

Minutes

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

DATE February 20, 2024

TIME 5:30pm

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER BY Mrs. Lashonda McFadden, Committee Chair

IN ATTENDANCE

Trustee Lashonda McFadden, Committee Chair
Lisa Ellis, Richland Two Teacher Representative
Melissa McFadden, Parent Representative
Larry Smalls, Parent Representative

NOT IN ATTENDANCE

Trustee Angela Nash, Board Vice Chair
Rania Jamison, Committee Vice Chair

Motion made by Mrs. Lashonda McFadden to call the meeting to order at 6:00pm, seconded by Mr. Larry Smalls

Mrs. McFadden opened the meeting with the Civility Pledge and thanked the committee members for their attendance.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS – NO ACTION REQUESTED

Competency Letter

Mrs. McFadden discussed the status of the Competency Letter with the committee. She stated the following:

- The letter was sent to the board for review.
- Melissa McFadden will introduce the letter to the board at the February 27th meeting.
- This is not a bill but is currently a Proviso in Richland Two.
- Ms. Lisa Ellis stated this is the end of the 2-year cycle and whatever doesn't make it in the bill will have to be revisited in the next cycle.

Parental Rights

The Committee discussed the following sections of this policy.

- **Section 63-23-140** – The Right to make physical and mental health care decisions for his or her child, unless otherwise prohibited by court order.
- **Section 63-23-160** -Except as otherwise provided by court order, a health care provider may not provide, solicit, or arrange health care services, perform physical or psychological examination, or prescribe medicinal drugs or biologics to a child without first obtaining written parental consent.

The committee had concerns from the bill. Although portions of this policy are currently under review by the Legislature, some committee members were concerned with the state having control over critical issues involving their children such as Teen Pregnancy, Abortion, and the administration of Psychiatric Medications.

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

- The policy has passed but you must have a child in the specific district in order to object to the materials.
- Bill is concerning for teachers as it may hinder their instruction and lesson plans.

DELEGATION MEETINGS

- The committee was encouraged to still plan to move forward with these meetings, but the chair stated that their suggestions will not be presented on behalf of the Richland Two School Board until a discussion is had with the entire board.

NEW BUSINESS – NO ACTION REQUIRED

New State Legislation

Ms. Lisa Ellis presented and discussed the current changes to the following policies with the committee. They are as follows:

Policy H.3728 – Instructional Materials

Senate took out language where ANYONE could sue the teacher and district for topics taught; Senate language states the person must have a current student in the school/district and must follow all district procedures before filing a lawsuit and can only sue the district and not the teacher.

Policy S.905/S.418 – Read to Succeed

- Passed by Senate and will move straight to the floor of the House
- Prohibits the 3Q reading and whole words (any reading program, teacher manuals and training will have to be aligned to science of reading)
- Removes requirement of classes for high school except SpEd teachers

Proposed Proviso – Cell Phone use by Students

- School districts must have a plan to prevent cell phone use in school
- If districts don't have a plan, they will lose State Aid to classrooms funding

House Finance Committee

The committee will release preliminary budget tomorrow (Wednesday, February 21, 2024). The committee has made the following predictions:

- Increase State Aid to Classrooms
- Raise minimum salary schedule AND adds steps to the minimum salary schedule.
- Salary schedule currently ends in 2023 but teachers who started prior to 2012 can't retire until 2028, after 2012, the *Rule of 90* applies (*age + years of experience = 90*)

Richland Two Focus – Teach Recruitment

Teacher Recruitment and Retention is currently an issue across the nation but especially within Richland Two. The major problem is that Richland Two is no longer competitive with other districts in the state. The following suggestions were discussed as possible ways to handle this critical shortage. They are as follows.

- Richland 2 needs to increase teacher salaries
- The state will help, but district receives local money that needs to supplement minimum salary schedule increase (we are not competitive compared to Midlands districts)

OTHER BUSINESS

Mrs. McFadden shared with the committee some of the topics that were discussed at Superintendent Weaver's Breakfast Briefing. She stated the following:

Workforce Development

- 19% of students that are graduating are equipped to go into the workforce.
- The state is bringing a lot of industrial, electrical and technical jobs into the state and has plans to provide training for these positions.
- The target groups are 18–24 year-olds.
- Possible 4-month training class for electrical careers that will not provide a certificate but a training award.

Next Meeting

March 12, 2024, at 4:00pm

Motion made to adjourn by Mrs. Lashonda McFadden, seconded by Mr. Larry Smalls

Meeting Adjourned at 6:47pm

*Respectfully submitted by: Ms. Tanedra Washington
February 28, 2024*