

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

398 Hospital Road, Sylva

April 27, 2021

6:00 p.m.

The Jackson County Board of Education held their regular session on Tuesday, April 27, 2021, 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:

Alison Laird-Large, Chairperson
Elizabeth Cooper, Vice Chair
Margaret McRae
Wes Jamison
Abigail Clayton
Ashley Leonard, Board Attorney

Also present were Dr. Tony Tipton, Interim Superintendent; Jacob Buchanan, Deputy Superintendent; Jeremiah Jackson, Chief Technology Officer; and Cora Fields, Board Assistant.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Ali Laird-Large called the business meeting to order.

Ali Laird-Large led the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

Shane Danner spoke to the board about the Smoky Mountain Sports Network (SMSN). He said that his daughter is a student athlete at Smoky Mountain High School, and it has been a blessing to be able to watch her perform because the sporting events are being broadcast. Mr. Danner said that it is physically impossible for him to sit for any length of time due to his condition, and because of the SMSN he can watch his daughter and the game. He stated that he hopes JCPS will continue to move forward with broadcasting these events and thanked the board for the job they are doing for the students and families of Jackson County.

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 March 23, 2021.

INFORMATION AGENDA

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

Presenter: Dr. Tony Tipton, Interim Superintendent

Dr. Tipton reported on the following:

1. Dr. Tipton announced that 55% of JCPS employees are fully vaccinated, and that several employees have received their first dose and are waiting for their second. JCPS is very close to having more than $\frac{3}{4}$'s of staff members fully vaccinated.
2. Dr. Tipton reported that things have gone extremely well in all schools since returning to school four days per week. The JCPS dashboard shows only two students as active COVID cases, and zero adults.
3. Planning for next school year is based on limited information received from DPI, that indicates all schools across the state will return to five days a week schedule. The state will require schools to offer the option for students with a medical reason, to be a remote learner. This number will be very small and will be treated much like homebound students. School districts across the state will be receiving additional information and guidance on this all through the summer.
4. Friday, May 7th, is School Lunch Hero Day. Dr. Tipton thanked Laura Cabe, School Nutrition Director and her staff for their hard work in providing meals to our students and our community during this COVID 19 year.

- B. **Agenda Item:** Student Vaccination Opportunities

Presenter: Mr. Jacob Buchanan, Deputy Superintendent

Mr. Buchanan informed the board that there are several options for students age 16 and older to get the COVID 19 vaccine. WCU and SCC still have on-site clinics set up.

- C. **Agenda Item:** Beginning Teachers' Program Update

Presenter: Mr. Brent Speckhardt, Director of Professional Development and Teacher Growth

Mr. Speckhardt provided the board with an update on the Beginning Teachers' Program that includes 34 beginning teachers this year. DPI conducted an audit of the program and JCPS received a Distinguished overall rating.

- D. **Agenda Item:** Mental Health Update

Presenter: Mrs. Kelly Doppke, Student Support Services Director

Mrs. Doppke provided the board with an update on the Mental Health program. The District Mental Health Team continues to work towards improvement and will bring a comprehensive plan to the June board meeting for approval.

- E. **Agenda Item:** Installment Update

Presenter: Mrs. Kristie Walker, CFO

Mrs. Walker updated the board about options for employee installment pay, since DPI will no longer offer this option. JCPS will switch over to the SECU Summer Cash program or an employee can choose to use their own bank. Each 10-month employee that utilizes the escrow program will be contacted by finance to explore other options.

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

Mrs. Walker presented the Unaudited Financial Summary as of April 27, 2021.

ACTION AGENDA

- A. **Agenda Item:** Budget Amendments
Presenter: Mrs. Kristie Walker, CFO

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

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

- B. **Agenda Item:** Blue Ridge School and Early College Retention Supplement Pilot Program for Certified Staff
Presenter: Dr. Tony Tipton, Interim Superintendent

Dr. Tipton presented information about the Pilot Retention Program for Blue Ridge School and Early College for Certified Staff 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 Pilot Retention Program for Certified Staff at Blue Ridge School and Early College.*

- C. **Agenda Item:** Class Size Waiver and Affidavit
Presenter: Mr. Jacob Buchanan, Deputy Superintendent

Mr. Buchanan presented the Class Size Waiver for three classrooms at SMES and the Superintendent's Class Size Waiver 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 Class Size Waiver and Superintendent's Affidavit.*

- D. **Agenda Item:** Field Trips
Presenter: Mr. Jacob Buchanan, Deputy Superintendent

1. Blue Ridge Early College – Grades 9-12, Costa Rica, April 10, 2022 to April 16, 2022, TT 6893.

Mr. Buchanan presented the above listed field trip and asked for board approval.

Action: *Upon a motion by Mrs. Elizabeth Cooper and seconded by Mrs. Margaret McRae, the board voted unanimously to approve the above listed field trip.*

E. Agenda Item: Policy Updates

Presenter: Mr. Jacob Buchanan, Deputy Superintendent

Policy Updates:

1. School Calendar and Time for Learning (3300)
2. Counseling Program (3610)
3. Homeless Students (4125)
4. Administering Medicines to Students (6125)
5. Discrimination and Harassment in the Workplace (7232)
6. Leave (7510)

Mr. Buchanan presented changes to the above listed policies 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 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 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. Draft Closed Session Minutes of Special Called Meeting on March 16, 2021.
- B. Draft Closed Session Minutes of Regular Meeting of March 23, 2021.

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. Buchanan, Amanda – School Nutrition Assistant, SCES

2. Chastain, Crystal – Bookkeeper, CVES
3. Cleaveland, James – Teacher and Assistant Athletic Director, SMHS
4. Cunningham, Brittney – Afterschool Assistant, CVES
5. Davidson, Todd – Bus Driver, SMHS
6. Robinson, Joey – Assistant Principal, SMHS
7. Robinson, Laura “Kim” – School Nutrition Assistant, BRS
8. Wilson, Stephanie – School Nutrition Assistant, BRS
9. Xiong, Rose – Afterschool Assistant, CVES

Employee Resignations:

1. Bailey, Amber – Teacher, SCES
2. Boone, Rebekah – Instructional Support Assistant, SCES
3. Coggins, Anita – EC Teacher, CVES
4. Crawford, Grace – Teacher, FES
5. Jones, Charles – Teacher, CVES
6. Stanley, Betty – Custodian, Central Office

Employee Retirements:

1. Broom, Anita – Bus Driver, SMHS
2. Farmer, Betty – School Nutrition Assistant, CVES
3. Hall, Robin – Teacher, SCES
4. Painter, O. Jill – EC Teacher, BREC
5. Potter, Linda – Media Coordinator, BRS
6. Robinson, Teresa – Teacher, CVES
7. Taylor, Mark – Teacher, SMHS
8. Tierney, Sarah – Teacher Assistant, FES
9. Tompkins, Suzanne – Teacher, SMHS
10. Wood, Pamela – Bookkeeper, CVES

Special Requests – Leave of Absence:

1. Pruett, Tonya – Teacher, SMES

Staff, Non-Staff, and Returning Coach Recommendations:

1. Brown, Megan – Assistant Coach District Track, SMHS – Returning Staff
2. Cleaveland, James – Head Coach Men’s Basketball, SMHS – New Staff
3. Davidson, Todd – Assistant Coach Varsity Track, SMHS – New Non-Staff
4. King, Tammy – Volunteer Assistant Coach Track, SMHS – Returning Non-Staff
5. Scifers, Jonathan – Assistant Coach District Wrestling, SMHS – Returning Non-Staff
6. Tate, Gracie – Assistant Coach Track, SMHS – New Non-Staff

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next regularly scheduled business meeting of the Board of Education is May 25, 2021, at 6:00 p.m., at the Administrative Offices of the Board of Education, Sylva, North Carolina. This meeting will be conducted using telephone and video conferencing technology.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no objection, Chairperson Ali Laird-Large adjourned the meeting at 7:43 p.m.

Alison Laird-Large, Chairperson

Dr. Dana Ayers for Dr. Tony Tipton, Secretary