

Board of Education January 22, 2026 Meeting

The Bedford County Board of Education met in a Special monthly session on January 22, 2026 at 4:30 PM in the Central Office Board Room, 500 Madison Street, Shelbyville, TN 37160. Board members **Present:** Andrea Anderson, Shanna Boyette, David Brown, Michael Cook, Lana Craig, Brian Crews, Glenn Forsee, Dan Reed, Barton Williams.

I. PROCEDURAL ITEMS

A. Call to Order The Bedford County Board of Education met in a Special Called Meeting on January 22, 2026 at 4:30 in the Board of Education Central Office located at 500 Madison St., Shelbyville, TN. Board members Glenn Forsee, Brian Crews, Andrea Anderson, Barton Williams, Michael Cook, David Brown, Dan Reed, Shanna Boyette and Lana Craig were present. School Board Attorney Chuck Cagle attended via ZOOM.

Chairman Michael Cook called the meeting to order and turned it over to Chuck Cagle.

Mr. Cagle thanked the board for allowing him to attend via ZOOM. He began by congratulating Dr. Garrett on her tenure as Superintendent of Bedford County Schools. Mr. Cagle started by explaining that in 1992 the Tennessee Code Annotated was changed to Directors of Schools being appointed by the locally elected Boards of Education. The statute says that you can have an active contract with an appointed Superintendent not to exceed 4 years. That is basically the only limitation. There is no requirement under the statute that a local Board of Education do a Superintendent search. If a Board identifies a candidate who meets the qualifications as set by policy of the Board for Superintendent then they can just employ that person. There is, however, a provision in the statute that says that if a local Board of Education wishes to conduct a search for a Superintendent then you have to have a policy that says how that search will be conducted. Bedford County Schools does have such a policy. The second thing in the statute that was put in there in 1992 says that the minimum requirement for being a Director of Schools is a bachelor's degree. That has since been amended to say that the local board can consider other factors. A Board can consider other factors including advanced degrees, education leadership, classroom teaching, writing, teaching of all sorts (either college or university level) as well.

He went on to say when hiring a Superintendent of Schools there must be written contract of employment. That satisfies the Statute of Frauds. If we employ somebody for over a year, for that employment to be valid, it must be in writing. The contract also must state the terms and conditions of the negotiated specifics or parameters that are set by the Board.

Mr. Cagle stated that he would stay throughout the course of the meeting in case there are any questions.

Mr. Cook added that we conducted a search when we hired Dr. Garrett. We employed the Tennessee School Board Association to conduct the search and paid \$11,500 for that service. That was, at the time, the premium level, Plan 3. That same search today is \$15,000. What this plan entails is them doing everything including coming down and having community meetings and a host of other things from start to finish. Plan 2 is doing everything minus the community meetings and it is \$7,500. Plan 1 is \$3,000 and basically all it includes is advertise and collect stuff and hand it to us. We can always get an outside consultant to do

that but I would guess that it would probably be equivalent of or more.

Mr. Cook then said I'm going to give you my opinion and then open it up for discussion. "In 1999 we had a man start here in Bedford County teaching social studies at Harris Middle School. In 2004 he became Assistant Principal and Athletic Director at Harris Middle School. In 2006 to 2009 he was the Principal at Liberty School, K-8. In 2009 to 2012 he was Principal at Thomas Magnet School, K-5 which is now a K-8 school. In 2012 to 2017 he was Principal of Cascade High School. In 2017 he assumed the role of Principal at Shelbyville Central High School and was there until 2021 when Dr. Garrett hired Tim to be our Assistant Superintendent. He has been in that role until the present. In my opinion, I would say that we, as a vote of the Board, appoint Tim Harwell to be the next Superintendent of Bedford County Schools. I will open it up to you guys.

II. ACTION ITEMS

A. Next step to fill the upcoming open position of Superintendent of Bedford County Schools Glenn Forsee said he would like to make a motion.

"Whereas: Dr. Tammy Garrett has served our school system with outstanding visionary leadership and integrity for the past five years, and ...

Whereas: Dr. Garrett has assembled a talented, loyal, skillful, visionary administrative team that is moving our system forward with great strides, and ...

Whereas: Mr. Tim Harwell has exhibited sterling leadership, integrity and loyalty as Assistant Superintendent of Schools during Dr. Garrett's term, and ...

Whereas: Dr. Garrett has announced her plans to retire, effective June 1, 2026, and ...

Whereas: Continuity of visionary leadership, educational philosophy and trusting relationships are essential for continued growth ...

Therefore Be It Resolved: that the Bedford County Board of Education appoint Mr. Tim Harwell to be the next Superintendent of Schools and enter into contract negotiations with him to that end."

Barton Williams seconded the motion.

Shanna Boyette expressed concern about the court of public opinion. She said she has no disagreement about Mr. Harwell's professionalism and ability to do the job. She asked about posting the position and giving everybody a fair opportunity.

Mr. Cook asked Chuck Cagle if there is a law that says we have to post jobs? Mr. Cagle replied that there is no statute that requires posting of jobs. He said the 1992 statute was written very specifically to say that the Superintendent of Schools is the only employee the school board has. For teaching positions we have to be concerned about credentials and experience and claims of discrimination based on any of a number of reasons. But there is no requirement in the law that we post any position. We do that by policy and sometimes by negotiated agreement through collaborative conferencing.

Brian Crews stated that this time we are in a unique position where we can save taxpayer money by not spending \$15,000 and recognize that we have a candidate who met all the qualifications and in the last search he came in as number 2. There is no one else in our district that has the qualifications and experience he has gained in the 5 years he has spent as Assistant Superintendent. He has the relationship with our Board, our staff and our community.

David Brown said that this was exactly the arrangement he was hoping for even 5 years ago. Andrea Anderson said that like Glenn she has been a part of more than one Superintendent search. She stated that she agrees with what Brian said and that we have a very qualified candidate sitting in our system and talking about continuity, with Tim we are in a good place. Barton Williams said that he has had people reaching out to him, students, parent, teachers, talking about how good a man he is, that he loves children and his word is his bond. I think it's our best move as well.

Dan Reed said he agrees with everything that has been said. He asked if there has been another Superintendent appointed in our system before. The answer was yes, Mr. Gray was appointed after Mike Bone retired.

Lana Craig said that she feels very blessed to have had Dr. Garrett around. She's done wonders for our county and thankful that Mr. Harwell has been able to work with her. His character stands tall and does represent what my services stand for. I'm looking forward to great things.

At this time there was a roll call vote.

First District, David Brown - Yes

Second District, Brian Crews - Yes

Third District, Dan Ree - Yes

Fourth District, Lana Craig - Yes

Fifth District, Michael Cook - Yes

Sixth District, Andrea Anderson - Yes

Seventh District, Barton Williams - Yes

Eighth District, Shanna Boyette - Yes

Ninth District, Glenn Forsee - Yes

Motion passed with a 9-0 vote.

Mr. Cook congratulated Mr. Harwell and stated that he is looking forward to continued great things and building off of our success over the last 5 years in Bedford County.

Motion to approve was made by Glenn Forsee and seconded by Barton Williams. Motion

Approved by

Yea: 9, Nay: 0

III. ADJOURNMENT Glenn Forsee moved to adjourn the meeting at 4:53 pm.