

**Minutes  
Transylvania County Board of Education  
February 4, 2019**

**Work Session / Planning Retreat**

ACTION:

Interlocal Agency Agreement

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION:

- RFQs for Architectural and CMAR Services
- Budget Projections
- FY19 Capital Projects Status Report
- Strategic Plan
  - Alignment of Plan and Budgetary Goals
- Staffing Needs for K-3 (Class Size Mandate)
- Instructional Technology Facilitators / Digital Learning Facilitators
- Local Teacher Supplement
- English Language Learners (ELL) Staffing
- Educator Retention and Recruitment
- Digital Learning
  - Coding
  - Digital Literacy
  - Computational Thinking
  - Next Phases of Virtual Days
  - Technology
  - Virtual Reality and AI (Artificial Intelligence)
- Social Emotional Learning
  - Including ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences)
- Substance Abuse
  - JUULS, e-cigarettes
  - Opioids
- NCHSAA 2020 Realignment

The Transylvania County Board of Education held a work session/planning retreat at 5:30 p.m. on February 4, 2019 at the Morris Education Center. Chairman McCoy welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order. In addition to one guest, the following board members, staff, and others were in attendance:

**BOARD MEMBERS:**

Tawny McCoy, Chair  
Ron Kiviniemi, Vice Chair  
Courtney Domokur  
Marty Griffin  
Alice Wellborn

**BOARD ATTORNEY:**

Chad Donnahoo

**MEDIA:**

John Lanier, *Transylvania Times*

**STAFF:**

Dr. Jeff McDaris, Superintendent  
Jenny Hunter, Administrative Assistant  
Dr. Brian Weaver, Senior Director for Human Resources  
Dr. Jeremy Gibbs, Chief Academic Officer  
Norris Barger, Director, Business Services  
Chris Whitlock, Director, Technology Services  
Kevin Smith, School-Community Relations Coordinator  
Tonya Treadway, Principal, PFES  
Dr. Anne Hardy, Instructional Coach, PFES  
Alana Anderson, ELL Teacher  
Mark Ellenberger, School Resource Officer



### INTERLOCAL AGENCY AGREEMENT

Attorney Chad Donnahoo presented the Interlocal Agency Agreement that sets forth the roles and responsibilities for the board of education and the board of commissioners regarding the bond construction/renovation projects. He reported that the new agreement replaces the previous draft memorandum of understanding, lease agreement and interlocal agency agreement and was developed with input from the county manager and bond counsel. The agreement establishes a School Bond Construction Committee to be comprised of two board members, two TCS employees (to be selected by the superintendent and may include the superintendent), two county commissioners, and the TCS finance officer, who shall serve as the committee chair. The committee will serve in an advisory role, interviewing architectural firms and CMARs and making recommendations to the board. If there are multiple construction options for the BHS and/or the RHS/RMS sites, the committee shall make a non-binding site recommendation to the board. The committee will meet monthly and the superintendent and finance officer will provide updates.

The county will appoint the board as its agent to carry out all phases of construction and/or renovations. Change orders will be handled according to board policy (amounts below \$90,000 may be approved by the superintendent; amounts above \$90,000 will require approval by both boards). The board has supervisory authority over the projects and authority to administer and award contracts. Both the county and the board will be co-obligees on all bonds and insurance. The board's finance officer will provide all documentation necessary for sales tax reimbursement to the county manager to file, then all receipts will be placed into an account for future capital expenditures for education projects and allocated as mutually agreed by both boards. The agreement may be terminated by mutual agreement of the parties or upon 180 days written notice to the other party.

The board reviewed the agreement, and ON A MOTION BY MR. KIVINIEMI, SECONDED BY MR. GRIFFIN, unanimously adopted the Interlocal Agency Agreement as presented. The board discussed which two members would serve on the committee, and ON A MOTION BY MRS. WELLBORN, SECONDED BY MR. GRIFFIN, unanimously appointed the board chair or vice chair as the first member and Courtney Domokur as the second member of the School Bond Construction Committee. Regarding the TCS employees for the committee, Dr. McDaris selected himself as the first member and indicated that he would name the second member after confirming that person's willingness to serve.

### RFQS FOR ARCHITECTURAL AND CMAR SERVICES

Norris Barger reviewed the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for firms interested in providing architectural services and the RFQ for firms interested in providing construction manager at risk (CMAR) services for the \$68 million in additions and renovations at Brevard High, Rosman High and Rosman Middle. He reported there has been interest already from a number of firms. The proposed timeline for the process is as follows:

- February 5, 2019 - Issuance of RFQs
- February 28, 2019 - Deadline for receipt of responses
- March 2019 - Committee discussion, presentations, recommendations
- April 8, 2019 - Board selection

Mr. Barger reported that the final scope of services, along with the fee, will be negotiated and included in the final executed agreements. Board members commended the thoroughness of the RFQ packets and expressed eagerness to get started on the process. The RFQs will go out tomorrow.



### BUDGET PROJECTIONS

Mr. Barger presented a first look at initial projections for the local current expense budget for fiscal year 2019-2020. He gave estimates for potential cost of living increases, retirement rate increase, health insurance increase, class size ratio increases for grades K-3 (4 teachers), central office state funding cut, increase for payment to charter schools, reduction of four positions, and a teacher supplement increase for veteran teachers. He reported a likely state funding cut for ADM next year. Board members inquired about the cost to increase the teacher supplement by another half percent. The supplement has remained at 8.5% since FY15. Mr. Barger reported that it would cost roughly \$105,000 to bring everyone up to 9%, not including any cost of living increase.

The board discussed commissioning a new pay study to look at rates for hourly wage workers and salary equity overall within the school system. The last compensation study was done in 2013-2014. Dr. McDaris discussed the difficulty of making comparative analyses with other school systems because each district does things differently. There was some discussion about commissioning an outside agency, such as NC State, to perform the study. Chairman McCoy cautioned against the cost involved and also against asking the administration to undertake another big task at a time when they would soon be down by one position. Dr. Brian Weaver offered to put together an in-house study for the board's review.

*The board took a recess from 7:00 to 7:20 p.m.*

Mr. Barger presented the five-year projected capital needs list and reviewed the estimated lottery fund balance and capital fund balance as of June 30. The capital needs list will be updated after input from the school facility tours and priorities from principals have been received.

### FY19 CAPITAL PROJECTS STATUS REPORT

Mr. Barger reviewed the latest capital projects status report. He pointed out three new line items (campus-wide renovations at BES, PFES, and TCH) at the bottom of the list. Chairman McCoy reported that these items were added by the county manager. The board indicated they would give these items further study. Mr. Barger reviewed and answered questions about other major projects on the list. He discussed the urgent need for a backup generator at the Education Center to protect the district's server network and provide emergency lighting.

### STRATEGIC PLAN

Dr. McDaris and Dr. Gibbs reported that the new NCStar program is being used to help plan resources to meet the district's strategic goals. For example, we want to continue investing in programs such as the arts, and these programs require resources.

### STAFFING NEEDS FOR K-3 (CLASS SIZE MANDATE)

Dr. Brian Weaver reported that class size ratios this year are 1:30 in grades K-3. Next year they will be 1:19, and 1:18 the year after that. The General Assembly has not provided the additional funds needed to implement the lower class size mandate, which means that schools must either increase class sizes at other grade levels or ask for more local money to fund the additional teachers needed. Dr. McDaris reported that the state did provide some money for enhancement teachers in art, music, and PE that will help somewhat over the next three years.



## INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY FACILITATORS / DIGITAL LEARNING FACILITATORS

Dr. McDaris and Mr. Chris Whitlock discussed the role of Instructional Technology Facilitators (ITFs) in our schools. ITFs primarily work with teachers by helping with classroom instruction and blending technology into lessons/unit plans in creative and innovative ways. They also help teachers learn how to use new tools, provide tech support when needed, and offer training at the district level at times. Much of our district's success with virtual days and digital learning is due to the foundation they have provided. One ITF is a Google certified trainer who is in demand to train staff in other school systems. All of our ITFs are certified teachers with master's level certification in various disciplines. We currently have six ITFs assigned across nine schools and would like to have more.

## LOCAL TEACHER SUPPLEMENT

*Discussed earlier during budget projections.*

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS (ELL) STAFFING

Dr. Weaver reported that TCS currently has one English Language Learner (ELL) teacher and one teacher assistant. Our ELL student population has more than doubled since 2009, from 60 to 126 students. Pisgah Forest Elementary has the largest ELL population with nearly 50 students. ELL teacher Alana Anderson reported that the majority of our ELL students are from Honduras and Guatemala. Transylvania does not have the sizable migrant population that other counties have, such as Henderson; instead, most of our ELL students come from families that have settled here permanently. For one teacher to provide support for all of these students, especially during testing, is a daunting task. Dr. Anne Hardy and Mrs. Anderson emphasized that ELL students who get help early on have a much better chance of success. Having no English is not a disability, but it can seem like one if not identified properly and afforded appropriate services. The board agreed there is a critical need for more resources and support in this area.

## EDUCATOR RETENTION AND RECRUITMENT

*Postponed to a future work session.*

## DIGITAL LEARNING

Dr. McDaris reported that for approximately \$40,000, we can expand our 1:1 initiative down through third grade. There will be more discussion on this topic at a future date.

## SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING

Dr. McDaris reported that the issues facing students today are very different than the issues seen in previous generations. Childhood trauma is increasing. Students have higher levels of stress daily. Mental health issues are increasing among students and parents. Some of these issues are generational, some are societal, and some result from difficult home situations. The district is working to find more ways to address social-emotional learning, including the following:

- Mental health services are in place at all nine schools. The number of days per week is based on the number of students referred by the school.
- *Trauma Informed Teaching* training has been provided to about half of our schools so far. This is the first part of a series of trainings done in cooperation with Meridian. CTE



teachers and some RHS staff will receive the first session during the next early release professional development day on February 15.

- Middle schools are receiving funds to sponsor small group counseling for students who have been identified with PTSD. The plan is to expand this program next year to the elementary and high schools.
- Mental health counseling is being provided to students who do not have insurance or qualify for Medicaid. Any student that has been identified as needing or wanting counseling is being served or is in the referral process.
- Transylvania County Schools has partnered with the CARE Coalition, which recently received a grant from the U.S. government for use in opioid abuse prevention.
- The school system gives a survey each year that measures the awareness and use of alcohol and drugs in underage users. This year, socio-emotional questions have been added to gauge middle school and high school mental health needs and how they are met.

Board members discussed that social workers, psychologists and counselors are critical to these interconnected efforts. The group discussed "Paper Tigers," a documentary about adverse childhood experiences that follows a group of students over the course of a school year as a new trauma-sensitive program is implemented.

#### **SUBSTANCE ABUSE**

*Postponed to a future date.*

#### **NCHSAA 2020 REALIGNMENT**

Mr. Griffin reported that we are two years out from the next high school athletic realignment, and there could be major changes ahead. Dr. McDaris reported there is growing support for the possibility of Rosman High School leaving the Smoky Mountain Conference. Nothing has been decided at this time.

Chairman McCoy suggested having one or more additional work sessions to discuss the topics that were postponed tonight due to time constraints. She recommended scheduling the work sessions prior to a regularly scheduled meeting. The board agreed to add a 5:30 p.m. work session to the next regular meeting on February 18 in order to discuss educator retention and recruitment.

There was no further business, and ON A MOTION BY MR. GRIFFIN, SECONDED BY MRS. WELLBORN, the meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Chairman

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Secretary