**CASWELL COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES**
**December 15, 2025**

The Caswell County Board of Education met in regular session on Monday, December 15, 2025, at 4:30 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 Interim Superintendent Lance Stokes, Keith and Heather Bunn, Brook Underwood, Alyson Beavers, 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 Chair Mel Battle. A moment of silence was observed, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

## I. B. REORGANIZATION OF THE BOARD

Interim Superintendent Lance Stokes called for nominations for Board Chair. Joel Lillard nominated Mel Battle as Chair. Joel Lillard moved, seconded by Nicole Smith, 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. Lisa Johnson-Knight nominated Dr. Nicole McGhee as Vice Chair. Trudy Blackwell moved, seconded by Vennie Beggarly to close the nominations for Vice Chair. The motions carried unanimously.

Upon written vote, Joel Lillard was voted in as Vice Chair with a vote of 4-3.

## I. C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Vennie Beggarly moved, seconded by Nicole Smith, to approve the minutes of the November 17, 2025, and Special Called meetings from November 25, 2025 and December 1, 2025. The motion carried unanimously.

## I. D. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Interim Superintendent Lance Stokes recommended approval of agenda as presented. Nicole Smith moved, seconded by Joel Lillard, to approve the agenda as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

## I. E. ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Interim Superintendent Lance Stokes thanked the maintenance staff for their assistance during the recent inclement weather days.

- Chair Mel Battle read a thank you note to the Board from Elaine McAdams for the flowers in the recent loss of her father.

## I. F. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Jen Sparks spoke to the board and shared she is on the sub-committee and expressed needs for a safe learning environment. She was here tonight to answer any questions from the group or individually.

Heather Bunn spoke to the board sharing that she is a mother of a student at Oakwood and was here as an advocate for his safety noting excessive incidents that have occurred in the classroom that have been directed towards her child and others. She shared her child feels anxiety and has to go the nurse's office and cries daily not wanting to go to school. She shared the teacher is wonderful but her hands are tied due to this situation and felt the students need and deserve support. The security in classroom is not the best and is here to advocate for a safe learning environment.

Alison Bernard spoke to the board with similar concerns noting that she has a child in the third grade at Oakwood and the behavior issues from one student has effected all the students as well as the adults. Her child has been scratched and bitten as well as have their hair chewed or cheeks pinched and felt as if the other students are to become immune to the violent behavior just to condone this student's behavior. All students deserve to be in a classroom that is a safe environment. The teacher cannot teach due to all the commotion and violent behavior and this is not fair to the teacher or to the students.

## II. REPORTS

Nicole Smith shared a recap from the recent Student Health Advisory Committee (SHAC) in which she is serving on. She shared there are multiple concerns with behavior issues and discussed alternative learning support for students. Other concerns included the cell phone policy with the recent requirements from the State and questions of what would happen if an active shooter occurred and the students cannot have their phones. It was also questioned if board members can participate in the active shooter training. Other concerns included the poor compliance with the metal detectors noting that some schools are not using them at all. Issues shared included the PCC students never walk through the metal detectors and basically the policy is not being followed. Nicole Smith shared she spoke with Principal Decolia Carter and she is very aware and is looking at getting a committee together and look at these issues to have a plan in place by January. Multiple conversations were had regarding the elementary school that is having safety and discipline issues. The SHAC committed requested that Nicole Smith go and observe. Nicole Smith did go and found behavior issues and an unfriendly learning environment. It was requested that a sub-committee be formed to work through these issues. Upon discussion it was shared that the Board has to approve a sub-committee. Dr. Nicole McGhee and Lisa Johnson-Knight both attended the first

meeting and shared that they met with Dr. Medina Jones with the concerns from the SHAC committee noting it was more of a staff issue and will need to work with agencies and help with needs; however, we do not have the capacity needed. Dr. Jones and Calla Wilson are part of the committee and noted that the sub-committee with SHAC does not have the authority to make decisions. Dr. Nicole McGhee shared that the sub-committee at Oakwood looked at Youth Haven and recommended they speak with Dr. Jones and Calla on what the next steps are. It was questioned who was on this new committee and who appointed the board members that are serving. It was noted that any committees that are formed must have board approval and this has not been approved.

It was requested to discuss this further in closed session.

## III. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Policy # 4318, Use of Cell Phones and Other Electronic Devices

Discussion took place on the current cell phone policy and revisions that are required by the State. Upon talking with the middle school principal on her thoughts, it was discussed that middle school not be allowed to have phones out during the school day. During a seminar at the North Carolina School Boards Association information was shared on various ways to handle this. Lengthy discussion was had regarding options to put in place regarding the cell phones.

The recommendation is for all electronic devices for K-8 to be out of sight and powered off during the instructional day. Nicole Smith moved, seconded by Lisa Johnson-Knight, to approve the recommended wording along with the changes provided by the NCSBA as presented. The motion carried 6-1 with Beggarly voting "No."

## IV. NEW BUSINESS

1. Consent Agenda

   Interim Superintendent Lance Stokes recommended approval of consent agenda as presented.

   Joel Lillard moved, seconded by Nicole Smith, to approve the consent agenda as presented.

   <u>Request for Transfer</u>

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   |---|---|---|---|
   | Law, Kamir Drewshawn | South | to | Oakwood (2nd) |

Early Graduates BYSHS

Blackwell, Javari
Brandon, Kenyatta
Carter, Shane
Clay, Geneisha
Dailey, Grant
DeJournette, Calvin
Ermatinger, John
Faucette, Jlayah
Hawley, Latracia
Johnson, Skyler
Jones, Allen
King, McKenzie
Loftis, Landon
McGhee, Deshanti
Mitchell, Brooklyn
Moser, Neil
Pennix, Brooklyn
Pharr, Meriah
Randle, D'Asia
Rimmer, Jarrett
Stokes, Jabari
Swanson, Talonda
Sykes, Levi
Thomas, Aniya
Willis, Kentrell
Wilson, Emma
Woods, Jamir

2. Use of Civic Center

Discussion took place regarding allowing the Veterans' to use the Civic Center for Veteran's Day and Memorial Day and waive the fee. They would be responsible for the custodian fee. Mel Battle moved, seconded by Joel Lillard, to approve waiving the fee for the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 7316, American Legion Post 89, for use of the Civic Center for Veteran's Day and Memorial Day and be responsible for the custodial fee only. The motion carried unanimously.

3. Read to Achieve Summer Learning Requirements

Alyson Beavers presented the Read to Achieve (RtA) Summer Learning Proposal. There has been a slight change to the structure after attending district meetings and sharing ideas as well as being in compliance it was felt this will be a better fit for the district.

Joel Lillard moved, seconded by Nicole Smith, to approve the Read to Achieve Summer Learning Proposal as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

4. RFP for Special Education Services

Nicole Smith moved, seconded by Trudy Blackwell, to approve the RFP for Special Education Services as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

5. Resolution

Vennie Beggarly moved, seconded by Nicole Smith, to approve the resolution as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

***Resolution in Memorial and Appreciation***
***Of the Life of Susan Jenkins Hammack***

**WHEREAS**, Susan Jenkins Hammack, was born on July 25, 1951, and resided in Yanceyville, North Carolina, until the time of her death on September 22, 2025, and

**WHEREAS,** Susan Hammack, was a faithful and loving daughter, wife, mother, sister, and friend and her family's welfare was her major and constant concern; and

**WHEREAS,** Susan Hammack graduated from Appalachian State University; and

**WHEREAS**, Susan Hammack worked for Caswell County Schools as a librarian for many years until her retirement; and

**WHEREAS,** Susan Hammack was a member of Trinity Missionary Baptist Church; she enjoyed traveling, reading and loved her many pets throughout her lifetime; and

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Caswell County Board of Education wishes to honor the memory of Susan Hammack 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 15th day of December 2025.

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| Mel Battle, Chairman | Joel Lillard, Vice Chair |
| Vennie Beggarly | Trudy Blackwell |
| Lisa Johnson-Knight | Nicole McGhee |
| Nicole Smith | Lance Stokes, Interim Superintendent |

6. Inclement Weather Codes

Discussion took place regarding the current inclement weather codes especially Code E, Remote Learning Days. Lengthy discussion took place on what other districts are doing and issues we have had regarding internet access for students and staff. It was shared that teachers have expressed they would like to have remote days; however, not all are in favor of this and it does not work for all staff. The board agreed previously that remote work for staff was not allowed.

Currently we have used three days. Mr. Stokes shared we have time banked so we will not need to make up those days or make any changes to the calendar. There was discussion from board members sharing that all staff do not understand this with the extended hours they are working. Joel Lillard shared this is hurting our cafeteria workers and bus drivers as they will not get paid and we need to think about this going forward as this wasn't considered when we looked at banking hours.

It was suggested that Mr. Stokes bring something to the board on what a remote day would look like for each grade level and also talk with teachers for input. It was asked to show what elementary, middle and high school levels would look like and bring back to the meeting in January.

Other concerns included salaried and hourly employees and making up time. This was also requested to bring back to the meeting in January.

7. Policy # 3620, Extracurricular Activities and Student Organizations

Policy # 3260 was updated to include middle school in the wording. Joel Lillard moved, seconded by Nicole Smith, to approve the revised changes to Policy # 3260, Extracurricular Activities and Student Organizations, as presented, and to waive the second reading. The motion carried unanimously.

## V. SUPERINTENDENT UPDATES

- Mr. Stokes shared update on PRC 029
- Posting of position for Behavior Specialists
- Title IX Training for BOE
- New traffic pattern at Oakwood when we return from the Christmas break. Deputies will be on hand to offer support and information will be shared with parents.

## VI. ATTORNEYS REPORT

None.

## VII. BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Board members shared information on events they recently attended.

## VIII. CLOSED SESSION

Mel 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

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

## X. PERSONNEL LISTING

Mr. Stokes recommended approval of the personnel listing as presented with omission of Item # 2. Joel Lillard moved, seconded by Nicole McGhee. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Stokes recommended approval of Item # 2. Nicole McGhee moved, seconded by Trudy Blackwell. Joel Lillard shared his vote has nothing to do with the individual; however, he is not in favor of the funding as he does not think this is fair to start at his current rate and hold harmless. The individual will be exempt from any other raises and has also declined insurance.

The motion carried 5-2 with Lillard and Beggarly voting "No."

General Substitute Pay Rates

Joel Lillard moved, seconded by Lisa Johnson-Knight, to approve the general substitute rate of pay as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

Non-Certified Substitutes

- Half Day (4 hours) = $60.00

- Full Day (8 hours) = $120.00

Certified Substitutes (NC Licensure)

- Half Day (4 hours) = $91.80
- Full Day (8 hours) = $183.60

Long-Term Substitutes who are Non-Certified will continue to be paid at the hourly rate of $22.95. State-Certified long-term substitutes are already compensated at their daily rate in hourly increments and will receive their full daily rate for an 8-hour day and half of their daily rate for a 4-hour day.

Long-Term Substitutes Non-Certified

- Half Day (4 hours) = $91.80
- Full Day (8 hours) = $183.60

Long-Term Substitute Certified (NC Licensure)

- Paid according to the NC State Salary Schedule, in half-day and full-day increments based on scheduled hours

Under this daily rate system, substitutes will not accrue compensatory time. Additionally, leave for positions requiring substitutes may only be taken in half-day or full-day increments.

Contract Extension

Trudy Blackwell moved, seconded by Nicole McGhee, to approve the contract extension for Interim Superintendent Lance Stokes as presented. The motion carried unanimously.

| **Resignations** | |
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| NL Dillard Middle School | Dawn Phillips, 6th Grade ELA Teacher = Eff. 12/30/25 |
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| **Employment** | |
| Central Office = Child Nutrition | Timothy Russell, School Nutrition Warehouse Manager (12 months/40 hours per week) = Scale 62 / Step 17 (held harmless) = no increase unless by State = Eff. 2/2/26 |
| | |
| Bartlett Yancey Sr. High School | Sydney Anderson, Social Studies Teacher = Eff. 1/9/26 |
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| **Substitutes** | |
| | Marvin Wimbush = Sub. Teacher |
| | Mihoshoty Yamaguchi = Cert. Sub. Teacher |
| | Megan Bridges = Bus Driver |

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| | Lavita Lee = Child Nutrition Sub. |
| | Tammy Neighbors = Child Nutrition Sub. |
| | Stephanie Williams = Child Nutrition Sub. |

## XI. ADJOURN

Joel Lillard moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:55 p.m., Vennie Beggarly seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. The motion carried unanimously.

The next regular meeting of the Board of Education will be held on January 12, 2026at 9:00 a.m. in the Caswell County Schools Administration Building.

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Mel O. Battle
Chairman

Lance Stokes
Interim Superintendent