

CASWELL COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES
WORK SESSION
April 22, 2024

The Caswell County Board of Education met in a work session on Monday, April 22, 2024, at 3:15 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, and JoAnna Gwynn. Connie Kimrey recorded the minutes. (*Note: Others may have been present but did not sign the roster or names were not legible*).

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Mel Battle.

Budget Review (Current Expense/Capital Outlay)

Dr. Barker reviewed the budget and shared an increase of \$312,500 is being submitted. This will assist with the boilers that need to be replaced. It was shared that teachers will lose the 10% supplement they have been receiving from ESSER funds as this ends this year. Dr. Barker shared that other districts chose to use the ESSER funding in different ways; however, Caswell opted to pay teachers the supplement. If the county does not approve the additional \$312,500, the board will need to look at the budget and adjust accordingly taking money out of the current expense or fund balance to continue to make things work that are needed.

A listing will be shared with the county of what fund balance will be used for and why there is a balance noting that emergency situations may occur as well as funding is needed if the board pursues the needs-based grant next year.

If approved by the county, the board will need to meet again with the finance director and determine at that time how to proceed.

Low wealth funding was discussed and Dr. Barker reminded that this was a board decision on who receives it and when; however, he advised that it makes more sense to disburse the money twice a year rather than monthly noting that it means more to the employee to receive a separate amount.

Low wealth can be used to pay for personnel and we have paid custodians out of this for the upkeep of the buildings. The funding received is based on the population of the county. Dr. Barker shared his hope is that the county commissioners will not cut the amount that was given last year.

Other topics included the athletic amounts and how the board wishes to proceed. Normally the school receives an amount and it is up to the principal to determine how they spend it. If the board wants to have other procedures in place they will need to discuss this so that the principals are aware if an amount is to be earmarked for specific items.

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Resolution for Board of Education Election Date

A draft resolution was shared and discussed regarding changing the voting date for the board of election members to be in November rather than the primary which is held in March. If this is agreed upon a copy will be sent to the House Representatives in which Representative Greg Meyers indicated he would try to push through. Dr. Barker shared he felt it would be better to push this through as law versus changing the date of when board members begin in July which was another option for consideration.

No one had concerns with moving forward with this and the resolution will be on the agenda for approval at the regular meeting.

Cell Phone Policy # 4318

The cell phone policy was brought back for the board to review with concerns that the middle school principal had concerns with allowing students to have their cell phones out during class change. Discussion took place and it was felt that this is a needed change for the middle school but didn't regard it to be an issue at the high school. The timing of making the change at this time with less than a month left of school was a concern and upon discussion it was agreed to bring this back for board approval after school is over. These changes will need to be included in student handbooks as well and felt it was best to have all information of that type reviewed and approved at the same time.

Joel Lillard moved, seconded by Tracy Stanley, to table Policy # 4318 until after school is over for students and include changes in student handbooks. The motion carried unanimously.

Resolutions for former employees

Draft copies of a generic resolution for employees who have worked for the school system and passed away was reviewed. The reason for having a generic resolution would assist the administrative assistant with typing them up noting that some obituaries do not include detailed information and others have more to work with. Upon reviewing the generic draft copies, Mr. Battle suggested that he would still like to have the date of the persons death.

It was agreed to continue working with the draft and bring back to the board at another time. It may be best to continue the current way until the next school year.

Zoom Meetings

Discussion took place regarding the small number of viewers who actually watch the zoom meetings and the cost associated with it as well as the technicians who are paid to be here to set the meetings up.

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It was shared that even though the number may be small during the actual broadcast it was felt that people go back and watch the meetings on YouTube at a later date. It was shared that the broadcast ends when the board goes into closed session and no longer goes live after the board returns to open. It was shared that usually only personnel is approved at that time and the board agreed a while back to allow the technician to go home rather than waiting so long to return to open session.

At this time the board did not want to change and agreed to continue broadcasting the meetings.

Legal Updates

Dr. Barker shared an update with General Statute 115C-287.1 and reviewed with the board. This regarded contracts and method of employment of principals, assistant principals, supervisors, and directors. The information shared with the board previously indicated that only a four-year contract could be offered once an individual had received a previous contract if they wished to renew them. Based upon this information if an individual submits a written letter of request may continue to offer a contract of a year or more if the board so chooses. The key to this is that a written letter of request is required.

Other questions submitted by board members were answered and included in the packet information.

Communications

Summer Hours were reviewed and the board agreed to continue for this summer for twelve-month employees.

Summer Hours will begin on June 17th and end on August 8th
Time will be 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. (with a 30-minute lunch required)
Only exceptions will be approved by the Superintendent

Upcoming Board events =

June 7th = Special Called meeting on June 7, 2024 @ 9:00 a.m. to swear in new Superintendent and approve budget amendments.

June 8th = Graduation = 10:00 a.m.

June 24th @ 5:30 p.m.

July 8th = 9:00 a.m.

July 22nd = 5:30 p.m.

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ADJOURN

Joel Lillard made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:10 p.m., Trudy Blackwell seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. The next regular meeting of the Board of Education will be held on April 22, 2024 at 5:30 p.m. in the Caswell County Schools Administration Building.

Mel O. Battle
Chairman

Dr. Douglas Barker
Interim Superintendent