CASWELL COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES
February 24, 2025

The Caswell County Board of Education met in regular session on Monday, February 24, 2025, at 5:30 p.m. in the Administration Building of Caswell County Schools. Members present: Chairman Mel Battle, Vice Chair Joel Lillard, Vennie Beggarly, Lisa Johnson-Knight, Nicole McGhee, Nicole Smith, and Trudy Blackwell. Others present include Superintendent JoAnna Gwynn, Austin Morris, Brook Underwood, David Useche, Board Attorney Ron Bradsher, Mary Myers, David Myers, Amy Myers, Ross Myers, Nolan Myers, Terri Parker, Tyshia McCain, Melinda Turner, Katina Turner, Vicki Smith, Tamia Ross, Delana Ross, Deon McCain, Johnathan Mize, Lauren Jones, Robert Jones, Cathy Marlowe, Dwayne Marlowe, Kayla Rudd, Melissa Lawson, Sharon Short, Shaniya Short, Donald Short, Shaliah Short, Dana Willis, Autumn Willis, Makayla Mitchell, Alan Poteat, Shalonda King. 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 Chair Mel Battle. A moment of silence was observed, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

I. B. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Nicole Smith moved, seconded by Vennie Beggarly, to approve the minutes of the February 10, 2025, regular meeting, and February 10, 2025 listening tour minutes as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

I. C. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

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

I. D. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Superintendent JoAnna Gwynn recognized the following:

Jakayla Mack, Bartlett Yancey Sr. High School
Johnathan Mize, Bartlett Yancey Sr. High School
Noah Crumpton, NL Dillard Middle School
Shaniya Short, NL Dillard Middle School
Zoey King, North Elementary School
Nolan Myers, North Elementary School
Imani McCain, South Elementary School

Ms. Gwynn shared that the week of February 24th through February 28th is Public Schools Week. She sent out a message to parents in regards to this.

Mel Battle read aloud thank you notes to the Board from the Lillard family and from Nicole Smith in the recent loss of their mothers.

I. E. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None at this time.

II. REPORTS

Small School Consortium

Ms. Gwynn reviewed and shared a handout and noted that an increase is requested for 2025. She has reached out to Rep. Renee Price and will follow-up with Rep. Greg Maier.

The proposed amount is $2,357,740.

III. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- Metal Detectors

  Ms. Gwynn shared a team was formed to look into this which included David Useche and Dr. Medina Jones. David Useche reviewed the information that was shared with the board on recommended additions to Policy # 4342.

  Upon review, the board was not in agreement with the proposed wording and shared their concerns that the metal detectors need to be implemented daily. The elementary schools should be consistent. Other concerns were staffing and who will manage this.

  Action: Ms. Gwynn was directed to gather input from all schools on what they are currently doing and revise the information that was shared and bring back to the board.

  It was also made clear that athletics are to be included and strategic planning may need to be required for sports that do not have a gated entrance but one suggestion to include a roped off area or cones to direct path to the event was made.

- Before and After School (BASC)

  Ms. Gwynn shared an update on the BASC and updated that Oakwood has dissolved their after-school care. South and North Elementary have been asked to make sure the attendance is consistent and if not, these programs will both be reviewed. The number of drops-offs was questioned of how one person can handle 17 students as the procedure guidelines state the amount of 17 but the listing has shown more students participating.

  Action: Ms. Gwynn will look in to the numbers to see how many are actually dropping in.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

1. Consent Agenda

JoAnna Gwynn recommended approval of the consent agenda as presented. Joel Lillard moved, seconded by Lisa Johnson-Knight. The motion carried unanimously.

Fundraising Request

BYSHS

SGA = Volleyball Tournament (March)
Band = Mrs. Fields (Cookie/Candy/Popcorn) (March)
Wrestling = Concessions Pro Wrestling (April)
Wrestling = Pro Wrestling Event (April)
FFA = Plant Sale / Car Wash / Candy (April-May)

NL Dillard

FFA = Plant Sale (April)
8th Grade Prom (May)
Book Fair (April)
Friday Bull Cart (March-May)
FFA = Cookbooks (March-April)
BETA = Pennies for Pies (Feb.)

North Elementary

Jr. BETA Club = Pajama Fundraiser = Feb-May

Stoney Creek Elementary

Jr. BETA Club = Sweet Treats = Feb.-April
Sweet Treats Candygrams = April

South Elementary

Spring Pictures = February
Jr. BETA Club = Coin Drive (February)
Math/Science Madness Basketball Competition = March

2. Listening Tour

Dates were discussed for upcoming listening tours as follows:

March 17th

3:15 – 4:00 = Classified
4:15 – 5:00 = Principals
5:00 – 6:00 = Directors

6:00 – 7:00 = Parents/Community

3. Summer Program Plan

   Ms. Gwynn shared information on the 24-25 Summer Program Plan. Discussion took place on students being retested and if the grades counted. David Useche shared that it counts for proficiency but not for growth. Concerns discussed included the amount of funding required if the grades are not going to count.

   Trudy Blackwell moved, to approve the 24-25 Summer Program Plan. The motion died for lack of a second.

4. Math Coach at NLD

   Discussion took place regarding the need for a math coach at the middle school. JoAnna Gwynn shared the feedback she received was to look into using Marty Erskine and utilize him to build capacity with the current coach and look at extending his contract if he is willing to do so. It was shared that the teachers expressed concern at the listening tour that they need someone there all the time and it was suggested to move forward and post the position to see what is available. Fifth grade math needs support as well and it was questioned if funding from Title I cannot be used for this.

   Action: Ms. Gwynn was to reach out to Mr. Erskine to see if he is available for full time.

   Finance Director, Brook Underwood, was questioned on the funding for Title I and she shared that there is a large carryover that we need to exhaust. Joel Lillard questioned if the funding is not an issue can we not look at hiring a math coach now.

   Joel Lillard moved, seconded by Vennie Beggarly, to approve and post hiring of a math coach for NL Dillard using Title I funds. The motion carried unanimously.

5. Athletic Director

   This was moved to closed for further discussion.

6. Panel for hiring of Principal at NL Dillard Middle School

   Ms. Gwynn shared a large panel is being planned for interviews for the principal at NL Dillard Middle School. The panel will include teachers, classified, two parents, and central office staff. Ms. Gwynn shared that parents can contact the principal if they are interested in serving on this panel.

7. Child Nutrition Activity Bus

Makayla Mitchell, Child Nutrition Director, answered questions from the board regarding the request of the surplus activity bus to be used in child nutrition. She shared that she requested this and will properly equip with hot box and refrigerator to be used during the summer feeding program. The van that is used recently broke and is no longer operable. She shared the listing of needed repairs would be approximately $18,000 and noted the van is very old. The refrigerated truck is also broken. Currently a pickup truck is being used to transport the food.

Concerns were voiced with the food not being covered and if it would pass inspection as well as concerns that the bus was put on surplus and questioned why it has not been posted. John Berdine, Transportation Director, shared that he had reached out to Ms. Gwynn indicating that Child Nutrition may want to use it. Other concerns included the only person that can drive it will have to have their CDL License. It was questioned how long the refrigerated truck has been broken. Makayla Mitchell shared it has been broken since she has been in the position. Makayla Mitchell shared that she notified Ms. Gwynn, David Useche and Brook Underwood. There is $200,000 in Child Nutrition Fund Balance.

Discussion took place regarding purchasing a new vehicle and ideas of how to pay for it. It appears that repairing the refrigerated truck and purchase a new van would fix the issues. Currently there are concerns that if a freezer were to go out or a power outage there is no backup. Other discussion took place on having orders delivered directly to the school site and options for the summer feeding program.

Action: Makayla Mitchell will inquire on the cost of deliveries to the individuals school sites and look at van on state contract as well as cost for repairs for the refrigerated truck.

8. Budget Consultant

Chair Mel Battle shared he spoke with Doug Barker on the possibility of working with us as a budget consultant. He hopes to hear back from him soon. Ms. Gwynn also spoke with him and agreed for him to come back if he is willing to do so to assist with budgetary items.

9. Unifirst Contract

Ms. Gwynn shared information on the contracts with Unifirst and the previous contract with Cintas. In the previous contract uniforms were covered for transportation and maintenance. Ms. Gwynn asked that the IT Department begin wearing uniforms; however, this was not approved and the budget was uncertain where this item would be paid for. Ms. Gwynn shared she wasn't aware that the uniforms could not be covered. IT was questioned why IT Dept. needs them and Ms. Gwynn shared she liked for the employees in that department to look uniformed as they go into the schools. Ms. Gwynn shared this was her mistake and the contracted was signed on December 6 without

approval from the board. David Useche shared it was a good faith estimate and the contract is for sixty months. Discussion took place on where this would be paid from and Joel Lillard suggested using the Superintendent line item unless the finance director can find another line to pull from as fund balance does not need to be used. The cost is $2,400 for five years. The Finance Director was questioned on where funding could be used and it was suggested to use workshops/travel or supplies. Ms. Gwynn shared she would like to talk to the company and see if we can pay for what we currently owe and then get out of the contract.

This item was deferred for closed session for further discussion regarding Cintas.

10. 2024-2025 School Calendar

Ms. Gwynn shared information on the recent change to the calendar due to the closing on February 20th. It was suggested that elementary go an additional fifteen minutes for two weeks to make up the time as the middle and high school teachers shred they have enough time. Ms. Gwynn wanted to confirm this was correct and bring back more information once confirmed.

V. SUPERINTENDENT UPDATES

Ms. Gwynn shared updates on the following:

- Met with County Manager and she would like to sit down with the board for more discussion. A supplement was discussed for teachers at a flat rate and shared that the low wealth supplement but this was not the same as the supplement received from the county.
- Met with Dr. Senegal (PCC) and discussed Pathways to PCC and possibility of HVAC program. They are very interested in utilizing the space of the east wing at the high school. She would like to explore these possibilities and she suggested meeting with the PCC Board as this would be a good opportunity for our students.
- Summer Curriculum Planning – a team will need to meet to write pacing guides during the first week in June and will be paid from Title I funds.
- Plans are to meet with home school representative this week discussing athletics and more information will be shared in the weekly update.

VI. ATTORNEYS REPORT

None.

VII. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

- Lisa Johnson-Knight shared she has enjoyed hearing comments from the staff during the listening tours. Nicole Smith shared she was grateful to the staff at the high school during recent signing of her son to Belmont Abbey noting they were most generous and assisted

her with cleanup until everything was finished and shared how invited guests commented on how beautiful the high school campus was. Joel Lillard shared he thought the listening tours were going well and he was excited to see the student recognitions tonight and how many parents were in attendance. Nicole McGhee shared similar thoughts with the listening tours. She was excited to see students being recognized. She shared she would hope we can get some type of bonus for our certified as well as classified as they all work hard. She shared she has always shared when working here that although we are rural, we are rich in other things than money. Trudy Blackwell that during one of the tours a teacher shared they would be willing to attend a job fair to be an advocate for Caswell County Schools and she thought this was very positive suggestion. She attended the sports senior night and that was very nice and shared that all students had set goals and had future plans. Mel Battle shared that it was nice to see the students and parents in attendance tonight.

VIII. 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. Joel Lillard seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

IX. OPEN SESSION

Joel Lillard made a motion to return to open session. Lisa Johnson-Knight seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

X. PERSONNEL LISTING

Ms. Gwynn recommended approval of the personnel listing as presented with the omission of #3 and #9. Trudy Blackwell moved, seconded by Nicole Smith, to approve the personnel listing as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Resignations	
Exceptional Children	Jessica Mitchell, EC Admn. Asst. = Eff. 2/14/25
Bartlett Yancey Sr. High School	Taylor Mustain, CTE Teacher = Eff. 3/22/25
Transfer	
Bartlett Yancey Sr. High School	Casey Lassiter = Currently School Counselor to ELA Teacher = Eff. 8/19/24
Substitutes	
Child Nutrition	Souad Abbas = Eff. 3/3/25

Substitute Teacher	Melissa Manoley = Eff. 3/3/25
Bartlett Yancey Sr. High School Custodian = Part Time	Rafael Melendez Fernos = Eff. 3/3/26 = Pending agreement to work at BYSHS = Eff. 3/3/25

Unifirst Contract
Ms. Gwynn recommended approval of contract with Unifirst for Maintenance and Transportation Departments. Joel Lillard moved, seconded by Nicole Smith. The motion carried unanimously.

2024-2025 School Calendar
Ms. Gwynn recommended approval of extending the school day for elementary only beginning March 3rd through March 14th and removing the early release day on March 14th. Joel Lillard moved, seconded by Trudy Blackwell. The motion carried unanimously.

XI. ADJOURN

Vennie Beggarly moved to adjourn the meeting at 10:12 p.m., Joel Lillard seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. The motion carried unanimously.

The next regular meeting of the Board of Education will be held on March 10, 2025 at 9:00 a.m. in the Caswell County Schools Administration Building.

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Mel O. Battle
Chairman

JoAnna Gwynn
Superintendent