

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

398 Hospital Road, Sylva

July 23, 2024

6:00 p.m.

The Jackson County Board of Education held their regular session on Tuesday, July 23, 2024, at 6:00 p.m., at the Board of Education Administrative Office Boardroom, 398 Hospital Road, Sylva, North Carolina. The following members were present:

Wes Jamison, Vice Chairperson
Abigail Clayton
Dr. Lynn Dillard
Gayle Woody

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

Kim Moore

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

Acting Chairperson Wes Jamison called the business meeting to order.

Mr. Jamison led the Pledge of Allegiance.

SIGNING OF THE CODE OF ETHICS

Board Members Wes Jamison, Abigail Clayton, Dr. Lynn Dillard, and Gayle Woody signed the Code of Ethics.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Board Attorney, Ashley Leonard instructed the board members on the procedures for the election of Board of Education officers. Ms. Leonard informed the board that the terms for the chair and vice-chair are for a two-year period. The election of officers will take place at the regularly scheduled July meeting of the board on even numbered years corresponding with the non-partisan elections held at the time of the primary.

Action: Upon a motion by Mrs. Abigail Clayton, the board unanimously voted to elect Mr. Wes Jamison as board chair until the organizational meeting following the next school board election in 2026.

Action: Upon a motion by Dr. Lynn Dillard, the board unanimously voted to elect Mrs. Abigail Clayton as board vice chair until the organizational meeting following the next school board election in 2026.

CONSENT ACTION AGENDA

Action: Upon a motion by Mrs. Abigail Clayton and seconded by Mrs. Kim Moore, the board unanimously approved the consent action agenda:

- A. Open Session Minutes of Regular Meeting of June 25, 2024.
- B. Open Session Minutes of Work Session on July 10, 2024.

INFORMATION AGENDA

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

Dr. Ayers reported on the following:

1. We are about three weeks away from the first student day of school and so much is happening. Our staff return on August 5th and students on August 14th. But before those days is the much-anticipated Back to School Bash. This is our third year of the event serving our community. WRGC will be broadcasting live and FREE haircuts, sports physicals, bookbags, school supplies, school vaccinations, lunch and much more are available. The Bash is Saturday, August 3rd from 10:00-2:00 at the Cullowhee Recreation Center. The Bash will take place, rain or shine, and there is a plan in place for inclement weather. I hope to see you there!
2. This week we are holding summer leadership training meetings with all directors, principals, and assistant principals. These meetings are crucial as we prepare and set the tone for the upcoming school year. One of the focus areas we are working on is the revision and creation of a new strategic plan. Our team is working diligently to create a district plan that highlights our mission to Engage, Enlighten and Enrich. We believe in this and want to ensure that our practices, curriculum, involvement, and messaging portray this mission. We will bring this new strategic plan to the board in August.
3. Our student-athletes across the district are busy with summer workouts, team building experiences and even community service activities. I am happy to see these fine student-athletes perform on the fields, courts or track this year. I am also eager to address some of our athletic needs on our priority list. The need for a track at SMHS for all our JCPS student-athletes to use is critical as well as lights for our ballfields on campus and in Webster. Mr. Buchanan and I are working to make these needs a reality.
4. A huge thank you to our Jackson County Board of Commissioners for unanimously voting on Tuesday, July 16th to move forward with our Fairview cafeteria and classrooms project. This means a new cafeteria and six classrooms will be added to the campus. Our team will be meeting next week with the county manager to determine the next steps.

5. Other exciting news we received today is that Blue Ridge Health will be providing in-person services at Blue Ridge School and Early College for two days each week for the upcoming year. This will provide health services to our students on campus just as we do at Fairview and SMHS. Huge thanks to Blue Ridge Health for making this happen!
6. Finally, I am proud and eager about the possibility of JROTC at SMHS. There are several aspects of this that are in progress, but I am confident it will happen in the very near future. SMHS has already identified space for that program too. More details to follow as soon as I receive confirmation and solidify the date of implementation. I believe this will be a wonderful avenue to offer our students something more!
7. The summer, though not over yet, is waning. Just know that the work that occurs during the summer is absolutely significant to ensuring the success of our students.

B. Agenda Item: Infinite Campus Update

Presenter: Mr. Adam Holt, Testing and Accountability Director

Mr. Holt presented information about the transition to the new Student Information System - Infinite Campus. JCPS was selected to be one of the districts in the first phase of implementation across the state.

C. Agenda Item: Preliminary List of Student Support Organizations for 2024-2025

Presenter: Mr. Jake Buchanan, Deputy Superintendent

Mr. Buchanan presented the preliminary list of Student Support Organizations for the 2024-2025 school year. This list will be updated as these organizations are established.

D. Agenda Item: Curriculum Update

Presenter: Mrs. Angie Dills, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum

Mrs. Dills provided the board with an update on curriculum and instruction. She informed the board that new Science standards will be implemented for 2024-2025; Math and ELA will undergo revision through the state in the next year; SBE approved computer science requirements for Grade 9 starting in 2026-2027; Fall 2024 - Students with a weighted GPA of 2.8 and above will be able to apply to six UNC schools with guaranteed admission; JCPS will be audited in CTE, Civil Rights, Consolidated Federal Programs and AiG Plan; a Parent Bill of Rights link has been established on the JCPS website for Parent's Guide to Student Achievement; all 8th grade students will take Earth Science next year; JCPS staff will be discussing standards to be used for acceleration in all Advance math 4th-8th grade settings, with new math book resources implemented in the Fall of 2024; Professional Development plans are being finalized for scheduled PD days in October and March; and new LTRS Cohort will begin Volume 1 this school year.

OPEN SESSION FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

ACTION AGENDA

A. Agenda Item: MOA School Resource Officers 2024-2025

Presenter: Dr. Dana L. Ayers, Superintendent

Dr. Ayers informed the board that the School Resource Officer MOU for 2024-2025 will be moved to the August agenda for action.

Action: *No Action Taken.*

B. Agenda Item: Extension of Wit and Wisdom Student Materials

Presenter: Mrs. Laura Dills, Director of Federal Programs

Mrs. Dills presented the Great Minds quote for additional instructional materials and asked for board approval.

Action: *Upon a motion by Mrs. Abigail Clayton and seconded by Mrs. Gayle Woody, the board voted unanimously to approve the purchase of Wit and Wisdom student materials.*

C. Agenda Item: JCPS and SCC MOU for 2024-2025

Presenter: Angie Dills, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum

Mrs. Dills presented the Memorandum of Understanding between JCPS and SCC for 2024-2025 and asked for board approval.

Action: *Upon a motion by Mrs. Gayle Woody and seconded by Mrs. Abigail Clayton, the board voted unanimously to approve the MOU between JCPS and SCC for 2024-2025.*

D. Agenda Item: Student Handbook and Code of Conduct for 2024-2025

Presenter: Angie Dills, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum

Mrs. Dills presented the updated Student Handbook and Code of Conduct for 2024-2025 and asked for board approval.

Action: *Upon a motion by Mrs. Abigail Clayton and seconded by Mrs. Kim Moore, the board voted unanimously to approve the Student Handbook and Code of Conduct for 2024-2025.*

E. Agenda Item: Naming the SMHS Basketball Court

Presenter: Dr. Dana L. Ayers, Superintendent

Dr. Ayers presented a request from Smoky Mountain High School administration to name the SMHS Basketball Court in honor of Cindi Saltz Simmons asked for board approval.

Action: *Upon a motion by Mrs. Gayle Woody and seconded by Mrs. Abigail Clayton, the board voted unanimously to approve the naming of the SMHS Basketball Court after Cindi Saltz Simmons.*

F. Agenda Item: Review Construction Priority List

Presenter: Dr. Dana L. Ayers, Superintendent

Dr. Ayers presented the construction priority list. The board discussed the existing construction priority list and the maintenance cycles for roof maintenance, inspections, and cleanings. JCPS will submit a Needs Based Grant application this cycle for the middle school project on the list.

Action: *No Action Taken.*

G. Agenda Item: Purchase of Playground at Smokey Mountain Elementary School

Presenter: Mr. Jake Buchanan, Deputy Superintendent

Mr. Buchanan presented the bid for the purchase of a playground at Smokey Mountain Elementary School and asked for board approval.

Action: *Upon a motion by Mrs. Abigail Clayton and seconded by Mrs. Gayle Woody, the board voted unanimously to approve the purchase of a playground at SMES.*

H. Agenda Item: Policy Updates

Presenter: Mr. Jake Buchanan, Deputy Superintendent

Updates:

1. Board Member Technology Use (2127)
2. Foreign Exchange Students (4140)

Rescind:

1. Foreign Exchange Student Program (3630/4160)

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

Action: *Upon a motion by Mrs. Gayle Woody and seconded by Mrs. Abigail Clayton, the board voted unanimously to approve the above-listed policy updates and rescission.*

CLOSED SESSION

The board unanimously approved a motion by Mrs. Abigail Clayton and seconded by Mrs. Kim Moore, 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. Abigail Clayton and seconded by Mrs. Kim Moore, the board voted unanimously to return to open session.

OPEN SESSION

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

- A. Closed Session Minutes of Regular Meeting of June 25, 2024.

PERSONNEL ACTION AGENDA

Action: Upon a motion made by Mrs. Gayle Woody and seconded by Mrs. Abigail Clayton the board voted to approve the personnel agenda as recommended by Dr. Dana L. Ayers. The board unanimously approved the following recommendations:

Employee Recommendations:

1. Bell, Tasha – Teacher, SMES
2. Bryson, Kim – District MS Assistant Athletic Director, District-wide/SMHS
3. Bunch, Reagan – Teacher, BREC
4. Cloutier, Rhonda – Student Data Manager, BREC/BRS
5. Conlin, Sharon – District MS Assistant Athletic Director, District-wide/SMHS
6. Cosenza, Tracy – Teacher, CVES
7. Crisp, Meredith – Instructional Math Coach, SMES
8. Cunningham, Brittney – EC Teacher Assistant and Afterschool Director, CVES
9. Daggs, Kevin – Teacher, CVES
10. Ensley, Cynthia – Assistant Principal, SMHS
11. Forsythe, Jennifer – Student Support Services Director, Central Office
12. Gilliam, Mallory – Afterschool Assistant, FES
13. Goshorn, Dana – Teacher, SMHS
14. Gribble, Corina - District MS Assistant Athletic Director, District-wide/SMHS
15. Jamison, Samantha – Extended Employment Speech Language Pathologist, CVES and FES
16. Kelly, Melissa – EC Teacher Assistant, CVES
17. Larch, Catherine “Mindy” – EC Teacher Assistant, SMHS
18. McAbee, Dustin - Drivers Education Instructor, Bus Garage
19. Montgomery, Dalton – Teacher, CVES
20. Potthoff, Allison – School Nutrition Assistant, FES
21. Reed, Erin – EC Teacher, FES
22. Rhymer, Kendall – EC Bus Monitor, CVES
23. Smith, Ailey – Teacher and Athletic Director, CVES
24. Smith, Jamie – Teacher, CVES
25. Smith, Theresa “Gina” – Custodian and Bus Driver, CVES
26. Sokolowski, Zoe – EC Teacher Assistant, SMHS
27. Tucker, Holly – EC Teacher Assistant, CVES
28. Vetter, Michael – HR Director, Central Office
29. Wagner, Geri – Teacher, CVES
30. Whaley, Alyssa – EC Teacher, SCES
31. Whisnant-Longanecker, Crystal – EC Teacher Assistant, SCES

Employee Resignations:

1. Alich, Daniel – Teacher, BREC
2. Clark, Jacqueline – EC Teacher Assistant, JCS
3. Daniels, Christina – Teacher, JCS
4. DeBord, April – EdTech Coach, District-wide
5. Flora, Kayla – Teacher, CVES
6. Harris, Donna – EC Teacher, CVES
7. Higgins, Molly – Teacher Assistant, SMES
8. Thompson, Robert Mark – Teacher, CVES

Special Requests – Leave of Absence:

1. Buchanan, Amanda – Teacher Assistant, SCES

Administrator Contract Renewals:

1. Buchanan, Jake

Staff, Non-Staff and Returning Coach Recommendations:

1. Fonseca, Amanda – Assistant Coach District MS Cheer Fall and Winter, District-wide/SMHS – New Staff
2. Mull, Ryan – Assistant Coach District MS Men’s Soccer, District-wide/SMHS – Returning Non-Staff
3. Murajda, Roger – Head Coach District MS Women’s Basketball, District-wide/SMHS – New Non-Staff
4. Nicholson, Amanda – Head Coach District MS Cheer Fall and Winter, District-wide/SMHS – New Staff – Returning Non-Staff

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next regularly scheduled business meeting of the Board of Education is August 27, 2024, at 6:00 p.m., at the Board of Education Administrative Office, 398 Hospital Road, Sylva.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no objection, Chairman Wes Jamison adjourned the meeting at 8:12 p.m.

Wes Jamison, Chairman

Dr. Dana L. Ayers, Secretary