

**Minutes
Transylvania County Board of Education
March 6, 2023**

INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME

BUSINESS ITEMS (including amendments and rescissions):

1. Approval of Agenda
2. Public Comment
3. Good News Report
4. Former Students in the Military
5. Consent Agenda:
 - A. Minutes
 - B. Personnel Report
 - C. Non-Faculty Coaches
6. School Calendar Resolution
7. Teacher Recruitment
8. Policy: Fall 2022 PLS Custom Updates
9. Mental Health Update
10. Superintendent's Update
11. Important Dates
12. Central Services Summer Schedule 2023
13. Other Items

The Transylvania County Board of Education met in regular session on March 6, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. at the Morris Education Center. Kimsey Jackson led in a moment of silence and Ron Kiviniemi led the Pledge of Allegiance. Chairman McCoy called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. In addition to approximately nine guests, the individuals listed below were in attendance.

BOARD MEMBERS:

Tawny McCoy, Chair
Kimsey Jackson, Vice Chair
Tanya Dalton
Ron Kiviniemi
Chris Wiener

BOARD ATTORNEY:

Kris Caudle, Campbell Shatley

MEDIA:

Dan DeWitt, Brevard NewsBeat

STAFF:

Dr. Jeff McDaris, Superintendent
Jenny Hunter, Administrative Assistant
Dr. Brian Weaver, Assistant Superintendent
Gabi Juba, Chief Finance Officer
Missy Ellenberger, Director, 9-12 Instruction
Audrey Reneau, Director, Federal Programs
Jen Heatherly, Public Information Officer
Janette Broda, Director, School Nutrition
Chris Whitlock, Director, Technology Services
Greg Stroup, School Resource Officer

1. **Approval of Agenda**
ON A MOTION BY MR. WIENER, SECONDED BY MR. KIVINIEMI, the meeting agenda for March 6, 2023 was unanimously approved as presented.

2. **Public Comment**
Chairman McCoy reviewed the guidelines for public comment.

Susan Lefler - Recently a parent was photographed sitting at a picnic table at BES wearing a tee shirt depicting an "assault or automatic-style" rifle and the slogan, "History of American Defiance." These types of weapons are intended for use by trained military

personnel and are designed to kill human beings. This parent happens to be an elected member of the school board. I have been trying to figure out what message the member wanted to convey to young people. Defiance means open disregard, contempt, or questioning of authority. The reality is that gun violence is the leading cause of death of children under 18. We say we are concerned for our kids' well-being. These same children have to practice emergency shooter drills. After the school shooting at Uvalde, Texas, legislation was passed to register students' DNA in order to identify remains. This is because their bodies are blown to bits. The board is charged with making our schools safe. How is the message like the one on that shirt enhancing our goals?

Alice Wellborn - I have heard a lot about parent rights in last couple of years. I would like to talk about parent responsibilities, specifically attendance. Chronic absenteeism continues to be a major concern. Our rate of chronic absenteeism is 39% as compared to NC as a whole which is 31%. As I have said before, what you see in high school begins in elementary school. Chronic absenteeism starts in elementary school. Neither the superintendent, teachers, or principals can make students come to school. Only parents can do that. And many of them do not. Attendance habits form in kindergarten. Teachers cannot close learning gaps or increase learning outcomes unless kids are in school. I suggest that the board come up with strategies to address the essential role that parents play in our attendance problem. Students benefit greatly when there are partnerships between staff and parents. We should work cooperatively to improve attendance.

Sam Edney - I congratulate this board on its willingness to listen to the public regarding the hiring of a new superintendent. This board is interested in hearing from the public, unlike our commission board members who are uninterested and demeaning to speakers. I recently had a liver transplant. I had doctors from many different parts of the globe, and my doctor was undoubtedly inspired by a teacher. I have run for office in this county. A common complaint is that our kids are leaving. I run a service business here. My employees have to use computers, technology, and attend continuing education regularly. It is a fast changing and highly technical business. We are a service county. Kids who leave will need skills above what I was taught. We need a visionary, an innovator, and a skilled negotiator because we have a commission board that is absolutely willing to ignore the will of voters. Also a great recruiter and an inspiring leader.

3. Good News Report

Dr. McDaris recognized the student artwork from Brevard High School that was on display in the board room and thanked Officer Greg Stroup for attending the meeting. He shared the following good news:

National Board Certifications

The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) offers National Board Certification as a way to 1) recognize the accomplished teaching that is occurring in North Carolina's classrooms, 2) develop and retain accomplished teachers, and 3) generate ongoing improvement in schools nationwide. It is the most respected professional certification available in K-12 education. The certification process evaluates teaching practice through performance-based assessments and is based on rigorous standards that represent what accomplished teachers should know and be able to do. Teachers who earn the certification are eligible for significant pay increases. Congratulations to the following teachers who recently earned NBPTS certification:

Laura Smith, Rosman Middle School
Alana Anderson, Pisgah Forest Elementary School

School Social Workers' Week Mar. 5-11

March 5-11, 2023 is National School Social Workers' Week. This year's theme is "We Rise." School social workers do rise to support school communities. They rise to share hope. They rise to listen and understand. They rise to challenge inequities. They rise to support students and families. School social workers work with crisis interventions and help identify and report child neglect and abuse. Our school social workers are Abby Ammons, Olivia Shuler and Bethany Green. Please join us in saluting these hardworking professionals for the important work they do.

National Read Across America Day - Mar. 2

Thursday, March 2, 2023 was National Read Across America Day in schools and libraries across the country. It also commences Read Across America Week and Read Across America Month. Established by the National Education Association in 1998 to help get kids excited about reading, the day occurs each year on the birthday of beloved children's author Dr. Theodor Seuss Geisel, known to all as "Dr. Seuss." Did you know:

- **Reading has something for everyone.** There is a book for absolutely every interest. Plus, reading to children helps them develop a good habit at an early age.
- **Reading is healthy.** Reading improves brain activity, aids sleep readiness, and reduces stress. Reading can lower blood pressure and heart rate, and can even fight symptoms of depression. Reading regularly slows down the aging of our cognition.
- **Reading makes you smarter.** Reading of any kind increases vocabulary and comprehension skills. It drastically increases our knowledge and makes us more intelligent. Reading stimulates the brain, improves memory, and makes us better writers.

National School Breakfast Week Mar. 6-10

March 6-10, 2023 is National School Breakfast Week. This year's theme, "Dig into School Breakfast," reminds us that school breakfasts help "build" healthy kids and give them a better "foundation" to achieve their goals. Studies show that children who eat school breakfast are more likely to achieve higher levels in reading and math, score higher on standardized tests, have better concentration and memory, be more alert and maintain a healthy weight. Reach out to your child's School Nutrition staff and thank them for their great work.

Brevard High Culinary Team Headed to Jr. Chef Competition

For the North Carolina Junior Chef Competition, teams of two to four students (grades 9-12) enrolled in North Carolina public schools are challenged to work with either an educator or School Nutrition administrator to develop a creative recipe for a school lunch entrée. The recipes must meet the National School Lunch Program nutrition standards, include at least two North Carolina-grown products and one USDA Foods item, be replicable by School Nutrition Programs, and appeal to student tastes. A team of Brevard High School Culinary 3 students entered the NC Jr. Chef Competition with their *Thai Pineapple Fried Rice with Chicken* lunch entrée and qualified for the next round in the state competition.

Arts in Our Schools Month

March is "Arts in Our Schools Month." Arts Education in North Carolina includes dance, music, theater arts, and visual arts—each with its own body of knowledge and skills. The arts shape our lives daily and add depth and dimension to the human journey. Arts Education heightens skills in listening, creativity, understanding human experiences,

creative problem solving, adapting to and respecting diversity, communicating effectively, reading, self-expression, imagination, self-confidence, and self-reliance. Over 95% of all students enrolled in North Carolina public schools have access to Arts Education courses. We urge all citizens to celebrate Arts Education as an essential part of every student’s education.

Kindergarten Rally & Registration for 2023-2024

A reminder that Kindergarten registration for the 2023-2024 school year is coming up soon. A Kindergarten Rally will be held on Thursday, April 6, from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m. at Transylvania Parks and Recreation. Kindergarten registration will be available in all our elementary schools on Monday, April 17 through Friday, April 21 from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., and also from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, April 20. 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, 2023 are eligible to start kindergarten this fall. For enrollment forms and more information visit our website www.tcsnc.org.

Congratulations to Our “Of the Year” Educators for 2023-2024

Congratulations to the educators listed below who were named as “Of the Year” educators for 2023-2024 by their peers. An awards program will be held on Tuesday, April 18, 2023 at 5:30 p.m. in the Rogow Room of the Transylvania County Library. The district Teacher of the Year (TOY) and District Teacher Assistant of the Year (TAOY) winners will be announced at the program.

BES

TOY Nancy Frady
TAOY Pat Rich

RES

TOY Breanna Morris
TAOY Michelle Mason

Rookie of the Year

Will Lindsey, BHS

BHS

TOY Erica Thompson
TAOY Nijayah Cruell

RHS

TOY Sarah Carson
TAOY Bethany Green

Principal of the Year

Scott Strickler, BHS

BMS

TOY Justin Ausburn
TAOY Amanda LaRowe

RMS

TOY Alissa Cook

Student Services

Person of the Year

Jaime Dulberg, DRS

DRS

TOY Julie Bowman

TCH

TOY Samantha Jones
TAOY Amelia Waycaster

Media/Technology

Person of the Year

Alicia LaDow, PFES

PFES

TOY Baylee Hale
TAOY Mary Palmer

4. Former Students in the Military

The board recognized the list of former students from Brevard High School, Rosman High School, and Davidson River School who are currently serving or have previously served in the U.S. Military. There were no new names on the list.

5. Consent Agenda

ON A MOTION BY MR. KIVINIEMI, SECONDED BY MR. JACKSON, the minutes of the November 7, November 21, December 5, and December 19, 2022 meetings; the personnel report for March 6, 2023 (attached), and the non-faculty coaches for spring sports 2023 (see below) were approved by 4:1 majority vote (FOR: Dalton, Jackson, Kiviniemi, McCoy; AGAINST: Wiener).

RMS

Dillon Zachary, Head Baseball
 Shaun Mason, Assistant Baseball
 Brent Metcalf, Head Softball
 Brett Owen, Assistant Softball

RHS

Shawn Lyday, Assistant Baseball
 Brian Bullock, Assistant Baseball
 Nathan Bumgarner, Head Men's Golf
 Bobby Ward, Head JV Softball
 Erik Owen, Assistant Softball
 Shannon Allison, Head Women's Track
 Joanna Allen, Assistant Track

BMS

Krew Owenby, Assistant Baseball
 Kenneth Barton, Head Golf
 Chappie Powell, Head Girls' Soccer
 John Felty, Assistant Soccer
 Jackie Witherspoon, Head Boy's Track
 Chelsea Gray, Head Girls' Track
 Jernail Radford, Assistant Track

BHS

Scotty Ruff, Head Men's Varsity Baseball
 Chuck Owenby, Assistant Baseball
 Craig Long, Head Women's Varsity Soccer
 David McNeill, Head Varsity Softball
 Chad Owenby, Assistant Softball
 Scott Keely, Head Men's Tennis

6. School Calendar Resolution

Dr. McDaris reported that on December 12, 2022, the North Carolina House Select Committee on An Education System for North Carolina's Future issued its finding that the current school calendar law is not best suited to the needs of students and educators and that local boards of education should be given greater calendar flexibility. The Select Committee recommended the "General Assembly take action and change the school calendar law." A number of statewide and local school calendar bills have been filed in the current legislative session to give more control to the local boards to create a school calendar that better fits the needs of their students and community. The board reviewed a resolution in support of an amendment to the current school calendar law to allow local control of school calendars. MR. JACKSON MOVED to approve the resolution and MR. KIVINIEMI SECONDED. During discussion, the board discussed sending the resolution to all legislators including Senate Pro Tem Phil Berger. Mr. Wiener discussed adding language to address the high school schedule and MOVED TO AMEND THE MOTION to say that if the legislature does not take the necessary action to resolve this issue with the school board, the local board reserves the authority to take action of its own accord. There was no second and the amendment failed.

Mr. Jackson discussed not being able to align the school calendar with community college calendars and the problems that creates for dual enrolled students and those who graduate in the fall after community colleges have already started their spring semesters. He asked if any special dispensations were possible. Dr. McDaris noted that we were able to align calendars in some previous years when we were granted weather waivers.

THE QUESTION WAS CALLED and the motion to adopt the calendar resolution passed unanimously on a roll call vote (see attached). Chairman McCoy read the resolution aloud. She indicated that she would ask the Board of Commissioners, Rosman Town Council, and Brevard City Council to consider adopting similar resolutions advocating for calendar flexibility.

7. Teacher Recruitment

Dr. Brian Weaver gave a report on teacher recruitment efforts. He reported that the normal hiring season for teachers is March through August. Now is it every month due to increased turnover. Exit interviews show that many of those who leave indicate career change as the reason why. Early retirements are more prevalent also. Trend data

shows that more employees retire with 25-30 years rather than the usual 30. There is higher turnover for classified staff also (bus drivers, custodians, teacher assistants, etc.). To help address this issue, Dr. Weaver presented a proposal for an employee referral incentive bonus. The incentive states that all Transylvania County Schools employees, both part time and full time, are eligible for \$750 referral bonus if they refer a candidate who is hired and works a minimum of 90 days. There is no limit on the number of referral bonuses an employee may receive. This referral incentive is available from March 7, 2023 through December 31, 2023. Dr. Weaver reported that last year from March to December we hired 60 individuals. Based on that, he estimated that we may have 15-25 employees receive the referral bonus for a potential cost of less than \$20,000.

During discussion, Dr. McDaris reported that new teachers right out of college are attracted to the growing urban centers in other parts of the state where they have industry and jobs and their student populations are projected to double. Dr. Weaver reported that although our system has one of the five lowest vacancy rates in the state and a retention rate of 92.8%, we are seeing this trend as well. Many school systems have begun offering signing bonuses. Dr. Weaver addressed numerous questions from board members regarding screening and interview procedures, job fairs, lateral entry, loss of incentives such as master’s pay and scholarships for teacher assistants, student teacher programs, internships, and recruiting retired teachers.

Board members indicated support for the referral incentive, and ON A MOTION BY MR. WEAVER, SECONDED BY MR. KIVINIEMI, the employee referral bonus was unanimously approved.

8. Policy: Fall 2022 PLS Custom Updates

Dr. Brian Weaver present as first-read information 29 policies from the NCSBA Fall 2022 PLS (Policies to Lead the Schools) Custom Updates and one policy that contains a local change. Some of the policies have only minor changes and others contain substantive changes. There were no new policies. Approval of the revised policies will be requested at the next regular meeting on March 20.

Dr. Weaver addressed questions from board members and reviewed the process for updates based on changes from the General Assembly and recommendations from board attorneys. Mr. Weiner expressed numerous questions and concerns about specific policy revisions.

Chairman McCoy called a ten-minute recess at 8:10 p.m. The meeting resumed at 8:20 p.m.

Chairman McCoy recommended that board members send any other remaining questions to Dr. Weaver or Mr. Caudle to address before the next meeting. Mr. Weiner requested that before the next meeting the policies be grouped into those with minor changes and those with substantive changes and that only the group with minor changes come back for action at the next meeting. There was consensus agreement with this request. ON A MOTION BY MR. KIVINIEMI, SECONDED BY MR. WIENER, the 30 policies listed below were unanimously accepted as first-read information.

Fall 2022 Custom Updates	
1510/4200/7270	School Safety
2120	Code of Ethics for School Board Members
2123	Board Member Opportunities for Development

2130	Board Member Compensation and Expenses
3102	Online Instruction
3220	Technology in the Educational Program
3420	Student Promotion and Accountability
3460	Graduation Requirements
3620	Extracurricular Activities and Student Organizations
4050	Children of Military Families
4100	Age Requirements for Initial Entry
4110	Immunization and Health Requirements for School Admission
4125 (local change)	Homeless Students
4155	Assignment to Classes
4220	Student Insurance Program
4240/7312	Child Abuse and Related Threats to Child Safety
4270/6145	Concussion and Head Injury
4300	Student Behavior Policies
4334/5035/7345	Use of Unmanned Aircraft (Drones)
4400	Attendance
4700	Student Records
6125	Administering Medicines to Students
6140	Student Wellness
6220	Operation of School Nutrition Services
6230	School Meal and Competitive Foods Standards
6305	Safety and Student Transportation Services
7130	Licensure
7241	Drug and Alcohol Testing of Commercial Motor Vehicle Operators
7360/8225	Crowdfunding on Behalf of the School System
7510	Leave

9. Mental Health Update

Director Missy Ellenberger gave an update on student mental health. Underlying factors affecting adolescent mental health include COVID-related social disruption/isolation, social media, peer acceptance, home life, socio-economic problems, and decreased social cohesiveness. These most commonly manifest as anxiety, depression, self-harm, risk-taking behaviors, or eating disorders. Prevention strategies that promote mental wellness can help prevent a range of negative experiences such as drug use and violence. Fostering healthy relationships with adults and peers at school and in the community is key to providing a sense of connectedness. Youth who feel connected are significantly less likely to consider attempting suicide. Mrs. Ellenberger reported there was a 50% lower rate of reported suicide attempts from August to December this year than during the same time last year. Our district has 16 school counselors and social workers. The recommended ratio is 1:250 students. Our ratio is far below that. Mrs. Ellenberger addressed questions from the board about school-age hospitalizations for mental health issues and the need for more resources.

10. Superintendent’s Update

Dr. McDaris gave an update on ChatGPT, the Artificial Intelligence chatbot from OpenAI, and its impact on job seekers. A recent survey indicated that:

- 48 percent of companies surveyed and using ChatGPT say it already has replaced some workers because it can be used to streamline many workplace functions.
- Job seekers who are experienced in using ChatGPT might get a leg up in the application process, as 90 percent of business leaders say ChatGPT experience is a beneficial skill.
- 49 percent of companies surveyed currently use ChatGPT and 30 percent plan to.

- 25 percent of companies using ChatGPT have already saved more than \$75,000 each.
- 93 percent of current users say they plan to expand their use of ChatGPT.

Dr. McDaris reported that the pending closure of the Canton paper mill will be an economic blow to that county and its schools. When Brevard lost its main industry with the closures of DuPont and Ecusta, many families moved away to find work elsewhere. Brevard was able to survive in part by focusing on and expanding its tourism economy.

11. Important Dates

Mar. 20	Teacher workday		
Mar. 20	REGULAR MEETING	6:30 p.m.	MEC
Apr. 3	REGULAR MEETING	6:30 p.m.	MEC
Apr. 6	Kindergarten Rally	4:00 - 6:00 p.m.	Trans. Co. Parks & Recreation
Apr. 7	Remote learning day		
Apr. 10-14	Spring break		
Apr. 17-21	Kindergarten Registration	M, Tu, W, Th, F 8:30am - 2:30pm; Th 4:00 - 6:00pm	BES, PFES, RES, TCH
Apr. 18	“Of the Year” Awards Ceremony	5:30 p.m.	Trans. Co. Library Rogow Room
Apr. 24	TCS STEAM Expo	4:00 - 7:00 p.m.	Trans. Co. Parks & Recreation
Apr. 25	National Technical Honor Society Induction - BHS	9:30 a.m.	BHS Auditorium
Apr. 26	National Technical Honor Society Induction - RHS	10:45 a.m.	RHS Auditorium
Apr. 28	Remote learning day		
May 1	REGULAR MEETING		
May 15	REGULAR MEETING		
May 18	TC Scholars Recognition Evening	5:00 p.m.	BHS
May 29	Memorial Day holiday		

Mr. Kiviniemi asked why there is no meeting scheduled for Monday, April 17. Dr. McDaris explained that is the Monday after spring break and no one will be working that week to prepare an agenda packet. Mr. Kiviniemi recommended that the board send its budget request to the county manager before May 1. Dr. McDaris noted there has been no activity yet on the Senate budget. Ms. Juba indicated that she would present on the capital budget at the next regular meeting.

12. Central Services Summer Schedule 2023

Dr. McDaris presented the 2023 summer schedule for central services and other administrative offices. Nine 40-hour weeks consisting of four 10-hour days will begin on Monday, June 19 and end on Thursday, August 17. Offices will be open 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday. Offices will be closed on Fridays and on Tuesday, July 4 for the Independence Day holiday. The regular five-day schedule will resume on Monday, August 21.

13. **Other Items**

Mr. Wiener asked if the board should schedule another meeting in April in terms of the superintendent search. Attorney Kris Caudle stated that the board would need a closed session in April. Potential dates will be discussed.

Mr. Kiviniemi asked for the projected amount of capital funding that the commissioners are holding. Ms. Juba reported it is at least \$25 million.

Chairman McCoy reminded everyone to wish Mr. Kiviniemi a happy birthday.

Mr. Kiviniemi stated that a speaker at one of the listening sessions asked to see board members' biographies posted on the district website. Dr. McDaris stated that practice will be resumed provided that all members provide a biography to be posted.

Mr. Jackson asked for written definitions of the responsibilities of the board of education and the responsibilities of the board of commissioners, plus a description of all the monies the county is required by law to provide to the school board (fines & forfeitures, sales tax, etc.) Mr. Caudle indicated that that Campbell Shatley could provide this.

Chairman McCoy gave a reminder that board members are to be at the Education Center on Monday, March 13, at 5:00 p.m. to pick up their packets containing the superintendent applications. Paula Lovitt with Campbell Shatley will hand deliver the packets.

There was no further business, and ON A MOTION BY MR. JACKSON, SECONDED BY MRS. DALTON, the meeting was adjourned at 9:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chairman

Secretary

PERSONNEL REPORT
March 6, 2023

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

Licensed Personnel

Erin Rogers, Teacher, BES, effective April 28, 2023
Cassandra Smatana, Teacher & Coach, effective June 15, 2023
Lisa Smith, Teacher, BMS, effective June 15, 2023
Zachary Stroup, Teacher & Coach, RMS, effective April 7, 2023

Classified Personnel

None

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

Licensed Personnel

None

Classified Personnel

Kiana Pittman, Teacher Assistant, TCH, effective March 7, 2023
Rosalia Valdez, Custodian, BMS, effective March 20, 2023

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

Licensed Personnel

Bethany Green, from Distance Learning Facilitator and ISS Coordinator, RMS & RHS, to School Social Worker, RHS-based, effective March 6, 2023
Robin Lavery, from Reading Specialist, RES, to Multilingual Learner Teacher, RES, effective August 21, 2023

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

Sasha Jones
Sheila Mooney
Allyson Smith

Substitute School Nutrition Workers

None

RESOLUTION BY THE TRANSYLVANIA COUNTY
BOARD OF EDUCATION SUPPORTING
LOCAL CONTROL OF SCHOOL CALENDARS

WHEREAS, the North Carolina law provides the Transylvania County Board of Education powers of supervision and control of the public schools located within Transylvania County;

WHEREAS, local control over establishing school calendars is an integral component of school system supervision and the administrative powers with which the Transylvania County Board of Education has been vested;

WHEREAS, in 2004 the North Carolina General Assembly set a statewide, mandatory start and end date for all school districts (the school calendar law);

WHEREAS, the North Carolina General Assembly amended the school calendar law in 2012 to further restrict the starting date for schools;

WHEREAS, the mandated school start date is no earlier than the Monday closest to August 26 and the end date is no later than the Friday closest to June 11;

WHEREAS, the school calendar law resulted in school starting no earlier than August 29 for the 2022-2023 school year, and no earlier than August 28 for the 2023-2024 school year;

WHEREAS, a late August start date means the schools within Transylvania County are unable to complete the first semester until mid to late January;

WHEREAS, the school calendar law requires high school students to take first semester exams after the winter break, which negatively impacts students and faculty and further, is an inefficient use of instructional time;

WHEREAS, the school calendar law does not align with community college and university calendars, making it nearly impossible for high school students who graduate at the end of the first semester to enroll in college courses in January because college courses start before or at the same time as high school students complete final exams;

WHEREAS, exams for Advanced Placement classes are given on the same day nationwide, and the current calendar law shortens the amount of time that Transylvania County students have to learn the material and prepare before the exam;

WHEREAS, it is well-documented through multiple studies that children will experience a phenomenon known as learning loss during breaks, which has a disproportionate impact on low-income children;

WHEREAS, with little flexibility built into the calendar, scheduling make-up days is extremely challenging, increasing the likelihood of using unpopular days like spring break and Saturdays as make-up days;

WHEREAS, with little flexibility built into the calendar, scheduling workdays and professional development during the school year for faculty and staff is almost impossible during the Fall semester and remains challenging in the Spring semester, despite the significant increase in areas which faculty and staff are required by law to receive training (e.g., LETRS);

WHEREAS, fall sports and band programs have not changed to coincide with the State-mandated school calendar causing some football and band events to occur before school begins;

WHEREAS, neither charter schools nor private schools are required to follow the school calendar law;

WHEREAS, allowing schools to start earlier in August will not impact the overall length of the summer break as the school year will also end earlier;

WHEREAS, parents overwhelmingly support a school calendar where the Fall semester ends in December;

WHEREAS, local school boards are better equipped to understand the balancing act of meeting the community's needs and maximizing student success;

WHEREAS, restoring local control of school calendars will allow the Transylvania County Board of Education to meet the calendar preferences of Transylvania County's families, educators, and businesses in our community while allowing for innovative experimental approaches to improve student achievement; and

WHEREAS, on December 12, 2022, the North Carolina House Select Committee on An Education System for North Carolina's Future issued its finding that the current school calendar law is not best suited to the needs of students and educators and that local boards of education should be given greater calendar flexibility; the Select Committee recommended the "General Assembly take action and change the school calendar law."

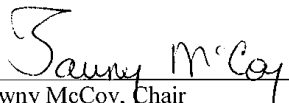
NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Transylvania County Board of Education supports an amendment to the current school calendar law, providing local school boards more flexibility in the start date of the school calendar; and

BE IF FURTHER RESOLVED that:

1. The Chair and Superintendent are authorized to disseminate this Resolution to members of the North Carolina Legislature.
2. The Board encourages parents, students, and other community members to contact their North Carolina Legislators to advocate for calendar flexibility.

3. The Board requests the Transylvania County Commissioners, and other local governments within Transylvania County, to adopt a resolution advocating calendar flexibility.

Adopted by the Transylvania County Board of Education this 6th day of March 2023.



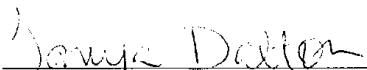
Tawny McCoy, Chair



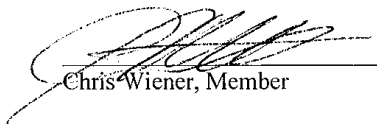
Kimsey Jackson, Vice Chair



Ron Kiviniemi, Member



Tanya Dalton, Member



Chris Wiener, Member