

## **OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE CALDWELL COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION**

The Caldwell County Board of Education met at 7:00 PM on September 14, 2009, in the Board Room of the Education Center, Lenoir, North Carolina.

The following members were present:

Vice-Chairman Dr. Helen Hall  
Chris Becker  
Linda Coffey  
Dottie Darsie  
Tim Hawkins  
Mike LaBrose

Chairman Dr. Sharon S. Pennell was absent.

The following administrative staff members were present:

Dr. Steve Stone, Superintendent  
Dr. Jeff Church, Assistant Superintendent for Auxiliary Services  
Trish Johnson, Associate Superintendent for Human Resource Services  
Dr. Caryl Burns, Associate Superintendent for Educational Program Services  
Karla Miller, Finance Officer  
Libby Brown, School-Community Relations Director  
Ed Blair, Attorney, Groome, Tuttle, Pike and Blair

Vice-Chairman Dr. Helen Hall called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Myra Bentley, Carole Bouchard and Jamie Laws, parents of students in the Caldwell County Schools, voiced their concerns to the board regarding the Graduation Project and the school system's decision to require the project in order for a student to graduate. Mrs. Bentley is concerned that the project will increase the drop out rate due to the requirements for students who do not earn a passing grade on the project. She stated that 13 years of education will be wasted and that mentors are not required to have background checks, which could be dangerous to students. She also feels it is cost prohibitive and infringes on her right as a parent to be forced to sign and support the project. Mrs. Bouchard agreed with Mrs. Bentley's observations adding that she has three children in high school that have worked extremely hard to earn a 4.5 GPA and they deserve to enjoy their senior year without the added stress and time the Graduation Project requires. Mrs. Laws stated she agrees with the comments made and fears the project will hinder her daughter and keep her from graduating. She does not want to be forced to sign a release that states she is responsible for any costs involved and fears with the difficult economy it will place an undue financial hardship on families throughout the county. The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction has placed the project on hold for further investigation and will not require the project for graduation until 2011. Currently, 80 of 115 school districts in North Carolina continue to require the project.

## **OPENING CEREMONIES**

Kelly Smith, Alternative Schools Transition Specialist, Caldwell County Schools, gave the invocation and students from the Grogan's Small World led the Pledge of Allegiance.

## **ACTION - AGENDA**

Upon motion of Tim Hawkins and second by Mike LaBrose, the board unanimously approved the proposed agenda with the following addition: An addendum was added to Item IX, Section A, Number 1, Usual and Customary Personnel Matters, as presented by Superintendent Dr. Steve Stone.

## **ACTION - MINUTES**

Upon motion of Dottie Darsie and second by Chris Becker, the board unanimously approved the minutes of the August 10 2009, Regular Board Meeting.

## **HONORS AND RECOGNITIONS**

Dottie Darsie presented a certificate to Granite Falls Middle School and William Lenoir Middle School, in recognition for being awarded the Project Lead The Way Gateway to Technology School of Excellence. Dr. Pete Yount is the Principal at William Lenoir Middle School and Brian Suddreth is the Principal at Granite Falls Middle School. Mr. Suddreth accepted the award on behalf of both schools.

Vice-Chairman Dr. Helen Hall presented a certificate and lapel pin to Brandy Cutrell, Granite Falls Middle School, in recognition for being named the North Carolina Special Olympics Local Coordinator of the Year. Mr. Brian Suddreth, Principal, Granite Falls Middle School, accepted the certificate on behalf of Mrs. Cutrell.

## **UPDATE – GRADUATION PROJECT**

Katrina Watson, Director of High School Curriculum, updated the board on the Graduation Project. The Graduation Project is required for seniors to graduate, as is the case in 80 of 115 school districts in North Carolina. Students in Caldwell County will begin the project their junior year writing their research paper, which is one of the four components. The product, portfolio and oral presentation are completed their senior year; the entire project is on a pass/fail basis, which does not affect a student's GPA. Ms. Watson noted that the Graduation Project did not prevent any senior from graduating last year.

## **UPDATE – CAROLINA COLLEGE ADVISING CORPORATION**

Advisors Rachel Brody and Blythe Gough provided year-end information on the Carolina College Advisory Program in North Carolina, which is part of the National College Advisory Corps utilized in 13 states. Last year, the advisors held 817 group sessions and 124 individual meetings in high schools across the county to increase interest in attending a four-year university after high school. The advisors assisted students with SAT registration, college applications and financial aid. They also coordinated the College Application Day and held outreach informational sessions with eighth graders. The program is funded, in part, by the Golden Leaf Foundation.

**ACTION – PROPOSED REVISION TO BOARD POLICY 3120 – TRANSFER OF STUDENTS – ONE MONTH COMMENT PERIOD**

Upon motion of Tim Hawkins and second by Dottie Darsie, the board unanimously approved to place the attached proposed revisions to Board Policy 3120, Transfer of Students, on a one month comment period as presented by Superintendent Dr. Steve Stone.

**ACTION – PROPOSED NEW BOARD POLICY 4302 – INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT - FOLLOWING A ONE MONTH COMMENT PERIOD**

Upon motion of Chris Becker and second by Mike LaBrose, the board unanimously approved the attached new Board Policy 4302, Integrated Pest Management, following a one month comment period as presented by Superintendent Dr. Steve Stone.

**ACTION - PERSONNEL MATTERS**

Upon motion of Dottie Darsie and second by Linda Coffey, the board unanimously approved the attached personnel matters as presented by Associate Superintendent for Human Resource Services Trish Johnson.

**ACTION – STUDENT TRANSFER REQUESTS FOR 2009-2010**

Upon motion of Dottie Darsie and second by Chris Becker, the board unanimously approved the attached student transfer requests for 2009-2010, as presented by Associate Superintendent for Human Resource Services Trish Johnson.

**ACTION – SURPLUS SALE**

Upon motion of Mike LaBrose and second by Linda Coffey, the board unanimously approved the attached list of items to be sold at Surplus Sale, October 14, 2009, 9:00 AM at the Caldwell County School's Maintenance Department as presented by Assistant Superintendent for Auxiliary Services Dr. Jeff Church.

**BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Vice-Chairman Dr. Helen Hall gave a report to the board regarding the recent Board of Education/County Commissioner Liaison Committee meeting. Discussed at the meeting were the new construction projects taking place. Sawmills Elementary School is adding four classrooms and expanding the cafeteria and Hudson Elementary School is adding 6 classrooms. The Caldwell County Board of County Commissioners will hold a public hearing on October 5. Discussions continue regarding the new William Lenoir Middle School and the next William Lenoir Middle School Taskforce Committee will meet on September 15.

Vice-Chairman Dr. Helen Hall gave an explanation and shared results from the recent evaluation of Superintendent Dr. Steve Stone. Vice-Chairman Dr. Helen Hall said that Dr. Stone received an excellent performance in every area: Community Relations; Working with the Public and Private Sectors; Business and Finance; Honesty and Integrity; and Professionalism. Some of the comments Dr. Hall shared as submitted by board members included: "He is highly intelligent and innovative and has become a respected member of the community in such a short time...a true professional and highly visible in all schools."

## **BOARD INFORMATION/POSSIBLE ACTION**

Board Member Dottie Darsie reminded board members of the upcoming Early Release/Staff Development Day for the Caldwell County Schools. She advised that a workshop on Single Gender Classes was being offered and would be a good opportunity for board members to earn some of the 12 hours of renewal credits required by the North Carolina School Boards Association.

Superintendent Dr. Steve Stone reminded the board to review the attached proposal of the Assistant Principal Development Plan he drafted and advise him if there were questions or concerns.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Vice-Chairman Dr. Helen Hall announced the next regular board meeting on Monday, October 12, 2009, 7:00 PM in the Board Room of the Education Center.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to come before the board, and upon motion of Tim Hawkins, second by Chris Becker, and the unanimous approval of the board, the meeting was adjourned at 8:07 PM.

Signed:

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Chairman, Caldwell County Board of Education

Attest:

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Secretary, Caldwell County Board of Education