

Cassopolis Public Schools
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Board of Education
Minutes
Regular Meeting
April 13, 2015

Welcome: This regular meeting of the Cassopolis Board of Education was held on Monday, April 13, 2015 in the Board meeting room at Squires Educational Center and called to order at 7:00 p.m., as President Ward welcomed those attending.

Roll Call: Members Present: John Bright, Deb Deubner, Lisa Cutting, George Calvert, Sue Horstmann, Jesse Binns, Scott Ward

Members Absent: None

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

Jesse Binns led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Agenda - Moved by George Calvert, **supported by** John Bright to approve the agenda as presented. **Motion carried** 7-0, as follows: Binns, yes; Horstmann, yes; Calvert, yes; Cutting, yes; Deubner, yes; Bright, yes; Ward, yes.

Approval of Minutes: **Moved by** Sue Horstmann, **supported by** George Calvert to approve the minutes from the regular meeting of March 23, 2015, as written. **Motion carried** 7-0, as follows: Cutting, yes; Binns, yes; Deubner, yes; Horstmann, yes; Bright, yes; Calvert, yes; Ward, yes.

Communications or correspondence – None.

Reports, Information Items from School Staff – Mr. Hertsel welcomed students, their parents and staff to the meeting. Mr. Hertsel said some competitions that students are being recognized for are individual events while others perform as a team. He realizes it takes a lot of effort and parent help as well as coaches who take a lot of time practicing for events.

Mrs. Voss said that her students began taking the M-STEP today. She thanked Mr. Diol, Mrs. Burks and Mrs. Stermer, as well as her staff. They made it through the first day with minimal issues. Mrs. Voss thanked the PTO for purchasing academic t-shirts for the teams. She then introduced staff members present - Lindsey Gorham, Aryn Carlisle, Nan Schuur and Sara Mason who coached our Math-A-Rama, Spelling Bee and Science Olympiad competitions. Each coach then introduced members of their teams that were present.

Dave VanLue thanked Ron Diol for his hard work preparing for the M-STEP which starts in his building tomorrow. He also said that Mrs. Doll, Mrs. Brawley and Mrs. Hargrove were very helpful in preparing for the test.

Mr. VanLue said that WNDU is coming to Cassopolis this Friday at 5:30 a.m., as we will participate in their weekly "School Rules" segment. They are planning a lock-in for Thursday night for 9-12th grade students. Junior High students can participate but need to be dropped off by a parent Friday morning. He is very excited about the positive press this will bring to Cassopolis.

Mrs. Hargrove introduced the 7th and 8th grade spelling bee teams. She also introduced team members of the Junior High Science Olympiad that were present.

Mrs. George introduced FFA team members that were present. She said we had 30 members that went to state convention. Mrs. Ward and Mrs. Rogers introduced their teams.

Mrs. Ward said this was her first year coaching FFA and she had a great group of kids. They came in 2nd at districts, went onto regionals and won the competition and were 2nd runner up at state. She was very proud of the kids on her team.

Mrs. Rogers said she is a Kindergarten teacher but helps with the FFA program as the Assistant Advisor. She said that the parliamentary procedures team is going to nationals this fall.

Mrs. George spoke of the FFA teams and their competitions this year, and the special awards that they won. Mrs. George also said that the Cass FFA Alumni is looking to rebuild and are reaching out to all parents, anyone with interest in supporting the chapter. She said that you do not need to be a member of FFA in the past, they are looking for adults to support the chapter. They hope to see new members at their next meeting, this Wednesday at 6:30 p.m. in Room 153 at the high school. Also, Mrs. George said we have two students participating in a tractor restoration project. They will present tomorrow night at the Cass County Fair Board meeting to request the Fair Board allow them to auction their restored tractor at the large animal auction at this years' fair.

Mr. Ward congratulated everyone for a fine job and thanked parents for supporting the kids.

Public Comment – None.

New Business – Discussion Items

Early Retirement Incentive for certified staff – Mr. Hertsel said the document before the Board for consideration is a voluntary incentive plan. He apologized for the short notice but time is of the essence. We are looking at cost savings for the district and said that even from the first year it would provide a savings. This will need to be acted on tonight in order to be done timely by the end of the school year. He then explained the proposed incentive which, after meeting eligibility requirements, is \$10,000 and \$50 for each accumulated sick day up to the maximum of \$5,700 as identified in the Master Agreement.

Mr. Bright asked if the \$5,700 is over and above the \$50 per day and Mr. Hertsel said no, \$5,700 is the cap, the most that would be paid. Mr. Bright asked if there was a minimum number of participants for this to happen. Mr. Hertsel said no because even one person would be a help.

Mrs. Horstmann asked how many are eligible. Mr. Hertsel said about 20, those that are at the top of the scale. This would be totally voluntary participation.

Mr. Bright asked if there would be a deadline for response. Mr. Hertsel said yes, the response window has to be 60 days which is why we are starting this process now.

Dr. Calvert asked if it would be difficult to replace some of the teachers due to certifications. Mr. Hertsel said he thinks it could be a challenge but that we would work through it as we have in the past.

NEOLA first readings, Volume 29, No. 1 – Mr. Hertsel said that he would like input from Board members with any questions on this version prior to the next Board meeting when the revisions will be presented for a vote.

New Business – Action Item

Accept Retirement – **Moved by** Sue Horstmann, **supported by** George Calvert to accept, with regret, the retirement of Rosa Haines, Transportation/Operations Supervisor, effective June 30, 2015. **Motion carried** 7-0, as follows: Calvert, yes; Horstmann, yes; Bright, yes; Binns, yes; Cutting, yes; Deubner, yes; Ward, yes.

Old Business – Action Item

Early Voluntary Incentive Plan – **Moved by** Lisa Cutting, **supported by** John Bright that it is hereby resolved the Board of Education authorizes a Voluntary Separation Agreement (resignation incentive plan) to be offered to the members of the teachers bargaining unit represented by the Berrien-Cass Education Association and the Cassopolis Education Association/Michigan Education Association, consistent with the terms provided by the school district's Superintendent in a memo to the Board of Education dated April 13, 2015, with the President of the Board of Education and the Superintendent authorized to execute a Plan Agreement on behalf of the Board with the Association. **Motion carried** 7-0, as follows: Horstmann, yes; Cutting, yes; Bright, yes; Calvert, yes; Deubner, yes; Binns, yes; Ward, yes.

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

- Thanked Mrs. Bright for the refreshments.
- Thanked Sandy Larkin and Dave VanLue who attended a funeral for a student that passed away over the weekend. The student had an association with us through Alternative Education and his family was presented with an honorary diploma at today's service.
- This Saturday, Project Graduation is holding an event to test drive new vehicles. This is being held at Midwest Energy, and each test drive helps raise funds for Project Graduation. This is for adults 21 and over and will be from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- Also on Saturday is the reverse raffle for the Cassopolis Public Schools Foundation at the VFW. The money raised is used for scholarships also for teachers for supplies/books for the classroom.
- Early Friday the junior senior high school will participate in WNDU's School Rules segment beginning at 5:30 a.m.
- Is glad things went well for Sam Adams Elementary's first day of testing on the M-STEP and hopes for the same at Ross Beatty JSHS tomorrow. Mr. Diol made sure we were well prepared.

There being no further business to come before the Board of Education it was **moved by** George Calvert, **supported by** John Bright to adjourn the meeting at 7:45 p.m. All in favor.

Susan Horstmann, Secretary