

**Jackson County Board of Education
Minutes of Special Called Meeting
Sylva, North Carolina
Central Office**

100 Smoky Mountain Drive

July 16, 2018

9:00 a.m.

The Jackson County Board of Education met in a Special Called Work Session at 9:00 a.m. on Monday, July 16, 2018, in the Media Center at Smoky Mountain High School (SMHS), 100 Smoky Mountain Drive, Sylva, NC. The following members were present:

Ali Laird-Large
Margaret McRae
Wes Jamison
Abigail Clayton

Also present were Dr. Kimberly Elliott, Superintendent; Jacob Buchanan, Assistant Superintendent; Cora Fields, Board Assistant; and Mr. John Cort and Mr. Bruce Youngberg with Cort Architectural.

CALL TO ORDER

Ali Laird-Large, Vice Chair, called the work session to order.

WORK SESSION

Dr. Kimberly Elliott welcomed all attendees to the work session and provided an overview and demographical background for the board members and attendees.

Dr. Kimberly Elliott and Mr. Jake Buchanan provided a power-point presentation outlining the details of the Jackson County Public School (JCPS) Strategic Plan. Dr. Elliott stated that the district is using the Continuous Improvement model and the Strategic Plan is a result of more than a year of discussions and input from all departments within JCPS.

Mrs. Gwen Edwards provided a finance overview that provided details about funding streams and allocations through various programs including local money, state allotments, operations and capital funding and federal programs.

Mr. John Cort provided a Middle School overview to the board prior to going into lunch recess.

MIDDLE SCHOOL DISCUSSION

Ali Laird-Large reconvened the meeting in the SMHS Auditorium at 1 p.m.

Dr. Kimberly Elliott welcomed everyone in attendance. She thanked the board, parents, teachers, and administrators for attending the meeting. Dr. Elliott said that JCPS was asked to explore the concept of

Middle School in Jackson County after several community members made a request of the board during the public comments at the March board meeting. Dr. Elliott stated that the board was very open-minded and were here to listen to options and public comments concerning Middle School in Jackson County. The board will review all information provided and decide on the next steps.

Dr. Elliott introduced Mr. John Cort and Mr. Bruce Youngberg with Cort Architectural Group. Mr. Cort provided a power point presentation with historical information on previous studies and construction. Mr. Cort discussed several options for Middle School that include:

1. Construct a new Middle School for 800 students on a new site which would reduce student population at all Elementary School allowing for significant student capacity growth at all facilities. Estimated cost - \$30,083,000.00
2. Construct a new Middle School facility for 800 students at the existing High School. Smoky Mountain High School would become a combined High School/Middle School. Estimated cost – \$14,464,500.00
3. Construct a new High School for 1000 students on a new site and convert the existing High School into a Middle School – Estimated Cost - \$39,000,000.00
4. Renovate one existing elementary school to become an 800 student Middle School. Redistrict displaced elementary students to other elementary school using classrooms vacated by Middle School students. Redistrict all remaining elementary schools.
 - a) Renovate Cullowhee Valley Elementary School – Estimated cost – \$5,835,000.00
 - b) Renovate Scotts Creek Elementary School – Estimated cost – \$3,160,000.00
 - c) Renovate Fairview Elementary School – Estimated cost - \$20,653,000.00

Estimated costs do not include the purchase price of the land or additional land for fields required at existing elementary schools.

OPEN SESSION FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ms. Kirsten Morgan: Ms. Morgan is a teacher with JCPS and a parent. She said that she was on the Middle School exploratory committee twenty years ago when the decision was made to keep K-8 schools in Jackson County. She stated that K-8 schools provide opportunities for student participation in athletics through their local school team, as well as the consolidated district team. She said that students in K-8 schools have better attendance, fewer discipline issues, more opportunities to participate in school leadership roles, student government and provide better parent involvement. She said that K-8 students have better prepared emotionally and socially due to the school community where teachers and administrators watch and support these children throughout the elementary grades.

OPEN SESSION

Dr. Elliott thanked everyone for attending the information session. She said to email her or call her if they would like to provide additional comments. She reiterated that the board is open-minded and ready to listen to all options. Dr. Elliott thanked Mr. Cort and Mr. Youngberg for providing information and options to the board.

ADJOURNMENT

Ali Laird-Large thanked everyone for coming to the meeting and asked attendees to share the information with other interested parents and friends. She said that the board will consider all input from the community, parents and staff and make a good decision with their children in mind.

There being no objection, Vice Chair Ali Laird-Large adjourned the meeting at 2:00 p.m.

Mrs. Alison Laird-Large, Chair

Dr. Kimberly Elliott, Secretary