

Cassopolis Public Schools
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Board of Education
Minutes
Regular Meeting
September 8, 2014

Welcome: This regular meeting of the Cassopolis Board of Education was held on Monday, September 8, 2014 in the Board meeting room at Squires Educational Center and called to order at 7:02 p.m., as President Ward welcomed those attending.

Roll Call: Members Present: Lisa Cutting, George Calvert, Sue Horstmann, John Bright, Jason Pompey, Scott Ward

Members Absent: Jeremy Carlisle

Also present: Tracy Hertsel, Dave VanLue, Dee Voss, Robyn Bright, Cindy Martynowicz, members of the staff and community

Jason Pompey led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Agenda - Moved by Jason Pompey, **supported by** Sue Horstmann to amend the agenda by adding two new action items, teacher hiring classifications and revision to policy for athletic uniforms.

Motion carried 6-0, as follows: Pompey, yes; Horstmann, yes; Calvert, yes; Cutting, yes; Bright, yes; Ward, yes.

Moved by George Calvert, **supported by** Jason Pompey to approve the agenda as amended. **Motion carried** 6-0, as follows: Pompey, yes; Horstmann, yes; Calvert, yes; Cutting, yes; Bright, yes; Ward, yes.

Approval of Minutes: **Moved by** George Calvert, **supported by** John Bright to approve the minutes from the regular meeting of August 25, 2014, as written. **Motion carried** 6-0, as follows: Cutting, yes; Pompey, yes; Horstmann, yes; Calvert, yes; Bright, yes; Ward, yes.

Communications or correspondence – None.

Reports, Information Items from School Staff –

Mr. Hertsel introduced Abby Dorr, a representative from the Conservation District. Ms. Dorr presented an award to Carrie George sponsored by the Alumni Association. Ms. Dorr listed the many accomplishments of the FFA program during Mrs. George's tenure. Mrs. George thanked everyone that works with her in the program and said that the award is for everyone.

Food Services / Bright: Mrs. Bright said that her department has been receiving more free and reduced applications than in prior years. All applications are being processed in a timely manner. To date there are 168 direct cert students. Mrs. Bright said that the coalition with the ISD is running smoothly. She is pleased with the way the program has started off the new school year.

Ross Beatty JSHS / VanLue: Mr. VanLue said that the Bully Free school rubrics is going very well. Discipline is excellent and he is hearing many positive comments from parents. Mr. VanLue said that he is impressed with the staff members who are doing a phenomenal job, being fair and consistent. He invited the Board to come into the building to see the hallway behavior, classroom teaching and said he is thoroughly impressed with the staff and students.

Public Comment – Tina Reick, 24627 North Street, Cassopolis, said she wanted to speak about having only two teachers in some grade levels. She was concerned about the kids that need to be challenged or kids that need encouragement, plus ones in the middle. No one can address them all with that many students per classroom. She said the 6th grade parents are talking, the 5th grade parents are looking ahead to next year. Mrs. Reick said that decisions like this that the Board made are what force parents to make hard decisions.

New Business – Discussion Item

Robotics Club – Math Credit / Varsity Letter Proposal – Mr. Hertsel introduced Mr. Chapman, Robotics team coach and Mikki Spagnoli, CTE Director for Lewis Cass ISD. They met with the Curriculum Committee prior to tonight’s Board meeting. He said that they are trying to reward our kids for a program they know is viable.

Mr. Chapman said that within one year of being on the Robotics team a student covers 90% of the high school math standards. They are getting hands-on, critical thinking skills, they are doing hard work and he believes the students should be rewarded the same as they do with regular high school classes and receive credit for their work in Robotics.

Ms. Spagnoli said this would be considered their fourth math credit.

Mr. Chapman said they would be able to confirm how the kids would earn the 4th math credit and it would be validated before the credit was awarded. Mr. Chapman said the students would be required to attend a certain number of meeting hours. They would have modules to work with to demonstrate that they are able to do them properly. Beyond that, they would have to be able to put together a presentation about the robot. He wants the kids to go above and beyond. Cassopolis would be the first district in the county or the region to offer a credit for Robotics. Mr. Chapman said he wants the bar set higher than other schools, because he knows our students can do it.

Mr. Chapman said the crosswalk for physics could also be aligned. Business classes could be included in this as well. There are more opportunities but they first want to get this in place for Robotics.

Dr. Calvert said that the Curriculum Committee is in favor of this request. They were impressed with the presentation and are in favor of granting the credit. As Chair of the Curriculum Committee, he recommends this be approved by the Board.

Mr. Chapman said that regarding students earning an academic letter, they put a lot of time and effort into this club. He believes it is only fair and just for them to earn a letter for their efforts. This would require the same time commitment as for the math credit, 150 hours, but in addition they would have to attend all competitions, as well as attend the Robo Rangers outreach community events. He would like to reward the students for their time and commitment.

Dr. Calvert said that this is not unprecedented as the band also gives a letter and academic credit for participation so the standard has been set.

Mr. Ward said that at the Curriculum Committee the Lego League was also discussed. One recommendation was for the Robotics students to mentor students at the elementary level. This would help the younger students plus also allow the high school students to earn required community service hours.

Mrs. Horstmann said that it is important for the school district to recognize the kids academically as well as athletically. She thinks other programs should look toward that type of recognition for our students.

Ms. Cutting said that this also shows students the business side of the team, they learn leadership skills, work to raise funds, and get a real world experience.

Mr. Hertsel said that this will be an action item at the next Board meeting.

New Business – Action Item

Hirings – **Moved by** Sue Horstmann, **supported by** George Calvert to award the position of Middle School Football Coach to Nick Hartman, as recommended by the Athletic Director. **Motion carried** 6-0, as follows: Bright, yes; Cutting, yes; Calvert, yes; Horstmann, yes; Pompey, yes; Ward, yes.

Teacher Hiring Classifications – **Moved by** Jason Pompey, **supported by** John Bright to award the following new teaching positions effective with the 2014-15 school year: Sam Adams Elementary School – Cheryl Graham, Title I (2 hours per day) and, Catherine Prestly, 31a (Math – full time); Ross Beatty Jr./Sr. High School – Paul Chapman, 31a Algebra I – one class first semester and one class second semester, Teresa Wellman, 31a Biology –one class first semester and two classes second semester, and Kerrie Bass, 31a English – one class first semester and one class second semester.

Mr. Hertsel said that in order to assure proper funding from Title I and 31a this action has to be done by the Board.

Motion carried 6-0, as follows: Pompey, yes; Horstmann, yes; Calvert, yes; Cutting, yes; Bright, yes; Ward, yes.

Revision to policy for athletic uniforms - **Moved by** Sue Horstmann, **supported by** Jason Pompey that it is hereby resolved the administration will develop a policy for athletic uniform purchases that will adhere to the following procedures: The head coach will bring recommendations to administration for uniform purchase; administration will in turn take an approved recommendation to the athletic committee of the Board for their acceptance. Grandfathered in under this motion will be approval for cheerleaders to wear the black uniforms as presented to the Board on August 25, 2014.

Mr. Hertsel gave background on this matter, noting that it was discussed in committee prior to tonight's meeting. Due to the cost of uniforms, keeping uniforms with a lot of white in them clean, as examples, led to this action. This gives some latitude but also gives coaches direction to go to the administration first and procedures to follow.

Mr. Ward said they also discussed the uniform styles changing drastically over the years, and that using black in them might increase longevity of use. Also discussed was that we have 15 varsity teams, let alone the JV and other teams and they did not want all of those uniform decisions to be brought to the Board. The Athletic Boosters were informed of the committee meeting and will be given a chance for input on uniform selection especially if contributing funds towards their purchase. We don't want to give everyone free reign but also want flexibility to keep the uniforms modern and clean.

Mr. Bright said this gives them more direction than leeway, it provides a good process to follow so the committee can make those final decisions.

Motion carried 6-0, as follows: Cutting, yes; Pompey, yes; Horstmann, yes; Bright, yes; Calvert, yes; Ward, yes.

Superintendent's Report – Mr. Hertsel reported as follows:

- Congratulated Mrs. George on her award and thanked her for her hard work.
- Regarding enrollment, we are taking attendance daily and looking at grade levels. We are watching both 6th and 2nd grades very closely. He is looking at contract language regarding class sizes. Overall our numbers are slightly down but they change daily. Alternative Education plays a big role in our numbers and their enrollment builds until count day.
- Has heard many positive comments about the speaker at the staff's first day back regarding Internet Safety. He would next like to bring the person back to speak to the upper elementary and also junior high and high school students as well as schedule a parent night.
- The sign at the elementary is functional and will be fine-tuned. The high school bleachers are about 98% complete, fencing is to be installed and the sound system is being put in place.
- Stated that Linda Vite is back at Mayo Clinic and will have additional surgery tomorrow.

Board member comments:

Mr. Bright said that they have moved the date of the tailgate from September 19th to homecoming which will be on October 10th. He still hopes Board members can help with the event. He was in the auditorium on Friday and would suggest when it's complete that we hold a Board meeting there to show what the new system will do. Regarding enrollment he requested the Board receive last October's numbers at the elementary, secondary, and Alternative Education levels so they can compare last October to the upcoming fall count.

Mr. Hertsel said that he would include that information in Friday's update.

Mr. Ward said that he attended a rocket football game on Saturday night and the feedback was very positive. People are very pleased with the new press box, bleachers, and all of the improvements.

There being no further business to come before the Board of Education it was **moved by** George Calvert, **supported by** Jason Pompey to adjourn the meeting at 7:57 p.m. All in favor.

Susan Horstmann, Secretary