

# CASWELL COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES

December 9, 2024

The Caswell County Board of Education met in regular session on Monday, December 9, 2024, at 9:00 a.m. in the Administration Building of Caswell County Schools. Members present: Chairman Mel Battle, Vice Chair Joel Lillard, Vennie Beggarly, Trudy Blackwell, Lisa Johnson-Knight, Nicole McGhee, and Nicole Smith. Others present include Superintendent JoAnna Gwynn, Brook Underwood, Cynthia Bigelow, Valene Sellars, Sandra Jeffries, Barbara Jeffries, Jerome Jeffries, Cliff Garnale, Anthony McGhee, AJ McGhee, Mary Miles, Kira Burns, Sara Broadwell, Medina Jones, Lisa Lassiter, Janice Lewis, Kamaia Barnett, Cherita Williams, Mildrow Hughes, Cynthia Richmond, Makaila Beaman, 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 Superintendent JoAnna Gwynn. A moment of silence was observed, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

## **I. B. SWEARING IN OF BOARD MEMBERS**

Clerk of Court John I. Satterfield initiated the oaths of office for Trudy Blackwell, Mel Battle, Nicole McGhee and Lisa Johnson-Knight.

## **I. C. REORGANIZATION OF THE BOARD**

Superintendent JoAnna Gwynn called for nominations for Board Chair. Joel Lillard nominated Mel Battle as Chair and Vennie Beggarly seconded the motion. Joel Lillard moved, seconded by Vennie Beggarly, to close the nominations for Board Chair. The motions carried unanimously.

Board Chair Mel Battle called for nominations for Vice Chair. Vennie Beggarly nominated Joel Lillard as Vice Chair and Nicole Smith seconded the motion. Trudy Blackwell moved, seconded by Vennie Beggarly to close the nominations for Vice Chair. The motions carried unanimously.

A brief recess was held.

## **I. D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Vennie Beggarly moved, seconded by Nicole Smith, to approve the minutes of the November 25, 2024, regular meeting as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

## **I. E. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

JoAnna Gwynn recommended approval of agenda as presented. Joel Lillard moved, seconded by Nicole Smith, to approve the agenda as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

## **I. F. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

John Berdine, Transportation Director, recognized the following as bus drivers of the month:

# CASWELL COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES

December 9, 2024

Jerome Stanfield and Thomas Long  
JoAnn Williams and Leslie Crowe

## I. G. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None at this time.

## II. REPORTS

Blue Bird and Blossoms Fuels Team gave a propane bus presentation. They shared the benefits of using a propane bus and answered questions from the board. It was shared that the propane buses meet all emission requirements and noted that changes will be taking place in 2027 and this meets those requirements. The initial cost would be \$14,984.00 and the State will cover the cost. This is a 72-passenger bus and is covered for five years. He shared the propane buses are usually running six miles to the gallon. Mechanics would be trained for free and noted that they have a Ford V8 engine and is similar to other buses that mechanics should be familiar with. There is no upfront cost for fuel station; however, the school system would have to pay the upfront cost for the electrical side for the pump. No cost was given on this.

Transportation Director John Berdine shared we are up for the purchase of a new bus and felt this may be a good opportunity to replace an EC bus noting the diesel fumes are near the lifts on the EC buses. No decision was made. It was shared that we have until the end of December to decide what bus to purchase.

The agenda noted that Tiffany Ramos from UNCG would be at the meeting to give an update on the beginning teachers; however, she was not in attendance.

Alyson Beavers shared an update on the Title I budget and answered questions. She shared she will be giving this to the board on a quarterly basis.

Ms. Gwynn shared that Mrs. Beavers does an excellent job with the Title I funds and budgeting.

## III. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

### Mathematics Coaching Proposal (Elementary)

Alyson Beavers shared and reviewed a contract for a mathematics coach for elementary and reviewed the benefits of moving forward with this. Mrs. Beavers has assisted and met with teachers, conducted observations, and coached them; however, she is pulled in many directions and this would be means of support to provide additional assistance and have hands-on help with math.

Trudy Blackwell asked if there are results from other counties who have used this individual and asked if there is, she would like to see that data. Mrs. Beavers shared she wasn't aware if

**CASWELL COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES**

**December 9, 2024**

this data is available but would check into it and she noted that this contract is only for two schools and will be having two meetings per month. This is to offer support due to the lack of instructional coaches at the elementary level.

Upon review, JoAnna Gwynn recommended approval of the contract with Marty Erskine, Erskine Consulting, LLC as presented. Joel Lillard moved, seconded by Nicole Smith, to approve the contract with Erskine Consulting, LLC as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Services or Seminar Fee:	\$9,000
Travel Expenses:	\$604.89
Other (specify):	\$725.65 (substitutes)
Contract Total:	\$10,330.54

Funding Source = Title I

Audrey Long = Contracted Services

Ms. Gwynn shared information on the contract for Audrey Long noting this was pulled from the last meeting for more information. The contract includes an amount not to exceed. Mel Battle questioned how many days Ms. Long will be working and if there is a set schedule. Ms. Gwynn shared she did not have a schedule but it will be based on need.

Ms. Gwynn recommended approval of the contract with Audrey Long as presented. Trudy Blackwell moved, seconded by Lisa Johnson-Knight, to approve the contract as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Audrey Long  
December 12, 2024                      Ending May 15, 2025  
\$315 per day or \$45.00/hour  
Not to exceed \$10,000

Funding Source = Title I

**IV. NEW BUSINESS**

1. Consent Agenda

JoAnna Gwynn recommended approval of the consent agenda. Joel Lillard moved, seconded by Nicole Smith, to approve the consent agenda as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

- Surplus Listing (Transportation)
- 6001 - 1987 International Lift Bus
  - 8010 - 1991 International Lift Bus

**CASWELL COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES**

**December 9, 2024**

- 8011 – 1991 International Bus
- 8158 – 1995 International Bus
- 8203 – 2003 Chevy Malibu

Request for Transfer

2025-2026 school year

Wieth, Andrew

Caswell

to

Wake County (4<sup>th</sup>)

2. NLD Math Coaching Position – Contracted Services

Ms. Cherita Williams, Principal at NLD Middle School, reviewed the contract with Marty Erskine, Erskine Consulting, LLC for assistance at the middle school. The data shows a significant need to math instruction. Three math teachers are currently enrolled in the Foundations of Math class provided by this instructor. Additional coaching would ensure that strategies learned transfer to the classroom instruction for the benefit of the students.

JoAnna Gwynn recommended approval of the contract with Erskine Consulting, LLC as presented. Trudy Blackwell moved, seconded by Joel Lillard, to approve the contract with Erskine Consulting, LLC as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Services or Seminar Fee:	\$9,000
Travel Expenses:	\$484.65
Contract Total:	\$9,484.65

Funding Source = Title I Funds

3. Contracted Services = Angela Martin

Ms. Gwynn reviewed the contract for Angela Martin that was mentioned at the last meeting. She shared the contract will be for sixty days and this will be monitored and feedback received upon completion of the sixty days. Currently Tiffany Ramos from UNCG is assisting with 14 of 32 beginning teachers. Angela Martin will work with the remainder and provide professional development to instructional coaches. Ms. Gwynn shared that the HR Director (Austin Morris) will continue to be working with the beginning teachers and once Angela Martin’s contract ends, the district should hope to sustain what she has implemented.

Joel Lillard noted the contract date was incorrect as it shows January through April and should be January through March. A breakdown of the beginning teachers by year was included in the contract presentation. Trudy Blackwell asked if feedback can be given to long term substitutes as well. Ms. Gwynn shared that mentors are in the classroom during the day and can offer support when time allows.

**CASWELL COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES**

**December 9, 2024**

Upon review, JoAnna Gwynn recommended approval of the contract with Angela Martin for dates of January through March 2025. Trudy Blackwell moved, seconded by Vennie Beggarly, to approve the contract with Angela Martin as presented with dates to be changed reflecting January through March 2025. The motion carried unanimously.

Services or Seminar Fee:	\$40.00/hour (up to 20 hours/week)
Travel Expense:	\$0.655/mile – if a county car is not available
Contract Total:	\$Up to \$40,000.00 total per year

Funding Source = Title II Funds

4. Seating Safety Solutions, Inc.

Maintenance Director Alan Poteat reviewed the quote for replacement parts for the seating at the Civic Center. He shared that Hussey is the manufacturer of the parts and he was given the distributor which is Seating Safety Solutions, Inc. This is the recommendation of what is needed to repair the seats and lift at the Civic Center.

Alan Poteat shared the seats were installed in 1980 and very little has been done to maintain them over the years. He also shared bleachers are required to be inspected over the years and he is not sure this has been the protocol for years past. Mel Battle questioned if there is a timeframe that has been given. Alan Poteat shared that he does not have one yet and would need to be based upon approval and the current rental schedule of the Civic Center. He would hope to have the repairs in March if possible.

Upon no further discussion, JoAnna Gwynn recommended approval of the quote with Seating Safety Solutions, Inc. for repairs of the seats at the Civic Center. Joel Lillard moved, seconded by Trudy Blackwell, to approve quote with Seating Safety Solutions, Inc. in the amount of \$34,554.54. The motion carried unanimously.

Seating Safety Solutions, Inc., PO Box 1760, Liberty, NC 27298

Funding Source = Capital Outlay Fund Balance

Total Cost = \$34,554.54

Provide one new Hussey power assist unit. Provide and install (60) new Hussey tier catch/row locks. Provide and install all new components of the front row brake mechanisms. Provide and install new front row skirt boards. Repair seat mechanisms as able; parts for this seat model are obsolete. Replace existing end rails with new code compliant end rails (14 rails). Materials, Freight & Labor = Total \$32,365.59 Tax = \$2,184.95.

5. Policy # 3620, Extracurricular Activities and Student Organizations

## CASWELL COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES

December 9, 2024

Mel Battle shared updated information was given at the NCSBA (North Carolina School Board Association) annual conference regarding homeschoolers and athletics. It was requested to look at our policy and made changes to allow students to participate if they are homeschooled. There were three options to consider for wording and Option 1 was the selection suggested for Caswell County Schools.

Joel Lillard moved, seconded by Nicole Smith, to approve the changes to Policy # 3620, Extracurricular Activities and Student Organizations as presented and to waive the first reading. The motion carried unanimously.

Mel Battle requested that this information be shared by the principals and posted in the Caswell Messenger. School handbooks will need to be changed to reflect the updated policy.

Changes are noted:

a. Home School Students

Any home school student whose primary residence (as defined in 16 N.C.A.C. 6E .0207) is in the school system is eligible to participate in high school interscholastic athletics if the student complies with the requirements of this subsection and meets all applicable eligibility standards of law and the State Board of Education as well as any applicable locally established requirements for interscholastic athletics participation.

The student must notify the principal of the high school in writing of the student's intent to try out for an athletic team at least 10 days prior to the first practice date of each sport season in which the student wishes to participate. Failure to comply with this requirement renders the student ineligible for that sport season.

Prior to the first practice date, the student must present a home school card from the Division of Non-Public Education for the current years as well as a transcript that indicates the student is at grade level, an attendance record, and an immunization record demonstrating that the student has received all immunizations that are required for public school attendance at the student's grade and/or age level. The student must also present proof of catastrophic accident insurance coverage unless the student is covered under the board's catastrophic athletic accident insurance policy.

## V. SUPERINTENDENT UPDATES

JoAnna Gwynn shared the following:

## CASWELL COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES

December 9, 2024

- Central Office reorganization chart
- CTE Student Interest Survey Results  
Discussion took place on the survey and the numbers who completed it and the number of students who did not. It was concerning that so many did not participate and it was questioned how we can do a better job of more participation. Mel Battle stressed we want to provide courses that our students are interested in. It was concerning having data earlier that showed we had enough interest in masonry for last school year but there was not enough this year. It was concerning with the information that is being shared. It was suggested to do another survey in the spring and make sure you are reaching out to the students especially in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade level and possibly do a survey for seniors to receive feedback.

### VI. ATTORNEYS REPORT

None.

### VII. BOARD MEMBER OBSERVATIONS

Mel Battle shared he would like to discuss this item on the agenda at an upcoming work session and noted these are not really “observations” but may need to reword this category.

Trudy Blackwell shared she visited the high school and things looked good and students were quiet. She had an academics discussion with Lance Stokes, Principal at Bartlett Yancey Sr. High School, and it was very informative regarding EVAAS data. She visited the middle school and felt they are changing the culture of the school noting it is all about academics. She visited Oakwood and noted the principal was out that day but everyone knew who was in charge and that was reassuring.

Nicole McGhee thanked the community for allowing her to serve on the Board of Education and received a warm welcome. She is excited to be back and looks forward to the opportunities.

Joel Lillard shared he was pleased to see things in the school related to the holidays and felt the excitement when visiting the schools. He welcomed the two new board members and wished all staff happy holidays and hope they can enjoy some rest and time with their families.

Mel Battle shared he hired Nicole McGhee as a teacher and noted how things come around. He also shared that Kathy Boyd with the NCSBA who has been instrumental in assisting our board with the policy update and process is retiring on December 19<sup>th</sup> and felt the board should acknowledge her with something.

**CASWELL COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES**  
**December 9, 2024**

Mel Battle moved, seconded by Joel Lillard, to approve the purchase of a recognition item for Kathy Body. Connie Kimrey and JoAnna Gwynn will make sure this is taken care of. The motion carried unanimously.

Mel Battle shared the Signature Breakfast is this Thursday and those that are attending can carpool and meet at Central Office at 7:00 a.m.

He welcomed the two new board members and wished them the best noting that we try to do what is best for students and staff to the best of our ability.

Nicole Smith welcomed the two new board members and shared she attended the recent balloon release for the student who was killed at the high school and asked that we continue to remember that family.

Lisa Johnson-Knight thanked the board for the warm welcome and she, too, was excited to serve on the board and hope she can live up the expectations the community has elected her for. She recently finished up a long-term substitute position at Oakwood and she attended the game at the high school in which the 1974-75 basketball team was recognized. She was very concerned with the PA system as it was very difficult to hear and she felt that the younger generation did not show respect to what was going on in center court during the recognition and this was very disheartening along with not being able to hear.

Vennie Beggarly shared she helped with the Thanksgiving lunch and shared that all board members are invited to the talent show at North Elementary. She also shared an invite to a pajama book party on December 21<sup>st</sup> in Pelham. She shared the dance recital at the high school is scheduled for December 19<sup>th</sup> and she welcomed the two new board members and wished everyone a happy holiday and to continue to remember those who have lost loved ones and/or dealing with other issues.

**VIII. CLOSED SESSION**

Joel Lillard 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. Vennie Beggarly seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**IX. OPEN SESSION**

Joel Lillard made a motion to return to open session. Nicole Smith seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.



**CASWELL COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES**  
**December 9, 2024**

**X. PERSONNEL LISTING**

Ms. Gwynn recommended approval of the personnel listing as presented. Trudy Blackwell moved, seconded by Lisa Johnson-Knight, to approve the personnel listing as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

<b>Resignations</b>	
Central Office /HR Dept.	Teresa Myers = Admn. Asst. Human Resources = Eff. 1/3/25
<b>Employment</b>	
NL Dillard Middle School	April Johnson, Art Teacher = Eff. 1/32/25
<b>Transfer</b>	
NL Dillard Middle School	McKenzie Miller = Teacher = transferring from North Elementary to NL Dillard - will fill a Social Studies teacher vacancy = Eff. 1/3/25
<b>Substitute</b>	
Child Nutrition	Katlyn Fuqua, Eff. 12/16/24
	Kelley Stewart, Eff. 12/16/24

**XII. ADJOURN**

Mel Battle wished everyone a happy and safe holiday. Joel Lillard suggested having a work session prior to the 5:30 p.m. meeting on January 27<sup>th</sup> and will confirm at the January 13<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Joel Lillard made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 12:15 p.m., Vennie Beggarly seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. The next regular meeting of the Board of Education will be held on January 13, 2025 at 9:00 a.m. in the Caswell County Schools Administration Building.

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Mel O. Battle  
 Chairman

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JoAnna Gwynn  
 Superintendent