

**Minutes
Transylvania County Board of Education
August 1, 2022**

INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME

BUSINESS ITEMS (including amendments and recissions):

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. Appointment of School Treasurer
6. Safe Schools, Athletics, and Transportation Update
7. Budget Update
8. Superintendent's Update
9. Important Dates
10. Other Items
11. Closed Session

The Transylvania County Board of Education met in regular session on August 1, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. at the Morris Education Center. Ron Kiviniemi led in a moment of silence and Courtney Domokur led the Pledge of Allegiance. Chairman McCoy called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. In addition to approximately 13 guests, the individuals listed below were in attendance.

BOARD MEMBERS:

Tawny McCoy, Chair
Ron Kiviniemi, Vice-Chair
Courtney Domokur
Marty Griffin
Kimsey Jackson

BOARD ATTORNEY:

Kris Caudle, Campbell Shatley

STAFF:

Dr. Jeff McDaris, Superintendent
Jenny Hunter, Administrative Assistant
Dr. Brian Weaver, Assistant Superintendent
Missy Ellenberger, Director, 9-12 Instruction
Carrie Norris, Director, K-8 Instruction
Audrey Reneau, Director, Federal Programs
Gabrielle Juba, Chief Finance Officer
Alan Justice, Dir., Facilities, Athletics, Transportation
Jen Heatherly, Public Information Officer
Chris Whitlock, Director, Technology Services
Greg Stroup, School Resource Officer

1. **Approval of Agenda**
ON A MOTION BY MRS. DOMOKUR, SECONDED BY MR. JACKSON, the meeting agenda for August 1, 2022 was unanimously approved as presented.
2. **Public Comment**
Chairman McCoy reviewed the guidelines for public comment. There was one speaker, Mike Clampitt, NC House of Representatives, 119th District. Representative Clampitt introduced himself and invited everyone to contact him with any questions or concerns.
3. **Good News Report**
Dr. McDaris shared the following items:

Jess Kimzey Awarded SECU Scholarship

Congratulations to Brevard High School 2022 graduate Jessica “Jess” Kimzey who was awarded a \$10,000 four-year college scholarship from the State Employees’ Credit Union Foundation. The SECU “People Helping People” scholarship recognizes recipients’ community involvement, leadership, character, integrity, and scholastic achievement. Jess will attend UNC-Chapel Hill this fall where she plans to major in either history or political science with a focus on pre-law. The SECU Foundation scholarship program has provided over \$70 million in scholarships for NC high school seniors since funding began in 2005.

RHS Senior Selected as a “Senator” in D.C.

Johnathan Meeks, rising senior at Rosman High School, was selected to serve as a “senator” for American Legion Boys Nation in Washington, D.C., July 22-29. During their eight days at Boys Nation, 100 “senators” from across the country learn how the U.S. Senate and the federal government operate. The participants are divided into two political parties, each of which conducts a party convention, sets a platform and nominates officers and party leaders. Each senator must write, introduce, and debate a bill of their choosing before a senate committee. If successful, the bill will be voted on by the whole senate. Bills passing the senate are then signed or vetoed by the Boys Nation president. While in Washington, participants have an opportunity to tour the National Mall, present a wreath at Arlington National Cemetery, visit the Iwo Jima Memorial, and meet with their state’s U.S. Senators. They may also visit the White House and attend a dinner at a nearby American Legion post. Notable Boys Nation alumni include former President Bill Clinton, Governors Chris Christie and Scott Walker, Senators Mike Lee and Tom Cotton, Tom Brokaw, Michael Jordan, Jon Bon Jovi, Garth Brooks, Neil Armstrong, and Roger Ebert, to name a few.

Regional Curriculum & Instructional Management Coordinator of the Year

Congratulations to Career-Technical Education Coordinator Tanya Melton on being named the North Carolina Western Region Curriculum & Instructional Management Coordinator of the Year.

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 MRS. DOMOKUR, SECONDED BY MR. JACKSON, the board unanimously approved the minutes of the June 20 and July 18, 2022 meetings; the minutes of the July 18, 2022 closed session; the personnel report for August 1, 2022 (attached); and the designation of Terri Upton as school treasurer at Brevard Elementary School, pursuant to N.C.G.S. 115C-448(a).

6. Safe Schools, Athletics, and Transportation Update

Transportation - Director Alan Justice reported that even though starting bus driver pay has increased to \$15 per hour, the bus driver shortage is making it hard to fill vacancies. We need drivers. For the 2022-23 school year, we will be rerouting buses, combining routes and/or grade levels, and possibly parking some buses. Parents will be informed of the changes to routes and pickup times. Board members asked about bus driver training and qualifications. Mr. Justice reported that candidates must complete three days of classroom training, three days of road work, pass a physical, and have at least five years of driving experience to qualify for a CDL (commercial driver’s license). The

training class is free and the school system pays for the physical and reimburses the cost of the CDL. Students are not eligible to drive school buses. Mr. Justice gave a reminder that our first electric school bus would be delivered in September. A charging station will be installed at the bus garage. Mr. Justice noted that Duke Power is interested in helping to purchase a second electric bus.

Athletics - Mr. Justice reported that the schools have a robust athletic program that relies heavily on community coaches; however, we are having difficulty finding coaches. Few people want to coach because it is a lot of work for very little pay. Mr. Justice reported it has been more than 20 years since the last increase in coaching supplements. He stated that we will offer all the same sports again this year. Many of our student athletes participate in more than one sport.

Safe Schools - Director Missy Ellenberger gave a safe schools update. She reported that TCS had 14 reportable offenses as classified by NCDPI during the 2021-2022 school year. There were only 5 reportable offenses in 2020-2021 (due to COVID-19 shutdowns) and 15 reportable offenses in 2019-2020. Mrs. Ellenberger noted that Transylvania's numbers are in line with similarly-sized counties. The "Say Something" anonymous tip line received 142 calls last year ranging from suicidal ideation and self-harm to too much homework. For an urgent or life-threatening situation, the system facilitates rapid, simultaneous notifications to key contacts such as the principal, SRO, counselor, and 911. School administrators are the ones who make contact with the parents. Other safety measures include the risk management plan, comprehensive threat assessment plan, regular tactical site surveys with emergency services and law enforcement, lockdown drills, and fire drills. Professional development for teachers will continue this year for the school mental health improvement plan. Mrs. Ellenberger noted that the PD includes state-required training on child sex abuse prevention and sex trafficking. Chairman McCoy commended the strong working relationship between the school system and the Sheriff's Department.

7. **Budget Update**

Finance Officer Gabi Juba presented a summary report of expenditures by fund for the 2022-2023 fiscal year. Mr. Kiviniemi requested a capital projects status report at the next meeting.

8. **Superintendent's Update**

Dr. McDaris reported the following items:

- August is here and with it the beginning of fall sports and activities. Although classes do not start until August 29 per the state calendar law, for all practical purposes the fall semester has begun for students participating in football, volleyball, soccer, and cross country. Within a week or so band and cheerleading will also begin. Best wishes to all of our students participating.
- As reported by both the *Wall Street Journal* and the Mountain Area Workforce Development Board Leads Report, "Low-cost cities with strong economies fared well in the second quarter as high prices and rising mortgage rates caused a swift slowdown in the housing market. As remote or hybrid work schedules have become more common, households are willing to relocate for cheaper housing or a better quality of life. Elkhart, Indiana, a metro area of about 206,000 people, was the top-ranked market for the quarter by the index. North Carolina had three cities/markets in the top 12. Burlington was in the No. 2 spot, Raleigh was at No. 6, and Durham-

Chapel Hill was at No. 12.” It is becoming harder and harder to compete with the growing economic juggernaut in the center of our state.

- As reported in the *News & Observer*, the COVID-19 pandemic would appear to be helping workers gain higher wages, especially in North Carolina, which now has 130,000 more jobs than at the start of the pandemic and the unemployment rate has dropped since then from 3.7 to 3.4 percent. Over the past year nationally, wages for non-farm, private-sector workers have risen 5 percent to an average hourly pay of \$32.08. But given that inflation is now at 9 percent, the rising pay is actually regression. That tension between labor supply and pay will grow, according to researchers, because today’s labor market will continue to tighten. The reasons are a workforce reduced by early retirements, the effects of the nation’s low birth rate, and a flawed immigration policy that is restricting the entry of needed foreign workers, skilled and unskilled alike.
- Legislation that bears watching is the ‘CHIPS Plus Bill.’ The U.S. Senate passed it last week across party lines and it now heads to the House. The bill’s proposal includes \$52.7 billion for domestic chip manufacturing and research subsidies, along with \$2 billion earmarked for less advanced legacy chips, which are crucial to the military and automotive industry. The bill provides a 25% tax credit for U.S. semiconductor manufacturing investments, and \$1.5 billion set aside for developing technology to help U.S. firms wean off their dependence on foreign telecommunications equipment.

Mr. Griffin stated that the Cleveland County Board of Education and perhaps other boards have adopted school calendars containing earlier start dates than the state calendar law allows. He asked what consequences they might face. Dr. McDaris reported that superintendents are watching this situation closely. He stated that it would not be his recommendation to defy state law.

9. Important Dates

Aug. 2	SPECIAL CALLED MEETING	6:00 p.m.	MEC
Aug. 15	Regular 5-day schedule resumes		
Aug. 15-16	TCS Administrators’ Retreat	7:30am - 4:30pm	PFES
Aug. 19	New Teacher Orientation	8:00am - 4:00pm	Rogow Room
Aug. 19-26	Teacher workdays		
Aug. 22	REGULAR MEETING	6:30 p.m.	MEC
Aug. 29	First student day		
Sept. 5	Labor Day holiday		
Sept. 5	NO MEETING		
Sept. 19	REGULAR MEETING	6:30 p.m.	MEC
Sept. 30	Remote learning day		
Oct. 3	REGULAR MEETING	6:30 p.m.	MEC
Oct. 17	REGULAR MEETING	6:30 p.m.	MEC
Oct. 31, Nov. 1	Teacher workdays		

Chairman McCoy reported that the purpose of tomorrow's special called meeting is to discuss the bond. Mr. Jackson recommended that the principals of BHS, RHS, and RMS attend the meeting.

Mr. Griffin asked why the state still requires LEAs to put remote learning days in their school calendars. Dr. Brian Weaver reported that the five remote learning days in our 2022-2023 calendar were a local decision and not driven by state calendar law. The calendar committee decided to use remote learning days in place of the former early release days because the early release days presented a hardship for many parents. On those five days, students will have remote instruction in the mornings and teachers will have professional development in the afternoons.

10. **Other Items**

None

11. **Closed Session**

ON A MOTION BY MRS. MCCOY, SECONDED BY MR. KIVINIEMI, the board voted unanimously to go into closed session pursuant to N.C.G.S. § 143-318.11 (a)(1)) to prevent the disclosure of privileged or confidential personnel information pursuant to N.C.G.S. 115C-319-321; and pursuant to subsection (a)(3) to consult with an attorney employed or retained by the public body in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege between the attorney and the board and to receive legal advice in the matter of *Doe by and through guardian ad litem Jami Reese v. Transylvania County Board of Education*, 22-CVS-1168. Following a short recess, the closed session convened at approximately 7:28 p.m. The following board members were present: Tawny McCoy, Chair; Ron Kiviniemi, Vice Chair; Courtney Domokur, Marty Griffin, and Kimsey Jackson. Also present were Dr. Jeff McDaris, Superintendent; and Chris Campbell, Board Attorney. No action was taken in the closed session. At approximately 8:50 p.m., ON A MOTION BY MR. GRIFFIN, SECONDED BY MR. KIVINIEMI, the board voted unanimously to adjourn closed session.

There was no further business, and ON A MOTION BY MRS. MCCOY, SECONDED BY MR. GRIFFIN, the meeting was adjourned at 8:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chairman

Secretary

**PERSONNEL REPORT
August 1, 2022**

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

Licensed Personnel

Yvonne Cullipher, Teacher, TCH, effective July 23, 2022
Stephanie Merrill, Instructional Coach, TCH, effective July 14, 2022
Jenae Turner, Digital Learning Specialist, RES & TCH, effective July 19, 2022

Classified Personnel

Jennifer Campbell, Teacher Assistant, PFES, effective July 12, 2022
Shannon O’Neal, Teacher Assistant, RES, effective July 28, 2022

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

Licensed Personnel

Allyn Anderson, Teacher, PFES, effective August 19, 2022
Mary Derks, School Counselor, RMS & TCH, effective August 19, 2022
Diane Gayer, Exceptional Children’s Program Compliance Coordinator, BMS-based, effective August 8, 2022
Elizabeth McConaughy, Teacher, BES, effective August 19, 2022
Olivia Shuler, School Social Worker, DRS-based, effective August 19, 2022
Kyle Worley, Teacher, PFES, effective August 19, 2022

Classified Personnel

Kenneth Corn, Bus Driver, TCS, effective August 29, 2022
Stephen Underwood, Teacher Assistant, TCH, effective August 23, 2022

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

Licensed Personnel

None

Classified Personnel

Terrill Upton, from Teacher Assistant, BES, to Office Support, BES, effective August 1, 2022

- 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

None

Substitute School Nutrition Workers

None