

**CASWELL COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**  
**MEMBERS PRESENT**

**May 15, 2023**  
**OTHERS PRESENT**

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John Dickerson, Chairman  
Tim Yarbrough, Vice Chair  
Ethel Gwynn  
Finch Holt  
Jeremiah Jefferies  
Rick McVey  
Frank Rose  
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Bryan Miller, County Manager  
Melissa Williamson, Deputy County Manager  
Jennifer Hammock, Finance Director  
Brian Ferrell, County Attorney (Remote)

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The Board of Commissioners for the County of Caswell, North Carolina, met in regular session on Monday, May 15, 2023 at 6:30 pm at the Gunn Memorial Library.

**WELCOME:**

Chairman Dickerson called the meeting to order, and welcomed everyone to tonight's meeting of the Caswell County Board of Commissioners in conjunction with the Caswell County School Board. Then all paused for a moment of Silent Prayer, and the Board of Commissioners and all the guest in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

**GENERAL UPDATES:**

**BOARD OF EDUCATION:**

Mel Battle called the Board of Education meeting to order. Dr. Carter then said first of all thank you for letting us be here to present to you our budget request for the 23-24 school year. I have with me from the Central Office: Brook Underwood, our new Chief Finance Officer (CFO), and this is her first full week. Jeremy Teeter, I'm sure you remember him. He was a former CFO, but we now contracted him and his company, SOS. Dr. Murray, Assistant superintendent, is here as well. So in front of you, we have a copy of the budget request that the Board of Education approved at their last meeting. We will go through it just a little bit, and I'm hoping that we're seeing that it was very bare bones requests because we know it's a very difficult time for everyone right now. So we tried to make sure that any budget requests we made was based upon just the necessities. You can see when we go through it that just the necessities were based upon State mandated increases, legislation, retirement increases, and hospitalization increases as well. So really those were the only increases that we've taken into consideration in this budget request. If you would go on over, you can see the organizational chart. Just to give you a little bit of background, we do have the number of students we have. We can see their prior year and current year, and we hope it continually goes up. I think we're moving at the right trajectory. I think as we, the new Board, especially with some of our new construction projects that we've seen a certainly big increase. Alright turn to the next page. I know that several of you have mentioned in the past the amount we received from people bonding. So we have provided this information to you, and you can see from prior years what we receive per pupil. If you look at it, it sounds

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like that's a lot of money per pupil. To put it in perspective, if you're a lower wealth district, you receive the most because of federal funding, small schools funding, and low wealth funding that comes to us. But we're not at the top of the funding recipient list. We're actually number nine on the list with the State. North Hampton is actually number one, and they received \$18,562 per student. This was back last year. Then Terrell County, and we come in at number nine receiving \$11,514 per pupil. So I just wanted to let you know. Then you can see from the local standpoint, it's been fairly consistent throughout the years as we move forward, but the increase in the 21-22 school year you can see is basically \$3,000 more. The only reason it's \$3,000 more is because of our ESSER funding, which will come to a clip in 2024 and stop. So that will reduce back down. Just a little bit of background of where the money comes from that supports Caswell County Schools. You can see the majority of the money does come from State, and the State does pay along with the other stuff. 80% of those expenses that it funds are for salaries in the district. It pays for our teachers and staff. As you can see we have the capital outlay funds that you provide, and you can see the local money that you provide as well in there. You can see the bulk of money that we do operate from is from the State. Then the next page you can see the 21-22 expenditures, and again as I said earlier, the majority of the money that we've received does pay for salaries and benefits and capital outlay. Then you can see the materials and services. We do have a chunk of money that goes to charter schools. If you'll turn the page. To provide a little bit more detail, we wanted to share of the money, over \$3 million that you provide, how that money is spent. You can see that the bulk of it is for maintenance, salaries, utilities, and their operation services. You have our financial and personnel services, and I won't read it to you. You can certainly see the charter schools, the listed charter schools, and how many students they have that receive money from the county listed as well. You can read the examples, but it's not totally implicit there. It is just an example. There could be other items that are paid out of that budget, but just gives you an idea of the money that is spent from that that amount that's listed. Then it continues on the next page and you can see that totals up to two million dollars, which is local. At the bottom you can see the charter schools that we send money to. We've been asked about vendors, and how much money we spend with our vendors. So if you'll turn the page you can see the top 10 vendors that we spend money with. They are listed there as well. Of course electricity is huge in our schools. You can see on that list is one of the largest charter school where we send students, and they do get a chunk of money. The next page, I think is one of the most important. It does talk about the funding that we are probably most uncertain about or the increase that we're looking for. Go down midway to Legislative Pay Increases. If you've been following legislation, you'll know that the House recently gave their proposal for salary increases from the State, and they were paid on a two-year plan of increasing in the House. I think it was 10.2 with 5.5 the first year and then 5.5 the second year was for certified, and then classified would be 4.2 over the two-year span. The Senate just today came out of their version and the Senate over two years was certified 4.5 and then classified 5%. So somewhere in that range, I'm sure that they will come to some sort of agreement of where it's at, but we still have to take into consideration that there will be an increase. Then we're asking you for an increase. So based upon that, we did

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put an increase in the request because it does include insurance, hospitalization, and retirement that we would have to pay for as well. So you can see at the bottom where we get an estimate of projections of what that might be and what that cost might be for retirement and hospitalization as well. Of course utilities continue to rise, and so we included that as well. On the next page, the total of those funds are listed. These are not exact numbers but they are estimates. The Senate and House have not passed anything or agreed upon anything. So we gave a fairly good estimate there that we predict that the salary increases will increase our budget by about \$157,000, and then of course along with that would be our retirement rate and our health insurance increases that go with that. Then the utilities increases are listed there too. Now one good thing that you don't see very often in the budget request is a negative. We just received word that our Low Wealth funding will increase next year, and we found out that it will increase by \$125,000. So we did deduct that. To be very transparent, we deducted that from the amount that we were asking for. So we're asking for a total increase of \$179,000. It seems like a lot, but expect from everything it's not a lot with education value. If you can look at the bottom, the request of the County Manager. You can see that we're not asking for any increase in capital outlay, and then the \$179,000 increase for the current expense fund. So it's not a lot of details because we're not asking for a lot of change. We're just asking for any increase that is State mandated and utilities. Dr. Carter asked are there any questions?

Commissioner Holt said can you sort out because I'm spending a lot of time on this part. All these charter schools receive money. I see the list here. Why are we giving money to area schools outside our county? Dr. Carter said the funding that we receive for public education that comes into Caswell County is for the students who reside in Caswell County. If they go to a charter school, then the money follows the student. Mel Battle said some may not have but one student. Clover Garden and Roxboro Community has the larger number of students.

Chairman Dickerson said Dr. Carter, when you were speaking of per pupil funding. \$14,659.59, is that we are number nine in range out of 100 counties? Dr. Carter said yes, and that's including the high wealth districts as well like Chapel Hill and Wake County, the ones who have quite a bit of tax base. So if I read to you, and I'd be glad to read through the list of counties that have the highest per pupil funding, you'll see that they're all low wealth districts. Northampton, Carroll County, Bertie County, Halifax County, Gates, Martin, Anson, Hertford and Caswell County Schools. You can see that all of those are ranked in the exact order of funding for low wealth, and we're number nine. We're also the number nine in Low Wealth counties as well. We are the exactly rank and numbering on both of them. So it corresponds. The thought is if you're in a low-wealth county, there's not a lot of funding that has been available for students early on in education to help support early learning. So sometimes there's more learning that needs to take place for the student in your school.

Commissioner Holt said that was telling us where we're at. How much are we getting for Low Wealth? Dr. Carter said yes, in that it's the total of federal funding which is Low Wealth and Small Schools. Commissioner Holt said where do we stand on how much we spend per pupil?

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Jeremy Teeter said traditionally Caswell has trended in the 90s. So there are 115 school systems. Caswell has hit peaks and valleys, but it's generally been somewhere between number 90 to number 93 throughout the State when you look at the whole picture.

Chairman Dickerson said I noticed on the first page... go ahead Mrs. Gwynn.

Commissioner Gwynn said when you look at the schools in Caswell County, Stoney Creek has 143 there, and I noticed that North Elementary had 300 and so does Oakwood. South only has 231. It seems to be that some of these students possibly consolidate. Mel Battle said it has always been a talk about Stoney Creek, but in order to do that we would have to close a school through that process. It was a time, give you a little history, over 50 years ago Caswell had about a 6,500 kids. That's a number we will never reach again. The birth rate, death rate, industry moving in, and people moving in, we just don't have a lot of people. So Charter schools are beginning to get those kids back in their hold. I understand your point about only 100 students at a school. I'll give you an example. North and South we both built in 1992. South has never been at capacity based on whatever you've done. The Northern end and the Southern end has never been a good number. When North first opened it had around 700 kids. That number will never be reached again. Commissioner Gwynn has Oakwood has many more. Mr. Battle said Oakwood is locked in. Mrs. Blackwell said enrollment has decreased. Commissioner Gwynn said it's decreased faster. It seems to me in the management sense somehow they could be integrated into another school such as South or North since the numbers are so low. Mr. Battle said if you close down Stoney Creek basically the only thing you can save is utilities. You still have staff and the benefits of staff. Commissioner Holt said since that is in my district, that would be a hardship on many parents if you close that. A lot of those people work in Greensboro or Burlington. In fact, there's no way they could drive to North or Oakwood and turn around and go back. Dr. Carter said just to share that the state will fund a principle for a school. Mr. Battle said just give an example where South School is now, South School would be better served had it been closer to Baynes Store area because if you want to talk about closing Stoney Creek to ship those kids to South or North is a tremendous time to bus those kids. That's always been a stick upon. I told you all I was on the Board in 1992, that would have been an opportune time to close Stoney Creek, but the county had just spent \$300,000 on the septic system for Stoney Creek School. That's why it was not closed back in 1992.

Commissioner Yarbrough said do you have any idea what it cost per student to operate Stoney Creek versus South or Oakwood? That number has to be available. Jeremy Teeter said we would have to compile that analysis for you. We'd be happy to do that. So we would just need a couple of days to pull in and presented in that way. Commissioner Yarbrough said going back to what Mr. Battle said when North and South were proposed, it was going to be North, south, and Oakwood. That was going to be the three elementary schools in this county. There was such an outcry from some residents in the Stoney Creek area that the School Board, for lack of a better word, caved into keeping Stoney Creek open. Now we're at this point where you've got a small school that is probably costing a lot to operate. Nicole Smith said we've looked at that. We've

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looked at that data before, and County funds, it was very little County funds that were used to fund Stoney Creek. It had the least amount of money going into it. I don't know what the numbers are now, but we have looked at that. We could get that for you all.

Commissioner Rose said that capital outlay money, would that be used for the septic system or needs in the school if you needed it? Mr. Battle said if you needed it, yes. Commissioner Rose said are there any proposed improvements that are going to be needed to Stoney Creek? Dr. Carter said not in the immediate. There could be in the trajectory of over five or ten years, but not in this year or next year.

Commissioner Gwynn said Mr. Battle is that the oldest elementary school in the county? Mr. Battle said it is right now. I think Stoney Creek opened in probably 1954 or 1955, but mind you now it's one of the soundest building that we have based on the improvements that have been made. Stoney Creek, Duncan, sweetgum, and High Rock opened about the same time.

Gladys Garland said I'm speaking to the hardships even when we look at it before, we look at the amount of time that the students would be in route to and from the school.

Dr. Carter said speaking of those increases, the school board devoted four years ago probably to increase the safety in all the schools, and at that time one of the greatest things was enclosing the two buildings at Stoney Creek. So we enclosed the hall way that's heated that allows the students and staff to be totally enclosed when they go from one building to another for safety reasons and the plus the elements. Also at the opening of the school at the beginning of the front door, there's a vestibule now where people can check-in before they can go into the school.

Commissioner McVey said so there's no way to pull apart or estimate the cost of operating Stoney Creek for a year from South. Dr. Carter said we can certainly get that number. I don't have that off the top of my head, but we can certainly get that. Commissioner McVey said I though you could just estimate about what you spend. Jeremy Teeter said I mean, if I had to ballpark it, I know we looked at it. It's been a while since we looked at for the Board. I want to say it was somewhere in the \$50,000 range just for the overhead of operating the building. It was just the utilities, and we looked at how much was it on property insurance to keep it covered on insurance. Then we, just sort of like Mr. Battle alluded to, the staff would follow the children. The State funds the principal; so the State funding for the principal would go away. It's really just the net impact of our responsibility to the building on an annual basis. In the long term, there could be some benefit to the point earlier of the district is no longer responsible for the long-term capital outlay, but the year to year it was it was pretty low because it was just utilities. But we'll pull and crunch the numbers for you.

Chairman Dickerson said Dr. Carter, on the first stage of the presentation. You mentioned a State grants for resource office in schools. Is that to be interpreted as it would be one at every school here in Caswell. Dr. Carter said well that's what we've had in the past due to state grants. It's a safety grant that usually the state comes out with each year. We just wait for legislation to approve grants, and see if they're available for us to get after that. So we're waiting now to see if

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they come out with another opportunity. I think right now too there is a need to find deputies in order to establish those positions as well. I know sheriff Durden's been working very closely with the schools to make sure that we do have the security that we need, but even with short staff, there's a rotation. It takes care of those needs, but we do look for all the funding that's there. Usually the State does offer grants. Chairman Dickerson said good. One more question. When you were talking about the State raises in your approximated here, the difference between certified employees and non-certified employees, six and four percent. Do you think these figures are going to hold pretty clear based upon what the Senate's done now or you can't say? Dr. Carter said we need a crystal ball. You know with the Senate and again these are for two years. So we'd have a half these numbers. In the Senate 4.55 for certified and 5% for classified over two years, and then the House at 10.2 over two years for a certified and 4.25% for classified. Somewhere around 6% sounds like a good guess because 4% and 10% you'd think we're lowballing them. But again we know it's going to increase because we're asking for an increase. We just don't know when they vote what it would be. Jeremy Teeter said I think from the timeline perspective; we're being told that it'll be around June the 15th that we can expect the two Chambers to ideally reach some sort of consensus, which oddly enough is kind of early for them. Dr. Carter said a few years ago it was October. Mr. Teeter said we've had some years that it has gone on the whole year never being settled, and it just reverted back to what it was.

Commissioner McVey said how are we looking on the new high school? Are we almost done? What's the situation with the new high school? Brooke Underwood said I sent our last few invoices to Jennifer today. Dr. Carter said it looks amazing. Commissioner McVey asked do they have a punch list or anything that's got to be done? Dr. Carter said there's some more cheap items that we still need but that's under warranty. As far as the punch list, those items have been completed. Commissioner McVey said can we see or can we have a copy of the punch list even if they've been completed so we know what had to be done? Dr. Carter said absolutely. Commissioner McVey said that's good news. Dr. Carter said it is. Commissioner McVey said so you all are well satisfied with everything. Dr. Carter said yes. Dr. Carter said and then it came under a hundred thousand under budget. We're very excited about that.

Chairman Dickerson asked if there were any more questions for the Board of Education or questions from the Board of Commissioners. If not, we will move on.

## **BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS:**

County Manager Miller said Commissioners, I don't have a lot of updates. I can tell you, the good news is that the Board approved the GREAT Grant paperwork. It's off to the State, and hopefully we'll see movement from Zitel in completing their GREAT Grant proposal. Spectrum seems to be moving along and doing the things that they're supposed to be doing. So we are seeing more and more people get connected every day. We are making what I would consider considerable progress on our 21 audit. I think we're moving along in good fashion with it. We think 22 will follow pretty soon thereafter. We don't really anticipate any hiccups with that. I

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think the Auditors will find everything in order when they get it. So we think that process will move along pretty quickly. I'm happy to answer any other questions you do have, but that's what I got.

Mel Battle asked is there a way for you to let citizens of Caswell know what their status is regarding the internet? What I mean by that is I know where Spectrum is. I don't necessarily know where Spectrum is going, but the last time we met, you mentioned four or five groups and the timetable was different. I think it would be good for citizens to know if you live on "X" road this is what you can expect. Do you follow me? County Manager Miller said yes I do, and trust me for the last year and a half of my life that has consumed my existence. Just trying to tell people when they're going to get internet. Unfortunately, I can't because it's one of those things that's out of my hands. Mr. Battle said I understand that, but last time you gave us a projection on what certain companies were going to do. That's what I'm talking about. If it's not going to come on my road, I'd love to know that. For example, I did Comcast. Many years ago, Comcast would not come down the road because they said it was not enough houses, but they changed. Spectrum is popular. A mile or two miles from the house, but it's not coming down the road. That's the kind of thing I'm talking about. County Manager Miller said so if you wanted to know if your address is, I can tell you that. There maps, and I think I've mentioned this before. It's a Rural Digital Opportunity Fund, RDOF. If you Google RDOF or Rural Digital Opportunity Fund winners, it brings you up a GIS type map. You can see if your area is shaded in gray, and then you know you're covered by Spectrum. I have the address list for Zitel, I'm happy to tell somebody whether or not they're covered. Actually I may be able to share that now. I think that's a public record. Mr. Battle said yes, by being in a meeting I'm hearing this. I'm talking about the general citizens of Caswell County. County Manager Miller said yes, I think I may be able to share that now. Before the grant was awarded and signed, it was proprietary information. Now it should be public record. So if we received acknowledge that they did have been sign it last week, so I can probably share it. County Manager Miller asked if there were any other questions about anything?

Commissioner Jefferies said in finishing up the school, we almost gotten through it. How much money are we going to have left from the money we borrowed. County Manager Miller said the school was finished and came in at a hundred thousand dollars under budget. Commissioner Jefferies said under budget. County Manager Miller said if you remember, we saved about six million dollars off the top. Dr. Carter, was it six million dollars we saved. About six or seven million dollars right off the top from the original projection for the cost of the school. Dr. Carter said I would have to look at the numbers. I mean it was a savings, but I'm not sure if it was six million or not. I'd have to go double check. County Manager Miller said I think we saved six or seven million dollars from the original projection when it was bid out, and then we came in under budget by a hundred thousand dollars. Dr. Carter said I knew it was under, but I just don't know exactly how much.

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Dr. Carter said I would like to share an invitation to the Commissioners for the high school graduation. It's on Saturday, June 10th at 10 o'clock in the morning. We'd be happy and honored to have the Commissioners attend the graduation at BYHS.

Chairman Dickerson asked if there were any more questions? Well if not, we'll move on to the next item which is to schedule the next meeting between the two boards. Thoughts or ideas?

#### **SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING:**

Mel Battle said it is quarterly. So it will be some time in August. County Manager Miller said August 21<sup>st</sup>. Mel Battle said what Monday is that? County Manager Miller said the third Monday. Chairman Dickerson asked if that date works for everyone's approval? With that item settled, if there are no more questions or comments, we will take a brief recess.

The Board of Education adjourned by a motion.

#### **RECESS:**

The Board took a brief recess to allow the Board of Education to adjourn.

#### **CALL TO ORDER BY CHAIRMAN:**

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

There were no public comments emailed or in person.

#### **RECOGNITIONS:**

There were no recognitions.

### **AGENDA:**

#### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Jefferies and seconded by Commissioner McVey and **carried unanimously** approve the agenda. (Ayes: Commissioners Holt, Gwynn, Yarbrough, Rose, McVey, Jefferies, and Dickerson)

#### **APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA:**

- a. April 28, 2023 Budget Work Session Minutes
- b. May 1, 2023 Regular Meeting Minutes
- c. May 5, 2023 Budget Work Session Minutes

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Jefferies and seconded by Commissioner McVey and **carried unanimously** approve the consent agenda. (Ayes: Commissioners Holt, Gwynn, Yarbrough, Rose, McVey, Jefferies, and Dickerson)

### **DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

#### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPER POSITION:**

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Chairman Dickerson said I would like to know why that position is still vacant, and what we can do to fill that. County Manager Miller said so I had our HR Director today go back and look at the applications we've received. Out of the applications that we received, we received one based on the criteria and job description. We received 10 applications overall. We received one application that was from an applicant that was qualified, but the one applicant that was qualified through education, had zero Economic Development experience. So we're not seeing Economic Developers apply for this position. So that's why we haven't filled that specific position yet. Melissa Williamson and I are working with the International Economic Development Council currently. I think they will be here June 12<sup>th</sup> through 14<sup>th</sup> to meet with elected officials. They're also going to look at the Pelham Industrial Park. They're going to bring a panel of experts and they'll look at the Yanceyville Industrial Park as well. They'll bring a panel of industry experts specific to our needs. So they don't take the same three or four people everywhere. They'll pick who we need to be here. After analysis, talking to the elected officials, and talking to the joint Economic Development Commission here within the county, then they're going to make some recommendations to us. They'll help us implement those after the Board agrees on the recommendations they want to try to achieve. Having said that, that help is free. They're doing this at their own costs. They're currently located in Wilmington, and the panel of industry experts could come from anywhere around the State or really anywhere on the Southeast corner. So they're a grant funded organization, and they're going to help us out in those ways. We're also working with Carolyn Freyberger, with the UNC School of Government. She's the Assistant Director of Economic Development. They're working with us to assess the impact of the casino, how much we can expect to see from the casino, and what the impacts might be, whether positive or negative quite frankly. That is not free. We're going to have to pay a little bit of money to have them engage and do some of that work, but it's not a substantial amount. You'll see that in the budget presentation. So those are the things that we're working on absent of an Economic Developer. We would like to see more candidates. I've come to the realization that I don't know that we're going to get an Economic Developer or the perfect candidate. I think there's some things that we could do to move that process along a little bit. One of which is to hire a Grants Manager to manage not just the Economic Development grants, but to hire to manage the grants all over the county and through most departments. Hiring a Grants Manager, I think that would help us tremendously because we take some of the administrative workload off the individual. There's some technical expertise that is required to be able to write and manage those kind of grants that I don't think we're going to find in most of the people we're seeing apply. Chairman Dickerson said if you fill that position and if they get enough grant funding in to cover their salary, they get paid. If they don't, they don't get anything. County Manager Miller said thank you for that question. Chairman Dickerson said you're welcome. County Manager Miller said there are administrative fees handled through grants and administered through grants. It's usually three to five to ten percent of the total grant award that can be used for administrative costs. With using those administrative costs, those are the type of grants you would focus on. Hopefully those grant monies would cover the salary of the Grants Manager.

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Chairman Dickerson said we went from talking about filling the Economic Development position to add another position to that department. Back to the original one. Is that position being advertised currently, and if so, where? County Manager Miller said yes. Chairman Dickerson said where is that? County Manager Miller said we've had it on Indeed. So we've had it on Indeed, and what we're finding from the applicants that we're receiving off of Indeed and the national job posting boards is we're seeing people from Florida, Georgia, California, and Boston apply for that those positions from those locations, which is not necessarily a bad thing if they're willing to relocate to Caswell County. That's fine, but even those applicants we find are either not qualified or they don't comply with the requirements of the job. They don't comply with filling out an application. They don't comply with sending in a resume. You might get an email from somebody that just says hey I'd just like to apply for this job, or you might receive just the resume when you requested a resume, application, and a cover letter. The problem with that is if somebody that's looking to fill that position can't follow the simple instructions that are on a job posting, then the chances of succeeding in that position are very, very low when it comes to the grant compliance that's required by the State or required by the companies themselves when they ask for Economic Development benefits. If someone were to come across with a great deal of Economic Development experience and didn't comply with that, we would probably still reach out to those folks. But we haven't seen that. We just haven't seen it. It seems too that some of our applicants have had 12 jobs over the last six years. Excuse me six jobs over the last 12 years. So they go from one jurisdiction to another, to another, to another, to another, and that's not going to benefit us. We need somebody that has, I don't want to necessarily say roots here, but we really need somebody that has roots in the region. They're tied to the region, and they're committed to helping Caswell County because if we don't, what we're going to see is somebody take a job, fill it for two years, and leave. Then a lot of the work that they've done, a lot of the connections and contacts is just lost.

Commissioner Rose asked how long has it been vacant? County Manager Miller said it was posted on eight. Commissioner Rose said how long has it been since it's been filled? County Manager Miller said it was posted soon after the last Economic Developer left, and that was 8/5/22. Now look, and I know you all are tired of hearing this. The Economic Development salary and total budget that we offer is not commensurate with what Economic Development Offices are usually seeing. That may be some of the reason we're not seeing qualified applicants. A qualified applicant is not going to come to a jurisdiction that they feel that they cannot be successful. Commissioner Rose said let me ask you this. The salary that it sits at now, say we find somebody to do this. Can an incentive be looking at how they produce? How they are able to attract? You know what I'm saying? As far as you start out this salary, then they wind up getting two or three companies to come in here, to locate, or start. You can go back to that salary, if they're producing and move along. Could that be done? County Manager Miller said I mean anything's possible. So yes. I mean that's one way of looking at it. Commissioner Rose said I guess I'm looking at it from aspect to get somebody a goal to strive towards. Either they cut it, or

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they don't cut it. But I will say this. Where we are at now, with that casino coming in or whatever, the longer that we keep it unfilled, I feel like we have nothing to build on. That's just my opinion.

Commissioner Yarbrough asked what's the salary on that? County Manager Miller said it was listed at \$62,970. So \$63,000. Commissioner Yarbrough asked do you got any comparables? County Manager Miller said no, but I can get them for you. Deputy County Manager Melissa Williamson said when I went to the Golden Leaf for a meeting, I was just happened to sit with some ladies that were from Rockingham County, and I was talking about we were having trouble filling our position for Economic Developer. When I told them what we were paying, they said no wonder you're not getting it filled. So apparently they must pay right much more than we do. But she said that's probably why you're not. County Manager Miller said I would encourage you as Board members, as individuals Board members, if you want to see, visit Rockingham County's Economic Development office. They have a standalone office. They have a wonderful Economic Developer. Those things are going to cost a lot of money. If we get somebody, the same caliber as Rockingham County, we'll probably have to double that salary. Commissioner Gwynn said did you say double it? County Manager Miller said yes, double it. And their budget is \$3.3 million a year for Economic Development. That's just their Economic Development budget that I was able to look at in their budget. They have a lot of other different departments that tie into Economic Development that help support that. So I can't even imagine total Economic Development dollars that are going in, but it's \$3.3 million. Commissioner Holt said that's hard to compare us to Rockingham County. They have tax base, look at the industry they have, and they have infrastructure. County Manager Miller said it is. Commissioner Holt said but you think about it. If you have this job, do you have water? Do you have sewer? I mean obviously you know you want one, but it's not going to without the other. County Manager Miller said I agree, but we can't compare ourselves with Rockingham. But the job is the job. It's the job, and if you want in Economic Development Professional, then you're going to have to pay for an Economic Development Professional. That's just the way it is.

Commissioner Yarbrough said I don't know about the rest of the Board, but if we could hire somebody that could produce Economic Development, I think the Board will be glad to compensate them. County Manager Miller said it would be worth it. You get back to the question which came first, the chicken or the egg.

Chairman Dickerson said well I still go back to the way I put it. Mr. Rose was more articulated the way he put it, but if you don't produce, you don't get paid. If there's some kind of way to put a measure behind it and if you want those kind of big bucks, produce. I don't want to hear another Economic Developer come in here, and say it's not their job in the recruit industry when it's what they're hired to do. County Manager Miller said so I understand. The one thing that Economic Development requires is exactly what Commissioner Holt said. Infrastructure. If we don't have the infrastructure, an Economic Developer is not going to be able to be successful. So you've got to have an infrastructure plan. Your Economic Developer has to go after that

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infrastructure by working with the State, tracking businesses, getting commitments, and having that infrastructure built. That's not a year process. That's a five-year process. A 10-year process, and I'm just shooting from the hip here. But I don't know many people that are going to say okay I want to work for 10 years, then you can pay me what I really deserve. I think we're going to have trouble with that, but the Board has to realize too that if you're doubling down on Economic Development, and I think you should. Let me be clear about that. I think you should. There's some commitments that the Board is going to have to make to infrastructure and to these processes that lead to Economic Development. That's just my two cents. I'm trying to shoot you as straight as I know how on Economic Development. Right now it's a tough game. I do think there's some opportunities out there. I think Carolina Core coming through. There's an Economic development group called Carolina core, which cuts a corner, the southwestern corner of Caswell. I think that could provide us some opportunities, but one of the first rules of Economic Development is you've got to have site control. We don't own or the county doesn't own any of that. So we're going to have to work and engage with private landowners in those areas. What we've seen through the explosive ordinances. Do you all remember that? For those of you that weren't on the Board at the time, we had a gentleman off of Cherry Grove Road or Pagetown Road, one of the two. I think it was Pagetown Road, and they had a business. Their business consists of a bunker, and that's truly what it was, a bunker. They would take propane tanks down to that bunker, and they would blow them up. Pressurize them until they blew them up. That's what their business consisted of. Now they chose Caswell to do that because we didn't have any regulations. But he did it in a pretty populated area to be honest with you. We would receive reports after every time that they did that of flying propane tanks or flying cylinders that sometimes hit roadways. Even coming out of this concrete bunker that they had. So the county put in an ordinance that didn't allow you to do that. We hadn't had any problems since, but what's going to happen is everybody that I've spoken with wants Economic Development. They want industry in this County. Right? Can we all agree on that? I think the other thing we can all agree on is nobody wants it beside their house. We saw that with the rock quarry. It's the NIMBY effect, not in my backyard. Yes, we need Economic Development. Yes, we need industry, but don't put it in my backyard. Don't affect my kids playing. Don't do any of those kind of things. So you as a Board are tasked with figuring out where we're going to focus on economic Development. You do that by where you spend your infrastructure dollars. If you run infrastructure down Cherry Grove Road, then you're signaling to industry this is where we want to focus our Economic Development efforts. If you run it to the Pelham Industrial Park, this is where we're wanting to focus our Economic Development efforts. So first of all, a lot of this stuff has to be Board driven. Site control is terribly important. That's why Melissa and I started initially with the Yanceyville Industrial Park and the Pelham Industrial Park. There'll be opportunities, in my opinion, for private landowners up and down the 86 Corridor, and we're going to talk about that with the IEDC and with Carolyn Fryberger with UNC. We'll speak to them about that, and how we get these people engaged with the economic development efforts.

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Chairman Dickerson asked if there were any other questions. If not, we'll move on.

### **ACTION ITEMS:**

#### **TITLE VI PROGRAM PLAN UPDATE:**

Melissa Williams said every three years Caswell County Area Transportation System is required to update/revise the Title VI Implementation Plan. CATS establish this Title VI Non-discrimination Plan for the purpose of complying with the Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as required by FTA Circular 4702.1 B and related requirements outlined under Group 0.1D "Non-discrimination Assurance" of the FTA Certifications and Assurances. The Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act provides that "No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color or national origin, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance." CATS is a recipient of Federal financial assistance from the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) and the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT), receiving Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funds through the NCDOT. Shirley Mikkelsen is our Compliance Specialist at NCDOT, and she requested that I submit the policy to her for review before sending it to the Board for signature in case there were any corrections that needed to be made after the update. I submitted the policy for her review, and she sent it to Ashley Council, the Title VI Officer of North Carolina Department of Transportation Office of Civil Rights and Title VI Program for review. The Compliance Specialist at NCDOT and the Title VI Officer of NCDOT Transportation Office of Civil Rights/Title VI Program have approved the updated plan. We did have to update the data since the new 2020 census information is available. Now we need for the Board of Commissioners to approve the policy as well so we can submit it to the state. We will be in full compliance with our Title VI Program Plan. We do provide Title VI annual training to all of our staff, and they will each receive and review a copy of this policy. There's a page that they will sign on which is page 11 of the policy that will be put in their personnel folder showing that they have received these new updates and that we do the training annually. We also post page five of the Title VI Non-discrimination Agreement between NCDOT and CATS in all of our vehicles that we have and in our training office. It is posted on our board for all staff and anybody visitors coming in to be able to see. So this information is posted, and I'm also going to need for each member to sign. You don't have to fill it out if you don't want to, but it's demographic information. There's a place on here if you don't want to, you can mark that you don't want to. It's gathering demographic information from each one of our Board members. If you'll just sign it, even if you don't want to provide the information. If you'll sign that you have received a copy of this because I have to keep it on file for the next three years before we update our policy again. So if the State comes in, we need to have these records that you all are our governing board. It is just basic information, but like I said if you choose not to, there's a box right at the bottom that you can elect not to and just sign and date it, if you would. I do need this Board to adopt and approve our plan so we will be in full compliance, and

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it won't put any of our funding in jeopardy. So like I said, our Civil Rights and Compliance Review Office have all approved the policy.

County Manager Miller said are there any questions about the policy that was included in your agenda packet? If there's no questions, we just ask for a motion to approve the policy.

A **motion** was made by Commissioner Yarbrough and seconded by Commissioner Gwynn and **carried unanimous** to approve the Title VI Program Plan. (Ayes: Commissioners Holt, Gwynn, Yarbrough, Jefferies, McVey, Rose, and Dickerson)

### **COUNTY MANAGER'S UPDATES:**

The County Manager said Commissioners, at this time I don't have a lot of updates. We're still continuing to work on the budget. We think we're getting a lot closer to having you a complete budget rather than just the departmental budgets. So we're working on that. I know Jennifer and Melissa along with Johnna Sharp, have done a tremendous job and putting in a lot of hours working on it. I know Jennifer is working weekends to try to get everything together. So I gave internet updates at the previous meeting. I'm happy to answer any questions that you have.

Commissioner Holt asked if there was anything new on the reconstruction? County Manager Miller said oh, oh of the books. So yes, the audit. So as I said in the Board of Education meeting, they have provided the Auditors with a lot of the information. They said to the Auditors: hey, we need you to start this audit. We need you to get going on it. We're waiting to hear back. We're waiting to hear a reply from the auditors. Commissioner Holt said so I take it that they are still working. I can't remember her name? County Manager Miller said yes, the NCACC, and that's the free unit. Commissioner Holt said she's still on? County Manager Miller said yes. She was here today as a matter of fact, and I imagine she'll be with us for a while. She usually works here about one day a week.

Chairman Dickerson asked will that be completed before we get into the approval of the budget for the county? Will the audit be completed? County Manager Miller said it depends on the Auditors at this point. Chairman Dickerson said that will be the next year before we did the audit. County Manager Miller said I agree. So the 22 audit definitely will not. The 21 audit will be finished. What I want you to remember when you're thinking about our audits is what they're really auditing us for is compliance. Did we do the things our grant said that we had to do. Did we operate underneath the authority given to us by the State, by the Board of Commissioners, by this entity, or by whatever entity gave us the money. The authority is what they're actually auditing us on. Commissioner Holt said the dollars and cents probably are going to come out to an exact number. Right? County Manager Miller said that's right. Commissioner Holt said just like you were talking about in the other meeting that you think it's going to be over a million dollars. So you don't even have a clue at this point. County Manager Miller said I do have a clue. I know it's going to be over a million dollars. I'm trying to be conservative with the number. I know what I think the number is going to be. Commissioner Holt said were you expecting that?

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County Manager Miller said was I expecting that to be over a million dollars? Yes. I expect that every year to be quite honest with you. Commissioner Holt said leading into the next year, when you started 22 without the 21 being done, you were thinking you're just going to have a million dollars? County Manager Miller said yes. We've not always had a million dollars, but since I've been here, we've always added to fund balance every year. So yes. I knew the Federal money from CARES Act and from ARPA were going to impact that. I knew that funding would impact that positively, but I didn't know to what extent. Commissioner Holt said I just have a hard time knowing what to vote for when it's that unbalanced checkbook. County Manager Miller said I understand it.

Commissioner Rose said we have a general fund balance. The reason I'm asking is I'm not saying to approve this budget we have to go into the general fund. I'm not saying that. I'm just saying when we come down to approving this budget, we've got X figure, or we know what's setting in general fund to be able to approve it. Do you follow what I'm saying? County Manager Miller said yes. So Jennifer can basically go in and add up the amount that's in the accounts we have at any time. The last time, I think I gave that to you Tim. The last time that I was asked to do that, it was about nine million dollars at last count. So nine million dollars would put us in about 23% or 24% fund balance at that point in time. Now I will tell you, fund balance is a lot more complicated. That's the most simplistic way you get to fund balance. there's a lot of other calculations that make up that fund balance percentage, but when I was asked the last time, that's what I did is we looked at the money we had. Fund balance is a moving target too.

Commissioner Rose said it is up and down. County Manager Miller said right because if you do it right after we've collected all the taxes, we've got a lot of money. If you do it right before we start collecting taxes, it's not so much. So that's why we always try to do it at one given time during the year, and that's June-July time frame. That way you always have something comparable to look at.

Commissioner Jefferies asked are they going to come before us to tell us. County Manager Miller said yes, after everything's done the Auditors will come before the Board and talk to the Board about what they found. I'm expecting our books for the 21 audit to be fairly clean right now with the work that we've had done to them. They better be pretty clean, and I expect the 22 audit will be in good shape too.

Commissioner Rose said I got a question, and I guess I'm trying to wrap my mind around how to see this or how to figure it out. If the Auditors was doing stuff and said that they found a million dollars. County Manager Miller said no, nobody found a million dollars. We always have money that's carried over from lapsed salaries. That's money that's carried or transferred into the general fund from lapsed salaries and from other things. But always lapsed salaries. We always have that money. Commissioner Rose said basically what you're saying is with lapsed salaries and what we've not had to pay out has accumulated that amount of money that they're finding. I don't guess you could go to the bank and add up what the banking accounts are and say they have \$5 million. Then the auditors say they found another million. County Manager Miller said no we

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don't add another million to it. Yes, you're right. Commissioner Rose said that's what I'm getting at. So you can't add to that to what you're having...County Manager Miller said there's no million dollars sitting down in the finance office that we had stuck back in a shoe box that's not in the bank. All the deposits, we're required on a daily basis by Statute to make deposits into the bank. So if we receive money on a daily basis, it's going into the bank. Commissioner Rose said I guess I'm trying to figure out how did they find it? How did they say that we were that much to the good? County Manager Miller said they reconciled the expenses with the revenues and figured out that our revenues were more than a million dollars over our expenses.

Chairman Dickerson said if that million dollars is basically in play every year off lapsed salaries and other savings found throughout the year like clockwork, shouldn't we be deducting that. County Manager Miller said well I'm glad you asked that because this year we are. That's one of the new things that I think you're going to see in your budget. Right Jennifer? County Manager Miller said I think that's one of the new things you're going to see in in the budget this year. It's one of the very few things that you're allowed to enter as a negative into your budget. So you'll see a negative salary line for lapsed salaries in the budget. Chairman Dickerson said good. One more question for you. As we have talked about proposed budgets from different departments, I've heard a figure you threw out of the State giving us a 6.5% increase. What I'm seeing online looks like a 3.5% one year and a 3.5% the next year. Where did you get 6.5%? County Manager Miller said no. I didn't say the State was giving 6.5%. What I said was I was recommended 6.5%, and the 6.5% was based off the inflation rate at the time we started talking about that. So just the rate of inflation off the numbers that I pulled was about 6.5%. Chairman Dickerson said so you're recommending basically twice what the State is recommending. County Manager Miller said yes. So I think it's a little bit unfair for us to be compared to the State because we don't pay like the State. The State is not at 90% of the minimum. So if you hire somebody straight off the street with no experience, maybe the educational requirements but no experience. You're hiring them in at 90% of the minimum. What they should be paid, we're hiring them at 90% of that. Not the average. Not the midpoint. Not the maximum. We're hiring them in at 10% below the minimum.

Commissioner Holt said so let me ask this question. The State's part of the school system. Are you trying to tell me that they're offering teachers in Mecklenburg County the same thing as Bertie County? The County Manager said say that again. Commissioner Holt said are they offering the teachers as minimum in Mecklenburg County, Charlotte, the same starting rate as in Bertie County. County Manager Miller said no. I guarantee that people...Commissioner Holt said you throw out the word State, but they're not just one big number. It depends on where you're at. County Manager Miller said no, the State I believe is the same rate. Commissioner Rose said I think he's talking about starting salary for a teacher in Mecklenburg versus starting salary for a teacher in Bertie County. Commissioner Yarbrough said yes but a teacher in Mecklenburg will make what a teacher is paid in Bertie County. County Manager Miller said yes. Commissioner Yarbrough said they are a State employee. County Manager Miller said so

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they follow the state employees pay list. So yes, you're right. They do. Commissioner Rose said you're talking about different school systems. County Manager Miller said yes, and the difference comes in local, low wealth, and those kind of things as to what teachers get paid. It's not the same. So the State has several different parts of their pay and grade system. They have the school systems, the correctional systems, and DOT. All of those systems are different. They're paid different, but what they do is they pay their employees at what they should be paid. I'm sorry to put it like that.

Commissioner Holt said well let me ask this because I wasn't here then, but from what I've been told, there was possibly a 7% raise last year. County Manager Miller said so that's partially true. So the way it was done, and hold on to your hat here because there's a lot of moving pieces. So it was initially done at 90% of the minimum or 7% whichever was greater unless you made over sixty thousand dollars. If you made over sixty thousand dollars, then you only got 2%. Everybody under thirty thousand dollars was brought up to a thirty thousand dollar minimum. Then later on, the Board came back and said okay, we're going to give everybody making over sixty thousand dollars the extra 5%. So they did that, but there wasn't the 90% of the minimum component thrown in with that too. So there were a lot of moving pieces to what happened. Truthfully I can tell you as a County employee, and I think the other County employees sitting here will tell you, we greatly appreciate those increases. Those helped us through some very difficult times. So don't think that we're not appreciative of those. That got people up to 90%.

Commissioner Gwynn said let me ask you this because I heard a complaint that some agency came back later and got another increase. A true increase whereas the others didn't get it. County Manager Miller said they did. The DSS. Commissioner Gwynn said why did some get an extra raise? County Manager Miller said well the Board voted to do that because DSS was in a position where they had no social workers. They had no social workers, and the State was going to or they were close because we couldn't find workers that the State was going to come in and take over the operation of providing certain social work functions within DSS. It would have cost us substantially more for the State to do that than to give the additional increases. Commissioner Gwynn asked are we in a critical stage like that in any other departments with this year's budget? County Manager Miller said yes. DSS, the Sheriff's Office, Emergency Management, and 9-1-1. Yes, we're seeing that kind of across the board. I saw some figures not too long ago. I can't remember the exact figures, but the graphic was the bar chart. The top line was governmental services. That sector had decreased, and I think it was by 11%. Then every other major industry showed either modest or large increases in employment revenue. So it's really governmental services that have really suffered over the last two or three years. I think it was 11.5%. Don't hold me to that, but that for some reason sticks out.

Commissioner Rose said like I said I understand the Sheriff's office is in the same shape. I saw this week in Greensboro that the Chiefs and Majors were actually out working the street. County Manager Miller said yes. Our Sheriff responded to three different incidents last weekend night time incidents. Commissioner Rose said they are short across the state. County Manager Miller

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said I read an article, and you may want to go take a look at it. It was on WRAL about the how the state is facing the exact same issues that we're experiencing. If you look at the State's budget, the cost to retrain employees, their shortage in Detention Center workers, and so on and so forth, WRAL has an article on it. I think it came out this morning, but I read that earlier today.

Chairman Dickerson said Raleigh government to Raleigh Fire Department, and Police Departments across the state that pay a lot more than we do are still struggling with the same problems we're facing. So money is not always answer. So what is? How do you retain these employees? County Manager Miller said so the first way I think you retain them is I think employees have to feel like they have support from Administration, from County government, from the elected officials. I think they've got to feel supported in what they're doing, but I also think we have to pay them enough to live. If you see 10 to 12% inflation, and they can't buy or make the same payments that they made last year, they can't buy the same things that they did the year before, that hurts. If they can go somewhere else and make more money, odds are they're probably going to do it. Chairman Dickerson said I see what you're saying, but still even tomorrow you may could wave a magic wand and say we had found another million dollars here and two million more in this pile over here, and we're going to elevate all the County Employees to where they're making more than all the other surrounding counties. You'll start a chain reaction with the other counties increasing their pay just like when we were number one with the EMS department at one time. Now everybody else around us has increased. I still say that throwing money at the problem is not always the answer. There's got to be some better management and some better things done to make these employees feel like they want to stay here in Caswell County. If we're struggling to fill positions and Raleigh and everybody else is struggling to fill positions and they pay a lot more than we do, you can't sit here and argue to me that money is the only thing that's going to make this problem go away. County Manager Miller said no, I totally agree. Absolutely, there's got to be something different that we offer, and what that magic pill is, I don't know. But if they can't afford to live, it just follows Maslow's hierarchy of needs. If they can't feed their families, if they can't make their car payments, they can't make their house payments, those are their top priorities, and they're going to fulfill those first. If we can't pay them enough just to be able to do those things, they're going to go somewhere where they can at least do that. Chairman Dickerson said if we don't figure out how to build a better mouse trap and figure out a better creative solution, you'll be right back here next year telling us the same thing all over again no matter how much money we pay. County Manager Miller said I agree. Chairman Dickerson said there has got to be a better way. County Manager Miller said for us this is a never ending cycle. Truthfully I've been here nine or ten years, not every year, but we see this every two or three years. We see this cycle around, and it comes back to the Board. I think some things that could be very helpful is if the Board were to approve a Grade and Pay Classification System. But I'm going to be honest with you, that's expensive. At this point in time you put something like that in, and you're going to pay for it because you have a lot of employees that have a lot of service to the county, and that moves them down that Pay and Grade

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Classification System. That moves their pay. If you can look down the road, and say okay in five years I'm going to be making five thousand dollars more or six thousand dollars more, that helps. That helps employees map out how they're going to live or what they're going to be able to do. It can't be well we might get... How many years did you go without a COLA (Cost of Living Adjustment) before I got here? Deputy County Manager Williamson said we went one time for several years and didn't get anything. County Manager Miller said County Employees remember those gaps. They remember how hard it was when inflation was creeping up, and they weren't receiving anything. I agree wholeheartedly with you. There's got to be something more, but Greensboro's not figured it out. Raleigh's not figured it out. Burlington may have. Burlington's paying their Sheriff's Office a starting salaries of \$55,000. They're going to get everybody, but now you're seeing exactly what he said. You're seeing Greensboro do that. You're seeing Forsyth do that, and before long that'll trickle throughout those organizations. Those that can afford to pay that will pay that. Chairman Dickerson said I'm going to throw this out there. I won't stay here to spar with you over it all night and drag this meeting out. But the same pressures that you were talking about with the County Employees inflation, putting food on the table, better opportunities elsewhere, we have a base of taxpayers. This County's struggling with the exact same problems, and all we give to the County Employees comes out of their pocketbooks. So there is never a free lunch. There's always give and take, and I would caution everybody on this Board to think about that as we go down this avenue. Those people are going to have to pay that bill. I'll drop it for tonight. The budget will be in swinging before long, and it'll be a time and a place to discuss all that. County Manager Miller said I'm happy to answer any other question you have.

#### **COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:**

There were no Commissioner Comments.

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS AND UPCOMING EVENTS:**

- May 18, 2023 at 6:00 pm Town of Yanceyville will host the Town meeting at the Municipal Building
- May 19, 2023 Commissioners Budget Work Session at 5:30 pm at the Gunn Memorial Library
- June 5, 2023 Commissioners Meeting 6:30 pm at the Gunn Memorial Library

#### **ADJOURNMENT:**

A **motion** was made at 7:57 pm by Commissioner Rose and seconded by Commissioner Gwynn and **carried unanimously** to adjourn the meeting. (Ayes: Commissioners Holt, Gwynn, Yarbrough, Jefferies, McVey, Rose, and Dickerson)

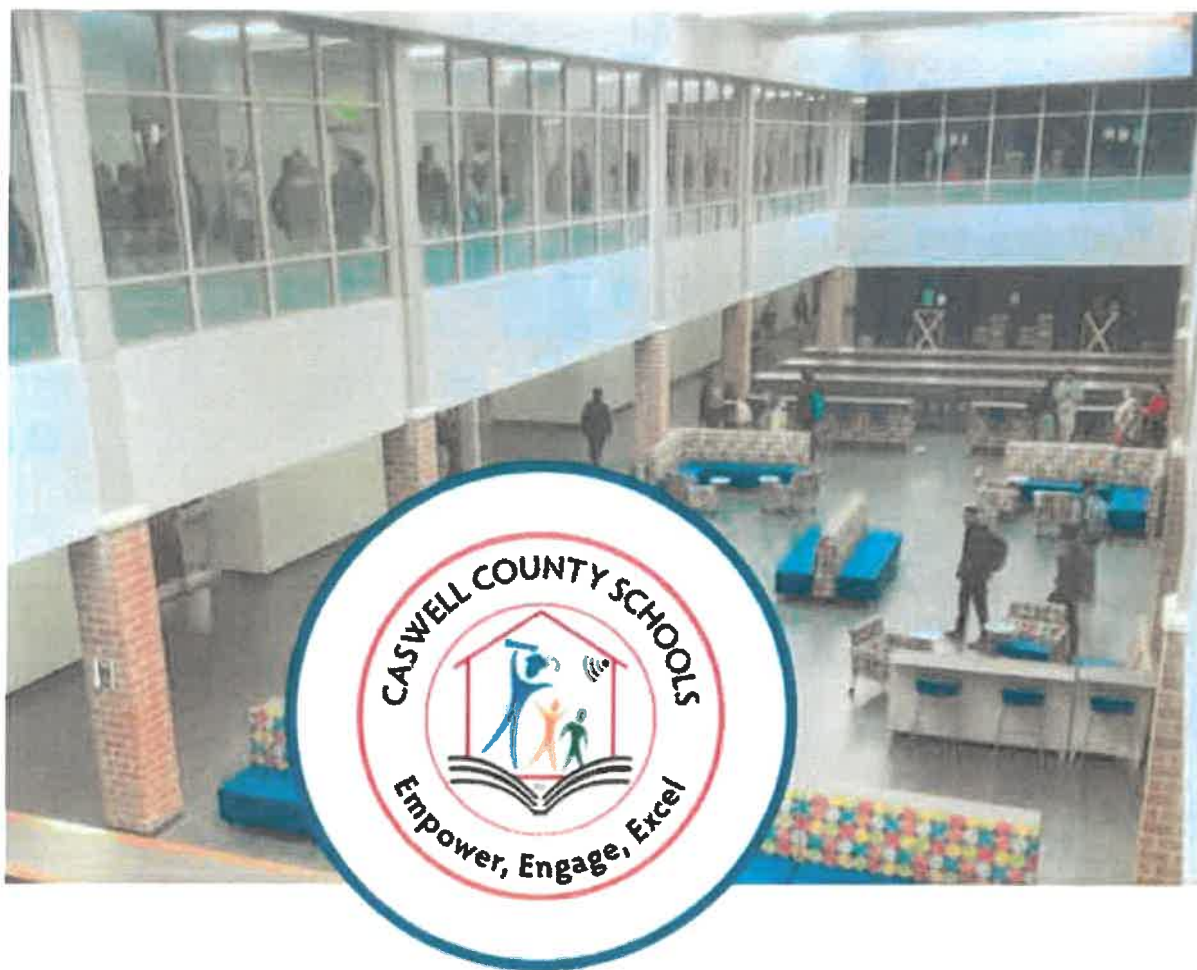
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Carla R. Smith  
Clerk to the Board

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John Dickerson  
Chairman

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## Caswell County Schools

Funding Request  
Fiscal Year 2023-2024  
Caswell County Schools

## Letter of Transmittal



On behalf of the Caswell County School System, please accept our Board of Education's local funding request for FY 2023-2024. Our request includes \$2,779,228 for operational expenses and a continued \$465,000 for capital outlay. We do not take this \$179,228 increase in our request lightly, but our district's needs continue to drive our budget discussions. We arrived at this figure after discussing our extensive needs and deliberating variables such as past years with no increases paired with a historic level of inflation nationwide.

It is important to note that our request reflects the local impact of legislated state salary increases, a rise in health care costs and retirement contributions. This request also reflects a continued rise in energy costs.

As we think about the year ahead, we would be remiss if we failed to acknowledge highlights of the current year. We remain grateful for the community's partnership in the renovation of Bartlett Yancey High School. Teaching and learning commenced in this new space at the start of the 2022-2023 school year. We are thrilled for our students to have such a modern, secure learning environment.

We would also like to thank Sheriff Durden for his continued commitment to student safety as he works with Caswell County Schools to staff each school with a School Resource Officer—made possible by a safety grant from the State of North Carolina.

Thank you for your consideration of this funding request to sustain the current level of operations in Caswell County Schools for the 2023-2024 school year. I welcome the opportunity to present and answer questions.

Respectfully,

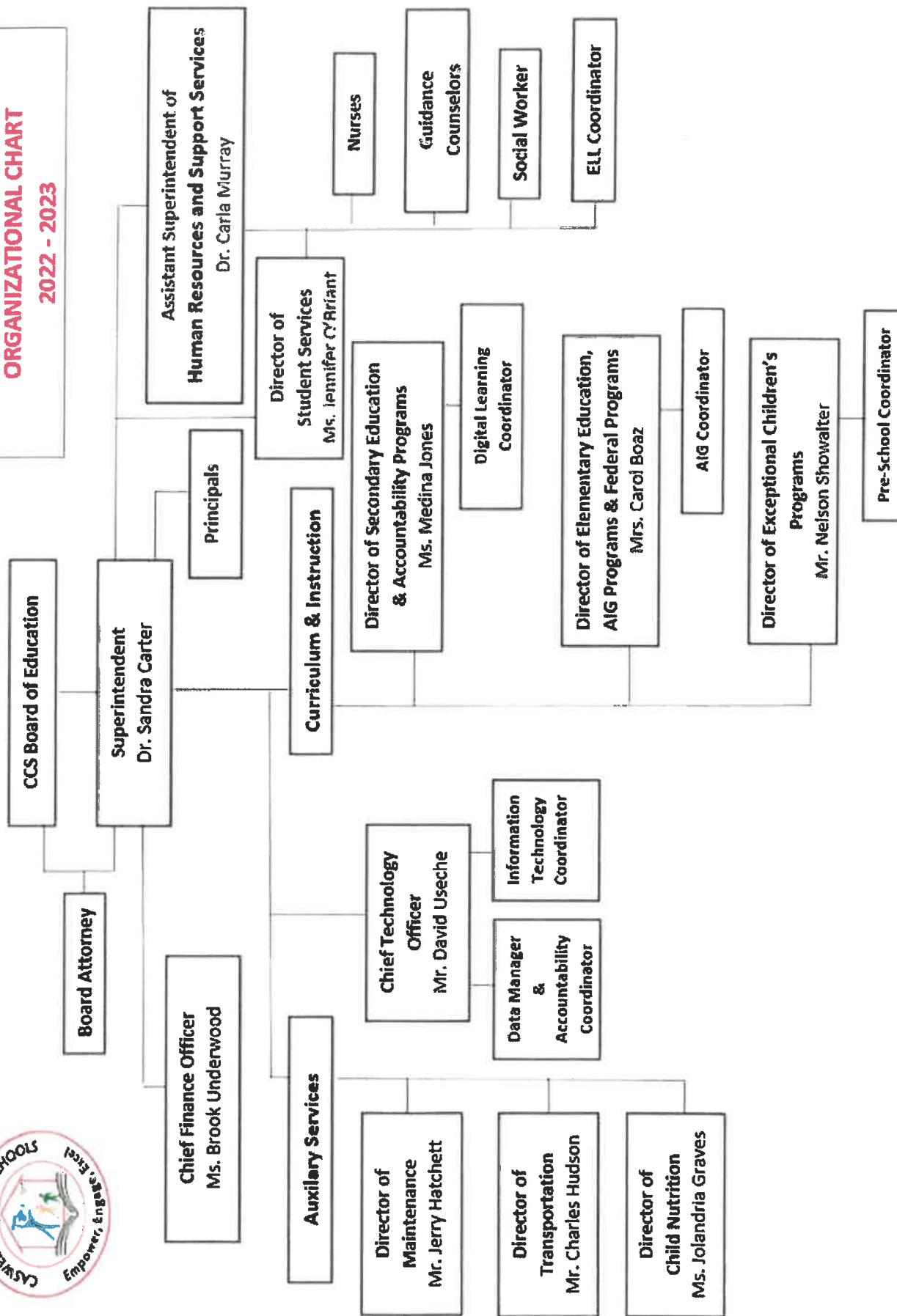
*Sandra Carter and Mel O. Battle*

Dr. Sandra Carter and Mel Battle  
Superintendent and Chairman Board of Education  
Caswell County Schools





2022 - 2023



# The Students We Serve

## Level

	2021-2022	2022-2023
Elementary School	976	1,004
Middle School	526	500
High School	667	680
Total	2,169	2,184

## School

	2021-2022	2022-2023
North Elementary	321	323
Oakwood Elementary	298	307
South Elementary	208	231
Stoney Creek Elementary	149	143
Dillard Middle	526	500
Bartlett Yancey High	667	680
Total	2,169	2,184



## Per Pupil

Fiscal Year	State	Federal	Local	Total Per Pupil
2020-2021	\$8,836.63	\$1,362.21	\$1,315.42	\$11,514.26
2021-2022	\$9,868.75	\$3,455.08*	\$1,335.76	\$14,659.59

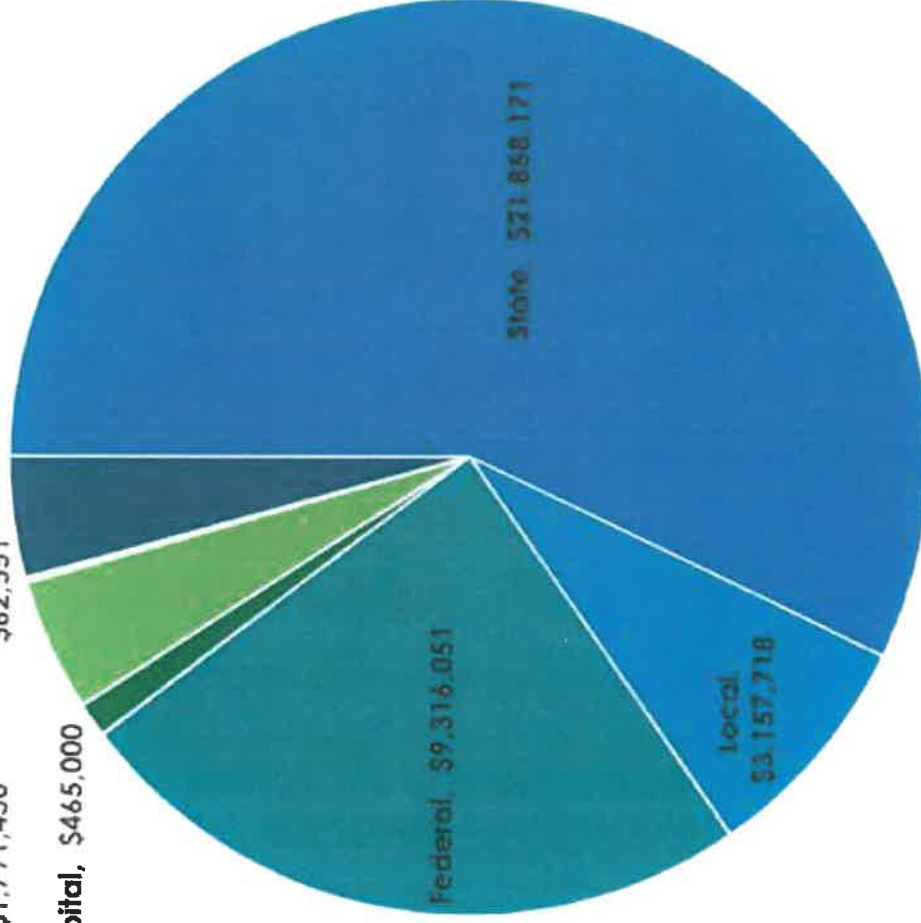
\*Federal funding increased due to ESSER spending.

# Funding Sources

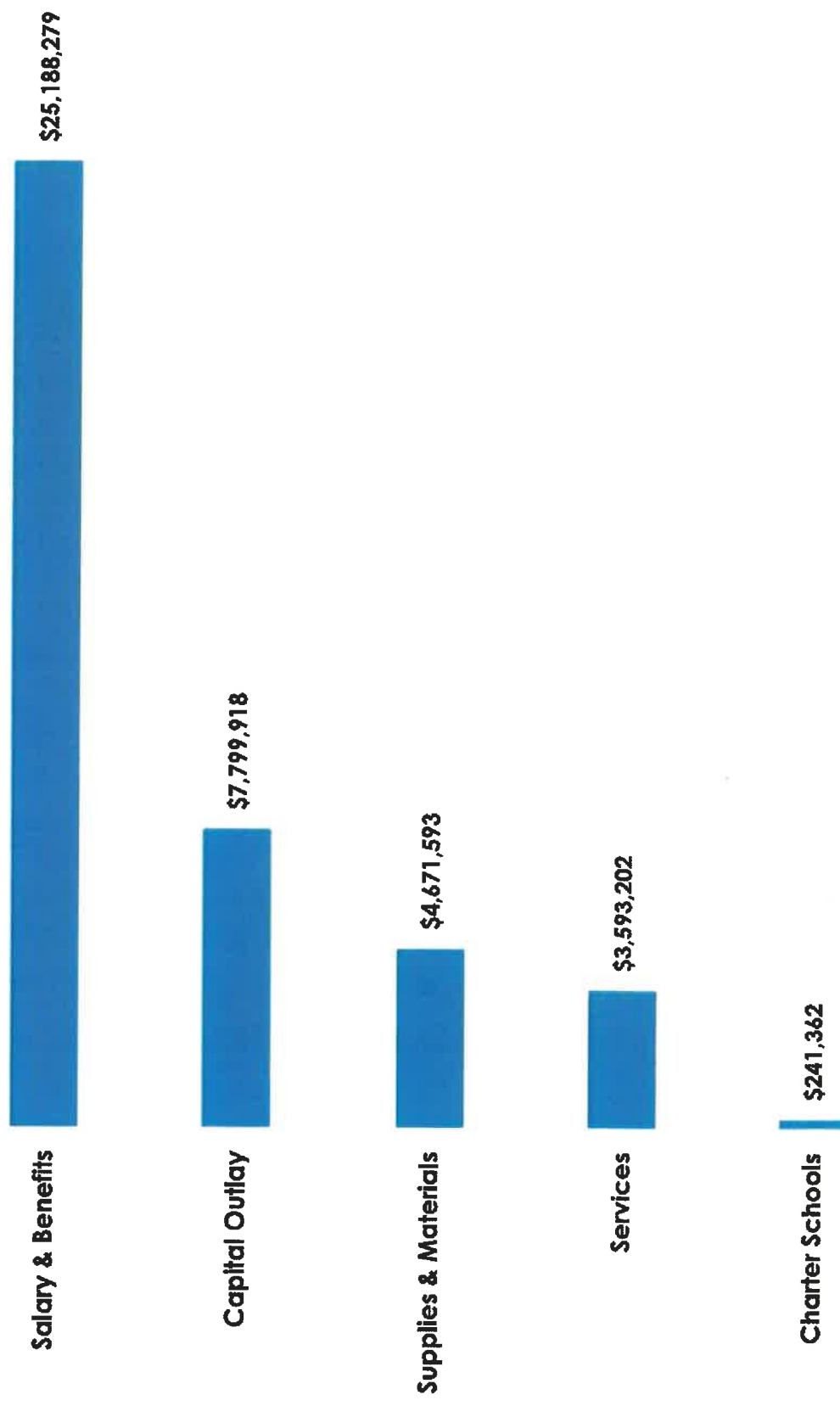
Restricted Grants,  
\$1,640,885

Child Nutrition, Before/After Care,  
\$1,791,450

Capital, \$465,000



## 2021-2022 Expenditures



## How Current County Appropriation is Utilized

Purpose	Amount	Share of County Appropriation	Examples
Operational Support Services	\$ 1,499,634.00	57.7%	Maintenance Department Salaries & Utilities
Financial & Personnel Services	\$ 349,725.00	13.5%	CFO Salary, Insurance & Financial Software
Charter Schools	\$ 241,449.00	9.3%	*Please see Chart of Charter Schools (221 Students)
Technology Support	\$ 175,826.00	6.8%	Part of ITs Salary & Software not allowed through State funds
Athletics	\$ 174,167.00	6.7%	Athletic Trainer Salary, Coaching Supplement, Activity Bus Driver Salary, Benefits and Athletic Allotments

<b>School Based Support Services</b>	\$ 89,723	3.3%	Partial of Student Services Director Salary and Benefits
<b>School Leadership</b>	\$ 43,024.00	1.7%	Centurylink
<b>Special Population Services</b>	\$ 23,831.00	0.9%	Required Local EC funds
<b>Support &amp; Development Services</b>	\$ 2,621.00	0.1%	Testing Supplies
<b>Total Unrestricted</b>	\$ 2,600,000.00	100%	

## Charter Schools

	School Name
Alamance Community School	Bethany Community School
Bethel Hill Charter School	Clover Garden School
Eno River Academy	Greensboro Academy
NC Cyber Academy	NC Learns NC Virtual Academy
Piedmont Classical High School	River Mill Academy
Roxboro Community School	Triad Math & Science
Summit Creek Academy	

# Top Ten Largest Vendors by Dollar Amount Fiscal Year 2021-2022\*

Vendor	Amount	Purpose
Duke/Progress Energy	\$604,425	Electricity
Brady Trane Services	\$467,268	HVAC
CDW Government LLC	\$371,973	Student Technology
Avery Jones Educational Solutions	\$315,774	Student Technology
Rentz-Eden Oil Company	\$300,396	Bus Fuel & Heating Fuel
Cheshire Speech & Voice Center INC	\$198,723	Speech Therapy
CINTAS	\$185,002	Custodial Supplies & Uniform Service
STEMERALD CITY LLC	\$168,362	STEM Education Kits, Materials, and Professional Development for CTE and Summer Learning (ESSER Grant)
Clover Garden School	\$139,051	Charter School
Surry Insurance	\$94,629	Various Insurance Coverages

\*Excludes Child Nutrition Fund

## Potential Risks

There are areas of uncertainty that exist regarding the 2023-24 budget that could impact costs. One of the largest is the potential impact of any legislated decisions by the General Assembly during the 2023 session. Once the state approves a budget for 2023-24, staff will assess the impact on resources. The other areas of uncertainty are:

### *Inflation*

The rate of inflation is increasing, and has been increasing, for many months. The actual inflationary increase and subsequent cost increases on the purchase of goods and services cannot be predicted, but it will likely result in significant pressure on the 2023-24 budget. As reported on April 12, 2023, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics March 2023 Consumer Price Index for all items, less food and energy rose 5 percent.

### *Legislated Pay Raises*

The proposed budget includes estimated salary increases to be approved by the General Assembly. Salary increases approved will impact budget costs, particularly for locally paid employees and employees funded from state allotments that behave similarly to local funds. The average of the increases across salary schedules for certified employees is approximately 6 percent. It is anticipated that non-certified employee salary schedules will be increased by 4 percent.

### *Projected Student Membership*

The proposed budget is based on a projected student membership of 2,142 students who will enroll in Caswell County Schools. This projection is 42 fewer than the 2,184 projection used for the current year. There will be a corresponding reduction in position and dollar allotments from the state for the 2023-24 fiscal year.

### *Retirement and Hospitalization Rates*

The General Assembly may approve changes to employer matching retirement and hospitalization rates. The proposed budget includes estimated increases in the rates. Any changes in rates different than those estimated will impact budget costs.

	<b>2022-23 Actual</b>	<b>2023-24 Projected</b>	<b>Percent Increase</b>
Retirement	24.50%	25.50%	4.1%
Hospitalization	\$7,397	\$8,000	7.5%

### *Utility Rate Increases*

As reported on April 12, 2023, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics March 2023 Consumer Price Index, electricity increased by 10.2% from March 2022 to March 2023.

## Continuation Budget Needs - \$179,228

Legislated Salary Increases	\$157,367
Retirement Rate Increase	\$36,864
Health Insurance Increase	\$37,434
Utility Increases	\$73,182
Additional Low Wealth Revenue from State*	-\$125,619
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$179,228</b>

\*State made school system finance officers aware of changes to state low wealth funding on April 25<sup>th</sup>—after April Board meeting

## Request to County Manager

Fiscal Year	Current Expense	Capital Outlay
<b>2022-2023 Received</b>	\$2,600,000	\$465,000
<b>2023-2024 Request</b>	\$2,779,228	\$465,000
<b>Increase</b>	\$179,228	\$0

