

**Minutes
Transylvania County Board of Education
March 1, 2010**

INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME

BUSINESS ITEMS

1. Approval of Agenda
2. Public Hearing on High School Property Transfer for County Improvements Financing
3. Public Comment
4. Good News Report
5. Former Students in the Military
6. AIMSweb K-5 Presentation
7. Consent Agenda:
8. Minutes
9. Personnel Report
10. Project Completion and Agency Agreement:
11. Facilities Master Plan and FY11 Budget
12. Important Dates
13. Other Items
14. Public Comment

The Transylvania County Board of Education met in regular session at 6:30 p.m. on March 1, 2010 at the Morris Education Center. Present were Tawny McCoy, Vice Chairman; Shelia Norman; Cindy Petit; and Sue Fox. Also present were Dr. Jeff McDaris, Superintendent; Jenny Hunter, Administrative Assistant; Norris Barger, Director of Business Services, Dr. Kim Elliott, Director of K-8 Curriculum; Dr. Scott Elliott, Director of 9-12 Curriculum; Lenora Carver, *Transylvania Times*, and approximately 13 teachers and guests. Erica Bagwell, Rosman High School, was the student representative. Mrs. Fox gave the invocation and Mrs. Petit led the Pledge of Allegiance. Vice Chairman McCoy called the meeting to order. Mrs. McCoy reported that Chairman Whitmire was absent due to military duty.

1. Approval of Agenda

ON A MOTION BY MRS. NORMAN, SECONDED BY MRS. FOX, the meeting agenda for March 1, 2010 was approved as presented.

2. Public Hearing

The Board provided a public hearing to take comment concerning a proposal for the Board of Education to transfer all or a portion of the Rosman High School property to Transylvania County to facilitate the County's borrowing money to pay for improvements at the school, specifically the construction of a Career/Technical Education building. Transylvania County plans to finance approximately \$1,297,778.00 to pay for the planned improvements. The type of financing selected by the County, in consultation with the School Board, requires the County to place a mortgage-type interest on some or all of the property being improved through the financing. For the County to place a lien on the school property, the School Board must first transfer ownership of the property to the County. The financing plan contemplates that the School Board will continue to use the school during the term of the financing and that the School Board will regain ownership of the school when the financing is paid off. There was no public comment on this matter.

3. **Public Comment**

Phratasia Macon, parent, addressed the Board regarding bullying and student dress code at Brevard High School. She reported that her daughter has been the victim of repeated bullying at BHS, and her efforts to address the problem with the school have been unsuccessful. She also expressed concern regarding “skinny” jeans and ethnic wraps. Ms. Macon does not feel that these items are a disruption to learning. She requested help from the Board regarding the bullying. Vice Chairman McCoy invited Ms. Macon to meet with the superintendent and discuss the issue. Dr. McDaris reported that he and Ms. Macon had talked together earlier in the year about this matter. He agreed to meet with her again in a further attempt to resolve the problem.

4. **Good News Report**

Dr. McDaris reported the following good news items:

SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION CONTEST WINNERS

The Transylvania Soil and Water Conservation District has announced its contest winners for 2010. Over 650 students from grades 3-6 designed posters; 41 entered essays; and 90 seventh graders wrote speeches. The topic was “The Living Soil.” Wal-Mart donated 400 pieces of poster board for the contest. The winners from Transylvania County Schools are listed below:

3 rd Grade Poster	4 th Grade Poster
Cray McCall, TCH - 1 st Place	Hailey Newman, RES - 1 st Place; Area 1 First Place Winner
Hannah Lenze, PFES - 3 rd Place	Deland Thomas, RES - 3 rd Place
Braden Baney, PFES - Honorable Mention	Julia Smith, BES - Honorable Mention
5 th Grade Poster	6 th Grade Poster
Micaela Meece, PFES - 1 st Place	Colter Galloway, RMS - 1 st Place
Casey Cooper, PFES - 2 nd Place	Sapphire Rogers, RMS - 2 nd Place
Madison Pulley, PFES - 3 rd Place	Caleb Stamey, RMS - 3 rd Place
Faith Miller, PFES - Honorable Mention	Cheyenne Nelson, RMS - Honorable Mention
6 th Grade Essay	7 th Grade Speech
Haley Parker, RMS - 2 nd Place	Hannah Reese, RMS - 1 st Place; Area 1 Second Place Winner
	Claire Harris, RMS - 2 nd Place
	Annie Winston, RMS - 3 rd Place

NCARE PRESENTATION

David M. Sutton, Director of Human Resources, was selected to present an original paper at the annual conference of the North Carolina Association for Research in Education held in Winston-Salem on February 25-26, 2010. This year’s conference theme was “Reform in Education: The Role of Educational Research.” A call for papers was made seeking proposals on any educational research or evaluation topic likely to interest North Carolina educators. The papers were reviewed by a juried committee and evaluated based on the criteria of quality, originality, and significance. Mr. Sutton’s paper, *Superintendent Succession: Entry Experiences, Emerging Challenges, and Predecessor Influence*, was one of those selected for presentation. Congratulations to Mr. Sutton on this prestigious honor. Mr. Sutton is scheduled to present another original paper in Chicago in April.

5. **Former Students in the Military**

The Board of Education 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. The list will be updated as more names are received.

6. **AIMSweb K-5 Presentation**

The Board heard a presentation on AIMSweb, a benchmark and progress monitoring system based on direct, frequent and continuous student assessment in which results are reported to students, parents, teachers and administrators via a web-based data management and reporting system to determine response to intervention. AIMSweb has been used this year in grades K-5. It was piloted last year at BES.

Dr. Kim Elliott reported that AIMSweb aligns well with the essential standards in core content areas of literacy, reading, reading, spelling and mathematics. It is not a high stakes assessment; it is a snapshot of achievement in essential skill areas that guides instruction through data-driven decisions. AIMSweb provides a system for benchmarking, as will be required in the state's ACRE (Accountability and Curriculum Reform Effort) Project. It provides consistency and immediacy in assessment of student achievement. Board members each took a two-minute "Are You Smarter Than a Fifth-Grader?" quiz to experience the AIMSweb assessment model. The following teachers and administrators shared their experiences and perspectives on AIMSweb:

Dr. Kim Elliott - MEC	Fran Michaels - TCH
Tammy Bellefeuil - BES	Vicki Denton - BES
Jo Hamilton - BES	Alicia Anderson - BES
Alissa Cook - RES	Melissa Redden - BES
Julie Nederveld - RES	Binky Pienaar - PFES
Crystal Whitman - RES	Laura Leatherwood - PFES

Observations included:

- From a principal's perspective, the charts on skills achievement show clearly the improvement from fall to winter. The charts can be used to track achievement all the way down the individual student level.
- The most important feature is it allows teachers to change instruction appropriate to each student's needs. You can see immediately what is working and what is not.
- It takes a lot of guesswork out of teaching. Although it was very time consuming at first for teachers to input all the data and scores, the graphs help teachers see the bigger picture and identify factors, other than academics, that are affecting the child's success.
- It provides good opportunities for parent involvement with interventions at home. We have "fit kits" activities that can go home with students for extra reinforcement of specific skills. The kits have very simple games and require minimal supplies. Kids enjoy them and parents appreciate them.
- It allows teachers to identify individual weaknesses from specific probes. It analyzes data and constructs graphs to show progress. Teachers can see the growth of each child, regardless of ability level.
- AIMSweb helps identify students who are above average, and who do not qualify for EC services, but need extra help early in the school year. K-2 teachers were

able to pinpoint phonics weaknesses and implement Reading Mastery with immediate results. We have created a notebook for teachers to use when searching for instructional weaknesses and making adjustments to planning.

- We have used teacher assistants and tutors for drills and help with small groups on specific skills work.
- A teacher was able to identify a student early in the school year as a slow reader. Corrective Reading was implemented and the AIMSweb results showed improved speed in reading. This same teacher changed her schedule after Fall AIMSweb results to have centers in the morning so that she could work with those needing help or acceleration.
- A teacher reports that AIMSweb helped her to be confident of her own student assessments.
- Another teacher used AIMSweb to develop timed readings. They record words read per minute and errors, and students graph the results. This has helped increase students' fluency. Plus, individual goal setting is empowering for students.
- AIMSweb removes bias. Parents appreciate that the results are not at all vague or subjective.
- AIMSweb data can provide valuable information to teachers in the next grade level.
- Looking ahead, it is exciting to think about the impact that AIMSweb will have on academic achievement and feelings about school. Learning to perform basic math and reading skills under pressure will allow students to focus their energy on critical thinking and problem solving strategies. Although the assessments are timed, kids have become used to them and do not feel the stress associated with high-stakes testing such as EOGs. It encourages them that they can do it.
- AIMSweb assessments work well for the majority of our disabled population. A two-minute timed test is short and to the point and great for EC kids who cannot do the 75-80 minute EOG test. It is much better that EC students can be compared to themselves rather than to regular education students. It also allows EC teachers and regular education teachers to communicate on the same level for a student.
- The earlier we can intervene, the better the student will do in later years. It is a good investment for our district.

Mrs. Fox stated that she would be interested in seeing how the AIMSweb data correlates with EOG data at the end of this year. She asked how parents were being educated on AIMSweb and what their level of understanding is. Teachers reported that most AIMSweb information has been shared through parent-teacher conferences in order to explain the graphs and how to read them. Dr. Elliott reported that they may resend the information packet that was sent home to parents at the beginning of the year. She noted that Transylvania students are outperforming the national norm for AIMSweb.

Mrs. Petit expressed concern that students could be retained based on AIMSweb. She reported a call from parents who were upset by receiving their child's AIMSweb progress report along with a retention letter. Ms. Bellefeuil clarified that children were not being retained based on AIMSweb. She surmised that the confusion had probably occurred due to the parents receiving several letters from the school at the same time; unfortunately, recent snow delays caused certain reports to go out at the same time. She encouraged Mrs. Petit to advise the parents to contact their child's school for an explanation.

Mrs. Fox asked the presenters to share their concerns regarding AIMSweb. Teachers listed the amount of time that is required to give the probes, analyze data and create individualized interventions, all within the scope of the regular instructional day. Teachers reported that they are working together to find ways to better manage the process time-wise. There is also some anxiety about how the AIMSweb assessments will correlate with End-of-Grade test results. Dr. Elliott agreed that division of labor is the big challenge right now. She concluded the presentation by stating that "intervention is the best teaching you can do."

Following a short break, Dr. McDaris introduced Erica Bagwell, RHS, to the Board. Board members welcomed Erica to the meeting and thanked her for coming.

7. **Consent Agenda**

ON A MOTION BY MRS. FOX, SECONDED BY MRS. PETIT, the following consent items were approved:

Minutes from February 1, 2010
Minutes from February 3, 2010
Minutes from February 4, 2010
Personnel report for March 1, 2010 (attached)

Mrs. Norman asked whether substitute teachers who have worked 30 days or more are entitled to unemployment benefits. Dr. McDaris reported that school districts across the state are seeing increased numbers of unemployment claims by substitute teachers. He stated that this phenomenon seems to be a product of the poor economy. He noted that the administration is seeking legal clarification on this matter; however, such claims have so far been successfully denied since substitute teachers are not considered to be full-time employees. Dr. Scott Elliott noted that TCS has more substitutes on its rolls than ever before, likely due to the economy. Mrs. Norman questioned whether the list should be reduced. Dr. McDaris pointed out the advantage of having a robust list of substitutes is that there are more options when demand is high or individuals are unavailable.

8. **Project Completion and Agency Agreement**

Norris Barger presented a Project Completion and Agency Agreement between the Board of Education and the County for the financing of the Career/Technical Education building at Rosman High School. Dr. McDaris reported that he had just received an e-mail from the Board attorney containing new revisions to the agreement. Mr. Barger reviewed the new changes with the Board. The revisions basically stipulate that the Board agrees to bear the sole responsibility for full completion of the project; and should that completion require additional funds, the County would not be required to provide additional funding above the agreed-upon amount and would be held harmless from any additional cost or expense. Dr. McDaris reported that BB&T wants to have the deed ready for closing this week. Since the chairman is out of town, the Board would need to authorize the vice chairman to sign on his behalf. ON A MOTION BY MRS. FOX, SECONDED BY MRS. NORMAN, the Board authorized Vice Chairman McCoy to sign the deed and other required paperwork in the absence of Chairman Whitmire. Dr. McDaris stated that heavy snow is predicted for March 2; therefore either he or Mr. Barger would deliver the paperwork to Mrs. McCoy at her home, if necessary. ON A MOTION BY MRS. PETIT, SECONDED BY MRS. FOX, the Board unanimously approved the Project Completion and Agency Agreement as revised by legal counsel.

9. **Facilities and FY11 Budget**

The Board continued its review of the Transylvania County Schools Master Facilities Plan and the 2010-2011 budgets. Discussion focused on the FY11 capital outlay board priorities list. Norris Barger review changes from the last meeting and answered questions from the Board. Vice Chairman McCoy directed Mr. Barger to check with Principal David Williams regarding the BMS parking item. The Board also asked for clarification on science lab renovations versus new classrooms at BMS.

Mrs. Norman asked for an update on the BHS artificial turf matter. Dr. McDaris reported that a community group has scheduled a meeting for March 11 at the County Library and has asked Coach Barnes to speak and answer questions. The meeting is open to all interested citizens. Board members indicated they may attend in an information-gathering capacity. Mr. Barger reported that at this time, he and the superintendent are planning for minimal repairs to the BHS field this summer. This would include top dressing, crown repair and planting grass.

Mrs. Petit asked about the generator at BES. Mrs. McCoy reported that the generator is not used for emergency shelter purposes, as she had initially thought. Mr. Barger reported that BES tends to have a lot of power outages, and some inner classrooms have no windows. The generator provides a small amount of emergency lighting in addition to running the phone system and freezers. Currently, the generator is not working. A new generator estimated at \$26,000 is included in the master plan, but was not listed by the principal as a priority item. Mrs. McCoy directed Mr. Barger to add the BES generator to the priority list.

Mrs. Norman asked about new carpet for the Education Center. Dr. McDaris reported that other priorities would take precedence. He is looking into in-house options such as removing the old carpet and sanding/finishing the hardwood floors underneath.

Mrs. McCoy requested a district priority list for the next regular meeting. Dr. McDaris asked the Board to begin thinking about which members would participate in the "two on two" budget meetings with the County Commissioners.

10. **Important Dates**

Mar. 15	REGULAR MEETING, 6:30 p.m., MEC
Mar. 18-19	NCSBA School Law Academy, Raleigh, NC
Mar. 20	First Day of Spring
Apr. 2	Teacher Work Day
Apr. 10-12	NSBA Annual Conference, Chicago, IL
Apr. 5	REGULAR MEETING, 6:30 p.m., MEC
Apr. 21-23	Spring Break
Apr. 25-28	District Accreditation Review
Apr. 28	Parent Advisory Council, 7:30 a.m., MEC
Apr. 29	Superintendent's Communication Council, 3:45 p.m., MEC
Apr. 30	Student Advisory Council, 7:30 a.m., MEC

Dr. McDaris informed the Board that graduation has been tentatively set for June 12. The last day of school is currently June 14. If more days are missed for snow, this could still change. Dr. McDaris reported that seniors would simply be counted absent for the final day(s) after graduation. He noted that AP testing begins on May 5, and this has caused some stress due to the number of days missed during spring semester. The AP testing dates are set nationally and cannot be changed. He reported there has finally

been talk among legislators and NCAE about the need to revisit calendar legislation. Western counties have been hit very hard this winter. Transylvania has missed 10 days thus far in addition to 10 delayed starts and two early dismissals. Two days have been taken from spring break for make-up. Saturday school was held on February 20, and could be held again on March 6 if more days are missed this week. Dr. McDaris declared his intent to protect the remaining three days of spring break if at all possible. He feels it is very important for students and teachers to have at least a short break before the end of the school year.

11. **Other Items**

Mrs. Norman gave an update from an NCSBA board meeting in Raleigh. She reported that calendar was the major topic of discussion. She also reported favorably on the E-Solutions paperless meeting platform that is being used by NCSBA. She found it to be very user-friendly, and recommended that Transylvania check into using the program.

12. **Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

There was no further business, and ON A MOTION BY MRS. NORMAN, SECONDED BY MRS. FOX, the meeting was adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chairman

Secretary

PERSONNEL REPORT
March 1, 2010

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

Licensed Personnel
None

Classified Personnel
None

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

Licensed Personnel
None

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
Heather McNeely, Teacher, RHS, GCBDB Family Leave effective May 18, 2010, through June 14, 2010

Classified Personnel
None

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

Substitute Teachers
Erica Shelton