Policy for Board of Commissioners Action on Caldwell County Schools Athletic Postseason Travel Grants

Effective Date: July 1, 2026

Purpose: To establish a structured annual grant process that funds travel, lodging, and meal costs exclusively for Caldwell County School System athletic teams and individual student-athletes advancing to state championship opportunities, while delegating all allocation authority entirely to the school system.

1. Policy Statement
The Caldwell County Board of Commissioners recognizes the unique and often unpredictable financial burden placed on student-athletes, families, and schools when teams or individual competitors qualify for state championship postseason play. To support these achievements, the Board will fund an annual **Athletic Postseason Travel Grant Pool**. This pool is strictly reserved for travel needs resulting from state championship opportunities outside of regular season events. The Caldwell County School System will maintain 100% autonomy and final authority over how these funds are distributed and spent among its qualifying schools, teams, and individual athletes.

2. Funding Mechanism and Grant Pool
- **Annual Appropriation:** The Board of Commissioners will allocate a lump sum to the Athletic Postseason Travel Grant Pool once per fiscal year.
- **Budget Integration:** The specific dollar amount of the grant pool will be determined each year by the Board as part of the county's standard annual budget process.
- **Direct Transfer:** The entire approved annual grant pool will be transferred directly to the Caldwell County School System finance department as a single allocation.

3. Strict Limitation on Use (Postseason Only)
- **Postseason Intent:** Funds must be used exclusively for full teams, partial squads, or individual student-athletes (along with their coaching staff) who advance to state-level championship opportunities.
- **Regular Season Exclusion:** This grant pool **cannot** be used to fund regular-season travel, standard conference games, regular tournament events, or routine transportation needs.
- **Eligible Expenses:** For qualifying postseason events, funds are limited to:
    - **Transportation:** Charter buses, activity buses, and fuel costs for buses
    - **Lodging:** Hotel rooms and accommodations for overnight championship events.
    - **Meals:** Food, per diems, or tournament meal allowances for participating student-athletes, individual qualifiers, and coaches.

- **General Exclusions:** Funds **cannot** be used for athletic equipment, uniforms, facility upgrades, salaries, or booster club operations.

4. Absolute School System Autonomy

- **Allocation Control:** The Caldwell County School System has 100% authority to determine which schools, athletic programs, specific qualifying postseason teams, or individual athletes receive funding from the pool.
- **Decision Criteria:** The school system will establish its own internal criteria to prioritize funding among advancing teams and individuals (e.g., travel distance, roster/qualifier size, financial need).
- **No County Oversight on Selection:** The Board of Commissioners will play no role in selecting recipient teams or individuals, approving individual postseason trips, or resolving internal school funding disputes.

5. Procurement and Administrative Compliance

- **School Procurement Rules:** All expenditures, bookings, and vendor selections made with these funds must follow the official procurement and purchasing policies of the Caldwell County School System.
- **Fund Roll-Over:** Any unspent monies remaining in the grant pool at the end of a fiscal year will not revert to the County. The school system will roll these funds over into the next fiscal year to accumulate and offset future postseason travel spikes.
- **Financial Reporting:** At the close of each fiscal year, the School System will provide a brief summary report to the County Manager showing the starting balance, expenditures (listed by qualifying team/individual and travel category), and the roll-over balance to ensure transparency for county taxpayers.

Adopted this 22nd day of June, 2026.

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Randy Church, Chairman
Caldwell County Board of Commissioners

Attest:

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Tasha Brown, Clerk to the Board