

CASWELL COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES
Joint Meeting with Caswell County Board of County Commissioners
February 20, 2023

The Caswell County Board of Education met in a joint meeting on Monday, February 20, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. (with dinner lunch being served at 5:00 p.m.) at the Gunn Memorial Library in Yanceyville, NC. Members present include Chair Mel Battle, Vice Chair Vennie Beggarly, Joel Lillard, Gladys Garland, Trudy Blackwell, Tracy Stanley, Nicole Smith, and Dr. Sandra Carter, Superintendent. Others present include Assistant Superintendent Dr. Carla Murray, Medina Jones, Carol Boaz, Brook Underwood, and Jeremy Teetor (Finance Consultant). Connie Kimrey participated remotely and recorded the minutes for the Board of Education. (*Note: Others may have been present but did not sign the roster or names were not legible*). Board of Commissioners present include: Chairman John Dickerson, Frank Rose, Finch Holt, Jeremiah Jeffries, Tim Yarbrough, Rick McVey, and County Manager Bryan Miller.

I. A. CALL TO ORDER

Chair John Dickerson called the meeting to order with a moment of silence followed by the pledge of allegiance.

The meeting of the Board of Education was called to order by Chair Mel Battle.

Superintendent shared exciting news for the school system and the county in which a grant which was received prior to Covid has provided the school system to pursue a substantial arts grant for K-12. With that initial grant an opportunity was provided to hire someone to do data research to support an arts grant. Amanda Hodges has been hired to assist with the data research. A meeting has been scheduled for March 6, 2023 as an informational session and we are very excited at the opportunities this can bring to Caswell County Schools.

Also, Dr. Carter shared that we recently finished the financial audit with results being very clean and no findings. She also shared that this is the fourth year in a row that there have been no findings. She thanked the finance department as well as the Consultant, Jeremy Teetor, for their efforts.

Bryan Miller shared his congratulations and shared the county is struggling with the audit process due to new computer software and continues to work through it. The NCAC is assisting them through this process.

Superintendent Dr. Sandra Carter shared handouts with academic growth information and briefly summarized the contents. This was shared previously at the last meeting; however, updates were included in this report.

Dr. Carter noted that due to the pandemic, grades have suffered across the state and other districts are having similar concerns.

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A question was asked why Caswell County Schools received a lower amount per pupil than the other counties listed on the report. Jeremy Teetor shared that the ADM (average daily membership) is state funded based on size, social/economic, property tax base, and average income. Caswell is very state dependent and receives a reliable amount from the state which impacts the total amount.

There were no other questions regarding the academic report.

Bryan Miller shared an update on broadband. As shared at the last meeting, Spectrum was the largest awarded federal funding within in the county. The number of addresses has grown to 10,500 and they are continuing to work with adding three additional terminals which should increase by 2800 passings or 265 addresses. The company by the name of Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF) is the primary basis.

Although Spectrum is not available to everyone there will be additional options which include Zitel and an option called "The Last Mile." Mr. Miller explained the details of each option and will send an email to the board with a listing of what options are available to the county.

Mr. Miller shared that when the Great Grant of \$1.5 million was received he reminded everyone to be cautious. The internet service provider ended up not being able to provide the service and a second round of bids was submitted in which Spectrum was awarded the contract. There is still funding left. An additional grant in the amount of \$4 million was received which will assist with any areas not covered by Spectrum which are mostly in the area north of Yanceyville. Currently, Comcast is not interested in expanding any further than they already have. CAB (Completion Access to Broadband) will offer access to these difficult areas. Mr. Miller shared that normally the resident will have to contact the provider and then the internet service provider would need to bid; however, the county will assist with this and act as a liaison. Hopefully this will allow providers such as Spectrum and Comcast to expand their service areas and apply for funding from this grant.

Bryan Miller shared he serves on the NC Association of Board of Commissioners and receives valuable information as well as provided the opportunity to take ideas to the state.

There were no additional questions.

Chairman John Dickerson shared the next joint meeting date for both groups would take place on May 15, 2023 at 6:30 p.m. Chairman Mel Battle shared the Board of Education will host and a meal will be provided at 5:30 p.m.

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Mel Battle questioned when the budget process will begin. Bryan Miller shared that within the next three weeks as forms have been sent out to department heads to compile the budget and begin working with the commissioners. The Board of Education should send in the information as they have done in the past.

John Dickerson requested a recess for the Board of Commissioners.

ADJOURN

Gladys Garland moved, seconded by Joel Lillard, to adjourn the Caswell County Schools Board of Education meeting at 6:50 p.m. The motion carried unanimously.

Mel Battle
Chairman

Dr. Sandra Carter
Superintendent