

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

398 Hospital Road, Sylva

February 27, 2024

6:00 p.m.

The Jackson County Board of Education held their regular session on Tuesday, February 27, 2024, 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; Jake 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.

Mr. Libbey, Fairview Choir teacher, led students from Fairview Elementary School in the National Anthem and 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 Certificates of Recognition to the following:

1. Council for Exceptional Children "YES I CAN" Award - Valentina Walker, 7th Grade, Fairview Elementary School, and Summerr Frady, 10th Grade, Smoky Mountain High School
2. Shaneka Allen, NCSPPRA Awards
3. Brittany Bowers, WRESA DHT Student Teacher Award

CONSENT ACTION AGENDA

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

- A. Draft Open Session Minutes of Regular Meeting of January 23, 2024.

- B. Draft Open Session Minutes of the Joint Meeting with the Jackson County Commissioners on February 8, 2024.

INFORMATION AGENDA

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

Dr. Ayers reported on the following:

1. February has been a month of catching up on consistent school days. Students have attended school daily for the last three weeks, without delays or interruptions. That's a welcome pattern after the lack of continuity in January!
2. Our winter athletes had many outstanding achievements. Most notably is the district middle school boys' basketball team who walked away as the Blue Ridge Athletic Conference Champions. The boys posted a nearly perfect season and played extremely well as a team. This is a first for any district team.
3. The SMHS wrestling teams went to regionals and state having some strong finishers. In fact, the Smoky Mountain High School Women's Wrestling Team came in 10th place overall at the Women's State Tournament. Emma Burnes placed 4th overall for her weight class and Shaylee Temple placed 6th overall for her respective weight class.
4. Last week, Blue Ridge School hosted the Little Smoky Mountain Conference tournament. It was great to see the gym full of families cheering on all athletes. Now BR has begun middle school baseball, varsity boys golf and varsity girls' soccer seasons.
5. This month, we paid tribute to counselors and bus drivers and will recognize social workers next week. We very much enjoy honoring and showering these groups with treats and words of gratitude. It is because of the dedication of each of these groups that our schools function and thrive.
6. Last Friday, the elementary Battle of the Books teams of Scotts Creek, Fairview and Smokey Mountain competed. The battle was tough, and the SME Tarheels came out victorious. The team's motto is "Quality over quantity!" Congratulations to all teams and the amazing SMES team of four young ladies and their coach Tiffany Taylor.
7. As we approach the end of the third quarter, there is a deliberate focus on strong, rigorous instruction. We know our students are engaged and learning and that our teachers are challenging them each day. Our juniors across the district are preparing for the ACT this week. ACT scores are calculated in each school's performance grade for the year. Good luck to our JCPS juniors. It's time to shine on this important test!
8. A huge thank you and accolades to Laura Dills. Among her many roles of preschool director, elementary director, ML and AIG coordinator, she is also the Federal Programs director. On January 31st, JCPS was monitored for the spending of ESSERS/Covid funds. We had NO findings and the report stated, "JCPS met all programmatic requirements for the use of these federal COVID funds." This has been an enormous task of budgeting and monitoring for the last four years. Thank you, Laura, for your meticulous attention and flawless documentation.
9. A final reminder, too, that the upcoming primary date of March 5th is when Board of Education members are chosen. Early voting is currently underway through Saturday, March 2. There are four candidates for the two available seats. Do your research and go vote for the candidate that you feel is best. Every vote counts!

- B. **Agenda Item:** Lenovo Self-Maintainer Program
Presenter: Jake Buchanan, Deputy Superintendent

Mr. Buchanan announced that the JCPS Technology Department has successfully completed the Lenovo Self-Maintainer Program. Technology technicians are now certified Lenovo repair professionals the can now perform warranty repairs that will result in faster turnarounds and increased device uptime.

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

Mrs. Walker presented the Unaudited Financial Summary as of January 2024.

OPEN SESSION FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS

Gail Woody spoke to the board about the school tours Superintendent Dana Ayers provided for Board of Education and County Commissioner candidates. She said that they were very informative. She said that she learned a lot of information about Jackson County Public Schools that she did not know, even though she had worked in each of the schools during her tenure as a teacher with JCPS. She thanked the superintendent for setting up these tours.

ACTION AGENDA

- A. **Agenda Item:** Purchase Security Camera with Grant Funds
Presenter: Jake Buchanan, Deputy Superintendent

Mr. Buchanan informed the board that JCPS has received a Safer Schools School Safety Grant for safety equipment, additional services for students in crisis and training. Mr. Buchanan said that the Technology Department plans to purchase 100 additional cameras to replace aging equipment and provide coverage in areas identified during safety walk-throughs.

Action: *Upon a motion by Mr. Wes Jamison and seconded by Mrs. Abigail Clayton, the board voted unanimously to approve the use of Safer Schools School Safety grant funds to purchase security cameras.*

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

Mrs. Walker presented the budget amendments to the Federal Grants Fund, Capital Outlay Fund and State Public School 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 Federal Grants Fund, Capital Outlay Fund and State Public School Fund.*

- C. **Agenda Item:** 2024 – 2025 Audit Engagement Letter and Contract
Presenter: Mrs. Kristie Walker, Chief Financial Officer

Mrs. Walker presented the 2024-2025 Audit Engagement Letter and renewal contract for Anderson Smith & Wike PLLC 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 2024-2025 Audit Engagement Letter and renewal contract for Anderson Smith & Wike PLLC.*

D. Agenda Item: Approval to Apply for E-Rate Funding

Presenter: Mr. Jake Buchanan, Deputy Superintendent

Mr. Buchanan presented a request to apply for E-Rate funding 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 application for E-Rate funding.*

E. Agenda Item: Summer Testing Program Plan

Presenter: Mr. Adam Holt, Director of Testing and Accountability

Mr. Holt presented the 2024 Summer Testing Program Plan 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 n2024 Summer Testing Program Plan.*

F. Agenda Item: Field Trips

Presenter: Dr. Dana L. Ayers, Superintendent

1. BREC, Grades 10, 11 and 12 - Washington, D.C., 01-18-25 to 01-21-25, TT8962.
2. CVES, Grade 3 – Young Harris College, Young Harris, GA, 03-21-24, TT9213.
3. CVES, Grade 7 - Lake Logan, NC, 05-21-24 to 05-23-24, TT9144.
4. CVES, Grade 8 – Magnolia Plantation and Gardens, Charleston, SC, 04-29-24 to 05-01-24, TT9209.
5. FES, Grades 7 and 8 – Carowinds, Charlotte, NC, 05-04-24, TT9216.
6. FES, Grades 7 and 8 - Dollywood, Pigeon Forge, TN, 04-17-24, TT9182.
7. JCEC, Grade 12 - Dollywood, Pigeon Forge, TN, 04-26-24, TT9232.
8. JCS, Grades 10, 11, and 12 – Randolph Community College, Asheboro, NC, 03-12-24 to 03-13-24, TT9201.

Dr. Ayers presented the above-listed field trips 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 field trips #2 through #8 and table field trip #1 for additional information.*

G. Agenda Item: Smokey Mountain Elementary School Culture Day

Presenter: Dr. Dana L. Ayers, Superintendent

Dr. Ayers presented a request for the Smokey Mountain Elementary School Culture Day 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 Smokey Mountain Elementary School Culture Day.

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 January 23, 2024.

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. Boone, Jerrod – Interim Assistant Athletic Director, SMHS
2. Buchanan, Max – Afterschool Assistant, CVES
3. Campbell, Carl – Substitute School Nutrition Assistant, FES
4. Capps, Zebulon – Substitute Bus Driver, SMHS
5. Chastain, Crystal – Payroll Coordinator, Central Office
6. Crisp, Julia – Custodian, SMHS
7. Fisher, Rita – High-Impact Tutor, SMES
8. Gilliam, Mallory – Afterschool Assistant, CVES
9. Howell, Joshua – Substitute Bus Driver and Field Trip Bus Driver, FES
10. Knight, Mandie – Substitute Bus Driver, FES
11. Lynch, Madelyn – Afterschool Tutor, SCES
12. Mattingly, Haylee – Afterschool Assistant, CVES
13. Mayes, April – Afterschool Tutor, FES
14. Painter, Chelsea – EC Teacher Assistant, CVES
15. Postell II, JT – PE Teacher and Head Coach Varsity Football, SMHS
16. Verrault, Gina – Afterschool Tutor, SCES
17. Young, Thomas – Interim Athletic Director, SMHS
18. Young, Thomas – Athletic Director, SMHS

Employee Resignations:

1. Cass, Seraphim – School Nutrition Assistant, BRS
2. DuPree, Ethan – Custodian and Bus Driver, CVES
3. Elkins, Brittany – Teacher, BREC
4. Gates, Melody – School Nutrition Assistant, SCES
5. Grasty, Allison – School Nutrition Manager, SCES
6. Madison, Paige – EC Teacher Assistant, SCES
7. Masotti, Kathryn – High Impact Tutor, SMES
8. McFadden, Kathy – School Nutrition Assistant, SCES and Multi
9. Weinzierl, Bobby Jesse – Custodian and Bus Driver, SMHS

Employee Retirements:

1. Fox, Paula – Teacher, CVES
2. Hall, Sarah – Teacher, BREC and BRS
3. Herter, Serena – Teacher, SMHS

Employee Separations:

1. Junaluska, Samantha – EC Teacher Assistant, CVES
2. Prater, Douglas – EC Teacher Assistant, CVES

Staff, Non-Staff, and Returning Coach Recommendations:

1. Bodine, Ryan – Head Coach Softball, SCES – New Non-Staff
2. Boyles, Autumn – Head Coach District MS Women’s Soccer, SMHS – New Staff
3. Bryson, Richard – Head Coach Baseball, FES – Returning Non-Staff
4. Cabe, Dustin – Assistant Coach District MS Softball, SMHS – New Non-Staff
5. Cooper, Jack – Head Coach District MS Men’s Track, SMHS – Returning Non-Staff
6. Early, Jordan – Assistant Coach District MS Golf, SMHS – Returning Non-Staff
7. Howell, Joshua – Head Coach District MS Golf, SMHS – Returning Non-Staff
8. Miller, Scott – Head Coach District MS Women’s Track, SMHS – Returning Staff
9. Scifers, Jonathan – Assistant Coach District MS Track, SMHS – Returning Non-Staff
10. Stephens, Anthony – Head Coach Baseball, SCES – Returning Non-Staff
11. Weaver, Brianna – Assistant Coach District MS Women’s Soccer, SMHS – New Non-Staff

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next regularly scheduled business meeting of the Board of Education is March 19, 2024, 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 8:10 p.m.

Elizabeth K. Cooper, Chairperson

Dr. Dana L. Ayers, Secretary