

Minutes of the March 5, 2019
Special Meeting of the Yancey County Board of Commissioners
Held at 5:30 pm in the Commissioners' Meeting Room
Yancey County Courthouse, Burnsville, North Carolina

Present at the meeting held March 5, 2019 were Chairman Jeff Whitson, Commissioner Jill Austin, Commissioner David Grindstaff, Commissioner Mark Ledford, Commissioner Johnny Riddle, County Manager Lynn Austin, Finance Director Lynne Hensley, Finance Officer Brandi Burleson, Planning and Economic Development Director Jamie McMahan, Chief Deputy Shane Hilliard, and Board Clerk Sonya Morgan.

Present and representing Yancey County Schools (YCS) were School Board Chair Angie Weatherman, Board Member Norb McKinney, Board Member Jeanne Tyner, Board Member Wade Dahlberg, Board Member Edwin Fortner, Board Clerk Xan Robinson, Finance Officer Robbie Renfro, and Interim Superintendent Heather Cox.

Call to Order

Chairman Whitson called the meeting to order, welcomed those in attendance, and extended his appreciation to the Yancey County Board of Education for meeting with the Board to discuss their budget.

Approval of the Agenda

Chairman Whitson asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Commissioner Ledford made a motion to amend the agenda to include Closed Session and approve, which was seconded by Commissioner Grindstaff. By unanimous vote, motion was carried. (Attachment A)

Joint Budget Meeting

Chief Deputy Shane Hilliard spoke first and stated he wanted to initiate a discussion about the possibility of School Resource Officer (SRO) positions being taken over by the Sheriff's office. He suggested that this be phased in over the course of the next few years as the current SROs retire so as not to affect their current retirement benefits. Two of the positions are currently funded by local funds through YCS and one position is funded by grant funds received by the school system. Chief Deputy Hilliard reviewed the benefits of having the SROs as employees of the Sheriff's office which includes more comprehensive training, higher salary and retirement benefits, and having jurisdiction that goes beyond the gates of the school. Chief Deputy Hilliard assured those present that the SROs would be dedicated to the schools and not pulled for other duties. A discussion between the Board of Commissioners and Yancey County School Board ensued. Chairman Whitson asked if there were further questions and stated that both entities would investigate the possibility further.

Next, Chairman Weatherman began with a discussion regarding the Yancey County Board of Education's efforts to save money. YCS has eliminated three assistant principal positions and nine positions at the high school over the last three years. YCS provided information on the impact those cuts have had on the high school. (Attachment B) Chairman Weatherman reported that the state is now cutting class sizes in elementary grades K-3, which is forcing the school system to fill positions. Board Member Tyner and Interim Superintendent Cox provided information about class size averages and the impact students enrolling have on class sizes. Ms. Tyner reported that YCS had to hire teachers this year to meet the requirements. Board Member McKinney reported that this is an unfunded mandate and discussed the high quality of education students receive in Yancey County. Board Member Dahlberg asked about the possibility of establishing a county reserve fund, with the school system only using it if required to meet the class size mandate. Board Members shared that the repercussion for having just one student over the class size limit would result in the Superintendent's license and salary being pulled. Chairman Weatherman asked for \$225,000 to fund four teaching positions. She went on to say that non-certified employees have not received an increase in eleven years. Non-certified employees include bus drivers, cafeteria workers, clerical staff, and other support staff. She indicated that the only funding source for an increase for non-certified

staff is from local funds. Finance Officer Renfro indicated that when she looked at the increases three years ago it was approximately \$75,000. She indicated YCS employs approximately 160 non-certified staff and that she would look at current figures. Board Member Fortner indicated that he would like to see joint venture between the county, YCS, and maybe the town to hire a grant writer. There was also a discussion about the condition of the tennis courts at the high school and the repairs that needed to be done. County Finance Officer Burleson said that she is working with the high school principal to investigate pricing and solutions. Chairman Whitson asked if there was any further discussion. Hearing none, he thanked the members of YCS for attending. This concluded the joint session between the bodies as the Yancey County School Board adjourned their meeting.

Closed Session

Commissioner Riddle then made a motion to go into closed session pursuant to N.C. Gen. Stat. 143-318.11(a)(4), with Commissioner Grindstaff seconding the motion. The Board voted unanimously to go into closed session.

Commissioner Ledford made a motion to leave closed session and return to open session, with Commissioner Riddle providing a second. The Board voted unanimously to leave closed session. No action was taken during closed session.


Adjournment

Having no further business, Commissioner Ledford made a motion to adjourn, with Commissioner Riddle seconding the motion. The Board of Commissioners voted unanimously to adjourn.

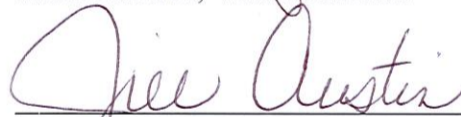
Approved and authenticated this the _____ 11th _____ day of March 2019.



Jeff Whitson, Chairman



Mark Ledford, Vice Chairman



Jill Austin, Commissioner



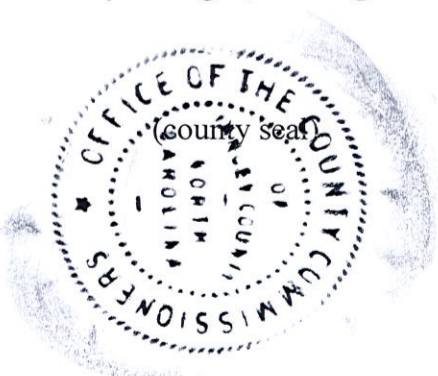
David Grindstaff, Commissioner

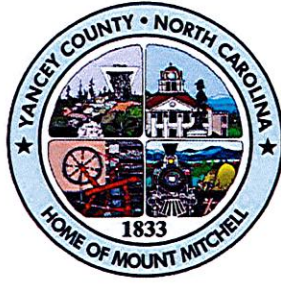


Johnny Riddle, Commissioner



Sonya Morgan, Clerk to the Board





Attachment A

AGENDA
YANCEY COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
SPECIAL MEETING
March 5, 2019
5:30 PM

- I. Call to Order**
- II. Approval of the Agenda**
- III. Joint Budget Meeting with Yancey County School Board**
- IV. Adjourn**

Attachment B

MOUNTAIN HERITAGE HIGH SCHOOL TEACHING POSITIONS INFORMATION

In the past three years, Mountain Heritage High School (MHHS) has lost nine (9) positions due to cuts. Almost every department has lost one position with some losing more. MHHS has also lost one month of employment for an assistant principal and both evening custodians.

The state allotment for high school teachers is based on ADM (Average Daily Membership) for the core classes. This does not include "enhancement" classes such as World Language, Physical Education, Art, Band, Choir and Theatre. With the current ADM, Mountain Heritage earns 23 teachers. Teachers employed within the Core total 23, Elective teachers total 8, CTE teachers total 11 (federal paid) and EC teachers total 5 (federal paid), making a total of 47 teachers.

Local policy states that a student must have a "completer" or pathway to earn a high school diploma from MHHS. Without these electives, students would not have this option. Currently, 240 students are enrolled in at least one college class. This allows our school to operate a schedule that is manageable. If those students were back in the regular classrooms, MHHS would have 30 - 35 students in every class. CTE classes and EC classes have mandated caps that do not allow for overage.

Mountain Heritage has been cut tremendously over the past three years. Making further cuts at the high school level would create the probable inability to give our students - **the future of Yancey County** - the opportunities they deserve to complete their educational goals and to become better equipped for significant economic production that will benefit the individual, their families and the communities in which they live.

**COMPARISON DATA FROM YANCEY, MITCHELL AND MADISON COUNTIES
REGARDING HIGH SCHOOL CORE AND ELECTIVE CLASSES**

YANCEY COUNTY - 670 STUDENTS				MITCHELL COUNTY - 482 STUDENTS				MADISON COUNTY - 525 STUDENTS <small>(They lose 200+ to Early College)</small>			
CORE CLASS	NUMBER OF TEACHERS	ELECTIVE CLASSES	NUMBER OF TEACHERS	CORE CLASS	NUMBER OF TEACHERS	ELECTIVE CLASSES	NUMBER OF TEACHERS	CORE CLASS	NUMBER OF TEACHERS	ELECTIVE CLASSES	NUMBER OF TEACHERS
English	6.2	World Language	2.5	English	5	World Language	2	English	5	World Language	1.3
Math	6	PE	3	Math	5	PE	1.5	Math	5	PE	3.5
Science	5	Band	1	Science	4	Band	0.5	Science	5	Band	1
Social Studies	6	Theatre	0.3	Social Studies	4	Theatre	0.5	Social Studies	5	Theatre	0.5
		Art	1			Art	1			Art	1
Core Teachers	23.2	Elective Teachers	7.8	Core Teachers	18	Elective Teachers	5.5	Core Teachers	20	Elective Teachers	7.3
TOTAL TEACHERS <small>(Core & Elective)</small>			31	TOTAL TEACHERS <small>(Core & Elective)</small>			23.5	TOTAL TEACHERS <small>(Core & Elective)</small>			27.3
Core Student/Teacher Ratio	28.88	Core and Elective Student/Teacher Ratio	21.61	Core Student/Teacher Ratio	26.78	Core and Elective Student/Teacher Ratio	20.51	Core Student/Teacher Ratio	26.25	Core and Elective Student/Teacher Ratio	19.23