

**Minutes
Transylvania County Board of Education
March 15, 2010**

INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME

BUSINESS ITEMS

1. Approval of Agenda
2. Public Comment
3. Good News Report
4. Resolution of Recognition, Thanks, Commendation and Congratulations
5. Former Students in the Military
6. Consent Agenda:
 - A. Minutes
 - B. Personnel Report
7. Non-Faculty Coaches
8. School Calendar for 2010-2011
9. Calendar Issues
10. Dropout Report for 2008-2009
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 15, 2010 at the Morris Education Center. Present were Chris Whitmire, Chairman; Tawny McCoy, Vice Chairman; Shelia Norman and Cindy Petit. Also present were Dr. Jeff McDaris, Superintendent; Jenny Hunter, Administrative Assistant; Norris Barger, Director of Business Services, Dr. Bo Williams, Director of Testing and Policy; Dr. Scott Elliott, Director of 9-12 Curriculum; Lenora Carver, *Transylvania Times*, and approximately 10 guests. Jacob Crabtree, Rosman High School, was the student representative. Mrs. Petit gave the invocation and Mrs. Norman led the Pledge of Allegiance. Chairman Whitmire called the meeting to order. He reported that Sue Fox was out of town.

1. Approval of Agenda

ON A MOTION BY MRS. MCCOY, SECONDED BY MRS. PETIT, the meeting agenda for March 15, 2010 was approved as presented.

2. Public Comment

Larry Chapman, candidate for the Transylvania County Board of Commissioners, informed the Board that he would like to meet with department heads and principals over the next few months in order to learn more about the school system. The Board welcomed this idea and suggested that Mr. Chapman contact the superintendent's office to make arrangements.

3. Good News Report

Dr. McDaris reported the following good news items:

MARCH IS NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH

The Department of Child Nutrition and the TCS Nutrition Committee are sponsoring a Fun and Fit Activity Planner and Art Contest in celebration of National Nutrition Month. One county activity plan winner will be selected for each grade K-8. In the

art contest, one county winner for each grade K-8 and one county winner for each high school will be selected. Winners will be announced on March 31. Entries will be evaluated based on originality, creativity and compliance with USDA dietary guidelines. Winners will receive a B1G1F sandwich coupon from Sunrise Café and a free muffin from Bracken Mountain Bakery.

WCU MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHERS OF TOMORROW CONFERENCE

On February 23, students from BMS and RMS traveled to Western Carolina University's Ramsey Center for the Teachers of Tomorrow College Access Conference. Students heard guest speakers from the education field and participated in breakout sessions on education topics. Topics included college access, scholarships, financial aid, diversity issues, teaching in today's society, and the Teaching Fellows Program of North Carolina. Special thanks to Dr. Kim Elliott who helped organize the event, and the BMS and RMS principals and staff who helped chaperone. Principals reported that the event was a great way to spark students' curiosity and open their minds to the possibilities of going to college and teaching as a career.

PFES CELEBRATES "NO NAME CALLING" WEEK

Students at Pisgah Forest Elementary School participated in National "No Name Calling" Week during the week of January 25-29. The event included lessons and activities on the importance of words and how we treat each other, self esteem, and attitude. The week culminated with students making a chain of footprints down the halls of the school. The footprints represented the fact that PFES is "taking a stand" against name calling and bullying. PFES would like to be a role model for a "No Name Calling" community.

RMS PEER TEAM TRAINING

Seventeen Rosman Middle School students attended a peer team training session at the Transylvania Boys & Girls Club on February 19. Led by Ren Uriarte from the Center for Dialogue along with RMS staffers Denise Reese and Ashley Witt, the training included exercises in team building, improving communication skills, listening and mediation strategies, and defining team vision. The participants were selected by their classmates as being responsible and caring individuals who have the skills to serve as leaders. Peer team members may serve as campus guides, tutors and peer mediators. They are Julia Crain, Haley Parker, Madison Holden, Hannah Shugart, Alex McNeely, Luke Owen, Brianna Cole, Logan Hall, Benny Buchanan, Chase Brooks, Falyn McDonald, Hannah Reese, Kimberly Holliday, Jacey Voris, and Nich McCall.

BMS COMIC LIFE PROGRAM

Thanks to a grant from the Transylvania County Educational Foundation, Brevard Middle School will purchase *Comic Life*, a graphic editing software package/site license. *Comic Life* provides a simple interface for students to integrate images, captions, speech balloons, and other forms of text into visually sophisticated projects while focusing on content and storytelling. The software is especially useful for engaging students who have difficulty with reading comprehension. Teachers Chris Dodson and Cathy Zandecki are enthusiastic about the future projects *Comic Life* will help create.

BLUE DEVILS RAISE FUNDS FOR HAITI RELIEF

Students at Brevard High School raised \$300 through the “Mr. and Mrs. Blue Devil” Competition held during Winter Spirit Week. The money was presented to Dr. Ora Wells, who traveled to Haiti to assist in recovery efforts.

DRS RECEIVES COMMUNITY & CHURCH SUPPORT

Several community members and local churches have provided support to Davidson River School programs and students. Mrs. Peterman, a local retiree, donated \$500 for a program to help motivate students to read. The local Bookmobile is also involved with this endeavor. Another retiree, Darlene Thompson, and her family supplied inflatable beds, blankets and linens for students when needed. Mrs. Thompson also volunteers at the school. Blue Ridge Quick Print has sponsored students in need of clothing and personal items. Joy Outreach Fellowship Church has adopted DRS, providing prayer support, maternity clothes, jackets and other items for students and baked goods to thank the staff. St. Timothy United Methodist Church also sent baked goods and teaching supplies to thank the staff.

AP TEST FEE REDUCTION GRANT

The NCDPI Division of K-12 Curriculum and Instruction was recently awarded an AP Test Fee Reduction Grant. The grant will allow NCDPI to provide funding for fees associated with AP (Advanced Placement) and/or IB (International Baccalaureate) tests for students who take AP and/or IB courses and receive free or reduced lunch.

4. **Resolution of Recognition**

ON A MOTION BY MRS. PETIT, SECONDED BY MRS. NORMAN, the Board adopted the following resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED by the Transylvania County Board of Education that commendations, thanks, congratulations and appreciation be expressed to the person(s) named:

Emma McLeod, Brevard Middle School, for being selected to the 2010
North Carolina All-State Middle School Band
Elisabeth Moore, Brevard High School, for being selected to the 2010
North Carolina All-State High School Band
Jennifer Williams, Brevard High School, for winning a \$175,000
Burroughs Wellcome Fund Career Award for Science and
Mathematics Teachers

Dr. McDaris reported that the Burroughs Wellcome grant is awarded each year to five outstanding science or mathematics teachers in the NC public school system. The grant is paid over a period of five years (\$35,000 per year beginning July 1, 2010 and ending July 31, 2015) to the teacher's school district on behalf of the teacher. The \$35,000 installment is allocated as follows:

- \$10,000 stipend to supplement the teacher's annual salary;
- \$5,000 to an annuity or savings account to be given to the teacher at the conclusion of the five-year award;
- Extra salary support provided by the State Board of Education to ensure that the recipient will receive a 12-month contract;

- \$10,000 to purchase needed equipment/supplies for the teacher's classroom/laboratory, or be shared with the teacher's school/district; and
- \$10,000 to be used at the discretion of the teacher for professional development activities.

Candidates for the award must complete a rigorous application and interview process and exhibit superior knowledge of science or mathematics, excellent teaching skills, demonstrated leadership, and a commitment to continue teaching in the NC Public School System.

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. Two new names were provided, Michael "Mikey" Snipes and Larry Chapman. They will be added to the list.

6. Consent Agenda

ON A MOTION BY MRS. MCCOY, SECONDED BY MRS. NORMAN, the Board approved the minutes from the February 18 and March 1, 2010 meetings and the personnel report for March 15, 2010 (attached)

7. Non-Faculty Coaches

ON A MOTION BY MRS. PETIT, SECONDED BY MRS. MCCOY, John Foster and Eddie Lowery were approved as assistant volunteer coaches for the RMS baseball program. Mr. Foster and Mr. Lowery are first-time coaches with TCS.

8. School Calendar 2010-2011

Dr. McDaris introduced RHS student representative, Jacob Crabtree, to the Board. The Board invited Mr. Crabtree to share any comments or concerns.

Dr. Bo Williams presented the school calendar for 2010-2011 as recommended by the calendar committee. Highlights of the proposed calendar include:

August 25, 2010	First pupil day
January 14, 2011	End of first semester
April 25-29, 2011	Spring break
May 30, 2011	Teacher workday (Memorial Day)
June 8, 2011	End of second semester

Dr. Williams reported that the calendar committee has requested that the Board consider granting 1:00 p.m. early dismissals on January 14, 2011 and June 8, 2011 (or the last day of each semester) to help facilitate remediation. He stated that the 1:00 p.m. dismissal times would permit lunch to be served on those days. The committee has also requested the usual 11:30 a.m. dismissal on December 22, 2010 (or the last pupil day before Christmas break). Dr. Williams reported that the fourth week of April was selected for spring break in order to give students and staff a break closer to the end of the school year. Additionally, teachers have requested that Saturdays be used for make-up as soon as days begin being missed next year. The hope is that by doing so, we can protect spring break, preserve teacher workdays, and prevent the school year from being extended past June 8. Mr. Crabtree spoke in support of the Saturday option. He stated

that students much prefer having Saturday make-up days rather of losing days from spring break.

Chairman Whitmire asked how many days could be used for make-up in next year's calendar. Dr. Williams counted 7-8 days that could be designated for make-up. One of those possibilities would be Good Friday, and Dr. Williams predicted that Good Friday would be used for make-up only as a last resort.

Dr. Williams reported that the only way to complete first semester exams before Christmas would be to start on August 9. Starting on this date would also allow the school year to end by Memorial Day. Mr. Crabtree expressed his support for this scenario.

Dr. McDaris pointed out that mountain counties get penalized by geography and the state calendar law, yet their academic performance is always higher than that of the eastern counties. He gave a reminder that the current calendar law was developed to support travel and tourism, not education. Approval of the 2010-2011 school calendar will be requested at the next regular meeting.

9. Calendar Issues

State calendar law mandates that "the opening date for students shall not be before August 25, and the closing date shall not be after June 10." The State Board of Education may waive this requirement for any LEA that meets eligibility requirements as determined by the LEA's 10-year history of closures (schools closed at least 8 days per year during any 4 of the last 10 years) due to severe weather conditions, energy shortages, power failures, or other emergency situations.

Dr. McDaris reported that the western school districts had numerous disruptions to instruction this year from not only missed days, but also early dismissals and late starts. Transylvania has experienced over 20 such disruptions this year. For this reason, Dr. McDaris proposed a calendar waiver request for the 2010-2011 school year. The waiver requests an opening date of August 9, 2010 and a closing date of May 28, 2011. Board members expressed their support of the waiver because it would restore local control of the calendar. They emphasized the need to inform parents and stakeholders of the possibility of an August 9 start, should the waiver request be approved. Dr. McDaris expressed hope that the State Board of Education would take action on the waiver request at its meeting in May. Mr. Whitmire suggested that if enough districts were to apply for waivers, the State Board might call a special meeting sooner.

Mrs. Norman asked about the possibility of year-round school. Dr. McDaris reported that there are pros and cons to year-round schooling. Should year-round school be considered as an option for this county, it would likely be as a school within a school because some parents would not want it.

ON A MOTION BY MRS. MCCOY, SECONDED BY MRS. NORMAN, the Board unanimously approved the calendar waiver request for the 2010-2011 school year.

10. Dropout Report 2008-2009

Dr. Scott Elliott presented the dropout report for 2008-2009. Transylvania County showed marked improvement with 13 fewer dropouts than the prior year. The district went from 65 dropouts and a rate of 5.04% in 2007-2008 to 52 dropouts and a rate of 4.19% in 2008-2009. This represents a 20% decrease from the prior year and the lowest

dropout number/rate in the last 11 years. Fifteen of the 17 western districts also saw their dropout rates decline. Additionally, the state average dropped from 4.97 to 4.27 percent.

Dr. Elliott shared the following observations regarding the report. There were a disproportionate number of dropouts in ninth grade. Local numbers reflected the state trend of more dropouts at ages 15 and 16 and fewer dropouts at age 17 and older. Males accounted for 67% of all dropouts locally and 59% for the state. Fifty-seven percent did not spend all of their schooling in TCS, and 41% were retained at least once prior to dropping out. Only 4 students (8% of dropouts) were receiving special education services. No AIG students dropped out. Five students were minorities (9.6%) compared to 52.7% of the state's dropouts. A large proportion of dropouts (82.7%) were economically disadvantaged (up from 63.6% last year). By comparison, only 36% of the total population in grades 9-12 was economically disadvantaged. Common reasons given for dropping out were unstable home environments (12); not returning after a long-term suspension (12); lack of engagement (11); and academic difficulty (5). Fewer students withdrew due to work (3) or interest in a GED (2) than in years past.

Dr. Elliott attributed the reduction in dropout numbers to the long-term payoff from programs that were put into place years ago, beginning in the elementary grades, which were designed to help students see the value of staying in school. Chairman Whitmire suggested that the new waiver policy for EOCs could be a contributing factor to the improvement as well.

To further reduce dropouts, Dr. Elliott recommended that more be done to support social and academic transitions to ninth grade. Sixteen is the cut-off age for compulsory attendance. Most students will turn 16 by the end of grade 9. Students who have not had successful transitions to high school are more likely to drop out. Dr. Elliott also feels that a better job can be done in addressing the needs of students who move into the district late in their schooling. High schoolers who transfer to TCS from other districts sometimes have a hard time due to differences in scheduling and course credits. Many find that NC graduation requirements are higher than in their home states, which can be discouraging to at-risk students. Additional support for these students could make a difference in their decision to stay in school.

11. **Facilities and FY11 Budget**

Norris Barger presented the latest current expense changes that are anticipated for FY11:

1*	Decrease in fines and forfeitures	\$40,000
2*	Health insurance 8.9% increase (\$4,527/FTE to \$4,929/FTE)	33,379
3*	Retirement increase (8.75% to 10.53%)	73,469
4*	State discretionary reduction increase	201,301
5	Restore FY09 0.5% pay cut	5,628
6	Supplement increase necessary with step increase	49,348
7	State budget cuts	?
8	OCS core course teacher	52,587
9	Child Nutrition subsidy	?
	Total	\$455,712
	Necessary increase in county appropriation	5.2%
	*Items already passed in NC biennial budget	

Mr. Barger reported that the teacher pay raise has been removed from the list based on information from the Governor's office and both Houses. No salary raises for state employees or teachers are predicted for FY11. Instead, Governor Perdue would like to restore the 0.5% pay cut/flexible furlough to all affected state employees. Mr. Barger reported that Item 6 (teacher supplement increase) would likely be removed also since the teacher step increase has been removed. Mr. Barger reported that state allotments are still very uncertain at this time. He noted that any "Race to the Top" money that North Carolina may receive would be designated for new programs and could not be used to supplant funds for existing programs.

There was some discussion regarding the Child Nutrition subsidy for next year. Estimates for the subsidy ranged from \$100,000 to \$115,000. Mrs. Norman asked whether contracting out child nutrition services would be more cost effective. Dr. McDaris reported that contracting nutrition services would make the school system ineligible to receive certain funds; therefore it would not save money. He noted that sales of supplemental items (Lance crackers, donuts, etc.), which usually increase profits, have been slow this year due to the poor economy.

Mr. Barger reviewed the latest changes to the facilities master plan and capital outlay priority list. He explained that items had been designated A-D to show "must haves", "ought to haves", "nice to haves" and "could wait if necessary." Chairman Whitmire recommended placing some larger capital items strategically higher on the priority list without sacrificing smaller items. He suggested asking principals if any program expenditure items could be eliminated in order to save jobs. Mrs. McCoy stated that she would not disagree with this suggestion, but at the same time would not want to replace recurring items with items that are one-time needs. Dr. McDaris reported that most recurring items (e.g., computer repair and replacement) are necessary in order to continue operating effectively. Mr. Barger gave a reminder that there is flexibility within the budget to respond to changing needs throughout the year.

The Board discussed whether \$18,000 would be sufficient for repairs to the BHS football field. Dr. McDaris and Mr. Barger explained that the field could be made green for that amount; however, the \$18,000 would not provide drainage or any repairs above the bare minimum. Mr. Barger predicted that this item would become an annual expense as long as the field sustains the same levels of wear and tear. He explained that he did not budget more for this item due to the community discussion regarding artificial turf. Mrs. Norman spoke in favor of having the City of Brevard involved in the turf discussions. She stated that the City has a vested interest in improvements to the BHS field because football games bring revenue to local businesses.

Chairman Whitmire suggested regrouping certain items on the priorities list. He also requested the addition of a running total. He discussed identifying certain projects for lottery funds or fund balance allocations and advised taking photos of capital outlay needs for visual impact during presentations.

Dr. McDaris gave a reminder that the county manager has requested the names of school board designees for the two-on-two budget meetings. Mr. Whitmire asked the group for their thoughts. Dr. McDaris stated that the two-on-two meetings have served the boards well in the past by providing an efficient and time-saving way to share preliminary information, thus allowing more time for in-depth discussion at the joint meetings. Mr. Whitmire expressed his preference for the full-board meetings versus the

two-on-two meetings and recommended having no more than one two-on-two meeting. No members were designated as the two-on-two representatives.

12. Important Dates

Mar. 20	First Day of Spring
Mar. 23	League of Municipalities, 2:00 p.m., Transylvania County Library
Apr. 2	Teacher Work Day (Good Friday)
Apr. 10-12	NSBA Annual Conference, Chicago, IL
Apr. 5	REGULAR MEETING, 6:30 p.m., MEC
Apr. 5-23	TC Student Art Exhibit, TC Arts Council
Apr. 8	TC Student Art Exhibit Opening Reception, 4:30-5:30 pm, TC Arts Council
Apr. 8	Kindergarten Orientation; 5:00 p.m.; BES, PFES, RES, TCH
Apr. 21-23	Spring Break
Apr. 25-28	SACS/CASI DISTRICT ACCREDITATION REVIEW (special BOE meeting to be determined)
Apr. 28	Parent Advisory Council, 7:30 a.m., MEC
Apr. 29	Superintendent's Communication Council, 3:45 p.m., MEC
Apr. 29	TCAEOP Awards Evening, 5:30 p.m., BMS Media Center
Apr. 30	Legislative Breakfast, 8:30 a.m., BRCC Flat Rock
Apr. 30	Student Advisory Council, 7:30 a.m., MEC

Dr. McDaris reported that Transylvania County Schools will have two highway billboards this spring advertising open enrollment.

Chairman Whitmire encouraged board members to attend the county commissioner meetings.

Mrs. McCoy gave a reminder of school board ethics training requirements. All board members must complete two hours of ethics training before December 31, 2010. Webinars are available for a cost of \$99 per connection fee plus \$10 per participant. Several webinar dates are offered in April and May.

13. Other Items

The Board recognized student artwork from BHS that was on display in the board room.

Dr. McDaris reported that Policy IC "School Year" specifies that graduation may be set for two days after the last pupil day, or any time thereafter as determined by each senior class. Each of the senior classes would like to hold their graduation ceremony at Brevard Music Center this year. Due to make-up days, the last day for seniors will be Friday, June 11. The last date that the Music Center is available is midday on Saturday, June 12. Therefore, the senior classes have voted on the following graduation schedules:

Brevard High School
Friday, June 11, 2010
6:00 p.m.
Brevard Music Center

Rosman High School
Saturday, June 12, 2010
10:00 a.m.
Brevard Music Center

Because these schedules do not allow for two days between the last day of school and graduation, Dr. McDaris requested that the Board grant an exception to Policy IC for the 2009-2010 year. Dr. Scott Elliott reported that the high schools would schedule final exams for seniors to provide time for remediation and retesting. He also reported that no

seniors would be prevented from graduating due to excessive absences as a result of missing the last two days of the semester (June 14-15). ON A MOTION BY MRS. MCCOY, SECONDED BY MRS. NORMAN, the Board unanimously approved a one-time exception to Policy IC for the 2009-2010 school year in order to allow the Brevard High School and Rosman High School graduations to take place on June 11 and June 12, 2010, respectively. Board members were enthusiastic about having the RHS ceremony at the Brevard Music Center this year. They commented that temperatures in the RHS gym during previous graduations have been very uncomfortable.

14. Public Comment

Chairman Whitmire reviewed the Board's public comment process for Mr. Chapman's benefit. Mr. Chapman asked about the practice of having student representatives at board meetings. Dr. McDaris explained that there is a sign-up/rotation process for the student representatives, all of whom are members of the Superintendent's Student Advisory Council.

There was no further business, and ON A MOTION BY MRS. NORMAN, SECONDED BY MRS. PETIT, the meeting was adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chairman

Secretary

PERSONNEL REPORT
March 15, 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
Carroll Parker, Bus Driver, effective March 16, 2010

- 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
None

Classified Personnel
None

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

Substitute Teachers
Carrie Carlene Johnson
Mary Anne Owen
Jamie Coleman Warren

Substitute Child Nutrition Workers
Brenda Campbell
Linda Orr
Kathleen Roush