

CASWELL COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES

January 23, 2023

Work Session Minutes

The Caswell County Board of Education met in a work session on Monday, January 23, 2023, beginning at 3:30 p.m. in the Caswell County Schools Administration Building of Caswell County Schools. Members present: Chair Mel Battle, Vice Chair Vennie Beggarly, Joel Lillard, Gladys Garland, Nicole Smith, Tracy Stanley, and Trudy Blackwell. Others present include Superintendent Dr. Sandra Carter and Asst. Superintendent Dr. Carla Murray. Connie Kimrey recorded the minutes. (*Meeting was livestreamed via Zoom.*)

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 3:30 p.m.

LETRS Updates

Mary Derfil with NC DPI (Department of Public Instruction) shared a PowerPoint overview of LETRS (Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling).

Exit Interview Process

Discussion took place on exit interviews and how they are handled. Exit interviews are mailed with a self-addressed stamp return envelope.

Joel Lillard shared he has spoken with someone in Human Resources from another district to see how they handle it. He shared that exit interviews are given face to face to employees that are leaving within three days of their last day of employment. There were just a few basic questions included that asked:

- Are we doing well
- Areas to improve upon
- Would you consider staying
- How do we do with communication
- Did leadership have anything to do with your reason to leave

Joel Lillard asked if we can revamp our process to gain more input and find out why our teachers are leaving.

Trudy Blackwell shared that some have fear of retaliation if recommendations are needed from employer. Nicole Smith shared that she thought legally there are only certain questions that you can answer.

Action: Dr. Murray is to revamp the exit interview process and bring a plan back to the board.

Stoney Creek Elementary - This topic was deferred as information requested has not yet been received.

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Central Office Structure – This topic was deferred to Closed Session.

Superintendent Evaluation Process

Mel Battle shared concerns with not staying on track and the issues with the timeframe that occur if the board opts to only have one meeting during this process. He requested a copy of the evaluation instrument be shared with the two new board members. He also shared the board needs to stay on track with the timeline for the future.

Local Budget for BOE

A copy was shared with each board member of their balance. Each board member is allotted \$1500. This is to be used for hotels, mileage, food, etc. when attending conferences. Mel Battle shared that the two most popular conferences to attend have increased with hotel fees and felt this is something the board can look into at the next budget work session. The board agreed that if a member is in need of funds and others have not used all of their allotment that this money can be shared; however, the entire board must be in agreement.

Mel Battle shared that if any board member feels they may need assistance they need to make this request to the board.

Regulations for use of P-Card

Connie Kimrey reviewed guidelines to follow when using P-Cards. Those include:

- Not to be used for the purchase of gasoline
- Itemized receipts are required by auditors
- Usage (rooms, food)
- County cars are available upon request or mileage is deducted from balance

Exit Process for Employees leaving System

Dr. Murray shared a check list that is used upon an employee leaving the system.

Master Board Training

A copy was shared with the board on what topics have been taken. It was requested that board members submit topics to Mel Battle that they would like to consider taking by February 13, 2023.

Curriculum Coaches

Nicole Smith questioned what year the coaches were put in place. Dr. Carter shared in 2017 when she began. Nicole Smith questioned if we have reviewed data since implementing this. Dr. Carter shared we have and the coaches and QAI's have made a difference. Nicole shared when talking with teachers they feel there should be more importance on filling the vacancies versus filling the curriculum coaches' positions. Other concerns shared included veteran teachers having to participate in training every week and asked if changes could be made in which they only attended every other week. Dr. Carter shared that this (LETRS) is new for

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everyone and our veteran teachers need to be involved in the training. Dr. Carter noted that every curriculum coach should be looking at individual teacher needs and should be a collaboration between principal, teacher, and curriculum coach.

Joel Lillard questioned how much time a curriculum coach is in the classroom? Dr. Carter shared she cannot give an exact time as it depends on the needs. In general, they should be in the class the majority of the time. Joel questioned what funds these are paid out of. It was shared that Federal funds pay for curriculum coaches. Joel shared that the curriculum coach at the high school is actually teaching one block and felt this is a good thing. Trudy Blackwell questioned if coaches give input on evaluations. Dr. Carter shared they may give input to the principal; however, it is not a part of the evaluation.

Employee Morale

Nicole Smith shared she would like to look into areas that we can help our teachers noting if a teacher has requested a transfer to a school and it was denied that we should look into this and try to accommodate staff that wish to transfer. Dr. Carter shared that all transfer requests may not be a good fit for the school. Nicole Smith shared that she would like to see this occur if it was a good fit.

Mel Battle shared that we are a small system and transfers are not always available. Nicole shared that we need to find a way to improve our relationships with the central office staff and our schools. Dr. Carter shared the central office should be helping and we all have to work together. It was suggested that these areas need to be worked on.

Joel Lillard shared that even when a transfer or an interview takes place with employees or anyone, someone should follow-up with them. He is hearing that staff may express interest for an opening and are never given the opportunity to interview and if they do, they never hear anything as a follow-up. He felt that all staff, if interested, should receive an interview. Information is not being trickled down to the employee and there is a gap in communication.

Dr. Carter shared that interviews are given for vacant positions at the central office. Dr. Murray shared that an automated email is sent in the applicant tracking system but transfer requests are different.

Gladys Garland shared that in the past we have looked at recognizing teachers, assistants, bus drivers and we need to look at recognizing every department. Vennie Beggarly shared she would like to see the Teacher Assistant of the Year put back in place as they were upset that they were grouped with Classified of the Year.

EC Fundraisers

It was suggested to continue as we normally have when approving EC fundraisers.

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Safety & Discipline

Principals are required to submit data regarding discipline. It was questioned how many students are at the alternative program. Dr. Carter shared three and one is waiting. It was shared that students at the high school have 20 plus offenses and some are major occurrences and nothing seems to be done about it.

Jersey Retirement

Mel Battle shared he sent his comments to board members and is waiting on a draft.

Four-day work week

Joel Lillard felt this needed to be discussed; however, Mel Battle asked to hold and discuss at the next work session. Dr. Carter shared she is hearing that the schools looking to do this only have a four-hour cushion in the entire school calendar and there are several concerns to look at regarding implement weather and extending the work day. Joel Lillard suggested sending out a survey to receive teacher input.

Trudy Blackwell shared she would like to hear an update on academics and where we are at the next meeting or the next work session.

A possible date of February 27, 2023 was discussed and will be confirmed at the February 13, 2023 meeting. If there are any additional items please submit them to Mel Battle.

ADJOURN

Vennie Beggarly moved, seconded by Trudy Blackwell to adjourn the meeting at 5:05 p.m. The motion carried unanimously.

Mel O. Battle
Chairman

Dr. Sandra Carter
Superintendent