective analysis must be considered.
6. For reasons mentioned herein, any sort of differentiated, performance based plan (with problems of inequitable measuring, unreliable data and subjective considerations not even being addressed) will create problems within the employment ranks. Issues like this and the recent legislation regarding the twenty five percent (25%) serve to detract from the positive, collaborative and collegial environment that our employees have worked hard to create and maintain.
7. As the law is written, who can receive differentiated pay is too restrictive. Many non-administrative school employees who are not considered classroom teachers are not even considered in this model. The role of the classroom teacher is hugely important, but so are other support individuals (i.e., school social workers, school counselors, etc.)

APPROVED by unanimous vote of the Transylvania County Board of Education this the 15th day of December 2014.


Tawny McCoy, Chairman


Dr. Jeff McDaris, Secretary

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