

Minutes
Transylvania County Board of Education
September 16, 2024

INVOCATION/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME

BUSINESS ITEMS (including amendments and rescissions):

1. Approval of Agenda
2. Superintendent's Opening Comments (*addition*)
3. Public Comment
4. Good News Report
5. Consent Agenda:
 - A. Minutes
 - B. Personnel Report
 - C. Designation of School Treasurer
6. Policy: Spring 2024 Custom Updates & July 2024 Special Custom Update
7. 41 Confederate Lane Property
8. Update on Proposal for Bond Project Manager
9. Facilities
10. Nominations for NCSBA Board of Directors 2024-2025
11. Report(s) from Training Event(s)
12. Important Dates
13. Other Items

The Transylvania County Board of Education met in regular session on September 16, 2024 at 6:00 p.m. at the Morris Education Center. Tawny McCoy led a moment of silence and Chris Wiener led the Pledge of Allegiance. Chairman Kimsey Jackson called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. In addition to approximately six guests, the individuals listed below were in attendance.

BOARD MEMBERS:

Kimsey Jackson, Chair
Tanya Dalton, Vice Chair
Tawny McCoy
Bryan O'Neill
Chris Wiener

STAFF:

Dr. Lisa Fletcher, Superintendent
Jenny Hunter, Administrative Assistant
Dr. Brian Weaver, Assistant Superintendent/HR
Audrey Reneau, Director, Federal Programs; Athletics
Carrie Norris, Chief Academic Officer
Kerry Putnam, Director, Facilities; CTE
Tessa Brown, Public Information Officer
Chris Whitlock, Director, Technology Services
Chris Brittain, School Resource Officer

BOARD ATTORNEY:

Chris Campbell, Campbell Shatley

MEDIA:

Laura Denon, Transylvania Times

1. Approval of Agenda

MR. WIENER MADE A MOTION to add Superintendent's Opening Comments as agenda item no. 2 after approval of the agenda. MRS. DALTON SECONDED. ON A MOTION BY MR. WIENER, SECONDED BY MRS. DALTON, the agenda was unanimously approved as amended.

2. **Superintendent's Opening Comments**

Ballgame Statement

This past Thursday, we held a JV football game at Brevard High School, where a player from the opposing team suffered a serious injury—a compound fracture. I want to address the concerns raised by our community regarding the presence of emergency services at the game. While schools are only required by state policy to have one athletic trainer present at a football game, we had more than that. We had our athletic trainer, a former athletic trainer who is now a physician assistant (PA), an additional first responder/athletic trainer, and the volunteer from the Rescue Squad.

It's important to note that County EMS has not been required at interscholastic games for over 15 years. The Rescue Squad, which is not a county department, was present and is the agency many school systems work with for first responder presence, whether in staffing or with a transport vehicle. When the injury occurred, our trainers immediately responded and determined that the player needed to be transported to a hospital. They called 911, and while ambulance response typically takes about 14 minutes, we were fortunate that County EMS arrived in just 10 minutes along with Brevard Fire and Rescue.

As always, we are committed to improving where possible. The county is arranging a meeting between EMS and school staff to ensure that everyone is familiar with our most current emergency action plan and that the ambulance knows where to go during an emergency. We value our partnerships with county departments, fire departments and the rescue squad.

Threats Statement

On September 4, a tragic school shooting took place at a high school in Winder, Georgia, claiming the lives of four individuals and injuring several others. Even those who weren't physically harmed were deeply affected. Since this event, threats to schools across nearby states, including our own, have increased. Today, we experienced another threat aimed at our schools, similar to those in Arizona and other parts of North Carolina.

I want to make it absolutely clear: we will seek felony charges against anyone who makes threats or incites fear within our schools. This is a serious matter, and we will not tolerate behavior that puts our students or staff in harm's way.

Parents, I urge you to monitor what your children are posting on social media. Even sharing threatening messages can lead to severe consequences. Please talk to your children about the seriousness of this issue and report anything suspicious to law enforcement or school administrators right away.

On December 1 of last year, I personally experienced the terror of a false report of students and a teacher being shot in a classroom. Although it was thankfully untrue, law enforcement responded as they should, bringing in a mass casualty unit to the school. It was a terrifying scene for teachers and students, many of whom believed their colleagues or friends had been shot. No one in this county should ever have to endure that kind of fear.

Together, we can stop this. I am thankful for the dedicated efforts of our Sheriff's Department and our School Resource Officers (SROs), who work tirelessly to keep our students and staff safe.

3. **Public Comment**

Chairman Jackson reviewed the guidelines for public comment.

Alan Winchester – I would like to talk about rental houses and apartments and affordable housing. Starting salaries for teachers makes it hard to attract teachers in our county. To attract new teachers, this problem has to change. I represent Transylvania Home Trust. We plan to build homes adjacent to RHS to attract new teachers to our schools in order to provide affordable teacher homes in perpetuity. We are close to our fundraising goal. It will take our entire community to solve our housing crisis. I encourage the school system to earmark the land on Confederate Lane to help with this problem.

Claudia Hawkins – I am appending Alan's comments. When the Land Trust was formed, we had to get legislation passed through the General Assembly. I encourage you to hold the Confederate Lane property open for this purpose.

Jami Reese – I had a conversation with a teacher today. This teacher taught for 24 years here. She is now leaving to go to a neighboring county. Her classroom was 80 degrees today. This teacher did not feel like she was being heard when she complained. Please survey the people in those buildings. Teachers and students. Do what they need first. They are the ones that matter.

4. **Good News Report**

Dr. Fletcher shared the following good news:

BES Staff Member Creates Office Mural

In response to a request from Brevard Elementary School Principal Mike Kirst for a way to help students find the front office, Teacher Assistant Abby Buchanan put her artistic ability to work and created a beautiful "BEE" mural on the outside office wall. Now students can enjoy her talents and know exactly how to get to the office! View the mural [here](#).

September is Attendance Awareness Month

September is National Attendance Awareness Month, a nationwide recognition of the connection between regular school attendance and academic achievement. A student who misses just two to three days of school per month can be chronically absent. We salute the TCS staff who work to develop tiered strategies and personalized interventions and help families recognize the importance of regular attendance for all students K-12.

National Arts in Education Week – Sept. 9-13

National Arts in Education Week takes place annually during the second week of September and is designated to bring attention and access to the arts for all students. Arts education covers a rich array of disciplines including dance, music, theater, media arts, literature, design, and visual arts. It is a core academic subject and an essential part of a complete education. Students from kindergarten to college benefit from artistic

learning, innovating thinking, and creativity. We salute our arts educators for all they do and our local community for their strong support of the arts programs in our schools.

Constitution Day – Sept. 17

September 17 is Constitution Day in the United States. It commemorates the September 17, 1787 signing of the final version of the United States Constitution by the delegates to the Constitutional Convention. The U.S. Constitution contains the main rules and amendments that instill law and order, protect the rights of citizens, and govern politics and daily life in America. The power of this governing charter strengthens our nation and informs what it means to be free.

National IT Professionals Day – Sept. 17

Annually on the third Tuesday in September, National IT Professionals Day honors the technology professionals whose specialized talents are essential to keeping our classrooms, offices, and businesses running. Please join us in showing appreciation to the Transylvania County Schools IT team who keep our devices, networks and servers running; troubleshoot problems; protect us from cyberthreats; install and maintain equipment; provide training; and patiently respond to hundreds of questions a day. They are the best!

Director of Technology:

Chris Whitlock

Technical Support:

Chris Lambert

Blake Tesnow

Stephen Shields

Ed Tech Coaches:

Kathryn Bailey (BHS)

Alicia LaDow (PFES & RES)

Bridgette Whitlock (BMS & DRS)

Alyse Sheppard (BES & TCH)

Erik Wahus (RMS & RHS)

#TeachAG Day – Sept. 19

Agriculture teachers never have the same day twice. One day they may be in the classroom or lab, the next visiting students in the field, preparing for an FFA event, or leading a community service activity. National #TeachAG Day is recognized on September 19, 2024 to bring focus to the important role of school-based agriculture education and to encourage students to consider becoming Ag teachers. Ag education prepares students to be problem solvers, leaders, entrepreneurs and agriculturalists through classroom and laboratory instruction, leadership development, and hands-on learning. It offers students a well-rounded education that will prepare them for college and the workforce and teach them how to be educated consumers. Ag teachers are role models and leaders in the classroom and the community.

5. Consent Agenda

ON A MOTION BY MR. WIENER, SECONDED BY MR. O'NEILL, the following consent items were unanimously approved:

- A. Minutes of the June 17, 2024 closed session
- B. Minutes of the June 25, 2024 closed session
- C. Personnel report for September 16, 2024 (see attached)
- D. Appointment of Heather Greene as school treasurer at Rosman Middle School, pursuant to N.C.G.S. 115C-448(a)

6. **Policy: Spring 2024 Custom Updates & July Special Custom Update**

Dr. Brian Weaver presented 18 policies from the NCSBA Spring 2024 PLS Custom Updates and one policy from the July 2024 Special Custom Updates as first-read information. The 19 updates contained revisions to 17 existing policies and two new policies. ON A MOTION BY MRS. MCCOY, SECONDED BY MR. WIENER, the 19 policies listed below were accepted as first-read information.

- **1310/4002, Parental Involvement.** Adds language from SBE policy PRNT-002 in subsection C.2.e. In subsection C.3., adds a reference to the notifications required by law when a school and/or school system is identified as low-performing. Clarifies language in subsection C.4.g. In Section H, references the reporting requirements of SBE policy PRNT-002. Corrects minor errors in Section D. Updates the legal references.
- **1510/4200/7270, School Safety.** Provision added to Section D.3 regarding training on recognizing and reporting threats. New Section E added to address statutorily required threat assessment teams. Legal references, cross references, and other resources were updated.

Mr. O'Neill expressed concerns about the amount of time it will take to train the threat assessment teams.

- **1760/7280, Prohibition Against Retaliation.** Clarifies language.
- **2127, Board Member Technology Use.** Changes Twitter to X. Revises the language in subsection C.3.c to reflect the new legal standard established in a recent U.S. Supreme Court case. Updates legal references.
- **3220, Technology in the Educational Program.** Adds new Section D to address the use of generative artificial intelligence (AI). Adds information on training on the use of generative AI in Section E. Updates the other resources.

Mr. O'Neill expressed concerns about sufficient safeguards for AI use.

- **3225/4312/7320, Technology Responsible Use.** In Section G, references generative AI guidelines as described in policy 3220. Adds other resources.
- **3420, Student Promotion and Accountability.** Creates new Section K to address students receiving high school credit for courses taken while studying abroad. Adds a reference to three-year high school graduation in Section L. Updates the legal references.

Mr. O'Neill recommended including the program or institution attended. Mr. Wiener recommended requiring sealed samples of work completed to document what was taught.

- **3460, Graduation Requirements.** Adds new student notice requirements in the paragraph preceding Section A. Reorganizes information from the paragraph preceding Section A into other parts of the policy. Adds a reference in Section A to policy 3420 in regard to credit for courses taken abroad. Changes the local

graduation “requirements” to local graduation “recommendations.” Adds information in C.4 regarding graduation high school in three years. Updates the diploma endorsements language. Includes various other minor changes. Updates the legal references. Custom language in c.7 has been removed for consistency with G.S.115C-83.31(c).

- **3620, Extracurricular Activities and Student Organizations.** Removes the local attendance standard for interscholastic athletics participation in light of the new SBE attendance standard effective July 1, 2024. Removes language referencing NCHSAA eligibility rules and adds a reference to applicable eligibility standards of law in B.1.a. Adds a new subsection B.1.c to grant students who transfer schools within the school system immediate eligibility to participate in interscholastic athletics. Adds a new subsection B.1.d to address the participation of home school students in interscholastic athletics (**The board must select one of the three options. The county athletic director, high school principals, and school athletic directors recommend Option 2 with local modifications**). Removes C.3. Includes other minor editorial changes. Updates the legal references.

Mr. Wiener questioned why staff selected Option 2 and not Option 1. Dr. Weaver reported that Option 2 has been the standard practice for our system. Our staff knows the students who are participating.

- **4040/7310, Staff-Student Relations.** Revises language in subsection C.4 to reference policy 7130, which now contains the reporting requirements from new 16 N.C.A.C.6C .0608. Updates legal references and cross references.
- **4140, Foreign Exchange Students (NEW).** Addresses the admission of foreign exchange students with J-1 visa status.
- **4240/7312, Child Abuse and Related Threats to Child Safety.** Revises language in Section D to reference policy 7130, which now contains the reporting requirements from new 16 N.C.A.C.6C .0608. In Section H, adds a new statutory requirement that applies with the beginning of the 2024-2025 school year. Updates legal references and cross references.
- **4270/6145, Concussion and Head Injury.** Updates statutory references throughout the policy. Includes other minor changes. Updates legal references and other resources.
- **5023/6128/7268, Emergency Administration of Naloxone (NEW).** Addresses the emergency use of naloxone on school property.
- **5071/7351, Electronically Stored Information Retention.** Updates legal references.
- **6125, Administering Medicines to Students.** Updates the division names of N.C. Department of Health and Human Services. Updates the other resources.

- **7130, Licensure.** Adds new Section F regarding mandatory reporting of misconduct. Updates legal references.
- **8340, Insurance.** Amends the language to include not just insurance but also other types of liability coverage.
- **8510, School Finance Officer.** Updates the duties of the school finance officer based on the information in State Board of Education Policy FINO-000. Adds new Section C regarding continuing professional education. Updates legal references and cross references.

7. **41 Confederate Lane Property**

At a previous meeting, the board tabled a resolution to declare as surplus the property located at 41 Confederate Lane, Brevard, in order to consider other options for the property, specifically teacher housing. Board Attorney Chris Campbell informed the board that North Carolina session law allows a board to enter into a land trust if property is declared as surplus under specific circumstances. MR. WIENER MOVED to table further discussion and let the board attorney and superintendent look into options for transferring the 41 Confederate Lane property to a local land trust. MRS. DALTON SECONDED. Dr. Fletcher reported that she would send a copy of the articles of incorporation for the local land trust to the board members as information. She also reported that there is an outstanding tax bill on the property and a lot of cleanup to be done. Chairman Jackson suggested that the county planning board may be able to clean up the property at no cost. There was no further discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

8. **Update on Proposal for Bond Project Manager**

Dr. Fletcher reported that she and the county manager are scheduled to meet this Wednesday to begin negotiations. There was a water lead at TCH last week. This is a prime example of how there will always be something to keep Mr. Putman busy and why a bond project manager is needed.

9. **Facilities**

Facilities Director Kerry Putnam reported that he is getting bids on the Rosman High School football field drainage issue. There is a bid opening on the 10th. He is working on discovery for the RHS retaining wall. The TCH water outage was fixed on Sunday. On Friday, a gutter leak was discovered at BMS that will be a fairly large fix. Axios did not catch it. Mr. Putnam is aware of hotspots in some classrooms and is working on solutions. Cosmetic work on the BHS arches is going well. Workers found some extensive dry rot that was not seen previously. The engineer came back out to evaluate and feels that we are still in the safety zone at this time. Mr. Putnam reported that he would not allow students inside if there were a heavy snow load on the old gym roof. Mr. Jackson asked about converting flat roofs to pitched roofs. That is being explored.

10. **Nominations for NCSBA Board of Directors**

As discussed on August 19, the North Carolina School Boards Association is seeking nominations for vacancies on the 2024-2025 Board of Directors. The term of service is two years and members are eligible to serve for two terms. The board holds meetings in November, March, June and September. In addition, each board member typically serves on two committees that meet once or twice during the year. Nominations must

be made by official board action by October 2, 2024. CHAIRMAN JACKSON NOMINATED CHRIS WIENER to submit an application for the NCSBA Board of Directors. MRS. MCCOY SECONDED, and the nomination was unanimously approved.

11. Report(s) from Training Event(s)

Mr. Wiener and Mr. O’Neill attended the WRESA/LEAD training event on September 4, 2024 at the Western Region Educational Service Alliance in Asheville. Mr. Wiener reported that he has posted the meeting materials into a shared drive for the board members to review. Topics of interest included the NCSBS legislative agenda and a draft job description for school board members.

12. Important Dates

Oct. 4	Noon dismissal - students		
Oct. 21	REGULAR MEETING	6:00 p.m.	MEC
Oct. 31, Nov. 1	Teacher workdays		
Nov. 5	Election Day		
Nov. 11	Veterans’ Day holiday		
Nov. 18	REGULAR MEETING	6:00 p.m.	MEC
Nov. 27-29	Thanksgiving break		
Dec. 16	REGULAR MEETING	6:00 p.m.	MEC
Dec. 20	Noon dismissal - students		
Dec. 23 – Jan. 3	Winter break		
Jan. 6	Students return from break		
Jan. 20	MLK Day (teacher workday)		
Jan. 21 (Tues.)	REGULAR MEETING	6:00 p.m.	MEC

13. Other Items

Mrs. Dalton congratulated the Rosman Youth cheerleaders and the Midgets and Mites teams for their achievements this past weekend.

There was no further business, and ON A MOTION BY MRS. DALTON, SECONDED BY MRS. MCCOY, the meeting was adjourned at 7:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chairman

Secretary

**PERSONNEL REPORT
September 16, 2024**

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

Licensed Personnel

Leah Hammond, Teacher, BMS, effective September 20, 2024
James Markey, Teacher, BMS, effective September 13, 2024
Jennifer Worley, Teacher, RES, effective December 27, 2024

Classified Personnel

Amelia Waycaster, Teacher Assistant, TCH, effective September 17, 2024
Christopher Zaludek, School Bus Driver, TCS, effective September 5, 2024

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

Licensed Personnel

Charles Cotter, Teacher, DRS, effective August 26, 2024
Charles Durant, Media Specialist, RMS & RHS, effective October 1, 2024
Douglas Grimm, Teacher, BMS, effective September 16, 2024
Anthony Johnson, Teacher, BMS, effective October 7, 2024

Classified Personnel

Annika Carlson, Teacher Assistant, PFES, effective August 20, 2024
Ashley Drown, Teacher Assistant, TCH, effective August 20, 2024
Heather Greene, Office Support, RMS, effective August 26, 2024
Lillian Orr, Part-Time Custodian, MEC, effective August 23, 2024
Kathy Powell, Teacher Assistant, TCH, effective /September 23, 2024

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

Licensed Personnel

Nijayah Cruell, from Teacher, BHS, to Teacher, BMS, effective August 19, 2024

Classified Personnel

Tabaitha Travis, from Custodian, BHS, to Teacher Assistant, BHS, effective August 26, 2024

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

Licensed Personnel

None

Classified Personnel

Phillip Heath, Custodian, BHS, Short-Term Disability, effective September 15, 2024, through September 14, 2025

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

Substitute Teachers & Tutors

Cassidy Ayers

Kylie Brittain

Hannah De La Riva

Ann Evans

Tiffany Galloway

Kelsey Hamrick

Megan Johnson

Douglas Markham

Sarah Miles

Jason Smith

Substitute School Nutrition Workers

Corey Broda

Christine Gordon