

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

398 Hospital Road, Sylva

August 24, 2021

5:30 p.m.

The Jackson County Board of Education met in regular session at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, August 24, 2021, at the Board of Education Administrative Office Board Room, 398 Hospital Road, Sylva, North Carolina. 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

The following members were present:

Elizabeth Cooper, Vice-Chair
Margaret McRae
Wes Jamison
Abigail Clayton

Also present were Dr. Dana L. Ayers, Superintendent; Jacob Buchanan, Deputy Superintendent; Teri Walawender, Personnel Director; Christopher Z. Campbell, Board Attorney; Jeremiah Jackson, Chief Technology Officer; and Cora Fields, Board Assistant.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Alison Laird Large called the business meeting to order.

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 convene open session.

CALL TO ORDER – REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING

Chairperson Alison Laird Large called the regular business meeting to order.

Mrs. 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

1. Keith Blaine – NC House Bill 324 – Ensuring Dignity & Nondiscrimination/Schools
Mr. Blaine read excerpts from HB 324 that informs school they cannot promote discriminatory and racist concepts and requested that the Board of Education write a resolution ensuring dignity and nondiscrimination in Jackson County Public Schools.
2. Dr. John Edwards - Judeo-Christian Bible as Curriculum in Public Education
Dr. John Edwards, spoke to board about the need for the Bible to be reintroduced into our public school curriculum.

CONSENT ACTION AGENDA

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

- A. Open Session Minutes of Regular Meeting of July 27, 2021.

INFORMATION AGENDA

- A. **Agenda Item:** Superintendent's Report
Presenter: Dr. Dana L. Ayers, Superintendent

Dr. Ayers reported on the following items:

1. The start of school in JCPS has been successful and very eventful. In the first week, JCPS had both an early dismissal and delayed start due to floods and poor weather conditions that impacted the schedule. All students were fed prior to the early dismissal and both meals with the delayed start, as well as transported home safely. Dr. Ayers thanked Laura Cabe, School Nutrition Director, Josh Francis, Transportation Director, and Todd Dillard, Director of Jackson County Emergency Management.
2. School is looking the most normal it has in well over a year. With a five-day week return and instruction taking place soon after the first day, we are making tremendous progress. Staff and students are establishing schedules, practicing good routines and working to create solid academic habits that will be beneficial throughout their school career. Dr. Ayers thanked the families, parents and community for supporting students in many ways.
3. In addition to having a normal schedule, the academic progress and instruction is already occurring this year. Dr. Ayers goal for the district to achieve academic growth through a focus on early literacy, are taking shape with the new reading materials for Kindergarten through Eighth grade. All resources have yet to arrive but teachers are diving into the materials, professional development has occurred and will continue during the year. Full implementation is the goal for the fall once all materials are received.

4. In high school sports, the Blue Ridge Bobcats will have their third volleyball match this evening. They have dropped the first two matches but are improving daily. The BR men's soccer team will have their first match tomorrow at home against Summit. The SMHS JV football team opened the season with a loss at Asheville last week. The Mustang varsity volleyball and men's varsity soccer teams are both off to a 2-0 start while the varsity football team won big over Cherokee Friday night. The men's and women's cross-country team took first and second place in their meet at Swain on Saturday.
5. Dr. Ayers shared how incredibly proud she is of the JCPS staff, who have been diligently planning, organizing and anxiously preparing for students to safely return. The open houses, the first in-person in two years, were well-attended and families seemed excited to return. During our first days, Central Office staff supported schools in car rider lines and other areas as needed.
6. JCPS is closely monitoring COVID numbers among staff and students. The JCPS Board of Education made an early, wise decision at the July 27th meeting to require masks for all students, staff and visitors while indoors. Requiring masks is key to allowing our students to remain in school. Currently quarantine numbers are fairly minimal which Dr. Ayers attributes to the StrongSchoolsNC Toolkit we are following that says students who are exposed while wearing a proper fitting mask are not required to quarantine. The JCPS COVID dashboard is updated as new cases arise. Dr. Ayers thanked the Board for choosing to keep our students safe and in school.

B. Agenda Item: Memorandum of Understanding with Mountain Projects/Head Start

Presenter: Laura Dills, Executive Director of Federal Programs

Mrs. Dills presented the updated Memorandum of Understanding with Mountain Projects/Head Start for the 2021-2022 school year. The agreement provides that our exceptional children's Pre-K staff will collaborate to assist with child find efforts, provide screenings when necessary, complete student evaluations for students with

C. Agenda Item: Declared Surplus

Presenter: Jacob Buchanan, Assistant Superintendent

Mr. Buchanan presented the following item as decaled surplus to be sold on GovDeals.com:

1. Surplus Activity Bus 8028 1990 Chevy Vin # 1GBM6P1F1MV102187

D. Agenda Item: Review COVID Protocols

Presenter: Jacob Buchanan, Deputy Superintendent

Mr. Buchanan updated the board on the following COVID protocols that will be in place:

1. JCPS was the first district to require masks and most surrounding districts have now followed suit. The JCPS Board directive is to keep kids in school 5 days a week. Mr. Buchanan stressed that masks keep kids in school.
2. All COVID documents from the StrongSchoolsNC toolkit have been uploaded to the JCPS website. The toolkit includes various scenarios of exposure and quarantine requirements.
3. School Nurses are working with the Jackson County Health Department to assist with determining symptoms, exposure and diagnosis.

4. Students will be required to follow the three-feet distance rule while eating breakfast and lunch without masks.
5. Masking, social distancing and hand washing, along with the vaccine is the best way to keep kids in school and staff at work.
6. Sports – JCPS will be following the Harris Regional Hospital Return to Play protocols to ensure student athlete safety.
7. Cleaning – JCPS will continue to sanitize buses and classroom with Bio Essence spray. Hand Sanitizer stations are accessible in all locations and face masks are being provided.
8. Free COVID testing. JCPS is working with a vendor to set up on-site COVID testing in each of our schools two days a week.
9. Students, without medical issues, that are having difficulty wearing masks will be asked to properly put on a mask. If the student refuses to properly put on a mask they will be issued an administrative warning-conversation on the first instance. A call will be made to the parent to either come to school and have the student wear a face covering or take the student home and educate the parent on the policy. The administrator will share an information packet regarding why wearing masks is important to keep student in school. The second instance will be a final warning, conversation and in-person/virtual conference. Same response as the first instance but inform the parent that this is their last warning and that further violations of the face-covering policy may lead to disciplinary action or re-assignment. The administrator will share an information packet regarding why wearing masks is important to keep students in school. The third instance will result in 1 day out-of-school (OSS) suspension, then 3 days OSS, then 5 days OSS.

ACTION AGENDA

- A. **Agenda Item:** Consolidated Federal Programs Application 2021-2022
Presenter: Mrs. Laura Dills

Mrs. Dills presented the Consolidated Federal Programs Application for 2021-2022 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 Consolidated Federal Programs Application for 2021-2022.*

- B. **Agenda Item:** Annual Roof Inspection and Maintenance Services
Presenter: Jason Watson, Maintenance Director

Mr. Watson presented the proposal for the annual roof inspection and maintenance services for Blue Ridge School, Cullowhee Valley Elementary School, the Central Office and Bus Garage 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 Annual Roof Inspection and Maintenance Services proposal.*

- C. **Agenda Item:** Change of location for September 28, 2021 Board of Education Meeting

Presenter: Dr. Dana L. Ayers, Superintendent

Dr. Ayers requested the board change the location for the September 28, 2021 Board of Education meeting from Jackson Community School to the Central Office Board Room, due to the increase in COVID cases in Jackson County.

Action: *Upon a motion by Mrs. Elizabeth Cooper and seconded by Mrs. Margaret McRae, the board voted unanimously to approve the change of location for the September 28, 2021 Board of Education meeting from JCS to the Central Office Board Room.*

D. Agenda Item: Paving Central Office Parking

Presenter: Dr. Dana L. Ayers, Superintendent

Dr. Ayers presented a proposal from Parker Paving to repave the Central Office parking lot.

Action: *Upon a motion by Mrs. Elizabeth Cooper and seconded by Mr. Wes Jamison, the board voted unanimously to approve the Parker Paving proposal to repave the Central Office parking lot.*

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. Ayers. The board unanimously approved the following recommendations:*

Employee Recommendations:

1. Barr, Joanna—Title I Tutor, SCES
2. Barrett, Samantha—Temporary Speech Language Pathologist, CVES
3. Beck, Mary—School Nutrition Assistant, SCES
4. Brooks, Morgan—After School Assistant, CVES
5. Browne, Abigail—EC Teacher Assistant, CVES
6. Carter, Samantha—SEL Support Assistant, SMES
7. Cochran, Trevor—EC Teacher Assistant, SMHS
8. Deal, Tyson—Agriculture Teacher, CVES
9. Doolittle, Hannah—Teacher, FES
10. Edwards, Robert—Teacher, SCES
11. Jones Faust, Lydia—Teacher, CVES
12. Gibson, Jennifer—School Nutrition Assistant, SMES
13. Fox, Abigail—AIG Teacher, CVES
14. Green, Tiffany—School Nutrition Assistant, SMES
15. Greenwood, Jane—Bus Driver, FES
16. Guthrie, Tina—Guidance Office Support, SMHS
17. Helton, Mary Ellen—Teacher Assistant, SMES
18. Herring, Amee—EC Teacher Assistant, SMHS
19. Jones, Deborah—School Nutrition Assistant, SMHS
20. Junaluska, Samantha—EC Teacher Assistant, CVES
21. Whisnant Karup, Aimee—Bus Driver, FES
22. Kelly, Caleb Ronnie—Bus Driver, SMHS

23. Love, Caitlin—EC Teacher, CVES
24. Massingale, Whitney—Teacher, CVES
25. Mathis, MaKellyn—Instructional Support Assistant, SCES
26. McNab Jr., James Dennis—Teacher, SMES
27. Monteith, Jennifer—Instructional Support Assistant, SCES
28. Mull, Karen—School Receptionist, BRS/BREC
29. Mulligan, Tyler—EC Teacher, SMHS
30. Nelson, Gabrielle—Teacher, SMHS
31. Olson, Christi—OT Facilitator, JCPS
32. Osorio, Alexana—EC Teacher, SMHS
33. Owens, Catherine—Part-Time Receptionist, CVES
34. Perez, Bernice—Child Nutrition Substitute, FES
35. Philipi, Kara—Afterschool Director, FES
36. Pol, Lana—EC Teacher Assistant, FES
37. Portale, Daniel—Teacher, SMES
38. Repreza, Evelyn—Instructional Support Assistant, CVES
39. Rich, Kameron—EC Teacher Assistant, SMHS
40. Schiele, Brittany—Teacher, BREC
41. Stephens, Chelsea—Teacher, SCES
42. Todd, Marissa—Student Support Specialist, JCEC

Employee Resignations:

1. Brown, Rebecca--EC Teacher, CVES
2. Brown, Sadie--Teacher, SMES
3. Carver, Kim—EC Teacher Assistant, CVES
4. DeVoe, William—Custodian/Bus Driver, SCES
5. Dunlap, Melissa—Data Manager, SMES
6. Hallman, Sabrina—School Counselor, JCEC
7. Hansell, William – Instructional Support Assistant, SCES
8. Lavezzo, Olivia—Afterschool Employee, CVES
9. Lowe, Tammela—Teacher, SMES
10. Medford, Julia—Teacher, SCES
11. Morris, McKinley—Teacher, SMHS
12. Quiring, Katie—Teacher, SCES
13. Stillwell, Renee—EC Teacher, CVES
14. Xiong, Rose—Afterschool Employee, CVES

Employee Separations:

1. Smith, Brandon—Custodian and Bus Driver, SMHS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next regularly scheduled business meeting of the Board of Education, using video and telephone conferencing, is September 28, 2021 at 5:45 p.m., at the Board of Education Administrative Offices.

ADJOURNMENT

Action: *Upon a motion by Mrs. Elizabeth Cooper and seconded by Mr. Wes Jamison, the board voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 7:16 p.m.*

Alison Laird Large, Chairperson

Dr. Dana L. Ayers, Secretary