

**Minutes
Transylvania County Board of Education
February 5, 2024**

INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME

BUSINESS ITEMS (including amendments and rescissions):

1. Approval of Agenda
2. Student Recognitions (*removed*)
3. Public Comment
4. Good News Report
5. Consent Agenda:
 - A. Minutes
 - B. Personnel Report
 - C. Designation of School Treasurers
6. Wide-Area Network Contract Renewal
7. Closed Session (*moved to Item 4*)
8. School Calendar 2024-2025
9. Auditor Contract FY24
10. Facilities Update
11. Update on Capital Reserve Study
12. NCSBA Legislative Committee
13. Report(s) from Training Events
14. Transylvania County Education Endowment (*postponed to February 19*)
15. Important Dates
16. Other Items

The Transylvania County Board of Education met in regular session on February 5, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. at the Morris Education Center. Tawny McCoy led in a moment of silence and Tanya Dalton led the Pledge of Allegiance. Chairman Jackson called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. In addition to approximately 50 guests, the individuals listed below were in attendance.

BOARD MEMBERS:

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

STAFF:

Dr. Lisa Fletcher, Superintendent
Jenny Hunter, Administrative Assistant
Dr. Brian Weaver, Assistant Superintendent/HR
Kerry Putnam, Director, Facilities; CTE
Chris Whitlock, Director, Technology Services
Greg Stroup, School Resource Officer
Ray Owen, School Resource Officer

BOARD ATTORNEY:

Kris Caudle, Campbell Shatley

MEDIA:

Nick Haselhoff, Transylvania Times
Dan DeWitt, Brevard NewsBeat

1. Approval of Agenda

MR. JACKSON MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MRS. MCCOY, to remove Item 2 (Student Recognitions) from the agenda, to move the closed session between Items 4 and 5, and to move Item 14 (Transylvania County Education Endowment) to the work session agenda for February 19. The agenda as modified was unanimously approved.

2. **Public Comment**

Chairman Jackson reviewed the guidelines for public comment.

Lisa Presnell – I am here regarding agenda item 14 (even though it has been removed from tonight's agenda) as proposed by Mr. Wiener for the creation of a Transylvania County Education Endowment with a goal to secure "100% local funding without any need for state or federal monies." Endowments are raised funds held in trust to earn interest. Generally, endowments only spend the interest earned on the principal capital every year on operating expenses, prudently holding the arranged capital in trust. To endow funds to support our \$56 million budget, while also prudently keeping the capital endowment intact, the board would need to raise \$1.1 billion. To endow just the \$34 million in state and federal funds, \$680 million would need to be raised. Again, keeping the capital intact and only spending the interest. We haven't even been able to get county commissioners to fund the voter-mandated \$68 million bond referendum. Yet we think we can raise \$1.1 billion? While I am not one to run away from a challenge, I actually believe that further funding of our existing Educational Foundation is a fabulous idea and the appropriate avenue in which to accomplish this. How would we raise that amount of money? Fundraising is hard work and it takes tons of man hours. How will raising that much money affect the fundraising of our other local foundations and non-profits? Will we be robbing Peter to pay Paul? Just so we can say "no" to funds already available to us? Funds that are paid by each of us via taxation? Back to the stated goal, to eliminate the encumbrances placed upon us by taking state and federal funds. As anyone in the non-profit world knows, and I have worked in the non-profit world for several years, all monies come with parameters, demands, guidelines, and encumbrances. Endowments are legally subject to the intent of the donors. Donors can stipulate how, when, and where the funds are used. Do we want to be like Harvard and be beholden to the agendas of our endowment owners? Are we trading one jailer for another? Who will our next jailer be? The Transylvania County Board of Education has had five years to get our commissioners to fund a one-time bond referendum. That bond referendum won a landslide of the votes. That is highly unlikely for a bond referendum. They never pass with that majority. Yet you want parents to believe and trust that you can raise almost \$1 billion to fund an endowment? Stop the nonsense, do your job, and fix our schools.

Cassie Broshears – Despite the best efforts of our educators and administration, our children are not physically safe or emotionally healthy in our school system. That safety and wellness is the responsibility of everyone in this room. Stop wasting the time and resources of this body, our administration, and teachers with performative actions and tactics that don't benefit our students or our school system. There are too many immediate and real needs that need to be addressed. This is not a call to action so much for our board as to parents and community members. We must express ourselves with our votes in the upcoming election. I don't care what your affiliation is. I ask you to look at our community and our school system. I ask you to look at some of what our students are experiencing and ask you if this is acceptable. It is not acceptable. It is not acceptable for my child. It is not acceptable for your child. These are the students that will be making choices for our retirement. You think this doesn't affect you? If you live in this community it does. We must become informed. There are candidates that are ready to take action to provide the fundamental role of the school board as a haven for learning. Learning. Let's find out which candidates want to work with each other to get things done.

Danielle Goulet – I have a Pre-K child at T.C. Henderson Elementary. I know you may or may not be aware of the situation under investigation involving multiple Pre-K students in the upper end of county. I just want to remind you of a few things. General statute 115C-47 states the board is to provide the opportunity to receive a sound, basic education. "It shall be the duty of the local boards of education to provide students with the opportunity to receive a sound, basic education, and to make all policy decisions with that object in mind, including employment decisions, budget development and other administrative actions with their respective local school administrative units as directed by law." Every child should have the right to an education, and we shouldn't have to worry when our child is in a classroom. Policy code 4240/7312 states, "the board is concerned with the health, safety and welfare of all children, and recognizes the legal and ethical obligations of the school employees, contractors and volunteers to report know or

suspected maltreatment of children.” This policy outlines reporting guidelines for suspected abuse. Only after parents and advocates questioned what was happening did administrators report appropriately. We then as parents filed the grievances and we are still unclear where these are in the process. *Board Attorney Caudle interjected with a reminder of the rules prohibiting discussion of individual personnel and/or student matters during public comment.* Chairman Jackson directed the speaker to conclude her remarks.

David Borman – I am here to talk about agenda item 14, the Transylvania County Education Endowment, that is proposed by Mr. Wiener. I think you can read this two ways. Charitably, it is another funding mechanism for our schools. As it is written, it seems like the beginning of privatizing our schools. I’ll be charitable. Let’s assume this is something that is in addition to what we already have in place. There are still four major problems here. Number one, this funding mechanism already exists. We have a Transylvania County Schools Educational Foundation that does work and has no relation to a partisan board. A decade of working in non-profits gives me a little credence here to say that the way to fund something is not to staff it with people who are partisan appointed. You need an objective third party to do this work critically and objectively. Two, this smacks of backroom deals and agenda pushing, not support for teachers and education. Again, some objective party to oversee this would be the ideal. Number three, there is no reason that anyone in this county would believe this board or the board of commissioners has any credibility when it comes to spending money for our schools. We have never been given any reason to believe that you could do that well. Four, this is inappropriate and a complete waste of time. Your task is overseeing and improving public education in this county, not enabling an attention-seeker. What efforts went into crafting this? How could those have been used to help our students? How many more irrelevant proposals do we have to listen to from Mr. Wiener before enough is enough? I’m asking you tonight to not consider this on your next agenda. I’m asking you to show how you support public education that is publicly accountable.

Peter Offen – I’m here to ask you to help secure parental rights in our schools specifically when there is a content challenge. Under the United States Constitution, parents have a right to guide the education of their child. This applies not only when content is challenged, but also applies to the rights of parents whose children have content removed from access. I would ask you to alter policy code 3210 to add notice to all parents of impacted children if content is removed from a curriculum or from the library. The Constitution applies to parents both that object to content and those that do not. Notice is a basic due process right. When content is removed from curriculum or the library, it infringes on the constitutional rights of the parents of those children to guide their education. So, I would ask you to secure the rights of all parents equally, and provide notice if any content is removed from a curriculum or the library, that states the basis of the challenge and the basis of removal and ideally, an option to be heard on that removal.

Claudia Hawkins - I’d like to speak about the proposed Transylvania County Education Endowment. My first question is, what is the threshold for getting an item on the agenda? Does it only require one board member? If so, I would encourage the board to review its bylaws to require at least two board members to support adding an agenda item. This would prevent one board member from putting half-baked ideas on the agenda and wasting time that could be better spent by the board. I’m certainly in favor of finding new sources of revenue to support our public schools, but this proposal as drafted doesn’t make sense. There is an existing organization whose purpose is to provide additional support. Before forming another entity, wouldn’t it be wise to consider creating an endowment fund under this existing entity? I have some experience with endowment funds at Brevard Music Center and Pisgah Legal Services. An endowment’s purpose is to provide a stable source of funding for an organization. It is intended to be a long-lived asset. Normally a board decides on a balance they want to achieve within the fund before making disbursements. When that level is achieved, withdrawals begin in accordance with a withdrawal policy. The goal being to maintain your endowment’s spending power over a long time frame. A typical withdrawal policy is a percentage of the average fund balance on a rolling 3-5 year basis. This prevents large swings in the disbursements. The distribution scheme proposed makes no sense. The best I can make out from the rather confusing language is that you would be on a 7-years off, 7-years on cycle. I don’t see that being helpful in any way to the school funding

situation. And let's be realistic about how much money you might be able to raise. Does it make sense to create and maintain an endowment outside of the existing Foundation for a rather small amount of money? What would the endowment balance have to be to generate meaningful distributions? At a million dollars with the typical withdrawal rate of 4 percent, you would only generate \$40,000. Finally, wouldn't a better approach to an issue such as this be that the board directs the superintendent and her staff to explore the issue, and bring forward their findings and recommendations to the board? This would require a majority of the board members to vote in favor of directing the superintendent to do so. That seems like a better way to do this, rather than allowing a single board member to try to determine the priorities of the board on an ad hoc basis.

Alice Wellborn – I have two comments this evening. First, the school calendar that doesn't follow North Carolina law is on the agenda tonight. At the last meeting, Mr. Wiener cited military code that requires soldiers to refuse to obey illegal orders as justification for disobeying North Carolina law. Let me just say that Transylvania County Schools is not a military institution and the calendar law is not an illegal order. My son, who was in the Army for seven years, told me that illegal orders are things like torturing prisoners or intentionally shooting civilians, not disagreements. To bring up military code in connection with the North Carolina school calendar is absurd. Second, I was stunned at the reports about the two speakers at the Transylvania County Republican Party's recent Education Forum. I was not there. But I talked with folks who were there. I had two reports from those who attended, and read the newspaper report. A representative from Moms for America and a far right-wing candidate for State Superintendent of Public Instruction, neither of whom live in Transylvania County, and both of whom homeschool their children, made the usual MAGA accusations about pornography, critical race theory, teachers grooming children—all ugly, evidence-free propaganda that the local Republican party spreads about our public schools. Our teachers are our friends, neighbors, family members, fellow church members, and they were once again accused and slandered at the local Republican Education Forum. I am so sick of this. And so are our teachers. Transylvania County Schools has some real problems and challenges right now. How about engaging in some honest discussion instead of spreading lies? What I found particularly shameful is the fact that not one candidate stood up to defend our teachers and our schools. There were certainly positive comments made about teachers by candidates, but nobody had the courage to stand up and call out those two speakers for their false accusations that had nothing to do with Transylvania County Schools. If I was a Republican candidate, I would sure want to know who selected those two speakers. The candidates have a choice. They can have a conscience and be honest about our schools and our teachers, or they can roll around in the filth with Moms for America and Michele Morrow. You are known for the company you keep.

Meg Lebeck – Leadership is something that you exercise or advocate. In an era when schools need support and momentum and change, we spend time posturing around national politics instead of dialing into what is needed here in the county for our teachers and for our children. And instead of leading this community and families and teachers, generations of whom have served this community, some of you seek to diminish, dismantle, and dissolve the very system you committed to serve. I'm sure it seems easier to deconstruct something than to build an effective system from what's in front of you. But this is a county that needs your leadership.

Jami Reese – In Article 9 of the North Carolina Constitution it states, religion, morality, and knowledge being necessary to good government and happiness of mankind. Schools, libraries, and the means of education shall forever be encouraged. These are the main areas in which we are failing, I believe. We have a large group here tonight, a major call to action if you will, which is nice if well informed by truth. Jesus said He is the way, the truth and the life. As a descendent of an Irish slave and a Cherokee Indian, and while I still have the opportunity to speak freely (well, mostly freely) at these meetings, I'd like to talk tonight about progress. Progress is having the ability to stand here according to the First Amendment of the Constitution of the United States and express my freedom to speak. Progress is as a woman, having the ability express my right to vote. Progress by definition is forward or onward movement toward a destination. Progress does not look like the repeat of history. It does not look like people being divided because of race, class, ability, or political affiliation. Progress doesn't look like anybody being able to call themselves a woman just because they feel like it. It doesn't look like the inability to have an

intelligent conversation with someone just because they are on the opposite side of the political spectrum. Progress doesn't make us enemies. If you are here willing to fall on your sword in the name of progress, I implore you to step outside of your circle and influence of friends who think like you and talk to the elders. Talk to the people who don't look like you. Talk to people who don't vote like you. Talk to people who have lived a while on this earth and let them tell you about progress. It baffles me the amount of progressive people here tonight with doublespeak, in one breath berating you guys for bond issues outside of your control, and in the next breath berating you for proposing a potential solution to raise funds for the ongoing financial issues surrounding our schools. Keep up the good work. Thank you so much for what you're doing. We're praying for you.

Frances Bradburn – I am the President of the Transylvania County Schools Educational Foundation (TCSEF). TCSEF is 501(c)(3) non-profit. We are dedicated to the enrichment of educational opportunities for our own students and efforts to support the Transylvania County school system. This month, the Foundation will distribute \$8,000 in Creative Classroom Grants, and in partnership with the Brevard Rotary Club, another \$4,000 in Creative Classroom Grants. These grants will allow teachers to enhance their students' classroom experiences with additional resources. We also sponsor several important initiatives throughout the school year. In collaboration with the county's School Nutrition Program and Anchor Baptist Church, the Foundation distributes backpacks of nutritious, shelf-stable food to over 300 children each Thanksgiving, Christmas, spring break, and during the summer through the Backpack Buddies program. We partner with the Transylvania County Retired Teachers Association to manage and stock the Teacher Supply Closet, which provides teacher-requested supplies for their classrooms throughout the school year. We work with Lake Toxaway Charities to facilitate and aggregate individual teacher grant applications—another valuable and sustaining partnership for the Foundation. As you begin discussion of the Transylvania County Endowment, we wanted to remind you of the work of TCSEF, an already established non-profit foundation benefitting our public schools. We welcome individual, business, and corporate sponsorships and donations to Backpack Buddies, the Teacher Supply Closet, Creative Classroom Grants, and to the Foundation itself to continue our work. Information can be found on our website.

3. **Good News Report**

Dr. Lisa Fletcher shared the following good news:

PFES Student is DAR Essay Contest Winner

Congratulations to Pisgah Forest Elementary School fifth grader Noelle Shelton for being named as the DAR (Daughters of the American Revolution) Essay contest winner.

February is Career and Technical Education Month

The month of February is recognized as National Career and Technical Education (CTE) Month. CTE directly prepares students for high-wage, high-demand jobs in areas such as health care, information technology, advanced manufacturing, hospitality and management, and more. It provides everything from classroom learning to certification programs to work-based learning opportunities outside the classroom. *Dr. Fletcher reported that Transylvania County Schools had the sixth highest CTE attainment in the state last year.* Some recent CTE activities include:

- BHS FFA students Ethan Zaludek and Baylor Blythe will compete in the NCCFFA State Truck and Tractor Driving Finals.
- BHS Architectural Drafting II & III: Thank you to architects John Koury and Melanie Spreen with May Collaborative, and building project manager Zach McCall, for sharing their knowledge and giving a tour of their Jordan Street Townhomes project. Mr. Koury also mentored Architectural Drafting III students through their first commercial drafting project. They worked on designing and drawing a new mixed-use building on the corner of Johnson and Main Street in downtown Brevard. Students visited the site in early December, then presented their conceptual projects to Mr. Koury for feedback.

- BHS FCCLA members volunteered to work in the concession stand during two football games and four basketball games to help raise money for the clubs.
- Eleven BHS Culinary 2 students received their ServSafe Manager Certification from the National Restaurant Association.

Black History Month 2024

Each February, schools celebrate Black History Month by recognizing the contributions of African Americans and the cultural heritage, triumphs, and adversities that are an indelible part of our nation's history. This year's theme is African Americans and the Arts. For centuries the artistic contributions of people of African descent were denied, minimized and/or stolen. However, there is an unbroken chain of Black arts production from antiquity to the present, from Egypt across Africa, from Europe to the New World. Music, literature, visual arts, and dance all reflect the richness of the past and present with an eye towards what the future will bring.

School Resource Officer Appreciation Day – Feb. 15

February 15 is National School Resource Officer Appreciation Day and a time to thank our dedicated SROs for all they do to keep schools safe and cultivate positive relationships with students, families, and communities. SROs are full-time law enforcement officers with sworn law enforcement authority, trained in school-based policing and crisis response, and assigned to work with schools using community-oriented policing concepts. They help bridge the gap between youth and law enforcement, serving as informal counselors and role models. We greatly appreciate Sheriff Chuck Owenby and our school resource officers for all they do. *Dr. Fletcher thanked Officers Greg Stroup and Ray Owen for securing the meeting.*

National School Counseling Week Feb. 5-9, 2024

National School Counseling Week is February 5-9, 2024, to focus public attention on the unique contribution of school counselors within schools. This year's theme is "Standards-Based, Student-Focused." School counselors can have a tremendous impact in helping students deal with adversity and mental health challenges, achieve academic success, and plan for higher education and careers. We thank our school counselors and our school social workers for all they do for students:

Denise Reese, school counselor – RES
 Mary Derks, school counselor – TCH, RMS
 Sarah Shawver, school counselor – RHS
 Autumn Rumfeldt, school counselor - PFES
 Julie Owens, school counselor – BES
 Debra Carabantes, school counselor – BES
 Colleen Fernandez, school counselor – BMS
 Kat Motuz, school counselor – BMS
 Kayla Byrd, school counselor – BHS
 Hailey Brinke, school counselor - BHS
 Jaime Dulberg, school counselor – DRS
 Courtney Owen, crisis counselor – systemwide
 Hallie Moore, academic counselor – BHS, RHS, DRS
 Bethany Green, school social worker – RES, TCH, RHS, RMS
 Lovey Puryear, school social worker – BES, BHS
 Olivia Shuler, school social worker – DRS, BMS, PFES

Love the Bus Month February 2024

February is the month we show our appreciation to the individuals and organizations involved in operating school buses and transporting students. We thank the drivers,

mechanics, schedulers and others who work hard to ensure the safe delivery of our children to and from schools five days a week.

Apply for the Governor's Educator Discover Award

The Governor's Educator Discovery Award is offering a stipend of up to \$1,000 for PK-12 traditional public school teachers to pursue a professional development experience of their choosing. Teachers may use the grant award to attend a workshop or conference that deepens their subject area knowledge or a session on how to create a project-based learning experience for students. Applications are currently open and due by midnight on February 19. The Governor's Educator Discovery Award is sponsored by the North Carolina Business Committee for Education. Visit ncbce.org/geda/ for more information and to apply.

Papa John's Pizza Classroom Party

School Nutrition Services is offering classes a well-balanced meal with Papa John's pizza delivered straight to the classroom. Teachers may complete a classroom party order form and turn it in to their cafeteria manager two weeks in advance of the planned event. School Nutrition will take care of the rest!

Employee Assistance Program

Transylvania County Schools partners with the Employee Assistance Network, Inc., to provide a valuable benefit to all employees and their immediate family members via the Employee Assistance Program (EAP). Under the EAP, employees and their families have access to a counselor to help improve or resolve difficulties, whether big or small, private or work-related, and develop a plan to move forward. Services are confidential and prepaid by the employer. For more information visit [employee assistance program](#).

Kindergarten Rally & Registration for 2024-2025

Kindergarten registration for the 2024-2025 school year is coming up soon. A Kindergarten Rally will be held on Thursday, April 4, from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. at Transylvania Parks & Recreation. Kindergarten registration will be available in all of our elementary schools on Monday through Friday, April 8-12, from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. and also from 4-6 p.m. on Thursday, April 11. Starting school is an exciting experience for young children and we want to be sure it is a positive one. All children who will be five (5) years old on or before August 31, 2024 are eligible to start kindergarten this fall. Visit www.tcsnc.org/k for enrollment information.

STEAM Expo/Duke Energy Science Night

The 2024 STEAM Expo/Duke Energy Science Night will be held on Monday, April 29 from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. at Transylvania County Parks & Recreation. This would be a good opportunity for high school students who are interested in running activities to earn community hours. Contact Audrey Reneau areneau@tcsnc.org for more information.

STEM Camp for High School Students

Mark your calendars for the hands-on STEM Camp for high school students coming up on June 17–27, 2024. Please contact Jessica Tidmore at BHS or Audrey Reneau at the Education Center for more information.

School Happenings in February

2/6 - Brevard Middle School PTO Meeting
2/6 - Pisgah Forest Elementary R.O.P.E. meeting
2/8 - Title One STEAM Night
2/12 - T.C. Henderson PTO Meeting

2/15 - Brevard Elementary OPT Family Game Night
2/16 - Early Dismissal

Feb: Black History Month
Feb: Career & Technical Education Month
Feb: Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month
Feb. 5-9: National School Counseling Week
Feb. 7: Global School Play Day
Feb. 12-16: National FBLA Week
Feb. 12-16: National FCCLA Week
Feb. 15: School Resource Officer Appreciation Day
Feb. 17: Random Acts of Kindness Day
Feb. 17-24: National FFA Week
Feb. 22: School Bus Driver Appreciation Day
Feb. 26 - Mar. 3: Public Schools Week

Opt-In Process

Schools are putting procedures into place so that parents may opt-in one time at the beginning of the school year for all routine activities at their child's school. Individual opt-in permissions will still be required for certain classroom activities.

Weather-Related Delays and Closures

Dr. Fletcher thanked everyone for their support during the recent weather-related closures and delays. She noted that road conditions can vary widely within our county. On days when roads in Brevard are dry and safe, roads in the upper end may be icy and treacherous. The reason we close all schools and not just certain schools is because our teachers and students do not all live near their schools. A decision to delay or close school is made for the safety of everyone on the roads—school buses, staff, teen drivers, parents, and the community.

4. Closed Session

ON A MOTION BY MR. WIENER, SECONDED BY MRS. MCCOY, the board voted unanimously to go into closed session pursuant to N.C.G.S. § 115C-318.11 subsection (a)(3) to consult with an attorney retained by the board to preserve the attorney client privilege between the attorney and the public body. Following a brief recess, the closed session convened at approximately 6:45 p.m. Present in the closed session were board members Kimsey Jackson, Chair; Tanya Dalton, Vice Chair; Tawny McCoy; Bryan O'Neill; and Chris Wiener. Dr. Lisa Fletcher, Superintendent; Dr. Brian Weaver, Assistant Superintendent; and Board Attorney Kris Caudle were also present in the closed session. At approximately 6:53 p.m., BY MOTION MADE BY MR. JACKSON AND SECONDED BY MR. WIENER, the board adjourned closed session and returned to open session.

5. Consent Agenda

ON A MOTION BY MR. WIENER, SECONDED BY MRS. MCCOY, the following consent items were unanimously approved:

- A. Minutes of the December 4, 2023 meeting
- B. Minutes of the December 18, 2023 meeting
- C. Minutes of the January 16, 2024 meeting
- D. Minutes of the January 16, 2024 closed session
- E. Personnel report for February 5, 2024 (see attached)
- F. Appointment of Lori Cairnes as school treasurer at Brevard Elementary School, Jennifer Moody as school treasurer at Rosman High School, and Shaunna

McCall as school treasurer at Rosman Middle School, pursuant to N.C.G.S. 115C-448(a)

6. WAN Contract Renewal

Director Chris Whitlock presented an addendum to the current contract between Transylvania County Schools and Comporium, Inc., to extend the school district's WAN (wide-area network) connectivity until June 30, 2025. He reported that this is the third of five one-year optional renewals for the contract. Board approval is required for expenditures in excess of \$90,000. Mr. Wiener asked if the WAN provides internet to the schools. Mr. Whitlock explained that the WAN provides the connection to enable internet access. Board Attorney Kris Caudle reported that he has reviewed the contract and addendum. ON A MOTION BY MRS. MCCOY, SECONDED BY MR. WIENER, the contract addendum between Comporium, Inc., and Transylvania County Schools to extend WAN connectivity until June 30, 2025 was unanimously approved.

7. School Calendar 2024-2025

As discussed at the January 16 meeting, Dr. Brian Weaver presented a draft "traditional start" calendar for the 2024-2025 school year and a draft "early start" calendar. The traditional start calendar complies with state calendar law which stipulates start dates no earlier than the Monday closest to August 26 unless a weather-related waiver has been approved. The early start calendar contains a start date of August 12, which would allow first semester exams to be taken before the Christmas break. Dr. Weaver reported that feedback from the calendar committee showed support for an early start and having exams before Christmas, but did not support a non-compliant calendar.

Mrs. McCoy agreed that an early start calendar is good for students; however, she has spent her adult life in the legal world and took an oath to maintain the laws of North Carolina. She therefore could not support any but the traditional start calendar. Mrs. Dalton expressed frustration that the board was expected to make a good decision between two bad choices. Chairman Jackson stated that his oath of office prevents him from voting for the early start calendar. MR. WIENER MADE A MOTION to approve the early start calendar for the 2024-2025 school year. The motion died for lack of a second. MR. JACKSON MOVED to approve the traditional start calendar for the 2024-2025 school year. MR. O'NEILL SECONDED and the motion passed on a majority roll call vote (FOR: Dalton, Jackson, McCoy, O'Neill; AGAINST: Wiener). The first day for students will be August 26, 2024.

Mr. Wiener asked if the calendar committee could produce a 3-5 year calendar for consideration starting with the 2025-2026 year and continue to develop early start alternatives. Dr. Weaver reported that a multi-year calendar should not be a problem since our district no longer qualifies for a weather waiver and agreed to bring the committee together to work on this. Chairman Jackson encouraged anyone unhappy with the calendar decision to contact their state legislators and request that control of school calendars be returned to local boards.

8. Auditor Contract FY24

Dr. Lisa Fletcher reported that Finance Officer Gabi Juba was out of town at a training event. She presented a contract to audit accounts from Anderson Smith & Wike PLLC for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024. There were no questions, and ON A MOTION BY MR. O'NEILL, SECONDED BY MRS. MCCOY, the contract with Anderson Smith & Wike PLLC to audit accounts for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024 was unanimously approved.

9. Facilities Update

Director Kerry Putnam presented a Statement of Qualifications from McGill Associates for the underground sinkhole work at the Rosman High School football field. He reported that this was the only firm to submit and asked for board approval to negotiate a task order to move forward with the project. He stated that he has worked with McGill and knows they deliver quality work. If the board approves, the next step would be to approve a contract. He gave a reminder that there is enough money in the budget to cover costs up to the point of bids. At that time, the board would need direction from the county commissioners regarding funding in order to proceed. This work is the necessary first step in repairing and preparing the field for either synthetic turf or natural grass. ON A MOTION BY MR. WIENER, SECONDED BY MRS. DALTON, the board selected McGill Associates for the underground sinkhole work at the Rosman High School football field.

10. Update on Capital Reserve Study

Dr. Lisa Fletcher reported that the full report from the capital reserve study should be presented to the committee next week. The board discussed options for receiving the report. Members expressed preference for small group meetings to digest the report. A special called work session may be held to develop funding options. A meeting with the commissioners would be needed for joint discussion regarding next steps and funding. Dr. Fletcher will discuss this proposal with the county manager.

11. NCSBA Legislative Committee

The North Carolina School Boards’ Association’s Board of Directors has invited local boards to nominate one member to serve on the 2024 NCSBA Legislative Committee. This committee develops the legislative agenda for consideration and adoption by the NCSBA Delegate Assembly. Board members discussed whether anyone wanted to be nominated to serve. There was no interest at this time.

12. Report(s) from Training Event(s)

Mrs. Dalton gave a report from the NCSBA Board Officers Academy training on January 18 in Raleigh. She stated that it was an informative session that offered legal viewpoints from board attorneys and opportunities to talk with board members from other districts that are dealing with similar issues.

Mr. Wiener gave a report from a “Making Education Work for Real” session hosted by the Cleveland County Board of Education on January 23. Topics included confidentiality, closed sessions, challenging parents to get involved, dual enrollment with community colleges, alternative school programs, and a legislative review. He reported that more and more districts are adopting early start calendars based on their popularity with teachers, students, and parents.

13. Important Dates

Feb. 16	Students dismissed at noon		
Feb. 19	WORK SESSION	6:00 p.m.	MEC
Mar. 4	REGULAR MEETING	6:00 p.m.	MEC
Mar. 18	WORK SESSION	6:00 p.m.	MEC
Mar. 25 – Apr. 1	Spring break		
Apr. 4	Kindergarten Rally	4-6 p.m.	Trans. Co. Parks & Recreation

Apr. 5	End of 3 rd quarter		
Apr. 8	Makeup day for Jan. 10		
Apr. 8-12	Kindergarten Registration	M-F 8:30– 2:30 pm; Th 4–6 pm	BES, PFES, RES, TCH
Apr. 15	WORK SESSION		
Apr. 23	“Of the Year” Awards Program	5:30 p.m.	Mary C. Jenkins Community Center
Apr. 29	STEAM Expo/Duke Energy Science Night	4:30 – 6:30 p.m.	Transylvania Co. Parks & Recreation
May 3	Students dismissed at noon		
May 6	REGULAR MEETING	6:00 p.m.	MEC
May 20	WORK SESSION	6:00 p.m.	MEC

14. Other Items

Mrs. Dalton thanked Dr. Fletcher for looking out for all children and making the difficult calls to delay or cancel schools during inclement weather. She reported her daughter’s car had slid backwards down a hill--evidence that conditions can worsen quickly. Chairman Jackson expressed support for Dr. Fletcher’s decisions regarding delays and closures, noting that “not every student lives in Brevard.”

There was no further business, and ON A MOTION BY MRS. MCCOY, SECONDED BY MRS. DALTON, the meeting was adjourned at 7:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chairman

Secretary

**PERSONNEL REPORT
February 5, 2024**

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

Licensed Personnel

Benjamin Blankenship, Senior JROTC Instructor, BHS-based, effective June 30, 2024
Emma Higgins, Teacher, BES, effective February 26, 2024
Hallie Moore, Academic School Counselor, BES-based, effective June 14, 2024
Carolyn Smith, Teacher, PFES, effective June 14, 2024

Classified Personnel

Jack Tomlinson, Custodian & Bus Driver, BES, effective February 2, 2024

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

Licensed Personnel

Anna Ownbey, Teacher, BES, effective February 12, 2024

Classified Personnel

Montana Owen, Teacher Assistant, BMS, effective January 29, 2024

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

Licensed Personnel

Tessa Brown, from Teacher, BHS, to Public Information Officer, MEC, effective February 26, 2024

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 & Tutors

Elena Bumgarner
Cassandra Dobbins
Gayla Guy

Substitute School Nutrition Workers

None