

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

398 Hospital Road, Sylva

December 15, 2020

6:00 p.m.

The Jackson County Board of Education held their regular session on Tuesday, December 15, 2020, at 6:00 p.m., in 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  
Christopher Z. Campbell, School Board Attorney

The following members were present:

Elizabeth Cooper, Vice-Chair  
Wes Jamison  
Abigail Clayton

Also present were Dr. Tony Tipton, Interim Superintendent; Jacob Buchanan, Assistant Superintendent; Dr. Kevin Bailey, Executive Director of Human Resources; Jeremiah Jackson Chief Technology Officer; and Cora Fields, Board Assistant.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson Alison Laird Large called the business meeting to order.

A pre-recorded video of the United States National Anthem was presented, featuring the Smoky Mountain High School Choir, under the direction of Ms. Linda Haggard.

**SPECIAL PRESENTATION**

The board listened to a pre-recorded Virtual Holiday Concert by the Smoky Mountain High School Choir, under the direction of Ms. Linda Haggard, and the Blue Ridge Early College Choir, under the direction of Ms. Sarah Hall.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

*Upon a motion by Mrs. Elizabeth Cooper and seconded by Mr. Wes Jamison, the board voted unanimously to approve the Agenda.*

**OPEN SESSION FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None.

## CONSENT ACTION AGENDA

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

- A. Open Session Minutes of Regular Meeting of November 17, 2020.

## INFORMATION AGENDA

- A. **Agenda Item:** Superintendent's Report

**Presenter:** Dr. Tony Tipton, Interim Superintendent

Dr. Tipton reported on the following:

1. Dr. Tipton thanked everyone in JCPS for their hard work getting us to this point in the school year. He stated that this week we are conducting end-of-grade testing and will end the first semester for our high schools and our second nine weeks for our other schools.
2. Dr. Tipton congratulated Blue Ridge Early College volleyball coaches and players on their undefeated season so far and wished them the best of luck for the remainder of the regular season and playoffs.
3. Dr. Tipton congratulated our three high schools for their impressive graduation rates for the 2019-2020 school year: BREC – 95.8%, SMHS – 96.1% and JCEC – 97.1%.
4. Dr. Tipton shared the 2020 Superintendent's Holiday Card which features Cover artwork by Ms. Emma Helsing, Grade 7 at Fairview Elementary School, and runners-up on the back. He thanked the schools, art teachers and Ms. Cora Fields for getting this project organized and mailed to more than 200 recipients throughout North Carolina.
5. Dr. Tipton wished the members of the school board and the more than 625 employees a safe but Merry Christmas and a happy 2021.

- B. **Agenda Item:** Staff COVID 19 Testing

**Presenter:** Dr. Kevin Bailey, Executive Director of Human Resources

Dr. Bailey informed the board that Blue Ridge Health and Harris Regional Hospital are offering COVID 19 testing on Dec. 28<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> for Jackson County Public Schools staff and families.

- C. **Agenda Item:** Highlands Cashiers Health Foundation Grant

**Presenter:** Jacob Buchanan, Assistant Superintendent

Mr. Buchanan informed the board that JCPS has again received a grant in the amount of \$125,000.00 from the Highlands Cashiers Health Foundation Grant to continue funding the School Social Worker and School Nurse positions at Blue Ridge School. He thanks Ms. Kay Keller and Mr. Carl Hyde for their continued support of Jackson County Public Schools.

- D. **Agenda Item:** COVID Bonus for Full-Time Employees

**Presenter:** Jacob Buchanan, Assistant Superintendent

Mr. Buchanan informed the board that the Jackson County Commissioners have provided funding for all JCPS full-time employees to receive a \$500.00 COVID bonus, that will be received in their December paychecks. The Commissioners also requested that JCPS provide a plan for a future supplement for all full-time employees.

- E. **Agenda Item:** Town of Dillsboro Stuff the Bus Donation  
**Presenter:** Jacob Buchanan, Assistant Superintendent

Mr. Buchanan reported that JCPS has received a donation from the Town of Dillsboro in the amount of \$25,000.00 for Stuff the Bus. The funding will be equally split among 8 campuses in Jackson County and will also include a small discretionary fund to be used at any school for emergency family needs. Mr. Buchanan expressed our sincere appreciation to the Town of Dillsboro for this generous donation.

- F. **Agenda Item:** Unaudited Financial Summary  
**Presenter:** Mrs. Kristie Walker, Chief Financial Officer

Mrs. Walker presented the Unaudited Financial Summary for December 2020.

### **ACTION AGENDA**

- A. **Agenda Item:** Budget Amendments  
**Presenter:** Mrs. Kristie Walker, Chief Financial Officer

Mrs. Walker presented the board with budget amendments to the Federal Grants Fund, Other Specific Revenue Fund and the State Public School Fund and asked for board approval.

**Action:** *Upon a motion by Mrs. Elizabeth Cooper and seconded by Mrs. Abigail Clayton, the board voted unanimously to approve the budget amendments to the Federal Grants Fund, Other Specific Revenue Fund and the State Public School Fund.*

- B. **Agenda Item:** Beginning Teacher Support Program Plan Update  
**Presenter:** Mr. Brent Speckhardt, Director of Professional Development and Teacher Growth

Mr. Speckhardt presented the board with updates to the Beginning Teacher Support Program Plan and asked for board approval.

**Action:** *Upon a motion by Mrs. Elizabeth Cooper and seconded by Mr. Wes Jamison, the board voted unanimously to approve the updates to the Beginning Teacher Support Program Plan.*

- C. **Agenda Item:** Policy Updates  
**Presenter:** Jacob Buchanan, Assistant Superintendent

1. Student and Parent Grievance Procedure (1740/4010)
2. Responding to Complaints (1742/5060)
3. Grievance Procedure for Employees (1750/7270)
4. Prohibition Against Retaliation (1760/7280)

5. School Calendar and Time for Learning (3300)
6. Visitors to the Schools (5020)
7. Public Records – Retention, Release, and Disposition (5070/7350)
8. Discrimination and Harassment in the Workplace (7232)
9. Employee Use of Social Media (7335)

Mr. Buchanan presented the changes to the above listed policies and asked for board approval.

**Action:** *Upon a motion by Mrs. Elizabeth Cooper and seconded by Mr. Wes Jamison, the board voted unanimously to approve the updates to the above listed policies.*

### **CLOSED SESSION**

*The board unanimously approved a motion by Mrs. Elizabeth Cooper and seconded by Mrs. Abigail Clayton, 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 Mrs. Margaret McRae, the board voted unanimously to return to open session.*

### **OPEN SESSION**

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

- A. Closed Session Minutes of Regular Meeting of November 17, 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 Mr. Buchanan. The board unanimously approved the following recommendations:*

#### **Employee Recommendations:**

1. Bailey, Doug – School Nutrition Assistant, SMHS
2. Cochran, Trevor – Instructional Support Assistant, SMES
3. Cowan, Kheri – Substitute Bus Driver, BRS and BREC
4. Frye, William – Instructional Support Assistant, SMES
5. Karup, Aimee – Student Data Manager, FES
6. Lewis, Taylor – Temporary Custodian, CVES
7. Miller, Carly – Temporary Custodian, CVES
8. Morgan, Kirsten – Homebound Teacher, FES
9. Moss, Keagan – Afterschool Assistant, FES
10. Powell, Angela – School Nurse, CVES
11. Tipton, Dr. Tony – Interim Superintendent

**Employee Resignations:**

1. Allman, Toby – Internal Auditor, Central Office
2. Egerdahl, Alexis – Substitute School Nutrition Assistant, FES

**Employee Retirements:**

1. Moore, Wanda – Social Worker, SCES

**Staff, Non-Staff and Returning Coach Recommendations:**

1. Fox, Jordan – Assistant Coach Swim, SMHS – New Non-Staff
2. Henson, Chris – Assistant Coach Men’s Soccer, SMHS, New Non-Staff
3. Thompson, Mark – Assistant Coach District Men’s Basketball, SMHS – Returning Staff

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**The next regularly scheduled business meeting of the Board of Education is January 26, 2021, at 6:00 p.m., at the Board of Education Administrative Office, 398 Hospital Road, Sylva, North Carolina.**

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no objection, Chairperson Alison Laird Large adjourned the meeting at 6:57 p.m.

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Alison Laird Large, Chairperson

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Dr. Tony Tipton, Secretary