

CASWELL COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES

March 15, 2021

Budget Work Session Minutes

The Caswell County Board of Education met in a budget work session on Monday, March 15, 2021, beginning at 2:00 p.m. in the Caswell County Schools Administration Building of Caswell County Schools. Members present: Chairman Wayne Owen, Vice Chair Gladys Garland, Donna Hudson, Tracy Stanley (virtually), Mel Battle, Vennie Beggarly, and Trudy Blackwell. Others present include Superintendent Dr. Sandra Carter, Finance Director Amy Chandler and Maintenance Director Jerry Hatchett. Connie Kimrey recorded the minutes. The meeting was livestreamed via Zoom.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Wayne Owen at 2:00 p.m.

A draft budget request to present to Board of Caswell County Commissioners was reviewed by Finance Director Amy Chandler.

Items reviewed include:

Local Current Expense Fund Budget Request

An increase of \$100,000 was included in order to keep Caswell County Schools to continue to provide the same level of service as in this past fiscal year. Benefit increases for locally funded employees include retirement and health increases mandated by the State. The additional loss for the Caswell County Civic Center included \$20,000. Total continuation budget request is in the amount of \$100,000.

Operating Expense Increase

Since 2016-17, the retirement rate has increased 5.4% and is expected an increase of 1.32% again in 2021-2022 which will go from 21.68% to 23%. The hospitalization rate has increased approximately 12% and is again expected to increase in 2021-22 to \$174/employee. This will result in totals of \$6,326 to \$6,500/employee.

Caswell County Civic Center

The budget request normally includes a \$30,000 loss in the budget revenue. The past year we did not budget any revenue because of uncertainty around Covid and the construction around the Bartlett Yancey Senior High School administrative offices. The normal operating expenses are approximately \$50,000 without custodial salaries and benefits for rentals.

(Utilities = \$48,000 / Electric = \$38,500 / Water/Sewer = \$7,500 / Garbage Svc. = \$2,000
Cleaning Services = \$2,000)

Social/Emotional/At-Risk Support

Continuation Budget Request of \$13,000 to fully cover the salary and benefits of the social worker. The \$50,000 is gratefully appreciated; however, the average salary with benefits is \$68,000.

Elementary School Resource Officer

Continuation Budget Request of \$49,000. Caswell County Schools received a grant from the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) in 2020 for one year to fund an additional School Resource Officer (SRO). The grant is set to expire in June 30, 2021. We are continuing to seek additional grant funds; however, at this time, none have been secured. The current elementary

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SRO serves all four elementary schools. They are instrumental in keeping schools safe, building relationships, as well as providing resources for school safety.

Charter Schools / Per Pupil Appropriation

Charter School enrollment and per pupil appropriation was reviewed. It was stressed that an increase of approximately 3% over the current per pupil appropriation of \$1,150 to \$1,185 based on projected average daily membership of 2,324. The per pupil appropriation ranking in 2019-20 school year for Caswell was 104 out of 115. Request of \$2,755,000 will be submitted.

Local Operating Expenditures Request

Items were reviewed and the board felt it would be helpful to include items that fall under the budget codes to provide a better feel of what the funding is used for. (Example: 6100 = Spelling Bee, Battle of the Books, etc.)

Action: Mrs. Chandler will include descriptions to accompany each code for the Local Operating Expenditures Request.

Fund Balance

Reasoning of why we have a fund balance was reviewed and noted that the LGC recommends a minimum of 8% fund balance enough for one month's average expenditures. Mrs. Chandler also shared that the State re-appropriated approximately \$40,000 from State Technology Funds.

Current Unrestricted Fund Balance as of June 30, 2020	\$2,468,556
Less: Appropriations to date	(172,000)
Total Est. Unrestricted Fund Balance as of March 3, 2021	\$2,296,556

Capital Outlay Request

Listing was provided of Capital Outlay Requests. Upon discussion, the Board requested Maintenance Director to put the items in priority order. Items reviewed (but in no particular order at time of meeting) include:

New Activity Bus	\$90,000
HVAC Upgrades (including East Wing & Stoney Creek)	100,000
Electrical Upgrades (ongoing lighting to LED / codes compliant)	40,000
School Repairs/Weatherization-district wide	120,000
School grounds-landscaping, paving, etc. (district wide)	120,000
Old gym repairs (plumbing for functional bathrooms & other repairs as needed)	300,000
Total:	\$770,000

Action: Maintenance Director will prioritize the items prior to board approval.

Total Local Request Summary

Local Operating Budget Requested	\$2,755,000
Capital Outlay Requested	770,000
Total Local Requested	\$3,525,000

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Additional Priorities not included in the Local Budget Request

Teacher Supplements

Discussion took place for the need of teacher supplements. It is very difficult to attract teachers when surrounding districts offer a supplement. It is not sustainable for Caswell County Schools to offer this on a yearly basis. A chart reviewing surrounding districts was shared and reviewed.

Social/Emotional/At-Risk Support

Discussion took place on the need for an additional Social Worker at the cost of \$68,000.

Dropout Prevention Specialist

Discussion took place on the need for a Drop-Out Prevention Specialist. The hope was for this person to work with the Social Worker and assist with the dropout rate which is down, but still above the State rate of 1.53. Cost for this position is \$68,000.

Upon review of the three additional priorities, the Board was in agreement to continue to include the request for teacher supplements which would be given in the same format as the last time the funding was received from the commissioners. The board was also in agreement to include the additional Social Worker but not to include the Dropout Prevention Specialist. It was shared that it would be helpful to include the formula of how teacher supplements were given in 2018-19 with the commissioners when submitting the budget request.

No other information was shared at this time. Dr. Carter shared they will update the budget request and bring back to the Board of Education at the meeting in April for approval.

Discussion took place regarding the information to be submitted to the County Commissioners. The past years included a great deal of verbiage and the information shared today was similar to a PowerPoint presentation. The board felt that both documents provided needed information and were in agreement to submit information from both documents unless an in-person presentation would take place in which the charts, etc. could be shared visually.

Discussion took place regarding if the Board of County Commissioners had set a schedule for quarterly meetings. Dr. Carter shared she has not heard back but the request to meet has been shared with them.

ADJOURN

Gladys Garland moved, seconded by Vennie Beggarly to adjourn the meeting at 3:210 p.m. The motion carried unanimously.

Wayne Owen
Chairman

Dr. Sandra Carter
Superintendent