

**Minutes  
Transylvania County Board of Education  
April 8, 2019**

INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME

BUSINESS ITEMS:

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
6. District Graduation Project
7. Offer to Purchase Right-of-Way
8. FY20 Budget
9. Superintendent's Update
10. Important Dates
11. Reports from Board Training Event
12. Public Comment
13. Other Items
14. Closed Session

The Transylvania County Board of Education met in regular session at 6:30 p.m. on April 8, 2019 at the Morris Education Center. Marty Griffin led in a moment of silence and Ron Kiviniemi led the Pledge of Allegiance. Chairman McCoy welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order. In addition to approximately three guests, the following board members, staff, and others were in attendance:

**BOARD MEMBERS:**

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

**STAFF:**

Dr. Jeff McDaris, Superintendent  
Jenny Hunter, Administrative Assistant  
Dr. Brian Weaver, Assistant Superintendent  
Norris Barger, Director, Business Services  
Kevin Smith, School-Community Relations Coordinator  
Josh Tinsley, TCAE President  
Missy Ellenberger, Asst. Principal, BHS  
Patrick Chapman, Asst. Principal, RHS  
Scott Thomas, School Resource Officer

**BOARD ATTORNEY:**

John Henning, Jr.

**MEDIA:**

John Lanier, *Transylvania Times*

1. **Approval of Agenda**  
ON A MOTION BY MRS. DOMOKUR, SECONDED BY MR. KIVINIEMI, the meeting agenda for April 8, 2019 was approved as presented.
2. **Public Comment**  
Josh Tinsley, TCAE president, reported that NCAE is sponsoring a "Day of Action" rally in Raleigh on May 1, 2019 to protest underfunded programs. They are requesting legislative support for five major issues: Medicaid expansion; a \$15 minimum wage across the board; reinstatement of advanced degree compensation for educators;

meeting national standards for numbers of school guidance counselors and social workers; and a 5% pay increase for all school employees and retirees. A number of counties have canceled school on May 1 to allow their teachers to attend the rally. TCAE is advising faculty and staff who want to participate to take a personal day. Mr. Tinsley encouraged the board to support TCS educators' participation and advocacy.

### 3. Good News Report

Dr. McDaris reported the following items:

#### *PUBLIC SCHOOL VOLUNTEER WEEK*

Public School Volunteer Week, April 22-26, 2019, provides a yearly opportunity for schools and families to honor the dedicated volunteers whose contributions support student success. Church volunteer groups, Augustine Literacy tutors, and vibrant parent organizations donate thousands of hours to our schools each year. There are currently over 430 active volunteers in our system who have submitted background checks and may assist in our schools. To the parents, grandparents, and community members whose experience, expertise, and passion make a difference in the lives of children each and every day, we say thank you for proving the motto, "teaching everyone takes everyone."

#### *CELEBRATIONS IN APRIL*

School Librarian Day is April 4, 2019, and School Library Month is celebrated throughout April. Assistant Principals' Week is April 8-12. Our thanks to the school media coordinators and assistant principals in our schools for all that they do.

#### *CONGRESS-BUNDESTAG SCHOLARSHIP*

Miranda Smith (BHS) has earned a full scholarship to study in Germany for 10 months as a Congress-Bundestag Scholar. The Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange (CBYX) was created in 1983 to strengthen ties between Germany and the United States through citizen diplomacy. Sponsored by the U.S. State Department, the CBYX is for motivated high school students who want to experience a culture and learn a language through a full immersion experience. The exchange year, valued at over \$10,000, includes placement with a German host family, admission to a German high school, pre-departure training and orientation programs, meetings with government officials, cultural excursions to the German Bundestag and German cities, and supplementary language lessons. Over 24,000 students have prepared themselves for a global world by participating in the CBYX program.

#### *MASONRY WINNERS*

Brevard and Rosman students did well in the Land of Sky Masonry Competition held at the Haywood County Fairgrounds on March 15. In Level 1 competition, Braden Mackey (BHS) took first place and Gavyn Rutledge (RHS) took 3<sup>rd</sup> place. In Level 2 competition, Baxter Swicegood (BHS) won 6<sup>th</sup> place, Zeb Sweet (BHS) took 7<sup>th</sup> place, and Marissa Bautista (BHS) won 9<sup>th</sup> place. To prepare for the competition, students worked during class and after school during Open Shop building sample projects. Open Shop allows students to come in and work for the full 2-3 hour time period that they will experience at the actual competition. It also gives more time for one-on-one instruction. The next competition will be the state SkillsUSA contest in Greensboro on April 9-11. Braden Mackey and Marshall Owens (RHS) will be competing in Level 1 and Marissa Bautista will be competing in Level 2.

*RMS FBLA AWARDS*

Congratulations to the Rosman Middle School Future Business Leaders of America who took several awards in their very first year competing at the North Carolina State FBLA Conference:

- 1st Place, Community Service - Reagan Chapman, Kyndall Harrison, and Meadow McCall. These girls also qualify for Nationals. Thanks to Mrs. Smith for her guidance and support to the team as they assembled their project.
- 2nd Place, Public Speaking - Shelby Tinsley
- 3rd Place, Desktop Publishing - Bailey Owen and Claire Owen
- Top Ten, Computer Slide Show - McKenna Baker and Myah Owen
- Top Ten, Critical Thinking - Madison Aiken and Vanessa Enriquez

Dr. McDaris recognized the student artwork from Brevard High School that was on display in the board room and thanked Officer Thomas for attending the meeting.

**4. Former Students in the Military**

The board 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. There were no new names on the list.

**5. Consent Agenda**

ON A MOTION BY MR. GRIFFIN, SECONDED BY MRS. WELLBORN, the board unanimously approved the minutes of the March 18, 2019 meeting and the personnel report for April 8, 2019 (attached).

**6. District Graduation Project**

Assistant Principals Missy Ellenberger (BHS) and Patrick Chapman (RHS) gave a report on the revised graduation project for Transylvania County Schools. Mrs. Ellenberger thanked graduation project coordinators Meredith Licht (BHS) and Jake Raines (RHS), and Vera Cubero, instructional technology facilitator, for all their help. Beginning with the class of 2021, all Transylvania County students will complete a graduation portfolio which will be completed throughout the student's four years of high school. The goal is to refine the project to include career and college readiness, improve communication skills, and infuse digital skills. A second goal is to free senior English from the sole responsibility for the project by spreading the project across four years rather than one semester during senior year (which has been a source of stress and anxiety for students) and involving teachers from multiple disciplines.

The graduation project will consist of five components: (1) a research paper that must relate to the graduation project; (2) a project proposal that will be presented to a panel of teachers, students and a member of the portfolio committee; (3) a research-based project completed prior to graduation that must include interactions with a mentor and a visual journal documenting progress; (4) presentation of the project to a panel of juniors, teachers, administrators, district leaders, and/or community members (presentations would take place during designated early release days and/or during the school day); and (5) a digital portfolio containing elements of career and college readiness for all four years of high school as well as the proposal, visual journal, and presentation aid. During freshman year, students will begin the portfolio and learn about project components. Sophomores will explore options for the project and research paper. Juniors will complete the proposal, defend the proposal to a panel, and complete the research paper (English 11). Seniors will complete the project, present the project to a panel, and

submit the digital portfolio. Mrs. Ellenberger noted that nothing would prevent students from working on the components ahead of time or over the summer. Students who transfer in mid-process would pick up on the checklist at that level. The project, proposal, presentation and portfolio will be evaluated holistically using a four-point rubric for each component (mastery, proficient, developing, and incomplete).

Board members asked a number of questions and were very complimentary of the new process. It was noted that the four-year pacing and simplified rubrics would give students who fall behind time to get help and try again. Board members were also pleased that the process would give students more opportunities to practice public speaking skills before being interviewed during senior year for college scholarships.

**7. Offer to Purchase Right-of-Way**

During recent meetings, the board has discussed an offer by the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) to purchase a right-of-way at Brevard High School for a 10' wide concrete sidewalk connecting the current sidewalk in front of the new gym and the driveway closest to Gallimore Road. The amount of the offer is \$3,160 (the equivalent of \$40,000 per acre). The board has received confirmation that the project will not interfere with future bond construction at the school. Mr. Barger reported that the DOT was unable to find funds to install lights. Mr. Barger spoke with Daniel Cobb at the City of Brevard, and the City agreed to provide some LED lighting for the pathway to improve safety. Mr. Barger also reported that school system funds could be used to add bollards at each entry for a cost of approximately \$400 each. MR. GRIFFIN MADE A MOTION, SECONDED BY MRS. WELLBORN, to accept the offer to purchase the right of way. The board discussed a possible start date and reached consensus to ask DOT to begin as soon as possible in order to complete the project before the start of the next school year. The board thanked Mr. Barger for his work resolving concerns and questions, AND THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

**8. FY20 Budget**

Norris Barger presented the latest local current expense and capital outlay drafts for the 2019-2020 fiscal year. The board reviewed changes and discussed the potential impact of state legislative proposals that may not be decided for weeks or months. The board will hold a special meeting on Thursday, April 25, at 7:30 a.m. to approve the FY20 budget request. The budget request is typically submitted to the county by May 1 each year.

**9. Superintendent's Update**

Dr. McDaris reported the following items:

- The school system is exploring the possibility of establishing a health clinic at Rosman High School and Middle School as part of the coming bond construction. This would be a way to provide health support to families in the community.
- A recent investigative piece by WRAL in Raleigh has revealed that over last three years, the North Carolina legislature has made more than \$100 million in taxes available to pay for students to enroll in private schools. They have spent better than two-thirds of that, and \$7.14 million alone has been spent to send students to six private schools located in Raleigh, Fayetteville and eastern NC. Public schools, including public charter schools, have transparency rules in place detailing how tax dollars are spent. We also have mandated testing and other indicators to demonstrate student achievement and understanding. As WRAL reported, private

schools that receive voucher funds do not have to provide evidence that students attend class, much less demonstrate they are learning anything. While there is a requirement for standardized testing, it is neither the same, nor remotely equivalent, to the testing of students in public schools. These schools do not even have to report how the money they received is used--whether it helps pay teachers, pays for school supplies, finances the athletics program, or outfits the school executives' office suite.

- A recent report in the industry daily, *Tech Advocate*, discusses how China is out-innovating the world by raising venture capital at unprecedented levels, creating transportation links between major cities, and producing more STEM graduates than anyone else, all in an effort to be the dominant player globally. China is also leading in artificial intelligence (AI) education, with the goal of establishing global innovation centers for AI in Chinese universities no later than 2030. The impact of this effort is already being felt in K-12 classrooms throughout China. The goal to master AI and machine intelligence will affect not only social capital, but also other areas such as military strength. The Chinese see harnessing the power of machine intelligence as advantageous. This is another reason why the U.S., and here in our county, the efforts to position our students for this new wave is critical.

#### 10. Important Dates

Apr. 15-19	Spring break
May 1	NCAE "Day of Action" Educators March in Raleigh
May 6	REGULAR MEETING, 6:30 p.m., MEC
May 7	"Taste of Transylvania," 5:30 p.m., Brevard Lumberyard
May 16	TC Scholars Banquet & Awards Presentation, 5:00 p.m., BHS
May 20	REGULAR MEETING, 6:30 p.m., MEC
May 21	TCAE "Friends of Education" Banquet, 6:00 p.m., Rogow Room
May 27	Memorial Day holiday
May 30	"Teacher of the Year" Awards Reception, 5:30 p.m., Rogow Room
June 3	REGULAR MEETING, 6:30 p.m., MEC
June 6	Last day for students; early release 12:00 p.m.
June 6	DRS Graduation, 10:00 a.m., DRS
June 7	BHS Graduation, 6:00 p.m., Brevard Music Center
June 8	RHS Graduation, 10:00 a.m., Brevard Music Center
June 17	4-day summer schedule begins
June 17	REGULAR MEETING, 6:30 p.m., MEC

#### 11. Reports from Board Training Event

On March 19, Tawny McCoy, Ron Kiviniemi, and Marty Griffin participated in the two-hour NCSBA webinar, "Ethics and Other Legal Duties and Responsibilities of NC School Board Members." Board members reported that the webinar was a good review and refresher, and reinforced the fact that the board must maintain a neutral position in many matters.

#### 12. Public Comment

None

#### 13. Other Items

Mr. Griffin stated that he was excited about the upcoming changes to senior projects. Mrs. Domokur stated that as a parent, she thanked Dr. McDaris for not closing schools on May 1. Chairman McCoy reported that the school bond construction committee has

interviewed several architectural and CMAR firms and would be meeting on April 11 to further narrow the field down to a few top choices.

**14. Closed Session**

ON A MOTION BY MRS. MCCOY, SECONDED BY MR. KIVINIEMI, the board went into closed session at 7:50 p.m. to discuss (1) confidential personnel information, and (2) matters protected by attorney-client privilege, including the following lawsuits: 18-CVS-283, *Tanne Trawick v. Transylvania County Board of Education, et al.*, and 18-CVS-537, *Betty Kendrick v. Transylvania County Board of Education, et al.*, pursuant to G.S. § 115C-319-321 and G.S. § 143.318.11. Present in the closed session were board members Tawny McCoy, Ron Kiviniemi, Courtney Domokur, Marty Griffin, and Alice Wellborn; Dr. Jeff McDaris, Superintendent; Dr. Brian Weaver, Director of Human Resources; and John Henning, Board Attorney. Chairman McCoy called the closed session to order. The board discussed three personnel matters and two attorney-client matters. No action was taken in the closed session, and ON A MOTION BY MR. GRIFFIN, SECONDED BY MRS. DOMOKUR, the board adjourned the closed session at approximately 8:35 p.m.

There was no further business, and ON A MOTION BY MR. GRIFFIN, SECONDED BY MR. KIVINIEMI, the meeting was adjourned at 8:36 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Chairman

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Secretary

**PERSONNEL REPORT**  
**April 8, 2019**

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

Licensed Personnel

Mandy Blake, School Counselor, DRS, effective April 26, 2019  
Sarah Gooding, Teacher, RMS, effective June 12, 2019  
Sondra Green, Teacher, RMS, effective June 30, 2019  
Charles Megown, Senior Marine JROTC Instructor, BHS, effective June 14, 2019  
Patricia Roman, Teacher, RES, effective June 12, 2019  
Matthew Stack, Head Football Coach & Teacher, RHS, effective June 12, 2019

Classified Personnel

Jackson Hockaday, Teacher Assistant, BHS, effective April 5, 2019  
Sheila Parris, Cafeteria Worker, Child Nutrition, effective May 31, 2019  
Felecia Michele Shipman, Teacher Assistant & After School Program Worker, PFES, effective April 5, 2019

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

Licensed Personnel

Kayla Byrd, School Counselor, BHS, effective August 15, 2019  
Citlalmi Gonzalez Rojas, Teacher, BES, effective August 15, 2019

Classified Personnel

Amy Owen, Bus Driver, TCS, effective April 9, 2019

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

Licensed Personnel

Melissa Ellenberger, from Assistant Principal, BHS, to Curriculum Director, MEC, effective July 1, 2019  
Courtney Hagenau, from Teacher, BES, to ESL Teacher, multiple schools, effective August 15, 2019  
Jacob Osteen, from Teacher, RES, to Teacher, BES, effective August 15, 2019

Classified Personnel

None

IV. APPROVE THE LEAVES OF ABSENCE RECOMMENDED BY THE SUPERINTENDENT FOR THE FOLLOWING PERSONS:

Licensed Personnel

Breana Murfin, Teacher, BES, family leave (BOE policy 7510), effective April 8, 2019 through April 28, 2019

Classified Personnel

None

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

Substitute Teachers

None

Substitute School Nutrition Workers

None