

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

398 Hospital Road, Sylva

December 14, 2021

5:45 p.m.

The Jackson County Board of Education met in regular session at 5:45 p.m. on Tuesday, December 14, 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:

Alison Laird-Large, Chairperson
Elizabeth Cooper, Vice Chairperson
Abigail Clayton

The following member was present via telephone and/or online platform:

Margaret McRae
Wes Jamison

Also present were Dr. Dana L. Ayers, Superintendent; Jake Buchanan, Deputy Superintendent; Teri Walawender, Human Resources Director; Chris 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.

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

1. Draft Closed Session Minutes for Regular Meeting on November 16, 2021.

Upon a motion by Mrs. Elizabeth Cooper and seconded by Mrs. Abigail Clayton, 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.

The students from Fairview Elementary School led the Pledge of Allegiance via video.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

SPECIAL RECOGNITION

1. Superintendent's Holiday Card – Izzy Alcantar, 3rd Grade, Blue Ridge School – Cover Artwork; River Otter, 10th Grade, JCS – Inside Cover Artwork
2. Cashiers Chamber of Commerce 2021 Spirit of our Community Educator of the Year – Stacy McNabb, Blue Ridge School
3. FES – Exceptional Children's Assistance Center "Tell Us Something Good" Award – Brandon McDevitt and Melissa Block
4. WLOS Thanks to Teachers – Hannah Martin, Scotts Creek Elementary School 4th Grade Teacher

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 16, 2021.

INFORMATION AGENDA

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

Dr. Ayers reported on the following items:

1. We have survived and THRIVED here in JCPS during the first semester of this school year. Even amid the pandemic, we have successfully navigated in-person instruction and are wrapping up with exams at our high schools. The remainder of this week and next week are important times for our high school students at BREC, JCEC, JCS and SMHS. It is critical that students are present and on time for these exams. Parents and families, please support us as we conclude the semester. Our final student day is Tuesday, December 21st and students will return to school on Wednesday, January 5th. I know our students, staff and families are ready to rest and enjoy the Christmas holidays!
2. We continue to do very well in our COVID protocol efforts. Our low COVID positivity rate of about 0.2% and eight active cases are a testament to these efforts. There are vaccination clinics taking place around Jackson County for families who wish to get the COVID vaccine. Remember that children age 5 and up as well as all adults are eligible.
3. Our middle grade and high school students are also in full swing with winter sports. We have basketball, wrestling and indoor track events taking place over the next several weeks/months. There's never a dull moment with our student-athletes and coaches. I am super-proud of our students who continue to focus on academics while also juggling sports, band, chorus, and other extracurricular activities. Well done students!!

4. Big things have happened over the last several weeks that are worthy of mentioning! First, our BOE voted and the state approved the \$2,000 retention incentive for all JCPS employees as of November 16th and who expect to remain through the school year. This will be paid out in mid-January. Along with the JCPS retention incentive, the state passed a budget that will also offer pay increases for staff and bonuses for many teaching staff. No amount of money will ever be sufficient to compensate for what they do for our students and families. However, this is incredible news for the hardworking, dedicated staff!
5. In other big news, JCPS has been awarded a grant from Dogwood Health Trust to open two new preschool classrooms in the fall of 2022. These new classrooms will serve a total of 36 more preschool students at Scotts Creek and Cullowhee Valley Schools! My purpose for writing this grant, with the assistance of Laura Dills, is to continue expanding access to early learning and early literacy. This grant addresses two of my goals for our district! More to come as I strive to expand preschool across the district in the months and years ahead. I am extremely grateful for the award from Dogwood as this will not only benefit our school system but provides a service to our community!
6. Big things have happened over the last several weeks that are worthy of mentioning! First, our BOE voted and the state approved the \$2,000 retention incentive for all JCPS employees. This will be paid out to in mid-January. Along with the JCPS retention incentive, the state passed a budget that will also offer pay increases for staff and bonuses for many teaching staff. This is incredible news for the hardworking, dedicated staff we have!
7. Additionally, we were awarded a grant from Dogwood Health Trust to open two new preschool classrooms in the fall of 2022. These new classrooms will serve a total of 36 more preschool students! My purpose for writing this grant, with the help of Laura Dills, is to continue expanding access to early learning and early literacy. This grant addresses two of my goals for our district! More to come as I strive to expand preschool across the district in the months and years ahead. I am extremely grateful for the award from Dogwood!
8. I also want to share our desperate need for key positions in JCPS. We are actively seeking bus drivers, custodians and school nutrition staff. It is nearly impossible to continue providing all of these services without much-needed staff. If anyone is interested in any of these key positions, we can be flexible in scheduling hours and days. I implore our community to direct potential candidates to our website or to call Sarah Wooldridge or Teri Walawender in the HR department.
9. Lastly, a sincere thank you to every employee, student, family, and community member in Jackson County. I believe we are a gem of a school system in western North Carolina and it is because of the support that is the standard here. For that I am grateful!

B. Agenda Item: Declared Surplus

Presenter: Jake Buchanan, Deputy Superintendent

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

1. Surplus Vehicle 8014 – 2003 Mercury Marquis Serial #2MEFM74WX3X640243

C. Agenda Item: MOU Addendum with Blue Ridge Health for Telehealth

Presenter: Jake Buchanan, Deputy Superintendent

Mr. Buchanan informed the board that an addendum will be added to the Memorandum of Understanding with Blue Ridge Health to provide Telehealth at all JCPS schools to begin in February 2022. Telehealth services will be provided by the School Nurse or a CNA and will be available to all students, staff and student family members.

D. Agenda Item: Unaudited Financial Summary

Presenter: Mrs. Kristie Walker, Chief Financial Officer

Mrs. Walker presented the Unaudited Financial Summary as of November 16, 2021.

OPEN SESSION FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

ACTION AGENDA

A. Agenda Item: Budget Resolution

Presenter: Mrs. Kristie Walker, Chief Financial Officer

Mrs. Kristie Walker presented the 2021-2022 Budget Resolution 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 Resolution for 2021-2022.*

B. Agenda Item: Mountain Projects Board of Directors Appointment for Wes Jamison

Presenter: Dr. Dana L. Ayers, Superintendent

Dr. Ayers requested that Mr. Wes Jamison to be appointed the permanent JCPS representative to the Mountain Projects Board of Directors and asked for board approval. Mr. Jamison has been serving as the temporary appointee since 2019.

Action: *Upon a motion by Mrs. Elizabeth Cooper and seconded by Mrs. Abigail Clayton the board voted unanimously to approve the appointment of Mr. Wes Jamison to the Board of Directors for Mountain Projects.*

C. Agenda Item: Review Mask Mandate

Presenter: Dr. Dana L. Ayers, Superintendent

Dr. Ayers reviewed the current JCPS mask policy that requires all students, staff, and educational visitors to wear masks when indoors. She said that the JCPS COVID numbers have remained low as a result of masking, social distancing, hand washing, and good custodial practices. As required by the Department of Public Instruction the board will review COVID procedures monthly.

Action: *Upon a motion by Mrs. Elizabeth Cooper and seconded by Mrs. Abigail Clayton, the board voted unanimously to approve the Mask requirement for all students, staff, and educational visitors in grades PreK through 12, regardless of vaccine status.*

D. Agenda Item: Calendar Change for February 21, 2022

Presenter: Dr. Dana L. Ayers, Superintendent

Dr. Ayers requested the board make a change to the calendar for February 21, 2022, from a student day to a Required Workday for Professional Development for teachers 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 calendar change for February 21, 2022, from a student day to a Required Workday for Professional Development for teachers.*

E. Agenda Item: Policy Updates

Presenter: Jake Buchanan, Deputy Superintendent

Technical Changes

1. Title IX Sexual Harassment – Prohibited Conduct and Reporting Process (1725/4035/7236)
2. Title IX Sexual Harassment Grievance Process (1726/4036/7237)
3. Public Participation at Board Meetings (2310)
4. Bullying and Harassing Behavior Prohibited (4329/7311)
5. Information Provided by Applicant or Employee (7110)
6. Job Descriptions (7400)
7. Family and Medical Leave (7520)
8. Facility Design (9020)

Mr. Buchanan presented updates to the policies listed above 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 updates to the policies listed above.*

F. Agenda Item: Field Trips

Presenter: Dr. Dana L. Ayers, Superintendent

1. SCES, Grade 8 – Outer Banks, NC, April 26, 2022 to April 29, 2022, TT7200.

Dr. Ayers reviewed the above listed field trip 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 field trip.*

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

Employee Recommendations:

1. Ashe, Brandon – Basketball and Cheer Bus Driver, FES
2. Bennett, John Maxwell – Activity Bus Driver, SMHS
3. Brown, Tabitha – Teacher Assistant, CVES

4. Bryson, Amy – Custodian, SMHS
5. Cabe, Pamela – Media Coordinator, FES
6. Crews, Megan – Project ACTIVATE Coach/Clinician, CO
7. Cumbie, Matthew – Technology Technician, CO
8. Evans, Kayla – School Nutrition Assistant, CVES
9. Geary, Erika – Project ACTIVATE Evaluator-Clinician, CO
10. Hall, Gregory – Band Tutor, BREC
11. Holloran, Misty – Student Support Assistant-ISS Tutor, JCS
12. Holloran, Timothy – Teacher, JCS
13. Hooper, Mark Keith – Activity Bus Driver, All Schools
14. Houtzer, Deborah – Afterschool Tutor, BRS
15. King, Mary – Instructional Support Assistant, CVES
16. Larch, Catherine – Instructional Support Assistant, SMES
17. Madison, Paige – EC Teacher Assistant, SCES
18. Massey, Garrison – Teacher and Substitute Bus and Activity Bus Driver, SMHS
19. McGhee, Logan – Bus Monitor, CVES
20. McGhee, Logan – EC Teacher Assistant, CVES
21. Owens, Tammy – Teacher Assistant, BRS
22. Schenk, Hailey – PE Teacher Assistant, CVES
23. Setzer, Ronald – Custodian and Bus Driver, SMHS
24. Stewart, Donna – EC Teacher, BRS
25. Tallent, Natasha – Instructional Support Assistant, SMES
26. Watkins, Susan – Afterschool Tutor, BRS

Employee Resignations:

1. Draper, Samantha Brooke – Instructional Support Assistant, SMES
2. Greenwood, George – Bus Driver, FES
3. Greenwood, Jane – Bus Driver, FES
4. High, Rachel – SEL Support Assistant, CVES
5. Medford, Taylor James- Teacher, CVES
6. Passmore, Kevin – Custodian and Bus Driver, SMHS
7. Young, Lyndsi – EC Teacher Assistant, CVES

Separations:

1. Shepard, Tracy – School Nutrition Assistant, CVES

Staff, Non-Staff and Returning Coach Recommendations:

1. Arnst, April – Assistant Coach MS Girls Basketball, BREC, New Non-Staff
2. Ashe, Brandon – Head Coach Boys Basketball, FES, New Staff
3. Bell, Tasha – Head Coach Cheer, SMES, Returning Staff
4. Bumgarner, Mary – Assistant Coach Cheer, SMES, Returning Staff
5. Capps, Zeb – Head Coach Men’s Golf, Returning Staff
6. Dezarn, Megan – Head Coach Women’s Track, Returning Staff
7. Dillard, Morgan – Head Coach Varsity Softball, SMHS, Returning Non-Staff
8. Ellenburg, Jeremy – Head Coach Varsity Baseball, SMHS, Returning Staff
9. Frizzell, Nathan – Head Coach JV Baseball, SMHS, Returning Staff
10. Gribble, Corina – Head Coach JV Women’s Soccer, SMHS, Returning Staff
11. Hackler, Carol – Head Coach Cheer, CVES, New Non-Staff
12. Hawk, Derrick – Assistant Coach Varsity Baseball, SMHS, Returning Staff
13. Miller, Scott – Assistant Coach Girls Basketball, SMES, Returning Staff
14. Mitchell, David – Assistant Coach JV Baseball, SMHS, Returning Non-Staff

15. Nicholson, Rachel – Assistant Coach Varsity Softball, SMHS, Returning Non-Staff
16. Parsons, Jonathan – Assistant Coach Varsity Soccer, SMHS, Returning Staff
17. Parsons, Stephen – Head Coach Varsity Women’s Soccer, SMHS, Returning Staff
18. Patterson, Virginia – Assistant Coach Cheer, CVES, New Non-Staff
19. Rhoads, Emory – Assistant Coach Men’s Basketball, FES, New Staff
20. Schenk, Hailey – Assistant Coach JV Softball, SMHS, Returning Staff
21. Shuler, Pam – Assistant Director Winter Athletics, SMHS, Returning Staff
22. Sullivan, Hannah – Head Coach Girls Basketball, FES, New Staff
23. Woodring, Leah – Head Coach Cheer, FES, New Staff

Special Requests – Leave of Absence:

1. McKee, Jennifer – Teacher, BRS

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next regularly scheduled business meeting of the Board of Education is January 25, 2022, 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 7:15 p.m.

Alison Laird Large, Chairperson

Dr. Dana L. Ayers, Secretary