

**Jackson County Board of Education
Minutes of Regular Meeting
Sylva, North Carolina**

398 Hospital Road, Sylva

August 25, 2020

6:00 p.m.

The Jackson County Board of Education met in regular session at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, August 25, 2020, at the Board of Education Administrative Office Board Room, 398 Hospital Road, Sylva, North Carolina. Due to N.C. Governors Executive Order 121, the meeting was conducted using video and telephone conferencing to limit the number of people present for the meeting. The following members were present via telephone and/or online platform:

Alison Laird-Large, Chairperson
Margaret McRae

The following members were present:

Elizabeth Cooper, Vice-Chair
Wes Jamison
Abigail Clayton
Chris Campbell, School Board Attorney

Also present were Dr. Kimberly Elliott, Superintendent; Dr. Tony Tipton, Interim Superintendent; Jacob Buchanan, Assistant Superintendent; Dr. Kevin Bailey, Personnel Director; Jeremiah Jackson, Chief Technology Officer; and Cora Fields, Board Assistant.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Alison Laird Large called the business meeting to order.

Mrs. Laird Large led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. Ann Melton, Jackson County Clerk of Court, administered the Oath of Office to Dr. Tony Tipton, Interim Superintendent of Jackson County Public Schools.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Upon a motion by Mrs. Elizabeth Cooper and seconded by Mrs. Abigail Clayton, the board voted unanimously to approve the Agenda.

OPEN SESSION FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS

Jeff Guelcher – Mr. Guelcher began his comments by reading a portion of a letter that was jointly published July 10, 2020, by the American Academy of Pediatrics, American Federation of Teachers, National Education Association, and the School Superintendents Association. He stated that returning to school is important for the healthy development and well-being of children, but we must pursue re-opening in a way that is safe for all

students, teachers and staff. Mr. Guelcher cited numerous statistics from the CDC that he felt showed that children are not driving the epidemic. He said that science states that we are harming our kids by keeping them from a traditional in-person education. He stated that teachers and students must return to the classroom with arrangements made for at risk students and teachers. He concluded his comments by asking all staff and administration to read an article on the CDC website entitled *The Importance of Reopening America's Schools this Fall*, and thanked the school board for their time.

CONSENT ACTION AGENDA

Action: *Upon a motion by Mrs. Elizabeth Cooper and seconded by Mr. Wes Jamison, the board unanimously approved the consent action agenda:*

- A. Open Session Minutes of Regular Meeting of July 28, 2020.
- B. Open Session Minutes of Special-called Meeting on August 04, 2020.
- C. Draft Open Session Minutes of Special-called Meeting on August 11, 2020.

INFORMATION AGENDA

- A. **Agenda Item:** Superintendent's Report
Presenter: Dr. Kimberly Elliott, Superintendent

Dr. Elliott reported on the following items for her final Superintendents report:

1. JCPS has received a grant from the A Friend Foundation, Linda and Evans Hubbard, for 2nd grade reading improvement at Blue Ridge and Smokey Mountain Elementary Schools. This is the second year JCPS has received this grant from the foundation. JCPS is appreciative of the Hubbard Family for recognizing the potential of these students in second grade. The grant provides for after school small group and one on one tutoring, reading materials and incentives. Amount: \$37,500.
2. JCPS is fortunate to have many partners. She stated that one of these excellent partners is Scotlynn Yard in Cashiers, NC. Dr. Lynn Dillard and her husband Scott have contributed many hours and many dollars to ensure Blue Ridge School landscaping and entry are aesthetically pleasing and equitable to other school's entrances. Dr. Elliott expressed that she is grateful this work could be completed prior to her retirement. She gave a special thank you to Dr. Lynn and Scott.
3. Dr. Elliott presented the Executive Summary Report regarding the fiscal well-being of JCPS as of June 30, 2020. She said that it is her responsibility to highlight considerations for the future well-being of JCPS. Dr. Elliott stated that the JCPS administrative team strives to ensure fiscal responsibility and excellent stewardship. Dr. Elliott highlighted items from the summary in her report.
4. Dr. Elliott took a moment to thank the following great partners in education in her final Superintendent report:
Sheriff Chip Hall and all SROs
Todd Dillard and all the Emergency Management Team
Don Adams, County Manager and Jackson County Commissioners
Michael Forbis

Steve Heatherly, CEO of Harris/Duke Lifepoint
 Shelley Carraway, Director of Health
 Media partners: Sylva Herald, SM News, Crossroads Chronicle, WLOS, and the Plateau:
 Quintin, Dave, Jim, Holly, Dan, Rex and Brian
 Dr. Kim Winter, Dean of the College of Education, WCU
 Chancellor Kelli Brown, WCU
 Dr. Don Tomas, Dr. Thom Brooks and Scott Baker with SCC
 The entire Sylva Rotary Clubs
 Superintendents in Region 8 and across the state of NC
 Janice Edgerton and all Region A Partnership for Children
 SW Child Development Commission Members and Employees
 Michelle Garashi Ellick, Great Smokies Health Foundation
 Tammy Greenwell, Blue Ridge Health
 Dr. Jan Webster and Dr. April Spencer with WRESA
 Dr. Lillie Cox with NCASCD and LMC Consulting
 Hank Hurd with HIL
 Kathy Isenhour with HIL
 EBCI and Chief Sneed
 Matt Wike, former BOE member
 Our Faith Based Partners
 The JCPS School Family, Principals, Directors, Parents, students, staff, and teachers; Central Office Employees, Cora, Jake, Angie, Laura, and Kelly, she gave a special thank you for all they do for all the students in JCPS and for making her laugh even in the challenging times.
 Dr. Elliott also thanked her immediate family: Bill, Brynn, Branson and Andy.
 Dr. Elliott said that she appreciates all the staff and partners and wished them all the best in the coming years as she concluded her final report.

B. Agenda Item: Beginning School Update

Presenter: Jacob Buchanan, Dr. Kevin Bailey, Kelly Doppke, and Laura Cabe

1. Jacob Buchanan
 - First Week - JCPS is following the A/B schedule for the first two weeks of school. Staff has done a tremendous job of screening students and staff. Approximately 32% of students have opted for remote only learning at this time.
 - Transportation and Ridership – Average ridership is approximately 141 per day, significantly down from last year. DPI will hold JCPS harmless for the change in ridership due to COVID-19 and funding allocations will be based on the previous year. The bus monitors are doing an excellent job of screening students riding buses.
 - Student Numbers - Overall enrollment numbers are up from last school year, with Cullowhee Valley Elementary School and Smoky Mountain High School showing the largest increase in student enrollments.
2. Dr. Kevin Bailey
 - Staff and Students COVID-19 Update – JCPS has two staff members at home due to COVID-19 symptoms. A total of 14 staff members are working remotely due to documented health concerns. One student has tested positive for COVID-19. A potential substitute shortage could occur due to Kelly Educational Services operating at 60% capacity. Board Attorney Chris Campbell indicated that this issue is out of the

control of the School Board. He stated that there could be circumstances where a school needs to be moved to remote due to a lack of staff. He said that the Superintendent is authorized to make this decision without board approval.

3. Mrs. Kelly Doppke
 - JCPS COVID-19 Dashboard – A COVID-19 Dashboard was created to help keep staff and students up to date with information about positive cases of COVID-19 in JCPS. The dashboard will be updated daily with reported and active cases. The site also includes reporting procedure information.
4. Mrs. Laura Cabe
 - Delivering Food on Virtual Days – Ms. Cabe outlined the remote feeding services that will be provided and a list of remote locations where students and parents can pick up meals during this time.

C. Agenda Item: Declared Surplus

Presenter: Jacob Buchanan, Assistant Superintendent

Mr. Buchanan informed the board that a JCPS vehicle, that was used by School Nutrition, was stolen from Scotts Creek Elementary School. He said that the Jackson County Sheriff's office has recovered the vehicle, but that it was set on fire and is totally unusable. Mr. Buchanan said that the 2007 Chevy Trailblazer that was planned to be declared as surplus, will be used in place of the stolen vehicle, and will be listed as surplus at a later date.

A. Agenda Item: Unaudited Financial Summary

Presenter: Jacob Buchanan, Assistant Superintendent

Mr. Buchanan presented the Unaudited Financial Summary for August 2020.

ACTION AGENDA

A. Agenda Item: 2020-2021 Student Handbooks

Presenter: Mrs. Angie Dills, Chief Academic Officer and Mr. Jacob Buchanan, Assistant Superintendent

Mrs. Angie Dills presented the 2020-2021 Online Student Handbooks and asked for board approval. Mrs. Dills added that the handbooks will be updated in line with board approved policy changes throughout the year.

Action: *Upon a motion by Mrs. Elizabeth Cooper and seconded by Mrs. Abigail Clayton, the board voted unanimously to approve the 2020-2021 Online Student Handbooks.*

CLOSED SESSION

The board unanimously approved a motion by Mrs. Elizabeth Cooper and seconded by Mr. Wes Jamison, to enter into closed session pursuant to G.S. 143.318.11 for the following purposes: under subsection; (a) (1) to prevent the disclosure of privileged or confidential personnel information pursuant to G.S. 115C-319-32 and (a) (3) to discuss matters protected by attorney-client privilege.

Upon a motion by Mrs. Elizabeth Cooper and seconded by Mr. Wes Jamison, the board voted unanimously to return to open session.

OPEN SESSION

Action: *Upon a motion by Mrs. Elizabeth Cooper and seconded by Mr. Wes Jamison, the board unanimously approved the consent action agenda:*

- A. Closed Session Minutes of Special-called Meeting of August 11, 2020.

PERSONNEL ACTION AGENDA

Action: *Upon a motion made by Mrs. Elizabeth Cooper and seconded by Mrs. Abigail Clayton, the board voted unanimously to approve the personnel agenda as recommended by Dr. Elliott. The board unanimously approved the following recommendations:*

Employee Recommendations:

1. Bishop, Johnny – Bus Monitor, CVES
2. Brown, Sadie – Teacher, SMES
3. Chavis, Martha – Teacher, SMHS
4. Clare, Reanna – Teacher, BREC
5. Doolittle, Hannah – Bus Monitor, CVES
6. Fahey, Amy – ESY School Counselor, BREC
7. Frady, Dillon – Bus Monitor and Cleaning, CVES
8. Hall, Greg – Band Tutor, BREC
9. Jimenez, Melanie – Bus Monitor, SMHS
10. Kennedy, Paula – School Counselor, BREC
11. Morgan, Kirsten – Bus Monitor, FES
12. Nicholson, Jacob – Bus Monitor, SCES
13. Pressley, Sara – Teacher, FES
14. Schallock, Diane – Bus Monitor, FES
15. Schrader, Kristin – Teacher, BRS
16. Shew, Kirstyn – Bus Monitor, FES
17. Smith, Susan – EC Teacher Assistant, BRS
18. Smyrl, Joshua – Teacher, CVES
19. Stewart, Donna – Teacher, BRS
20. Tompkins, Suzanne – ESY Bus Monitor, SMHS
21. Young, Lyndsi – TA, CVES

Employee Resignations:

1. Caldwell, Susan – Teacher, SMHS
2. Pruett, Maureen – Teacher, BRS
3. Shehan, Kylea – Afterschool Assistant, SCES
4. Taylor, Ashley – EC Data Manager, Central Office
5. Wittekind, Rachel – School Nurse, SMES

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Board of Education will hold a Special-Called Meeting, using video and telephone conferencing, on September 01, 2020, at 6:00 p.m. at the Board of Education Administrative Offices.

The next regularly scheduled business meeting of the Board of Education, using video and telephone conferencing, is September 22, 2020 at 6:00 p.m., at the Board of Education Administrative Offices.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no objection, Chairperson Alison Laird Large adjourned the meeting at 7:15 p.m.

Alison Laird Large, Chairperson

Dr. Kimberly Elliott, Secretary