

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

398 Hospital Road, Sylva

May 23, 2023

6:00 p.m.

The Jackson County Board of Education met in regular session at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, May 23, 2023, at the Board of Education Administrative Office Boardroom, 398 Hospital Road, Sylva, North Carolina. The following members were present:

Elizabeth Cooper, Chairperson
Wes Jamison, Vice Chairperson
Abigail Clayton
Kim Moore
Dr. Lynn Dillard

Also present were Dr. Dana L. Ayers, Superintendent; Jacob Buchanan, Deputy Superintendent; Teri Walawender, Director of Human Resources; Ashley Leonard, School Board Attorney; and Cora Fields, Board Assistant.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Elizabeth Cooper called the business meeting to order.

Mrs. Cooper led the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Upon a motion by Mr. Wes Jamison and seconded by Mrs. Abigail Clayton, the board voted unanimously to approve the Agenda.

SPECIAL RECOGNITION

Dr. Ayers presented a Certificate of Recognition to Ms. Maya Ferrer - 7th Grade CVES. Ms. Ferrer has the honor of being awarded the Victor E. Bell, Jr. Scholarship from the College Foundation of North Carolina.

Dr. Ayers presented a Certificate of Recognition to Ms. Angela Phillips, SMHS Teacher. Ms. Phillips has been selected as a Summer Scholar to attend one of 35 summer seminars and institutes supported by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

CONSENT ACTION AGENDA

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

- A. Open Session Minutes of Regular Meeting on April 25, 2023.

INFORMATION AGENDA

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

Dr. Ayers reported on the following:

1. We are in the final days of the school year with only 10.5 days remaining. Our End-of-Grade tests begin this Thursday with 3rd through 8th grade students taking the reading assessment. Other EOGs and EOCs will take place in the coming weeks. The last days of school are filled with testing, celebrations, promotions and graduations. I recommend everyone attend at least one of these special ceremonies.
2. I want to offer a word of sincere gratitude to the Jackson County Sheriff's Office for their partnership with our schools. The tremendous amount of support we receive with School Resource Officers, canine searches or any other request is much appreciated. The goal of both of our systems is to ensure every school is safe and drug-free. Last week, we used canines to sweep both Cullowhee Valley and Scotts Creek Schools. These sweeps will routinely take place at all schools.
3. This week, we had the pleasure of hosting the CEO and many staff and board members from Dogwood Health Trust. We visited three schools and spent most of our visits discussing preschool expansion, CTE and other workforce initiatives. State Representative Eric Ager also joined us to learn about the work we are doing in JCPS to meet the needs of our students and families. Dogwood has been extremely supportive of JCPS by offering multiple grants to fund new preschool classrooms and adapted playgrounds. We are so grateful for their partnership.
4. Unfortunately, we have experienced some less than positive press this week. The SMHS senior prank began as a harmless, "have-a-little-fun" prank and went according to plan. It is the actions after leaving the building that are irresponsible and illegal. Students were directed to leave campus but they returned and re-entered the building without permission and trespassed on campus. Much time that should have been spent focusing on instruction, school safety and preparing for testing and graduation ceremonies was spent by the SMHS admin team and SRO on investigations. I am disappointed by the actions of students and disheartened by the community uproar surrounding the incident. The students' actions have resulted in law enforcement pressing charges with my full support. Additional consequences could have included exclusion from graduation exercises (Board of Education Policy [4300](#)). However, as has already been communicated to students and families, I do not believe students should be excluded from graduation. Students involved *WILL BE PERMITTED* to participate in graduation ceremonies. My hope is that a lesson has been learned from this incident by the students.
5. Looking ahead, we have finalized our date for the 2nd Annual Back to School Bash to be held on Saturday, August 5th at the Cullowhee Recreation Center. We look forward to seeing many students and families at this wonderful event.
6. I am delighted to live and serve in this community. JCPS has incredible things happening in our schools and I aim to continue the positive trajectory we are on.

- B. **Agenda Item:** Project AWARE Update
Presenter: Megan Crews, Behavioral Health Services Director

Ms. Crews presented an update on the JCPS mental health program and the Project AWARE grant.

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

Ms. Walker presented the Unaudited Financial Summary as of May 23, 2023.

OPEN SESSION FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS

Jay Pavey – Mr. Pavey spoke to the board as a representative of some of the students involved in the Senior Prank.

ACTION AGENDA

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

Ms. Walker presented budget amendments and transfers to the State Public School Fund, Federal Grants Fund, Local Current Expense Fund, Capital Outlay Fund, and Other Specific Revenue Fund and asked for board approval.

Action: *Upon a motion by Mr. Wes Jamison and seconded by Mrs. Abigail Clayton, the board voted unanimously to approve the budget amendments and transfers to the State Public School Fund, Federal Grants Fund, Local Current Expense Fund, Capital Outlay Fund, and Other Specific Revenue Fund.*

- B. **Agenda Item:** Community Use of Facilities Policy 5030/9035 and Agreement
Presenter: Dr. Dana L. Ayers, Superintendent

Dr. Ayers presented information to the board about the current process for community use of Jackson County Public School facilities. Dr. Ayers said that board policy 5030/9035 – Community Use of Facilities, has been updated many times during the past, but that the fees for use of JCPS facilities have not changed in many years. Dr. Ayers said that due to numerous requests to use the newer facilities at SMHS, we will re-evaluate the fee structure based on similar facilities in Jackson County and bring this information to the board in July for action.

Action: *No Action Taken.*

- C. **Agenda Item:** NC ESS Contract Renewal
Presenter: Mrs. Teri Walawender, Human Resources Director

Mrs. Walawender presented the NC ESS Contract renewal and asked for board approval.

Action: *Upon a motion by Mr. Wes Jamison and seconded by Mrs. Kim Moore, the board voted unanimously to approve the NC ESS contract renewal.*

- D. **Agenda Item:** Purchase of Chromebooks for Middle School Students
Presenter: Mr. Jeremiah Jackson, Chief Technology Officer

Mr. Jackson presented the bid for the purchase of 300 Chromebooks for rising Middle School Students and asked for board approval.

Action: *Upon a motion by Mr. Wes Jamison and seconded by Mrs. Abigail Clayton, the board voted unanimously to approve the purchase of 300 Lenovo Chromebooks utilizing the NC State contract.*

- E. **Agenda Item:** Facility Fencing Proposal
Presenter: Mr. Jake Buchanan, Deputy Superintendent

Mr. Buchanan presented the proposals for the purchase and installation of fencing at Jackson Community School, Smoky Mountain High School, and Fairview Elementary School and asked for board approval.

Action: *Upon a motion by Mr. Wes Jamison and seconded by Mrs. Kim Moore, the board voted unanimously to approve the facility fencing proposals.*

- F. **Agenda Item:** Policy Updates
Presenter: Mr. Jake Buchanan, Deputy Superintendent

Updates:

1. Professional and Staff Development (1610/7800)
2. Dual Enrollment (3101)
3. Integrity and Civility (4310)
4. Drivers (6315)
5. Insurance for Student Transportation Services (6330)
6. Participation by Historically Underutilized Businesses (6402)
7. Purchasing Requirements for Equipment, Materials, and Supplies (6430)

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

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

- G. **Agenda Item:** Field Trips
Presenter: Dr. Dana L. Ayers, Superintendent

1. CVES, Grade 6 - Dollywood, Pigeon Forge, TN, June 2, 2023, TT 8517.

Dr. Ayers reviewed the above-listed field trip and asked for board approval.

Action: *Upon a motion by Mr. Wes Jamison and seconded by Mrs. Abigail Clayton, the board voted unanimously to approve the above-listed field trip.*

CLOSED SESSION

The board unanimously approved a motion by Mr. Wes Jamison 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 Mr. Wes Jamison and seconded by Mrs. Abigail Clayton the board unanimously approved the consent action agenda:*

1. Draft Closed Session Minutes for Regular Meeting on April 25, 2023.

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

PERSONNEL ACTION AGENDA

Action: *Upon a motion made by Mr. Wes Jamison 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. Alcantar, Elena – Substitute School Nutrition Manager, BRS
2. Blackburn, Trinity – Field Trip Bus Driver, SMES
3. Browning, Amy – Student Data Manager and Receptionist, SCES
4. Browning, Amy – Extended Employment Student Data Manager and Receptionist, SCES
5. Cope, Brandon – School Nutrition Manager, FES
6. DeFresne, Claire – Teacher, SMHS
7. Eden, Zachary – Extended Employment Assistant Principal, BRS and BREC
8. Fonseca, Amanda – Tutor, JCEC
9. Forbis, Michael – Substitute Bus Driver and Field Trip Bus Driver, SCES
10. Green, Tiffany – Substitute School Nutrition Manager, SMES
11. Hensley, Brooklyn – Bus Monitor, SCES
12. Hill, Molly – College Success Coach, JCEC
13. Johnson, Felicia – Substitute School Nutrition Assistant, CVES
14. Longwell, Sarah – Teacher, SCES
15. McCoy, Susan – Substitute School Nutrition Manager, SCES
16. McNabb, Stacy – Extended Employment Instructional Coach, BRS
17. McNider, James – Extended Employment Assistant Principal, JCS
18. Pinkerton, Randi – Teacher, SMHS
19. Porterfield, Curtis – Teacher, SMHS
20. Proffitt, Christy – Intervention Specialist, SCES
21. Queen, Bernice – Substitute School Nutrition Manager, SMHS
22. Renegar, Nanette – Teacher, SMHS
23. Sandoval, Jesus – Field Trip Bus Driver, SMES
24. Umphlett, Courtney – Title 1 and Band Instructor, SCES
25. Watson, Joshua – Extended Employment Assistant Principal, CVES
26. Willoughby, Wes – Field Trip Bus Driver, SMES
27. Young, Connie – Substitute School Nutrition Manager, CVES

Employee Recommendations – Summer Employment

1. Alcantar, Elena – Summer Program School Nutrition Assistant, BRS
2. Bates, April - Summer Program School Nutrition Assistant, CVES
3. Evans, Kayla - Summer Program School Nutrition Assistant, CVES
4. Grasty, Allison - Summer Program School Nutrition Manager – Summer Feeding, CVES
5. Ledford, Stephanie - Summer Program School Nutrition Assistant, CVES
6. McFadden, Kathy - Summer Program School Nutrition Assistant, CVES or BRS
7. Parris, Judy - Summer Program School Nutrition Assistant – Summer Feeding, CVES
8. Robinson, Laura - Summer Program School Nutrition Manager – Summer Feeding, BRS

Employee Resignations:

1. Ayres, Chloe – Afterschool Assistant, FES
2. Berry, Gareth Kyle – Evening Custodian, FES
3. Bramlett, Brianne – Pre-K Teacher, CVES
4. Cook, Haley – Teacher, SMES
5. Cox, Lora – School Social Worker, CVES
6. Fisher, Keari – School Nutrition Assistant, FES
7. Gorman, Robin – Teacher, FES
8. Hilliard, Amanda – Teacher, SMHS
9. Kullenberg, Christine – Lead EC Teacher Assistant, BRS
10. Miller, Evangeline – Substitute Bus Driver, BRS
11. Murphy, Ronda – Part-time Student Data Manager, SCES
12. Norman, Susan – Instructional Support Assistant, CVES
13. Nolan, Megan – Teacher, CVES
14. Pierce, Elizabeth – Teacher, SMES
15. Rogers, Christie – Teacher, SMES
16. Ward, Turner – Bus Driver, BRS
17. Warlick, Kodie – EC Teacher Assistant, SMHS
18. Wilson, Kellie – Teacher, SMHS

Employee Retirements:

1. Stowe, Stephanie – Teacher, SMHS

Staff, Non-Staff and Returning Coach Recommendations:

1. Sharpless, Reuben – Assistant Coach Baseball, SMES – Returning Non-Staff
2. Willoughby, Wes – Head Coach Baseball, SMES – Returning Staff
3. Young, Thomas – Head Coach Men’s Basketball, SMHS – New Staff

Administrator and Director Contract Renewals:

1. Cowan, Kheri
2. Eden, Zachary
3. McCrory (Reidinger), Heather
4. Robinson, Joey

Teacher Contract Renewals:

District

1. Giles, Petra

Blue Ridge Early College

1. Coggins, Anita
2. Kennedy, Paula
3. Mullally, Fransisca
4. Pressler, Nickalus
5. Schiele, Brittany
6. Smathers, Stephanie

Blue Ridge School

1. Coffey, Leigh
2. Greene, Heather
3. Leathers, Annette
4. Steen, Ashlee
5. Stewart, Donna
6. Watkins, Rebekkah

Cullowhee Valley Elementary School

1. Boaz, Brittany
2. Bonen-Clark, Michael
3. Conley, Sydney
4. Davis, Jamie
5. Deal, Tyson
6. Fox, Abigail
7. Frazier, Brooke
8. Hammer, Kelly
9. Harris, Donna
10. Jorgensen, Leah
11. Kostak, Abigail
12. Lambert, Julie
13. Lovedahl, Kassidy
14. Massingale, Whitney
15. Miller, Carly
16. Myers, Melissa
17. Nytko, Emily
18. Rave, Sarah
19. Reece, Gretchen
20. Smyrl, Joshua
21. Thompson, Robert

Fairview Elementary School

1. Allred, Alexis
2. Barlowe, Rebecca
3. Block, Melissa
4. Boyles, Autumn
5. Clare, Reanna
6. Hendershot, Sarah
7. Leopard, Sara
8. Libby, Jonathan

9. Miller, Emma
10. Moss, Amber
11. Painter, Mikaela
12. Provost, Valerie
13. Shull, Heather
14. Taylor, Lora
15. Thompson, Julie
16. Turnmire, Cheryl
17. Wheatley, Jessica
19. Collins, Stacey

Jackson Community School

1. Hannah, Melissa
2. Mwaniki, Sarah
3. Roles, Caice
4. Sutton, Kelli

Jackson County Early College

1. Fonseca, Amanda
2. McMahan, Kathy

Scotts Creek Elementary School

1. Ballew, Amber
2. Colton, Rachel
3. Davis, Megan
4. Dewantara, Candace
5. Finley, Katelyn
6. Lynch, Madelyn
7. Medford, Taylor
8. Norman, Kaitlyn
9. Trempe, Andrea

Smokey Mountain Elementary School

1. Beam, Michael
2. Burchette, Marissa
3. Dodson, Kaitlyn
4. Doll, Victoria
5. Hudson, Laura
6. Hummer, Suzanne
7. Jenkins, Megan
8. King, Morgan
9. McGrew, Tucker
10. Phillips, Trina
11. Pruett, Tonya
12. Saavedra, Charito
13. Taylor, Tiffany
14. Volk, Amanda

Smoky Mountain High School

1. Berryhill, Suzanne
2. Cooper, Laura
3. Doner-Campbell, Jaclyn
4. Guillermo, Dominador
5. Herter, Serena
6. Howard, Travis
7. Laws, Kaylah
8. Marcus, Cecilia
9. Mills, Jordan
10. Nelson, Gabrielle
11. Phillips, Angela
12. Ray, Kathryn
13. Sargent, Bethany
14. Smith, Martha
15. Stiffler, Kerstin
16. Stiffler, Mark
17. Varian, Lynn
18. Wilke, Anna
19. Young, Thomas

Action: *Mrs. Abigail Clayton recused herself from the vote. Upon a motion made by Mr. Wes Jamison and seconded by Mrs. Kim Moore, the board approved the following recommendation:*

Teacher Contract Renewal
Fairview Elementary School

18. Woods, Anna

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next regularly scheduled business meeting of the Board of Education is June 27, 2023, at 6:00 p.m., at the Board of Education Administrative Offices, 398 Hospital Road, Sylva, NC.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no objection, Chairperson Elizabeth Cooper adjourned the meeting at 9:02 p.m.

Elizabeth Cooper, Chairperson

Dr. Dana L Ayers, Secretary