

**CASWELL COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES**

**February 26, 2024**

The Caswell County Board of Education met in regular session on Monday, February 26, 2024, at 5:30 p.m. in the Administration Building of Caswell County Schools. Members present: Chairman Mel Battle, Vice Chair Joel Lillard, Vennie Beggarly, Gladys Garland, Nicole Smith, Tracy Stanley and Trudy Blackwell. Others present include Interim Superintendent Dr. Douglas Barker, JoAnna Gwynn, and Board Attorney Ron Bradsher. Connie Kimrey recorded the minutes. (*Note: Others may have been present but did not sign the roster or names were not legible*).

**I. A. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Mel Battle. A moment of silence was observed followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**I. B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Joel Lillard moved, seconded by Nicole Smith, to approve the minutes of the February 12, 2024, regular meeting as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

**I. C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Dr. Barker recommended approval of agenda as presented. Gladys Garland moved, seconded by Nicole Smith, to approve the agenda as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

**I. D. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Dr. Barker recognized elementary students from Oakwood Elementary who were recognized for honorable mention in the North Carolina School Boards Association art contest held in November. Those include:

Addison Turner (5<sup>th</sup> grade), Destiny Reaves (5<sup>th</sup> grade), and Mariah Gwynn (3<sup>rd</sup> grade) who were in attendance. Also mentioned were Elaina Newcomb (5<sup>th</sup> grade) and Ximena Quintero (5<sup>th</sup> grade).

**I. E. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None at this time.

**II. REPORTS**

None at this time.

**III. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Civic Center Rentals / Fees

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Dr. Barker brought information back to the board regarding the rental of the Civic Center and changes to the fee schedule. Discussion took place regarding leaving the performance seating down and in place and only renting this side out for performance events if possible. The small auditorium will be set up in banquet style and be left in this arrangement unless requested to be changed by renter. If either auditorium needs to be changed, a set up fee of \$200 will apply. The large auditorium should only be rented out for banquets if the amount exceeds what the small auditorium can hold to avoid the moving of the performance seats. We have currently charged for tables in the past; however, if a setup fee is charged the board could waive the cost of the tables and the setup fee will assist in replacing damaged chairs and tables as needed.

Dr. Barker shared if the board agrees, the current pricing will stay in place if the renter has already paid their deposit. If not, the new pricing and guidelines will apply.

Gladys Garland moved, seconded by Tracy Stanley, to approve the new rental fee and guidelines as presented with effective date of March 1, 2024. The motion carried unanimously.

Updated pricing & guidelines will be posted on the website.

**IV. NEW BUSINESS**

1. Consent Agenda

- Request for Transfer
- Surplus Items
- Contract - M. Audrey Long (Guid. Counselor Support)

Tracy Stanley moved, seconded by Nicole Smith, to approve the consent agenda as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Requests for Transfer (2024/25)

Wirth, Andrew

Caswell

to

Wake (3<sup>rd</sup>)

Surplus Items

- Lot of 3 laptop carts
- Lot of 2 bookshelves
- Lot of 3 pedestal fans
- Plastic Tub
- Microwave
- Lot of 3 Stoves
- Vending Machine
- Roof flashing & coating
- Backpack Sprayer
- Lot of 3 Aluminum Doors
- Lot of 2 Loudspeakers
- Agricultural Tank

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- Popcorn Machine
- Truck bed toolbox
- Lot of 7 droplights
- File cabinets
- Detecto Scale
- Honda Generator
- Lot of 2 oil lift drains
- ARC Welder
- Disassembled Bookshelves
- Vinyl Siding
- Lot of school desks & chairs

Contract – M. Audrey Long  
(5 Dairyfield Way, Greensboro, NC 27410)  
Not to exceed \$5,000 (\$50.00/hour for up to 100 hours)  
Assist Counselor at the high school

2. Resolutions

Joel Lillard and Trudy Blackwell read aloud resolutions for former employees. Trudy Blackwell moved, seconded by Joel Lillard, to approve the resolutions as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

*Resolution in Memorial and Appreciation  
Of the Life of  
Nettie Russell Dameron Blackwell*

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**WHEREAS**, Nettie Russell Dameron Blackwell, was born in 1934, and resided at 7402 US Hwy 150, Yanceyville, NC, at the time of her death on February 15, 2024, and

**WHEREAS**, Nettie Blackwell, was a faithful wife and loving mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, sister, and friend and her family’s welfare was her major and constant concern; and

**WHEREAS**, Nettie Blackwell grew up a parishioner of Prospect United Methodist Church, and she became a devoted member of Bethesda Presbyterian Church, where she sang in the choir and helped lead youth programs. She was also a loyal member of the Women of the Church organization. She was a member and officer of Alpha Delta Kappa, a teacher’s sorority; and was well loved; and

**WHEREAS**, Nettie Blackwell was a graduate of Bartlett Yancey Senior High School, and a 1956 graduate of Greensboro College with a degree in elementary education. She followed the footsteps of her sisters and became a respected public-school teacher in Rockingham County and later taught in Caswell County at Cobb Memorial School for most of her career where she taught thousands of students, including her own children. She was also the director of the student glee club at Cobb Memorial School for many years; and

**WHEREAS**, Nettie Blackwell was known by her community and friends as an excellent chef and cook. She prepared countless dishes, meals, and snacks for her family, church, school and social events. She was

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an expert homemaker with skills and knowledge in sewing, gardening, canning, home economics, childcare, animal care, decorating, and social etiquette. She always retained a keen knowledge of local, national and family events and history; and

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Caswell County Board of Education wishes to honor the memory of Nettie Blackwell and expresses its sympathy to her family by causing a copy of this Resolution to be spread upon the official minutes of the Board of Education and a copy forwarded to the family.

This the 26<sup>th</sup> day of February 2024.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mel Battle, Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_  
Joel Lillard, Vice Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Vennie Beggarly

\_\_\_\_\_  
Trudy Blackwell

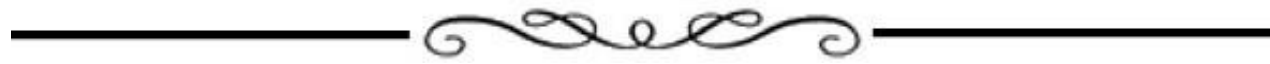
\_\_\_\_\_  
Gladys Garland

\_\_\_\_\_  
Nicole Smith

\_\_\_\_\_  
Tracy P. Stanley

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dr. Douglas Barker, Interim Superintendent

*Resolution in Memorial and Appreciation  
Of the Life of  
Betty Graves Long*



**WHEREAS**, Betty Graves Long, was born on July 22, 1945, and resided at 212 Brentwood Drive, Danville, VA, 24570, at the time of her death on February 17, 2024, and

**WHEREAS**, Betty Long, was a faithful wife and loving mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, sister, and friend and her family's welfare was her major and constant concern; and

**WHEREAS**, Betty Long was a member of Sassafras Grove Baptist Church; and

**WHEREAS**, Betty Long was a native of Caswell County and upon graduation she worked at several companies which include Dan River Mills in Danville, VA and Hanover Mills in Yanceyville, NC. She also worked as a Teacher Assistant and Library Assistant at New Dotmond Elementary School in Milton, NC for many years; and

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Caswell County Board of Education wishes to honor the memory of Betty Long and expresses its sympathy to her family by causing a copy of this Resolution to be spread upon the official minutes of the Board of Education and a copy forwarded to the family.

This the 26<sup>th</sup> day of February 2024.

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\_\_\_\_\_  
Mel Battle, Chairman

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Joel Lillard, Vice Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Vennie Beggarly

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Trudy Blackwell

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Gladys Garland

\_\_\_\_\_  
Nicole Smith

\_\_\_\_\_  
Tracy P. Stanley

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dr. Douglas Barker, Interim Superintendent

Joel Lillard suggested looking at a standard resolution as mentioned at the last meeting and bring a draft copy to the board to review at the next meeting.

**V. SUPERINTENDENT UPDATES**

Dr. Barker shared updates on the following:

- Needs Based Grant was not awarded. This would have assisted with renovations to Oakwood but we were told that this grant will be available next year and Dr. Barker encouraged the board to pursue this and to keep all the information that we've collected so they will be ready to proceed.
- School Mobile Health Center information was shared and the ribbon cutting is scheduled for March 25<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 p.m. An alertnow call will be going out to the district and information is posted on the website. Dr. Barker shared that once this schedule begins it will most likely need to be tweaked to make things flow better; however, this is a starting point.
- Safety Grant that was awarded will not be fully implemented this year. We will receive 80% of the funding this year and the remaining 20% next year. Dr. Barker shared the priority will be the vaping detectors. This grant will also be offered again next year and he encouraged the board to apply for this to purchase the stand-up metal detectors.
- Dairy Alliance Grant (Moo Brew/Nutrient Rich Smoothies) - This grant was received earlier and Dr. Barker shared he just found out about in the past week. Child Nutrition applied for the grant through the National Dairy Alliance. At this point, the options need to be implemented in March to see if there is an increase in milk sales. An iced-coffee machine will be at the high school and a smoothie option will be at the middle school. If a child gets a smoothie and graham crackers it is considered a breakfast or a smoothie and fruit it is also considered a breakfast and will be no charge. The iced-coffee will have a charge of a \$1.00 or \$2.00 based on if they are receiving a meal. Concerns were voiced with the timing if we have been aware of these options all year and are just now implementing them. Other concerns included if the electrical outlets are suitable for additional equipment.

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Dr. Barker felt this would not be an issue and based upon the sales an additional cashier may be needed but this will be monitored.

- Summer School Program – Dr. Barker reviewed a proposed schedule for summer school and shared that students will not be tested as five days is not enough for testing. The following is proposed:

Dates:

June 24-27	Week 1
July 8-11	Week 2
July 15-18	Week 3
July 22-25	Week 4
July 28-Aug. 1	Week 5

(length of day to be determined)

Only reading & math will be offered at elementary level

Middle / High School students who failed a subject with 50-59 grade

Must have 10 students to offer the class

Class length will be 2 hours (students could take multiple classes)

Discussion took place with the locations and Dr. Barker shared that one elementary and one for the middle/high as we did last year. Other concerns shared included the need to have cafeteria equipment repaired/replaced while students are not in the building and hope this can be taken care of this year. Dr. Barker shared that one issue which was a freezer at Oakwood has been corrected by taking the doors off of an old freezer here in the kitchen area of central office and replacing them and that has fixed that issue.

- Proposed 2024-2025 School Calendar – Dr. Barker shared that he felt the proposed calendar is a very good calendar to work with and thanked the committee noting this was an excellent group of people to work with and did a very diligent job in offering input. He especially thanked David Useche and Shannon Apple for taking the lead in this as well. This calendar meets the letter of the law and will be shared with staff and brought back to the board at the next meeting for approval.

One concern expressed the date of graduation which conflicts with the summer conference offered by the North Carolina School Boards Association. Other concerns included the Blue Ridge Rock Festival that took place during Labor Day week and the chaos it brought with traffic and getting buses home. Dr. Barker shared that the State Troopers were instrumental in assisting us and may need to be contacted again. One consideration was adding a workday or an early release. No decision was made.

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- Child Nutrition Equipment Needs – Dr. Barker shared a list of items he requested from Child Nutrition Director. He shared that there are three pieces of equipment at the central office warehouse that were brought over from the high school and can be used to replace those that are failing and they are in the process of getting these ready to go out to the schools. They are still waiting for the bids for the serving lines which have not been received as of yet. We have two hot/cold serving lines that were used at the high school and he will update the board on the status of this at the next meeting.

### VI. BOARD MEMBER OBSERVATIONS

- Gladys Garland shared thanks to our bus drivers. She visited NL Dillard Middle for an assembly, attended a ballgame at the high school on senior night and Stoney Creek and participated in STEM day with Ms. Lunsford's class and shared they did a great job and she is also doing a wonderful with the combo class as she observed a reading group assignment.
- Nicole Smith shared she was not aware and recently learned that if a student in CTE takes the state test and passes they will receive a notification and a printout that can be used to apply for a job (which will assist the student if they opt out of going to college). She thought this was a nice option for our CTE students. She also attended games at the high school and offered congratulations to the girl's team for making the playoff and wished them good luck.
- April board meeting falls the week after spring break. It was agreed to only meet once in April which will be April 22<sup>nd</sup> at 5:30 p.m.

### VI. CLOSED SESSION

Vennie Beggarly made a motion to go into closed session for the purpose of considering a personnel action that involves an officer or employee of this Board (NC General Statute 143-318.11(a)(6); and for the purpose of discussing information that is privileged, confidential or not a public record (NC General Statute 143-318.11(a)(1) and to confer with legal counsel. Gladys Garland seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

### VII. OPEN SESSION

Vennie Beggarly made a motion to return to open session. Nicole Smith seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

### VIII. PERSONNEL LISTING

Dr. Barker recommended approval of the personnel listing as presented. Vennie Beggarly moved, seconded by Gladys Garland, to approve the personnel listing as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

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<b>Resignations</b>	
BYSHS	Angela Kelly, Custodian (Eff. 3/22/24)
NLD Middle School	Marshall Hankins, Custodian (Eff. 2/16/24)
<b>Substitutes</b>	
	Clarice Turner, EC Sub. (Eff. 3/4/24)
	Michelle Purnell, Sub. Teacher (Eff. 3/4/24)
	Annette Gwynn, Part Time Sub. Custodian / Bus Driver - BYSHS (Eff. 3/4/24)
<b>Employment</b>	
Central Office - Transportation	John Berdine = Transportation Director (currently serving as Interim Trans. Dir.)

**Superintendent**

Trudy Blackwell moved, seconded by Vennie Beggarly, to approve Ms. Joanna Gwynn as the Superintendent effective July 1, 2024 in agreement with contract as presented. The motion carried 6-1 with Garland voting “No.”

Mel Battle shared a press release will be on the website after the meeting and information will be shared with all the schools and local newspaper. Letters will be sent to all applicants who applied for the position.

**IX. COMMUNICATIONS**

- Spring coaching list (revisions will be made)
- Multiplication Madness = March 1, 2024
- Signature School Breakfast = March 7, 2024

**X. ADJOURN**

Gladys Garland made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 p.m., Vennie Beggarly seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. The next regular meeting of the Board of Education will be held on March 11, 2024 at 9:00 a.m. in the Caswell County Schools Administration Building.

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Mel O. Battle  
 Chairman

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Dr. Douglas Barker  
 Interim Superintendent