

BEAUFORT COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION
School Board Meeting Minutes
August 17-18, 2021
Hilton Head Island School for the Creative Arts
Hybrid Meeting

Members Presents

Christina Gwozdz, Chair	Ingrid Boatright	Earl Campbell
Melvin Campbell, Vice Chair	Tricia Fidrych	Richard Geier
David Striebinger, Secretary	Angela Middleton	Cathy Robine
	William Smith	Rachel Wisnefski

Dr. Christina Gwozdz called the meeting to order at 4:36p.m.

Mrs. Ingrid Boatright made the motion to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of employment matter re: employment, appointment, promotion, compensation pursuant to SC Code Ann. Section 30-4-70(a)(1); receipt of legal advice related to two pending claims covered by the attorney client privilege pursuant to SC Code Ann. Section 30-4-70(a)(2); discussion of negotiations incident to proposed Robert Smalls International Academy (RSIA) Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) Proposal Amendment #2 with JE Dunn Contract pursuant to SC Code Ann. Section 30-4-70(a)(2); discussion of negotiations incident to proposed St. Helena Elementary School (SHES) Gym Renovation Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) Proposal Amendment #11 with H.G. Reynolds Company pursuant to SC Code Ann. Section 30-4-70(a)(2). The motion was seconded by Mr. William Smith. The motion passed 11/0.

Dr. Gwozdz called the meeting back to open session at 6:03 p.m.

Action from Executive Session

Mr. David Striebinger made the motion that the Board of Education approve Amendment #2 for a new Robert Smalls International Academy school, including the multipurpose room alternate with JE Dunn Construction for a Guaranteed Maximum Price in the amount of \$61,698,567. The motion was seconded by Mr. William Smith. The motion passed 10/0/1. Rachel Wisnefski abstained from the vote.

Mr. David Striebinger made the motion that the Board of Education approve Amendment #11 with H.G. Reynolds for the St. Helena Elementary School gym renovation in the amount of \$1,431,953 using FY2022 8% funds. The motion was seconded by Mr. William Smith. The motion passed 10/0/1. Rachel Wisnefski abstained from the vote.

Mrs. Ingrid Boatright made the motion to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Melvin Campbell. The motion passed 10/0/1. William Smith abstained from the vote.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. A moment of silence was observed in memory of Aidan Harrison, a rising freshman at Bluffton High School who recently passed away.

Dr. Gwozdz stated that the media was properly notified.

Under Points of Celebration, the Board and Dr. Rodriguez recognized the following:

- **SCSBA Boardmanship Recognition**

Four Beaufort County School District board members earned recognition by the South Carolina School Boards Association (SCSBA) for achievement in the association's 2020–2021 Boardmanship Institute.

- Christina Gwozdz and David Striebinger reached Level Five by earning 300 points within five consecutive years or less. Level Five recipients receive a certificate and pin with a red stone.
- Ingrid Boatright and Patricia Fidrych reached Level One by earning 25 points within one year. Level One recipients receive a certificate.

- **Principal and Assistant Principal of the Year**

This year began a new tradition to honor the Principals and Assistant Principals, the Principal of the Year and Assistant Principal of the Year programs.

All principals have gone the extra mile, and this program is in recognition of the work they do, especially during this last school year and looking ahead to the 2021-22 school year.

The application and qualifications for POY and APOY are aligned to the South Carolina Association of School Administrator guidelines SCASA so they can qualify for Principal and Assistant Principal on a state and national level. Application questions were aligned to the SC ADEPT standards.

- This year's inaugural Elementary Principal of the Year is Dr. Kathy Corley, Red Cedar Elementary School. Secondary Principal of the Year is Matt Hall at Bluffton Middle School.
- This year's inaugural Elementary Assistant Principal of the Year is Pritchardville Elementary's Mary Beth Roulston. Secondary Assistant Principal of the Year is Jeremiah Young who is serving in this role at Beaufort Middle School this year.

Public Comments

- Russell Whiteford, Hilton Head Island stressed the importance of a partnership between the school district and the Hilton Head Boys and Girls Club.
- David Cook, Hilton Head Island spoke about masks and student rights.
- Georgia Champion, St. Helena Island asked what the district is doing to keep students safe during COVID, including on the bus, and asked why Lady's Island Elementary received used furniture from Beaufort Elementary instead of new furniture.

Chairman's Report

Dr. Gwozdz expressed gratitude towards all principals, teachers, and staff for getting school open and ready for the new school year.

Committee Reports

- *Ad Hoc NOB Committee* – Earl Campbell, chair shared that the committee met on August 10 and discussed committee scope.

Mr. Earl Campbell made the motion to approve the Northern Beaufort County Ad Hoc Committee's Scope. The motion was seconded by Mr. William Smith. The motion passed 10/1. William Smith voted against the motion.

- *Finance Committee* – Richard Geier, chair started with the following motion:
Mr. Richard Geier made the motion that the 2021-2022 Debt Service Fund Budget expenditures be amended to an amount of \$79,274,891. The motion was seconded by Mr. Earl Campbell. The motion passed 10/0/1. William Smith abstained from the vote.

Colonel Geier shared that the committee discussed what the 8% debt capacity should be.

- *Operations Committee* – Tricia Fidrych, chair shared the committee reviewed the information that Mr. Oetting provided concerning the Propane Bus Fueling Station to be located in Southern Beaufort County.

Mrs. Tricia Fidrych made the motion that the Board of Education approve the Use of FY2023 8% capital fund for the use of a propane bus fueling station. This should not to exceed in the amount of \$200,000. This item shall be listed in the FY2023 8% capital funds list of contingency recommended projects. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Ingrid Boatright. The motion passed 11/0.

Mr. Oetting presented the construction update.

- *Technology Committee* - David Striebinger, chair shared that the committee determined the committee's scope, which aligns with OE-17. The committee's next meeting is scheduled for September 9 at 11:30 a.m.

Mr. David Striebinger made the motion to approve the Technology Committee Scope. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Ingrid Boatright. The motion passed 11/0.

Superintendent's Report

Goal #1 Student Achievement

- Staff Development for Teachers and Staff
Dr. N'Kia Campbell presented information on professional development that took place during the summer.

Goal #3 Fiscal Responsibility

- Monthly Transparency Report
- Monthly \$100K Report
- Board Monthly Budget
Mrs. Crosby presented the monthly transparency report, monthly \$100K report, and Board monthly budget and addressed the Board's questions.

Other Matters

- ESSER Update - Mrs. Crosby introduced Denise Mattson, Federal Programs Coordinator, who presented an update on “ESSER” funds.
- Update on School Opening – Dr. Rodriguez gave an update on school opening, highlighting the efforts of Beaufort Elementary’s staff for adjusting to construction conditions and ensuring the first day of school run smoothly.

Mr. William Smith made the motion that we direct the Superintendent to make mandatory mask wearing in Beaufort County Schools. The motion was seconded by Mr. Melvin Campbell.

Mr. Smith amended the motion to say that Beaufort County School District Board of Education make mandatory mask wearing in Beaufort County Schools. The motion was seconded by Mr. Melvin Campbell.

Mrs. Ingrid Boatright made the motion to postpone the motion pending the receipt of legal and public health advice. The motion was seconded by Mr. Earl Campbell. The motion passed 9/2. Richard Geier and William Smith voted against the motion.

Second Public Comment

- David Cook, Hilton Head Island spoke again about masks and student rights.

Mrs. Angela Middleton made the motion to adjourn the meeting for tonight. The motion was seconded by Mr. William Smith. The motion passed 6/5. Christina Gwozdz, Cathy Robine, Tricia Fidrych, Richard Geier and Ingrid Boatright voted against the motion.

The meeting will reconvene at 6 p.m. on August 18 at Hilton Head Island School for the Creative Arts.

The meeting adjourned at 9:32 p.m.

August 18, 2021

Members Absent

Ingrid Boatright
Cathy Robine

Dr. Christina Gwozdz called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

Superintendent’s Report

- **Website Update** - After being interrupted by Mr. William Smith, Dr. Candace Bruder, provided an update on the forthcoming new website.
- **Diversity Group Update** – Mrs. LaKinsha Swinton, presented an update on the Student Advisory Council on Diversity & Inclusion. She shared that it is a small diverse group of students in grades 10-11, from each of the high schools, and ACE.

- **Update on Land Consultant** – Mr. Robert Oetting provided an update on the Land Consultants. Two people have been identified. Their roles will be to assist in search for future school sites, and assistance in selling current property.

Board Business

Mrs. Tricia Fidrych made the motion to accept the donation from Realtime Media - Sun Maid Board of Imagination to Hilton Head Island Elementary in the amount of \$5,000 for supply tools for STEM activities. The motion was seconded by Mr. Earl Campbell. The motion passed 9/0. Ingrid Boatright and Cathy Robine were absent from the meeting.

Dr. Rachel Wisnefski made the motion to accept the donation from Vaden of Beaufort to Whale Branch Elementary School in the amount of \$13,500.00 for Teacher and Student Supplies. The motion was seconded by Mr. Melvin Campbell. The motion passed 9/0.

Several Board members expressed their gratitude to Vaden for the donation.

Consent Agenda

- June 29, 2021 Board Meeting Minutes
- July 13, 2021 Board Meeting Minutes
- August 10, 2021 Special Called Executive Session Minutes
- OE-5-7 Monitoring Report
- OE-6.2 MWBE Monitoring Report for the 6-month period ending June 30, 2021
- OE-16 FOIA Monitoring Report, 2nd Quarter Report
- OE-16 FOIA Superintendent's Interpretation
- OE-17-18 Monitoring Report

Mrs. Tricia Fidrych made the motion to approve the consent agenda items. The motion was seconded by Dr. Rachel Wisnefski. The motion passed 7/0/2. Rachel Wisnefski, and William Smith abstained from the vote.

Mrs. Tricia Fidrych made the motion to entertain public comment on this agenda. Mrs. Fidrych withdrew her motion.

Mrs. Tricia Fidrych made the motion to suspend the Board's policy for public comments at tonight's meeting and allow public comments prior to adjournment. The motion was seconded by Mr. Earl Campbell. The motion passed 8/0/1. William Smith abstained from the vote.

Future Agenda Topics

- Mr. Mel Campbell would like an update on the profile of a Beaufort County graduate.

Announcements

The Board will hold a special called meeting to receive legal and public health advice on mask mandates.

Public Comment

- Heather Young, Hilton Head Island spoke against a mask mandate.
- David Cook, Hilton Head Island spoke against a mask mandate.

- Melissa Tullino, Bluffton spoke against a mask mandate.
- Tanya Hagedorn spoke against a mask mandate.
- Camala LaRocco, Bluffton spoke against a mask mandate.
- Melissa Epstein, Bluffton spoke against a mask mandate.
- Michele Naddy, Hilton Head Island spoke against a mask mandate.
- Annette Gilman, Hilton Head Island spoke against a mask mandate.
- Bryna Dean, Hilton Head Island spoke against a mask mandate; health and mental effects.
- Debra Powers, Hilton Head Island spoke against a mask mandate.
- Joshua Mathianas, Hilton Head Island spoke against a mask mandate.
- Courtney Homer, Bluffton spoke about freedom of choice concerning masks.
- Mechelle Burd, Hilton Head Island spoke against a mask mandate.
- Jodie Sruitek, Bluffton spoke in favor of a mask mandate.

Meeting adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

(Signature on Official File Copy) _____ Date: September 7, 2021

David Striebinger, Secretary, Board of Education

Minutes prepared by Robyn Cushingberry, Executive Assistant

Motion Summary

A motion was made to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of employment matter re: employment, appointment, promotion, compensation pursuant to SC Code Ann. Section 30-4-70(a)(1); receipt of legal advice related to two pending claims covered by the attorney client privilege pursuant to SC Code Ann. Section 30-4-70(a)(2); discussion of negotiations incident to proposed Robert Smalls International Academy (RSIA) Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) Proposal Amendment #2 with JE Dunn Contract pursuant to SC Code Ann. Section 30-4-70(a)(2); discussion of negotiations incident to proposed St. Helena Elementary School (SHES) Gym Renovation Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) Proposal Amendment #11 with H.G. Reynolds Company pursuant to SC Code Ann. Section 30-4-70(a)(2). The motion was seconded and passed 11/0.

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A motion was made to approve the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded and passed 10/0/1. William Smith abstained from the vote.

A motion was made to approve the Northern Beaufort County Ad Hoc Committee's Scope. The motion was seconded and passed 10/1. William Smith voted against the motion.

A motion was made that the 2021-2022 Debt Service Fund Budget expenditures be amended to an amount of \$79,274,891. The motion was seconded and passed 10.0/1. William Smith abstained from the vote.

A motion was made that the Board of Education approve the Use of FY2023 8% capital fund for the use of a propane bus fueling station. This should not to exceed in the amount of \$200,000. This item shall be listed in the FY2023 8% capital funds list of contingency recommended projects. The motion was seconded and passed 11/0.

A motion was made to approve the Technology Committee Scope. The motion was seconded and passed 11/0.

A motion was made that we direct the Superintendent to make mandatory mask wearing in Beaufort County Schools. The motion was seconded.

Amended motion was made to say that Beaufort County School District Board of Education make mandatory mask wearing in Beaufort County Schools. The motion was seconded.

A motion was made to postpone the motion pending the receipt of legal and public health advice. The motion was seconded and passed 9/2. Richard Geier and William Smith voted against the motion.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting for tonight. The motion was seconded and passed 6/5. Christina Gwozdz, Cathy Robine, Tricia Fidrych, Richard Geier and Ingrid Boatright voted against the motion.

August 18, 2021

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A motion was made to accept the donation from Vaden of Beaufort to Whale Branch Elementary School in the amount of \$13,500.00 for Teacher and Student Supplies. The motion was seconded and passed 9/0.

A motion was made to approve the consent agenda items. The motion was seconded and passed 7/0/2. Rachel Wisnefski, and William Smith abstained from the vote.

Consent Agenda

- June 29, 2021 Board Meeting Minutes
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- OE-16 FOIA Monitoring Report, 2nd Quarter Report
- OE-16 FOIA Superintendent's Interpretation
- OE-17-18 Monitoring Report

A motion was made to entertain public comment on this agenda. The motion was withdrawn.

A motion was made to suspend the Board's policy for public comments at tonight's meeting and allow public comments prior to adjournment. The motion was seconded and passed 8/0/1. William Smith abstained from the vote.

Meeting adjourned at 8:02 p.m.