

NCACBSS NEWSLETTER

Fall/Winter Edition



*Pushing Beyond
Familiar!*

North Carolina Association of County Boards of Social Services

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- ✓ NCDHHS Press Releases
- ✓ MEDICAID EXPANSION
- ✓ BUDGET SEASON!!!!
- ✓ SSI UPDATES & EVALUATION
- ✓ Upcoming Meetings Agenda
- ✓ (General Assembly) "Bill Watch"
- ✓ GENERAL ASSEMBLY WEEK IN REVIEW
- ✓ BY-LAWS CHANGE

What does it mean?

Fall is in the air! The nights are getting longer, the days are getting shorter, and it's getting somewhat cooler. The warm days of summer are about over. Now we can enjoy the beauty of fall as the leaves change their colors...

Much of the work that we continue to do as officers and board members is being shared in this newsletter edition. We share board and member accomplishments, and exciting happenings of our advocacy partners. The work done to advocate for DSS departments across North Carolina is self-fulfilling. The role of each

department brings to the forefront the caring behaviors toward citizens in need of help county by county.

We thank each participating county board for connecting, dialoguing, and sharing ideas that will ultimately help our association's growth.

We encourage non-county boards to become active in the association. Your ideas, creative best practices and expertise is needed and welcomed... We look forward to continuing to provide quality assistance to our "83 Counties Strong" membership!

Regards,

Mary S. Accor- President

NCACBSS Agenda
August 2-3, 2023

Wednesday, August 2

- 9:00 Opening Session
- Board Introduction
- 9:45-11:45 am- Community Connections
- 11:45-12:15 pm- Lunch
- 12:15-1:45 pm- Community Centered Treatment Presentation
- 2:15-3:15 pm- Medicaid Workshop (Building Momentum: Preparing for Future Change(TP, CCU, Expansion) Room: Hickory #4
- 3:15-4:30 pm- Join your county for the INNOVATION AWARD LUNCHEON-Room: Hickory 1B, 2
- 4:30-5:00 pm- Co-located Care Management: Collaboration Efforts to Support NC's Child Welfare System- Room: Conover #3

Thursday, August 3

- 8:00 am- Breakfast and Closing Business
- 8:30 am- Member "Real Talk" (Open House for Elected Officials & Board Members)
- 9:00 am- Community Connections
- 9:30 am- Community Centered Treatment Presentation
- 10:15-11:45 am- Medicaid Workshop (Building Momentum: Preparing for Future Change(TP, CCU, Expansion) Room: Hickory #4
- 11:45-1:30 pm- Join your county for the INNOVATION AWARD LUNCHEON-Room: Hickory 1B, 2
- 1:45-3:15- Co-located Care Management: Collaboration Efforts to Support NC's Child Welfare System- Room: Conover #3

DOOR PRIZES

3:30-5:00 pm On Your Own to select Workshops

"Pushing Beyond Familiar"

NCACBSS



North Carolina General Assembly Week in Review - September 2023 #2

The final version of the state budget is on its way and could be enacted as soon as next week, according to House Speaker Tim Moore (R-Cleveland). Following a brief House session Tuesday, Speaker Moore told members that voting sessions are planned for Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday next week, including a budget vote.

One of the issues that has contributed to the delay in finalizing the state budget proposal is the legislature's consideration of legalizing commercial casinos in North Carolina. Following Tuesday's voting session, and a nearly four-hour long House Republican caucus meeting on the topic, Speaker Moore [said](#) that the caucus was still counting the votes to determine whether or not the chamber moves forward with casino legislation. However, there does not seem to be enough of a consensus among the House Republican caucus for commercial casino legalization, either as part of the final budget proposal or as a stand-alone bill, for it to pass. Other issues that have contributed to the budget's delay include raises for state employees and tax cuts. Both are expected to be included in the budget when it is released next week, but exact figures have not yet been publicized.

This week, there was also news within the Executive Branch as NC Department of Transportation Secretary Eric Boyette announced his retirement after overseeing the department for the past three years. Governor Roy Cooper [announced](#) that Joseph R. "Joey" Hopkins, the department's current Chief Operating Officer, will take over as Secretary effective October 1. Before serving in his role as COO, Hopkins served in a

variety of engineer roles and helped prioritize transportation projects in the state.

House Votes

While House lawmakers were in Raleigh, members convened for a brief floor voting session Tuesday afternoon. Three noncontroversial bills were passed nearly unanimously, including:

[SB 274: Study Independent Older Adult Services](#) - would require the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to conduct a comprehensive examination of services available to older adults who live independently but require support to maintain their autonomy. These services encompass in-home companions, sitter, and respite care services, as well as tasks like meal preparation, house cleaning, pet care, and other home management services. Additionally, the bill covers services like grocery shopping, retail errands, and pickup/drop-off of items such as library materials, mail, and donations. Furthermore, the bill also includes transportation services to and from medical appointments, social events, and community activities.

SB 274 passed the House in a final 107-2 vote, sending the bill back to the Senate for concurrence.

Mental Health Town Halls

The next Mental Health Town Hall will be held on Sept. 14 from 6 to 7:30 p.m. at Elizabeth City State University, K.E. White Graduate Center, 1862 Edgewood Drive in Elizabeth City. The town hall will be live streamed on the NCDHHS YouTube channel. [A flyer](#) for more information can be found on the NCDHHS website.

Improving Behavioral Health and Resilience is a [top priority](#) for the NCDHHS. In alignment with our mission to improve whole-person health, NCDHHS is committed to speaking with individuals in communities across the state about

North Carolina's behavioral health needs and key department initiatives through mental health town halls. We hope to visit as many counties as possible in the coming months and encourage residents to attend and join in the conversation.

Behavioral health is essential to overall health. More than 3 million people across North Carolina have mental health or substance use disorders. The behavioral healthcare system in North Carolina has been stretched and under-resourced for decades. The most important step to take to increase behavioral health access is to expand Medicaid and until we close the coverage gap, needed care will remain out of reach for too many.

We have an opportunity to make lasting change by investing in coordinated systems of care that make behavioral health services easier to access when and where they are needed and reduce stigma. Please join us.

County representatives who are interested in hosting a Mental Health Town hall can contact Annelise Iglesias: annelise.iglesias@dhhs.nc.gov.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2023 - 00:00

Treatment Readily Available if You Test Positive for COVID

PRESS RELEASE - During the current period where COVID-19 cases are increasing, treatment is readily available and appropriate for the majority of North Carolinians. Using antiviral treatments reduces the risk of serious illness and preliminary data indicates treatment is associated with reduced risk of developing long-COVID.

RALEIGH

During the current period where COVID-19 cases are increasing, treatment is readily available and appropriate for the majority of North Carolinians. Using antiviral treatments reduces the risk of serious illness and preliminary data indicates treatment is associated with reduced risk of developing long-COVID. Treatment works most effectively when started early and is advised for those at high risk for severe disease, even if your current symptoms are mild.

There are no supply constraints limiting providers' ability to prescribe treatment. NCDHHS recently sent [a memo](#) to health care providers across the state with updated information on treatment options for their patients with COVID-19. Having a supply of rapid tests at home allows individuals to determine if they are positive for COVID-19 and

minimize the spread to others and can help providers to prescribe treatment. People with a positive test result can also access treatment through [eMed's Home Test to Treat Program](#), a free nationwide telemedicine program.

"We expect COVID-19 trends to rise and fall, but we are in a much different place than we were at the start of the pandemic," said Dr. Elizabeth Cuervo Tilson, State Health Director and NCDHHS Chief Medical Officer. "We have the tools to manage COVID-19, so it doesn't manage us. Treatments are safe, effective and widely available."

Staying up to date with vaccines is the best way to reduce hospitalization and death due to the illness. The most up-to-date booster aligned with circulating variants is expected to be available later this month.

A large proportion of the North Carolina population is considered at high risk for severe illness based on age or underlying conditions. People who are likely to get very sick from COVID-19 include older adults (age 50 and older), people who are unvaccinated and people with [underlying health conditions](#).

Oral antiviral medications for COVID-19 are being distributed for free by the U.S. Government. Any prescribing provider in the state can send a prescription for oral antiviral drugs to the nearest pharmacy that has the drug in stock. Paxlovid is the preferred oral antiviral per the [NIH COVID-19 Treatment Guidelines](#) and can be given to people 12 years and older. All currently authorized and approved treatments are expected to retain effectiveness against the COVID-19 variants currently circulating, including the [BA.2.86 variant](#) that has recently been identified.

As COVID-19 cases rise, be prepared to test and seek treatment if you are feeling ill or if you have been exposed to someone with COVID-19. Talk with your health care provider to determine the best treatment option for you. Visit [Testing & Treatment | NC COVID-19 \(ncdhhs.gov\)](#) for information on how to get COVID-19 tests and more information on accessing treatment, including [test-to-treat sites](#).

It is important to remember to take other actions to stay healthy:

- Stay up to date on vaccines
 - Get the updated COVID-19 vaccine when authorized and available this fall.
 - Get your seasonal flu vaccine
 - People 60 years and older should talk to their doctors about whether an RSV vaccine might also be good for them.
- Practice [basic protective measures](#), like washing your hands, covering your nose and mouth when you cough or sneeze, cleaning surfaces often and staying home

when sick. Consider an extra layer of protection of masks in higher-risk indoor settings and/or if an individual is high risk.

- Check the [North Carolina Respiratory Virus Summary Dashboard](#) for up-to-date information on respiratory virus activity, including COVID-19, influenza and RSV.

The Road to SSI:

Sharing “SSI” Happenings...



- Directors:
- Region 1
Angela Mainor
 - Region 2
Archie Taylor
 - Region 3
Monty Riggs
 - Region 4
Clyde Everette
 - Region 5
Pauline Campbell

- Directors:
- Region 6
George Holley
 - Region 7
Tyronna Hooker
 - Region 8
Frankie Roberts
 - Region 9
Leonard Frieson, Sr.
 - Region 10
Victor Taylor





**NCACBSS
WELCOMES
BACK
KRISTI
NICKODEM!!!**

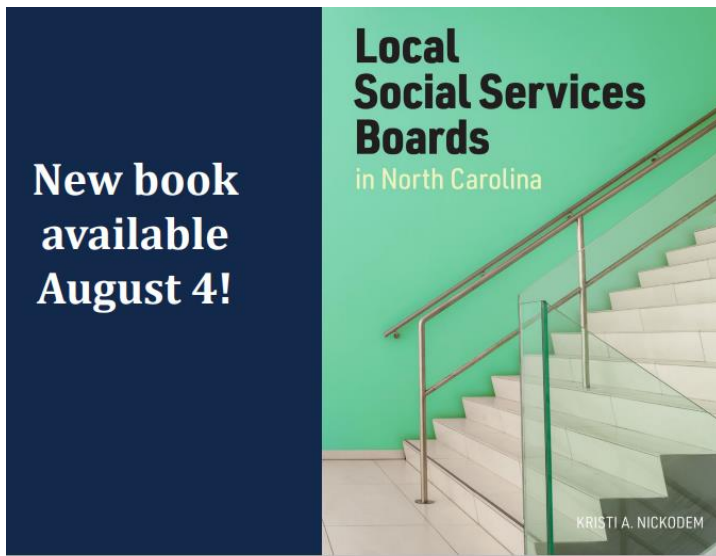
- UNC SCHOOL OF GOVERNMENT

**PRESENTATION
TOPICS:**

- Comprehensive “Legal Concepts”
 - Develop an Evaluation Process for Directors




Kristi Nickodem returned this year to provide an update on Comprehensive Legal Concepts and assist board members with an Evaluation Process for Directors. Overall, Kristi received raving, positive reviews on our evaluation! She has provided much needed assistance to NCACBSS, and we thank her for doing so.



Thanks to Kristi, the new *Local Social Services Boards in North Carolina* book is become available for purchase August 4th!


A Few Presentation “Take-Aways”

Why do we have social services boards?



State Constitution

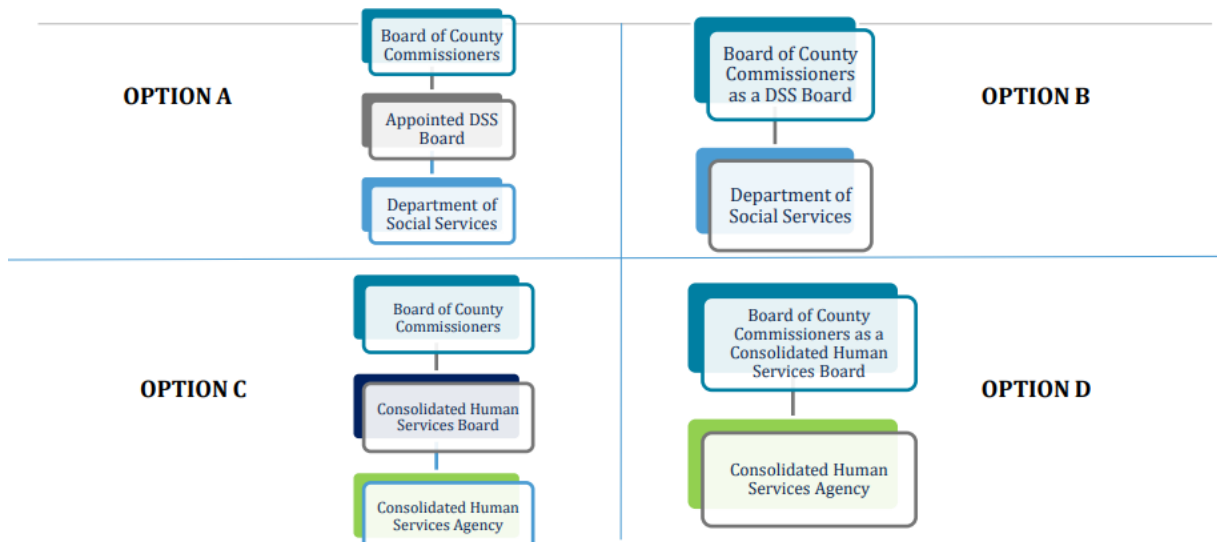
- State must establish agencies and institutions to serve the “public good” and respond to the “needs of humanity”
- State must provide “beneficent” care for “poor, the unfortunate, and the orphan”



State Statutes

- “Every county shall have a governing board for social services.... The governing board shall establish policies for the programs established” by state law (G.S. 108A-1)
- Create a state-supervised, county-administered social services system

Organization and Governance Models



UNC School of Government

Where Are We Now?

Organization Changes

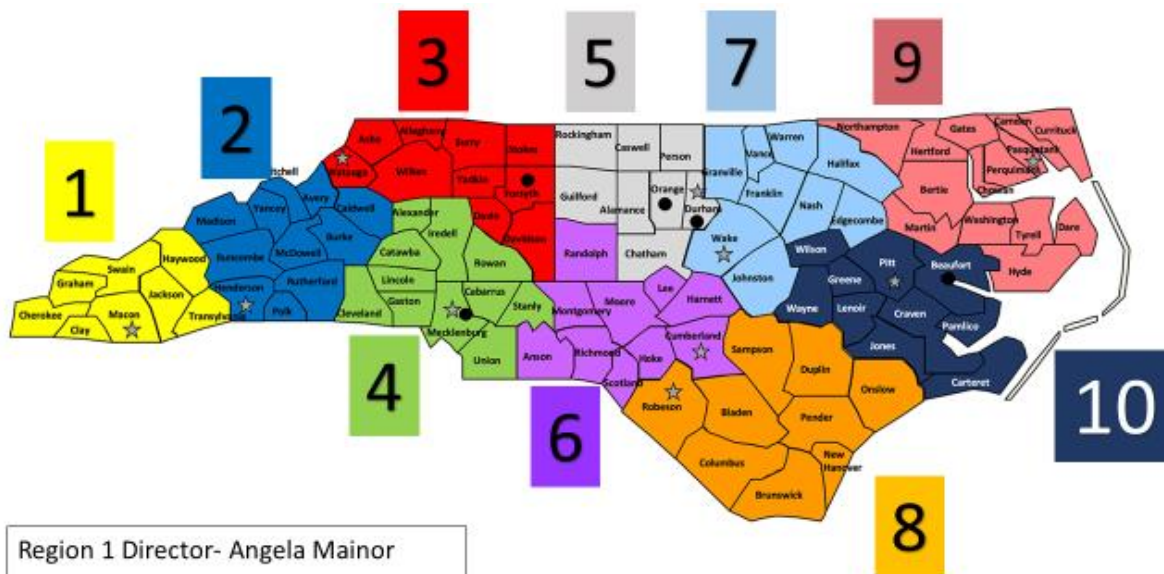
- **Thirty counties now have CHSAs**
 - Twenty-nine include both public health and social services
 - 16 counties have appointed CHS boards, while 14 counties have CHSAs governed directly by the BOCC.
 - 27 counties have opted to remove CHSA employees from the coverage of the SHRA.

Governance Changes

- **In 25 counties, the BOCC now acts as the governing board for social services.**
 - In 11 of those counties, the BOCC is governing a standalone department of social services.
 - In 14 of those counties, the BOCC is acting as the governing board for a CHSA that includes social services.

UNC School of Government

During SSI, New Districts were established and voted upon. The new districts and bylaws change are below:



Region 1 Director- Angela Mainor
 Region 2 Director-Archie Taylor
 Region 3 Director-Monty Riggs
 Region 4 Director-Clyde Everette
 Region 5 Director-Pauline Campbell
 Region 6 Director-George Holley

Region 7 Director- Tyronna Hooker
 Region 8 Director-Frankie Roberts
 Region 9 Director-Leonard Frieson Sr.
 Region 10 Director-Victor Taylor

Existing Bylaws Reading:

ARTICLE V. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 1. Composition, Election, and Term

- A. The Association's board of directors shall consist of the Association's six officers and fifteen (15) directors.
- B. Three directors must be residents of counties within Region I of the NCACBSS region, three directors must be residents of counties within Region II, three directors must be residents of counties within Region III, three directors must be residents of counties within Region IV, and three directors must be residents of counties within Region V. A director may be elected or appointed out of Region if a candidate cannot be identified within Region.

Suggested New Bylaws Reading:

ARTICLE V. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 1. Composition, Election, and Term

- A. The Association's board of directors shall consist of the Association's six officers, ten (10) regional directors, and two At-Large Directors.
- B. Each director must be a resident within the assigned Regional counties. A director may be elected or appointed out of Region if a candidate cannot be identified within Region.

SSI EVALUATION

Special thanks to all board members providing input for future planning of our SSI meetings and agenda. If you did not provide input, there is still time to do so. The officers and board will use this input to strengthen our bond with our partnering associations and community advocates.

Our Opening Session and Icebreakers, Board Training with Kristi Nickodem, Board Member “Real Talk”, NCACBSS Business Session, NCACDSS Joint Session and the Medicaid Workshop “Exceeded Expectations” ratings.

The Family Centered Treatment (FCT) Presentation and Co-located Care Mgt: Collaboration Efforts to Support NC’s Welfare System, and all additional workshops also Met Expectations...Great assessment of our sessions!

Any needs addressed in the evaluation (Time restraints, room accommodation, SSI fee assessments, etc.) will be shared and discussed at our next NCACBSS Board Meeting.

THANK YOU! THANK YOU for your input and participation!... TOGETHER WE WILL CONTINUE TO GROW as we successfully PUSH BEYOND FAMILIAR!

GET
READY
FOR
2024

The Nominating Committee for 2024-2026 Officers and directors will be formed to begin its work by May 2024, with a slate of nominees in place by June 2024. Please, Please consider taking a leadership role in our awesome association!!!! See any officer, or Inbox me (msaccor@carolina.rr.com) to share your interest!

*Special Thanks to
Commissioner Viola Harris*

For stepping up to fill the office of
1st Vice- President

Update!

Congratulations to newly elected Region 7 Director,

Tyronna Hooker

Alamance County





REAL TALK

With NCACBSS Elected officials,
and Board Members
“Establishing Positive Connections”

Thank you, Commissioners, and DSS Board Members Allen Thomas, Pauline Campbell, Archie Taylor, and Viola Harris; Councilwoman Jennifer Hensley; DSS Board Member Deborah Morrison. and former commissioner and DSS Board Member, Jim Sides, for an amazing panel discussion. We are appreciative of your willingness to share your knowledge and respond to questions regarding positive board member connections with elected officials...Great Job!

*Congratulations to all NCACDSS Innovation
Award Recipients!*



NCACBSS



Please Visit Your New Website
At ncacbss.org!

Pushing Beyond Familiar

NORTH CAROLINA ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY
BOARDS
of
SOCIAL SERVICES

We are in the process of sending our webmaster updated SSI information and gallery photos. Please visit the site often. Some of the presentations are also being shared.



News across County DSS Departments



DSS Child Support Supervisors Kelly Daves, Kyna Barnes, and Tonya Robbs-Haney, pictured with Child Support Manager, Tracy Tolbert

Cleveland County Child Support Supervisors and Manager Receive Statewide Awards!

Congratulations to Cleveland County Child Support Supervisors, Kelly Daves, Kyna Barnes, and Tonya Robbs-Haney on receiving the Child Support Team of the Year Award at the recent Annual Child Support Conference!

The statewide award was given in recognition of exceptional levels of work performance, implementation/participation in special projects that reinforces child support program goals, motivation by creating high

morale within the workplace, inspires others toward excellence of performance, provides outstanding customer service delivery, and participates in community service projects.

Congratulations to Cleveland County Child Support Manager, Tracy Tolbert, recipient of the Manager of the Year Award, having the same metrics. “I am so very happy that Cleveland County was recognized in such a major way at the Annual Child Support Conference. This was the first time our county has been recognized in either category. Additionally, we had nominees in the last category, which was Front-Line Staff Employee of the Year. The nominations not only included all 100 counties but also State Staff including the Central Office and the Call Center, so there were a lot of great individuals and teams in the running.”



DSS Child Support Manager,
Tracy Tolbert

Some of the highlights of the year were successful implementation of Traverse, implementation of our Family Engagement initiative CORE (Connecting, Opportunities, Relationships, and Empowerment), participation in the National Night Out Event, and ensuring that customer service is at the forefront of every interaction we have.

Cleveland County Commissioners Appoint Interim Social Services Director

SHELBY, N.C.– The Cleveland County Commissioners appointed Rebecca Johnson as the interim director for Social Services at the June 20th meeting, following the departure of Director Katie Swanson. Rebecca previously served as the Program Manager of the Adult Services Department.

“Cleveland County has been a fantastic place to serve over the last four years,” said Katie Swanson. “I have a lot of faith in Rebecca Johnson as the Interim DSS Director and believe she will be a fantastic leader while they search for the next DSS Director.”



Rebecca has served Cleveland County DSS for the last 24 years. She holds a master’s degree in business administration from Gardner Webb University and a bachelor’s degree in Sociology from University of North Carolina at Charlotte. Rebecca is a native of Cleveland County and graduated from Crest High School.

Interim Director,
Rebecca Johnson

Director Katie Swanson announced she has taken a position with the State Department of Health and Human Services as the Deputy Director of



DSS Advisory Board Chair, Allison Gragg presents a “resolution” award to Former Director, Katie Swanson. Also, picture is Mary S. Accor, board member.

County Operations with the Division of Social Services. Her last day with Cleveland County DSS was Monday, June 26th.

“It is bittersweet leaving Cleveland County because of the great people I have worked alongside however it is also an opportunity for me to impact a larger system and help more counties and communities across the Social Services landscape,” said Katie. “I will forever be grateful to Cleveland County for allowing me to serve as Director of Social Services here amongst a team of strong and committed employees.”

SAVE THE DATES! ...NCACBSS REGULAR OFFICERS & DIRECTORS BOARD MEETING DATES:

*President Accor has scheduled the following
2023-2024 Board Meetings
and or preparation dates:*

Location: The Cutting Board

Time: 10:00- 1:00 (12:00-1:00) Business Lunch

2699 Ramada Road, Burlington, NC 27215

(We will discuss conflicts in schedules during our October Meeting)



October 7, 2023- (2023 SSI FOLLOW-UP & 2024 Planning)

December 15, 2023- Regular Meeting

March 15, 2023- Regular Meeting (Training Agenda)

April 26, 2024- One-Day NCACBSS Training Conference-

Time/Location- TBD

May 24, 2024- Begins 2024-2026 Nomination Process

June 14, 2024- (SSI Planning & Business Meeting/Review slate of officer nominees)

July 31- August 2, 2024 - SSI-Hickory, NC

(Officers & Directors Election Day!)



This invitation is extended to non-member boards to join 83 NCACBSS county DSS boards, coming together to advocate for DSS Departments across the great state of North Carolina... We are your association "TEAM" at work!

If you are interested in joining your association, please contact our treasurer, Jim Sides.



Next Newsletter Deadline:
December 15, 2023

Please contact your Regional Director or President to share newsletter articles or photos!



Welcome Fall!

Save the Date ...Next NCACBSS Board Meeting-
October 7, 2023 10:00 am