

School Board Puts Reins on Sports Practice

Tuesday, May 19, 2009

When the Board of Education met on May 11th, they voted to rein in sports practice during school hours, to toughen alcohol and illegal drug policies, and to apply some new rules to use of school facilities.

“We are getting to the place where sports is taking over. We need to put a little rein on this,” said Board Member John Wheeley.

This statement was followed by Wheeley’s motion to allow 45 minutes of sports practice during the school day and in school year 2009-10, and no sports practice during the school day effective with the 2010-11 school year.

“What about tournament play?” asked Principal Bransford. “This is practice,” he was told.

“We need to get the proper perspective,” remarked Board Member Jimmy Cook.

The motion made by Wheeley passed with four in favor, Steve Walton, Jimmy Cook, John Wheeley and Bill Wilmore. Ronald Birdwell cast a no, opposing the measures saying, “I want to explain my vote. This is not because I’m a coach.”

Cook began, “We’ve got to get academics before sports.”

“Let me finish,” stated Birdwell, “It will create a hardship at Red Boiling Springs,” referring to the one gymnasium shared by many.

Later in the meeting, Cook told those gathered that he has taken calls from concerned parents of basketball players, “We are notorious for playing in two tournaments over Christmas break.”

“Our school is set for next year,” said RBS Elementary Principal/ Boys basketball coach Michael Owens. “My guys had six days off,” and offered that none of next year’s tournaments are overnight.

“Two is too many,” replied Cook, “Some parents are concerned about it and we represent parents.”

Macon County will be getting two new 78-passenger buses. School Bus Superintendent Larry Holland spoke in favor of the purchase, “If we don’t keep these buses up, we aren’t going to have any sub buses at all.” Several spoke in agreement prior to voting unanimously to purchase two new buses.

Walton proposed two amended policies, one for use of school facilities and another regarding conduct at junior high and high schools. These two policies, voted on unanimously by the board, must pass a second reading.

Amend Policy 6.3002 (Conduct MCJHS, RBSHS, and MCHS)

In addition to the punishments of time in ALC as outlined above, any student found with alcohol or an illegal drug, or found under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs on school property, at a school function, or on a school sanctioned trip shall forfeit ALL RIGHTS to any and all extra curricular activities.

This to extend for a period of 365 days from the date of the incident, up to and including one complete sports season.

This punishment will preclude participation in all school-related athletics teams, clubs, trip, pageants, dances, and social functions including the prom and senior trip. They will be ineligible for election to class officer and yearbook superlatives. NO EXCEPTIONS.

After the 365-day suspension the student will not automatically regain their membership to the teams and clubs, but would be eligible to apply for re-admission.

Amend Policy 3.206 (Use of School Facilities) to Add:

All revenues from rental use of indoor school facilities (Gyms, auditoriums, cafeterias, rooms, etc.) shall be put directly into the general fund at that individual school and used for the benefit of all students.

No school employee is to be directly compensated personally due to rental use of school facilities. If someone must be present during an event at night or after school hours, this is to rotate among the custodial staff at that school.

If no custodial staff at that school is available, this may be opened up to custodial staff from other schools.

If additional clean up is required after the event the custodial staff is to do this, and any required time is authorized, and they are to be paid at the appropriate hourly rate.

The rental of any outdoor facility (football field, soccer field, parking lot, etc) shall be remitted directly to the board of education. This money shall be pooled and used for upgrades to these outdoor facilities, or divided up at the end of the year among all schools based on student population.

The rental charge for all venues shall be the 10% of the gross event gate receipts for an event where admission is charged (ball game, pageant, concert, etc) or a fixed cost fee if no admission is charged.

The board may vote to waive the rental fees on a particular event for charities or other similar functions.

As always, student organizations and clubs (Band, Beta, Interact, FFA., etc.) shall not be charged for use of facilities at their school.

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The director of schools is to determine the school system's fixed cost per hour for the use of all venues to be rented. These costs are to include: electricity, heating, cooling, clean up, supervision and general wear and tear on the facility. The goal is to provide these venues to the community at the school system's cost.

In other business:

Bids were authorized for food service items, pest control, diesel fuel, bus driver physicals, alcohol and drug screening and fire and safety equipment.

Passed general purpose school budget amendment #2.

Accepted low bid of \$27,800 from Bransford's Electrical and Mechanical services for five cafeteria electrical upgrades.