

BEAUFORT COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION
School Board Meeting Minutes
January 17, 2023
District Educational Services Center
Hybrid Meeting

Members Present

Christina Gwozdz, Chair	Ingrid Boatright	Earl Campbell
Richard Geier, Vice Chair	Carlton Dallas	Chloe Gordon
Angela Middleton, Secretary	Elizabeth Hey	Victor Ney
	William Smith	Rachel Wisnefski

Dr. Christina Gwozdz called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

Mrs. Angela Middleton made the motion to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of receipt of legal advice regarding four pending matters, covered by the attorney client privilege pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. Section 30-4-70(a)(2); receipt of legal advice related to matters covered by the attorney-client privilege pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. Section 30-4-70(a)(2); discussion of negotiations incident to proposed Lobbyist Contract Renewal with Burr Forman Law Firm pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. Section 30-4-70(a)(2); Personnel Ratification Report; pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. Section 30-4-70(a)(1); Adult Ed/Home School Report pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. Section 30-4-40(a)(4); discussion of negotiations incident to proposed MB Kahn contract amendment #29 for HVAC replacement scope at Bluffton Elementary School pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. Section 30-4-70(a)(2); discussion of negotiations incident to proposed Thompson Turner Construction contract amendment #29 for Safety/Security, Technology Infrastructure, and Athletics at Bluffton Middle School pursuant to S.C. Code ann. Section 30-4-70(a)(2); Executive Administrative Assistant Evaluation Results pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. Section 30-4-70(a)(1). The motion was seconded by Colonel Richard Geier. The motion passed 9/0. William Smith and Elizabeth Hey were absent from the vote.

Dr. Christina Gwozdz called the meeting back to open session at 6:09 p.m.

Action from Executive Session

Mrs. Angela Middleton made the motion to approve the Superintendent's recommendations for employment listed on the December 1 to December 31, 2022. Personnel Ratification Report. The motion was seconded by Mr. Earl Campbell. The motion passed 10/0. Elizabeth Hey was absent from the vote.

Mrs. Angela Middleton made the motion to accept the Superintendent's recommendation for the monthly Adult Education/Home School Report for January 17, 2023. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Chloe Gordon. The motion passed 11/0.

Mrs. Angela Middleton made the motion that the Board of Education approve Amendment #29 with M.B. Kahn Construction Co., Inc. for the Bluffton Elementary School Summer 2023 HVAC Scope based on the Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) of \$871,926. The motion was seconded by Mr. Carlton Dallas. The motion passed 10/0/1. Rachel Wisnefski abstained from the vote.

Mrs. Angela Middleton made the motion that the Board of Education approve Amendment #29 with Thompson Construction for the Safety/Security. Technology/Infrastructure and Athletics Scope at Bluffton Middle School in the amount of \$4,312,562. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Ingrid Boatright. The motion passed 10/0/1. Rachel Wisnefski abstained from the vote.

Mrs. Angela Middleton made the motion to approve the contract with Burr & Forman with the changes made to the date and the mileage reimbursement. The motion was seconded by Mr. Earl Campbell. The motion passed 10/1. William Smith voted against the motion.

Dr. Rachel Wisniewski made the motion to approve the January 17, 2023 agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Ingrid Boatright. The motion passed 11/0.

The Pledge of allegiance was recited, and a moment of silence was observed.

Dr. Gwozdz stated that the media was properly notified.

Student Performance

The Broad River Starfish Singers performed “Have a Happy New Year” under the direction of music teacher Laura Boozer.

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

- School Board Appreciation Month
As a small token of appreciation from the School District, Board members received umbrellas at their seats.

Dr. Rodriguez asked everyone to join him in expressing appreciation in honoring the year-round commitment that school board members make to the district and community.

- **Character Education Students of the Month of December**
 - Northern BCSD Lady’s Island Middle School – 8th grade student Brianna Mikel
 - Southern BCSD Hilton Head Island Elementary School – 5th grade student Isabella Skelly
- **Blue Ribbon Schools of Excellence Beacon Award – Whale Branch Early College High School**
https://youtu.be/sUWCO4P_nq4

Public Comments

The following community members, including students, spoke regarding book banning.

- Mare Deckard, Port Royal
- Barb Nash, Beaufort
- Peter Birschbach, Port Royal
- Millie Bennett, Beaufort High School Student
- Madelyn Confare, Beaufort High School Student
- Patrick Good, Beaufort Student
- Elizabeth Foster, Beaufort Academy Student
- Isabella Troy, Battery Creek Student
- Melinda Henrickson, Beaufort
- Jeff Baker, Beaufort
- Ivie Szalai, Beaufort
- Lori Hlaban, Beaufort

Mrs. Ingrid Boatright made the motion to extend the first comment session until the speakers have finished. The motion was seconded by Mr. William Smith. The motion passed 11/0.

- Julie Matthews, Beaufort
- Robin Liebenberg, Hilton Head Island
- David Cook, Hilton Head Island
- Angela Rossillo, (Phone Call) also spoke on an opt-out process to standardized testing.
- Joseph Castagnino, (Phone Call)

Chair’s Report

Dr. Gwozdz shared information regarding Board business meeting protocol and made the announcement on the 2023 Committee Assignments:

ACE: Earl Campbell, Carlton Dallas, Dick Geier

Academics: Chloe Gordon (Chair), Angela Middleton, Victor Ney

Finance: Dick Geier (Chair), Earl Campbell, Elizabeth Hey

Operations: Dick Geier (Chair), Victor Ney, Will Smith

Legislative: Earl Campbell (Chair), Chloe Gordon, Rachel Wisnefski

Policy: Rachel Wisnefski (Chair), Ingrid Boatright, Carlton Dallas

Results: Ingrid Boatright (Chair), Chloe Gordon, Elizabeth Hey

Technology: Ingrid Boatright (Chair), Carlton Dallas, Will Smith

Committee Reports

Operations Committee: Ingrid Boatright, chair asked Rob Corbin, Project Manager with CBRE-Heery, to provide a construction update.

Mrs. Boatright also shared that the committee reviewed updates to several Administrative Regulations.

Superintendent's Report

Goal #1 Student Achievement

- Student Support -Dr. Rodriguez presented information on student support as required by ACT 213.

Other Matters

- Community Project Review Committee 2.0 Update
Mr. Bill Piero provided an update on the Community Project Review Committee 2.0. To date, the committee is comprised of 28 community members, has met four times, and visited 9 schools.

Board Business Action

- Board Determination on the Appeals from the Materials Reconsideration Committees Report for the following books:
book titles:
Speak, author – Laurie Halse Anderson
Stamped: Racism, Antiracism 7 You, author Ibram X. Kendi 7 Jason Reynolds
The Handmaid's Tale, author – Margaret Atwood
The Kite Runner, author Khaled Hosseini
The Lovely Bones, author – Alice Sebold
The Perks of Being a Wallflower, author Stephen Chbosky

Colonel Richard Geier made the motion that the Beaufort County School Board concurs with the findings of the Book Review Committee for the following book titles:

Speak, author – Laurie Halse Anderson

Stamped: Racism, Antiracism 7 You, author Ibram X. Kendi 7 Jason Reynolds

The Handmaid's Tale, author – Margaret Atwood

The Kite Runner, author Khaled Hosseini

The Lovely Bones, author – Alice Sebold

The Perks of Being a Wallflower, author Stephen Chbosky

The motion was seconded by Mr. Earl Campbell. The motion passed 8/2/1. Elizabeth Hey and Victor Ney voted against the motion. Rachel Wisnefski abstained from the vote.

Dr. Rachel Wisnefski made the motion that the Board of Education directs the Superintendent to develop a rating system for recreational resources available to students in BCSD media centers. The motion was seconded by Mr. Victor Ney.

Dr. Christina Gwozdz passed the gavel to Colonel Richard Geier.

Dr. Christina Gwozdz made the amended motion that the Beaufort County Board of Education directs the Superintendent to reevaluate the opt -Out form for recreational resources available to students in BCSD media centers. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Elizabeth Hey. The motion passed 7/4. Rachel Wisnefski, William Smith, Ingrid Boatright and Victor Ney voted against the motion.

- Donation from Tammy & Duke Novak in the amount of \$5,500 for negative lunch balances at Hilton head Middle School

Dr. Rachel Wisnefski made the motion to accept the donation from Tammy & Duke Novak in the amount of \$5,500 for negative lunch balances at Hilton Head Middle School. The motion was seconded by Mr. Carlton Dallas. The motion passed 11/0.

Dr. Rachel Wisnefski made the motion to approve the Consent Agenda. The motion was seconded by Mr. William Smith. The motion passed 11/0.

Consent Agenda

- December 8, 2022 Joint Board/SIC Meeting Minutes
- December 13, 2022 Board Meeting
- January 3, 2023 Board Meeting

Future Agenda Topics

- Mr. Carlton Dallas would like to discuss communication with communities.
- Mrs. Ingrid Boatright would like to discuss representation of schools in student performances.
- Mr. William Smith would like to discuss anyone receiving checks from the district.

Announcements

Mr. Dallas thanked district staff for their work in the many district programs.

Public Comments

The following community members spoke on book banning.

- Ivie Szalai, Beaufort
- Patrick Good, Beaufort
- Julie Matthews, Beaufort
- Mike Covert, (Phone Call)

The following students thanked the Board for considering their voices regarding the book review.

- Millie Bennett
- Elizabeth Foster

The meeting adjourned by unanimous consent at 9:08 p.m.

(Signature on Official File Copy) _____ Date: February 7, 2023

Angela Middleton, 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 receipt of legal advice regarding four pending matters, covered by the attorney client privilege pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. Section 30-4-70(a)(2); receipt of legal advice related to matters covered by the attorney-client privilege pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. Section 30-4-70(a)(2); discussion of negotiations incident to proposed Lobbyist Contract Renewal with Burr Forman Law Firm pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. Section 30-4-70(a)(2); Personnel Ratification Report; pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. Section 30-4-70(a)(1); Adult Ed/Home School Report pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. Section 30-4-40(a)(4); discussion of negotiations incident to proposed MB Kahn contract amendment #29 for HVAC replacement scope at Bluffton Elementary School pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. Section 30-4-70(a)(2); discussion of negotiations incident to proposed Thompson Turner Construction contract amendment #29 for Safety/Security, Technology Infrastructure, and Athletics at Bluffton Middle School pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. Section 30-4-70(a)(2); Executive Administrative Assistant Evaluation Results pursuant to S.C. Code Ann. Section 30-4-70(a)(1). The motion was seconded and passed 9/0. William Smith and Elizabeth Hey were absent from the vote.

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The Lovely Bones, author – Alice Sebold

The Perks of Being a Wallflower, author Stephen Chbosky

The motion was seconded and passed 8/2/1. Elizabeth Hey and Victor Ney voted against the motion. Rachel Wisnefski abstained from the vote.

A motion was made that the Board of Education directs the Superintendent to develop a rating system for recreational resources available to students in BCSD media centers. The motion was seconded.

Dr. Christina Gwozdz passed the gavel to Colonel Richard Geier.

An amended motion was made that the Beaufort County Board of Education directs the Superintendent to reevaluate the opt -Out form for recreational resources available to students in BCSD media centers. The motion was seconded and passed 7/4. Rachel Wisnefski, William Smith, Ingrid Boatright and Victor Ney voted against the motion.

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