

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

398 Hospital Road, Sylva

October 24, 2023

6:00 p.m.

The Jackson County Board of Education held their regular session on Tuesday, October 24, 2023, at 6:00 p.m., at the Board of Education Administrative Office Boardroom, 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; Mrs. Teri Walawender, Director of Human Resources; Ms. Ashley Leonard, School Board Attorney; and Mrs. Cora Fields, Board Assistant.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chairperson Elizabeth Cooper called the business meeting to order.

Mrs. Cooper introduced Ms. Linda Haggard, SMHS Choir Instructor, and members of the Smoky Mountain Mustang Singers - Senior -- Ella Ledford; Junior -- Parker Hughes; Junior -- Aniya Metcalf; Junior -- Drew Callaghan; Senior -- Mathias Saunooke; and Senior -- Tucker Buchanan who sang the National Anthem.

Mrs. Cooper led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

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

**SPECIAL RECOGNITION**

Dr. Ayers presented Certificates of Recognition to the following staff members:

1. 2023 NCCAT North Carolina CTE Teacher of the Year Finalist, Kim Williams
2. National Principals Month – JCPS 2023-2024 Principal of the Year – Holly Whisnant

**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. Draft Open Session Minutes of Regular Meeting of September 26, 2023.

## INFORMATION AGENDA

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

Dr. Ayers reported on the following:

1. October has been fast...the days have been full and escaped us quickly. Schools have hosted parent nights and fall festivals to engage families in the school setting. We just marked the end of the first quarter of the 2023.2024 school year and report cards are going out this week. We've also hosted several regional Department of Public Instruction staff who are collaborating with our low-performing schools to make instructional improvements. Their presence in our schools and work alongside principals is bringing opportunities for instructional coaching, constructive criticism and feedback. This has been a welcome addition to our plans for growing students and staff.
2. The central office leadership team spent time in our community with the Hands-on Jackson service event on October 5th. We worked hard, got dirty and blessed a local veteran. I wholeheartedly believe it is imperative that we, as a school system, are fully engaged with families across the county.
3. Our athletic teams and marching band students are wrapping up their fall competitions and looking toward winter sports tryouts, concerts and productions. I am in awe of the commitment our students, teachers and coaches exhibit in their work on the fields, courts, track and the auditorium. Preparing for a new season or a performance is time-consuming work that often goes unnoticed.
4. We are still fundraising to install lights at the SMHS baseball and softball fields prior to the spring season. This is an effort that will benefit our small community and our schools without diverting our focus on large capital projects. As I've said before, our student-athletes deserve the ability to play ball under the lights!
5. Finally, I want to recognize and honor one of my leadership team members. Angie Dills has been an integral and valuable part of the central office leadership team and Jackson County Public Schools for 27 years. She has served as a teacher, principal mentor, Career Development Coordinator, CTE Instructional Management Coordinator, Middle and Secondary Curriculum Director, Executive Director of CTE and, currently, is the Chief Academic Officer. Angie holds degrees in the following degrees: Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, Bachelor of Science in Education and a Masters of Business Administration.
6. This evening, I want to announce a change for Angie. Her role will not change nor is this a promotion; simply a title change that matches her job skills. She willingly leads and assists in any capacity she can and for her work ethic and character, I am enormously appreciative. Angie Dills' new title is Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction. You're already doing the work, let your title reflect that. Congratulations, Angie!

- B. **Agenda Item:** School Improvement Plans  
**Presenter:** Mr. Adam Holt, Director of Testing and Accountability

Mr. Holt presented the School Improvement Plans for 2023-2024 school year for review.

- C. **Agenda Item:** NC National Guard Cyber Security Response Force Assessment  
**Presenter:** Mr. Greg Stewart, Chief Technology Officer

Mr. Stewart presented the NC National Guard Cyber Security Response Force Assessment plan that will be conducted in January 2024.

- D. **Agenda Item:** 2023-2024 Booster, PTO, PTA List  
**Presenter:** Mrs. Kristie Walker, Chief Financial Officer

Mrs. Walker presented the final list of Booster, PTO, and PTA contacts for the 2023-2024 school year.

- E. **Agenda Item:** First Quarter and Bank of America Audit  
**Presenter:** Mrs. Kristie Walker, Chief Financial Officer

Mrs. Walker informed the board that the 1st quarter internal audit and Bank of America purchase card audits have been completed with no findings.

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

Mrs. Walker presented the Unaudited Financial Summary as of October 24, 2023.

### **OPEN SESSION FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None.

### **ACTION AGENDA**

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

Mrs. Walker presented the budget amendments and transfers to the State Public School Fund, Federal Grants Fund, Local Current Expense 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 to the State Public School Fund, Federal Grants Fund, Local Current Expense Fund, and Other Specific Revenue Fund.*

- B. **Agenda Item:** Local Salary Decompression  
**Presenter:** Mrs. Teri Walawender, HR Director and Mrs. Kristie Walker, CFO

Mrs. Walawender and Mrs. Walker presented the Local Salary Decompression and asked for board approval.

**Action:** *Upon a motion by Mr. Wes Jamison and seconded by Dr. Lynn Dillard, the board voted unanimously to approve the Local Salary Decompression.*

**C. Agenda Item:** CVES ActivPanel Purchase

**Presenter:** Mr. Greg Stewart, CTO

Mr. Greg Stewart presented the bids to purchase 29 ActivPanels for Cullowhee Valley Elementary School 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 29 ActivPanels for Cullowhee Valley Elementary School.*

**D. Agenda Item:** Policy Updates

**Presenter:** Dr. Dana L. Ayers, Superintendent

Dr. Ayers presented the following Board Policies for Second Reading/Stakeholder Review/Input:

1. Parental Involvement (1310/4002)
2. Parental Inspection of and Objection to Instructional Materials (3210)
3. Comprehensive Health Education Program (3540)
4. Criminal Behavior (4335)
5. Surveys of Students (4720)
6. Student Health Services (6120)
7. Staff Responsibilities (7300)

**Action:** *Upon a motion by Mr. Wes Jamison and seconded by Mrs. Abigail Clayton the board unanimously approved holding the vote on the above-listed policies until the November meeting. No Action Taken.*

**E. Agenda Item:** Crucial Learning Professional Development

**Presenter:** Dr. Dana L. Ayers, Superintendent

Dr. Ayers presented the proposal for Crucial Learning Professional Development and asked for board approval.

**Action:** *Upon a motion by Mr. Wes Jamison and seconded by Mrs. Abigail Clayton, the board voted 4 to 0 to approve the Crucial Learning Professional Development contract. Dr. Lynn Dillard abstained.*

**F. Agenda Item:** Field Trips

**Presenter:** Dr. Dana L. Ayers, Superintendent

1. BRS, Grade 6 - Washington, DC, 03-20-24 to 03-22-24, TT8778.
2. JCEC, Grade 12 – Atlanta, GA, November 10, 2023, TT8871.
3. SCES, Grade 8 – Outer Banks, NC, 04-22-24 to 04-26-24, TT8840.
4. SMES, Grade 6, 7 and 8, Blue Ridge Assembly, Black Mtn, NC, March 18 to 20, 2024, TT8774.
5. SMES, Grade 8 – Sequoyah Birthplace Museum, Vonore, TN, 11-20-23, TT8886.

6. SMHS, Grades 9-12, Walt Disney World, Lake Buena Vista, FL, 03-14-24 to 03-17-24, TT8775.

Dr. Ayers presented the above-listed field trip requests 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 trips.*

### **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.*

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

### **OPEN SESSION**

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

- A. Closed Session Minutes of Regular Meeting of September 26, 2023.

### **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. Barone, Christopher – Teacher, SMHS
2. Billie, Summer – Substitute Bus Driver, SMES
3. Bonen-Clark, Michael – Substitute Bus Driver, CVES
4. Bryson, Kim – Assistant Athletic Director District Middle School, SMHS
5. Cherbony, Elisabeth – School Nutrition Assistant, FES
6. Cope, Kristina – EC Teacher, SMHS
7. Crisp, Julia – Bus Driver, SMHS
8. Davis, Megan – Athletic Director, SCES
9. Doll, Victoria – Afterschool Tutor, SMES
10. Garrison, Leslie – PreK Teacher, CVES
11. Hawken, Danielle – Lead PreK Teacher Assistant, SMES
12. Herevia, Chanda – Certified Nursing Assistant, SCES
13. Higgins, Molly – Teacher Assistant, SMES
14. Mathis, Isaiah – Custodian, BREC
15. Newton, Charleigh – Afterschool Assistant, FES

16. Peoples, W – EC Teacher Assistant, SMES
17. Prater, Douglas – EC Teacher Assistant, CVES
18. Rhymer, Kendall – EC Teacher, CVES
19. Robertson, Rebecca – Afterschool Tutor, SMES
20. Shuler, Kimberly – School Nutrition Assistant, SCES
21. Siler, Amy – EC PreK Teacher Assistant, FES
22. Thompson, Alyssa – School Nutrition Assistant, FES
23. Thompson, Alyssa – Part-time Custodian, FES
24. Winship, Kimberly – Instructional Support Assistant, SMES

**Employee Resignations:**

1. Campbell, Jennifer Elliott – EC Teacher Assistant, FES
2. Myers, Gail – Instructional Support Assistant, CVES

**Employee Retirements:**

1. Fiskeaux, Kim – Teacher, SCES

**Special Requests: Leave of Absence:**

1. DeBord, April – EdTech Coach, Central Office
2. Thompson, Julie – Teacher, FES

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

1. Brennan, Thomas – Head Coach District MS Men’s Basketball, SMHS – New Non-Staff
2. Boone, Jerrod – Head Coach Indoor Track, SMHS – Returning Staff
3. Cochran, Trevor – Head Coach Women’s Cross Country, SMHS – Returning Staff
4. Day, Jake – Assistant Coach District MS Women’s Basketball, SMHS – New Non-Staff
5. Dills, Mickey – Assistant Coach District MS Baseball, SMHS – Returning Non-Staff
6. Dills, Monica – Assistant Coach Women’s Basketball, SCES – New Staff
7. Eyler, Jim – Assistant Coach Women’s Tennis, SMHS – Returning Non-Staff
8. Floyd, Andrea – Head Coach District MS Women’s Basketball, SMHS – Returning Non-Staff
9. Hooks, Matthew – Head Coach Men’s Basketball, SCES – New Non-Staff
10. Mojica, Carlos – Assistant Coach MS Soccer, BREC – New Non-Staff
11. Pero, Joseph – Assistant Coach Baseball, SCES – New Staff
12. Thompson, Robert Mark – Head Coach District MS Baseball, SMHS – Returning Staff

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**The next regularly scheduled business meeting of the Board of Education is November 14, 2023, at 6:00 p.m., at the Board of Education Administrative Office, 398 Hospital Road, Sylva, NC.**

**ADJOURNMENT**

There being no objection, Chairperson Elizabeth Cooper adjourned the meeting at 7:25 p.m.

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Elizabeth Cooper, Chairperson

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Dr. Dana Ayers, Secretary